

VOL III
Pages 1 to 121

THE EARLY HISTORY
OF
THE GOSPEL
OF
THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IN BRITAIN
WITH
HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND SOCIAL REMINISCENCES
OF
PERSONS, PLACES, AND EVENTS

COMPILED BY WILLIAM NORRIE

VOLUME III.

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THE
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IN BRITAIN
VOL III

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EARLY HISTORY
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—
ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS.
—

The Brethren Isolated and Unknown to Each Other.

THE Edinburgh Church dated its existence from the month of March 1853. Next to the Dundee Church, which had been formed a short time previously, it was probably the first in this country to be formally organised upon the basis of a belief in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and baptism subsequent to that belief. Shortly after the formation of the Edinburgh Church, the fact became known that there existed here and there throughout the country small companies of believers, as well as isolated individuals, who cherished the same faith and hope. At that period, there existed no means of putting these small associations of believers in communication with each other, and in some instances it was quite surprising how brethren in different parts of the kingdom became aware of each other's existence. Through communications that appeared in the *Herald of the Kingdom*, and through previous acquaintanceship in other religious associations, it was known that there were a few in Glasgow, Dundee, and Fifeshire who had accepted 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas;' but beyond this little was at first known.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1853

1853.

Making Personal Acquaintance.

The first personal visit we had from 'stranger brethren,' as they were somewhat paradoxically termed, was on Sunday, October 16, 1853—little more than six months after the formation of the meeting—when Allan Fordyce and James Archibald from Glasgow, John Duncan from Dundee, and David Lawson from Newburgh, met with us. These four brethren, having learned that a meeting had recently been formed in the Scottish Metropolis, of persons who were all Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, were naturally desirous of making the acquaintance of their hitherto unknown brethren. They accordingly arranged among themselves to pay us a visit, making us aware beforehand of their intention to do so.

We were of course delighted to know this, and made arrangements to give them a cordial welcome. This meeting—which was practically arranged by the brethren in Glasgow—may be said to have been the first of those annual general meetings which afterwards became an established institution among the brotherhood, and were usually held in Edinburgh.

A tea meeting was held in the afternoon, at which the visitors gave an account of the state of the churches in their respective localities. The report from Glasgow, which was the most interesting, stated that there had recently been a division in the church there, in consequence of a disagreement on the question of the present possession of the Holy Spirit. At that time, it was the custom of the Edinburgh Church, previous to offering up prayer, to give an opportunity for making suggestions as to any special petition that should be presented, so that all might agree to it; and before separating, at the request of the Glasgow visitors, special united prayer was made that the cause of disunion among them might soon cease to exist.

1854.

A Desire for Extended Acquaintanceship.

The meeting with these four brethren from distant places was of an exceedingly pleasant and profitable character, and it greatly stimulated a desire that had previously existed, to search out and put the brethren into communication with congregations of believers and solitary brethren who might be located in different parts of the country, for their mutual benefit. The subject was mentioned at the first anniversary meeting of the Edinburgh Church, held on the afternoon of Sunday, March 26th, 1854; and after being talked about, it was resolved that a correspondence should be opened with other churches in different parts of the country.

AGGREGATE MEETING.

As a result of the steps that were thus taken towards cultivating the acquaintance of distant brethren, it was arranged to have an aggregate meeting of as many brethren from other quarters as could attend, on the last Sunday of 1854, being the last day of the year. Invitations were issued to all the brethren so far as known; and these were responded to by the presence of eleven from Glasgow, three from Fife, three from Aberdeen, one from Dundee, one from Greenock, and one from Moffat. The proceedings at this assembly were made to assume both a business and a festive character, and an attempt was made at something like a formal organisation of the brethren thus scattered throughout the country.

The Visitors.

In addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting, the following were present from other places:—

ABERDEEN—Alexander, Mrs, and Miss Black.	and John McTaggart, Mrs NalSmith, and James H. Stoddart.
DUNDEE—John Duncan.	GOVROCK—James Lamb.
GLASGOW—James Archibald, Allan For- dyce, James Fraser, Donald Mackay, Miss Marshall, Elizabeth, Sarah, Helen,	KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd. MOFFAT—James Henderson. NEWBURGH—David Lawson.

SATURDAY.

The Younger Brethren Demonstrate.

In the early summer of this year, the younger brethren of the Edinburgh Church had established what was known as 'the Saturday Night Meeting,' which was intended for mutual improvement and to promote social intercourse among the members. A similar meeting had also been commenced in connection with the Glasgow Church, and there had been some pleasant intercourse between the two. The members of the Edinburgh Saturday Night Meeting had arranged for a grand reception and entertainment to their visitors from the West; but, unfortunately, the train by which they travelled was several hours late, and all the kindly planned arrangements were completely upset.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

Devotional Exercises.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row—the usual meeting-place of the Edinburgh brethren. Francis Renwick was appointed to preside; and he commenced the proceedings by giving out the 148th Psalm, second version, which was sung heartily, to the tune of Benedicite, with the Doxology at the end. He then offered up fervent prayer and thanksgiving on behalf of the assembly, after which Brother John Forman read the 46th Psalm. The President next gave out the first four verses of the 72nd Psalm, which were sung to the tune of St Stephens. James Cameron then read the 26th chapter of Isaiah.

Reports Respecting the Churches.

JOHN FORMAN, by request, made a statement respecting the origin and the history, thus far, of the Edinburgh Church, with some remarks as to its present position.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1854

ALLAN FORDYCE gave a sketch of the meeting in Glasgow previous to their separation from Thomas Young and his party on the question of the present possession of the Holy Spirit. He also gave a brief account of their present condition, which he described as being one of great carelessness and callousness.

JAMES FRASER supplemented the remarks of Brother Fordyce with one or two particulars he had omitted.

JOHN DUNCAN reported progress respecting Dundee. He said they had recently been considering the subject of the Holy Spirit, and with special reference to a suggestion which had been made, that God would perhaps give them this as a mark by which to distinguish them as His well-beloved children. They could not, however, find sufficient warrant in Scripture for such an expectation. One reason why they thought they did not possess the Holy Spirit at the present time was because they were not in a state to receive it; for they were so selfish, that if they were now endowed with it, they would be inclined to use it for personal purposes.

ALEXANDER BLACK spoke on behalf of the church in Aberdeen, and mentioned that it consisted of 26 persons—17 males and 9 females.

DAVID LAWSON gave an account of the prospects of the truth in different parts of Fifeshire. He said that at Cupar they had a great obstacle to people coming to their Sunday evening lectures in the winter time from the want of a light at the entrance to their meeting-place, which was a rather awkward one. People were consequently deterred from coming.

ANDREW TAIT then rose to make what was intended to be a few concluding remarks. He expressed it as his opinion that the meeting would have been more profitable if it had been occupied with devotional exercises and the reading of the Scriptures; and he proposed to read a chapter.

The CHAIRMAN, however, interrupted him to say that this was a mistake, and he pointed out that, in the special

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1854

circumstances, the meeting had been conducted to the best advantage as it was.

A. TAIT then read the 5th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, on which he made a few remarks.

The last four verses of the 43d Psalm were then sung to the tune of Invocation, followed by prayer, after which the meeting adjourned at half-past one o'clock.

AFTERNOON.

The meeting was resumed at three o'clock; and after thanksgiving had been offered by John Forman, tea was served.

Evangelistic Work.

The first subject considered was the best means of making known the things of the Kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ. A good deal of discussion took place on this question, and several suggestions made applicable to the varying circumstances of different localities.

The Breaking of Bread.

The propriety of observing the Lord's Supper on any other day than Sunday, and at another time than in the evening, was then brought up. On this latter point some of the Edinburgh brethren had from the first entertained strong convictions, contending that, as it was in the evening when our Lord instituted it, and that it was called a 'supper,' which was an evening meal, it should not be partaken of in the early part of the day. The general conviction, however, seemed to be that, as there was no special direction for the breaking of bread being observed on a particular day or at a particular hour, the brethren were at liberty to study their own convenience in the matter; but, as the first disciples were in the habit of observing it on the First Day of the week, it was considered seemly that we should do so likewise.

Before this meeting separated, the breaking of bread was introduced, in accordance with the Edinburgh custom which then prevailed of having it in the evening.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1854

EVENING.

After an interval of twenty-five minutes, the conference was resumed at a quarter to seven o'clock.

The Best Mode of Conducting the Meetings.

The principal topic that engaged attention at the evening sederunt was the best manner in which the church meetings should be conducted, and particularly how those who were usually silent might be induced to take part in the proceedings. In the discussion that took place upon this subject, all the brethren present were in turn asked to speak their mind; and, as regarded the Edinburgh meeting, a general feeling was expressed that a number of those who usually maintained silence should be invited and encouraged to contribute to the general edification.

Christian Fellowship.

This subject had also been set down for consideration; but as the hour was rather late before it was reached, and a number of the brethren and sisters had by this time left, it was treated very briefly, only a few generalities being indulged in by one or two speakers.

The meeting was closed by the company singing the last four verses of the second paraphrase, to the tune of St David's, followed by prayer and thanksgiving, presented by John Forman.

MONDAY.

On Monday morning (New Year's Day, 1855), several of the Glasgow visitors returned home by an early train. According to an arrangement made on the previous day, those who remained, along with a number of the Edinburgh brethren and sisters, met in the forenoon at the Duke of Wellington's statue, Princes Street, and had a walk round the Queen's Drive. Assembling in the Tailors' Hall at two o'clock, refreshments were served, after which the visitors were accompanied to the railway station on their return home.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

1855.

The success which attended the aggregate meeting in 1854 was such as to call for its repetition at the close of the year 1855; and with a view to turning it to the greatest advantage, and obtaining as much information as possible respecting the position of the truth throughout Britain, manuscript circulars announcing the intended meeting were forwarded to all the various churches in both Scotland and England. Information was also requested respecting the state of the various meetings, the manner in which they were conducted, and several other points of interest.

A Difficulty with the Glasgow Meetings.

In sending out these invitations, some difficulty was experienced from the fact that there were two meetings in Glasgow, mutually opposed to each other. When it was suggested that an invitation should be addressed to Thomas Young, on behalf of the brethren then meeting at 30 Frederick Street, William Naismith strongly opposed the proposal, and said that if Mr Young came, he would not attend. Against this it was contended that the united brotherhood should not recognise personal differences, but send invitations to all who were known to be of like faith. A good deal of unpleasant discussion took place on this point, but ultimately it was agreed that the brethren meeting in Frederick Street should be invited, along with the others, to take part in the convocation, by letter or deputy. This was done, and in reply they wrote stating that they would send two brethren on condition that the discussion of the following questions should be the principal business of the meeting:—

1. Is the Spirit of God promised to and possessed by all the sons of God?
2. Did Jesus exist, before taking upon him flesh, in the image and glory of God?
3. Was the death of Jesus in order to satisfaction of divine justice, or was it merely as an example, &c.?
4. Are we at liberty to admit into our fellowship those who hold the negative of the above propositions?

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

They added that, as a meeting, they could not hold fellowship with those who denied the truths referred to. The response to this letter stated that, as the contemplated meeting was for the comparison of congregational experiences, the Edinburgh brethren could not take upon themselves to yield to their conditions, and asked them to reconsider. This elicited another letter, containing replies to some of the nine points mentioned in the circular, and an intimation of their intention to send one or two deputies to the meeting, but with this reservation, that they did not recognise our position as Scriptural. As it was concluded they could not associate with the assembled brethren in the acts of divine worship, the secretary (George Dowie) wrote :

In coming to the meeting, we apprise you that you cannot keep yourselves from the association of those who are foreign to you, both as respects faith and position. Unless there is, therefore, an entire change in the conditions on which you can associate with us, we are constrained to conclude that our invitation is by you rendered nugatory, and that no fellowship can result.

In consequence of this letter, no representative of the Frederick Street meeting was at the convocation.

The Visitors.

In addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting, the following were present from other places :—

ABERDEEN—James Robertson.	DUNDEE—John Duncan.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie,	KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd.
GLASGOW—Allan Fordyce and Donald Mackay.	LANARK—James Murray.
	NEWBURGH—David Lawson.

The actual number of deputies present was thus much smaller than had been expected. One cause of this was the misunderstanding with the Glasgow brethren. When it became known there that Thomas Young had been invited, and was coming, a large number of the members of the other meeting, who had intended to be present, changed their minds; and ere they learned that, after all, Mr Young was not coming, they had made other arrangements which kept them from leaving home.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

SUNDAY.

The meeting on this occasion was remarkable for the great length to which it extended. There was, in fact, only one meeting all day, which extended from eleven o'clock in the forenoon until eight in the evening, with the exception of an interval of half an hour, from one to half-past one, to allow preparations being made for tea, and another half hour's interval, from half-past six to seven, previous to the breaking of bread.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row, David Lawson being called to the chair. After the exchange of salutations and engaging in devotional exercises, the deliberations were commenced with the reading of the letters which had been received from twelve different churches with which there had been correspondence respecting the meeting.

Letters from the Churches.

These letters were quite voluminous, and some of them were so lengthy, especially those from the churches in England, that all the time of the first meeting, and a portion of the second, was occupied with their perusal, with passing explanations or inquiries, and oral information on the matters mentioned. The meeting in Halifax sent a most elaborate letter—so long, indeed, that a portion of it was not read—and also a bundle of tracts. In addition to the letters to the various churches, communications were also read from several isolated persons in various quarters, which were very interesting.

Statistics.

As this was the first occasion on which anything like a detailed statement respecting the various churches had been obtained, a digest of the matter contained in the letters is interesting, as showing the state of the brotherhood in Britain at that time, so far as could be ascertained.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

The number of disciples represented by deputy or letter was 205, as follows:—Aberdeen 27, Arbroath 2, Dundee 10, Edinburgh 42, Fifeshire 9, Glasgow 23, Greenock 5, Halifax 8, Lanark 6, Nottingham 32, Airdrie 7, Derby 4, Birmingham 13, and Devonport 17. This did not include the Paisley meeting, from which no direct communication had been received. The letters and communications also afforded information regarding the existence of individuals not connected with any of the churches, hearers of their teaching, readers of their books, and lookers on their doings, concerning whom hopes were entertained that they would become obedient to the faith.

The Mode of Conducting the Meetings.

In response to inquiry in the circular convening the meeting, the letters gave information respecting the manner in which the various meetings on the First Day of the week were conducted, of which the following is a summary:—

ABERDEEN.—Two presiding brethren. Song, prayer, breaking of bread in the afternoon, exhortations, collection. Monthly meeting on a week night for consideration of Bible subjects.

BIRMINGHAM.—At the time of writing, were in a disorganised state, but intended to resume at Christmas.

CUPAR.—No president. Song, prayer, reading and conversing on Scriptures, breaking bread. Being far scattered, have no week meeting.

DERBY.—Thanks and prayer, reading the Word, edifying in all holy things, the Lord's Supper.

DEVONPORT.—No president (apparently).—Song, prayer, reading the Scriptures, address. Breaking bread in the evening.

DUNDEE.—No president. Song, prayer, reading, and generally conversational remarks on what is read, the Lord's Supper.

EDINBURGH.—No president, except at extra meetings. Song (psalms, anthems, and chanting). Prayer, which is deliberate in its subject, and for this purpose the brethren

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

suggest matter of thankfulness or objects of need. Reading the Scriptures consecutively, mutual examination of pre-arranged subjects. Break bread (unleavened bread and unfermented wine) in the evening. A meeting through the week for the practice of music, the arts of reading and composition and the acquirement of other knowledge.

GLASGOW.—No president. Song, prayer, and thanksgiving. Reading of the Scriptures, address for edification, the breaking of bread, Scripture lesson, on which the brethren speak in rotation. Meeting through the week, for the practice of music, &c.

HALIFAX.—Two elders (president and secretary alternately), and two deacons. Song (singing of hymns and chanting of psalms); prayer for certain definite things (the Lord's Prayer some part of the day); reading the Word; breaking the bread of commemoration (unleavened bread and unfermented wine); exhortation, counsels, &c. The evening meeting occupied with preaching the truth in serial discourses and disputing with the hearers. Meeting through the week for investigation of Scripture subjects on which there is indecision.

LANARK.—No president. Song, prayer, reading and consideration of the Scriptures, breaking the loaf.

NOTTINGHAM.—One president. Song (Reformation hymns in use), prayer, reading the Scriptures, and mutual consideration of questions upon them, breaking bread. Members far apart, therefore only one meeting.

Some of the churches did not send the information asked on this point, but it was presumed that their style of meeting was somewhat similar to those recorded above. Indeed, it was remarked that there was a general uniformity in the character, though not always in the details, of the First Day meetings. Whether this similarity had its origin in tradition or from examination of the Scriptures, cannot be said.

Subjects Considered.

The subjects which had been under the consideration of the brethren, the results of this consideration, and the difficulties yet unsolved, were thus stated :

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ABERDEEN.—Punctuality in attendance at meetings; nature of addresses, also the value of a conversational style in the meeting occasionally; the eldership; the fellowship; the restoration of the Jews to their own land (this in consequence of the dogmatic denial by a brother who has since left their assembly); the Holy Spirit (yet a difficulty).

DEVONPORT.—‘The subjects have been the Gospel, the future Kingdom, and Baptism. The result has been that several who profess to believe in the speedy advent of the Christ have turned a deaf ear to the Gospel of the Kingdom; while, on the other hand, two or three have gladly received it and yielded obedience thereto, and there seems to be a spirit of inquiry in the minds of others.’ A practical difficulty was thus stated:—‘Most of us are what is termed teetotallers, and among us there are two who object to the partaking of alcoholic wine, preferring to partake of a decoction of raisins, thus causing two cups to be used, which appears to some of us to be saying, “Ours is the Lord’s cup, and consequently the other is the reverse.”’

DUNDEE.—The brethren have specially examined the pretensions of certain parties, commonly called Irvingites, to those gifts which Christ bestowed upon his church when he ascended up on high, and have not seen cause to recognise their pretensions. At the same time, they see and feel the necessity existing in the body of Christ for those gifts and for that Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which he promised to his disciples. They had also been considering the propriety of sending part of the bread and wine used for a remembrance of the Lord, to brethren who might happen to be absent; but had not quite decided about this.

EDINBURGH.—The subjects most recently under review had been the quotation of the Psalms by the New Testament writers, the quotation of the Prophets by the same persons, and the Gift of the Holy Spirit, with special reference to its present possession—this latter subject being still under examination. There had also been considered, the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, the Gog of the Land of Magog, and Worship to Christ in the Present Age. At several of the evening meetings, attention had been given to an exact application of the Christian laws to common life, from which examinations the most satisfactory conclusions had resulted. The only practical difficulty then pending was ‘whether a president would not be an advantage to the investigation meeting.’

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coming.' They had also discussed concerning inherent knowledge of right and wrong, natural theology, &c., the majority concluding that man has no inherent intuitive knowledge of God from nature, that in his flesh dwells no good thing. 'There is a difficulty regarding baptism—whether a person previously immersed should be re-immersed on coming to a more perfect knowledge of the Kingdom.' Prophecy had been examined, but not quite satisfactorily, owing to the imperfection of historical and geographical knowledge.

Business of Meetings.

In addition to the congregational usages already mentioned, under the heading, 'Business of Meetings,' there was some interesting information, of which the following is a summary:—

EDINBURGH.—The practice of introducing conversation on proximate subjects during the festival of the Lord's Supper, which conversation is usually carried on into the evening. There had been frequent communication by letter with churches and remote individuals, either for sympathy, for counsel, or appeal to duty: this practice has been very much appreciated. A manuscript magazine has likewise been started among the brethren, and is intended to be a vehicle of deliberate thought and permanent lessons on important subjects.

GLASGOW.—The practice of baptism was spoken of as 'devoid of all clerical forms and invocations.' The neophyte, having in an intelligent manner confessed his faith, is led to the water, and with his own lips calling upon the name of the Lord, is forthwith immersed *for* the name of the Lord Jesus.

HALIFAX.—'In our reviews, we always aim at unanimity. Differences of views, by submission to Bible teaching, have resulted in "one heart and one mind." That the apostolic injunctions to unison can be practically carried out, we know from our own experience.'

Practical Suggestions.

Practical suggestions having been invited, the following were submitted:—

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

ABERDEEN.—‘The most practical exhibition of Christianity which the congregations scattered over the country can give will be best consulted by forming themselves into *one body*, for the following ends :—

1. The affording of aid to congregations that may stand in need of it.
2. In the event of funds existing over this demand, to employ to that extent a brother to go out to the highways and bye-ways, and invite men to come in, that the Lord’s house may be full.
3. To aid the congregations in the acquisition of knowledge by letters or tracts (not necessarily *printed* ones) explanatory of any doctrine or practice which may from time agitate any of the congregations.’

DUNDEE.—The brethren here submitted whether it would not be an improvement to compose, introduce, and use from time to time songs, hymns, and studied prayers. It was also submitted that it would be suitable for the various meetings to obtain maps of Biblical lands for illustrations of Biblical objects, and particularly plans, models, and sketches of the Tabernacle and Temple spoken of in Scripture, with their various vessels, sacerdotal robes, and appurtenances. These were considered almost indispensable to the right understanding of the Bible.

HALIFAX.—The practice of the chant was recommended as the most natural and Scriptural mode of praise. The brethren feared that there was in all the churches too great encouragement of a prominence of intellectuality, to the exclusion of affection and heart; and recommended the imitation of the primitive Christians in frequent meetings, cordial greetings, and social amenities; the increase of fervency and frequency in private and communal prayer and praise; also a diligent attention to the punctual and regular attendance at the meetings by all the brethren; the exercise of hospitality to one another; a regularly organised system of epistolary correspondence; and last, the avoidance of any distinguishing sectarian name.

NOTTINGHAM.—‘In all matters of doctrine, we must appeal to the Scriptures exclusively.’

Evangelistic Work.

Respecting the means to be used for attack upon those who opposed or were indifferent to the truth, the following were submitted :—

ABERDEEN.—As already stated, the brethren here suggested the employment of an evangelist or public preacher.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

DERBY.—'The means we use against our opponents is to speak the word in love, with all gentleness and meekness, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. . . . We find it vain to attempt to reason with the world without Bible in hand, for we must speak according to the law and the testimony.'

CUPAR.—The brethren have 'tried to gain the ear of the public by delivering addresses to them in a public hall.'

DEVONPORT.—'By conversation and the loan of the works of Dr J. Thomas.'

EDINBURGH.—No particular means for this end were in use except private communication, reading, reasoning, and an open meeting for the exhibition of the fashions of Christian worship and the process of Christian instruction.

HALIFAX.—'Use press, post, pen, and tongue well. . . . Let us by all means have a number of readable tracts issued. . . . Lend books; but upon the great points of our faith, it would be needful to print ourselves. . . . Added to tracts, there ought to be a cheap and good magazine, devoted to expounding prophecy, the way of salvation, the gospel, &c., in original articles contributed by the brethren, or selections from similar periodicals; with condensed chronicle of events having relation to the signs of the times, reports of progress of churches, &c., not forgetting Scriptural science or the great social questions of the day. Such a serial would be hailed with delight. We think it might be done without loss by each church guaranteeing to take 12, 20, 50, or 100 according to numbers and monetary ability. . . . But above all other means, do not neglect oral proclamation of the truths we advocate. As our course of night subjects has been productive of so much good, we heartily recommend all the churches to devote a portion of the Lord's Day to the preaching of the truth in open assembly. Open-air preaching ought to be practised by every church in town and village. . . . Never omit visiting and conversing with acquaintances, and never avoid, but rather promote, debate with a worthy opponent.'

NOTTINGHAM.—'Our means of attack upon the opponents of the truth are various. If they are infidels, we try to show them the difference between Scripture and theology, nature and revelation, &c. With theologians, we question their authority to do and say such and such things, bring

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them to the Scriptures, and ask their definition of the gospel ; or we define it for them, which, if they love truth, leads them to inquire more fully into the Scriptures. But with all parties we think it desirable to ascertain first if they love truth.'

AFTERNOON.

Reports Respecting the Churches.

Among the letters, were some particulars respecting the churches not included in the foregoing classification. Thus, the letter from Devonport, in addition to the addresses, occupations, and former religious associations of the members, gave also their ages, from which it appeared that, of the 17 persons composing that meeting, the greater number had attained the mature age of 50, and the youngest was 27. It was also remarkable that, of this middle-aged company, no fewer than 12 had not previously been members of any religious community.

In the letter from Derby, mention was made of three very interesting cases ; one especially—that of a young woman who had encountered much opposition from her parents, who were Roman Catholics, and even beseeched her upon their knees not to go to a place where the things of the Kingdom were taught. The letter stated that she had died lately, and that 'the last words of our dear sister were joy and peace to the troubled ones who were left to feel her loss.'

The One Point of Agreement.

The letters disclosed the fact that all the brethren so represented were not of one mind on every point, and that the several congregations had not the same tint of thought. On one set of things, however, there was perfect unanimity—namely, a recognition of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and baptism subsequent to such recognition, as the first article of faith, and the basis of all Christian character ; to be received into good and honest hearts, and carefully nurtured by apostolic usage and teaching to the development of true Godly life. This gratifying fact was duly noted.

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The Proposed Formal Union of the Churches.

All the letters having been read, the conference proceeded to deal with the various suggestions contained in them. The proposals from Aberdeen being deemed of the greatest importance, were first taken up. They recommended that, for the accomplishment of certain purposes, there should be something like a formal union among the various meetings; but, after consideration, the general opinion was, that there was no need for such a thing—that we were already united in our faith and hope, and any other union was unnecessary. It was urged by the opponents of the proposal, that any attempt to organise a formal union of the brotherhood would be a purely human device, and as such was bound to be a failure. It was therefore all but unanimously agreed not to adopt this proposal. The objects suggested by the Aberdeen brethren as desired to be attained by a formal union were deemed worthy of consideration, however, and were consequently taken up seriatim.

Pecuniary Aid to Congregations.

On the suggestion as to affording pecuniary aid to poor congregations, it seemed plain that it was preferable to dispense with parochial aid to brethren in need, but that beyond the aid which each congregation could afford to its own members so situated, all the organisation for co-operation then obtainable was to appoint the Edinburgh Church as a committee to consider and report upon the subject, and that, meanwhile, George Dowie might be corresponded with regarding any case requiring immediate attention.

The Evangelist Question.

The proposal for the employment of an evangelist or preacher brought out a number of suggestions, none of which seemed very feasible under existing circumstances. While, on the one hand, it was generally supposed that a suitable person so employed might do much good, yet, as there seemed no such person at hand, it was deemed pre-

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

ferable to use the means at the disposal of each meeting ; that, where practicable, the example of the Halifax brethren should be followed ; and that all the brethren should, in their several spheres, contend earnestly for the faith.

Proposed Revisit of Dr Thomas.

In the course of the discussion on the proposal to employ an evangelist, it was stated that Dr Thomas had expressed his willingness to revisit this country, provided his expenses were guaranteed. It was proposed by one of the Edinburgh brethren that such an invitation should be sent to him to come and lecture through the country, and that a special fund should be raised for the purpose. A few brethren were favourable to the proposal, but it was opposed by the delegates from Dundee and Glasgow, as well as by several of the Edinburgh brethren, and it was finally withdrawn. However, the matter was remitted to the brethren in Aberdeen, that, if strongly convinced of the propriety of the measure, they should not keep silence on it, but send the result of their deliberations to Edinburgh for distribution through the country.

Fraternal Correspondence between Churches.

The third suggestion from Aberdeen—relating to the writing of letters or manuscript tracts—elicited a strong recommendation from all, that the brethren thus happily made acquainted with each other should immediately and frequently correspond by letter, not merely in the interchange of compliments, but for information regarding practice and experience ; also that the various subjects mentioned in the letters should be written upon at length, that the truth might be elicited as far as possible. Foremost of those subjects, from its coming up in almost all the churches, was, 'The Holy Spirit—Is it now received ? and How are its Powers manifested ?' To carry out this, a manuscript magazine was proposed, to circulate among the churches. The Glasgow brethren present coincided with the Halifax suggestion, that it should be printed.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

Literature of the One Faith.

In considering the best means by which a knowledge of the truth might be disseminated, it was generally conceded that literature should be largely employed. Among the suggestions with this view was a reprint of the second part of *Elpis Israel*, and also of a little American work entitled *The Contrast between Protestantism and the Gospel*, which had been strongly recommended by Dr Thomas in the *Herald of the Kingdom*. The following topics for tracts were suggested in the letters and by the voices of the deputies:—

The Kingdom of God.	Repentance.
The Gospel of the Kingdom.	The Way of Salvation.
The Resurrection from the Dead.	The Death of Christ.
Life and Immortality.	Immersion—its Essentiality, Necessity, and Meaning.
The Kingdom of Israel, Past and Future.	'Examine Yourselves, whether you be in the Faith.'
The Destiny of Nations.	'Love not the World' (addressed to the Brethren).
The Goodness of God.	
Faith.	

The tracts were recommended to be 'plain, pithy, and earnest.'

It was matter for regret on all hands that there was not time to enter fully into the questions on which information had been furnished by the letters, and that the subject of tracts and publications had received so little attention, for the same reason. On this matter, however, it was suggested that further correspondence would be necessary, and that it would be prudent to have the materials collected before commencing to print.

The Glasgow Difficulty.

The correspondence which had passed between the Edinburgh meeting and the one in Glasgow was read; and after this had been done, James Cameron asked, for the satisfaction of the Edinburgh brethren, who had been acting for the various meetings represented, if the delegates from these meetings approved of the course which had been followed; and they all expressed satisfaction with the way the correspondence had been conducted.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1855

EVENING.

In accordance with the practice of the Edinburgh Church, the evening sitting was devoted to

The Breaking of Bread

and the special exercises which usually accompany the observance of that institution.

An Agreeably Disappointed Deputy.

The meeting was an exceedingly pleasant and profitable one to all concerned. So much was this the case, that, before the fraternal company separated, the brother from Aberdeen felt constrained to stand to his feet to testify the great pleasure he had experienced in it. He had been led, he said, through Thomas Young, of Glasgow, to believe that it would be a dry, uninteresting, and controversial meeting; but he was glad to say he had been most agreeably disappointed.

James Robertson

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1856

1856.

I do not appear to have preserved the report of the aggregate meeting in 1856, and so can only give a brief report, taken from my journal. The meeting was held on Sunday, December 28th, and there were only three persons from a distance present—namely, David Lawson, from Newburgh; James Beveridge, Springfield; and Mrs Shiels, Harelaw. This meeting, as the former ones had been, was held in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row, and a number of letters from various churches were read at the forenoon meeting; after which there was an interval of half an hour, from 1.45 to 2.15. Tea was then served, and consideration of the letters followed. The breaking of bread was observed before the two brethren from Fife took their departure, which they did shortly after four o'clock, and the proceedings lasted till about eight.

Proposed July Meeting.

At this meeting it was represented that the time of the year was not favourable for brethren travelling from a distance; and it was therefore agreed that in future the annual aggregate meeting of the brotherhood should be held in the month of July, and on the Sunday that would be most convenient for the brethren coming from Glasgow and the West.

Reminiscences of the July Meeting.

I may here introduce some interesting retrospective remarks respecting the July Meeting, made by Grierson G. Mitchell many years after they had been established,

In those days, we assiduously cultivated the friendship and fellowship of brethren whom we either knew or had tried to discover at a distance. The lecturing tours of Dr Thomas no doubt indicated where these might be found; and our secretary (George Dowie) gradually built up quite a large correspondence, and at socials and the July Meet-

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1856

ings, letters read from scattered brethren and small churches formed quite a large and expected feature. In fact, so much did this grow, that some began to complain of the time being so much occupied with 'foreign affairs' and matters affecting affiliation and organisation. I believe myself that at one time we devoted too much attention to matters of this sort and the general economy of the body. This in time declined, however, until a more healthy feeling succeeded, which regarded ourselves as every way better engaged in practically minding our own business.

The July Meeting was always the great event of the year; and how strongly impressed we all were with the vast importance and impressive character of the occasion! A kind of millennial tone almost pervaded all our proceedings, and a kind of ideal savour of sanctity enveloped the occasion, turning our more prominent visitors especially into something different from ordinary men. That was in our youthful days, and I am recalling some of our youthful feelings.*

* 'Some Reminiscences of the Early Days of the Edinburgh Church,' by G. G. Mitchell, in *Tyrra*, January 1899.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1857

1857.

THE FIRST JULY MEETING.

In accordance with the resolution come to at the aggregate meeting in 1856, that meeting was 'adjourned' until Sunday, July 19th, 1857—this consequently being the first of the annual gatherings since known as the July Meetings. I find that I have not preserved a copy of the detailed report of this meeting, and consequently have to fall back upon my journal for the outline that follows.

The Visitors.

There were 23 brethren and sisters present from a distance, but I can only give the names of the following :—

ABERDEEN—Brother Barker and Robert Roberts.	KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie,	LANARK—James Murray.
DUNDEE—John Duncan and George Schlesselman.	NEWBURGH—David Lawson.
GLASGOW—Allan Fordyce and James Fraser.	NOTTINGHAM—W. Owen & Mrs Phelps.
	PAISLEY—Adam Connel and William Wilson.
	WISHAW—James M'Kinlay.

All the visitors who arrived on Saturday were comfortably lodged and hospitably entertained in the houses of the Edinburgh brethren. Among these visitors, it will be noticed, was Robert Roberts, from Aberdeen, who was then quite a youth, and who now made his first personal acquaintance with brethren outside his native city.

SATURDAY.

A preliminary meeting was held in the Tailor's Hall on Saturday night, at which most of the visitors were present, and there were mutual introductions on both sides. Arrangements were made as to the order of the proceedings on the following day, and it was agreed that Allan Fordyce should preside at the afternoon meeting.

In consequence of the large number of brethren and sisters expected from a distance, an extra room, at 102 South Bridge, was engaged for the gathering on Sunday, in addition to the Edinburgh brethren's usual meeting-place in the Potter Row.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1857

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the hall on the South Bridge. The meeting was commenced by the singing of the 100th Psalm, followed by prayer.

The Breaking of Bread.

On this occasion, the Edinburgh Church having discontinued their former practice of having the breaking of bread in the evening, it was now given the first place in the day's proceedings. It was followed by one or two short exhortations.

Letters from the Churches.

Next came the reading of the letters from the various churches, which was accomplished in time to permit of the meeting being adjourned at one o'clock.

AFTERNOON.

The company re-assembled at two o'clock in the Tailors' Hall, where tea and sandwiches were served. I have it recorded in my journal, that, while this refreshment was being partaken of, Brother Roberts lost his cap from its falling over a back window—said window looking into a slum region which no one had ever been known to penetrate. A few anthems were sung in the Tailors' Hall before the company returned to the room in the South Bridge, where the business of the conference was resumed.

EVENING.

Proposed Printed Magazine.

The greater portion of the time during the latter part of the sitting was occupied in considering a proposal to commence a printed magazine for the brotherhood. There were many conflicting ideas upon this subject, causing several motions to be proposed, and at times there was a good deal of confusion, from the difficulty of understanding

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1857

the exact nature of the various proposals. Ultimately it was agreed that such a magazine should be started, under the management of John Duncan, of Dundee—the name given to it being the *Gospel Witness*.

This day's convocation was the most protracted of all the annual aggregate meetings, not being brought to a close until about nine o'clock, although a good many were compelled to leave before that.

An Explanation.

In the annual church report of the Edinburgh Church for the year 1857-8, the following reference is made to this first July Meeting:—

The 19th of July 1857 witnessed a great concourse of brethren from various parts—Aberdeen, Dundee, Cupar, Glasgow, Lanark, even Nottingham, &c.—who assembled in solemn conclave under the auspices of the Edinburgh Church. The particulars of that meeting being stated at length in a report drawn up and sent to all the churches, it is unnecessary to dwell upon them, further than to explain that it was found impossible, from various reasons, for the brethren then appointed to draw out a tract, to complete their task within the two months allotted, and consequently its publication, for the consideration of the brethren, has been committed at a later date to the editors of the *Gospel Witness* (a Dundee publication with which all the brethren are familiar), where it may be found in various forms—principally, however, at great length in a series of papers on 'The Great Salvation,' from the pen of Brother James Cameron.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

1858.

The meeting this year was again held in the Tailors' Hall, Edinburgh, on Sunday, the 18th of July.

SATURDAY.

A preliminary meeting was held in the Tailors' Hall on Saturday night, at which most of the visitors were present, and there were mutual introductions on both sides. Arrangements were made as to the order of the proceedings on the following day, and it was agreed that James Cameron should preside at the afternoon meeting.

The Visitors.

There were 16 brethren and sisters present from a distance, but I can only give the names of the following :—

AYTON—John Yule.
CROSSGATES—John Muir.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie.
DUNFERMLINE—Robert Tennant.
DUNDEE—John Duncan.

GLASGOW—Allan Fordyce and other three.
KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd.
LANARK—James Murray.
NEWBURGH—David Lawson.
PAISLEY—T. Stewart and Jas. Taylor.

The total number of brethren and sisters who gathered together was 53, and the number of believers represented in the letters sent was 264, which included those in Glasgow who met separately, and three isolated individuals in the north of Scotland.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the proceedings being opened with praise, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures.

The Breaking of Bread.

The Lord's Supper was then observed, after which brief exhortations by Archibald Dowie of Cupar, James Taylor of Paisley, and James Cameron of Edinburgh, were given.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

Reports Respecting the Churches.

The various letters which had been received from the churches were then read, and the following is a summary of their several experiences during the preceding year :—

ABERDEEN.—During the past year, a brother and a sister had been added to the church, and a brother had removed to Edinburgh, which made their number 28. For three years, the subject of the eldership had at various times occupied their attention, with a view to having men appointed to office such as obtained in the apostolic churches. They had not yet, however, attained this congregational order, which, they were convinced, was intended to continue after the gifts of the Spirit had passed away. They believed that there should be bishops, elders, and deacons in every congregation where properly qualified men could be found; and this subject was suggested for the consideration of the brethren generally. They also proposed again that an evangelist should be appointed to go through the towns and villages preaching the gospel, the expense to be defrayed by the several churches.

BERWICK-ON-TWEED.—There were, strictly speaking, no brethren resident in this town; but in its neighbourhood, and widely separated from each other, were five persons who had become obedient to the truth. Three of these were baptised on the 23d of May previous; and, since that period, a meeting had been held in Berwick on the First Day of the week for worship, breaking of bread, and Scripture study. Brief as had been their existence as a church, they had not been without their share of annoyance and petty persecution from those who love not the truth.

DERBY.—The brethren here were 13 in number, only 9 of whom had been baptised. At the time the report was received, three were waiting to be immersed in a bath which one of the brethren was putting up in his own premises for the purpose. The brethren in this place recommended that a short report of the annual meeting should be [printed and] published, together with anything that would be interesting to the brethren, and that a copy of this report should be forwarded to every member of the various churches.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

DEVONPORT.—There were 9 brethren and sisters in this place, who met once a fortnight in the house of one of the brethren, for praise, prayer, and edification. As none of the brethren were capable of giving an address, they read from the *Herald*, published by John Thomas of America.

DUNDEE.—At last annual report, their number was 10. Since then, the brother who had adopted Irvingite views had left the meeting and joined himself to that body; while two had been added from Arbroath and one from Edinburgh—making the number 12. Of the brethren formerly reported as belonging to Arbroath, one still resided there, another was temporarily living at Dunkeld, and a third had been overcome by the drinking usages of this country. The church in Dundee now enjoyed peace, and harmoniously strove to build up each other in the most holy faith, waiting for the coming of the Lord.

EDINBURGH.—The number of brethren here was 48. During the past year there had been 7 additions; 4 of these had been immersed into the name of the Lord, and being young persons, it was hoped they would profit much in having the start so early. One sister had left for Glasgow, and another for Dundee; two other sisters resigned their places to join those who formerly left; and two—a highly-esteemed and much-loved brother (John Forman) and sister (Mrs William Wilson, jun.)—had died in the good hope of life in the resurrection of the just. Among subjects which had been studied at the Sunday afternoon meetings had been prophecies relating to ancient nations—Moab, Tyre, and Egypt, the latter being still under consideration. In addition to the stated meetings on Sunday and on Thursday evenings, they were in the habit of holding some four or five social tea-meetings in the course of the year, with occasional excursions into the country, which were generally well attended and intensely relished. Indeed, it was an easy matter to improvise such meetings at any time—the social feeling was so strong, the family idea so complete. Visits were frequently paid by different members to various places, and an intercourse was kept up with several congregations of disciples; but all experience still tended to enhance the relish they had for their own home, and the happiness of their most highly-prized family circle. Other features of their existence and social action had been stated at some length in papers which had appeared in the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

They had not for a long time made any public effort to set forth their faith. But what had not been spoken on the house-tops had been whispered in the ears of an interested few, and the additions recorded were taken as first-fruits of a good vintage.

FIFE.—The brethren located in different parts of Fife were 10 in number. The only regular meeting held was in the town of Cupar, but arrangements were in progress for the formation of another at Crossgates. During the previous twelvemonth they had enjoyed much peace and happiness, and humbly believed that they had not ceased to grow increasingly in the grace of God and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

GLASGOW.—The number of brethren and sisters in connection with the church here was 33. There had been several additions since last report; 2 had removed to a distance; and 4 had left the meeting. Three of the latter now met by themselves. The brethren meeting in Allan's Hall, 28 Frederick Street, had lately sent a circular to all the churches in Scotland, stating things which must have been believed, previous to baptism, by all who desired fellowship with them, whether permanently or for a day only.

HALIFAX.—The progress during the past year had been slight. There had been only one addition. Two had been married and removed, but were still reckoned as amongst them; and they now numbered 20 members. The late commercial crisis had told unfavourably upon them, in causing a deficiency of the sinews of war. Their morning meetings had had an average attendance of only 8, owing to the sickness and infirmity of several, and from others residing at a distance. During the past year, they had had, on the Sunday evenings, a series of discourses delivered on 'The Things Belonging to the Name and Mission of Jesus the Christ,' and on the lessons from the lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. These lectures were advertised by printed placards, and discussion was invited after each discourse. Their evening meeting was then taken up in the investigation of the prophecies of Isaiah. They had lately commenced a church library, to consist chiefly of critical and exegetical works in theological science.

LANARK.—During the past year, one brother had emi-

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

grated to America, and one had been added to them, so that their number was the same as at last report—namely, 4. They did not expect to do much good, as they met in a retired place, where few had an opportunity of hearing; but they would gladly hail the services and contribute to the support of an efficient labourer who would herald forth the glad tidings to the perishing; and their prayer was, that the Lord might send forth such, so that His word might run, and have free course, and be glorified.

NOTTINGHAM.—There were 30 brethren and sisters who assembled in this town; 9 of these had not been immersed having a knowledge of the Kingdom's Gospel, and advice was requested how to deal with such. Since last year, one young man, from the Campbellites, had been added to the congregation. They had printed circulars announcing a meeting on Thursday nights, when the Gospel of the Kingdom would be proclaimed. It was considered that the best means for carrying on the great work before them would be to have a common fund in each church, which should be amply sufficient to maintain the poor and propagate the truth. They still thought that tracts were eminently useful for disseminating the gospel, and recommended the republication, in the form of a pamphlet, of a series of articles upon 'The Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land,' which appeared in Dr Thomas's *Herald* (September 1855 to January 1856).

PAISLEY.—During the past year, 6 had been added to the church in this place, making the number 33. Their meeting was described as being very peaceful and agreeable. They were of opinion that the Apocalypse would not have its fulfilment until the time styled 'the day of the Lord,' 'the day of Christ,' &c., and they would be very glad if any of the brethren could throw further light on the subject.

WISHAW, AIRDRIE, &c.—There were 7 brethren in Wishaw or its vicinity, and 5 at Chapelhall, Airdrie, and in that quarter. There was no meeting at any of these places; but it was expected that two would soon be commenced—one in Wishaw and another in Airdrie or Chapelhall.

When all the letters had been read, it being now near two o'clock, the meeting was adjourned for an hour.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

AFTERNOON.

The company re-assembled at three o'clock, James Cameron presiding; and after tea had been served, the following subjects were considered:—

Means of Edification in Small Churches.

This subject was suggested by the statement in the Devonport letter, that, none of the brethren being capable of giving an address at their meetings on Sunday, they read from the *Herald* of Dr Thomas. All the brethren, while admitting the propriety of reading from the works of all authors in private, agreed in deprecating the use of any other book than the Bible as a class-book at the meetings on the First Day of the week. The churches in Lanark and in Copar were smaller than that at Devonport, and they had never used any other book than the Bible for instruction in their church assembly. The Edinburgh Church—the largest in the connection—had experienced great advantage from conversation on the Scriptures; and it was thought that the Devonport brethren were just in circumstances to profit from a similar mode of procedure. George Dowie was instructed to communicate a recommendation to this effect to the church in Devonport.

'Unbaptised Brethren.'

This subject had reference to the fact that, in the Derby and Nottingham Churches, there were persons who had not been immersed since believing the Gospel of the Kingdom; and the Nottingham Church desired the advice of the brethren in the circumstances. The brethren generally recommended that the baptised brethren in these two meetings should be advised to deal firmly, but gently and affectionately, with the unbaptised friends, urging them to be baptised into the name of the Lord; and that, if they still remained disobedient, separation must ensue. It was also suggested that a special communication should be sent to these two churches, in which the experience of

other churches in this respect should be cited, as it might be useful to them in their circumstances.

The Best Means of Preserving the Purity of the Faith.

This question arose out of the request in the Glasgow circular, to consider 'the necessity of all the churches acting in harmony to maintain the purity and simplicity of the apostolic teaching concerning the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' Most of the brethren expressed themselves unfavourable to the adoption of any form of confession of faith, to be taken as a creed; some deprecated in very strong terms the introduction of a written statement of things believed; while others spoke approvingly of an expressed statement of faith, if given entirely in Scriptural language.

Correspondence with Churches in America.

George Dowie was instructed to send a copy of the report of this year's conference, and also of that of the previous year, to the church in New York, together with an abstract of each, for insertion in the *Herald*.

'The Gospel Witness.'

John Duncan, of Dundee, stated in regard to the *Gospel Witness*, that he intended to continue it to the end of the current year, but that he would not be able to conduct it longer than that period. The claims of this periodical upon the brethren, as a means of promoting the truth, were universally acknowledged, and a strong desire was expressed for its continuance. It was stated that the number of subscribers was 300, and thus did not prove remunerative. It was not expected that any difficulty would be experienced in making up the expense connected with the carrying on of this magazine; but considerable difficulty was found in getting a person to undertake its literary management. John Duncan finally agreed to continue it during the following year, if one or two others were appointed to co-operate with him; and it was arranged that James Taylor, in Paisley, and William

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1858

Norrie, in Edinburgh, should act as assistants in procuring matter from the brethren in their respective localities, and in preparing it for the *Witness*.

Tracts.

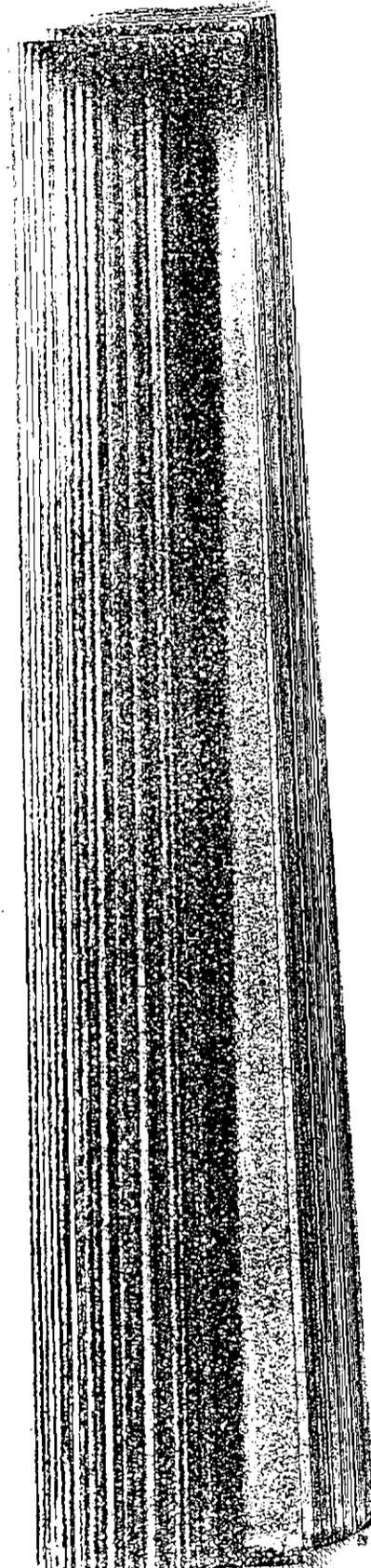
Some conversation took place respecting the question of printing of tracts, raised by the proposal from Nottingham to reprint, in the form of a pamphlet, a series of articles from Dr Thomas's *Herald*. After due consideration, however, it was not considered expedient to adopt the suggestion at that time.

Elders, Deacons, &c.

The meeting was engaged for some time in considering the recommendation from the Aberdeen Church respecting the appointment of office-bearers of the apostolic stamp; but all who spoke expressed dissent from the conviction of the Aberdeen meeting on the subject.

Other subjects still remained on the programme for consideration; but owing to the lateness of the hour (it being now nearly half-past eight o'clock), their consideration was deferred until another time.

After praise, and returning thanks for favours received, and asking the divine blessing upon the proceedings of the day, the brethren separated.



*In 1859
held the first
Gathering
at Nottingham
See Vol II, 309*

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

1859.

The meeting this year was again held in Edinburgh, the hall of the Phrenological Museum, 1 Surgeon Square, being engaged for the occasion, in addition to the ordinary meeting-place of the Edinburgh brethren. The meeting was held on Sunday, 17th July.

SATURDAY.

A preliminary meeting was held in the Tailors' Hall on Saturday night, at which most of the visitors were present, and there were mutual introductions on both sides. Arrangements were made as to the order of the proceedings on the following day, and it was agreed that James Cameron should preside at the afternoon meeting.

The Visitors.

In addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting, the following were present from other places:—

- | | |
|--|--|
| BERWICK—John Nesbit. | Donald Mackay, Mrs Mackay, Wm. Naismith, and William Wilson. |
| CARSTAIRS—James Doig. | HARELAW—Mrs Shiels. |
| CROSSGATES—John Muir. | KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd. |
| CUPAR—Archibald Dowie. | LANARK—James Murray. |
| DUNFERMLINE—Robert Tennant. | NEWBURGH—David Lawson. |
| DUNDEE—John Duncann, Graham Booth, and David Watson. | PAISLEY—John B. Newlands. |
| GLASGOW—Allan Forlyce, Jas. Fraser, | TRANENT—Margaret Hastie. |

The total number of brethren and sisters who gathered together was about 80.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, in the hall of the Phrenological Museum, the proceedings being opened with praise, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures, several brethren taking part in these exercises.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

The Breaking of Bread.

The Lord's Supper was then observed, after which William Laing gave a very practical and edifying address upon 'doing all things that Christ might be magnified.'

Correspondence with Churches in America.

George Dowie, as instructed at the previous annual meeting, had sent a letter to the church at New York, along with copies of the reports of the last two conferences which had been held. In acknowledgment, he had received a private and unofficial letter from Brother James Forman, of New York (cousin of our deceased brother, John Forman). This letter, which was rather lengthy, gave an interesting account of the state of the brotherhood on the other side of the Atlantic. The following is a summary of its contents:—

The writer sent his sympathy and congratulations to the brethren of like precious faith assembled at the annual aggregate meeting in Edinburgh. The church in New York was a very mixed one, as regarded nationalities. Small as it was, there were English, Scotch, Irish, Germans, and Americans in it. But though all were united on the one faith, and valiant in contending for it, they did not spontaneously exhibit any enthusiasm in church duties, being too much absorbed with business. There were a good many churches in different parts of the United States—one in Newark (New Jersey) numbered 40 members; a small one in Elizabeth Town (New Jersey); a meeting of 12 in Detroit (Michigan); one in Geneva (Illinois), in a very healthy condition; one in Milwaukee (Wisconsin); also in Baltimore (Maryland), Washington (D. Columbia), Richmond (Virginia), King William County (Virginia), besides several in Canada. In the month of June, the New York brethren had the pleasure of immersing a man who had come 2000 miles (from Louisiana) for the purpose. There were a good many isolated parties where there were no organised meetings; many had occasion to move to the country in search of work, or to commence farming. The New York meetings on the First Day of the week were—forenoon, when Dr Thomas preached; afternoon, the church met for breaking

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

bread and exhortation. The first meeting was always well attended; but the effect produced on the hearts of the hearers was very slight, as many had attended for years—acquiescing in what was taught, but admitting no entrance of the truth to produce obedience. This was not the church letter in reply to one sent from Edinburgh in the month of January previously, which was in preparation.

The Church at Devonport.

A long letter from Brother J. W. Moore, Devonport, was next read.

It contained some account of the experiences of the brethren in that quarter, and expressions of regret that they were so far out of the reach of visits of brethren from other parts. Reference was made to a visit of Brother Shapter, from Toronto, Canada West, which had proved very refreshing to them in their solitary position. It would appear further, that the immoral conduct of some who had, in their earliest days, been instrumental in awakening attention to Bible truth, had been productive of much evil to the cause. This had particular reference to Messrs Dealtrie, Bougess, and Micklewood, known in many parts of England as leaders in what used to be designated 'Millerism.' The immoral conduct of the first two, and the hypocrisy of the third, had scattered the company to the winds; but the truth which had taken root in a few hearts led them to seek one to another. By this time, they had a visit from Dr Thomas, who cleared away much of the mist, and established many on a better footing. Subsequently this church had been harassed and disgraced by the immoralities of a Mr Williams, who came among them and assumed much importance. The same person was now in Toronto, and had there also done some evil. It was hoped, however, that he now repented of the former works, and retrieved his evil deeds by diligent imitation of the pure and holy. The church at Devonport met once a fortnight, and continued to read Dr Thomas's *Herald* at their meetings.

Letters from the Churches.

Extracts of letters were also read from the churches at Aberdeen, Crossgates, Cumnock, Dundee, Dunkeld, Glas-

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

And it was in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty nine that the first meeting of the Brethren was held in the City of London.

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The first meeting was held in the City of London, and was attended by a number of Brethren from the various Churches of the Kingdom.

There were present at the meeting a number of Brethren from the various Churches of the Kingdom, and they were all of the same mind and heart.

During the meeting, the Brethren were all of the same mind and heart, and they were all of the same mind and heart.

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ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

gow, Halifax, Leeds, Nottingham, Wishaw, &c ; but there was little information in any of them beyond what had previously been given in the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*.

ABERDEEN.—Reference was again made in the letter from this place to the unhappy circumstance of one or more of their number having gone back from the faith, and left the church in consequence. It was mentioned that the first number of a manuscript magazine had just been issued.

NOTTINGHAM.—The letter from this place referred more particularly to some features of difference between the English and Scottish character in the matter of church fellowship and bold independence of action, necessary to thorough and complete following of the will of the Lord.

After the singing of a hymn, the forenoon sederunt was closed about two o'clock.

AFTERNOON.

A Repast with One Complaint about It.

The brethren reassembled at three o'clock in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row, to partake of a simple but sufficient repast which had been provided for them. The utmost friendliness and congeniality were manifested by all. With a single exception, every one appeared highly pleased with what had been prepared. That solitary exception was our dear sister Susan Mark, beloved of the whole brotherhood. Susan had always been the chief caterer and principal ministering spirit on these festive occasions, and gave time and labour ungrudgingly to contribute to the comfort and gratification of our esteemed guests. For some time previously she had been in a very poor state of health, and her mortal career was now nearing its close, she being at this time in a state of great physical weakness and debility. It was the last time she was able to be present at such a gathering; and by one who used to enjoy it so much, there was something quite pathetic in her piteous complaint, that she 'never liked the tea now!'

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

BUSINESS MEETING.

The meeting was resumed at four o'clock in the Phrenological Hall, James Cameron in the chair.

Reports Respecting the Churches.

Verbal reports were given from Berwick, Crossgates, Cupar, Dundee, Glasgow, Lanark, and Paisley by the brethren belonging to these places respectively. The only matters particularly requiring notice were these :

BERWICK-ON-TWEED.—The brethren here were much distressed at the anticipated removal of Brother Thomas Jackson from their midst to the United States. They had been so much beholden to him for much of their instruction, and for the very spirited example he had set them, that they feared evil consequences from the deprivation of his company.

GLASGOW.—There were present five brethren and a sister from this place. A twelvemonth ago, or more, there had been some disagreeable differences, which had ultimated in the separation of a few from the original congregation, who, before they could come together again, had been joined by more, and thus formed a small society with the same radical faith, but with a slight difference in the administration of affairs relating thereto.

PAISLEY.—During the past year, there had been some unpleasant matters which had caused estrangement with a few, but things were all to rights again, and the church was going on harmoniously.

The Birmingham Meeting.

George Dowie and John Duncan, of Dundee, both of whom had recently visited Birmingham, gave statements of the result of their visits. It appeared that there were four persons then ready to be immersed, and steps were being taken to get a church organised there. It was recommended that a regular correspondence should be kept up between the brethren in Scotland and those of like precious faith in Birmingham. In addition to the Edinburgh correspondent, David Lawson was named, and he agreed to write to them occasionally.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

The London Meeting.

John Duncan stated that he had met with a number of brethren in London when there a fortnight previously. There were eight altogether who held by the faith. But London he considered a most uncongenial soil for the growth of faith, hope, or charity, and thought the people of God should as speedily as possible 'come out of her.'

Statistics of the Churches.

The letters showed that the membership of the various churches was as follows:—Aberdeen, 26; Berwick, 9; Cumnock, 5; Cupar, 6; Devonport, 7; Dundee, 22; Dunkeld, 12; Edinburgh, 65; Glasgow (first meeting), 33; (second meeting), 5; Halifax, 24; Leeds, 8; London, 8; and Newark, 16.

The Glasgow Differences.

A. FORDYCE, on behalf of the church meeting in Allan's Hall, 64 Howard Street, Glasgow, occupied a considerable time in stating various reasons why several had left the church, and were now meeting separately.

W. NAISMITH, as one of those who had left, said that the other meeting was simply a matter of expediency: they did not differ on matters of faith, but on private grounds.

There appeared great reluctance on the part of the assembly to hear or entertain the questions of dispute, and all were pleased to learn that these were simply matters of expediency in the meantime. The prevailing feeling seemed to be that the brethren did wrong in forming themselves into a separate meeting when they were agreed upon the foundation of the faith. The hope was expressed that those brethren—(three of each company being present)—would at home do what they could to bring about a good understanding and perfect unity among themselves; and that if they could not expediently meet in one place, they would still cultivate a good understanding and ready sympathy with one another.

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ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

The Unity of the Body of Christ.

J. DUNCAN then gave an appropriate address on 'The Unity of the Body of Christ,' suggested by various remarks which had fallen from the previous speakers. He inculcated the duty of being subject to the Lord, since we have become united to him by immersion into his name. When united to the Christ, we cannot be dis severed from him at our own caprice, but are pledged to abide in the onerous relation of children of God and heirs with Christ Jesus. The importance of our personal conformity to the will of God remained, whether others did well or ill. Paul knew of brethren who defrauded one another, and he commanded that they should be borne with, and not that vengeance should be required. We lay our account with bearing much evil and injustice from those without—why not from our own brethren?—(1 Cor. vi. 7, 8). And as none of us are worthy of the company of the Lord Jesus—who calls us 'brethren' and honours us with his society—how much more ought we to forbear with one another, and seek to esteem one another worthy of all respect, being ready to prefer one another in honour!

The remarks of Brother Duncan led to a conversation on the subject, in which several of the brethren took part. The inculcation of brotherly and mutual forbearance was strong and pointed; and after some talk, it was unanimously agreed that each brother individually should act upon a suggestion of Brother Laing's, to the effect that nothing short of a denial of the truth was a sufficient reason for withdrawing from the fellowship of the church.

The Church Roll.

It was intimated that, at a fraternal gathering of the English brethren, held at Nottingham two months previously, it had been agreed that a printed list of the names, addresses, and occupations of all the brethren and sisters in the United Kingdom, so far as known, should be printed, and that the Edinburgh Church had been asked to do this, and print 500 copies. This was agreed to.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

The Case of Thomas Jackson.

J. NESBIT asked the assistance of the brethren in the case of Thomas Jackson, who, being unable to earn a livelihood in this country, had determined to emigrate—a proceeding which, Brother Nesbit felt assured, would be the death of the infant church at Berwick.

J. DUNCAN said he did not approve of our interfering with Brother Jackson, who, he thought, should be left to his own decision in the matter.

A brief conversation ensued, after which the subject was allowed to drop.*

More Fraternal Gatherings Recommended.

Some consideration was given to the propriety of having occasional meetings such as the present, for the comparison of congregational experiences and gathering of information regarding the brethren. As the church in Edinburgh had hitherto found a benefit from such meetings (which had hitherto been held there), it was presumed that the distribution of that benefit would be attended with the like advantages in other places. Dundee, Glasgow, and Paisley were spoken of.

A. FORDYCE announced that the church in Glasgow had a quarterly reunion of the brethren in the West of Scotland, and that at the next one (first Sunday in October) this feature was proposed to be introduced. Hitherto they had been in the habit of devoting the time to the discussion of set subjects of doctrine. The brethren at large received a hearty invitation to be present on that occasion.

Tracts.

Some conversation took place respecting the question of the writing and issue of tracts. The impression of the English brethren had been that, were there means at command to print them, the matter was ready for many

* Brother Jackson died shortly after this meeting, and before he could carry out his intention to emigrate.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

means would easily be found were there good and pointed tracts ready to be printed. The difficulties in the production of a good tract had been tested, and it was found that it was no easy matter to write what would say the right thing well and no more. The suggestions given by James Cameron, in his paper in the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*, No. 11, regarding 'Gospel Preaching,'* were considered particularly applicable to the case in hand. There did not appear to have been any violent unprovoked denunciations against the defaulters in Israel, even by the Lord Jesus; and the apostles were in the habit of reasoning out of the Scriptures. The same calm style was recommended for tracts. The danger of producing a faulty thing led to the idea that the best tracts were the lives of the brethren and their pure speech; but it was shown that tracts had a service in addition to the living voice, speaking to a stranger in the absence of the disciple in whose conversation he had been interested. Many of the brethren were in the habit of using them in this way, and were sensible of the importance of their matter being pure and select. Reference was made to a series of two-page tracts which the friends and brethren in Birmingham had reprinted, the matter and style of one or two of which, even although true, were reckoned too offensive to the prejudices of the people to be of any good. It was also suggested that too much should not be attempted at one time; one topic, and that not too extensive, being sufficient for one tract. The writing of the required tracts—(for it was generally admitted there were very few of the right sort available)—was reckoned a good and beneficial exercise for the brethren, as the concentration of thought and review of faith requisite would prove good discipline to any one who would thus engage himself. It was agreed that the tracts so written should be sent round in the *Messenger*, and, if approved of, printed, the expense being paid out of a fund for that purpose.

* See vol. i., pp. 277-87.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1859

Drawing Out Latent Talent.

J. DUNCAN made a few remarks on the importance of arranging means and appliances in all the churches for drawing out latent talent. He had found in his own experience of Edinburgh, that when necessity impelled, there were quite a number of the brethren who could and would take part in the service of the church, who, through modest deference to others better qualified, were in the habit of keeping their abilities in abeyance. The importance of this matter was admitted by all, and recommended to the attention of the church in general.

Summing up by the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN, in summing up the proceedings of the day, referred to the favourable appearance presented by the churches in general, and the increased interest exhibited in the present meeting, there being a larger number from a distance than on any former occasion (19). Four new congregations had been reported—namely, Cumnock, Dunkeld, Leeds, and Newark; while three were in embryo in Birmingham, London, and Lincoln.

The Service of Song.

The discussion of the foregoing topics was relieved and diversified by songs of strength and words of praise occasionally introduced, and the meeting was brought to a close about eight o'clock. After prayer, the last songs sung were the themes of the Nottingham brethren, embodying the faith and hope of all present:

The Lord shall inherit Judah, His portion in the Holy Land;
And shall choose Jerusalem again.
Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion;
For lo! I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord.

Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham;
Which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.
Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his refuge;
Whose hope is in the Lord his God.

1860.

The gathering this year again took place at Edinburgh on Sunday, July 15th, in the Phrenological Hall, Surgeon Square.

The Programme.

In the preliminary announcement made respecting it in the *Messenger*, all the churches in Britain were requested to forward to the Secretary information on the following points:—

1. The numbers of brethren and sisters respectively meeting with them, the number of their meetings, their internal healthy condition, and the extra efforts which have been made during the past year for the publication of the truth.

2. Any questions on which they are not at one amongst themselves, or think others differ from them; or which they would like to be brought before the brethren when assembled, or upon which they would wish to learn the opinion of the brethren generally.

3. Any readily practicable suggestions that can be made for a wider dissemination of the knowledge and obedience of the truth in Christ.

In response to this invitation for questions suitable for consideration, the following had been received:—

At the quarterly meeting of the West of Scotland churches, held in Allan's Hall, 64 Howard Street, Glasgow, on Sunday, 1st April, 1860, the following resolution was adopted:—'This meeting recommends to the annual meeting, to be held at Edinburgh in July next, to consider, above all other subjects, the necessity of a full declaration of our principles, in order to a thorough co-operation of the various churches in the United Kingdom.'

The Nottingham meeting, in view of the fact that, at the approaching census, 'religious profession' would have to be stated, suggested 'Our Religious Designation' for consideration.

The Necessity and Method of Organising our Literary Resources.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

A Disquieting Prospect.

An unusual and perplexing interest attached prospectively to the July Meeting this year, in consequence of a combination of events having a disturbing tendency, and which threatened mischief. In the first place, the Glasgow brethren had determined to press 'The Creed Question,' as it was termed, upon the consideration of the conference, and insist upon something like a formal confession of faith being adopted as the basis upon which there should be a union among the various churches. On this question very strong and very conflicting ideas were held, and how these were to be reconciled without a disruption, no one could foresee. There was also a good deal of apprehension as to what might transpire at the meeting; as the differences between the Glasgow brethren—instead of having been smoothed over, as had been hoped at the previous July Meeting—had become accentuated, the two parties being now more hostile than ever; and it was understood that representatives from both meetings were to be present at the aggregate meeting, and it was feared that there might be trouble with them. There was also the division which had just taken place in the Nottingham meeting to be considered; so that, altogether, the aggregate annual meeting of 1860 had been looked forward to with a good deal of anxious foreboding.

The Visitors.

In addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting, the following were present from other places:—

ABERDEEN—William Gill.	GLASGOW (first congregation)—Allan Fordyce, and William Pearson.
BERWICK—Phillis Nesbit.	(Second congregation)—John Campbell, Eliza A. Hare, and Mrs Naismith.
CARSTAIRS—William Scott.	HARELAW—Mrs Shiels.
CROSSGATES—John Muir.	KIRKCALDY—John Forbes.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie, Elizabeth Mill, and James White, sen.	LANARK—James Murray.
DUNDEE—John Duncan.	NEVBURGH—David Lawson.
DUNKELD—James Milne and Duncan Stewart.	PAISLEY—Adam Connell, Mrs Comrie, Mrs Maitland, and Wm. Wilson.

The total number of brethren and sisters who gathered together was about 80.

SATURDAY.

EVENING.

The Edinburgh Church had, only a week or two previously left their original meeting-place in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row, and removed to a more convenient room, the Phrenological Hall, 1 Surgeon Square, at the foot of Infirmary Street. For the convenience of the visitors, this hall was open from six o'clock on the Saturday evening.

Preliminary Arrangements.

A preliminary meeting was held at eight o'clock, to make arrangements as to the order of the proceedings on the following day. These arrangements provided that the ordinary forenoon meeting, for worship and edification, should be little altered, and that the remainder of the day should be devoted to the discussion of the topics suggested. At the same time, it was determined that the authority of such assemblies was bounded very much by the disposition of the parties thus assembled, or there represented; and as most brethren appeared on their own individual responsibilities, no more could be insisted upon for their decisions than that they were the judgments and recommendations of wise and God-fearing men—qualified and intensified by the aggregation of multiplied experience. It was agreed that John Duncan should preside at the meeting in the afternoon.

The Glasgow Differences.

The mention of the Glasgow differences led to a protracted conversation. Allan Fordyce and Wm. Pearson (of the first congregation) said they had not come to Edinburgh to break bread, as they expected that several from the second congregation would be present; and this knowledge had kept eight or nine from coming. Ultimately, however, on the understanding that arbiters would be appointed to judge between the two churches, in order to re-unite them, all parties agreed to break bread on the following day. This meeting lasted till eleven o'clock.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

SUNDAY.

The weather on Sunday was very close and sultry—oppressively so, in fact; but a very heavy shower of rain shortly after noon agreeably cooled and cleared the air.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, in the hall of the Phrenological Museum, the proceedings being opened with praise, prayer, and the reading of the Scriptures, several brethren taking part in these exercises.

The Breaking of Bread.

The Lord's Supper was then observed, after which words of exhortation and encouragement were spoken by James Cameron, Andrew Tait, and David Lawson.

Letters from the Churches.

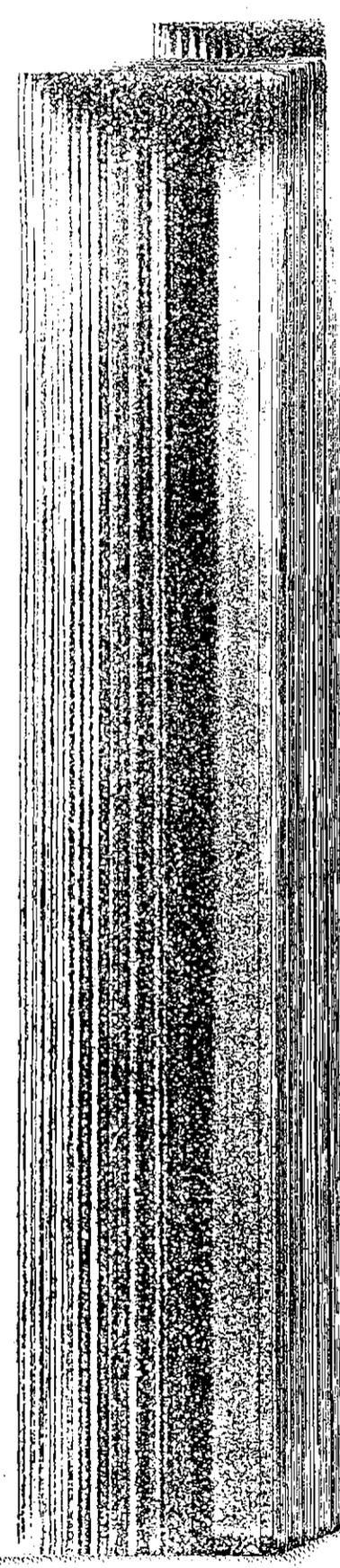
The letters which had been received from the various churches were then read. The following is a summary of the contents of these letters:—

ABERDEEN.—The number of the church was 35. In reference to the Glasgow question, they had sent a declaration of principles to the annual meeting two years ago, to which they still adhered, although no use had been made of that declaration as a test.

BERWICK-ON-TWEED.—One brother had died during the year, and another had joined their meeting from Cupar. The meetings were now held in the house of Brother Nesbit. A few thoughtful inquirers after the ancient faith were reported in some places near the Border.

CROSSGATES.—On the previous Sunday, one brother and two sisters had been immersed. By this accession, and that of another brother from Edinburgh, now resident in Dunfermline, they would be able to hold meetings every First Day of the week at Crossgates—which they had not been able to do for a long time.

HALIFAX.—The brethren here had been distressed with a prevalence of ill health and the death of four of their number; yet, as far as they had been able, they had occu-



ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

ped themselves, as was their wont, in setting forth the truth—Heckmondwike, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, and Dewsbury having been centres of action. They expressed repugnance to the 'full declaration of our principles' proposed, if that meant the making of a creed or test of union; recommending rather an abstract of the things confessed by each church (without individual crotchets or idiosyncracies) as a ready basis of friendly correspondence one with another.

LANARK.—During the past year, there had been two additions, but two had left for other parts.

LONDON.—The meeting of brethren here was of very short continuance, and now was rendered impracticable through the removal of one to Edinburgh and one to Glasgow, and the falling away of other two from the faith.

PAISLEY.—During the past year, there had been 16 additions to the Church Roll, with two removals and one death to subtract. The brethren were now going on peacefully and harmoniously, after times of various and often unpleasant experience.

PLYMOUTH.—The brethren here met together as usual, and endeavoured to help each other on in the way which leadeth to life eternal. One sister had died during the year.

Reports Respecting the Churches.

In addition to the foregoing, notice was taken of the progress of the truth in outlying fields, including Belfast, Douglas (Lanarkshire), Kelso, and Motherwell.

Statistics of the Churches.

The appearance of the foregoing reports, it was stated, was more meagre than usual, in consequence of so many of the doings of the several churches having been already reported in the intelligence department of the *Messenger*. The review was, on the whole, satisfactory; but, from the imperfectness of the returns, no estimate of increase could be formed.

The forenoon meeting was closed at 1.45 P.M., when there was an interval of three quarters of an hour.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

AFTERNOON.

The meeting was resumed at 2.30 o'clock, John Duncan presiding. The brethren first partook of a repast, after which there was an interval of about twenty minutes for fraternal intercourse.

BUSINESS MEETING.

In drawing up the programme for the business part of the day's proceedings, it had been arranged that matters having reference to 'the state of the churches' should have priority of consideration. The first matter taken up, therefore, was

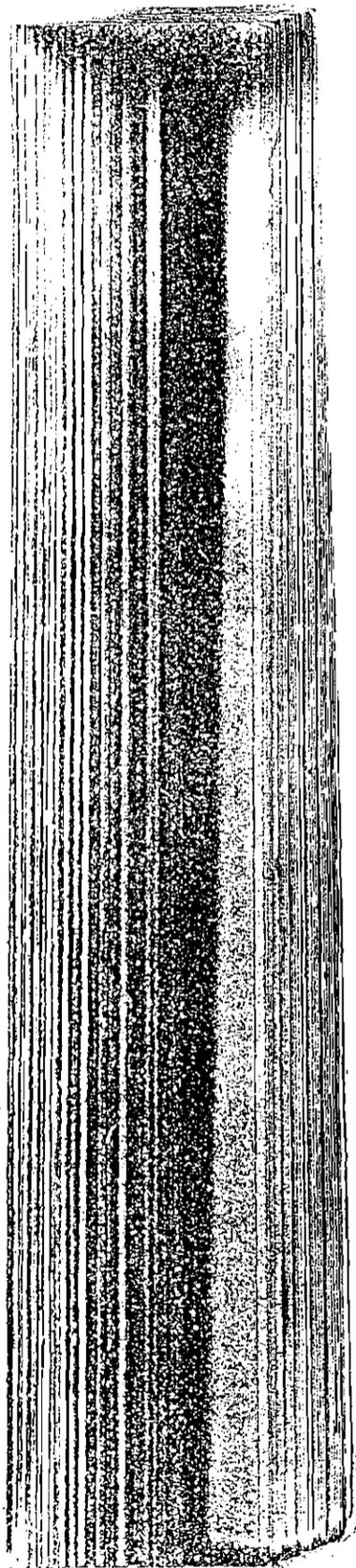
The Glasgow Differences.

These, unfortunately, were of long standing, and consequently, extremely difficult to deal with. Repeated efforts had already been made by the Glasgow brethren themselves to restore a proper understanding, but all these attempts had failed. It therefore appeared necessary that the aid of other brethren should be called in to the settling of these differences. Without at all entering upon the merits of the questions at issue between them, the conference strongly deprecated the existence of a division in the church in Glasgow, and were unanimous in recommending to both parties to refer their disputes to the arbitration of men of wisdom selected from other churches.

A. FORDYCE, on behalf of the church meeting in Howard Street, took it upon himself to say that they would be willing to settle their differences by umpires, and abide by their decision.

J. CAMPBELL said he had no doubt that the Stockwell Street meeting would be equally disposed to such a measure, though he was not authorised to say so.

Several other brethren spoke in favour of this plan, and the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:—
'That this meeting recommend the brethren of both churches in Glasgow to appoint umpires to arbitrate between them.' In order to assist their choice, thirteen



ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

brethren from various churches were named from among whom the selection could be made. The Secretary was instructed to communicate the resolution of the meeting to the churches in Glasgow.

EVENING.

The Division in Nottingham.

The next matter taken up was the state of the church at Nottingham. The meeting there had originated with the Second Advent movement, and had a Second Advent basis; and it was stated that all the members held it necessary to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the King of the Jews, though a number of them did not believe this at the time of their immersion. A division had lately taken place on this and other points, and there were now two separate meetings in Nottingham, and a few who did not take part with either. George Dowie mentioned that he had received letters from each of the three parties; and as time could not be spared to read them all, only an extract was read from the one by William Norrie, setting forth the grounds of difference. Several proposals were made as to what should be done in the circumstances.

D. LAWSON recommended that they should write and congratulate those brethren who had come out and made a stand for the truth.

A. TAIT, in opposing this, said they ought rather to rebuke them for not leaving before they were forced to it.

A few others spoke, and among other suggestions, it was proposed that George Dowie should send some brotherly counsel to the 'unbaptised' party.

G. DOWIE said that was the work of an apostle, and he must decline to undertake it.

It was ultimately agreed that John Duncan should write a letter to each of the parties, as far as possible suited to each particular case.

The Creed Question.

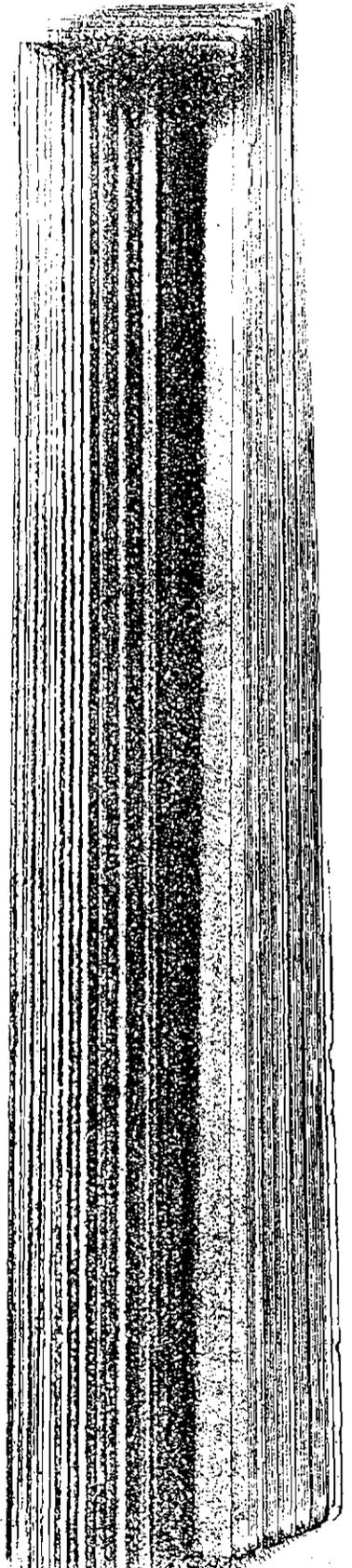
The next matter for consideration was that suggested by the Howard Street meeting in Glasgow, and for which urgency was claimed—namely, 'the necessity of a declaration of our principles, in order to a thorough co-operation of the churches.' On the suggestion of Allan Fordyce, the proposition was amended, so as to read, 'our *first* principles.'

A. FORDYCE, in introducing the matter, pleaded for the adoption of a declaration of first principles to prevent all misunderstandings that otherwise might arise. He cited the fact that it had benefitted the church in Glasgow, and contended that advantage would be derived by all from its more general adoption. It was urged further that, although not used and not needed in apostolic times, it was needful now, when so diverse ideas on the same subject were entertained by different persons. The evils which had resulted from the adoption of creeds by the sects were attributable, he contended, to their negative character, and from being too expository on other than first principles. A quiet understanding and oral expression might often be sufficient; but in all cases of foreign fellowship the first principles must be written.

W. ELLIS, speaking in support of the proposal, referred to the re-immersion of William and Jane Norrie (Mrs Robert Roberts), and contended that if such a declaration had been in existence at the time of their first immersion, a second would not have been necessary.

Others who spoke in support of the proposal argued that it was better to have one authoritative utterance than many different opinions; and that its existence might sometimes have saved the unpleasant presence and necessary withdrawal of some parties.

On the other hand, it was urged that there had not been sufficient proof of the failure of the former method; that is, having a clear understanding of first principles, without any authoritative document of human compilation; that the apostles never sanctioned any such thing by practice or by anticipation; that the adoption of it, in one



ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

case at least in Scotland, had already done mischief, and that this church in question was glad to get rid of it; and that our position, although satisfactory, might not be ultimate, and that the embodiment of our principles in a written form might put a stop to further development of truth—as it had done in other cases.

The discussion, which occupied nearly two hours and a half, was very keen and interesting, and the good feeling and forbearance of the brethren on such a knotty and contested point were very gratifying. Nearly every brother present spoke, and the reasons given both for and against were many and weighty, though those for the negative side appeared to be most numerous and powerful. Among those who spoke in favour of the proposal were—Allan Fordyce, John Campbell, William Ellis, Robert Norrie, Andrew Tait, and James Lawrie; against—George Dowie, James Cameron, Archibald Dowie, David Lawson, Duncan Stewart, William Wilson, William Gill, and William Laing.

The CHAIRMAN said he could go either way. If they got a right creed—almost an impossibility—he would subscribe it; but he did not believe they could get one.

W. LAING suggested that, while there might not be a necessity for a written 'declaration' of first principles, it was very desirable that there should be a proper 'understanding' as to the faith held by the various churches.

This suggestion was generally approved of by all the brethren.

The CHAIRMAN, in summing up the whole discussion, gave it as the mind of the majority of the meeting, that in the meantime it was not needful to the co-operation of the various churches in the United Kingdom that a written declaration of first principles should be adopted, but that it was necessary to have a clear and complete understanding between all the churches; and that this should be at once established.

A. FORDYCE said he did not object to the change of the word 'declaration' into 'understanding.' That was all that was wanted or meant in the overture.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1860

Our Religious Designation.

The CHAIRMAN, referring to the suggestion made by the Nottingham brethren, said that, as the Government had withdrawn the 'religious profession' clause from the Census Bill, there seemed no necessity now to entertain the question of 'Our Religious Designation.' He found, however, that the brethren seemed already to have, almost simultaneously, and without consultation with each other—(as in the Church Roll, the *Messenger*, &c.)—adopted a designation which was perhaps the most expressive they could have in the meantime, and which might serve their ordinary purposes till necessity demanded a change—namely, 'Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.'

This was unanimously assented to, and no more was said upon the subject.

Literature of the One Faith.

The last subject considered was the necessity and method of organising our literary resources; but as there was now no time for the review and consideration of so important a matter, nothing was done except the hearing of George Dowie's suggestion for the selection of a literary council, who might work together, not only in the production of tracts or ephemeral writings, but for the compilation and composition of books: one such was proposed on 'The Messiahship;' and when the combination of the powers of the brethren had produced this, other subjects might be found awaiting them.

At the conclusion, thanks were offered to God for the very agreeable and harmonious meetings of the day, after something different had been feared. The high praises of God were sung then, and at intervals throughout, in anthems and sacred song.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1861

1861.

For the first time, the annual aggregate meeting of the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was held at Glasgow on Sunday, July 7th, in Allan's Hall, 64 Howard Street.

The Visitors.

The change of the place of meeting, from the East to the West, had a considerable effect upon the number of visitors, there being no fewer than 46, in addition to the members of the Glasgow meeting. I can only give the names of the following, however, being those who had come the longest distances :—

ABERDEEN—James Mowat.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie.
DUNDEE—John Duncan.
LEWES—William Norrie.

LINCOLN—Edward Turney.
MANCHESTER—John Paterson.
NOTTINGHAM—John Turney.

Besides these, there were 4 from Airdrie and its neighbourhood, 1 from Beith, 10 from Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, 12 from Lanark and the adjoining district, 10 from Paisley, and 2 from Wishaw.

The total number of brethren and sisters who gathered together was 110, which was so much in excess of anything previously experienced, as to cause Allan Fordyce to remark that it was the largest assembly of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God since the Day of Pentecost!

Literature of the One Faith.

A new and interesting feature was introduced into this year's gathering—namely, by exhibiting a number of maps, diagrams, charts, and chronological tables, &c., illustrative of Scripture subjects; as well as various descriptions of placards which had been issued by churches in different places in making known the gospel—which were displayed around the walls of the meeting-place. There were also arranged on a series of tables, for convenient reference, and for the inspection of the brethren, a large

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collection of books in various departments of Biblical literature, pamphlets, tracts, &c.; besides a number of portraits of deceased brethren and sisters, together with a series of stereoscopic views of Scripture scenes—which were contributed by different brethren, and formed suggestive and profitable subjects of examination, and comment at intervals during the day.

SATURDAY.

EVENING.

A preliminary meeting was held at eight o'clock, to make arrangements as to the order of the proceedings on the following day. These arrangements provided that the proceedings should commence at ten o'clock—an hour earlier than usual—and that John Duncan should preside at the business part of the conference.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

Devotional Exercises.

The first part of the proceedings of the day consisted in worship, reading of the Scriptures, exhortation, and the observance of the Lord's Supper, which having been duly attended to, Brother Duncan took the chair.

BUSINESS MEETING.

Statistics of the Churches.

The Secretary (George Dowie) read the following numerical statement of the condition of the churches, from the statements which had been forwarded to him:—The church at Aberdeen numbered 35, 3 having been added by immersion during the year; this was exclusive of the meeting at Inch, about 30 miles distant, which had sprung out of the Aberdeen brotherhood. Airdrie, 9. Belfast, 7. Berwick, 5. Birmingham, 15; 3 having been immersed

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during the year, and 1 separated because of non-attendance. Crossgates, along with the 2 brethren at Kirkcaldy, 8; 1 addition during the year. Cumnock, 7, being an increase of 2. Cupar, 7. Douglas, 4. Dundee, 30; 5 had been received during the year, and 3 had left. Edinburgh, 76; 19 had been received during the year, 2 removed, 1 died, and 1 fallen away from the faith; in addition to these 76, there were two congregations in connection with the Edinburgh Church—namely, at Haddington, numbering 3, and at Tranent, numbering 6. Glasgow, 68, being an increase of 16 from different sources. Halifax, 12; a late arrangement had been made, by which a church had been formed at Huddersfield, consisting of 6 members. Hamilton, 8; arrangements had been made for the meetings taking place, during the summer, chiefly at Motherwell. Inch, 5. Lanark, 14, 3 of whom were immersed the night previous at Glasgow. Nottingham, 25. Paisley—in George Street, 26; in Oak Shaw Street, 11. Wishaw, 7. From the other churches not mentioned, no returns had been received.

Letters from the Churches.

The letters which had been received from the various churches contained other pieces of information relating to them; but as the substance of it had been given in the *Messenger*, it was not repeated in the conference report.

Letters of Recommendation.

It had been suggested by the church at Halifax, and concurred in by the brethren at Birmingham, that, in the event of a brother going to a distant place, and there being no other means of identification, he should be provided with a letter of introduction from the brethren whom he had left to those to whom he was going. It was stated that, in consequence of the absence of such a means of identification, the brethren in America had been imposed upon. The proposal was agreed to without any conversation taking place upon it.

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AFTERNOON.

There was here an interval for refreshment, during which the brethren had an opportunity of examining the books, maps, &c., already referred to.

The British Brotherhood.

Amongst the charts suspended upon the wall was a 'Map of the British Brotherhood,' on which was indicated the location of the various churches and isolated brethren throughout Great Britain—a red cross indicating where a church existed, and a red dot where an isolated brother resided. George Dowie explained the object of the map, which was to show at a glance the geographical relations of the various churches, and furnish hints as to how the several districts described on the map might be efficiently worked for the dissemination of the truth. Various suggestions to this effect were thrown out by the brethren. Brother Dowie then gave a detailed and lucid explanation of the other diagrams and charts that hung around the walls, which was listened to with great attention by the assembled brethren and sisters.

The Evangelist Question.

This subject had been recommended for consideration by the churches in Aberdeen and Nottingham, and the proposal was supported by speeches from the brethren who represented these two churches. The arguments used were much the same as had been adduced on former occasions when the subject had been under consideration; and they simply resolved themselves into this, that, even supposing it were desirable that an evangelist should be appointed, no brother was known to be available for the office.

Proposed Revisit of Dr Thomas.

After several brethren had spoken both for and against the expediency of having an evangelist, and to meet the objection that no brother in this country was available for the purpose,

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W. PEARSON, Glasgow, formally moved, 'That this conference earnestly requests all the meetings of the brotherhood to unite in inviting Dr John Thomas, of New York, to come over and take a lecturing tour through Great Britain.'

J. MOWAT, Aberdeen, seconded.

J. CAMERON moved an amendment to the effect that 'the subject of the appointment of an evangelist be referred to the various churches for consideration, and that they should report to the Secretary upon it at a future time.'

This amendment having been seconded, a good deal of discussion followed. As there seemed great difference of opinion as to which recommendation should be adopted by the conference, the Chairman put the matter to vote, when the amendment was carried. There was a laudable hesitation on the part of the brethren to voting; but as there seemed no other way of settling the matter without a very protracted discussion upon it, this was resorted to as inevitable.

General Education.

It was stated that there was a strong desire on the part of many members of the various churches, that they should become better acquainted with the Scriptures and their true meaning; and in order to do this, and that they might be able to correct a bad rendering of the Scriptures when it was presented, and be the better satisfied with the pure Word, it was recommended that the brethren generally, and particularly the younger ones, should give their attention to the study of the languages in which the Scriptures were originally written. Various suggestions for carrying out this recommendation were offered by the brethren.

Literature of the One Faith.

This subject was confined chiefly to a view of the tracts and books which lay upon the tables; and it was recommended that the tracts already in existence—not only the brethren's, but the issues of other parties—should be put into circulation among the brethren in a systematic man-

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ner; and it was further suggested that they should be stitched together, and interleaved with blank pages, in order to permit of remarks being made as to their merits or demerits.

Preaching on Glasgow Green.

There was here another interval for refreshments; and a number of the brethren accompanied Allan Fordyce to Glasgow Green, where, according to previous announcement, he made a proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

EVENING.

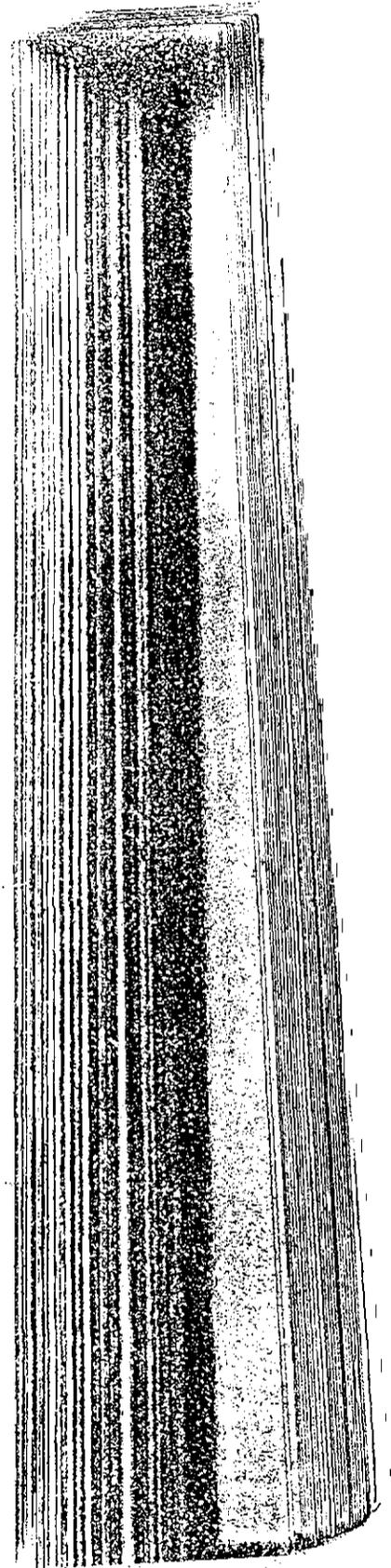
In the meantime, the brethren and sisters had again assembled in Allan's Hall, and the business of the conference was resumed.

Proposed New Church Roll.

It had been proposed by several churches that there should be a re-issue of the Church Roll, to indicate the additions, changes of residence, and other alterations that had taken place since the publication of the former one. It was found, however, that there were difficulties in the way of accomplishing this. There was a division in the church at Paisley, and some misunderstanding as to the position of the meeting at Newark in relation to that at Nottingham; so that it was agreed this matter should stand over for the present.

Divisions in Churches.

This was a matter of lengthened and attentive consideration by the brethren. It was proposed that it should be remitted to a number of brethren in different towns to consider what causes are sufficient to warrant a withdrawal from fellowship, and how matters of discipline should be conducted; also how, when differences arise in churches, they should be removed. This proposal, after a protracted discussion, was adopted.



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'The Messenger of the Churches.'

J. CAMERON stated that, when the *Messenger of the Churches* was first commenced to be printed, eighteen months previously, it had a circulation which enabled it to clear its own expenses; but at the commencement of the present year there was a falling off in the circulation which caused a deficiency of from 7s. to 10s. per month in the income.

It was mentioned that the church in Dundee had agreed to make a collection in aid of the funds required to carry it on, and a similar course was recommended to the other churches. Various alterations in its character, size, price, and mode of publication were suggested; but it was agreed to continue the present arrangements until the end of the year, after which several changes of the kind mentioned would probably take place.

The Church at Piltown.

W. NORRIE, who had for the last ten months been residing at Lewes, about nine miles from Piltown, in Sussex, gave some, interesting information respecting the church at that place, which he had been enabled to obtain from repeated visits to them. The circumstances under which this congregation were brought under the notice of the brethren were detailed in the number of the *Messenger* for March 1860—the one thing lacking in their faith being a belief in the future restoration and exaltation of Israel according to the promises of God. Brother Norrie stated that, in the course of the visits which he paid to their meeting, he had entered very fully into this matter, in private conversation with some of them, and he was pleased to find that there was, on the part of a few, an inclination to inquire into the subject. He spoke in high terms of the kindness and hospitality which had invariably been shown to him on the occasion of his visits, and commended them for the brotherly feeling by which they seemed to be actuated, and for the zeal and earnestness with which they endeavoured to propagate the truth so far as they them-

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July 1860. See
p. 39
See below

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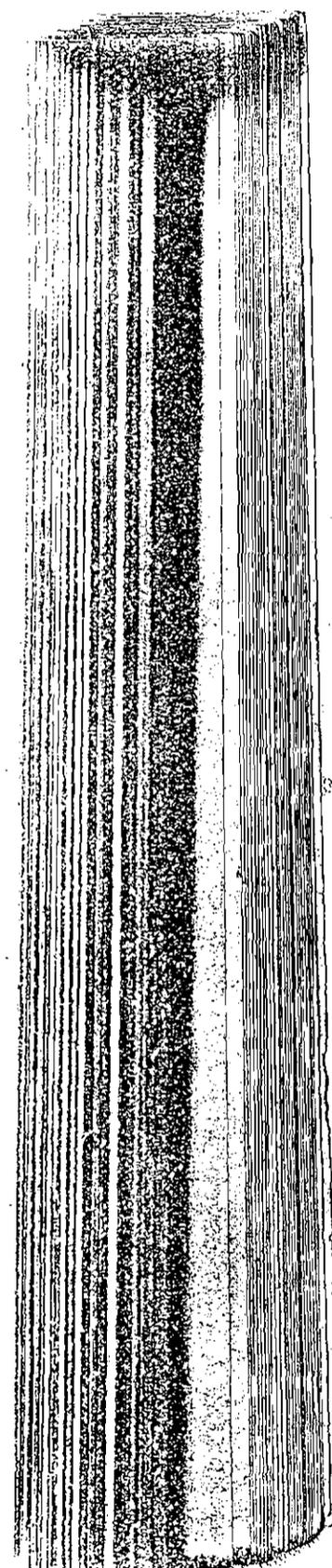
selves knew it. Brother Norrie also mentioned that, having informed their pastor, Henry Farley, of his intention to be present at the annual gathering that day, he had been requested by him to offer his congratulations to the brethren, and to express to them his wishes for their peace and prosperity.

In acknowledgment of this kind message, Brother Norrie was instructed to convey to the church at Piltdown an assurance that the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, in conference assembled, regarded the church at Piltdown with feelings of the deepest solicitude and the greatest affection, and that they earnestly desired that they might come to know the way of the Lord more perfectly.

This terminated the business of the conference, which was not concluded until ten o'clock—having thus lasted twelve hours altogether.

MONDAY.

A number of the visitors, including those from England, remained over the greater part of Monday in Glasgow. In the forenoon, John and Edward Turney and Andrew and Mrs Tait, waited upon Mr J. W. Jackson, the phrenologist, who gave phrenological delineations of John Turney and the two Tait, which were taken down by William Norrie. They afterwards had a walk in the West End Park; and at the quay on the south side of the Broomielaw, went on board the *Scotia*, then the largest vessel afloat except the *Great Eastern*; and afterwards witnessed a launch on the Clyde and a fire in Jamaica Street. They were also shown over the confectionery manufactory of Messrs Wotherspoon, through the interest of Brother Douglas; and returned to Edinburgh in the evening. At Portobello there was a fraternal gathering in the house of Andrew Tait, to whom Edward Turney explained the disrupted state of the meeting in Nottingham.



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Divisions in Churches.

The brethren in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Lanark, and Newburgh who had been appointed 'to consider what causes are sufficient to warrant a withdrawal from fellowship, and how matters of discipline should be conducted; also how, when differences arise in churches, they should be removed,' submitted the following document, which was appended to the conference report, as given in the *Messenger* for August 1861:—

THE PREVENTION AND CURE OF SCHISM.

[In pursuance of a suggestion made at the conference, the following paper has been prepared and submitted to some brethren in several churches. Their endorsement of the same is to be understood by the signatures hereto affixed.

The brethren, at the meeting in question, were reminded that a case of division was referred to the annual meeting of 1860, and that that meeting unanimously recommended the selection of neutral brethren as arbitrators; which suggestion, afterwards adopted, resulted in the establishment of peace and unity. But as it is not desirable to have such a case and such a recommendation year by year, it is contemplated rather to attempt, as far as the human instrument of divinely instructed men can work toward it, to put an end to such splitting and separation, by exposing and analysing the sources of such evils and their divine remedy.—This is the meaning of the following document. There may be many things which it would have been well to embrace in such a document, which are overlooked or omitted here; but this is submitted to the discernment of intelligent men, in the hope that they will thereby understand the sentiment which is entertained regarding all such evil doings.]

The *Body of Christ* is one, yet hath many members. The whole of those members are subservient to the behests of the head, even Christ himself. But among them is that sympathy which is necessary to the perfect co-working of members of diverse capacity and varied purpose. The works of God display many instances in which unity of action is secured by the harmony of different yet congruous parts. The solar system, the balance of the whole animal and vegetable world, the human body. This last is most appropriate to the nature of the union and sympathy of the Church; therefore the divine wisdom has selected it as its most expressive symbol. The apostolic teaching on this point is familiar to all. (See 1 Cor. xii; Eph. iv. 11-15, &c.)

The *Family of God* is one. The purpose of God is to gather in one not only those who are on earth, but those

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who are also in heaven with them—(Eph. i. 10). The head of this family is God Himself; while the eldest member of the great brotherhood—most honourable of all in earth or heaven—is Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord's Messiah, who, in order to the suffering of death, was once made low indeed; but for his obedience unto death, is now set in the highest seat of honour at God's right hand, far above all principalities and powers in heavenly places.

We, then, through the favour of God—frail and mortal though we be, are honoured with a place in this body of Christ—a seat in this family of God. Do we sufficiently realise this? Such high calling demands a noble demeanour; a demeanour, however, which we are not left to guess at, for the whole of the way we have to walk has been trodden by the great sons of the divine family, whose footsteps we can mark—especially and most visibly the steps of the Son of God (1 Pet. ii. 21–25). And what is deficient in example is supplied in precept; for the teaching of the Lord and his apostles is most explicit on the duties of this mutual life, its relations, and responsibilities. Pervading all is this consideration, that God himself has set us an example which affects all cases, and gives a direction to every purpose. And His favour is guaranteed on condition of obedience to His will. Thus: 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;' 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;' 'Be followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us'—are samples of the Bible precepts.

With such noble family connection, so elevated a virtue, and such inspiring hopes as we can command, what is before us but the perfection of God? Are we not called by the grace of God to glory and virtue? and shall we hold in little esteem those means with which divine wisdom has furnished us? His divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. And among these, the most noteworthy are those motives and principles by which conformity to the will of God and the pattern of divine character is secured. There is the same most absolute necessity for maintaining the perfect symmetry and entireness of the body of Christ, as there is of the human body, which, if we dismember and subdivide, not only becomes incompetent for its ordinary functions, but must die. Alas! that we should do anything to endanger the vitality of the body of Christ!

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It is hardly necessary to remind the brethren of the great and influential motives with which the oracles of God abound; but it is perhaps proper to say, that even in those cases where there is offence and trespass, the whole provision for the treatment of such offence is eminently characterised by that large benevolence which God our Father has shown in the gift of His Son, and which that Son has exhibited in his willing submission, even unto death. We counsel all the brotherhood to ponder well this truth, that in all cases where discipline (as it is conveniently termed) is to be exercised, there are always such arrangements as shall, as far as possible, secure the reformation of the offender; or where such clemency is unavailing, we can see the spirit of severe legislation tempered by sympathy and condolence for the unfortunate and mistaken person. Let these passages be read carefully in their connection, that the theory and practice of treatment of offences may be familiar to all: Matt. xviii. 15-35; 1 Cor. v. 1-5; 2 Thes. iii. 6-16; Titus iii. 10, 11. It will be seen in all cases how merciful is the intention and how humane the treatment. Nay, those other severe sentences which are recorded in Heb. vi. 4-8; x. 26-31, are not devoid of the same spirit, as apparent in the context, where the outer edges of that judgment are hung round with tender inducements and affectionate warnings.

How is it, then, that we oft times are guilty not only of indiscretion and folly—erring because of the dominance of sin in our mortal flesh—but in our treatment of those who so offend being headstrong and unfeeling, instead of gentle and forbearing, as the Lord and his apostles have so well exemplified? Verily there is a great fault here; and who shall say he is not, nor ever has been to blame, for such a case?

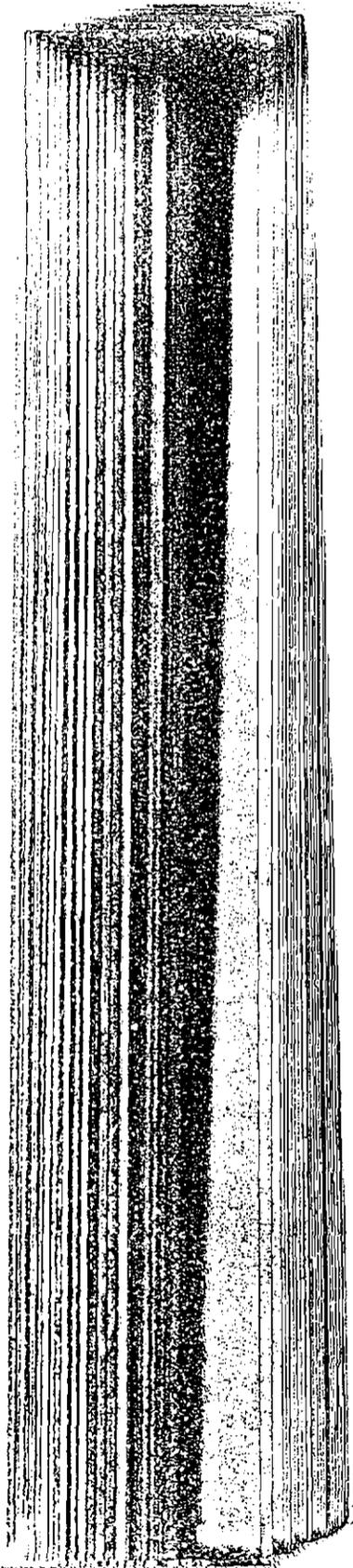
What is to be done, then? We seriously advise the brethren to lay it down as an inviolable maxim, that nothing shall warrant a separation from those who are in Christ. It is only when those who have once confessed the Christ, but now deny him, and belie the faith, that we are at liberty to break off fellowship with them. Shall we boast of our adherence to the Lord Jesus, and in the next instant in our hearts turn away from, and by our own lips speak against, those who are his—separating those holy bonds by which the whole body is attached limb to

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limb, and all to the Head? Shame on us to quarrel with one another! Certainly, whatever reasons there may ever be for our separation from, there are many more for our adherence to those who call upon the name of the Lord, both theirs and ours.

But, to our discredit, there have been divisions, and there are alienations. How can a divided Church be the one body of Christ? Impossible. How shall we restore that unity and entireness? What is to be done now? Agree again, by all means. Of course, this is an easy matter to speak about, though difficult to do. And why difficult? Is it because the Lord has neglected to provide for such a case? Does not our perpetuation of a separated state contemn him, especially after we know that he desired and prayed for unity among those that are his?—(John xvii. 20, 21). We submit, that the rules for the treatment of offences are few and simple, but effective. They have been quoted above, and it will be found, we feel assured, that either the evil is of a private personal nature, which should be treated as directed in Matt. xviii., or a flagrant public offence, such as is set forth in the terrors of 1 Cor. v. and Heb. x.; or a case like 2 Thes. iii. or Titus iii.—all of which are distinctly provided for, and there can be no others. This last case, indeed (Titus iii.) is one which at once divides off the dividers, bringing swift judgments on those who are heretics (that is, schismatics or sect makers). Go to! go to! be friends. There is enough of wisdom in these precious oracles to guide us all.

But the case most usual is not the want of rule nor the restraint of intelligence; it is the want of disposition. How can two walk together if they be not agreed? How can two walk together if there is no love? If such love as God's—such benevolence and sacrifice as the Lord Jesus Christ's—be in us, it becomes an easy matter to adjust all differences; and we shall not go groping for rules and directions; for we shall find the law in our own hearts, speaking and prompting spontaneously. If it be that the matter has hardened into a grave offence, and the breach got confirmed into a wide chasm, it may be—and indeed often is—better that it be referred to the arbitration of another one or two brethren—men of sense and probity—whose judgment is unbiassed and whose motive is pure. And there are many such ready to sacrifice their own convenience for the glory of God and the good of



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His people. Call for them; they will come to help you. And bow yourselves down beneath the majesty of the heavens whom you have despised and offended, and come down from the height of your pride to sit in the dust with confusion of face. But awake to righteousness and sin not. Behold, THE JUDGE is at the door—the Lord is at hand. Be zealous and repent, else He will come quickly, and remove your candlestick out of its place.

Generally approved, and most earnestly pressed on the attention of the brethren by

JAMES MOWAT, Aberdeen.
ALEX. D. BLACK, "
WILLIAM GILL, "
JOHN COUPAR, Dundee.
GRAHAM BOOTH, "
ALEXANDER SMITH, "
JOHN DUNCAN, "
DAVID LINDSAY, "
DAVID WATSON, "
DAVID LAWSON, Newburgh.
JAS. CAMERON, Edinburgh.
ANDREW TAIT, "
WILLIAM LAING, "
GEORGE DOWIE, "
JAMES MURRAY, Lanark.

Leeds
ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1862

1862.

Dissensions in the Churches.

It is a melancholy and humiliating fact, that the manifesto for 'the prevention and cure of schism,' with which the conference of 1861 wound up its labours, and which was intended 'to put an end to such splitting and separation,' should have entirely failed in this laudable purpose. Before the time for holding another July Meeting came round, there were serious schisms in several of the churches. Trouble had again broken out in the Glasgow meeting, as well as in Leeds and Paisley, where the brethren, small in number though they were, felt constrained to have two meetings, each more or less antagonistic to the other; while in Edinburgh, a serious division had just been commenced, one of the separatists being also a signatory of the manifesto which declared that 'nothing shall warrant a separation from those who are in Christ.' Such was the melancholy state of matters when arrangements had to be made for the approaching aggregate meeting of the brethren from all parts; and this naturally had to be taken into account in selecting the subjects for the consideration of the brethren on that occasion. This is seen from the notice intimating the meeting, which was inserted in the *Messenger* for July 1862, and which was as follows:

The July Meeting.

We have not as yet said much about the aggregate meeting, because the suggestions for it are not so varied as on former occasions. It seems to be desired, however, that it should have a character this year different from the former years. We would sum up the suggestions regarding it thus:

1. More time should be employed in prayer and praise, in teaching and exhortation, than what has been at our former meetings. This would tend to unite us more closely to each other as children of God, and lead to more real fruitfulness in the future history of the churches.

2. Those attending are expected to meet as brethren concerned about weighty matters, and not to fritter away time in mere pleasure for the hour.

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3. Surely the brethren will see the necessity of giving attention to the question of church unity, and that in such a way as to indicate whether they consider it in accordance with apostolic example or teaching to make division a mere matter of expediency, and the unity of the body to depend upon personal likings or dislikings. Let the brethren be well prepared on this topic.

To urge these duties upon us, we are reminded that our strength is in the Lord; and having His Word dwelling in us richly, we shall be ready for every good work. We also believe that the Judge standeth at the door: why, then, should we grudge one against another? May the Lord be with us, and guide us all to act so that He may be glorified by us in all things.

As before announced, the meetings will take place in the Hall of the Phrenological Museum, 1 Surgeon's Square, Edinburgh; which will be open from four o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, 19th July. It has been suggested to have meetings even sooner than this, provided there be brethren forward. That evening, at eight o'clock, the programme of the morrow will be determined; and the brethren present can say whether any meetings should be held on Monday. Such is desirable, if found practicable.

The Visitors.

There were 19 brethren from a distance present, in addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting—as follows:—

ABERDEEN—William Philip.	GLASGOW—David Christie, Allan For-
CROSSGATES—John Muir and James	lyce, Jessie Forlyce, James Napier,
Wilson.	Mrs Naismith, William Smith, William
CUMNOCK—John Paterson.	Thomson, and Andrew Wright.
DUNDEE—John Duncan and Henry	LANARK—James Murray.
Mackintosh.	PAISLEY—James Hunter.
DUNFERMLINE—Robert Tennant.	

The Secessionists in Edinburgh.

As has already been stated, a number of the members of the Edinburgh Church had, only a few weeks previously, separated themselves and formed another meeting, because of a difference on a matter of church order; and some curiosity existed as to how they would act in the altered circumstances. None of them appeared at the forenoon meeting; but in the afternoon, a little sensation was caused by the entrance of the following seceders:—Andrew Tait, William Ellis, Walter Oliver, Mrs Oliver, Robert Meek,

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John Shedden, David Swanson, and Alexander Swanson. William Pearson, of Glasgow, who had met with the seceders in the forenoon, accompanied them. With one exception, they did not take any part in the proceedings, whilst listening attentively to all that was said.

SATURDAY.

Preliminary Arrangements.

A preliminary meeting was held at eight o'clock, to make arrangements as to the order of the proceedings on the following day. These arrangements provided that there should be no chairman on this occasion. There seemed to be one absorbing topic in the minds of all those assembled—the unity of the brotherhood. It was therefore determined that it should have a pre-eminent place in the deliberations and deliverances of the brethren; reserving only the third of the three sederunts for the comparison of notes on prophetic readings and studies. As it turned out, however, even that short time could not be spared for so interesting a matter.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the forenoon. The first meeting was occupied in the congenial exercises of praising our Father in heaven, by song and thanksgiving and commemorative breaking of bread, in prayer for wisdom and blessing, and in the consideration of His revealed will in the Scriptures. The duties of self-examination and mutual care were urged upon the hearts of all in terms of most acceptable address; and attention was drawn to our hope in the coming of the Lord as the great point of interest and centre of motive to unity and diligence. This meeting was brought to a close shortly after one o'clock.

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AFTERNOON.

The afternoon sederunt was opened at half-past two by an appropriate psalm, after which the company sat down to a simple but sufficient repast.

THE UNITY OF THE BROTHERHOOD.

An Exhortation to Unity.

Brother WILLIAM PHILLIP, of Aberdeen, then gave a short address, in which he dwelt upon the desirability of maintaining the unity of the brotherhood, and called attention to Scripture exhortations to that effect.

Letters from the Churches.

The Secretary (George Dowie) read the following letters bearing upon the subject which had been received from the churches in Aberdeen and Halifax :—

To the Annual Meeting of Brethren held in Edinburgh on July 20.

Aberdeen, 17th July 1862.

DEAR BRETHREN,—We really do hope and pray that something may be done to promote the cause of unity among the churches. We look upon these divisions as a very serious matter—a matter that demands the serious attention of the whole brotherhood.

They evidently indicate a lack of that due appreciation of the mutual obligations that the truth lays us under to one another as brethren in Christ, as members of the adopted family of God, and as aspirants to glory in the Kingdom of God. These obligations will not conform with rival churches in one city, separated because they cannot live in unity. Can such two churches both be in the body of Christ—both holding the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace—when they cannot come together into one place to break the bread that represents the one body? Brethren are exhorted to be 'knit together in love,' 'to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.' Do these and similar passages harmonise with brethren in a state of separation?

We would urge on those churches so situated, to consider well whether they can receive the blessing of God while in such a state; whether they have exercised that love and forbearance which the Word of God enjoins us to exercise one to another. Judging from the published documents and correspondence of the Edinburgh division, there is no fundamental principle in dispute, but a question of church order, which has now been laid aside. Why then remain separate?

We think our Lord defines the position of all such in Mat. xviii. 15-30. On the question of offences, those who neglect to hear the church are to be accounted as heathen men and publicans. On such questions there is no appeal—the decision of the church is binding in heaven and on earth. It becomes, therefore, a serious matter both for those who give and for

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those who receive such a decision. Can it be, brethren, that those who cannot sit together in unity at the Lord's table *now*, can 'eat and drink at his table in the Kingdom of God?'

We would urge the consideration of these statements upon the brethren. Are they Scriptural? If so, let brethren act in accordance therewith. And may all of us strive to attain to our true position as the Church of God. 'To be perfect, to be of one mind, to live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with us.' These are the conditions of present blessing laid down for us. Let us fulfil them, brethren, and we shall receive the blessing.

We are yours in the fellowship of the gospel, on behalf of the church in Aberdeen,

W. GILL.

The Church in Halifax to the Brethren assembled in Edinburgh.

BELOVED BROTHERN,—In presenting our annual report, we cannot but regret that we have not more vital results to chronicle, seeing the Lord is so near.

The steady proclamation of the gospel (during the winter, chiefly by Brother Shuttleworth) has resulted in the addition of three sisters, as you will have known per *Messenger*. This, with the residence of Brother and Sister Stevenson in the neighbouring town of Bradford, who attend at our fellowship when practicable, constitutes our only numeral difference since last report. To this we may add the change of our meeting-room to a more central and convenient place—Grove Street.

We are glad to say that we have peace among ourselves. We deem it our highest privilege to belong to the household of God, so that our associative opportunities are highly prized. We cannot be too closely knit together; and the sister church of Huddersfield seems rather to be of ourselves than another—so often are our communications. Long may it be ere we are humbled to understand what division may mean, either in our own community or amongst others.*

You wish an expression of our mind upon the unity of the churches. This matter has been frequently before us. We can only say, that we know no reason for two congregations in any town, except where it is impossible to get one place to accommodate the whole. And even in this improbable contingency, the brotherhood in that place should form but one church. Divisions on account of individuals, likings and dislikings, church government, opinionative teachings, &c., are to be most severely reprehended, because they, in every case, arise from the anti-divine and anti-christian spirit which has no forbearance—(Eph. iv. 30 to v. 2). Only when men are worshipped above truths, or human expositions exalted above the exact sayings of God, will Christ's law of love be broken.

We therefore most urgently press the necessity of strict observance of Christ's edict—(Matt. xviii. 15-17)—and also the appointment of arbitrators (or rather the plan for their being used), in the contingency of the law being transgressed.

Wishing you the presence and guidance of Holy Spirit in your deliberations, I remain, on behalf of the church,

J. WILSON.

* [Unhappily, it was not so very long before this humiliation was experienced in the complete disruption of the Halifax Church from that in Huddersfield. See vol. ii., pp. 195-201.]

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Comments upon the Letters.

These letters afforded a basis for remark by the brethren assembled; and it was worthy of notice, that all who at first spoke, not only heartily endorsed the sentiment of these letters—the one from Aberdeen particularly—but unequivocally expressed themselves that there could be no difference sufficiently great to cause those to separate who yet acknowledged each other as brethren. It was urged that we should not only be one in heart, but that there was an absolute necessity for being one in appearance, which was to be accomplished by the old apostolic practice of meeting 'in one place;' that we cannot afford to separate, because we need the diversities of one another for help and strength; that there could be no division without evil speaking and back-biting, which are to be reprobated; that the only precept or example of separation in apostolic times concerned those who 'went out from us, because they were not of us;' that we should act as in the presence of the Lord; that the bond of peace should keep or bind the unity, and therefore it is wrong to break the unity in order to secure the peace—(Eph. iv. 3); that there were differences in faith at the root of some of the divisions at present existent—for example, the intrusion of long periods as necessarily intervening in the present epoch, did not assort with the teaching of the Lord as to the Kingdom of God being 'at hand,' and the consequent call to 'watch and pray.'

Exception was taken to this statement, on the ground that this difference had not been avowedly connected with any division among brethren, and also because there was a period necessarily implied as intervening, during which there should be a falling away, and that man of sin, the son of perdition, should be revealed—(2 Thes. ii. 3, 4). Still, it was urged that differences 'marred the unity of the faith.'

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1862

A Plea for Separatists.

W. ELLIS, one of the Edinburgh brethren who had seceded, felt constrained to rise and speak. He contended that the step they had taken was justifiable on the ground that the apostle Paul had counselled the marking and avoiding of those who caused 'divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine we have learned,' and still not to treat such as enemies, but brethren in error—(Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Thes. iii. 14, 15).

These apologies were not favourably received by the assembled brethren; the former passage being held to treat of false teachers, who had sought to turn away the disciples from the faith; and the latter not to schismatics at all.

EVENING.

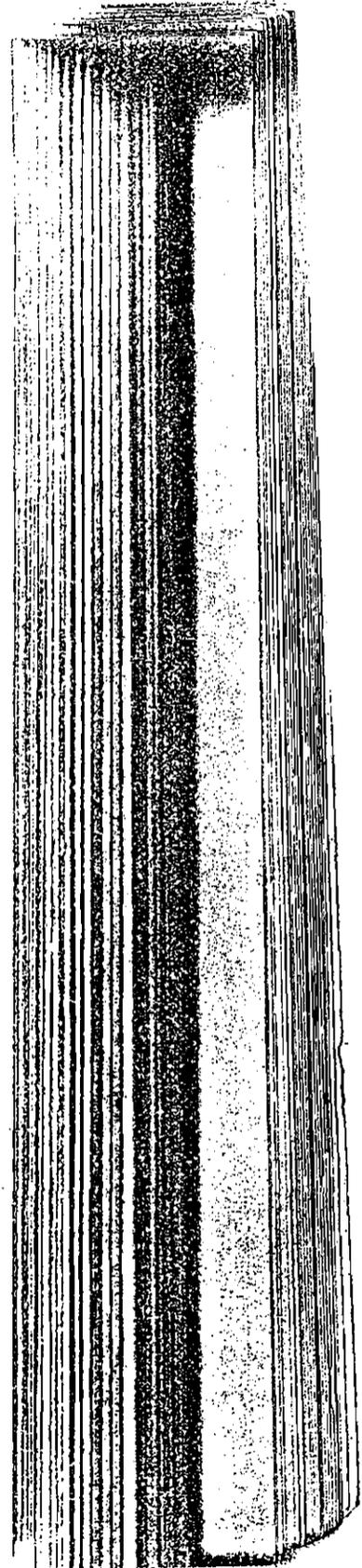
The free expression of the brethren on the important subject of the unity of the brotherhood, with its collateral topics, was continued with unabated vigour in a third sederunt, until the shades of evening, settling down upon the company, gave warning to close.

Although there had been no chairman during any part of the day, all the deliberations were conducted in a good spirit, and with as much point as was to be expected in the discussion of so comprehensive and absorbing a subject.

The Results of the Conference.

The *Messenger* concluded its report of the proceedings with the following reflections upon them :—

The results of such a conference we cannot pretend to calculate; but our earnest wish is that they may be most salutary. When it is remembered that the expression of sentiment then given was one in which there was a very general agreement; and when it is taken into account that there are several congregations where there is need for its practical application, the importance of the whole matter must appear evident to all. The brethren in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, and Leeds are all less or more in need



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of correction on this point. The present is a time of agitation among the churches; we have no desire but that such a shaking may produce its legitimate issues—removing what is foreign to the structure and stability of the house of holy materials; that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

ANNUAL AGGREGATE MEETINGS—1863

1863.

The Divisions in the Churches.

The passing of another year did not witness any improvement in the condition of the British brotherhood. On the contrary, matters were fully worse than they had been when the brethren met in solemn conference and seriously exhorted each other as to the duty and necessity of preserving the unity of the fraternity. So far as the division in Edinburgh was concerned, it may be said to have become more pronounced than ever. The number of the separatists had been largely increased; and now, instead of assigning disagreement on a matter of church order as the cause of their leaving, it was endeavoured to be shown that there was a material difference respecting first principles which warranted separation. Meanwhile, also, Dr Thomas had visited Edinburgh, had identified himself with the seceders, and expressed approval of the course they had adopted.

In Glasgow, also, former disagreements had been revived and aggravated, points of faith on which all did not see eye to eye being distorted and magnified to such an extent as to necessitate the maintenance of two meetings, if only for the sake of peace and harmony. Some of the Glasgow brethren—and notably Allan Fordyce—had strong convictions as to the necessity of having something like a creed; and, as we have seen, he endeavoured, at the annual aggregate meeting in 1860, to get the brethren to assent to a full declaration of their first principles, but got only sanction for an 'understanding' instead, with which he expressed himself as being satisfied. The 'understanding' arrangement, however, did not work so well as had been expected. This was seen only a month afterwards when the Church Roll of what purported to be the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God appeared, with some prefatory notes, among which was the following paragraph:—

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With a very few exceptions, obtaining only in two places—and those exceptions, we believe, becoming still more rare day by day—the whole are persons who have been immersed into the name of the Lord, subsequent to their belief of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

Allan was quite indignant at this mixing up of baptised and unbaptised persons, 'because,' as he bluntly complained, 'we cannot tell who are our brethren and who are not.' There was consequently a renewal of the demand for a 'declaration,' or 'confession of faith,' to which all the brethren must assent; and the meeting in Glasgow with which Brother Fordyce was connected led the way in this direction by drawing up and adopting a 'confession of faith' for their own use.

It had been settled that the July Meeting should this year be again held in Glasgow; and this gave the brethren in that city, as having to make the necessary arrangements, the opportunity of pressing their views and wishes more urgently upon the brotherhood. How they did this will be seen from the notice intimating the meeting, which was inserted in the *Messenger* for July 1863, and which was as follows:—

The July Meeting.

The July Meeting, as before announced, will be held on Sunday, 12th July, in the brethren's meeting-place, Mechanics' Institution, 38 Bath Street, Glasgow.

The hall will be open on the Saturday evening previous, from 6 to 10, as a place of rendezvous for brethren from a distance, and for the usual preliminary meeting to arrange the programme of the morrow. It is desirable that as many as possible would make a point to be present at said meeting, to advise how we may turn to best account the time at our disposal next day.

The brethren in Glasgow particularly desire that brethren coming from a distance be made aware that they intend submitting to the preliminary meeting the proposition that, previous to worship or the breaking of bread on Sunday, we endeavour to ascertain how far those assembled

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are agreed as to first principles—particularly as to the position they are prepared to take up in regard to those who corrupt the fellowship by acknowledging, as belonging to the body, those who are unbaptised. The reasons for urging this course will be given at the proper time and place.

An Important Conference.

It will thus be seen that the annual meeting of 1863 was calculated to excite unusual interest among the brotherhood, from the declared intention of the Glasgow brethren; and the event proved that it was the most important of these fraternal gatherings that had as yet taken place. This must be my excuse for giving the very detailed report of it which follows.

The Company.

It was probably the acknowledged great importance of the meeting, and the dread of what might happen at it, that caused some of the regular attenders at the annual meeting to be absent on this occasion. At any rate, be that as it may, there was not such a numerous attendance as on some former occasions. Those present, so far as I could gather from inquiries made at the time, were as follows:—

GLASGOW (Bath Street)—Mrs Bright, John Campbell, Robert Carruthers, sen., Mrs Carruthers, Rt. Carruthers, jun., Fergus Cameron, David Christie, James Doeg, James Douglas, Allan Fordyce, Jessie Fordyce, James Fraser, Mrs Fraser, David Forbes, Robert Forbes, Nathaniel Haddow, Mrs Keltie, Mary Lawrie, Colin Macdougall, Wm. Napier, James Napier, jun., Mrs Jas. Napier, Catherine Napier, Jessie Russell, William Smith, Mrs Smith, Henry Sinclair, Mrs Sinclair, Mrs Stevenson, Andrew Wright, sen., and Andrew Wright, jun.
GOVAN—William Pearson, Wm. Clark, and Mrs Clark.

AIRDRIE—Thomas and Mrs Forsyth.
BIGGAR—Gavin Cree.
BIRMINGHAM—Maria Henry.
COATBRIDGE—Matthew Paterson.
DUNDEE—Henry Mackintosh.
EDINBURGH (Surgeon Square)—George Dowie, John R. Norrie, and Isabella Pearson.
(Calton Convening Rooms)—William Ellis.
HAMILTON—James McKinlay.
LEWIS—William Norrie.
MOTHERWELL—John Kay.
PAISLEY—Adam Connell, John B. Newlands, Kennedy Picken, James Stevenson, Mrs Stevenson, and Thos. Stewart.

A deputation waited upon the brethren meeting in Stockwell Street, Glasgow, and invited them to attend, but none of them were present.

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SATURDAY.

EVENING.

The preliminary meeting was held at eight o'clock, to make arrangements as to the order of the proceedings on the following day.

The Confession of Faith of the Aberdeen Church.

The proceedings were commenced by the reading of the following letter which had been received from the church in Aberdeen :—

Aberdeen, 8th July 1863.

DEAR BROTHER CHRISTIE,—We see, by the *Messenger*, that the annual meeting of brethren is to be held in Glasgow this year, and that all intimations and suggestions concerning it are to be made to you. There are none of us here who can find time and convenience to be present at the meeting. We have no suggestions to make regarding the meeting, but as you have intimated that the subject of first principles is to be brought up, I have been desired to write, stating our views thereon; and, in doing so, we shall merely repeat what we sent to the annual meeting of July 1858.

The great foundation upon which Jesus of Nazareth said he would build his church is, 'That he is the Christ, the Son of the living God.' This grand truth, then, must be believed and confessed by every one before he or she can be baptised into the name of the Lord. Therefore only such baptised believers are regarded by us as Christians. We believe that the Scripture definition of the term 'Christ,' or 'Messiah,' embraces him as the seed of Abraham, 'in whom all nations shall be blessed,' and who, with Abraham, is to receive the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. It also embraces the seed of David, who is to sit for ever on the throne, and in the presence of David—(2 Sam. vii.; Is. ix. 6, 7, &c.)—and who is to reign over the restored tribes of Israel, as set forth by the prophets, and announced by the angel Gabriel to Mary—(Luke i. 33); and also that his 'dominion' shall extend over the whole earth, as set forth in the book of Daniel—(chaps. ii., vii.); and we believe that God the Father has made Jesus of Nazareth both Lord and *that Christ*—(Acts ii. 36); and that the resurrected believers are the saints who are to be associated with him in the administration of the affairs of the world to come—(Dan. vii.; 2 Tim. ii. 12).

We understand Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of the living God—First, by being the Son of God and Mary by conception and birth, as recorded—(Luke i. 35)—and as such proclaimed by a voice from heaven at his baptism, when the Father gave him His spirit without measure—(Matt. iii. 16, 17; John iii. 34)—and who was thus 'God manifested in the flesh'—(1 Tim. iii. 16)—'Emanuel,' 'God with us.' Second, as tho the Son of God, with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead—(Rom. i. 4; Acts viii. 33). That is to say, God the Father raised him from the dead by His spirit, and set him on

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His own right hand, and gave him His own name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, to the glory of God the Father; so that he who honoureth and worshippeth the Son honoureth and worshippeth the Father, inasmuch as the Father's name is in the Son; 'for,' said he, 'I and my Father are one.'

We understand by the phrase, 'living God,' that ever-living and uncreated Being who is the origin of all things, the one God and Father of all—(Eph. iv. 6; 1 Cor. viii. 6)—and who is 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'—(Eph. i. 3)—and also he of whom Christians are heirs; as in Rom. viii. 17: 'We are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.'

This, then, is what we consider essential to be known, understood, and believed by every one before the immersion of such a one can be valid for the remission of sins through his name, and the heirship connected therewith.

Yours in the above faith and hope,

W. GILL.

An Explanation.

D. CHRISTIE, after reading this letter, explained that the reason why the brethren in Glasgow had caused a notice to be inserted in last month's *Messenger*, desiring that, as a preliminary step, it should be ascertained how far the brethren assembled at the aggregate meeting were agreed upon first principles, was the divided state of some of the churches. In consequence of these divisions, it was impossible that, at such a meeting, all those present could unite together in Christian fellowship unless there was first some re-assertion of first principles, and a mutual understanding come to respecting them. This was what it was proposed should be done previous to the breaking of bread on the following day.

Preliminary Arrangements.

The brethren then entered into a consideration of the order in which the various points of the subject should be taken up; and after a lengthy conversation it was finally arranged that a declaration of faith should first be given by all those present; next, that an understanding should be come to respecting the course to be pursued in maintaining the faith in its integrity, and whether it was not possible that, although the faith was believed, other things might also be believed of such a character as to

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nullify it. Did time permit, it was also agreed that some attention should be given to the causes of division among the brethren in Britain at the present time, and to the duty of the brethren in relation to those churches where divisions existed. It was arranged that James Mackinlay, of Hamilton, should preside during the time that these matters were under consideration; and, under the circumstances, it was not deemed expedient that the meeting should be opened by united prayer; but it was recommended that every one should pray heartily, before coming to the meeting, that the brethren might be guided by divine wisdom in their deliberations.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, Brother James Mackinlay presiding.

BUSINESS MEETING.

This was essentially a business meeting; and for the first (and only) time in the annuals of the annual aggregate gathering, and in accordance with the resolution come to on the previous evening, devotional exercises were dispensed with at its opening.

The CHAIRMAN commenced the proceedings by reading the announcement respecting the meeting that had been given in the *Messenger*, and also the letter from the church in Aberdeen.

THE GLASGOW CREED.

The CHAIRMAN next read the declaration of first principles which had been adopted by the Glasgow Church, expressing a hope that there would be no discussion upon it. This document, which had been printed, consisted of four pages; but only the first three paragraphs in it, which constituted the 'confession' proper, were read at present, the rest of the document being explanatory and demonstrative.

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G. DOWNIE said, that these two papers, either separately or together, expressed what he conceived to be the one faith. They expressed what was his own faith at the time of his immersion, and what was still the faith he held.

D. CHRISTIE also expressed his concurrence in the statements contained in the two documents.

G. DOWIE remarked that those then assembled had hitherto been in the habit of meeting together as brethren holding the one faith. Events, however, had occurred which had caused suspicion to be engendered respecting some because of their belief on certain important matters, and hence had arisen the necessity for pursuing the course which it was now proposed to follow. Whatever doubt might exist on those matters on which it might be deemed necessary that all should be agreed, he thought every one then present should set out with the determination that his or her single purpose should be to endeavour to recognise the truth of God, as taught by His prophets, by His Son from the heavens, and by His apostles, especially so far as this truth concerned man, in bringing him good news of salvation, by which he might rise above the difficulties and the evils of the present life, and become an heir of the immortal nature. Whatever differences might be found to exist in the course of the inquiry upon which they were about to enter, he presumed that every one was determined to serve God with his whole heart and mind, according to the directions given in His Word. He therefore strongly urged upon all—upon both those who spoke and those who refrained from speaking—that this should be a guiding principle with them—‘By what I say or do, or by what I refrain from saying or doing, I must seek to gain the glory of God and the good of those who serve Him, and must be careful that I do not cause unnecessary pain or strife amongst my brethren.’ If this consideration was borne in mind by every one, it would aid materially in causing a satisfactory result to be attained.

J. FRASER suggested that the whole of the Glasgow document should be read, and did so himself, as follows :—

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*Confession of the Faith of the Brethren meeting in Mechanics' Institution,
38 Bath Street, Glasgow.*

Every one who is admitted to our fellowship must have been baptised after having confessed his faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God as preached by Jesus and his apostles; having also confessed Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of the living God.

Every one must agree to maintain the faith of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and the things concerning the name of Jesus, as the ONLY faith revealed for salvation in this present age.

Every one must agree to maintain that all lordship in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus; that he is the only Mediator between God and man—the great High Priest who, by his acceptable offering in the heavenly tabernacle, hath procured that salvation which sinners receive through his name; that baptism is the appointed means whereby sinners receive his name, in order to the remission of sins, and the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We are convinced that, in order to perfect unity among the professed followers of the Lord Jesus, there must be, in the first place, a humble submission to the will of the Lord, which will lead us all to be subject one to another—(1 Pet. v.); and, when we thus submit ourselves one to another in the fear of Christ—(Eph. v.)—instead of division, we would be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To this end, we should all learn to speak the same thing—(1 Co. i.) Not only should we speak the same thing, but the words which we speak should be God's words; and not only should there be a restoration of the pure words of God amongst His people, but there should also be a restoration of the very ideas which His words contained, in order to a perfect unanimity. The things contained in the foregoing declaration of first principles, are words taught by the apostles of the Lord Jesus. Still, it is possible that they may be used and perverted by giving them a meaning different from that which was understood at the time they were spoken. For this reason we think it needful to give the sense in which we use the words in the foregoing Confession of our Faith.

To begin with the word 'Kingdom,' by which, according to Bible usage, we understand a reign; and, by the words, 'Kingdom of God,' we understand that reign or government which God is to establish on this earth, as witnessed by the prophets:

The Lord shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously—(Isaiah xxiv. 23). And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed—(Dan. ii.) The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations—(Isaiah lxi.)

We use the word 'Messiah,' or 'Christ,' as did the Scribes, when they answered Herod's question about where the Christ should be born. They said:

In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel—(Matt. ii.)

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The Messiah or Christ is here spoken of as Governor of Israel ; and this agrees with the words of the wise men when they asked :

Where is he that is born King of the Jews?—(Matt. ii.)

It also agrees with the confession of Nathaniel :

Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel—(John i.)

In confessing Jesus to be the Son of God, we use the word 'Son' in its highest sense, and accord to Jesus the dignity of being equal with God—(Phil. i.) In this title may be found a fulfilment of that part of the promise to David where God says of David's Son :

I will establish his kingdom ; he shall build me a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever ; I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son.

The words, 'Son of the living God,' when properly understood, may lead us to contemplate Jesus as our Life Giver :

As the living Father hath sent me, and as I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me—(John vi.) For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself—(John v.) I am the resurrection and the life—(John xi.) As Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given him—(John xvii.)

That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, is not a confession of human invention, Jesus testified to Peter when he made it, and added :

Upon this rock will I build my church—(Matt. xvi.) ;

and, therefore, every one added to the church should make the same acknowledgment.

We use the word 'baptism' here as a burial in water :

And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptised him—(Acts viii.) Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised?—(Acts x.) Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word—(Eph. v.)

To every one who believes the things here stated, we solicit your fellowship. If you love the Lord Jesus Christ, you should cultivate that love to his people which he hath commanded ; for he saith :

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you—(John xv.)

And this commandment have we from him :

That he who loveth God, love his brother also—(1 John iv.)

Do not forget that the Lord's prayer was for those who should believe in him through the word of the apostles :

That they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee ; that they all may be one in us ; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me—(John xvii.)

Let his prayer be our prayer, and let us endeavour to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace :

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body—(Col. iii.) For we, being many, are one body in Christ ; and every one members, one of another.

Brethren, do not neglect the new commandment, or excuse yourself, alleging that we are unworthy of your affection. You have been as unworthy of God's love as we can be of yours :

Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned ; behold, the Judge standeth at the door—(James v.)

Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, at his coming, shall find watching for and serving him—(Matt. xxiv.) The night is far spent, the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on

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the armour of light—(Rom. xiii.) Wherefore, brethren, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless; abiding in Christ, that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be shamed away from him at his coming.

Criticism of the Glasgow Confession of Faith.

H. MACKINTOSH said he thought the third clause should read, 'Every one must agree to maintain that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and rose again.' With that alteration, he was quite willing to take the Glasgow document as a complete summary of his faith. As it at present stood, it merely stated that Christ had procured salvation, but did not express that this was obtained by his death.

W. ELLIS said he had felt considerably disappointed at the intimation which had been made by the Chairman at the opening of the meeting, that there was to be no discussion. Not that he desired discussion; but he had understood that, on the previous evening, it had been arranged that they should meet to discuss, in the first place—not what was the individual faith of those present—but what was the faith revealed in the Scriptures; instead of which, it now appeared that it had been decided to begin at the other end. If he were asked whether he agreed to the statement drawn out by the Glasgow brethren, he should say that he did not, as he considered it was entirely imperfect. It lacked the very element that had caused the gospel to be announced. It was the introduction of sin and death into the world that had caused every promise and arrangement of God to be made, and the document in question ignored this. The Aberdeen document implied this, but the Glasgow one did not. The Glasgow paper said, 'The words, "Son of the living God," when properly understood, may lead us to contemplate Jesus as our life-giver;' but, on the other hand, they might not lead to such a contemplation. He looked upon this as a radical point. For his own part, when he was baptised, he believed that he was a mortal being, a descendant of Adam, and inheriting death from him. He

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believed in the announcements of the prophets, and of Jesus himself, that he was the life-giver. Jesus came for that purpose, and the life that he brought to light was to be obtained through believing that he was the Messiah, the anointed Son of God. He believed these things, and in consequence had been immersed into the name of Jesus Christ, that he might attain to that life at the resurrection, when the Lord should return. He did not see this, or anything like this, stated in the Glasgow document. He merely mentioned this as one objection to be found with the confession.

It having been suggested that he should state all the objections he had to the document,

W. ELLIS said that he had not had sufficient time to examine carefully all the statements in the document, but from the examination he had given it, he was perfectly satisfied that it was defective on a most important point. He would not recognise as a brother, any one who did not know that he was a mortal being, and acknowledged the Scripture to that effect—that he obtained life only through Jesus Christ, God's appointed medium.

G. DOWIE said he had already spoken for himself; but as some hesitated, and would not speak, he might say that the amendments to, or rather the developments of, the statements contained in the two documents, he did not deem contradictory. Further, that he had been cognisant of the baptism of William Norrie, his brother John, sisters Isabella Pearson and Maria Henry, upon a substantially similar confession to that contained in the two documents.

George Dowie's Belief Called in Question.

W. ELLIS said he had been given to understand that George Dowie, a few years previously, in Nottingham, had discussed with Robert Roberts on quite the opposite side of the life question from that he had just been advocating. Whilst Robert Roberts argued that man was naturally a mortal being, George Dowie had contended that he was not.

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G. DOWIE explained that this must be a mistake. It was true that, when in Nottingham, he had a lengthy conversation with some of the brethren there, and particularly with Robert Roberts, upon the subject of eternal life; but he certainly had not advocated the doctrine of natural immortality, or even expressed any doubt upon the subject; because, ever since the year 1852, there had been no doubt in his mind about the matter. This was what he had told Robert Roberts at the time he first heard of this, a few weeks previously; and it must have been owing to some hallucination, or some unaccountable misunderstanding, that such a statement had come to be made and circulated.

W. ELLIS said he would like to have more evidence in support of George Dowie's explanation.

A. FORDYCE suggested that perhaps it might be difficult to produce evidence just at that moment.

W. ELLIS said he did not expect to get such evidence at that meeting; but the circumstance he had mentioned, taken along with other things, had produced an impression upon his mind which was not erased. As another objection, he mentioned the fact that, some time previously, George Dowie had written an article upon 'The Phrenological Bearings of the Christian Faith,' in which he wound up with the expression,

This dome of thought, this palace of the soul.

He would allow George Dowie to put his own construction upon this expression, but he would ask what the soul was if the head were its palace?

A. FORDYCE—I doubt you Edinburgh folk are far too learned for us here—(laughter).

G. DOWIE explained that the words in question were a quotation from an English poet. He confessed that he sometimes made quotations from poets without distinctly knowing what they meant.

W. ELLIS—What do you mean by it?

G. DOWIE—Is it necessary that I should explain?

D. CHRISTIE—I think not.

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Misunderstandings and Explanations.

W. PEARSON—I think this explanation would come properly in the latter part of the day. So far as I understand the arrangements made last night, I think the Chairman is labouring under a mistake in our manner of proceeding this day. It appeared to me that it was decided we should first ascertain whether we are all of the one faith, and immediately after that we should consider what those things are which nullify the faith. According to the explanations of the Chairman, however, that particular portion of our business comes after the breaking of bread. If this is to be the case, it is of no use for many of us being here, for we cannot decide as to the fellowship of some until after this question has been disposed of. With Brother Ellis, I have to say that this confession of faith (the Glasgow document) is more imperfect than any that has as yet, so far as I am aware, emanated from believers in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It is more indefinite than any I have as yet seen; and consequently, were I asked if I was willing to break bread upon this, I would emphatically say, 'No!' for I should wish to know better what is meant by certain phrases which it contains. There are condensations in it which I must have detailed before I can say 'Ay' to them. For instance, we are told that we must believe 'the things concerning the name of Jesus as the only faith revealed for salvation.' It seems rational to me, after the reading of the Bible, to inquire, 'Salvation from what?—and to what? Salvation!—why do we need salvation, pray? What is upon us that we wish lifted from us? and what are we saved to?' That from which we are to be saved is never mooted in this confession. Jesus Christ is said to be the only Mediator between God and man, and a mediator implies that there has been a disagreement between the parties; but I find no allusion to this in the confession. The document says, 'The words, "Son of the living God," when properly understood, may lead us to contemplate Jesus as our life-giver.' Here is a quotation from Scripture, but this is no

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proof to me that those from whom this confession has emanated believe that Jesus is the life-giver in the Bible sense. I have seen the necessity, when people quote Scripture, of demanding an explanation of what they mean. It is a well known fact, that the causes which have produced this confession of faith from the meeting assembling in this place are not to be found in the use of the water in baptism, but in the effects of the use of it. The nature of baptism never has been the subject of dispute with us. This confession does not explain what the brethren meeting here mean by baptism. An explanation has been given, but I will get all Glasgow to admit the same thing by quoting Scripture without giving an expression of opinion upon it. All the parties acknowledging this confession demand immersion in water, but they deny that it has the effect of bringing us into connection with the name of Jesus, which I do. This is one reason why I say it is a very imperfect confession of faith with regard to baptism. Many other objections could be urged against it; and although it should be found to be all right, there is still the other matter to be considered—even if the one faith is held by an individual, may he not believe other things which go to nullify it? When that question comes up, I will be able to prove that many who could make a far better confession than what we have here, hold things that nullify every confession that could be made.

J. CAMPBELL, as a member of the Bath Street meeting, said he was not aware that a confession of faith was to be produced that day, for subscription by those assembled. He did not know whether it was intended merely for the strangers or for every one. If the latter, he felt quite in a dilemma, and did not know what he could say about it, as there were certain things in it with which he did not agree. The document purported to be the confession of the faith of the brethren meeting in the Mechanics' Institution, Glasgow, but that must surely be a mistake, for he was a member of that meeting, and had not previously

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heard anything about the confession in question. At a former period of their history, a similar document had been produced, but he understood that it had been burnt, and that it was never to be brought up again. He had many objections to make against the present document, but it would be better not to state them then.

A. FORDYCE explained that Brother Campbell had been unwell for some time, and was not at the meeting when it was decided to adopt a confession of faith.

W. NAPIER said he believed all that was contained in the document, and a great deal more; but as he had objections to breaking bread with those assembled, and at the same time did not wish to give any annoyance, he would content himself with withdrawing, without assigning his reasons for so doing. He had on former occasions said that there was no opportunity for growing in knowledge in that meeting.

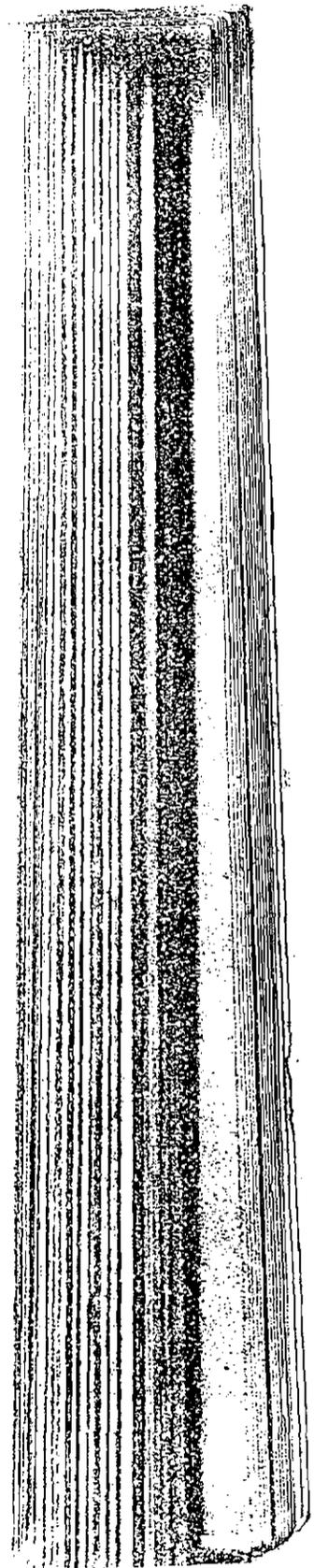
Assents to the Confession of Faith.

A. FORDYCE then stated his faith at the time of his immersion; and having expressed his willingness to answer any questions that might be put to him, several were proposed by William Pearson, to all of which he gave answers.

W. PEARSON urged, as an objection, that Allan Fordyce, at the time of his immersion, believed that he was possessed of inherent immortality.

A. FORDYCE—I can only answer Brother Pearson in the language I used to the Campbellites—namely, that at the time of my immersion I believed I no more had naturally immortality than a dog or a cat has.

The whole of the assembled company then, in succession, gave a statement of their faith, and it was found that they were unanimous in adopting the aforesaid documents, with such explanations and amplifications as had been given, as expressive of their faith, and as a right basis for fellowship. Some reservation, however, was expressed by a few as to the act of fellowship, till the standing of all was



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tested, in relation to holding views which might nullify that faith; and also till it was satisfactorily shown there were no other disqualifying circumstances in any case.

The meeting then adjourned for a short interval.

AFTERNOON.

On re-assembling, the company partook of a repast, after which the conference was resumed.

The Edinburgh Differences.

W. ELLIS then rose and said—I presume it is well known to all here, that I, along with several other brethren and sisters in Edinburgh, left the fellowship of the meeting we formerly recognised as holding the faith in Edinburgh, and that we assigned certain reasons, some of which were given in brief, for so doing, but did not deem it necessary at that time to specify all the reasons for our leaving; and a great deal of advantage has been taken of this fact. We did not deem it necessary to specify the whole of our reasons to those to whom the published letters were written, as these reasons had repeatedly been brought before the meeting, and had frequently been discussed there. In consequence, however, of a positive demand made by those meeting in Surgeon Square, a letter was written by the brethren then meeting in Union Street, and now meeting in the Calton Convening Rooms, specifying certain things, and stating certain objections, because of which we could not hold fellowship with them as a meeting. In the letter that had previously been received from the meeting in Surgeon Square, the reasons were demanded, and here they are (Letter No. 7):—‘We had special reference to the literal mode of interpreting the prophetic Scriptures, taught by Brethren Dowie and Laing’—others I might mention, but these are the principal—‘and exemplified in their teachings from 1 Thess. v. 1, Rev. xi, 3 and context, Rev. xvii. and xviii., &c.’ 1 Thess. v. 1 says: ‘But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.’ Au

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exposition of this by William Laing was to the effect that there are no times and seasons, and therefore there was no use in Paul writing about them. That was the meaning Paul intended to convey to the Thessalonians.

G. DOWIE—As William Laing is not here, perhaps you will confine yourself to the other person.

W. ELLIS—It does not matter though William Laing is absent; if there is any one in the whole brotherhood who holds these sentiments, my remarks apply to him as well as to William Laing.

G. DOWIE—Does William Ellis ask us if we endorse these sentiments of William Laing, then? For my part, I distinctly repudiate the statement. I assert that there are times and seasons.

W. ELLIS—I mention this passage because we had special addresses upon it, and it is to the special understanding of it that I allude. Rev. xi. 3: 'I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.' George Dowie intimated in his exposition, that these were two human men. The next passage is the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelations. In these two chapters, the apostacy is symbolised by a city called Babylon the Great. These brethren teach that the village of Hillah, somewhere near the Euphrates, shall yet merit the title; or, in other words, that Babylon is yet to be built upon the banks of the Euphrates—is yet to become a mother of harlots, yet to slay the apostles, and yet to fulfill all that is written in these two chapters concerning it; whereas the angel of the Lord taught John that the city was then reigning over the kings of the earth—in John's days. Another reason is, the whole teaching of these brethren concerning the manifestation of the man of sin of 2 Thess. ii. They hold this to be a human man who has yet to appear upon the earth. If I in any way misrepresent, I shall be corrected. I think all the Scriptures used by these brethren for the purpose of defending this exposition—that he is yet to be manifested

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three and a half years in the land of Palestine, in which he is to build the Temple, to establish the daily sacrifice, to set up the worship of the true God, and therefore to become the one who shall merit the title of Antichrist itself, as it is implied in this passage—are wrested out of the meaning intended by the Spirit of God. This was in existence last year, is still in existence, and other things have been added since. Last year, at the annual meeting held in Edinburgh, it was stated by some who were present—I think by John Duncan of Dundee, and David Lawson of Newburgh, and I am not sure whether by Allan Fordyce or not—that, in order to believe the Gospel of the Kingdom, it must be believed that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand 1800 years ago. I mean to say that any man or woman who holds that the kingdom was at hand then, in the sense proclaimed by the prophets—as an after-resurrection manifestation—subverts the purpose of God. It never was intended to be at hand at that time in the sense explained by these brethren, for God's works were known, and that from the beginning; and all that He intended to do has been done. The resurrection did not then take place, and the kingdom could not be established until this was effected, and this one fact shows positively that it was not at hand. Another proof is that the Gentiles were not brought in, which must be effected before the kingdom in its glorious manifestation could be at hand. Therefore I maintain that any one who maintains that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, as expounded by these brethren, is a subverter of the truth. The man who has learned the 'at hand' element in the gospel since he was immersed—George Dowie is one, I do not know of any others—has apostatised from what he was immersed into, and consequently believes another gospel from what he believed then. George Dowie has circulated that, and lectured upon it, and I think his views are in accordance with those propagated by Allan Fordyce in the *Messenger*. I therefore say that I cannot hold fellowship with any brother, or any church,

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which holds these notions. There is also stated in the confession of to-day, what is very ambiguous to me—namely, that persons who believe and are baptised receive the Holy Spirit. This, of course, is for those who believe it to explain: I do not know that any one now receives the Holy Spirit in the sense in which the Scriptures state it.

A. FORDYCE—Is that an objection?

W. ELLIS—It is not an objection to the same extent as the others I have stated, which I hold as standing objections.

A. FORDYCE—Before going any further, I would ask William Ellis what was the gospel that Jesus and his apostles preached; for he, along with us, subscribed to the statement that every one must be baptised, 'after having confessed his faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, as preached by Jesus and his apostles.' The preaching of Jesus and his apostles is to be found, I presume, in the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—do you believe that?

W. ELLIS—I do.

A. FORDYCE—I want a clear understanding that this teaching was concerning the Kingdom of God; and if this is admitted, and if it was preached as being at hand, I want to know from William Ellis what was the thing predicated concerning the Kingdom of God.

W. ELLIS—I agree with the statement in this confession (alluding to the Glasgow document), which is a statement of what every one who comes here must believe. I presume that every one who made this confession did it intelligibly, because a confession of faith in an unintelligible sentence is no faith. Those who believed Jesus were those who understood; and the same is to be said of those who believed the apostles. The matter that was presented to them was, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' or near. What I understand by this is, that throughout the prophets, God had invariably shown that the resurrection must necessarily come before the kingdom. If Jesus

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Christ preached that the kingdom was at hand, he did not mean his disciples to understand that it was to come before the resurrection, and consequently it would not be at hand in that sense. He preached that the kingdom was at hand in the sense of developing heirs, and he gave them a sample, on a small scale, of what his kingdom should be. His disciples fell into the mistake that his kingdom would immediately appear; and, to correct this mistake, Jesus told them that the Son of man should go into a far country, to receive the kingdom, and to return. The kingdom was present in the manifestation of the power of God; and this same power, which is the inheritance of the saints, will become theirs when they inherit the kingdom.

A. FORDYCE—What, then, is to be understood by the words, 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all nations for a witness, and then shall the end come?' Do you still hold that the Kingdom of God at hand, as preached by Jesus and the apostles, was the power of God, manifested in the working of miracles? And is that power of God the Gospel of the Kingdom, which was afterward to be preached in all nations for a witness?

W. ELLIS—I think so. Jesus and his apostles were witnesses, and they preached this to the world, as Paul testifies, so that their sound had gone into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. They preached for a witness, and another witness has not appeared since that end came.

A. FORDYCE—Then you absolutely deny that the kingdom was preached as at hand?

W. ELLIS—In its present power and manifestation, I absolutely deny that it was so preached.

G. DOWIE—William Ellis has said that Brethren Dowie and Laing have exemplified the 'literal mode of interpreting the prophetic Scriptures, by certain teachings from 1 Thes. v. 1: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you."' And it is affirmed that William Laing, in his public teaching in Edinburgh,

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said there were no times and seasons. I must have been absent from the meeting on the day on which this was spoken. I was present one day, however, when he spoke on this passage, and he read another verse, which afforded an explanation of it: 'But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.' I think that was the substance of what he said, so far as I heard that day. But I am not hear to answer for what William Laing teaches, as if it affected our fellowship to-day. I think either William Ellis must have quite misunderstood him, or else he refers to an utterance upon a day when I was not present.* I have no objection to answer for what I have spoken myself, either to hold by it or to set it aside. It has been urged that, in the church in Edinburgh, I taught that the two witnesses spoken of in Rev. xi. are two 'human men,' as they have been called, which is perhaps a solecism; but that they are two men called 'prophets' is what I have always believed, and will continue to believe, until I receive some distinct intimation, more than I have at present, that they are to be understood in a different way. I hold—and seven years ago taught in the church—that the two witnesses spoken of in Rev. xi. are two prophets, because they are so called—(ver. 10)—and the term 'prophet,' so far as I am aware, is always applied to men or persons. I do not remember having used any

* Anxious for correctness in all things, we have applied to Brother Laing, who furnishes the following note:—'The purport of my remarks on 1 Thess. v. 1, 2, was to the effect, that in ver. 2 Paul gives the reason why he had no need to write to these disciples regarding "the times and seasons." That the reason he assigns is not that he had already fully instructed them in regard to "the times and the seasons," but that they knew "perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." That knowledge, on their part, rendered it unnecessary for him to write to them about "the times and the seasons;" but the knowledge he refers to relates not to "the times and seasons," but to "THE DAY OF THE LORD," that it "so cometh as a thief in the night." That knowledge would naturally keep them constantly on the watch, so that, while the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, it would "not overtake them" unawares, but find them, like faithful servants waiting for their Lord. Seeing they "knew perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh," and would, therefore, be constantly waiting its approach, he had no need to write to them about "times and seasons." Those who wish to know my belief fully, regarding the proper position of the church in regard to the Lord's appearing, will find it recorded in the tract, "The Return of the Lord Jesus and the Hope of the Early Church," or *Gospel Witness*, pp. 176-82.—WILLIAM LAING.—Foot-note in 'The Messenger' Report of July Meeting.

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phrase expressive of their human (in contrast to divine) character; but I may have done so, and may even have gone a little further and suggested who these men might be; but as this has not been referred to, I will not allude to it. What William Ellis has asserted respecting what I have said in the church in Edinburgh is quite correct, but I cannot see that it subverts the faith. Again, I think it must be *my* teaching respecting Babylon that he refers to, for I do not remember William Laing speaking about it. Here is what I wrote about it in the April number of the *Messenger* last year, in a short article entitled 'A Contribution to the Geography of the Apocalypse':—

BABYLON, OR BABYLON THE GREAT. (Chaps. xiv. 8; xvi. 19; xvii.; xviii.)—In the days of the vision of John, Babylon was a city of such importance that it harboured great numbers of Jews, and was the seat of a Christian Church—(1 Pet. v. 13). Between four and five centuries afterwards, we learn that from the Jews there proceeded the most voluminous of all their immense rabbinical books, the Babylonian Talmud. This was promulgated A.D. 500. Since those days Babylon has had a varying fortune, like most Eastern cities; it has suffered a wasting away, but now seems to be experiencing a revival. Amid the ruins of the ancient walls and fortresses of the Babylon of old, is the town or village of Hillah, which in 1833 had a population of about 12,000, having nearly doubled its numbers in the previous twenty years. This growth in such a place, and without any appreciable commerce to stimulate it, is wonderful. Is it not significant also? We have no history of a downfall of Babylon since the days of John; should we not look for it to attain such prosperity as to warrant the designation 'Great,' before the days of its terrible doom? Once, indeed, it bore that title; so that the apocalyptic designation is not new—(Dan. iv. 30).

Let it not be supposed that this is a mere gratuitous speculation. Reference to the olden prophets makes it apparent that Babylon is both to have an existence and a great downfall at the time of the restoration and exaltation of Israel. Its existence is apparent from such passages as Micah iv. 10; Is. xiv. 1-4; Jer. l. 4. The parallelism between Jeremiah's and John's prophecies is so complete

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that there is no avoiding the conclusion that they both refer to the same time and same events. Read together and compare Jer. l., li., and Rev. xvii. and xviii.

This I wrote deliberately, and I thought over the subject years before it was written. It will be observed that, in what is here written, I have gone upon this principle—a principle upon which I am strongly inclined to act to the end of my days—that, in order to understand the Scriptures, the only proper clue we can have to the correct comprehension of what is spoken, is to have a clear understanding of the subject of which it is spoken. The subject in the passage I have referred to, I take to be Babylon, because it is so called; and whatever difficulty we may have in understanding it in that way, a greater difficulty appears to me to be caused by losing hold of the name. It is to Dr Thomas I am indebted for this principle, which has been a kind of guiding star to me in the reading of the Scriptures. 'When,' said he to me, 'you read in the Scriptures concerning Zion, and Jerusalem, and Israel, you must understand Zion, and Jerusalem, and Israel to be meant, and refer to these places or people, and not speculate upon them as referring to anything else.' I apply the same principle to the Apocalypse that I apply to Isaiah; and when I read about Babylon, I understand that it is Babylon that is meant. I am not aware that, in my public teaching in the church, I have said that Hillah shall yet merit the title of Babylon, and I do not say so in what I have written here, for Hillah is Hillah, and Babylon is Babylon. As to the teaching concerning the Man of Sin, I never spoke of that in the Edinburgh Church so that it does not concern me.

A. FORDYCE—Respecting what William Ellis has laid to my charge, I have not changed since my baptism, and—

W. ELLIS—I did not say that you had.

A. FORDYCE—I am just going to plead guilty to the charge you have brought against me, and I feel it a privilege to do so. I will just remind the brethren here,

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that, before I came from Dundee to Glasgow, I sent them a copy of a pamphlet I had written, entitled *Elements of the Prophetic Word*, by a Working Man. That work was in the hands of most of the brethren in Glasgow, and also of most of those in Edinburgh at the same time. I received from the whole of the brethren in Glasgow their congratulations upon that pamphlet, in which the Kingdom of Heaven is set forth as strongly as in anything I have since written.

Personal Objections.

W. ELLIS (addressing George Dowie)—I accept your explanation as an honest one, but in my estimation it quite unfits you for my fellowship. I have no faith in any one who holds the literal system of interpretation, of which George Dowie has just given a specimen.

A. FORDYCE—You have no faith in him as an expositor—is that what you mean?

W. ELLIS—I have no faith in his brotherhood. I have been satisfied about it long ago, and it is now patent to all who are here.

The CHAIRMAN—Are we to understand that William Ellis cannot hold fellowship with any who hold these views?

W. ELLIS—Certainly.

The CHAIRMAN—As the time agreed upon for consideration of this subject is nearly expired, if any one has anything else to bring before this meeting which will disqualify any one for fellowship, let him do so at once.

W. ELLIS—What I have already mentioned are only specimens of the system of interpretation to which I object. Here is another. George Dowie holds—(he will correct me if I am wrong)—that the whole of the Book of Revelation has to be fulfilled after the day of the Lord's appearing, and that the seven churches have had no existence yet. Is that a fact?

G. DOWIE—No.

W. ELLIS—Well, I have heard this advanced by some who hold themselves to be brethren.

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A Question of Time.

W. NORRIE—Will William Ellis tell us when he first came to consider the figurative interpretation of prophecy an essential condition to fellowship? The literal system of interpretation, charged against George Dowie, has been adopted by some of the brethren in the Edinburgh meeting for many years, and I never, until to-day, understood that it was regarded by any as subversive of the faith.

W. ELLIS made a lengthy statement in reply to this question, the exact purport of which could not be gathered. It was understood to be an enumeration of the evils resulting from the system of interpreting prophecy which the speaker had been deprecating, and the necessity of preserving the faith from teaching which tended to undermine it.

J. FRASER inquired if Brother Norrie was satisfied with the answer which William Ellis had given him.

W. NORRIE said he was not, and he again put the question to William Ellis, remarking that, as the teaching alleged to be subversive of the faith had existed in the Edinburgh meeting for a great number of years—(of which Brother Ellis must be well aware)—he (W. Norrie) wished to know why or when Brother Ellis had first come to regard it in such a light.

W. ELLIS again replied to the question at some length. The answer was to the effect, that he was perfectly well aware that the literal system of interpreting prophecy had been practised in the Edinburgh meeting for many years, but it was not until recently that he had come to see its pernicious tendency.

More Personal Objections.

W. PEARSON then rose and said that he objected to the fellowship of Allan Fordyce, because that individual considered a belief in man's naturally mortal condition, previous to baptism, was of no importance. When he (Pearson) was about to be baptised, and a confession of

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his faith was asked, he commenced with the immortality question, which he looked upon as the A B C of the gospel; but he was stopped by Allan Fordyce, who told him that matter was of no consequence, and asked what he understood by the Kingdom of God. Pearson gave the man credit for not meaning what he said, but supposed he should be asked about the immortality question after stating his faith concerning the Kingdom of God. But neither Allan Fordyce nor David Christie, who was with him, asked what were his ideas regarding the natural state of man. This fact was sufficient to convince him that Allan Fordyce's mind was not in reality in harmony with the Bible meaning of life in Christ. It might be urged, however, that he had condoned the offence, as he had been in fellowship with Allan Fordyce since; but he had another fact to mention, which confirmed him in his conviction respecting Allan Fordyce's views on this subject. Some time ago a Protestant lecturer against Popery had delivered a public lecture in Glasgow, in which the question of the immortality of the soul was considered. Fordyce was present on the occasion, and at the close he stood up and made a few remarks on the lecture, in which he uttered these words: 'We are not a body composed of individuals who all believe one thing regarding this question; some of us believe one thing, and some another.' On this he had challenged Fordyce, in name of the meeting then assembling in Howard Street, for putting them in a wrong light with the public. The excuse was, that the statement was perfectly true, and when proof was demanded, Fordyce said that there was a brother—he was not quite sure whether he called him a 'brother,' or a 'person,' or an 'individual'—who had already got into the fellowship of the brethren in Edinburgh or Aberdeen—he forgot which—who did not understand the life question. This individual had been baptised and received into fellowship, and yet held the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Here was another proof of Allan Fordyce's want of understanding; and it showed that

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those who insisted upon the necessity of understanding this doctrine did not understand it themselves. After some further remarks in a similar strain, Brother Pearson said he objected to the fellowship of Mrs Bright, one of those present, for the following reason:—One Sunday afternoon last summer, he had been standing speaking to her on Glasgow Green, when George Mills, a man well known to many in that room, passed them, upon which she remarked, 'There is a real Christian.' In answer to inquiries by him, she said she considered him a Christian because of his excellent life and conduct, and not because he had confessed his faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and been baptised upon that confession. [Here Mrs Bright attempted to make a statement in explanation, but she was informed that she need not trouble herself to do so.] W. Pearson continued, that, although Mrs Bright might say that she believed all the things contained in that document, and fifty more, he could not have fellowship with her. To say that a man was a Christian, without first knowing that he was a Baptised Believer of the things of the Kingdom of God, was deliberately to deny her own confession of faith. This was an instance in which a person might hold the faith, and yet believe other things which nullified it. W. Pearson next objected to the fellowship of William Smith, for the following reason:—He had been present at the conversation between Mrs Bright and himself, to which he had just alluded, and in reference to what he (Pearson) had said, observed that he had not known until that afternoon that such ideas were held by the meeting in Bath Street, and he promised to see to the matter, and to cause either these views or Mrs Bright to be expelled from the meeting. He had not done so; and this, Pearson held, amounted to a denial of the faith on Smith's part. If these reasons were not considered sufficient to disqualify any one from fellowship, all he could say was that he thought it would be hopeless to attempt to prove that anything would disqualify from fellowship.

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Replies to Objectors.

A. FORDYCE, in answer to the accusations brought against him by W. Pearson, repeated his conviction on the life question which he had expressed in a former part of the day, and, in explanation of the apparently unimportant position which he had assigned to the subject among the things concerning the Kingdom of God, urged that the doctrine of the non-immortality of the soul was never placed by the Lord Jesus, or by his apostles, on an equality with the Messiahship of Christ.

W. SMITH, in reply to what had been said respecting his denial of the faith, admitted that the conversation had taken place, as stated, but denied that he had said he should see either these views or Mrs Bright expelled from the meeting.

Some conversation took place on this matter between the two individuals concerned, but it was of a purely personal character.

'The Messenger of the Churches' Repudiated.

G. CREE then said that he also must decline to take part in the breaking of bread with those assemblies. The reason why he thus declined was because of certain articles which had been published in the *Messenger of the Churches*. Amongst other statements in this magazine to which he objected was one to the effect, that the whole of the Apocalypse had yet to be fulfilled from the 4th chapter.

G. DOWIE stated that the *Messenger* was not to be taken as the expositor of the faith of the several churches collectively, but of the belief of the writers individually. He did not hold himself responsible for anything that appeared in it unless his signature was appended to it, or it was given as a quotation from his writings, or from something he had said.

W. ELLIS said that, as the *Messenger* had been mentioned, he desired that his name, and the names of those brethren and sisters associated with him in Edinburgh,

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Some conversation took place on this matter between the two individuals concerned, but it was of a purely personal character.

'The Messenger of the Churches' Repudiated.

G. CREE then said that he also must decline to take part in the breaking of bread with those assembled. The reason why he thus declined was because of certain articles which had been published in the *Messenger of the Churches*. Amongst other statements in this magazine to which he objected was one to the effect, that the whole of the Apocalypse had yet to be fulfilled from the 4th chapter.

G. DOWIE stated that the *Messenger* was not to be taken as the expositor of the faith of the several churches collectively, but of the belief of the writers individually. He did not hold himself responsible for anything that appeared in it unless his signature was appended to it, or it was given as a quotation from his writings, or from something he had said.

W. ELLIS said that, as the *Messenger* had been mentioned, he desired that his name, and the names of those brethren and sisters associated with him in Edinburgh,

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might be withdrawn from it, as they could not be identified with the teaching which it contained.

G. DOWIE—You mean that you do not intend to continue as subscribers to it?

W. ELLIS—No; we desire it to be understood that we are not connected with it in any way, as we cannot acknowledge its teaching.

Another Decided Objection.

G. CREE having still urged his objections to the fellowship of the brethren assembled, after repeated questions had been put to him, he was understood to say that it was with sorrow he could not recognise as brethren those who followed the literal plan of understanding the prophecies.

The CHAIRMAN expressed great regret at hearing such a statement made by any one, and deplored the divided condition of the brotherhood which it was calculated to produce.

It being now half-past five o'clock, there was another short interval here.

EVENING.

The conference was resumed at six o'clock.

The Breaking of Bread.

The first matter to engage attention was the breaking of bread. William Ellis, William Pearson, William and Mrs Clark, William Napier, and Gavin Cree were not present while this was being done. After the memorial ordinance had been observed, brief exhortations were given by David Christie, George Dowie, James Mackinlay, and Allan Fordyce.

A Condemnation of the Schismatics.

A. FORDYCE, in the course of his address, strongly condemned the step which had been resolved upon by those brethren who had declined to break bread. It was painful to think that those around him had been cast out of fellowship by those who had formerly recognised them

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as brethren. They had also been charged with 'subverting the purpose of God;' but that was clearly a mistake on the part of the speaker, for God's purposes could not be subverted by any one. The speaker must have meant that they perverted the words of God: the purpose of God would be accomplished whatever man might do. Referring to what had been said in the former part of the day respecting the kingdom being at hand, he said it was true that the kingdom was preached as being at hand, and it did not appear; but in the same way the destruction of Nineveh had been predicted after forty days; and yet the forty days expired, and Nineveh was not destroyed. He spoke in a particularly solemn manner of the serious position which those brethren had assumed who had kept back from the breaking of bread. They had virtually lodged an appeal to the Lord Jesus against their former associates, which appeal must remain until the Lord returned. He would not be in their position for ten thousand pounds.

During the latter part of Allan Fordyce's remarks, William Ellis, William Pearson, and Gavin Cree re-entered the meeting.

The Kingdom of Heaven at Hand.

J. CAMPBELL made some lengthy remarks respecting what Allan Fordyce had said about the Kingdom of Heaven being at hand, and taking exception to some of the statements he had made.

A somewhat irregular conversation upon this subject thereupon ensued, in which several persons took part. In the midst of it, as the time was passing, George Dowie asked to have a hearing for a paper on the subject of divisions, of which he had given notice at the preliminary meeting on the previous evening. The disputants in the 'at hand' discussion, however, were so absorbed in the controversy, that George Dowie had been on his feet for some time, paper in hand, before the opportunity was given.

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GEORGE DOWIE ON THE EDINBURGH DIVISION.

G. DOWIE then proceeded to read his paper, which he did with great distinctness, giving some of the passages with marked emphasis. The paper was as follows:—

Preamble.

I have waited till I could get the largest audience of brethren which Britain can assemble to hear my deliverance on this momentous question of division: and while I have misgivings as to my ability to present matters with that clearness which is needful, I have no lack of confidence as to the uprightness and fairness which shall characterise my statements.

Questions Affecting the Status of the Churches.

I cannot pretend to enter into the merits of any other divisions than the one with which I am most familiar, and which more immediately affects me personally—the disruption in Edinburgh. But I know that the principles which are at the root of it are questions which may soon enough harass the whole brotherhood, and even now have begun their rankling evils among several communities which once were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment—questions, in short, which affect the whole status of the churches in Britain.

The Disruption in Edinburgh.

It is now a fact of more than a year's standing, that there are two assemblies in Edinburgh professing to be based upon the apostles and prophets, and seeking to maintain and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints—conspicuous from others avowedly lent to the same work by an earnest pleading for the importance of the things concerning the Kingdom of God. Those two assemblies are not at one for reasons which I shall now endeavour to expiscate.

Correspondence between the Two Companies.

As far as possible, every one of the brethren in the country was last year furnished with a copy of a correspondence which passed between the two companies, and which gave, as far as could be elicited, the accredited and

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authorised reasons for the secession of one of them from the other. The correspondence and its accompanying documents, consisting of only public and deliberately written papers, and the series being complete, it was presumed that they contained the whole merits of the question at issue.

The Reasons for Secession.

Since that time, however, the original parties who concocted and subscribed the one set of documents—namely, those who seceded—have frequently given others as the *true* reasons for forsaking those with whom they had long been associated. The published correspondence shows two main reasons for secession—first, because there were certain social arrangements which were offensive; and second, some brethren had taught views of Scripture prophecy which were deemed by others to be inaccurate. With this there was both the tacit and expressed admission that the matters of ‘the faith and hope’ remained the same. Now, the brethren remaining immediately and thoroughly removed the offensive arrangements whenever it was known that they stood in the way of unity and fellowship. This is referred to at length in the published correspondence. The other matters of difference they were not prepared to charge, because, as they involved no differences on the real ground of union, and had existed for seven years during a period of the most perfect unity of faith and harmony of action, there seemed neither reason nor practicability in attempting an alteration.

The Only Reasons.

As it had been distinctly and unequivocally stated in some of the letters that those who had left had given the whole reasons for leaving, saying, ‘We have no additional reason to present you with beyond that contained in our second letter, which to us appears insurmountable, unless we compromise what God has revealed in the Scriptures concerning us and the nations of the earth.’ We who remained were satisfied to accept these as the true, and could not speak of or acknowledge any others.

The True or the False Reason.

Why it is, however, that those who have left have so frequently told that these are not the *true* reasons, is to us a matter of astonishment. That they should be

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ashamed of the only authoritative utterance they have given on the case is to me inexplicable, unless it be that for such a step no reasons can be given of which a sensible man should not be ashamed, or that the false reason is designedly set forth in order to accomplish some end.

Fellowshipping the Seceders.

Whatever be the reason, it is matter of fact that brethren from various parts coming to Edinburgh have visited and had fellowship with those who withdrew. I take the liberty of noticing one brother, because of the part he has taken and the principles he has enunciated—I mean Robert Roberts of Huddersfield. The Sunday he was in Edinburgh he attended their meetings, and at their instance delivered two public addresses in their hall. The reasons which he gave for thus homologating their position were that, although the step taken by the secessionists was wrong; yet the point at which they had arrived was right, because the different views of matters entertained by some of those who remained were calculated to undermine the faith. Thus, it is averred that 'the faith' not only refers to and includes the doctrine concerning the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the hands of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah who died for sin and who rose to life, but also such untaught ideas as the year-day theory for interpreting the prophets, the Roman Catholic character of the Apocalyptic Babylon, and an unliteral mode of reading the bulk of that book of Scripture called the Apocalypse.

The True Grounds of Difference.

I would not think myself justified in thus publicly referring to these things as the opinion of a private brother—an individual—if it were not that they appear to me to be the true grounds of difference, and which those he has associated with and their sympathisers have studied to set forth as sufficient to warrant any irregularity in breaking up fellowship. It has come to this now, that those principles which we so long rejoiced in, and on which we may have plumed ourselves—unity of faith in all cardinal matters summed up in 'the gospel,' but a perfect freedom of judgment on such matters as, lying beyond that, were, or at least were deemed to be, not so clearly revealed—that these principles, I say, were to be set aside

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as unsound or incompetent, and that an effort should be made to reduce to a perfect unity of opinion those who at the same time are recognised as having perfect freedom in the formation of their judgment of matters lying on the margin of our faith.

The Pleasure of Uniformity.

This much I have said for such brethren as are of sufficient strength of mind and depth of intellect to stand questioning for the part they have taken ; but in this, as in all similar cases, there have been a much larger number led away by dim and very inaccurate notions of what is right. A very common apology for secession has been the supposed advantage thus obtained for edification. I must say, however, that what is pleasant to the individual, rather than what is right, in the main has been the test of such edification. Alas ! it is not only those who inaugurate a false principle, but those also of weaker judgment, who are misled. In this case, is there any difference between the two?—for if the first cannot bear to hear expressed an opinion different from their own, or cannot stand to have their own put to the test, is it not the same seeking for the *pleasure* of uniformity which decides them, as has decided those, to go where and to do what will afford more enjoyment without effort, and give pleasure rather than profit?

Too Little Respect for Dr Thomas.

Some there are, also, who have taken the part of the dividers because the others seemed to treat Dr Thomas with too little respect ; because they did not abandon their ordinary church meeting to attend upon his addresses ; because they did not invite him to their meetings who said he would not come, and because they would not be hand-and-glove with one who, without hearing both sides of the matter, pronounced judgment for those who had made division, and advised all lovers of truth to follow the example of the seceders !

Dr Thomas Rebuked for his Style of Speech.

It should now be mentioned—what was not once referred to in the printed correspondence—that there were, and subsequently have been, strong prepossessions in favour of the person and opinions of Dr Thomas. Two years

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secured, a doctrine utterly at variance with the plain teaching of the inspired apostles of the Lord—that the resurrection of the dead saints is to be a reviving of their natural life; or that what is sown a natural body is also raised a natural body. In Edinburgh, as in many other places, those who have an unqualified admiration of Dr Thomas have set themselves assiduously to leaven their own minds and those of others with the process of ratiocination by which this anti-apostolic dogma is supported; and the day may not be distant when the reception of it may be taken as the test of fellowship.

A Voice of Warning.

Under these circumstances, I think it my duty to lift up a voice of warning against the reception or entertainment of such a fatal error. This once received, the whole fabric of Bible truth becomes loose and uncertain. We have looked on passively and tolerated with a becoming patience the inculcation of empirical modes of interpreting occult or symbolical prophecies, because we thought we had no authoritative disclaimer in the Word itself; but this is a gloss on a plain truth, a denial of a positive statement. Can we view it with indifference—we who affect to be the champions of the earliest and most divine truth?

Caution Against Dr Thomas's Teaching on the Resurrection.

With the personal character of Dr Thomas, we have not now to do; but with his public teaching we have to do. There is no mistake as to it. In private companies with aim in Edinburgh and elsewhere, the aforesaid topic has been discussed, and the arguments by which it is sought to be propped up have been handled and talked over. And it is presented to us as a matter to be received as truth most precious. It is not enough that one who may have instructed us—one who might, in the height of adulation, be called our spiritual father; it is not enough for us that he enunciates any idea; he must speak according to the Word of the Living God, as spoken by His servants of old. The Bereans were commended for testing the words of the apostles; but this is no apostle—shall we receive his dictum without question? Yet this is what is sought to be imposed upon us by those men who seek to lead us again into bondage and impose upon us the

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thralldom of creeds and clergy. Brethren, let us beware. All experience assures us that our safety consists in adhering closely to the very words of Scripture, especially in such a vital doctrine as that of the resurrection from the dead. Compared with this, the hypothetical predictions of the fate of European nations, their battles, intrigues, rise, and fall are as nothing. Brethren, let us be wise, and make a just discrimination among matters which affect our well-being not only in the present life, in our association with one another, but surely are intimately connected with our well-being in the world to come. Shall it be that, for the fancied illumination we may receive regarding French revolutions and the overthrow of Turkey, we endanger our enjoyment of the Kingdom of God? Never!

William Ellis Criticises George Dowie's Paper.

W. ELLIS, who sat next to George Dowie, and who seemed to be painfully affected by the reading of this address, when it was finished rose to reply. He said it was his thorough conviction that the facts mentioned in this paper were very much overdrawn. George Dowie had been first in his own cause, and had most assuredly created a false impression in the minds of those who had listened to him. It had been charged upon those who had withdrawn from the meeting in Edinburgh, that they had not assigned the true reasons for doing so, at the time of leaving, but had kept back some of them. It was indeed true that, in the letters which they had sent, they had not given every item of reason, because they had not deemed it necessary to do so; but the strength of the reasons, he contended, would be found in the published correspondence. He did not think the brethren then present were able to form a correct judgment respecting what George Dowie had just said, but he hoped they would exercise their own discretion in seeking to obtain the means of judging. As George Dowie had not said anything against him (W. Ellis), he had nothing to reply to in it; but as Robert Roberts had been referred to, and, he believed, not correctly, he would just read the following letter he had received from him:—

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[Letter from Robert Roberts to William Ellis.]

Huddersfield, Monday Evening,
June 8, 1863.

DEAR BROTHER ELLIS.—After a quick and, on the whole, comfortable ride on the rails from Edinburgh, I and my little charge arrived here all safely this morning at 8.20, and found all well.

On the way, I thought much of your proceedings in Edinburgh, which I had previously only viewed at a distance. The result of my visit has been to impress me with a sense of the good that has resulted from the recent commotions in Edinburgh. The truth has had a great revival amongst you—a revival which could not have taken place in the old connection; and now you bid fair to answer to the proper character of the true ecclesia—a *light stand*, a community permeated by *the truth*, held with *full assurance*, and unmixed by the starving speculations indulged in by the unlearned. Yet among the churches you will stand at a disadvantage. The true merits of your position will never be appreciated. You will be regarded in the light only of the 'documents,' which do not set forth the whole position of the question, though they deal thoroughly enough with the particular points of the objection raised at the time of secession. The broader question that lies behind all the technicalities of that discussion will never be appreciated by the churches as a whole. The real issue which, from the beginning, I have always maintained, was to be found in the spiritualities that existed in the original meeting, will never be apprehended by the majority of brethren at a distance. Yet of this you may well be independent. The gain is all with you. Purity of doctrine, deliverance from spiritual chill, scope for up-building in your most holy faith, are more precious far than the approval of a fallible judgment, and may encourage you in the position you have taken as earnest contenders for the truth of God in its unsullied purity. I can only say they are happy who are privileged to hold a place in such a truth-loving and truth-maintaining community.

My kindest love to all the brethren and sisters with you.

Your very affectionate brother in Christ,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

W. Ellis continued, that it would be seen from this letter what Robert Roberts thought of the position which he and those along with him had now assumed. Robert Roberts had resided for some time in Edinburgh, and understood the character of the meeting very well, and those present had now heard his opinion respecting the separation.

George Dowie and Robert Roberts Misunderstand Each Other.

G. DOWIE said this was not the first time he had heard this letter of Robert Roberts's read, as, through John Norrie, he had seen it previously. He was very much surprised at its contents, because Robert Roberts, when

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recently in Edinburgh, had several times in his hearing said that he disapproved of the brethren in Calton Convening Rooms separating, and that he had said so to themselves at Portobello. He did not know what to think of such contradictory statements.

W. ELLIS remarked that there was no mistaking what was now the mind of Robert Roberts, as stated in the letter which he had just read.

The Real Point at Issue.

G. DOWIE observed that it seemed the brethren in Edinburgh were now at issue on a most important matter—the principle of the literal interpretation of prophecy. He did not know of a more important matter, unless it were the truth of the doctrine of the kingdom itself. One way of getting quit of the difficulty was by saying, 'I have nothing to do with that book or these words;' but that would not do. The principle for which he contended was, that the subject of a prophecy was to be understood from the thing stated: that was to say, that the words of the prophet should be received in what might be called their literal or natural sense.

The Case of James Lamb.

A. FORDYCE asked William Ellis if James Lamb had altered his views on these subjects, as he knew that James Lamb at one time was of the same mind as himself, and yet he had been given to understand that James had been for some months in fellowship in the Calton Convening Rooms.

W. ELLIS said he would explain the circumstances. When James Lamb came to Edinburgh some six months previously, he (W. Ellis), knowing him better than any one else, they both having come from the same place, he had some conversation with him; and finding what his views were, he recommended James to go to the Surgeon Square meeting, as he should there find the teaching more in accordance with his own mind. James accordingly did

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go one Sunday, but that was quite enough for him, as he came away thoroughly dissatisfied, and determined not to go back. They in the Calton Convening Rooms, believing that he had a good deal to learn, and might be set right on those matters in which he was wrong, yielded to his request, and admitted him to their fellowship, in the hope that he would profit by the instruction which he should thus receive. He continued in their fellowship for some time, and it was believed that he was making progress in the truth, when he one Sunday, in the meeting, attempted to teach those very things that were deemed subversive of the faith. This, he was informed, could not be allowed, and he was again told that he ought to go to Surgeon Square, which was just the very place for him, as he would there be allowed to teach anything, no matter how absurd or unscriptural! To this James had said that he would rather go to the Church of Rome than to the Surgeon Square meeting.* He was now about to leave Edinburgh and go to London in search of employment. When this had become known, it was suggested to him to go to Glasgow instead of London, as there he should have the advantage of the society of the brethren; but to this he replied that he would not do so, as the meeting in Glasgow was as bad as the one in Surgeon Square, in Edinburgh.*

A. FORDYCE said he had seen a brother who had come from Edinburgh during the previous week, and in speaking of James Lamb he had assigned quite a different reason for his going to London in preference to Glasgow. This person said that when it was suggested to James that he should go West instead of South, he answered that if he did go West, he should only be able to find employment of the kind he desired in Gourock, where he would be as much alone, so far as the society of the brethren was concerned, as in London; and as he would be able to get higher pay and lighter work in the South, he had resolved

* [James Lamb afterwards flatly contradicted this].

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to go there. No objection, so far as he was aware, had been made to the meeting in Glasgow.

W. ELLIS said he had merely given the reason as it had been received from James Lamb's own lips.*

Appeal for the Judgment of the Conference.

G. DOWIE then asked whether the assembled brethren, having heard the paper he had read, were prepared to endorse the sentiments he had expressed respecting Dr Thomas's teaching on the subject of the immortalisation of the saints at a period subsequent to the resurrection.

Some conversation ensued upon this question, but no one proposed the endorsement of the sentiments which had been enunciated by George Dowie, while several very decidedly demurred to do so. As the hour was now pretty far advanced, however, and the time had nearly arrived at which a number of the brethren and sisters had to take their departure by train, the inquiry did not receive the attention which its importance demanded. The meeting, consequently, was brought to a close, about nine o'clock, without any formal expression either of approval or disapproval having been given upon it.

A Memorable Meeting.

And thus terminated the most important of all the many annual aggregate meetings of the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God which have been held in this country. It marked what was 'the parting of the ways' with some who introduced a new standard of belief as a necessary condition to fellowship. It was worthy of notice, however, that while there were now such regrettable differences among the brethren, their deliberations were characterised throughout by the most perfect good feeling on the part of every one present. No unpleasantness of any kind occurred, and no expression calculated to offend or annoy escaped from any of those who differed so widely on such important matters.

* [James Lamb afterwards flatly contradicted this].

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of the earth to be governed. This is an intelligible mode of making the Word of God of none effect by a conclusion. But I think it cannot be maintained that anything short of this can be held to subvert the faith. If there be no such direct antagonism between the two things as to be mutually destructive the one of the other, there can be no ground for alleging subversion.

But even supposing that a brother entertains an opinion that is deemed contradictory of the faith, did it never occur to any one that, while such opinion might be subversive of the faith, the faith is as certainly subversive of the opinion? And even supposing the brother's hold of his opinion to be as strong as his hold of the faith, would it not naturally occur to one imbued with even a small measure of the love that thinketh no evil, and hopeth all things, not to speak of brotherly kindness, that the faith in such an unequal struggle must gain the victory, seeing that it is based on plain Scripture testimony, 'that a child may read and understand,' whereas the opinion may be a mere inference drawn from obscure statements, about which different minds will often disagree.

But this is an extreme case, and one that I am not aware has any existence among the brotherhood. There is not the slightest approach to it as regards Babylon, the Man of Sin, Times and Seasons, &c., about which so much has been said. Those who view Babylon as a literal city bearing that name, and not the apostacy, believe as firmly as any that it shall be destroyed, and its power suppressed, to make room for the Kingdom of God to be established on the earth. Those who consider the Man of Sin to be a literal man and not a system of iniquity, believe that he shall be destroyed by the brightness of the coming of the Lord. Where is there any room for the charge of subverting the faith here? Are not the two things quite compatible, supposing the literal view correct? And supposing it to be erroneous, is not the faith still preserved intact? Will not the coming of the Lord to establish his kingdom be as certain whichever view of Babylon, the Man of Sin, the two prophets, or the times and seasons, shall prove to be correct? And is not the faith of the literalist regarding this as firm as that of the symbolist? How, then, can the one faith regarding the establishment of that kingdom under the Messiah and the saints, over Israel and the nations be affected in any way by any

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such debateable questions. Is it not admitted by those who put so much value upon these prophetic details, that a vast amount of study is necessary for their comprehension, involving mental endowments and knowledge of history possessed by very few?—whereas the things of the faith 'stand out in such bold relief that a child may READ and UNDERSTAND.'

But it seems to me the danger of subverting the faith lies in another direction. For instance, Brother Ellis holds that the words of Jesus, 'As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be,' were fulfilled in the Roman army coming against Jerusalem in A.D. 72. Is not this a parallel case with those who, in the apostles' days, declared the resurrection to be past already, and so overthrew the faith of some? and with the Swedenborgians, who say the New Jerusalem has already come; and with the Roman Catholics, who believe that the millennium is past, it having ended about the time of Luther, who, with his coadjutors, they view as Gog and Magog. If the same mode of interpretation be applied to predictions of the coming of the Son of Man that is thus applied to the words just quoted, where is there any foundation for the faith regarding the coming of the Messiah in person to immortalise his saints and establish his kingdom? For if this plain passage, occurring in a prosaic, didactic discourse, professing to give an answer to certain questions of the disciples, may be said to speak of a proxy coming of the Son of Man, why may not Daniel's vision—(Dan. vii. 13)—John's vision—(Rev. i. 7)—which occur in connection with symbols, be explained on the same principle, and the personal coming of Christ be thus set aside, and a coming of something else substituted for it?

While I present this as the legitimate result of this principle, I do not call those who use it subverters of the faith; for I know that those who hold it accept the literal view of Dan. vii. 13 and Rev. i. 7. But it is the nearest approach to subversion of the faith that I am aware of among the brotherhood. And I say this the more freely, that I clearly see the force of Jesus' words to lie in their having exclusive reference to his personal advent in the clouds of heaven. They were uttered as a caution to his disciples against being deceived with reports of his presence in connection with the siege of Jerusalem; and he

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gives as the reason, that when his coming should take place, it would be unmistakeably apparent as the lightning's flash. The passage referred to is Matt. xxiv. 23-7.

I forbear to characterise the spirit of intolerance exhibited in the quotation from the report of the aggregate meeting in Glasgow, but would respectfully submit to the whole brotherhood, that the time has now come when it is the duty of each to settle for himself and herself what is the individual duty they owe to the Lord, to the truth, to themselves, and to their brethren in this matter. Are we to 'STRIVE TOGETHER for the faith of the GOSPEL,' before a world lying in wickedness, or to magnify theories, at the best uncertain and changeful, as if they were the very Gospel of Salvation?

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1864.

Change in the Character of the Conference.

The aggregate meeting for the year 1864 marked a new departure in the nature of these annual gatherings. The printed *Messenger*, by giving each month a notice of anything of interest that had transpired in the various churches, had now entirely superseded the congregational reports that were a special feature of the first aggregate meetings. In accordance with a wish that had been very generally expressed, it was now tacitly agreed that in future, as far as possible, 'business' should be excluded from these meetings, and the time devoted mainly to mutual exhortation and up-building in the faith by means of addresses.

The meeting was this year held in Edinburgh, in the Union Hall, 98 South Bridge.

The Visitors.

There were 14 brethren from a distance present, in addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting—as follows:—

CROSSGATES—John Muir.	ALLAN—Allan Forlyce, and James Fraser.
CUMINESTON—Charles Reid.	KIRKCALDY—Robert Boyd.
CUPAR—Archibald Dowie.	LEWES—William Norrie.
DUNDEE—John Duncan.	NEWBURN—David Lawson.
DUNFERMLINE—Robert Tennant.	TRANENT—George Kerr and William Smith.
GLASGOW—David Christie, Mrs Christie,	

SATURDAY.

According to usual custom, a preliminary meeting was held on the evening of Saturday, 16th July, in the house of George Dowie, 12 Beaumont Place. At this meeting the programme of the proceedings was decided upon, and other necessary arrangements made—John Duncan, of Dundee, being appointed to preside at the afternoon meeting.

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SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The brethren assembled in the Union Hall at eleven o'clock on Sunday forenoon, July 17th.

The Breaking of Bread.

The first matter to engage attention, after the opening services, was the observance of the Lord's Supper, which was attended to after a few appropriate remarks by John Duncan and William Laing.

ADDRESS BY ALLAN FORDYCE.

ALLAN FORDYCE then rose and said—

Brethren, the subject upon which I intend to speak is our relation to each other, and what constitutes our bond of union. Our relation to each other is derived from our birth. We are the children of the same Heavenly Father, and we are all the servants of the same Lord. Our union with Christ constitutes our union with one another.

Baptism into Christ.

'Ye are the children of God,' says Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, 'by the faith which is in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ.' Allow me to remark, in passing, that the words 'of you' have no representative words in the original; and, consequently, that as many as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. This holds good in the corresponding passage in the letter to the Romans, where it says, 'For as many as have been baptised into Christ have been baptised into his death.' It is the baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, then, that constitutes us one with him, and one with his Father—constitutes us children of God; for by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, and by that spirit we are enabled to cry, 'Abba, Father.'

Union with Christ.

If, therefore, my baptism into Christ makes me a child of God, it also makes me brother to every other member

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of the body of Christ. Let this be well understood—that if my baptism makes me a member of the body of Christ, it also makes me a brother to every other member of the body of Christ. So long as I hold my position in Christ, I maintain my relation to the members of his body. If we who are assembled here together are all united to Christ—if we are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus, having each been baptised into Christ, and therefore having put on Christ—our relation to each other comes from that ordinance and by that appointment. We are, then, by God's appointment also united to one another by that very act, so that we are not united together from choice, because we like this one or dislike that, but because we have rendered the obedience of faith, and have thus become members of the body of Christ.

Separation from Christ.

If, then, our union with each other is derived from our union with Christ, our separation from each other must also be caused by separation from him. I wish you, brethren, to think seriously of this position. Tell me, is this a true position? Have I described our relation rightly, or have I not? If the position I have defined is true, we cannot give our assent to the separation of any brother from the brotherhood until he has separated himself from Christ. Nothing else can warrant us to give our assent to the separation of a brother from the brotherhood. If we thoroughly understood our relationship, our position in the sight of God, and our own worthlessness, we would tremble to pronounce bulls of excommunication upon one another.

Speaking the Same Thing, and Being of the Same Mind.

Paul says, in 1 Cor. i. 10: 'Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.' But many will tell us that this is very good, but that we are quite unfit to carry it out in the present state of things. It has not been thoroughly tried, however. How is it possible, when we think so very diversely, that we could all speak the same thing? To have the same mind—the mind of God—we will require to have the very same words. The

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very same words will follow if we have the same sentiments. We all know that a Roman Catholic will not speak a dozen words before we detect that he is a Roman Catholic, and the same may be said of a certain class of Presbyterian and Methodist preachers. So also will we be able to recognise the members of the body of Christ; for, when properly instructed, they will speak the same thing.

Bible Things in Bible Words.

But how is this to be arrived at? It must be by speaking the words which the Spirit of God has taught us, for this is the only means by which we can all speak the same thing—speaking of the things of God's Kingdom in the words which God's Spirit has taught us. If we do so, there will be a oneness in our nomenclature and in all our sentiments. This was one prominent doctrine which was introduced into this country by Alexander Campbell, in the year 1826, and was one of the fundamental principles of the body who call themselves the Second Reformation. The principle is one that is tenable—one that we are able to maintain, and one that it is our duty to maintain. I give a quotation from *The Foundation of Christian Union*, by Alexander Campbell, which is in these words:

We choose to speak of Bible things in Bible words, because we are always suspicious that if the *word* is not in the Bible, the idea which it represents is not there; and always confident that the things taught by God are better taught in the words and in the names which the Holy Spirit has chosen and appropriated, than in the words which man's wisdom teaches.

I think it would be well for us still to hold by this as a principle for our guidance—that we will stand to the words of the Spirit to learn the things of God. Not only to retain the things, but also the words, which the Spirit has taught us. This is what the apostle has in view when he says, 'I beseech you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that ye all speak the same thing.' We received our religion from God, having been taught it by His Spirit; and, in speaking of it, therefore, we should prefer God's words to those of men.

Unscriptural Nomenclature.

In the work to which I have alluded, the writer has enumerated a great many words which have crept into the language of professing Christians, such as 'the Holy

Trinity,' 'conditional election,' 'free will,' 'original sin,' 'human depravity,' 'sovereign grace' 'visible church,' and many others. These words have come into use in consequence of a departure from the simplicity which is in Christ, and forsaking the words which the Holy Spirit has taught us. It does not affect our purpose, nor does it alter our position, that the author from whom I have quoted has himself departed from the principle: we can still hold by that which we have held all along with him. He has written many articles upon 'Christianity'—original, modern, and apostolic; and yet the Bible teaches us nothing whatever about 'Christianity.' It is one of those phrases which the Spirit of God has not taught us, and therefore the more we avoid it the better. By some people the Word of God has been divided into what they call the 'moral' law, the 'judicial' law, and the 'ceremonial' law. These are words of man's invention; and, by laying them all aside, we shall come to a unity of sentiment and language which has never yet been shown forth by any body of men. Again, some men are accustomed to speak of one part of God's Word as being 'doctrinal,' and another as being 'practical'—just as if the teachings of Jesus were not practical.

Dr Thomas Alleged to be in Fault.

Now, although we may have discarded these phrases, in order to arrive at a pure and sound speech, there are others of a similar kind which we may fall into. We have some of our brethren speaking of 'The Frog Power,' 'The Lion Power,' 'The Sin Power,' and a great many other such phrases. These are the words which gender strife—words which the Spirit has not taught us, and which lead to division. Let us, therefore, forsake those words which cause strife, and let us speak of the things concerning the Kingdom of God in the words which the Spirit has given us. We have also such a phrase as 'four-square multitudinous unity.' Will God's description of His own house—of His own city—not be sufficient for us? I trow we may be content with God's description of what belongs to Him, without puzzling our minds to find out new-coined words and phrases, to represent those things which are represented to us in His Word. It is because I see these things coming in and growing upon the brethren who have professed their faith in the Kingdom of God that I now refer thus openly to them.

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Our Position.

It is high time we should openly speak our sentiments upon these things. We have no necessity to act as counterfeits to any system of theology. We have made a profession—aye, and a confession—of the name of Jesus Christ, of which we need not be ashamed; we do not hold by the doctrines or precepts of any man or set of men, but we hold our religion directly from that God who has given it to us; and we hold our position in Christ by strict union and communion with our Head, whose place is at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens. We have no name and no connection with any city on earth; and no matter whether it be Rome, or Edinburgh, or New York, all places are alike, and we are now in the possession of access to God through Jesus Christ, and that directly, for there is one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, himself a man.

At the conclusion of Allan Fordyce's address, it being now one o'clock, the forenoon meeting was brought to a close.

AFTERNOON.

The company separated for an interval of an hour and a half, re-assembling at half-past two in the hall in Surgeon Square to partake of a repast which had been provided for them. This having been finished, George Dowie, with the aid of a map of the brotherhood, gave an interesting account of a visit which he had recently paid to a number of the churches and isolated brethren in different parts of England. Shortly afterwards, the company returned to the Union Hall, where the business of the conference was resumed, John Duncan presiding.

ADDRESS BY JAMES CAMERON.

JAMES CAMERON, who was the first speaker, said—

The Christian Brotherhood.

The Christian brotherhood is composed now, as of old, of various heterogeneous elements. If not Greek and Jew, Barbarian and Scythian, yet at least of individuals as diverse in their relations and characteristics. But these, having a common faith and baptism, by which they are

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united to the Head, are all one in Christ Jesus. Still, the peculiarities of the individual unit are apt to bulk unduly in the mind's eye, and to warp the sympathies common to the brotherhood. One's own peculiar opinions, habit of mind, and whole idiosyncrasy, are liable to be regarded with a kind of philoprogenitive affection; and, even where opinions are adopted at second-hand, they often receive the love bestowed upon an adopted child.

The Faith and Hope of the Church.

We are all more or less tinged with the spirit of the sectarianism around us, and it is founded on human deduction raised to a level with the express Word of God. The church is built on the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; and the faith and hope of the church are derived from the divine testimony in its plainest and most natural sense, without interpretation—that is, by taking the words of the Spirit with only such definitions as are furnished by the Scriptures. But now we find matters apart from the one faith, and things obscurely revealed which are made plain only by dint of human wisdom (too often discovered to be human folly) added to the one faith, and insisted on as essential to church fellowship.

Born by the Word.

Here arises the necessity for some potent influence which shall counteract the waywardness of the head. This is found in the heart—not the heart of the natural man, but the honest and good heart, in which the good seed—the seed of the kingdom—has been sown, in charity, or love, 'out of a pure heart.' Says the Apostle Peter: 'Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. . . . And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.' We are, then, children of a common Father, not in virtue of agreement in opinion regarding matters beyond the limits of the faith, but as being born by the Word—that Gospel of the Kingdom of God and name of Jesus the Christ.

The Struggle Between the Flesh and the Spirit.

In these circumstances, it is plain that this brotherly spirit will often have to contend with the flesh, the affections (or passions) of which are too often enlisted on behalf of its thinkings, to the subversion of brotherly love and the 'fellowship in the gospel.' Jesus and his apostles seem to have anticipated this struggle between the flesh and the Spirit. Said the Lord: 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.' And his apostle, Paul, exhorts the Corinthians to 'covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet,' says he, 'I show unto you a more excellent way.' The more excellent way he indicates in this style: 'Charity suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked,' &c.—(1 Cor. xiii. 4-8). With such commendation he also speaks of the power of prophesying above that of speaking with tongues, as if it were the best gift—'he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.' In chapter xii. of this epistle, he shows that the divers gifts were from one Spirit, as means to an end, which is the profit of all. When he says, 'covet earnestly the best gifts,' and yet there is a more excellent way, he shows that love, though not a gift of the Spirit, is yet superior to all—even the best. In chapter xiv., he shows the superior utility of prophesying—for edification of the church. This virtue is also inscribed to love in chapter viii.—'knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up.' The good of others being the grand end, to prophesy to edification there must be love in the heart to impel to do good, and to ensure a Christ-like manner in the doing of it, on which more depends than is generally supposed. Mere talk, however eloquent and entertaining, which may gratify itching ears, will not satisfy empty and aching hearts. In this passage we notice one quality which he uses three different words to express—that of bearing or tolerating: 'suffereth long, and is kind, . . . beareth all things, . . . endureth all things.' If this quality were not an absolute necessity, we can hardly conceive of the apostle thus exhausting his

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vocabulary to express it. It is a necessity to the continued existence of a community so heterogeneously constituted as the church.

The Discussion of Debateable Questions.

In another category, he shows that, if love is not a gift of the Spirit, it is a fruit of the Spirit; and uses other six words, with love at their head, all expressive of this bearing quality: 'Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance'—(Gal. v.) In contrast to this, observe that, in enumerating the works of the flesh, out of seventeen words used, eight are characteristic of the spirit of intolerance and division—'Hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions [divisions], heresies [sects], envyings.' It is a grave inquiry, and worthy of attention, how far the discussion of debateable questions should be allowed in the church, seeing it is liable to endanger the harmony and unity of the church, by provoking some of those same works of the flesh. Rather let us be 'rooted and grounded in love;' rather let us labour to be 'knit together in love;' rather let us 'forbear one another in love, and endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' and thus show that our faith works by love—the divinely appointed 'bond of perfectness,' or perfect bond. On this point, the apostolic testimony is very full; and while neither the knowledge of Greek, nor facility in the use of logic, is needed to apprehend it, it is really the most difficult part of the disciples' work. Let us put forth all our energies to ensure success. If we know these things, happy are we if we do them.

ADDRESS BY DAVID LAWSON.

DAVID LAWSON was the next speaker. He said he liked the good old Presbyterian fashion of selecting a text as the subject of a discourse, and he would therefore read 1 John ii. 7, 8, on which to make a few remarks.

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment, which ye had from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

Eternal Life.

In his Gospel, John says: This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,

whom Thou hast sent.' It is a great affair to us to know whether we have eternal life. We have it not by nature, but we have it as the gift of God. It is an important question to each of us, 'Has God given me that gift?—shall I live for ever?' John says in the 3d verse of this same chapter, 'Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.' Then what an important thing it is to know what His commandments are, because we cannot keep them unless we know what they are.

An Old Commandment.

It is evidently to those commandments by the keeping of which we do know that we know Him that the apostle refers when he says, 'Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment;' and so on. He built upon the foundation that had already been laid. 'Thou bringest strange things to our ears,' some parties said; and that was against their receiving it; but John says that he preached no new commandment, but an old commandment, which they had from the beginning. The apostles proceeded like cautious, prudent men in preaching the gospel. Those who had itching ears would go and hear the apostle John if he would tell them some new thing; but if not, they would say, 'We will go to Hymeneus and Philetus, for they will give us something new.' John, however, says: 'I write an old commandment.' He does not tell us directly and explicitly what the old commandment is. He leaves us to find it out, and I think there is sometimes a benefit in finding things out: we think more of them, and hold them more firmly after we have found them. It was an old commandment they had heard from the beginning; it was therefore an old commandment that had been spoken from the beginning. Not from the beginning of the world, for they were not there to hear; but evidently from the beginning of the gospel. John wrote to Asiatics, and they might have heard it when they came to worship at Jerusalem; as we read in Acts ii. that they did. They might also have heard of it from preachers like Apollos, who went forth from Jerusalem to their own cities and countries, and preached the gospel to them, knowing only the baptism that John preached.

The Commandment Heard from the Beginning.

I am inclined to think that the old commandment which they had heard from the beginning was just this—'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' There is an allusion to this old commandment in the third chapter of this same epistle, in the 11th and 12th verses, where John says: 'This is the message—[margin, 'commandment']—that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.' It may be asked how the thing I have asserted agrees with this. Is 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' a commandment why we should love one another?' It is exactly so. It means to cease from evil, and learn to do well; to cease from hating your brother, and learn to love him. As explained by Jesus, let him that has two coats give one of them to him that has none; that is, love one another. Observe with what propriety it is called an old commandment. It is as old as the race of man, and, I suppose, a good deal older. Cain and Abel were under it, and so were the Jews. It is the commandment contained in what we call the second table of the law. The apostle makes reference to the same commandment in the 4th and 5th verses of the first chapter. Look at the connection of this with 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' Cease to do evil, and learn to do well; imitate God, for in Him is no darkness at all. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.'

The Ground of Keeping the Commandments.

It is of great importance that we keep God's commandments on the grounds on which He has asked us to keep them. Some people may say: 'If we love one another, is not that enough? It does not matter on what ground we keep the commandment. Is not keeping the commandment the great thing? Is not loving one another the main thing, whatever we believe?' But love is a fruit that will not grow except upon the tree of faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God, because without faith it is impossible to love one another. Suppose a Jew were to say: 'Well, I think a great deal of the law, particularly of the second table of the law, and I am

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disposed to keep this law, but not upon the ground on which Moses gave it. I am not sure if God brought up Israel out of Egypt and out of the house of bondage.' Do you think that God would have accepted such a keeping of the law? and do you suppose God would accept our keeping of this law otherwise than upon the ground that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand?

The Kingdom of God at Hand.

It has been said by some that the Kingdom of God was at hand when John and Jesus preached the Gospel, but that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews put back the kingdom, and that after Jesus ascended to the right hand of God the kingdom ceased to be at hand. But do the Scriptures not represent the kingdom as being at hand after Jesus had been rejected by the Jews? And what do we make of this passage—(1 John ii, 15-18): 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—he is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God—that keepeth His commandments—'abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time'—it is the last hour—'and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time' or hour. You will here observe that there is in the first place an exhortation to keep the commandment to love one another; and what is it that practically keeps us from loving one another but the love of the world, the undue indulgence of the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life? The gratification of these lusts makes us feel that we have not to give to him that needeth; and therefore the apostle warns us against this, that we may deny ourselves, and have to give to him that needeth, and to do this because the world passeth away, whereas he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 'Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when you fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.' John not only tells us that the world is passing away, but that it has come to the last hour of the world. In Romans xiii. Paul says: 'Owe no man anything but to love one another. . . . Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of

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the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand.' Again he says: 'Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.'

Difficulties about the Kingdom being at Hand.

It may be a difficulty with some people to understand how the kingdom can be said to have been at hand 1800 years ago, and not come yet; but is there no difficulty on the other side? Is it not a difficult thing, for instance, that the day in which the kingdom was to appear was at hand 1800 years ago, but that the kingdom itself was not to appear? The apostles tell us that the day of the Lord was at hand, and therefore the kingdom was also at hand. When I have to choose between two difficulties, I always prefer the lesser. I do not see any difficulty in this. I have only to remember that the apostle Peter says that 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,' and the difficulty vanishes. I am bound to remember that 'the Gospel of the Kingdom' is 'the Word of the Lord;' and I am bound to remember that one thousand years is with the Lord as one day, and I am bound to apply that knowledge to this fact as a reasonable matter. With man a few years is a long time, but not with God. It may be said, 'We keep this old commandment, to love another, because the kingdom is at hand now, and is not that just as well?' We all believe in the truth that the kingdom is at hand, but we do so on different grounds. Some think it is at hand because they have discovered a particular theory—a year-day theory, as it has been called—by which to interpret the Bible; and by their sagacity and knowledge they have drawn out by inference the fact that the day of the Lord is at hand. This may be right, and it may be wrong, but it is not my ground of my belief; for I believe, on His own word, that the Kingdom of God is at hand. My faith in this matter does not stand on my wisdom, nor on the wisdom and sagacity of any man, but on the explicit testimony of God, and I believe it as God's command.

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The New Commandment.

Perhaps I may now go on with the new commandment, Jesus says in John xiii. 34: 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.' In John xv. 10 Jesus says: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.' Of this commandment, John says: 'Which thing is true in him and in you.' We have the old commandment in common with the Jews—with John the Baptist, the disciples, and with at least some of the heathen, who had the law written in their hearts, and were a law to themselves; but the new commandment is altogether our own—'which thing is true in him and in you.'

The Divine Love Manifested in Jesus.

What thing is true in him? That he beheld us from his throne of glory in the heavens, as sinners, and enemies to Him by wicked works; and he pitied us in our low and lost estate; and being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with Him, but took upon him the form of a man, and was made in the likeness of man himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He loved us, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour; and upon the ground of this great love he asks in return that we love one another as he loved us. 'Hereby perceive we the love of Christ, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.' And if we lay down our lives, everything less than our lives. 'But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' John adds: 'Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.' It formerly was involved in great darkness, among the Jews, the heathen, and even among the disciples; but now the darkness is past, and the true light shineth. Never was divine love so manifested as in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. The cross was the noon-tide of everlasting love, the meridian splendour of divine mercy, and the sun that will never go down.

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ADDRESS BY ARCHIBALD DOWIE.

ARCHIBALD DOWIE was next requested to address the meeting, and gave an earnest exhortation to the brethren to faithfulness and continued exertions in the cause of the truth. A record of his interesting and appropriate address has not, however, been preserved.

ADDRESS BY GEORGE DOWIE.

A Trumpet of Warning.

GEORGE DOWIE then rose and said—After the very agreeable addresses and exhortations to which we have already listened, I feel little disposed to introduce the matters which press upon me; and were it not that I had weighed and determined their importance with deliberation previous to this meeting, and prepared myself to speak upon them, I could not, after those sweet flute-notes with which we have been blessed, introduce the perhaps harsh sound of my trumpet of warning.

Origin and Constitution of the Various Churches.

We have been accustomed to date the origin of our several assemblies to the lectures of Dr John Thomas, in 1848-50, when a large proportion of the earlier brethren had their attention first directed to the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—preached by our Lord and his apostles as the subject of saving faith. The bond of fellowship amongst us, as established at the first, was a common faith in 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' and a subsequent immersion into the name of the Lord. Along with this uniformity of belief and practice, there existed, on the part of many, a difference of opinion on other matters, which, though important in themselves, were not reckoned matters of saving faith; and the holding or expressing of them was not regarded as antagonistic to the most cordial fellowship in our common faith and salvation. Now, however, it is different.

Manifesto by 'The Antipaa.'

We are already familiar with those circumstances which accompanied the separation in Edinburgh. Since then, similar results have been produced in other places; and the progress of these unhappy schisms is apparent in the

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more certain and distinct shape the heresy has latterly assumed, so that its original fragmentary character is now being modelled into the symmetry and proportions of a separate community altogether. That this is the creation of a new sect is apparent: they have issued in their manifesto, to all who read it,* their name and connection. They are 'The Antipas,' the head-quarters of whose testimony is in 24 Cooper Institute, New York City—whose head appears to be the teacher there, who has adopted the soubriquet of 'Antipas.' They have given their creed, and indicated their terms of fellowship in that same document. Many of the evils we have fled from they now resume—a sectarian name and basis, with a man for their leader; and they seem disposed to separate from them all those who will not conform to their peculiar opinions. It is hard to see wherein they differ from other sectaries, except in the particular form of their creed—the same man-following appears, the same spiritualising of many portions of Scripture, while the name they have assumed—'The Antipas'—is made to be significant of that 'opposition to all' which they deem it a virtue to exercise.

A Change of Basis.

I have no hesitation in recording my dissent from a system which, for its support, makes even the facts of history, and the dates of chronology, so ductile as to fit the varying moods of a human judgment. I would not, however, condescend to notice such matters; I would rather have left them to the category of unauthoritative opinions, which, whether held or not, do not affect the faith; but the propagators of them are not content with so modest a place for them—they are classed, in their testimony and manifesto, along with those primitive and undeniable statements of the prophets regarding the coming of the Lord and the restoration of the Hebrew monarchy. The basis upon which we have hitherto built—the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Christ, as given in the Scriptures—appears to be too narrow now; for other elements are introduced as tests of fellowship. That such is the case is apparent; for one brother is denied the privileges of brotherhood because he believes the devil exists; another

* *Yahweh Elohim: or, a Testimony on behalf of Original Apostolic Christianity—Revised in the Nineteenth Century in Britain and America.* By Antipas.

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is cut off because he says that the New Jerusalem is a city; and we all heard, twelve months ago, the statement made by one, that he had no faith in any one who holds the literal system of interpretation. It is evident that there is altogether a disposition to carry matters after a different fashion from what we had at all contemplated at first; and my conclusion from the whole is, that those who have separated from us desire to separate, not only in presence, but in fundamental standing, and there is nothing we can say will prevent them.

The Differences in Nottingham and in Newark.

This much to point out the dangers which threaten us on one side; on the other, we are met with evils less formidable in extent, but no less dangerous in character. Four years ago, the church in Nottingham was in the throes of a revolution, which resulted in a proper assorting of some very incoherent elements which had previously existed together there. That result was a division; but the parties who divided had different faiths, and therefore were properly set apart. With the one party—the church presently meeting in Little Toll Street—we have heretofore held fellowship, for they are built on the same basis as ourselves; but with the other we have had no dealings, for they have ignored, as a fundamental principle, the recognition of the establishment of the kingdom over Israel and the nations, reckoning that not an ingredient of the faith, but a part of truth which may be acquired afterward. Hitherto their standing has been distinctly enough understood, and the churches in general have had no intercourse with them. Now, however, an exception to this appears in the church at Newark, which, through various means, has been induced latterly to divide, and that on similar issues to the assembly in Nottingham aforesaid—a large portion taking part with those strangers in Nottingham, yet seeking to identify themselves with us. When in England, in June last, I had opportunities of intercourse with representatives of all the parties in Newark and Nottingham, and have no hesitation in saying that we should not change our relations at all. Those from whom we have been estranged, because of their establishing a different church basis, we should still keep aloof from fellowship. Those who take part with them, not by accident or ignorance, but with distinct

*Not
Indicated.*

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distinct defence of their principles—do they not shut themselves out from our brotherhood too? And if there are any in any other places who follow the same course, are they not manifestly excluded also? This is the error on the other side to which I call your attention: assuredly as dangerous if not as menacing as the other.

A Choice of Courses.

What are we to do in such a crisis? How shall we be affected when the whole aspect of what was once a compact brotherhood is being changed? Shall we yield to the degrading influence of partisanship, and fall back into sectarianism again? Shall we yield those grand apostolic bases concerning which we have already been so confident? Or shall we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, cultivating that same simplicity in receiving, and valiant bearing in defence of the Word of God, which has made us what we are, and has long ago separated us from the professedly Christian world around us; and while we assert the right of private judgment on unimportant matters, counting that which is distinctly declared for faith to be all important? The answer is manifest.

The Only Safe Side.

We believe that the Kingdom of God is a theocracy on earth, centred in Mount Zion, whose power shall be wielded by Jesus the Christ, his apostles, and all the saints; and we hold this ground in virtue of the purchase of us by the blood of this Christ; and we hope for eternal life at his appearing and kingdom. We have the honour of being heirs with him of the glory and honour of the world to come; and having this hope, we seek to purify ourselves, as he is pure. And all this we believe, and do and hope for, because it is plainly declared and taught in the Word of God. It is by taking that oracle in its simple and obvious sense that we have learned anything; and we have, therefore, such thorough confidence in the 'words' of God, that we would rather abide by them in a wonderfully literal sense, even at the risk of being deemed extremists. It is the only safe side in such matters; and though some of us be cut off or put out of the fellowship of our former friends on this account, yet the rest cannot sympathise with such excision.

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The Prize.

The 'prize' to be gained is 'the high [or exalted] calling of God in Christ Jesus.' What that means you all understand: it is no less than eternal life, glory, and dominion in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in his everlasting kingdom. What a treasure! The course may appear long, rough, and wearisome, and we may have to bear many annoyances, and deny ourselves many alluring pleasures; but all these things, present and behind, are temporal: the joy and glory to come are eternal, and surely worth any sacrifice that mortals can render.

The End of the Race.

And after all, are we asked to do more than men of the world frequently submit to for the treasures of this age? How often do we see them forsaking home and all its comforts to endure hardship and toil in a strange land, to endure—what? A few years of such enjoyment as this world's goods can give. And how often is even that cup of ephemeral pleasure dashed from their lips ere they have tasted its sweetness? I shall never forget an instance of this sort, which occurred in September 1857. The United States steam-ship, *Central America*, bound for New York with the Pacific mails, foundered off Cape Hatteras. The passengers and crew numbered 625 persons. The great bulk of them were returning homeward from the mines of California, hoping to spend the rest of their life in comfort. The wealth on board was immense—upwards of two millions of dollars, which the possessors were now fain to throw away lest its weight should increase their danger. Full purses and treasure belts were hurriedly cast aside by those who, a few minutes before, would have struck down the man who dared to steal the smallest portion. About 500 perished in the waves. No such mishap can befall the treasure for which we run. And if men endure such hardships to gain a reward so uncertain, and at the best so short in duration, what shame and confusion shall cover us in the day of the Lord Jesus, if we grow weary and faint by the way, or for some sensual gratification, Esau-like, lose our inheritance! The end of the race is 'the appearing of the Lord;' for, 'when he who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.'

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ADDRESS BY WILLIAM LAING.

WILLIAM LAING next addressed the meeting. After referring to his satisfaction with the whole proceedings, and his concurrence with the principles advanced by the previous speakers—particularly with the addresses of A. Fordyce and J. Cameron—he spoke substantially as follows:—

The Rule Laid Down by Paul.

The brother who spoke last, in referring to certain evils existing in relation to the brotherhood, enunciated the inquiry, 'And what shall we do?' The proper answer to that question appears to me to be what Paul says he was determined to do: 'This one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' He enjoins his brethren to walk by the same rule, to mind the same thing.' It is not simply unity in the abstract that he enjoins when he speaks of 'the same rule.' The 'rule' he refers to is that which he had just indicated as his own guide—namely, 'forgetting what was behind, and reaching forth to what was before.' Therefore, he says, 'Brethren, be followers together of me.'

Competing for the Prize.

These words, 'reaching forth,' are most expressive in the Greek, and denote the most extreme earnestness, like that of the racer in competing for the prize; or the thirsty camel, which, travelling over the burning desert sands, catches a glimpse of water in the distance, and, with outstretched neck and eager eye, increases its speed to the utmost limits of its remaining strength. With similar ardour did the apostle of the Gentiles pursue the race set before him; and the best thing for us to do in all circumstances, is to imitate his example. When we hear of evils here, and defections there, we are not to sit down by the way and weep, while the prize is still ungained. No; but, taking warning from the errors of others, let us keep the prize in view, and allow nothing, either pleasant or painful, to divert our attention or abate our ardour in running the race set before us.

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demned already—the children of wrath. But we have entered into a new position. We have escaped from condemnation of death through Christ, and must fight the good fight of faith, that we may lay hold on eternal life. It is we, then, who are placed upon trial, and accordingly as we bear the trial will be awarded to us the blessedness of him that endureth to the end.

A Question of Expediency.

THOMAS WILSON expressed his gratification at what had been said, with the exception of George Dowie's paper, which he thought was ill-judged.

ARCHIBALD DOWIE—I do not think the expression of warning against a seen evil should be looked upon with suspicion. The things done are before us, but we do not see all the consequences. Our brother has done well. The Scriptures contain warning as well as consolation, and we should take both. Fear no man; deal kindly with all. Deal faithfully with the truth which we have ourselves confessed.

W. LAING—We can find no fault with the right or lawfulness of introducing such matters as have been referred to, but we may question the expediency of doing so. It is this I understand Brother Wilson to take objection to.

T. Wilson—Exactly so.

D. LAWSON—There is danger of a wrong impression. They who build up the church are like those who built Jerusalem in the days of Ezra. Some like only the trowel; it is as well to have the sword also.

The Kingdom of God at Hand.

A. FORDYCE—There are two views of the Kingdom of God. One is, that the kingdom was set up on the day of Pentecost; the other, that it was set up during the ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth. This latter is an old theory, but now apparently held by some, although in a limited sense. Those among us who hold this doctrine are many. Their doctrine is, that the Kingdom of God was nigh, or come, when Christ was manifested to Israel. Jesus of Nazareth is not the king in the ordinary sense in which a king is the head of a human dominion, but the root and cause and mainspring of the whole matter, and therefore comprehensively spoken of as 'the Kingdom of our father David'—(Mark xi. 10)—which in him came

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GENERAL REMARKS.

David Christie.

DAVID CHRISTIE said—Beloved brethren, though I feel somewhat impelled to say something, yet it is with some degree of trepidation that I essay to address brethren on such an occasion as this. I have been considerably gratified to-day with what I have seen. I have been pleased to hear the simplicity of the faith referred to so frequently, and what we consider absolutely necessary to be believed to become competitors for the glorious prize. These things have been stated with such an amount of precision, that it would seem to place those who let such statements pass in the position of tacitly assenting to them as their understanding of the matter. There has been reference to attacks on the simplicity of the faith by forms of speech not to be found in Scripture. Various things have been referred to as tending to turn aside those who run the race. We have heard of the necessity of believing the Gospel concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Christ. With this I fully concur. We require to believe those things, and to confess them; and then, having done so, to be baptised for the name of Jesus Christ. Among other evils, we have found that it has been maintained, that persons who have first been baptised and afterwards believed, are counted among believers. This is an evil which we ought to set our faces firmly against, seeing there are various places where congregations, professing to be Baptised Believers, have admitted those who were not baptised after believing. In regard to our fellowship and the basis of it, that has been set before us with sufficient explicitness. When we meet with one who believes the gospel, and has been baptised after believing, we dare not refuse his fellowship; and as little dare we accept the fellowship of such as have not followed this course. Those who are of this mind feel that with such they are bound up in one bundle; they are one household; their sympathies, hopes, and feelings are all alike. They rejoice to be in the company of such; and such being their position, they ought to stimulate one another in the Christian race. This, brethren, is a time of trial to us. This is sometimes said concerning the men of the world in general. They are, however, con-

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demned already—the children of wrath. But we have entered into a new position. We have escaped from condemnation of death through Christ, and must fight the good fight of faith, that we may lay hold on eternal life. It is we, then, who are placed upon trial, and accordingly as we bear the trial will be awarded to us the blessedness of him that endureth to the end.

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'nigh' eighteen hundred years ago, not for development, but for offer by proclamation as an individual inheritance. This is the Kingdom of God as presented then to the people as a thing of which there is no remnant. It is no good news to us at all that the Kingdom of God was manifested eighteen hundred years ago. It is our duty still to look for that kingdom, saying, 'Thy kingdom come.' The coming of the Lord Jesus in his kingdom is our joy and our hope—our gospel.

Keeping the Word Pure.

I have introduced the keeping pure and entire the apostolic and prophetic word. I may give some more examples. I find it said the Scriptures must be 'interpreted.' This is the old Roman Catholic doctrine—namely, that the Bible, without the interpretation of the teaching body in the church, is a curse and not a blessing. The word of God—'Thou shalt surely die'—is thus turned into 'Ye shall not surely die.' But 'blessed is he that READETH and they that HEAR the words of the prophecy of this book.' Let us hold to this first principle—that the Word of God, uninterpreted, is the foundation of our faith and hope.

Remembering the Word Spoken.

It has been remarked already, that heresies, and other sins of a similar kind, are among the works of the flesh. Heresy is a choosing. We are purchased, and we cannot do as we like. Elections in the world may be tolerated, but we who have given ourselves to God have not the liberty to do as we like. By the strongest ties we are bound to do what Jesus commands us. Hence all attempts at division, corruption of God's Word, &c., must bring upon us the condemnation of the Lord at his coming. Divisions arise from contention about words to no profit. Hear what Jude says in regard to what had come upon the church: 'Remember ye the words which were spoken.' Are these words sufficient for us to keep us in the truth? I heartily recommend every one to keep to these words. Study them more. The more we study, the wiser we become. I have generally found that those who have been easily led away have been persons who were not Bible readers. Many are not Bible readers as they ought to be. There is a great want of that close and earnest

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searching of the Word of God which is necessary to enable us to stand fast in the faith. We should take some means, as if studying a science, and appropriate a certain portion of our time to this important work, so that the word of Christ might dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and enable us to approximate to the perfect man of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Alexander Davidson.

ALEXANDER DAVIDSON.—I enjoy very much to hear brethren speak so faithfully of the dangers into which we may fall. 'Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand,' seems to embody that truth; and in that kernel there is all those commandments of the Lord Jesus which he gave to his disciples. 'Ye have heard that it was written; but I say unto you.' And while he repeats and quotes the law, his gospel presents finer shades of the same morality. In his doctrine of godliness there is the gospel. I think we cannot have that too much impressed on our minds. The gospel is not merely a testimony for our belief and acceptance, but it embodies the whole doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. This commandment he gave us: while it had been said of old, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery, I say unto you, whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.' This example conveys my meaning. I have been bewildered by giving heed to the writings and commandments of men, and I rejoice that I have been so far delivered from this evil, and been led to value the estimate which the apostle Paul put upon the divine word: 'I commend you to God and the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified.' Let us be studiously careful to keep the simple ordinances which God has appointed. Never let us be absent while our legs are able to carry us to the assembly of the saints.

William Smith.

WILLIAM SMITH expressed the gratification he felt at being present, and the instruction he had derived from the words which had been spoken. He would have much to think upon and speak about for many days to come. He thought such gatherings might with advantage take place more frequently.

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SUMMING UP BY THE CHAIRMAN.

The proceedings were completed by the following summing up by Brother John Duncan:—

An Encouraging Meeting.

It is now full time that this prolonged meeting should be brought to a close. It has in many respects been a satisfactory and cheering meeting, calculated to impress on all of us truths of the very highest importance for our regulation in this dark and disordered world.

The One Body.

We have had chiefly before us these things—that we are a body, one and indivisible, and that it is by God's Word that we have our being and sustenance. We are one body. 'By one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.' In our baptism into Christ we have been made members one of another, even as we are members of Christ—'of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.' How can we seek to break that wondrous unity? How can any tear themselves away from oneness with those who are in Christ Jesus, who sitteth at the right hand of God, and who is even one with the Father?

Divisions and their Causes.

Surely there are some great errors underlying these ruptures and divisions which we so deeply deplore. Assuredly, if it were manifested to ourselves, as we hope it will be manifested to the world some day, that we are the sons of God, division and separation could never suggest themselves to our minds; we would purify ourselves as He is pure; we would esteem one another with an unflinching love, and endure all things for those who are truly princes, and shall be kings in the kingdom that God hath prepared for them that love Him. May it not be that we honour each other on a false basis, or that we, in bestowing our honour, do not have a sufficient respect for the honour that cometh from God only? And may it not be this that causes these schisms and divisions and heresies which have been alluded to to-day? One is honoured, it may be, for unwearied solicitude for the afflicted; another for his successful labours in the defence and propagation of

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the faith; another for his glowing eloquence and fervour, which makes our hearts burn within us in contemplation of the love wherewith God hath loved us, and in prospect of the glory to be revealed in us at the appearing of our coming Lord. It is right that we should esteem and honour those who labour diligently in the Lord; assuredly there is a time coming when they shall be honoured in the presence of God and the holy angels. But are we not apt to overlook that these are but small titles to honour—such titles as we can earn for ourselves—compared with the title to honour which we all possess—the strongest with the weakest, the most gifted with the least gifted of all, an honour which cometh from God, which we have all received from Him, in that we are the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Methinks if we could honour each other truly as such, and care for each other truly as such, no knowledge, no skill in unlocking mysteries, no faith, though it could remove mountains, no tongue of men or of angels, should rend the body of Christ, who gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish in the presence of his glory.

Keeping the Word Pure.

The other subject which has been pressed on our minds may very well be summed up thus: 'The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.' It is a true inference that, since the Scriptures are given by inspiration, the Scripture words, or their exact literary equivalents, are the best words that can be used for the setting forth of any Scriptural matter; and the surest condemnation of any separate teaching, or system of teaching, is that it calls for a new vocabulary and an artificial method of understanding the Scriptures. The words of the Lord are not random or imperfect words. As silver is tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times, so every one of them is pure and tried, and most surely sets forth what God wishes to convey by it. The religious world does not so regard God's words, and hence arbitrary systems of interpretation have sprung up, based upon some human teacher who is supposed to have found the key, but who truly is only 'sib' to them who have

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taken away the key of knowledge. We have met this error again and again, and are ready to face it still. It exalts man to be our rabbi, our leader, our master, when we should call no man on earth master. We have one Master, who is in heaven. The errors around us, with which we have struggled and battled, and which we have striven to rid ourselves of, mostly spring from artificial methods of distilling meanings from the Scriptures, which the Scriptures do not freely yield; and it is much to be regretted that danger should accrue to the brotherhood from such methods—methods from which they had to some extent been freed. Some apply the rack and torture to one part of the Scriptures, to make them utter a meaning that spontaneously they never profess; others torture another portion with the same fruitless result. And no one has any right to claim for his system of interpretation a superiority over that of any other. All have their origin in the thinkings of the flesh, which is not subject to the expressed will—the Word of God—neither indeed can be. Our only course is that which has been so forcibly urged and re-urged upon us, that we should hold fast by the Scriptures, which are given by inspiration, and are profitable to make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished for every good work. The glosses and words of men can never profit us as these will do. Hence let us more and more be Bible readers and students of God's words. Other words may please us better, but they are not reliable; God's words are pure words, and have no dross or imperfection in them.

The Psalms and their Inspiration.

This brings me to the Psalms, which a brother has mentioned in connection with this question. It seems there is a small leaven working—to what results time may, and eternity will, disclose—of this nature. It is said the Psalms are inspired, but they cannot be understood in a literary and critical aspect; that the words of God in the Psalms, divinely breathed, are words which, understood in a literary way (as words must be understood), do not convey God's meaning. I am glad that the whole tone and tenor of the addresses to-day has been against this view. It is an untrue and ignorant assertion. The Psalms either are inspired, and therefore fully equal and ready for any

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literary or critical trial, and quite able, in a literary point of view, to set forth what they were chosen by God to express; or they are defective as words, and therefore not inspired. But if God's tried and chosen words cannot express God's meaning, then sure I am that the unskilled words of those who are not inspired never can approximate to that result. I will say more. I have, during a considerable space of time, made the Psalms an especial part of study, and I have sought to know what their inspired words mean, looking at the matter in a literary and critical point of view; and often, when I have most slowly and laboriously spelled out the meaning of a Psalm in a literary manner, have I been struck with its entire and unexpected agreement with some other Scripture which quoted it, but which I had refrained from referring to in my painstaking examination. I have searched it in the Psalms, and have found that there it certainly holds true that the words of God are pure and tried words, like silver purified in a furnace of earth seven times. Therefore do I repel, with my entire force, the human teaching, fraught with peril and danger, that the words of God are imperfect, although inspired. Such teaching at once reflects the imperfections upon Him by whose inspiration we have received the Scriptures.

The Sum of the Whole Matter.

The sum of all is this: we are few in number—some here, some there, taken out from among the Gentiles to bear the name of the Lord. Let us walk worthy of our high calling. We are one, and we are complete in one, Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. We have one Father, who is in heaven; we have one Redeemer, who died for us, and now ever liveth, who is our advocate in the presence of God. Let us search the Scriptures, for in them we have eternal life: they testify of him who hath the keys of hades and of death. We may learn slowly, but let us learn well, that every thought may be in subjection to Christ. We may have difficulties—in patience they will prove no difficulties, but the great bulwarks of our faith. We may be in danger—let us look to him who overcame, although, like him, we overcome by dying. Let us humble ourselves—One will lift us up. Let this mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus, that he humbled himself through many stages even

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unto the death of the cross, so that we may do nothing in strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind esteem each other better than ourselves. He who will be great must serve; he who will be greatest must be the servant of all. Are we despised of men? What of it, if we are not despised of God, who loved us, and gave His Son a propitiation for our sins? What are men who despise us?—can they compare with us in our destiny or our name? We are men; but we are not only men—we are members of the great family in heaven and in earth. What that means will be manifest some day, to the astonishment, it may be, of both men and angels. May God grant us, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God.

As usual, the proceedings were agreeably varied and enlivened by the occasional singing of 'psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs' in harmony with the important themes which engaged the attention of the company; and all the different exercises of the day were carried out in a spirit of the greatest good-will and brotherly kindness.

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1865.

The meeting was this year held in Edinburgh, in the Union Hall, 98 South Bridge. There was an unusually large attendance of brethren and sisters from a distance, and the proceedings, as a whole, were of a particularly pleasant and profitable character. It proved, indeed, a season of great refreshing to all who were present, and was not soon forgotten.

The Visitors.

There were 16 brethren from a distance present, in addition to the members of the Edinburgh meeting—as follows:—

CROSSGATES—John Muir.

CUPAR—Archibald Dowie.

DUNDEE—William Bain, John Duncan,
David Lindsay, and Anne Miln.

GLASGOW—Margaret Wright.

HALIFAX—John Wilson.

LANARK—James Murray, Robert Murray,
and Thomas Murray.

MUMBLES—William Clement and Catherine Bennet.

NEWBURGH—David Lawson.

SWANSEA—Richard Goldie.

TRANENT—George Kerr.

The Edinburgh Brethren and Sisters.

The Edinburgh brethren and sisters present were as follows:—

Elizabeth Adam, Robert Archibald, James Cameron, Mrs Cameron, Mrs Campbell, James Cleghorn (Musselburgh), John Davidson, Mrs Davidson, Alexander Davie, George Dowie, Mrs Dowie, John Fleming, Mrs Hay, Ann Hogg, Mrs Hughes, James Kerr, Mrs Kerr, Jane Kirkland, William Laing, Mrs Laing, James Lawrie, Mrs Lawrie, George Macbain, James Massie, Mrs Massie, Margaret McKechnie, Robert Miller (Bathgate), Grierson G. Mitchell, Mrs Mitchell, William Norrie, John R. Norrie, Andrew Pearson (Dewarton), Isabella Pearson, Barbara Tod, James Watson, Mrs Watson, William Watson, Thomas Wilson, William Wilson, and Mrs Winter.

Much regret was expressed that Brother and Sister Bingley, from Chicago, who were at that time paying a round of visits to the brotherhood in this country, and who had been in Edinburgh during the previous week, and had several times met with the brethren there, were unable to remain over the Sunday, in consequence of previous engagements.

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SATURDAY.

Preliminary Arrangements.

According to usual custom, a preliminary meeting was held on the evening of Saturday, 10th July, in the house of George Dowie, 12 Beaumont Place. On this occasion the presence of two brethren and a sister from Wales, who were typical of all that is best in the Welsh character, and who had previously been personally unknown to the great bulk of the brethren, gave an added zest to the enjoyment at the preliminary gathering. At this meeting the programme of the proceedings was decided upon, and other necessary arrangements made—Thomas Wilson, of Edinburgh, being appointed to preside at the afternoon meeting.

Tracts.

The subject of the preparation and printing of a supply of tracts, for the purpose of making known the truth, was taken into consideration, and a number of suggestions bearing upon the matter were submitted, and very fully entered into. The result of a somewhat lengthy deliberation by the brethren was a unanimous opinion that it was desirable that those tracts which had been found useful, and were still on hand, should be advertised in the *Messenger*; that others, also deemed useful, but now out of print, should be re-issued; that brethren and churches should be communicated with to ascertain whether the demand for any particular tract was sufficient to warrant its publication; and that this duty should be assigned to Brother William Norrie, who should also be appointed to superintend the printing and supply of such tracts, so that brethren and churches might give their orders to him. It was also recommended that each church should institute a fund for the support of tract publication, which fund could be used for the distribution of those tracts deemed most serviceable.

SUNDAY.

FORENOON.

The forenoon meeting commenced at eleven o'clock, and was devoted chiefly to praise, prayer, reading of the Scripture, the observance of the Lord's Supper, and brotherly exhortation.

The Breaking of Bread.

Previous to the breaking of bread, David Lawson, in accordance with the arrangements that had been made, offered a few appropriate observations.

After this institution had been attended to, John Duncan followed with some remarks, also relating to the death of the Christ, in which he dwelt particularly upon the record that God hath given us eternal life.

Two letters—one from the meeting in Edward Street, Birmingham, and the other from that in 280 George Street, Glasgow—were read to the meeting by the Secretary.

*By the
Religious*

The brethren separated at one o'clock, when there was an interval of an hour and a half.

AFTERNOON.

The afternoon sederunt was opened at half-past two by a simple but sufficient repast.

Psalm Composed for the Occasion.

This having been disposed of, George Dowie read the following psalm he had composed for the occasion :—

Speak out, ye children of the Mighty One, speak out !
In manly speech express His praise ; with ardent song
Give utterance to gratitude. And let each softer note
Of murmuring descant flourish gloriously.

Our Father is THE LORD. He, Israel's God, Supreme,
Incomprehensible, dwelling in light, pervading all :
Sustaining, guiding, and restraining every one ;
Source of all power, all wisdom, and all virtue pure :
With Him the spring of life, with Him the care of all mankind.

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His myriad angels—mighty ones, or those who watch the cradled babe,
With wakeful ear, and with good hand to help, attend on every side ;
Their clustering numbers chain the earth to heaven.
Most careful they to whisper our half-breathed requests
From mouth to mouth in rising grades up to the ear of God :
While our thin canticle, by their rich voice borne up,
Is blown in glowing harmonies within the hall of heaven.

This world and its concerns, in heaven and earth, are all
In angel hands. Their ministry is constant, and their help
Is ever at our hand.

O, who can tell,
What mind can sum them up, what voice recount
The guards from danger, and the provident escapes
Of even one hour, vouchsafed by God our Friend ?
He is the Father of us all ; His power immense ;
His wisdom is unsearchable, His goodness baffles thought.
Joyful the service of His servants, and sublime their place—
Or in the earth, or air, or by the throne of God.
Yea, oft we find ourselves befriended when we least
Expect the service. Here a stranger, there unknown
And unrevealed, we yet, through God's good grace,
Are served by stranger hands, and blessed by stranger lips,
By men the Lord has set in place—men whom the Lord
With Father care has touched in heart, to ope their door,
To spend their store, to give their time to hospitality.
And often, too, the thoughtless prattle of a child,
When nothing else could do, is used to warn us from destruction
In a dreadful form. By such unseen help the angels serve.
The jostle of an angel in the crowd of men has oft
Determined how that crowd would turn, and what would do.
Chief over all this service those seven eyes of God,
Which, ever running to and fro, discern the evil and the good ;
Discern the need, and prompt the act which can supply.
Thus God Omnipotent, the Master of all powers and ministry,
Gives charge unto His angels who rejoice to serve ; by them upheld,
We cannot dash our feet against the stones—we cannot fall.

We praise Thee, Holy God ; we sing to Thee, we bless Thy name,
For all Thy providence, for all Thy care, Thy vigilance, Thy love
Unceasing, thus displayed. And we rejoice to know
That thus Thine angels watch all those who are thine heirs—
Heirs of Thyself, joint-heirs with Christ.

All things are ours ; the present and the past—apostles, prophets, saints.
Isaiah's glowing odes and Paul's sententious lore for us are written,
And for us preserved. And even those signs which Daniel saw—
Those mystic deeds extravagant by which Hosea startled Israel—
Are written to instruct us in Thy ways, and show Thy purpose sure.
Not only for the suffering Greeks were healing hands
Employed by early saints ; not only cordial oil administered
By early elders, that those mortal lives might have their span prolonged ;
But chief that we, the people of a distant age and foreign clime,

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Might know, when spoken truth had waxen cold, and sere tradition
Could no more inform us, might have facts to show
That even these strangers of the Gentiles were preserved,
And fed, and cared for by Israel's God.
He is the Saviour of all men, but specially of those
Who are His children by the faith in Christ.

All things are ours. The world to come is ours ;
That glorious world wherein the excelling goodness of the Lord
Is made more excellent ; that world wherein the truth
Shall be made paramount ; wherein the right shall rule :
Wherein the peace distributed to all shall bless their lives ;
A world wherein that life shall not be overborne
By stern, relentless death, which now holds terror o'er us all.
That blessed world is built of truth and righteousness,
And garnitured with life and peace. And it is ours ;
Ours, not to wander in as strangers, nor be served,
As if such service were required ; far less to feel ourselves
Degraded by our helplessness, which sometimes courts despair,
And at the best gives way to discontent or sloth.
No more the angel hands shall regulate, no more the power invisible
Control. The sons of God made manifest—the glorious ones
Who shine with Heaven's lustre, and who wield Heaven's power,
The sons of men, immortalised and beautified—shall then
Dispense Heaven's benison ; not in a fitful stewardship,
As now it sometimes is doled out ; but with a steady life of love,
So long's the sun shall shine, and measure days and years to other men,
And while the moon with silver sheen reflects its light, to endless time,
The royal children shall dispense their Father's bounty wide and far,
At once the boon of Abraham and gift of Abraham's God.

This is our hope : it is a joy to have such hope.
This changeful life—so short, so pointless, and so sad—
Affords not half employment for that power and life
Which God has given us. And were our time cut off
At such a little measure as four-score, we had not well begun
The grand designs which ripening age of virtue has marked out.

Within this porch of life—this vestibule of time—
We must be diligent ; we must put off the worldly cares
And tawdry raiment of this age ; and with another care
Array ourselves complete ; that when My Lord shall come,
And call us to his royal rooms, and galleries magnific,
We may not feel ashamed to enter in.

This kingdom comes anon.
Yes—hark ! we almost hear the sound, the rousing call,
' Behold, the Bridegroom comes !—go forth to meet the Lord !'
And are we ready now ? and have we confidence
To say with all our heart, ' Come, Lord !
Lord Jesus, quickly come !'

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ADDRESS BY WILLIAM LAING.

W. LAING then addressed the meeting as follows on the subject of

The Disciples' Position in Relation to Peace and Mutual Edification.

'Think not,' said Jesus to his disciples, when foretelling the evils that awaited them on their mission of love—'think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I am come not to send peace, but a sword.' Such would be the effect of the proclamation of his truth among men: such the antagonism of the despisers of his gospel to those who gladly received it, that the close ties of friendship and kindred would be snapped asunder, and 'a man's foes would be those of his own household;' and the fidelity of the disciple would be put to the severest test. Ills of this nature are bad enough to bear, and many may have sunk under them; and yet there are evils more oppressive and deleterious still—I mean strife and division within the church of God.

The Divisions in the Churches.

Looked at in the abstract, such evils would appear an impossibility. Having one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, the idea of disunity among the disciples of the Lord Jesus seems an absurdity; but the ideal here, as elsewhere, differs from the real. The apostolic epistles to the churches bear sufficient evidence that even at that early date—when the ardour of young love might be supposed to prevent any scope for disaffection, and when the personal superintendence of the apostles of Christ might be judged sufficient to forbid the appearance of division—there were schisms, contentions, and litigations among the members of the body of Christ. And, beloved, have not we to deplore the existence of the same evil at the present time, and in connection with our own experience? Is it not the case, that those who are distinguished from the sects of so-called Christendom by faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, have, in several places, become as strangers to each other, so that they refuse to break the same loaf and drink the same cup?

Seeking Peace.

Brethren, I wish to indulge in no recriminations or to occupy the time with vain regrets. 'The night is far spent, the day is at hand,' and those who are blameworthy for these things shall soon be made manifest. My object at present is to stir up and strengthen the determination of all present to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' In doing so, I would call to your remembrance the injunction of the apostle of the Gentiles, 'Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another'—(Rom. xiv. 19). The term here translated 'follow' expresses more than the common use of the word 'follow' represents. Its import is better expressed in 1 Peter iii. 11: 'Seek peace and *pursue* it.' It means to pursue with persevering determination, to follow after the object of pursuit with the ardour and persistence by which the avenger of blood dogs the footsteps of the homicide. With similar zeal and perseverance, without the malignity, the apostle exhorts us to 'follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.' Like many other exhortations in these epistles, it partakes of a general character, but at the same time is specific enough to be used on fitting occasions. The things that are conducive to peace and mutual edification are not enumerated; because the intelligent believer is supposed to be able to discern them as they appear in different circumstances. If our mind is bent on the pursuit of such objects, we shall seldom be at a loss to discover what course to pursue. Indeed, in all matters that we set our hand to, in relation to the brotherhood, we should pause and consider whether it will tend to the furtherance of these objects—mutual peace and edification. Were this injunction followed by all who believe the gospel of Christ, what reason we would have for rejoicing this day!

Subjection to One Another.

One thing which appears to me conducive to peace and edification in the church of God is a willing subjection of ourselves one to another. Not only should the younger submit themselves to the elder, but all are enjoined by Peter to be subject one to another, and to be clothed with

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humility. To the same end writes Paul: 'Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.' In the fellowship of the gospel there are no distinctions of rank or privilege—'One is your master, even Christ, and ye are all brethren.' The disciples are forbidden to call others 'Rabbi,' or to be called so themselves. 'The fellowship of the gospel' is, in other words, a mutual participation in all the privileges and honours of the household of faith. This circumstance is by no means to be set aside, or affected by differences of mutual endowment, or possession of this world's goods. As children of God, we are exactly on the same level—'we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;' and whatever one possesses more than another, he is bound to communicate the same to him that needs it. 'He that is greatest among you,' said our Lord, 'let him be the servant of all.' While, in the world, the man of wealth and mental powers makes all others yield to him, in the church of God we must all be subject one to another. If one be stronger than his fellow, he is called upon to bear his weaker brother's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Special Topics to be Avoided.

Another thing that is conducive to peace and edification is the avoidance of a frequent introduction of topics for which we may have a peculiar liking ourselves, but which are held in different esteem by our brethren. I do not recommend that such topics should never be introduced to the notice of our brethren; by no means. Being ourselves impressed with the worth or truth of any matter, our love to the brethren impels us to bring it before their notice, and submit to their consideration intelligible reasons for its acceptance; but what I speak against is the frequent introduction of such matters when they are known to be distasteful. To do so will be sure to mar the peace, and will not further the edification of the brethren. If we would communicate truth to the minds of our brethren, or persuade them to the adoption of any profitable measure, we can never do so by means that tend to annoy and irritate them. And in such attempts we must bear in mind, that our brethren are as desirous of truth, and as willing to do good, as ourselves; and that if they think less favourably of what we recommend, it is simply because

their judgment of the matter differs from ours. By all means let us use our liberty of utterance, but use it in a way that shall make for peace, and by which one shall edify another.

Allowance for Differences.

The only other matter which I shall further indicate at present, as making for peace and edification, is that of making due allowance for the differences of our brethren. We differ not only in our tastes, and manner, and mode of speech, but also in our convictions on some matters we reckon as being taught in Scripture; and it is chiefly in regard to this last mentioned difference that allowance requires most to be made in order to peace and edification. If any one is startled at the idea of believers differing thus, he is surely deficient in the exercise or power of reflection. Are we not all in the position of disciples or learners? And is it wonderful that in our studies we should fall into error on some points, or that all should not learn with equal rapidity? Are we wiser than Paul, who confessed that he knew 'but in part?' And if we as yet know 'but in part,' what more likely than that we should sometimes, unconsciously, draw wrong conclusions?

No Pleading for Error.

I beg that you will distinctly understand that I am not pleading for 'the right of brethren to hold error.' No; I believe we are all anxiously desirous to get quit of it entirely. What I plead for is that we, as becomes those who are learning, should make due allowances for differences of judgment among our fellow-learners. Neither am I pleading for a difference of faith in relation to the gospel of salvation, by believing which we become brethren; but for making allowance for differences of belief, among brethren, in relation to other matters.

Waiting in Patience.

I respect my own convictions as much as any man does; and I am heartily desirous that all my brethren should have a sound apprehension of all Scripture; but I find that some form wrong conclusions—my conviction is that some of my brethren misunderstand some parts of God's Word, and what am I to do? Reason with them out of the Scriptures, and try to show them wherein they have erred. Very good; but if I fail to convince them,

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and they are convinced that I am the erring party, what shall I do then? Cut them off, or separate myself from my brother and my sister? Perish the thought? Nay, rather I shall wait in patience, confident that, if they fail to see eye to eye with me now, they may learn to do so by and by; and at least, when the Master returns, 'we shall all know even as we are known.'

How Far Forbearance should Go.

Some may be inclined to ask, 'How far is this forbearance to go?' So far as you find a child of God. To be more explicit, I would remind you that 'we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;' and so long as that faith is held, we are children of God. 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born [or begotten] of God.' And wherever we find those who believe that Jesus, who died on Calvary for human transgression, is the Christ—the Son of the living God, the seed of Abraham, who is ordained to sit on the throne of David, to reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and sway the sceptre of Jehovah over all the nations of the world—who look for the appearing of that blessed One who has gone into the heavens to present his own blood on our behalf, to come again to transform them into his own likeness, and make them partakers of his eternal kingdom and glory; who believe that everlasting existence can only be enjoyed by those of the sons of men who are in the Christ, at his coming; who, with such beliefs and hopes, have been immersed in water, into Christ, and who strive to adorn the doctrine of Christ, by a becoming behaviour: I say, whenever and wherever we find such persons, we are bound to treat them as children of God, whatever mistakes they may have fallen into in regard to other matters. By so doing, we shall 'follow after things that make for peace, and things by which one may edify another;' whereas, by an opposite course we shall find we are pursuing opposite results.

Loving as Brethren.

Now, beloved, I think I have said enough; and I hope what has been spoken, in weakness, from the heart, shall be productive of peace and edification among us all. We hold each other dear, as children of God. We shall soon have to separate—some of us far from each other. We are few in number, and have no prospect of ever being

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numerous, or important in the estimation of the world, till our Lord's appearing and kingdom. Shall we love as brethren, be pitiful and courteous, and with all our mind and heart follow after those things that make for peace and mutual edification? If so, we shall have the smile of him who said: 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God;' and many shall rise up and call us blessed. And 'now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us those things which are pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.' Amen.

ADDRESS BY JOHN WILSON.

JOHN WILSON was the next to speak, and he addressed the meeting in a similar strain.

Faith in God.

Brethren, the apostolic injunctions to 'have faith in God' and 'be at peace among yourselves' appear to be a summary of the Christian's duty, and they are two inseparable duties in the Christian's life. Faith in God is the grand principle which regulates our religious belief, and peace is the bond which unites us one to another. To have faith in God consists not merely in believing what we are to receive; it consists not merely in looking to the glorious kingdom which He has promised to all who love Him; it also embraces an every day and every hour reliance upon Him. The faith that relates to the hope is like a great mountain which the Lord has created; but the Lord who has made that has also made the minutest fragment of the dust of the earth which can be detected by the microscope, and He has alike fashioned all in beauty. Therefore we should have faith in God concerning the smallest matters, as we have faith in Him that He shall give us the glorious kingdom.

The Love of God.

We have the character of the God in whom we are to trust set forth in the Scriptures, as a God of infinite mercy and of immeasurable love. It is this love which is the sunshine and the warmth that animate the faith. We

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may compare the faith to the light which the sun sends forth. Light there would be, but a faintness of life and growth in the world; but when we have this life accompanied with heat rays, and with the other rays which give the colouring matter, then we have a glorious creation. So it is in moral and spiritual things. By the love of God through Christ, we have the principle which vivifies the faith so that we can live in it. In the love of God there is also manifested His eternity; for there shall be an end, at some time, to faith and hope, but love shall abide for ever. Now, the God who is love has given a promise in the Word, which is commensurate with His Word. That is the grand purpose which He has foretold as the accompaniment of His love.

The Millennium and Beyond.

Therefore it behoves us, as having faith in God, to look not merely at the things which are near, but to the whole scope of God's revealed will, as made known to us in the Scriptures. It is too common to limit our hope to the millennium, or to vague generalities about eternal life. If we look at it from the stand-point which God has made known in the Book, as the eternal purpose which He has purposed, then we get hope which has some measure of breadth in it commensurate with the love which He has commended, and we get a broad basis, as it were, for our faith to rest upon. Brother Dowie beautifully spoke of this life as the porch to the future. The millennium should be regarded as the porch or ante-chamber to God's good things which He will bestow upon those who love Him; and we ought not to confine our view merely to what is in that ante-chamber, but let us go by faith into the palace-court itself, and see what are the things which God has promised, even 'the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

Scope for our Hope.

If we do this, we shall get such a scope for our hope, that our vision will be cleared, as it were, and we shall be so impressed with the majesty of the things which we have to receive, that we shall obtain that which is the purpose of the faith—an impression of our duty to God; and we shall be made like Him by the operation of the 'exceeding great and precious promises.' Let us, there-

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fore, always be mindful, whilst we look at the things which are seen, to look, like Abraham, at the things which are far off, and, with Abraham, look for 'a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.'

ADDRESS BY RICHARD GOLDIE.

RICHARD GOLDIE, from Swansea, was the next speaker. After a brief apology, he proceeded to give some account of

The Truth in South Wales.

He said that, before going from Scotland to Wales, he had some knowledge of the faith, and was uncertain what course to take on arriving at Swansea. He, however, cast in his lot with The Reformation, but was not well satisfied with their teachings. His acquaintance with the truths of the gospel awakened a desire to know more, and he applied anew to the Word of God. The expression of his convictions did not find much sympathy among his co-religionists for a time, although ultimately to some extent affected the minds of the evangelist who took the leading part in the church, and of an ardent, intelligent young man, David Atkins. On the removal of the evangelist to another quarter, the care of the church was handed over to these two, who, applying themselves with still greater diligence to the study of the Scriptures, soon made themselves so unpopular that they were put out of the church. At the same time another member, named Benjamin Low, withdrew; and, still uncertain as to the course to follow, the three met in Brother Low's house to read the Word of God and to learn the precious truths contained in it. Brethren Goldie and Atkins were not long in deciding that their former baptism was not valid.

A Church Formed.

Meanwhile, a correspondence was opened up with William Laing, of Edinburgh, who gave them much help in their search after the way of life. They had some difficulty at first as to who should baptise them, but ultimately determined to render this service to one another. Mrs Goldie immediately followed, and not long after Brother Low also decided to be re-immersed. These four

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continued to meet as a church for some time. A fifth was added, who had since died. By and bye, Brother Goldie, yielding to an unaccountable impulse, went with an excursion party in the country, and there met William Clement, of Mumbles. A conversation was commenced on the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Much was said that was new to the Welshman; but he manifested a great willingness to listen to all that was said, and to receive what appeared to be in accordance with the Word of God.

Welcome Aid from Edinburgh.

Shortly afterwards [continued Brother Goldie] when our Brother George Dowie paid us a visit, we called upon Mr Clement together; and the result of that visit was, that our brother was satisfied concerning many of the truths we now believe; and when our dear Brother Laing came, the work was finished. You know the rest of the story, and Brother Clement is here himself to tell it to you more in detail. I have now only to say further, that you should all be very proud of the work you have been instrumental in doing. It is a great work that has been begun, although possibly none of you, except those who have had some experience of it, can realise its magnitude. A very great interest has been awakened in the place, and a great deal of seed has been sown, which I believe will yet spring up abundantly.

The Benefit of Correspondence.

I have also to say that we have derived much benefit from those kind letters that several of you have written to us, and I would urge upon you the great necessity of using all diligence and embracing every opportunity of keeping up such communications as these. Those letters, I can assure you, have a wonderful effect upon distant brethren. They encourage us when there is little around us to cheer us. You are here a strong, mighty, and powerful body; but we are weak and feeble; and when your letters come to us, they have a wonderful effect in strengthening us for our onward journey.

ADDRESS BY WILLIAM CLEMENT.

WILLIAM CLEMENT, from Mumbles, then addressed the meeting in a very animated and characteristic manner.

Personal Experiences.

Our Lord asked the question on one occasion of a certain individual, 'Who do you think ought to love most?' and the Lord himself very judiciously answered, 'Him that was forgiven most.' God in His mercy has forgiven me a great deal, and therefore He has a strong claim upon my affection. Nursed in the lap of Wesleyan Methodist error, and tightly laced in a coat manufactured by John Wesley, nothing could be received that had not a Methodist twang. I do not recollect the period in my history when I was not a seeker after truth; nevertheless, I was taught to look at the truth of God through man-made spectacles. With the knowledge to which I have now attained, however, I may say that when I come athwart men who act as spectacles to teach their fellows error, the whole of my Welsh blood is up. Taught as I was to look at the truth through these spectacles, I could never understand it. However, as soon as young Clement, as I was then called, was brought into the church, I was given something to do; and for nine years—at least I may say for six of them—every Sunday I declared and upheld the doctrines of John Wesley. This I continued to do, and I may also say that I became a great favourite among the Wesleyans. I never yet went to a place where I was not received with a smile and a hearty welcome. I never knew what it was to receive a frown, nor what it was to preach to almost empty houses. And yet I had not much learning, so that it could not have been that which made me such a general favourite. I suppose it was because of my warmth of feeling, and because I spoke what I believed with all my heart.

Wesleyan Methodism Renounced.

My confidence in the Wesleyan system, however, was ultimately shaken by comparing it with the Word of God. I confess that I swallowed down the whole system, although I must say that I could not understand it. The first thing that shook my confidence in the Wesleyan system was the treatment that they gave to some of the

members of their own persuasion. Perhaps some of you in this country may remember of a man named Cobill, and of the stir that was occasioned in connection with him in 1849. The treatment to which he and others were subjected induced me to search the New Testament, to see whether they were acting in unison with the sentiments contained in that book; and the more I searched, the more was I convinced that their conduct was unbecoming the Christian character. Accordingly, in the memorable year of 1849, I sent in my resignation, being then a Wesleyan local preacher, a class leader of four classes, a circuit steward, and I do not know what else. I look back to that time with a great deal of comfort, because I acted then sincerely and honestly. When I took my departure, I said to them, holding my New Testament in my hand, 'Now, for God's sake, do not follow me. Here is the Book; follow its teachings, and then, if I go wrong, you will not.'

Among the Reformed Wesleyans.

Having now quitted the Wesleyan body, I became connected with the body known as the Reformed Wesleyans; and in the course of a few years a chapel was built, and I became a preacher in it. However, I must confess that I never became satisfied with my position, although I tried hard to make myself satisfied. To use a very home-spun expression in Wales, I could not make it 'go.' It would not fit with the Word, and I kept continually reading. Many of those doctrines which I now believe to be the truth of God, I was then afraid of, and looked at with fear and trembling, believing them to be sceptical; yet, turning over the Scriptures, I found them staring me in the face. 'But, William,' I said to myself, 'they must be wrong, for John Wesley did not believe them, and Adam Clarke did not hold them.' So I reasoned at that time, and yet I could not open the Scriptures without finding these truths.

Baptism.

At length the subject of baptism came under my notice, and after diligent searching of the Word I came to see that it was my duty to be baptised, and was baptised accordingly. The fact of a Wesleyan being baptised caused a great stir in the neighbourhood. However, I now see that I was only going from one error to another.

As I walked along the street, people would stop me, and accuse me of being a changeable man. I have been a changeable man, I confess; but all the changes I have made have been in the right direction, I believe. I have all the while been going away from Rome, and everything connected with it. I have gone from Wesleyanism to Wesleyan Reform, and from that to what might be called a Baptist Church, although there were some amongst us who did not believe in baptism, yet continued to associate with us.

The Millennial Reign.

I may, before going further, say that I always believed in the personal reign of Christ. Sometimes our preachers would laugh at me because I held such views, but I could not help it. I found them in the Word, and therefore must believe them. I was one of those resolute fellows who would say, 'Well, if you don't like it, I cannot help it.' Having a clear view of Christ's reign, it would have been very far wrong in me to have said otherwise. Time rolled on, and I continued, as they say, to preach error.

Staggered with the Immortality Question.

And now I come to speak of the time that has just been alluded to by our brother. A few of the Swansea friends had been over at Mumbles assisting us at a temperance demonstration, ^{and} a few of us had gone to their demonstration. My wife was gone down to Gloucestershire to the burial of an aunt, and so I went to the temperance demonstration. After I had gone and seen the waterfall, I strolled about very much like a crow on the mountain-top looking for a companion. Not having had much to do with the total abstainers of Swansea of late years, I found the old faces had gone, and new ones had come instead. I am rather fond of old faces, and so I strolled about in search of some, when my attention was taken by a rather peculiar looking fellow, who, I thought, was something like myself. I overheard a conversation that was going on between him and another, and which I thought smelt rather sceptical. I saw that one of the gentlemen—not the one here [Brother Goldie]—recognised me, and said, 'Brother Clement.' The other turned with a peculiar smile on his face, and said, 'Oh, this is Brother Clement, is it?' A certain line of conversation

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ensued, in which those things I have referred to were brought up to my mind. The first thing that startled me was, that my new friend fearlessly declared that man had not got an immortal soul! I thought that was a settler. He had a friend with him, and dealt his blows most terrifically. I thought his friend could do all the talking, and I could do all the listening. Doctrines were broached which I thought were very erroneous, but I noticed that he always based them upon the Scriptures. My friend was always trying to upset it, but my friend Goldie kept saying, 'Here it is in the Word.' I took particular care to put down the passages that he referred to, and he gave me a tract entitled 'The Soul,' which came from Edinburgh. I did not go to bed that night before I took the Bible and read carefully the passages; and in the morning I got up, recollected some I had forgotten, marked them down also, and kept it all to myself. The worst of it was, that I had to preach next Sunday, and the thought struck me at once: 'What if you have all your life been preaching error?—you had better drop it.' To drop it would be an awful affair, and to continue it would be worse. If I were not to preach to them, the people in Mumbles would think that the world was coming to an end. I did preach, however, but I took care that it was not on any of these subjects.

George Dowie Worse than Richard Goldie.

Soon afterwards I saw Brother Dowie from Edinburgh. The room where I met him is so fastened in my memory that I think I will remember it when I get into the kingdom, if I do get there. I recollect putting some very straightforward questions to that Edinburgh brother; and what struck me was, that he never answered me at all, but quoted from the Bible! I thought Brother Goldie was bad, but he was far worse! It was this, to use a Welsh phrase, that 'floored' me. They wished me good-bye, and the next day I went into Swansea, and to Salubrious Place, to look for this Scotchman at Blackie's office. I knew not what to think.

Is Methodism Wrong?

You will excuse me when I say that Methodism was my right arm. I would as soon have thought of cutting off my right arm as to give up Methodism; but when I

came to read the Word of God, I found that it was contrary to its teaching. If some of you had looked into my room, I daresay you would have said that I was fit for an asylum. Indeed, some of the people said so, and that I had got the devil. Now, to be told so, and at the same time to feel that you are all wrong, is a most tremendous affair. I do not think any one can comprehend it unless he has passed through it. I walked my room for a quarter of an hour at a time—[here the speaker suited the action to the word, by walking up and down with folded arms]—then sat down, then read, then repeated, 'Is Methodism, with all its teaching, wrong?' and then walked again. Had some of the people just opened the door and looked into the room, I would not have wondered had they said, 'That fellow is pretty fit for the asylum.' I had to preach twice a day, and some of the people, when they had listened to me, would say, 'But do you think that is quite true?' 'Well, I think it is,' I would reply. 'But where in all the world do you get your truth from, then?' You will find it in such and such a chapter.' Thus I was obliged to talk both in the pulpit and out of it. Some evenings I have gone home tired and scarcely able to walk up stairs from having met this man and that man, and this woman and that woman, who wished to know about these truths. They would say, 'But, Friend Clement, if what you teach is right, the sects are all wrong.' During three months, I never was in Swansea once without going into Blackie's office, not for Blackie's books, but to see the man that was there. Where he got his reasons I do not know.

Visit of William Laing.

At last I suggested to our brother that some of our better informed brethren from this quarter should come and see us, and in course of time Brother Laing came over to Mumbles. I was then sufficiently advanced in the truth, but did not know about baptism into Christ. One of the texts Brother Laing spoke from was, 'These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ;' and one friend said to me afterwards, 'What was it, Friend Clement, that made you hang down your head when the gentleman from Edinburgh quoted that text?' I said it was because I had never believed it before. The next day I was in a worse fix than ever.

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Re-Immersion into the True Faith.

Having sold Wesleyanism and become what was called a Baptist, I had to sell this sectarianism and get something else, and thus had again to be found fault with. Well, I had again to be told I was changeable. Oh, dear! how it did mortify the flesh! One man said: 'Well, I never thought that proud spirit could have come down again.' By William Laing I was, along with some others, baptised into Christ. I have a lad about twenty years of age, who, like his father, was seeking after the truth; and on the morning we came to be baptised, I thought it my duty as a father to broach this delicate subject. I said to him: 'Dan, do you think your baptism is quite right?' 'No, not worth a straw, father,' he replied. The consequence was that he and I were that morning baptised into Christ.

Daniel

Making Known the Truth.

From that time I have endeavoured, as far as I can understand the truth from the reading of the Word, to declare the Gospel of the Kingdom—I need not say to you, in a fearless manner. I am not one of those timid men who are afraid to proclaim the truth. I have declared the truth in what is the best way according to my judgment. I have been found fault with, and perhaps justifiably; but I am one of those men who can bear to be found fault with. Until I see from the Scriptures that my course is wrong, I shall continue it; and as soon as I am convinced of that, I shall change it. I am disposed to think that, as brethren in Christ, we do not hold the truth in that fearless and, as some may deem it, that dogmatic manner we ought to do. I know there are some among you who believe that the truth of God ought to be made known in meekness and in love, and that those who differ from us should be spoken to in a respectful manner. I am sorry to say that, after being with you one week, I cannot believe it.

The Clergy Denounced.

I believe that those men who are sowing darkness, disease—spiritual disease, of course, I mean—and death throughout the length and breadth of the land, ought to be noticed, spoken to, and held up to ridicule. I think we ought to speak of them as deceivers, and warn the people against them. They deal in what I would call

quack medicines and damnable heresies, and we ought to lift up our voices and speak of them just as they ought to be spoken about. John, in his epistle, calls them 'liars,' and I call them liars also. Paul, in his epistle, calls them 'dogs,' and I have the same authority to call by this name men who repudiate the truth as it is set forth in the Word of God. However, I call upon you all, brethren, just to preach the truth in your own way, and you will just allow me to preach it in mine. Having only known this mode, and having seen the tendency of the clergy, it seems to be my duty, for one, to point at them the finger of scorn, and show that they are the enemies of Christ—to declare that these are the men who teach heresy and false doctrine. We cannot separate the error from the men who teach it. They are so united, that I have not the ingenuity to separate them; and therefore, when I denounce the error, I must denounce the men as the holders of these errors. When I read Paul's epistle to the Galatians, I find he says that if even an angel from heaven were to preach any other than the one gospel, he was to be accursed. If the clergy, therefore, deserve to be accursed for preaching another than the true gospel, it certainly becomes my duty, as one who believes the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to point out to the people that these men are wrong and dangerous in the extreme. If I read in the third chapter of Paul's epistle to the Galatians that the blessings of Abraham were to come upon the Gentiles through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is by being baptised into the Christ that we become the seed of Abraham, what shall I do with those men who are strutting up and down the country saying that we are the seed of Abraham because we were sprinkled in our infancy? [They are acting like the man who has just been condemned to death in your city for administering poison to two of his relatives [Dr Pritchard].] If I understand the doctrines of the sects, the clergy administer poison to the people, and cause them to be destroyed wholesale. I therefore consider it my duty to declare the truth fearlessly and honestly, and to denounce the men who teach error.

The Churches at Mumbles and Swansea.

In answer to an inquiry, it was stated that the church in Swansea numbered 5 persons, and that in Mumbles 38.

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ADDRESS BY ARCHIBALD DOWIE.

ARCHIBALD DOWIE, of Cupar, was asked to tell the meeting something about the condition and prospects of the truth in Fifeshire, was the next speaker. He said :

The Truth in Fifeshire.

Brethren, I have not much to tell you about Fife. We are just much the same as we have been for years—not doing much for the truth, but holding it fast. We are in the hope of seeing Brother George Dowie, from Edinburgh, amongst us, to spread the truth which we all love, and which we are anxious that others should embrace. So far as Cupar is concerned, we are to get a good house to meet in, and I hope we shall have a large number of people to hear ; and I hope the truth will be so spoken that many shall be led to believe it, and believing it, also to obey it, and to unite with us in that joy and peace which the belief and obedience of the truth are calculated to afford. This is my hope ; but I may say, as we are now telling what we have passed through in our search after truth, that for many years I have been in a measure isolated. But the truth of God—the Word of the living God—has been to my mind a source of comfort, of joy, and of gladness, that no discouragement has ever shaken.

Personal Study of the Word.

The Word of God affords to the intelligent believer, wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding, and comfort, and joy, which no society of men without it can give to any individual. In order to understand the truth, we must individually study the sacred oracles. The teaching of our brethren is an important privilege, and we should rejoice in having our minds stirred up by exhortation or by teaching ; but depend upon it, brethren, that if we ever attain to a full knowledge of the mind of God as revealed in the Scriptures, it must be by our own personal study of the Word—by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and earnestly seeking from God the guidance of His good Spirit, that we may receive from the Lord Himself the whole truth as He has revealed it ; and thus furnished with the truth in our own minds, we may impart to our brethren that which we ourselves have learned as the

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oracles of God. Let God be glorified in all that we say and do. What have we that we have not received from Him? Everything that we have has been given us by our Father in heaven. The prophets are before us, and the purpose of God, as revealed by them, is made known to us. We are to give heed to the word spoken by the Lord and his holy apostles. These are our instructors, and let us be satisfied with them. Having drunk the pure waters of life emanating from the fountain of truth, let us not turn aside to any of the muddy streams of human invention, no matter by whom they may be recommended. Therefore let us study the oracles of God for ourselves, and determine to follow out their teaching faithfully.

Faithfulness to the Truth.

Brother Dowie then proceeded to point out that all we possess had been received from God, and that we are but stewards of it; and he inculcated the necessity of exercising this trust judiciously, and of being faithful to the truth, and to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose we are, and whom we desire to serve.

GENERAL REMARKS.

David Lawson.

DAVID LAWSON, Newburgh, having been called on to speak, expressed his approval of the remarks that had been made by William Laing, and particularly of what he had said respecting forbearance, and how far it should be exercised. He stated his conviction that forbearance should be extended to every child of God, and he pointed out what constituted a child of God. He also expressed his great satisfaction with the intelligence that had been communicated from Wales, and his desire that still more good might be accomplished. Regarding those who disseminated 'spiritual poison,' he thought they should be regarded with pity as well as with horror. It ought to make us grateful when we remembered that we had escaped from this mystery of iniquity; and while we denounced those who wilfully misled the people, we should have compassion upon the ignorant and those out of the way.

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James Murray.

JAMES MURRAY, from Lanark, in answer to an inquiry by the Chairman respecting the progress of the truth in his locality, said that the meeting at Lockhart Mill was very small. The brethren who met there were only nine in number, but they endeavoured in their own humble way to set forth the truth. As they met in a very retired place, however, few persons came to hear them. He was sorry that both in Wishaw and Douglas the brethren were not in a very satisfactory condition. Brother John Murray, in Douglas, remained strong in the faith, and lamented over those who were lukewarm. In Wishaw there had lately been certain visitors, who had endeavoured to introduce some strange views amongst the brethren, and they had succeeded in some measure. This had caused a kind of division there, although there were a few who still met together on the First Day of the week simply for the purpose of reading the Scriptures, and not for the breaking of bread or for worship. This state of things was very much to be regretted; and if anything could be suggested to rectify it, it would be very desirable. Perhaps if some of the brethren in Edinburgh were to visit them, it might be attended with good results.

WILLIAM LAING suggested that James Cameron should visit the brethren in Wishaw, and endeavour to restore harmony amongst them.

The suggestion was agreed to.

An Evangelistic Holiday in Fife.

GEORGE DOWIE explained the reference which Archibald Dowie had made to his intended visit to Cupar. He expected to have a ten days' holiday, which he intended to devote to making known the truth in Fifeshire. Several places would be visited, and the truth made known; and tracts would be distributed broadcast through the country, for the purpose of finding out honest-hearted men. When that had been done, perhaps some other work of a similar character would be superinduced upon it.

Tracts.

WILLIAM LAING intimated the proposal which had been considered and approved of at the meeting on Saturday evening—namely, that William Norrie should be entrusted

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with the duty of providing and superintending the printing of a suitable supply of tracts, and of communicating with the various churches and individuals upon the subject. Brother Laing accompanied the recommendation with some remarks pointing out the efficiency of tracts as a means of disseminating the truth.

The proposal was then unanimously agreed to.

ADDRESS BY DAVID LINDSAY.

DAVID LINDSAY, of Dundee, was then called upon to address the meeting. He said :

I had not intended to say anything ; but as I am called upon to speak, I feel stirred up to give my testimony to the excellency of the addresses we have heard, if it is only to give my 'amen' to them.

The Church in Dundee.

We have had a kind of experience meeting this afternoon ; and, following suit, I think I may say, so far as Dundee is concerned, that we have nothing particular to report. We stand, unfortunately, in much the same position as we occupied in former years. Not that I think the stationary condition of our numbers is a crime *per se*. There are other circumstances which influence that for good or for evil ; and whether we are to blame for not having done much good, is not for us to judge. So far as I am aware, we have not been deficient in our endeavours to make known the truth, and in declaring it with earnestness and force ; but whether we have at all times been acting with pious zeal and watchful tenderness to employ every outlet we have to spread the truth to the neighbourhood, is a thing that I will not answer for. But this is not a crime which, so far as I am aware, has ever been laid to any of the Christian churches. In the epistles to the seven churches, there is no mention of such a crime. So far as my memory serves me, there is no mention of such a charge against them as that their numbers had not increased. No ; quality, and not quantity, seems to have been the standard set up in God's Word. At the same time, in reviewing the past, I think there is much room for improvement, and for an earnest and patient determination to do better hereafter.

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Skilled in the Word.

In listening to the addresses we have had to-day—and, in fact, in listening to addresses upon any religious subject—we ought all to be critics so well skilled in the Word of God as to be instinctively acute to any transgression of a doctrinal commandment. We should even be so highly educated in God's Word as to detect that which is an offence against good manners; and as a well educated man, having learned the rules of grammar, does not require to refer to the rule when he hears a breach of it, so ought we, without referring our minds back to any particular passage of Scripture, to be able to say that such-and-such was a transgression of such-and-such, and so take heed to it.

Educated in the Truth.

In addition, we ought to be able to carry out this principle of Christian education, so as to sink the *ego* or self, and not be proud that we have a proficiency of Christian knowledge to tell instinctively what is right and what is wrong. In obeying the exhortation, for instance, to submit ourselves to one another, we should do so without the remembrance that we are all individually responsible to God. In Dundee, we have been afflicted with seducing spirits—I mean sheep-stealers, who have taken away from our flock those who were not so perfectly grounded in the Word of God as to detect false pretensions. In fact, there have been false teachers among us, as there were in the early churches, who have carried off some of our number, and the reason seems to have been that those who were taken away were not so well educated in the truth as to have been able to give a 'Thus saith the Lord.' I think it is also to be attributed to the instinctive desire we all possess to have a teacher sent from God. We are too apt to take another man's word, and not to take the Word of God Himself. This is a position we ought to guard against; and the way to guard against it is to be instructed individually and collectively in the mind and will of God. This is a matter we would do well to ponder.

The Use of Money in the Divine Service.

Brother Archibald Dowie has referred to the stewardship that God has given us. In the proper use of money we have the right employment of wealth, talent, time, and

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ability; for money is hoarded labour, and available for a great many purposes. There is no more difficult thing than to use money aright. Men and women spend it for a great many purposes, but to use it in the service of God is one of the most difficult and one of the highest services. Let us therefore seek to use it to the glory of our Father who is in heaven.

The Truth in Crossgates.

JOHN MUIR, of Crossgates, said that the state of matters in his neighbourhood, at present, was rather discouraging. At one time there had been seven brethren who met together on the First Day of the week, but now their number was reduced to three. Still, few as they were, they did not despair; and although living four miles apart, they met together as frequently as circumstances would allow. Having given some account of his own religious experience, he spoke of the encouragement the few brethren in Crossgates had received by occasional visits from Edinburgh and elsewhere, and expressed a hope that these visits would be continued.

Christ Risen from the Dead.

JOHN DUNCAN, from Dundee, in the course of a long address, called attention to the Scriptural doctrine that Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep. He observed that there was great confusion in the world as to what was the ultimate destiny of man; and owing to the conflicting ideas that prevailed upon this subject in early times, we owed an article in what is known as 'The Apostles' Creed'—the article which stated, 'I believe in the resurrection of the body'—which we all believed. He then referred to some of the ideas entertained by heathen nations as to the transmigration of souls, purgatory, and the like, and to the dissensions that have taken place among scientific men as to the distinctions between mind and matter, and whether matter can be annihilated. The present state of science taught that matter could be changed into a variety of forms, but that it could not be annihilated. If the British Association or the French Academy could produce among their members one who could annihilate matter, they might look forward to the time when they could destroy the whole of the creation. It would thus be seen that the

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great question to be dealt with was not the existence of mind, but the existence of matter. In the resurrection of Christ we had a proof that our bodies could be fashioned anew and made meet for standing in the presence of God. There was a promise of a new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness should dwell; not a new earth alone, but a new heavens also. Christ made peace by the blood of his cross to reconcile all things unto himself—things which are on earth and things which are in heaven. One great thing Christ had to do was to reconcile things in heaven as well as things on earth. That was beyond the scope of our vision; yet we know it is so, and we are told to look forward to the fulfilment of God's eternal purpose, when He shall gather together all things which are in heaven and in earth.

It being now about half-past six o'clock, it was deemed advisable not to protract the meeting further; and the proceedings were accordingly brought to a close by devotional exercises. An anthem was sung between each of the addresses; and a short interval took place about the middle of the proceedings, at which a repast of fruit was served, and an opportunity was afforded for friendly conversation.

EVENING.

After the meeting, as the weather was delightfully fine, a large party of the brethren and sisters enjoyed a walk and a climb together to the top of Arthur's Seat—a favourite place of resort, on holiday and other occasions, by the younger members of the Edinburgh Church. The splendid view from this eminence was much admired by all, and especially by the visitors from a distance. Having sufficiently feasted the vision, the descent was commenced, and was accomplished in much less time than the ascent. Loathe to part, the company, slightly diminished, re-assembled in the house of one of the brethren, where they were entertained to an elegant repast, and did not finally disperse until about eleven o'clock.

MONDAY.

Several of the visitors from a distance had arranged to remain a few days in Edinburgh; and during their stay a number of pleasant excursions to places in the neighbourhood were arranged, and numerous social gatherings also took place in the evenings. On the evening when the visitors from Wales took their departure, they were accompanied to the railway station by a party of about thirty brethren and sisters, from whom they parted with much regret, and with many pleasing reminiscences of the faithful ones whose acquaintance they had just made, and of the delightful intercourse they had enjoyed during their brief sojourn in the Modern Athens. On the part of the Edinburgh brethren, it was an unmingled gratification to have been honoured with the presence of so many visitors of 'like precious faith,' and to have had it in their power to minister to their comfort and entertainment.

KINGDOM LITERATURE

KINGDOM LITERATURE.

PRELIMINARY LITERATURE.

In noticing various works that from time to time emanated from the British press, in advocacy, elucidation, or defence of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, within the period to which our review is for the present confined, it cannot be overlooked that, previous to the out-and-out promulgation of 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas,' there had been both speakers and writers in this country who had in some measure prepared the way for it. This they had done by the enunciation of more Scriptural views respecting the Coming and Kingdom of Christ, the doctrine of life only through him, and kindred truths, than had previously found acceptance by any of the religious bodies of the time. A brief mention of some of the more conspicuous of these immediate forerunners of the great Herald and Discoverer of the Recovered Gospel of the Kingdom, may therefore appropriately enough precede the notice of what may be regarded as the Kingdom Literature proper. It would not be an easy matter to give a complete enumeration of all the books that might be considered as coming under this category. I can only undertake to mention such as have come under my own personal notice in the course of a somewhat miscellaneous style of reading. There are doubtless many others that have not been brought under my cognisance, and of which, consequently, I am unable to make any use in this record.

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With this view, I think it may be advantageous to go as far back in the narrative as the writings of Edward Irving, who, in a sense, may be said to have been the John the Baptist who was the forerunner of, and to some extent prepared the way for, John Thomas. Irving claimed for himself, and with a certain show of reason, that he was 'a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath been honoured of him to bring forth from obscurity a whole system of precious truth, and especially to proclaim to this land the glad and glorious tidings of his speedy coming.' If that was not an important part of the mission of Dr Thomas, I do not know, what was.

The 'Irvingites.'

Mr Irving was the founder of the religious body who are sometimes called after his name, 'Irvingites,' but who acknowledge that of 'The Catholic Apostolic Church.' 'The Gospel of the Kingdom' is a phrase that bulks largely in the teaching of this body, and much of it no doubt is 'according to the Scriptures;' but it is lacking in some most important particulars, and matters have been engrafted on their religious system which are clearly contrary to the divine standards.

Biographical Sketch.

For an account of Mr Irving's extraordinary career, and his services in preparing the public mind for the gospel truth that was to be more Scripturally elaborated by one who should come after him, I cannot do better than give a series of extracts from Mrs Oliphant's interesting and touching biography of this remarkable man, which is related with great graphic power.*

* *The Life of Edward Irving, Minister of the National Scotch Church, London, by Mrs Oliphant, two vols., 1862.*

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Early Life.

Edward Irving, the son of a tanner, was born at Annan on Aug. 4, 1792. After spending some years in teaching in Haddington, and afterwards in Kirkcaldy, he in Oct. 1819 became assistant to Dr Chalmers, of the Church of Scotland, in St John's, Glasgow. In 1822, he was offered the pastorate of the congregation in connection with the Church of Scotland then worshipping in the Caledonian Chapel, London. This he accepted, and began his labours there in July of the same year, the congregation afterwards removing to a larger building in Regent Square.

A Popular Error Abandoned.

It was not long after his removal to London that, we are told,

Irving changed the common superficial idea of the world's conversion—that belief calmly held or earnestly insisted on in the face of acknowledged disappointment in many missionary efforts, and the slowness and lingering issues of even the most successful, which is common to most churches. 'That error,' as he himself says, 'under which almost the whole of the church is lying, that the present world is to be converted unto the Lord, and so slide by a natural inclination into the church—the present reign of Satan hastening, of its own accord, into the millennial reign of Christ.' For this doctrine he learned to substitute the idea of a dispensation drawing towards its close, and—its natural consequence in a mind so full of love to God and man—of an altogether glorious and overwhelming revolution yet to come, in which all the dead society, churches, kingdoms, fashions of this world, galvanically kept in motion until the end, should be finally burned up and destroyed.

It will thus be seen that Mr Irving's first decided step towards obtaining even a glimmering of 'the Gospel of the Kingdom,' was to discard the popular belief that the Kingdom of God is already in existence, and is to 'advance' by successive stages, as expressed in the paraphrase :

And may Thy kingdom still advance,
Till grace to glory rise.

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The Study of Prophecy Commenced.

Mrs Oliphant gives us the following account of how Irving came to have his attention specially directed to the study of prophecy :—

The manner in which Irving's attention had been, some short time before, specially directed to the study of prophecy, is too interesting and characteristic to be passed without more particular notice. Several years before, Mr Hatley Frere, one of the most sedulous of those prophetic students who were beginning to make themselves known here and there over the country, had propounded a new scheme of interpretation, for which, up to this time, he had been unable to secure the ear of the religious public. Not less confident in the truth of his scheme that nobody shared his belief in it, Mr Frere cherished the conviction that if he could but meet some man of candid and open mind, of popularity sufficient to gain a hearing, to whom he could privately explain and open up his system, its success was certain. When Irving, all ingenuous and ready to be taught, was suddenly brought in contact with him, the student of prophecy identified him by an instant intuition. 'Here is the man!' he exclaimed to himself; and with all the eagerness of a discoverer, who seeks a voice by which to utter what he has found out, he addressed himself to the task of convincing the candid and generous soul which could condemn nothing unheard. He disclosed to his patient hearer all those details to which the public ear declined to listen; and the result was that Mr Frere gained a disciple and expositor; and that an influence fatal to his future leisure, and of the most momentous importance to his future destiny—which, indeed, it is now impossible to join from the man, or to consider his life or character apart from—took possession of Irving's thoughts. This new subject naturally connected itself with that conviction of an approaching crisis in the fate of the world; not mild conversion, but tragic and solemn winding up and settlement, which he is said to have derived from Coleridge. Henceforth the gorgeous and cloudy vistas of the Apocalypse became a legible chart of the future to his fervent eyes.

The fascination of that study, always so engrossing and attractive, seized upon him fully; and when it came to be

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his business to consider the truths best adapted for the instruction and encouragement of a body of Christian men labouring on behalf of that old Roman world which has long been the heart and centre of the earth, his mind passed at once into those solemn and mysterious adumbrations of Providence in which he and many other Christian men have believed themselves able to trace the very spot, between what was fulfilled and what was unfulfilled, in which they themselves stood. Could such a standing ground be certainly obtained, who can doubt that here is indeed the guidance of all others for any effort of evangelisation? Irving had no doubt upon the subject. To him the record was distinct, the past apparent, the future to be reverently but clearly understood. Superficial pious addresses were impossible to a man who went into everything with his whole heart and soul. His Bible was not to him the foundation from which theology was to be proved, but a divine word, instinct with meaning never to be exhausted, and from which light and guidance—not vague, but particular—could be brought for every need.

To a mind instinct with this realising principle, the conception of the second advent nearly approaching was like the beginning of a new life. The thought of seeing his Lord in the flesh cast a certain ecstasy upon the mind of Irving. It quickened tenfold his already vivid apprehension of spiritual things. The burden of the prophetic mysteries, so often darkly pondered, so often interpreted in a mistaken sense, seemed to him, in the light of that expectation, to swell into divine choruses of preparation for the splendid event which, with his own bodily eyes, undimmed by death, he hoped to behold.

First Published Works.

In 1823, Irving published his first books—*Orations*, and the *Argument for the Judgment to Come*, both of which had been partly preached in the form of sermons. This book provoked an immense amount of criticism, and added greatly to the rapidly increasing popularity of the author.

Next we have this mention of a very remarkable work by him:—

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A Spanish work, entitled *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, professedly written by Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra, a Hebrew convert to Christianity—but in reality, according to the facts afterwards ascertained, the production of a Jesuit priest, called Lacunza—was brought to him, as he describes in his preface to the translation of that work, by friends who had been specially impressed by his own views on the same subject. He found in it, as he declares, 'the hand of a master;' and not only so, but 'the chief work of a master's hand;' and feeling assured that his God had sent this 'masterpiece of reasoning' to him 'at such a critical time, for the love of His church, which He hath purchased with His blood,' he resolved 'to weigh well how I might turn the gift to profit.' The result of his ponderings was, that he undertook the translation of the book, concluding, after his fashion, that the church was as open to receive instruction, wheresoever it came from, as he himself was.

A Bond of Union Created.

During the summer of 1826, while Irving was busied with his translation, the expectation conveyed in this Spanish book—to which his own mind and that of many others had been directed, with special force and clearness, not very long before—seems to have swelled within the minds of all who held it, to such an amount of solemn excitement and inquiring interest as could no longer keep silence. If the advent of the Lord were indeed close at hand; if events were visibly marching forward to that great visible era of doom and triumph, as so many students of prophecy concurred in believing—it was but natural that a hope so extraordinary should bring the little brotherhood into a union far more intimate than that of mere concurrence in belief. The bond between them was rather that personal and exciting one which exists among a party full of anxiety for the restoration or election of a king—a patriotic band of conspirators furnished with all the information and communications in cipher which cannot be given at length to the common mass—than the calmer link between theologians united in doctrine; and indeed one wonders more at the steady pertinacity of human nature which could go on in all the ordinary habitudes of the flesh under the solemn commotion of such a hope, than at any kind of conference or extraordinary

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consultation which might be held under the circumstances. 'A desire to compare their views with respect to the prospects of the church at this present crisis' naturally arose among them, as Irving informs us in the preface to *Ben-Hera*; and after several meetings during the summer, a serious and lengthened conference on the subject was arranged to take place at Albury, the residence of one of the most remarkable of the little prophetic parliament—the late Henry Drummond.

THE ALBURY CONFERENCES.

Henry Drummond—impatient, fastidious, and arbitrary, a master of contemptuous expression, acting and speaking with all the suddenness of an irresponsible agent—was as unlike a man as could possibly be supposed to the great Scotch preacher, with all the grand simplicity of his assumptions and tender brotherhood of his heart. But 'they who loved his appearing' were united by a spell which transcended every merely human sympathy; and from this time Mr Drummond appears to have exercised a certain degree of influence, varying, but always increasing, over the career of Irving. Their first point of actual conjunction appears to have been at this meeting of prophetic students, held at Albury. When the summer was over, with all its restraints of labour and fashion, and early winter whitened the gentle hills of Surrey, the grave little company assembled in that house, which has since given character and colour to the district round it, and become for one division of Christians a kind of visible Beth-El in the wilderness of men's houses.

One of our number [says Irving, in the preface already quoted], well known for his princely munificence, thought well to invite by special letter all the men, both ministers and laymen, of any orthodox communion whom he knew or could ascertain to be interested in prophetic studies; that they should assemble at his house of Albury Park, in Surrey, on the first day of Advent, that we might deliberate for a full week upon the great prophetic questions which do at present most intimately concern Christendom. In answer to this honourable summons, there assembled about twenty men of every rank, and church, and orthodox communion in these realms; and in honour of our meeting, God so ordered it that Joseph Wolff, the Jewish missionary, a son of Abraham and brother of our Lord, both according to flesh and according to faith, should also be of the number. And here, for eight days, under the roof of Henry Drummond, Esq., the present High Sheriff of the county, and under the moderation of the Rev. Hugh M'Neil, the rector of the parish of Albury,

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we spent six full days in close and laborious examination of the Scriptures. . . . These things I write from recollection, not caring to use the notes which I took ; for it was a mutual understanding that nothing should go forth from the meeting with any show of authority, that the church might not take offence, as if we had assumed to ourselves any name or right in the church. But there was such a sanction given to these judgments by the fulness, freeness, and harmony which prevailed in the midst of partial and minor differences of opinion ; by the spirit of prayer, and love, and zeal for God's glory and the church's good ; by the sweet temper and large charity which were spread abroad ; and by the common consent that God was in a very remarkable way present with us—that I deem it my duty to make known these great results to the Christian churches which I have thus so early an opportunity of addressing.

Having said so much, I think it to be my duty further to state the godly order and arrangement according to which the Albury Conference, concerning the second advent, was conducted ; for to this, under God, I attribute in no small degree the abundance of blessings with which our souls were made glad. We set apart a day for each subject, and resolved to give no more than one day to each ; and as we were but six free days assembled—having met on the Thursday and parted on the Friday of the week following—we joined the fourth and seventh subjects together, conceiving them to be closely connected with one another ; and having apportioned a separate subject to each day, we proceeded to each day's work after the following method :—We divided the labour of each day into three parts—a morning diet before breakfast, the second and principal diet between breakfast and dinner, and the third in the evening. The object of our morning diet, to which we assembled at eight o'clock precisely—as early as we could well see—was twofold : first, to seek the Lord for the light, wisdom, patience, devotion to His glory, communion of saints, and every other gift and grace of the Holy Spirit which was necessary and proper to the labour which was that day appointed us in God's good providence ; this office was always fulfilled by a minister of the gospel. Secondly, one of the number was appointed over night, and sometimes several nights before, to open the subject of the day in an orderly and regular way, taking all his grounds of argument, and substantiating all his conclusions out of the Holy Scriptures ; and while he thus proceeded, the rest of the brethren took down the substance of what he said, and noted down the texts from which he reasoned ; for we sat in the library around a large table, provided with every convenience for writing and for consulting the Holy Scriptures. When the outlines, and divisions, and whole groundwork of the subject were thus laid out by the brother, strengthened by our prayers, we parted without at that time declaring anything, and refreshed ourselves with breakfast, where we met the pious and honourable lady and family of our worthy host. Two full hours were allowed from the breaking up of the morning till the assembling of the mid-day diet, which was at eleven o'clock, in order that the brethren might each one try and prove himself before the Lord upon the great questions at issue, and that we might come together with convictions, not with uncertain persuasions, and speak from the conscience, not from present impressions. And when we had assembled, and had shortly sought the divine favour to continue with us—an office generally performed by our reverend Moderator—he proceeded in due course to ask each man for his convictions upon the subject which had been laid before us in the morning ; and the rest diligently used their pen in catching the spirit of

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what dropped from each other's lips. No appeal was allowed but to the Scriptures, of which the originals lay before us; in the interpretation of which, if any question arose, we had the most learned Eastern scholar perhaps in the world to appeal to, and a native Hebrew—I mean Joseph Wolff. In this way did every man proceed to lay out the nature and ground of his convictions, which was done with so much liberty, and plentifulness, and mutual respect and reverence of the Holy Word, as much to delight our souls. Now this diet lasted oft four, and sometimes almost five hours—our aim being to gather the opinions of every one before we parted; and when we tired, we refreshed ourselves with prayer, which also we regarded as our main defence against Satan. This diet also we closed with an offering of thanksgiving by any of the clerical brethren whom the moderator might pitch upon. After dinner we again proceeded, about seven o'clock, to the work of winding up and concluding the whole subject; but in a more easy and familiar manner, as being seated round the fire of the great library-room, yet still looking to a moderator, and with the same attention to order, each seeming desirous to record everything that was said. This went on by the propounding of any question or difficulty which had occurred during the day, addressed to him who had opened the subject, or to any other able to resolve it: and so we proceeded till towards eleven o'clock, when the whole duties of the day were concluded by the singing of a hymn and the offering up of an evening prayer. Such were the six days we spent under the holy and hospitable roof of Albury House, within the chime of the church bell, and surrounded by the most picturesque and beautiful forms of nature. But the sweetest spot was that council-room where I met the servants of the Lord—the wise virgins waiting with oil in their lamps for the bridegroom; and a sweeter still was that secret chamber where I met in the spirit my Lord and Master, whom I hope soon to meet in the flesh.

And upon this the warm emotions of the preacher burst forth into verse—verse less melodious and full of poetry than his ordinary diction, but not less the expression of those high-pitched and lyrical climaxes of feeling which naturally find utterance in rhythm and cadence. The narrative, however, which Irving gives in such detail, redeems the singular assembly out of that oblivion into which it and its proceedings have since fallen. What their deliberations were, or the results of them, is neither important to this history, nor is the present writer qualified to enter into such a subject. They who had set their chiefest hopes upon the personal appearance of our Lord, at a period which some actually fixed, looked also, as a necessary preliminary of that appearance, for a personal development of evil, more remarkable and decided than anything that had preceded it; and had so identified and concluded upon the source from which this antichrist was to come, that the ruin of the First Napoleon, and the death of his harmless and unfortunate son, had so much

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effect upon one, at least, of the disappointed expounders of prophecy, as, when fact could be no longer contradicted, to bring an illness upon him. This gentleman, as common rumour reports, first declared that it could not be, and then 'took to his bed' in dire disappointment and distress.

A more formal account of the deliberations and conclusions of this extraordinary little assembly was published by Mr Drummond himself, first in 1827, and afterwards when the successive meetings took place. These reports, however, being given in the form of dialogues conducted by Philalethes, Anastasius, &c., are by that masquerade so withdrawn out of all recognisable individuality, that neither the persons who took part in the conference, nor the historian of it himself—piquant and characteristic as are his other writings—are able to throw any perceptible token of their presence through the chaos of words and consultations. The assembly only meets again in Irving's *Preface*, and in a lighter sketch made by the missionary Wolff, who, about this time, had come over to England under the patronage of the pious autocrat of Albury. 'Within the chime of the church bell,' as Irving says—looking out upon the woods and lawns which enclosed that venerable remnant of ancient masonry, within the walls of which another ritual and a fuller worship were to connect and commemorate the names of Irving and Drummond, occurred this conference—the beginning of the second chapter of the preacher's career—a prayerful *retreat* of piety, surrounded by all the genial observances of hospitality and human communion. It is an era of no small importance in Irving's life. Doubtless a more than usual awakening of general interest on the subject of prophecy—so often left in the mystery which can never be fully cleared up until the end come—was evidenced by a consultation so remarkable. But of the men there assembled, there was, perhaps, no such indivisible man as Irving—none so liable to be seized upon by the splendid expectation, which was henceforward, more or less, to abstract his thoughts from things more earthly; or to give himself up, with such ever-increasing devotion, as a herald of his Lord's coming. This he did henceforward, often losing, in the breathless interest of his theme, all regard to those necessary boundaries of time and space, of which he never had been too observant.

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His companions are described generally as ministers and members of all the different orthodox churches—men both lay and clerical; some of them already distinguished, and some who were hereafter to become so. Mr Hatley Frere, who, according to his own testimony, was the first to turn Irving's thoughts towards prophecy; Mr Lewis Way, whose publication on the second advent Irving cites, along with his own and that of *Ben-Ezra*, as a token of the unity of three churches in the one great doctrine; the Rev. Hugh M'Neil, since so notable a member of his party in the church; along with Wolff, Drummond, and Irving, are the only members named at this early conference. But the solemnity of the meeting, the importance which all its members felt to attach to it, and the evident curiosity it awakened, make of itself a remarkable incident in the history of its time. That time was clearly a time of expectation. An age of great events was just over, and the public mind had not yet accustomed itself to the domestic calm. At home, the internal economy of the country was swelling with great throes—agonies in which many people saw prognostics most final and fatal. Out of all the visible chaos, what a joyful, magnificent deliverance, to believe—through whatsoever anguish the troubled but short interval might pass—that the Lord was coming visibly to confound his enemies and vindicate his people! No wonder they assembled at Albury to build themselves up in that splendid hope; no wonder the empire thrilled, through some thoughtful, and many believing minds at the mere name of such an expectation; least wonder of all, that a mind always so lofty and attuned to high emotions as that of Irving, should have given itself over to the contemplation; or should shortly begin to cast wistful looks all over the world, not only for prophecies fulfilled, but for signs approaching—watching the gleams upon the horizon which should herald the advent of the Lord.

This meeting, he tells us, delayed the completion and publication of the book which had cost him so much toil; but it was after all only the January of 1827, when that laborious performance, with the long preface, which occupies half of an octavo volume, and is one of his finest and most characteristic productions, was 'offered to the church.' I can find no evidence of the amount of favour

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which *Ben-Ezra* and his work attained in the church; but the translator's preface has been often quoted, and was reprinted in a separate form, along with some other of Irving's shortest and least known productions, a few years ago, by some of his admirers in Glasgow.

These conferences were held annually for several years afterwards.

IRVING CARRIES HIS MESSAGE TO HIS OWN COUNTRY.

In the spring of 1828, Irving went, counting himself 'most favoured of the Lord,' to proclaim in Scotland, as he had already done in London, the coming of his Master. 'Walk, dear David, in the fear of the Lord—the time is short,' he writes in one of those friendly letters, now becoming rarer and rarer. And, penetrated with that conviction, he went to Scotland to warn, first his father's house and kindred, and the countryside which had still so great a hold upon his heart, and then universal Scotland through her capital, of that advent which he looked for with undoubting and fervent expectation. This journey was in many respects a very remarkable one, being occupied entirely in the work to which he had no inducement or persuasion but his own profound belief of the great event about to happen—of which, indeed, nobody can doubt that the world had, if it were so near at hand, most need to be advertised. No way could he have better proved the perfect reality of his own belief.

Irving in Edinburgh.

In 1828, Irving caused an immense sensation in Edinburgh, where he delivered a course of lectures on prophetic subjects.

Then he went to Edinburgh, where he had already arranged to deliver twelve lectures on the Apocalypse. Here he was to live in the house of Mr Bridges, now a friend of some years' standing, who lived in Great King Street—one of those doleful lines of handsome houses which weigh down the cheerful hill-side under tons of monotonous stone. The mistress of the house awaited in some trepidation the arrival of her distinguished guest, doubtful whether one, of whose eccentricities and solom-

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nitics everybody had heard, might be sufficiently of human mould to make him an agreeable visitor. She sent away her children hurriedly when she heard his arrival at the door, and listened with a little awe for his stately approach. But, while the mother stood palpitating by her drawing-room door, the children on the stairs encountered the stranger. He stood still immediately to greet them, to make himself acquainted with their names, and give them the blessing, without which he could not pass any head sufficiently low to have his hand of benediction laid upon it. I am not sure that one of them was not mounted aloft on the mighty altitude of his shoulder when he confronted the mother, alarmed no longer, and received the welcome, which came from no hesitating lips.

It was May, and the clergy of Scotland were all in Edinburgh. Of all times to deliver the message of Elias, this was the best time for the Presbyterian nation; and it was on that special account that Irving had chosen it. He began his lectures in St Andrew's Church at the extraordinary hour of six in the morning, in order to make sure of the ecclesiastical audience, busied all the day in the affairs of the church, which he particularly sought. In the sweet but chilly freshness of those spring mornings, a dense crowd filled the area of George Street. I have heard a clergyman of the mildest aspect and most courtly manners describe how, roused by the idea that favoured persons were being admitted by another entrance, he, despite all the proprieties of his clerical character and the suavities of his individual disposition, was so far roused as to threaten an official in attendance with a personal assault, and descent over the besieged railing, if admittance was not straightway afforded. Nothing in our day seems fit to be compared with that wonderful excitement. Half of the audience would, on ordinary occasions, have been peacefully reposing in their beds at the hour which saw them, all animated and anxious, pressing into the gloomy church. The very accompaniments which would have repelled them from another—his indifference to ordinary comforts and regulations—his selection of an hour, of all others least likely to tempt forth the crowd—seem to have attracted them to Irving. Hosts of people cheerfully made themselves uncomfortable for the chance of getting admittance; and those who came, came not once, as to

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an unparalleled exhibition, but time after time, as unable to escape the spell. 'He is drawing prodigious crowds,' Dr Chalmers writes. 'We attempted this morning to force our way into St Andrew's Church; but it was all in vain. He changes to the West Church, for the accommodation of the public.' In that vast building, fitted up with three hideous galleries, the wonderful invention of the eighteenth century, the crowd did not lessen. 'Certainly there must have been a marvellous power of attraction that could turn a whole population out of their beds as early as five in the morning,' adds Dr Chalmers. 'The largest church in our metropolis was each time overcrowded.' And the enthusiastic hearers took the younger members of their household with them, when it was practicable, through the crowd, by way of impressing that wonderful eloquence, so unlikely to appear again in their day, upon the minds of the new generation.

Whether Chalmers's conclusion, that the lectures of this course were 'quite woeful,' was shared by the Edinburgh public, seems very doubtful; for, to the last, that public, not over-excitabile, crowded its streets in the early dawn, thronging toward that point where the homely West Church, with its three galleries, stands under the noble shadow of the Castle Hill; and his wonderful popularity was higher at the conclusion than at the beginning. Nor is it easy to believe that the same year which produced the splendid oratory of the *Last Days*, could have fallen so far short in the special mission with which he felt himself charged. But Chalmers's disapproving eye did not perceive nor recognise the overpowering force of that conviction which had taken possession of his friend. The second advent was, to him, a doctrine open to discussion, possibly capable of proof; to Irving, a closely-approaching stupendous event, of which woe was unto him if he did not warn his brethren. The one man was not able to judge the other with such an astonishing gulf of difference between.

At Rosneath.

When he arrived at the little westland paradise of Rosneath, and under the rich sycamores and blossomed laurel set up the tent, or wooden out-door pulpit, familiar to all eyes on great ecclesiastical occasions, and close by the

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little church, all too small for the overflowing audience, yet occupied by a portion of the hearers, thrilled the soft air and listening crowd with his herald's proclamation of the Coming King, the whole district—hereafter to bear a notable part in his own history—was stirred by his approach. Doubtless the singular young woman who was first to receive that wonderful gift of 'tongues' which had so great an influence on Irving's future fate, was there from the head of the loch to have her mysterious imagination quickened with words which should reverberate to the preacher's undoing. All the agitations and distractions of his latter days lay there in the germ by the sweet half-Highland waters, on the shore of which, as eager to penetrate the rural stillness as to charm the greater ear of cities, he delivered his startling message. Next day at Row, on the opposite shore, almost within hearing of his Sabbath-day's station, a similar scene was repeated.

Tragedy at Kirkcaldy.

On Sunday evening, after the sacramental feast was over, a prodigious concourse of people gathered in Kirkcaldy Church. They had come from all quarters to hear a preacher so renowned for his eloquence, who had long been familiar to all the neighbourhood, whom once the popular mind of Kirkcaldy had scorned, but whom now the entire neighbourhood struggled for a chance of hearing. In the sweet summer evening, when Irving, all unaware of any calamity, and having just left his ailing wife, was on his way to church, he met a messenger coming to warn him of the terrible accident which had just occurred. The overcrowded galleries had fallen, and, besides the immediate inevitable loss of life—which, fortunately, was not great—all the horrors of a vulgar public panic had set in amongst the crowd. Irving immediately took up his post under a window in the staircase, and, conspicuous by his great size and strength, helped many of the terrified fugitives to make their way out, lifting them down in his arms. Such a scene of popular panic and selfish cowardice is always an appalling one. Dr Chalmers, whose wife and child were present, reckons, in his account of it, that 'at least thirty-five people' were killed, two or three only by the actual fall of the gallery, and the rest 'by the stifling and suffocation towards the doors of the church.' The dead and dying were lifted out into the churchyard, the

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latter to receive such help as might be possible, and terror and lamentation filled the neighbourhood. In the midst of this heart-rending scene, one of the crowd—with a bitterness, perhaps, excused by some great loss—turned upon the preacher, and taunted him cruelly with being the cause of the terrible event. The reproach, bitterly unjust as it was, went to Irving's heart. He is said to have withdrawn from the melancholy scene to his own chamber, with tears of anguish and humiliation. And when this dreadful disturbance of the evening's calm had come to an end, and the troubled family, after having exhausted all possible efforts for the relief of the sufferers, were at last assembling to their evening prayers, his grieved soul broke forth into words. 'God hath put me to shame this day before all the people,' he said, with a pang of distress all the more sharp and terrible from the love of love and honour that was natural to his heart. The short time he spent in Kirkcaldy afterwards was entirely occupied by visits to the injured or bereaved people; and to such of them as needed pecuniary help, his purse as well as his heart was open. But the whole calamitous event seems to have been embittered by a wholly unreasonable and most cruel resentment against the preacher, which it is hard to account for. It is said that in some excited local coterie there was wild talk of *offering up the author of all this calamity as a deodand.*

Perth.

The Rev. J. W. Taylor, of the Free Church, Creich, writes:

My own remembrance of Edward Irving is thirty years old, yet is the impression as fresh as the day on which it was made. I remember the very bend of the pavement where first I saw him: the raven locks flowing down to his broad shoulders, his magnificent erect figure, the cloak thrown over his arm, and the giant air with which he marched, are ineffaceably present to my mind. . . . He had come to Perth to preach. Mid-day sermons were not popular entertainments then, and the Kirkcaldy Church catastrophe was fresh in people's thoughts; but the East Church was filled. His text was taken from the 24th chapter of Matthew, regarding the coming of the Son of Man. I remember nothing of the sermon, save its general

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subject; but one thing I can never forget. While he was engaged in unfolding his subject, from out of a dark cloud, which obscured the church, there came forth a bright blaze of lightning and a crash of thunder. There was deep stillness in the audience. The preacher paused; and from the stillness and the gloom his powerful voice, clothed with increased solemnity, pronounced these words: 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.' You can imagine the effect.

The Second Albury Conference.

Mr Irving thus refers to the second Albury conference, and what came out of it, in a letter which he wrote to Dr Chalmers:

We have had another Albury meeting, and are more convinced than ever of the judgments which are about to be brought upon Christendom, and upon us most especially, if we should go into any league or confederacy with, or toleration of, the papal abomination. I intend, in a few days, to begin a letter to the Church of Scotland on the subject. They intend setting forth quarterly a *Journal of Prophecy*, which may stir up the church to a consideration of her hopes. I think there is some possibility of my being in Edinburgh next May. Will any of the brethren permit me the use of their church to preach a series of sermons upon the kingdom, founded upon passages in the New Testament? . . . I trust the Lord will give you time and leisure to consider the great hope of the church first given to Abraham; 'That she shall be heir of the world.' Certainly it is the very substance of theology. The second coming of the Lord is the very *point de vue*—the vantage ground, as one of my friends is wont to word it—from which, and from which alone, the whole purpose of God can be contemplated and understood.

Irving Again in Edinburgh.

This spring [1829] was once more occupied by thoughts and preparations for another visit to Edinburgh, on the same high errand as had formerly engaged him there. A letter of anxious instructions to his friend Mr Macdonald, about the necessary arrangements for the course of lectures he meant to deliver, shows that he had already

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more difficulty than on a former occasion in finding a place to preach in.

I yesterday received a most fraternal letter from Dr Dickson [he writes], most politely and upon very reasonable grounds of damage and danger to the house, refusing me the use of the West Kirk; and I am perfectly satisfied. Indeed, it is as it should be, and as I anticipated it would be. The subject I have to open is too common and concerning to be confined to the walls of a house: it ought to be open as the day to all hearers from the streets and the bye-ways, and from everywhere. . . . You who know law, and are wise as concerneth this world as well as concerneth the world to come, see if there be anything to prevent me preaching in the asylum of the King's Park; and if not, then signify by public advertisement in one or two of the papers, and by handbill and otherwise, to this effect:—

I hereby give notice that, God willing and prospering, I will preach a series of discourses, opening the book of the Revelation in regular order, beginning on Tuesday, the 10th of May, at six o'clock in the evening; and continuing each evening that week; but in the week following, and to the end of the series, at seven o'clock in the morning (not to interfere with the hours of the General Assembly); and earnestly entreat as many of my fellow-churchmen as love the exposition of the holy Word, and that Book which is specially blessed and forbidden to be sealed, to attend on these discourses designed for the edification of the church. The place of meeting will be in the open air (here insert the place), where our fathers were not afraid nor ashamed to worship.

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Minister of the National Scottish Church, London.

Let this be stuck up on the corner of every street; and for the rest we will trust to God. I believe the Lord will not fail me in this purpose, from which nothing on earth shall divert me. I will do it, though they should carry me bound hand and foot to prison. So awfully necessary do I now see it to be. . . . Let there be no tent: a chair on which I can sit and stand. Choose a place where the people may slope upwards, and so that we can wheel with the wind. Pray much for me. I never undertook so much or so important a thing. Ask the prayers of all who will not laugh it to scorn.

These arrangements were, however, unnecessary. Edinburgh did not see that sight which might have been as striking as any of the modern occurrences endowed with double picturesqueness by her noble scenery. The last representative of the ancient prophets—heroic antique figure, noways belonging to vulgar life—did not utter his message under the shadow of the hills, with his audience ranged on the grassy slopes above him. A place was provided for his accommodation, more convenient, if less noble, in Hope Park Chapel, situated in what is commonly called the south side of Edinburgh; and there he preached this second course of lectures, which he seems to have come to, in spite of all obstacles, with a still deeper sense of their importance than the first.

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IRVING'S TRIAL FOR HERESY.

A time of trouble was now at hand for Irving. In consequence of his alleged 'divergence from the rules of Presbyterian worship,' especially of his action in the matter of permitting the alleged 'gift of tongues' to be exercised in the church, and so violating the trust-deed of the national Scotch Church in London, he was summoned before the Church Courts to answer five different complaints that were made against him. He had to stand his trial before both the Presbytery of London and that of Annan, by both of which he was found guilty and excommunicated, or its Presbyterial equivalent. While not agreeing with Irving's contention, that certain extraordinary sounds, that emanated from both male and female throats in his church, were 'the voice of the Holy Ghost,' he yet said some noble things in the course of his speech in his own defence, which can be thoroughly appreciated by those who, in these latter days, contend for 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas.' In his trial before the London Presbytery, he made this daring

Assertion of his Right.

I lay it down, as a doctrine, that if I, as a minister of the church, for instance, see evidence of the speedy coming of Christ to this world, to execute the judgments written in the Scriptures, and destroy Antichrist and establish his kingdom, and reign with his saints upon the earth, I am not to be prevented preaching it, because it is not in the standards. When were the standards made the measure of the liberty of preaching and of prophesying, which is the basis of all liberty? When was the liberty of preaching bound up within the limits of Twenty-six or Thirty-nine Articles? Never since the world began: never was it so, and never shall it be endured. What!—is it meant to be asserted, that the decision of a council sitting in Westminster, in troublous times, was for ever to bind up the tongue of the preacher, to preach nothing but the things contained therein? I never subscribed these articles with that view; and if any other man hath so signed

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them, it is with a false view ; and if with that view, it is said, I did subscribe them, I say it is not so ; and if any say I must use them, I solemnly say I will not do so.

The Scriptures as the Supreme Authority.

At this same trial there was a discussion in which every clerical member of the court declared, individually, in opposition to Irving's protest, that 'the rev. defender was quite out of order in appealing to the Scriptures,' and that 'the question was not the Word of God, but the trust-deed and the doctrines of the Church of Scotland.' This gave Irving the opportunity for a grand and eloquent championship of the Bible as the only rule and guide in such matters. The following passages from his memorable speech are well worth reproducing :—

I never could submit my doctrines to you as a court of Christ ; for by refusing all reference to the Holy Scriptures, ye have put yourselves beyond this privilege. What would any one say of a civil court in Britain which would refuse an appeal to the laws of the realm ? Would not such a court, sitting in the name of the King, who would so despise the laws, be guilty of rebellion against the King, whose office it is to administer the laws impartially to all his subjects ? So say I, if a court, calling itself the court of Christ, says it will not allow appeal to lie open to the Scriptures, which are the statutes of our King, as was ruled by this Presbytery in deliberate judgment yesterday, and that judgment protested against, then that court ceaseth to be a court of Christ ; and I cannot retract or qualify my assertion that, by such proceeding, this Presbytery hath become only a court of Antichrist.

I do not deny that the Presbytery, when it meets, is, or at least ought to be, constituted in Christ, the Head of the church, and ought to be conducted by entire regard to the teaching of the Holy Ghost. But this Presbytery have virtually denied this, and have cut themselves off from the fountain of justice. They have cast themselves from all judgment on the basis of Scripture, which is the only standard of faith and practice, as declared by the very standards of our church ; and they cannot give righteous

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judgment in this cause until they repent of that which was done yesterday, in cutting themselves off from all appeal to this Book, and expunge their decision on this point from the records; and not only not prevent, but gladly permit, in all causes that come before them, reference to be made to the Holy Scriptures. For how would I be a good magistrate of the King, if, when parties came before me with any case to be adjudged, and those parties were referring to the statutes of the land, I should say, 'You ought not to refer to the statutes of the King, but to some antique customs, or some of the new-come notions—some of the notions lately come up in this part of the country—which we have ruled among ourselves?' At our Quarter Sessions, if a man should come up before a magistrate, and should be accused of any matter, and it should be found out and showed that the statutes of the realm applied to the very point, but that they had been long neglected, and were lying in desuetude, surely you would judge him by the statute so adduced. If that court were to say, 'No, we cannot permit any such appeal,' would you say they were fulfilling their office justly? So I say you ought to encourage appeals to the Word of God, because it is the only rule of faith and of practice. It is the thing which is imposed on every baptised person, and as such it is obligatory on you.

I speak at this bar as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ—as a minister of His Word which the Lord has given me to keep and to minister; and as a maintainer of the paramount authority of His Word; and I say again, that dishonour of the most flagrant nature hath been done to the Word of God in these proceedings, by preventing an appeal to it; and if I were not to lift up my voice against it, the very stones out of the wall, and the beams out of the timber, would cry out.

If you resolve so to do—which may the Lord forbid!—I shall appear at the bar of the Great Judge as a witness against you, that I did here this day for four or five hours contend, no irrelevant matter, but contend the very matter in question—that we have received the gift of the Holy Ghost; that we have ordered it according to the Word of God, and that it ought not to be cast out of the church.

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I shall appear at that bar where all secrets shall be revealed, and evidence that you have shut your eyes against this thing, notwithstanding all the evidence that could be adduced; yea, though I have offered to substantiate it by five hundred persons of unblemished reputation, who would willingly come forward and testify to this work being of the Holy Ghost, before this court, or any diet you may appoint. Ah! if ye will turn aside from that, and say, 'No; there are no customs or authority in the canons of the church for it, and we will not consider whether the thing is in Scripture or not;' if ye will not consider it in the only true light—the light of the Scripture—I tell you, ye shall be withered in your churches; I tell you ye will be visited with heavy retribution; I tell you the waters in your cisterns shall be dried up; I tell you ye shall have no pastures in which to feed your flocks; I tell you your flocks shall pine away for hunger, and shall die. Moreover, I stand here rejoicing, not on your account truly; but Oh, I rejoice that I am accounted worthy to suffer shame and reproach for this testimony! If ye will, as members of a Christian court, give your decision against me, while I deplore it on your account and that of the complainers, I rejoice—yea, I rejoice exceedingly—for my own sake, and for the sake of my flock; yea, I will call on them to rejoice, and to be exceeding glad, that I am counted worthy to suffer for the Lord's sake. And I will say of this Presbytery, that it took away my judgment; that it thrust away my judgment; that it would not examine into the merits of the case; that it set aside the testimony of honest men—of an elder, and a deacon, and a prophet, and a minister of Christ; and, judging against all the evidence, ye have thrust aside their testimony, and have merely said, 'Is there any authority for this in the Church of Scotland?' Oh, it is a small matter to be cast out of a house; it is a small matter this, seeing we have 'a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,' and are here but as pilgrims and sojourners on the earth, as all our fathers were. The Lord, we do not doubt, will provide us another; and if not, we are no worse off than He who was accustomed to preach the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom by the Sea of Galilee; who taught his flock in the fields and desert places of Judea, and on the Mount of Olives. We can take ourselves to the fields and open

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places around this great city, and there I can feed my flock. We cannot be worse off than He who, to seek retirement, went up into a desert mountain to pray, and who had not where to lay his head; and when they all went to their several homes, He went to the Mount of Olives during the night to sleep there. We are not worse off than He. Oh, it is a small matter to be turned out of our church! He will soon recompense us with 'a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.' The day is near at hand when the heavens shall be opened, and He—the Son of Man—shall appear in the clouds, with power and great glory, and when His saints shall be taken to Him, to dwell before His throne. It is near at hand, we know. That day is near at hand, and we know this voice of the Holy Ghost has been sent to his church to be the witness to prepare all men for His speedy coming, by a voice that could not be doubted, which the Lord has been graciously pleased to send amongst us in answer to our prayer. When ye had set aside the voice of testimony, which I have lifted up for the last five or six years, to the coming of Jesus, and counted it as a fable, then the Lord, in order that ye might not perish, sent His own voice, as in the old time, to prepare you for His coming.

I do solemnly declare (it is the faith of a Christian, and I mean no offence), but I do solemnly declare my belief that the Protestant churches are in the state of Babylon as truly as is the Roman Church. And I do separate myself, and my flock standing in me, from that Babylonish confederacy, and stand in the Holy Ghost, and under the great Head of the church, waiting for His appearing, who shall come out of Zion a Deliverer, constituting no schism; but, as a minister believing his Lord is soon to appear, desiring and praying that his church may, by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, be made meet for His appearing. And with this hope and prospect, I still have great love for each of you, and desire you to know the same, and entreat you to come out from the Babylonish mixture—to come out of all cardinal ordinances, from all human authority repressing you, and putting you in bondage to man's devices, and preventing you from entering the promised land of the Spirit. I entreat you

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to set up the Holy Scriptures as the only basis of faith and practice; to look as ministers, and to look as people; and I know this, that if you throw the Bible aside, you will not look to much else that is good. You may talk about standards as you please, but I know there will be little reading of the standards or other good books, if there be not much reading of the Scriptures. Therefore I entreat you to put the standards on their own basis, and every moment to walk before the Lord in His commandments. Cry to the Lord, and repent of worldliness; turn to the Lord, and call on Him to lead you into the true faith, and to baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and the Lord will soon teach you and bless you. What I say to the Presbytery, I say also to you all; and I would further urge you, in doing so, not to fear but that in the day of His appearing the Lord will spread His mantle over you, and hide you in the secret of His pavilion, and give you for ever reverently to inquire for, and to know Him in His holy place. Amen and Amen.

IRVING ON 'THE KINGDOM OF GOD.'

The following extract from *Dialogues of Prophecy*, by Irving, written in 1829, shows how greatly he was in advance of some of his clerical brethren in his ideas respecting the Kingdom of God;—

The succession of parables in Matt. xiii., &c., is given by the Lord for the single purpose of teaching true and correct ideas concerning the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Kingdom of God. But first we must know what is meant by the words, 'The Kingdom of Heaven' or 'The Kingdom of God,' before we can profit by these parables, which set forth its resemblances. John the Baptist came proclaiming, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' And when the evangelists would describe in one word what was the substance of their preaching, they called it 'the gospel,' or 'good news of the kingdom.' Now, to one reflecting upon this—the constant theme of the Baptist, and of the Lord, and of his apostles—it is clear that the matter of the gospel—the word of preaching, the substance of faith, the object of hope—is the Kingdom of God, which, also, is the only future thing that we pray for in the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' adding this com-

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mentary or exposition, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven:' and therefore, in the very first blush of the thing, it is manifest that every preacher should be occupied in proclaiming to every man the Kingdom of Heaven which is to come, whatever may be his opinion concerning the same. We are not to be abused or derided for preaching a kingdom; but they who do not preach a kingdom are to be accursed of not preaching the gospel of our Lord and his apostles. But besides this, another thing is manifest from this style in which the Baptist and our Lord began their ministry—namely, that the term, 'Kingdom of Heaven,' signifies something with which the Jews were perfectly familiar. For had not this been the case, what would have been the meaning of preaching it 'at hand'—of preaching a thing 'at hand,' concerning which they knew, and therefore cared, nothing at all? For example, if a preacher were now to stand up and preach that the conclusion of the meteoric cycle was at hand; that the *annus magnus* was nearly closed; or any other event in time, to which you attached no ideas, and consequently no hopes or fears, would he be called a wise man or a fool? Certainly a fool; for every one will answer and say, 'What's that to me—what concern is it of mine?' It were not like a message of God, upon which to send Messiah and Messiah's forerunner, to proclaim a thing to which the people were utterly strange. But if, on the other hand, he were to stand up and say in the midst of them all, 'The judgment of the quick is at hand—the outpouring of the seventh vial is at hand,' then, indeed, you would feel it to be a most grave and mighty message with which he was burdened; because you have already a distinct apprehension and a deep feeling of that which these words convey.

Forasmuch, then, as the Jewish people, to whom these tidings from the Lord were sent, must have well understood the meaning of the expressions in which they were couched, the question arises, 'And what did they mean thereby?' They understood what God had taught them in the Old Testament concerning a kingdom which was yet to be upon the earth. That kingdom, which being everywhere mentioned in Scripture, is particularly set forth in its succession by the prophet Daniel, as about to follow the four successive Gentile monarchies under which the Jews, as the church of God, were to be brought in

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bondage. Dan. ii. 4: 'And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; and it shall stand for ever.' Again, Dan. vii. 13: 'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days; and they brought him near before Him; and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' And again, verse 27: 'And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.'

Here, then, is the fountain from which the Jews drank their expectations. There is a fifth kingdom, coming in succession after four others, which is called the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of the Most High, the Kingdom of the Son of Man. Those four previous kingdoms had come, and three of them had passed away. They had already endured the fourth for two hundred years—a longer period than any of the preceding; and they were in daily expectation of that fifth Kingdom of God, of Messiah, of the Most High, or of Heaven, in which they were to hold the government, under God, over all the nations of the earth. Now this, and nothing else, is or can be the thing which our Lord means in the Gospels by the Kingdom of Heaven; for this, and this alone, is what the Jews understood by that expression, 'The Kingdom of Heaven.'

Our Lord did not come to abolish, or make void, the law and the prophets; verily not to destroy, but to fulfil them; not to alter their faith—that is, not to give them new objects of belief, but to correct any erroneous notions and conceptions which they entertained concerning that kingdom on earth, which is, and ever has been, and ever will be, the object of the church's expectation. . . . Yet I utterly despair of making this blinded, self-conceited generation to discern truth; and it is from amongst those

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who make no profession that the flock of Christ is now to be called in. . . . How awful it is to see the religious world treating the subject of the coming of the Son of Man with derision, unbelief, and hostility. . . . We hold that the Son of Man is to come like the lightning, and that he is to judge the quick, just as the furnace judgeth between the gold and the dross; and he is to separate bosom friends, and close-knit companions, the one unto destruction, like the deluge or like Sodom, the other unto honour and to glory, according to no other principle than this, whether they are expecting him, and ready to receive him, or not. We say he is to come to destroy the careless church, all indifferent to his coming; to slay the great enemy of the Chosen One, which is Antichrist, in all his forms; and to deliver his elect ones, who have cried day and night for vengeance upon the adversary—from his oppression, whether that oppression be the oppression of the world upon the living, or the oppression of the grave upon the dead.

And I say, moreover, that it is his elect who cry to him day and night for vengeance, and they only who have the promise of this deliverance; and those only who are on tiptoe readiness to obey the summons, who receive the escape from the fiery deluge. What say you—are not these things in the passage before us? Is not this, and this only, the substance of it? Shall I be ashamed to echo the words which my Lord has spoken? Shall you be unwilling to hear the words which he has commanded us to speak? God forbid! Let the gainsayers gainsay, and let the deniers deny to the uttermost that the Lord is coming in person to judge the anti-Christian church: it is the voice of God's Word, and it cannot be broken. And if they would quench in death every living voice which declares it, then the thunders from the heaven above, and the lightnings flashing from pole to pole, and the earthquake's shock from beneath, will make men to hear it—aye, and to believe it too; but, like the devils, to believe and tremble. Therefore let men take heed how they hear.

WILLIAM ANDERSON

WILLIAM ANDERSON.

So far as I have been able to observe, the Rev. Dr William Anderson, of Glasgow, was the only clergyman in this country of whom Dr Thomas spoke approvingly, and whose utterances he reported in a similar spirit.* Dr Anderson was born at Kilsyth, Stirlingshire, on January 6, 1799, his father, the Rev. John Anderson, being the Relief minister there. William was also trained for the ministry of the same church, and was ordained minister of John Street congregation, Glasgow, in 1821. He had a fearless spirit of independence, a daring originality of style, and a contempt for conventionalities, which made him a noted preacher, not only in his own denomination, but throughout the whole of Scotland; and he was thus frequently spoken of as 'daft Willie Anderson.'

Dr Anderson's Millenarianism.

Speaking of Dr Anderson's millenarian views, his biographer, George Gilfillan, of Dundee,† says:

In his early days, William Anderson held, we presume, the common ideas about Christ and the eschatology of his religion. Christianity began with a supernatural crown around its infant head, even as old painters represent the child Jesus with a halo round his brow. But, like the corona round a nebulous star, that light had gradually faded, and was to return no more. The religion of Jesus was to go on solely through its intrinsic truth and energy, along with the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost, till it gained universal prevalence. And at some uncertain period hereafter, Christ was to return to judge the world and to take his people to heaven, and, as Hall says, to leave nothing for the Last Fire to consume but the objects and the slaves of concupiscence.

Dissatisfaction with this view of Christian history began to be felt by many ministers simultaneously in

* See vol. I., pp. 50-51.

† *Life of the Rev. William Anderson, LL.D., Glasgow*, by George Gilfillan, 1873.

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England and in Scotland. To the influence of Cunningham of Lainshaw, and of Irving, over Anderson, we propose immediately to refer. But there were considerations suggested by his own reflections, and strengthened by his own temperament, which weighed strongly with him. He felt terribly the thought of the lengthened prevalence of sin and misery, error, paganism, and infidelity, which the common theory implied; and conceiving that the whole world was lying with the Wicked One, he panted for a speedier and supernatural deliverance from his power. His ear was pained and his heart agonised while listening to the groanings of creation, and he earnestly prayed that they might soon be turned into the jubilees of a regenerated world. He believed that the missionary wheels were driving heavily, and that ordinary means had to some extent failed. Gazing at the 'gloomy hills of darkness,' over which his creed taught him that the vulture of divine vengeance was hovering and preparing to descend, he saw the light of true religion creeping up so slowly, and illuminating them so partially, that he began to despair unless behind them the dawning of the second advent should break.

He had, besides, a strong impression that the *kingly* element in the mediatorial character of Christ was greatly overlooked; or rather, that it was not yet fully expressed, nor would be, until the Sufferer on the cross and the Interceder within the veil, became the Monarch on the universal throne. At this prospect his imagination caught fire, and then came in the influence of his peculiar temperament. His organ of wonder was excited in the highest degree by the prospect of the erst Malefactor of Calvary becoming Sovereign of Jerusalem, of Judea, of the world, of the universe, with the palace of an empire as extensive as the creation and as enduring as the sun, covering perhaps the very spot where stood his cross and where yawned his sepulchre! Connected, and mingling strongly with this, there was a child-like passion for Christ in a child-like nature. He learned to appreciate Christ as a person more than in his youth; and it seemed simply a corollary from this to long for his personal presence in power and in glory. The desire for Christ has been very strong in many Christians who do not believe in the

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second advent, but expect to meet him at death. It was so with Samuel Rutherford and many of the Covenanters. Whether Anderson actually held the doctrine of *Hades* we are not sure, but we know that he inclined to it; and this perhaps led him to pant after seeing One on earth whom otherwise he was not likely to meet till the far-off and indefinite Judgment Day. There was in his temperament also a degree of impatience which probably served to intensify this desire. He fell on a time, too, when 'deep was calling unto deep;' the political convulsions of the Continent answering to the muttered thunders and struggling agitations of political and ecclesiastical feeling at home, like the voice of Etna replying to that of Vesuvius; and when, to answer the question, 'What shall be the end of these things?' anxious inquirers were driven to open the Sybilline books of prophecy, when 'young men were seeing visions and old men were dreaming dreams;' and when many expected that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear;—all this served to prepare an ardent and sanguine Christian for embracing a doctrine so exciting, and promising to hope such speedy and splendid prizes as the pre-millennial advent.

But although thus prepared for adopting it, there were circumstances and influences without which probably he would not have adopted it so soon, or perhaps adopted it at all. Though Anderson was a man of gigantic proportions, it might truly be said that a little child could lead him. But there were grown men, and men of no ordinary power, who became his guides into a prophetic region where, sooth to say, guidance was needful, since precipices and mists, dangerous pinnacles of ascent, and fierce blasts abounded, as well as ravishing prospects and gleams of celestial light.

Anderson had, in 1830, at the instance of a clerical friend of Cunningham, gone down to Stewarton and preached, where the Laird had an opportunity of hearing him. The sermon treated, in some of its particulars, upon the millennium; and Cunningham, while professing to be greatly delighted with it, said to Anderson: 'I object to one thing—you have given us a millennium without a Christ.' The result was that Cunningham indoctrinated Anderson with his millennial views, and set him on a

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course of earnest study of the prophecies, which tended to confirm him in the belief. He became deeply interested in the conversion of the Jews, and their restoration to their own land. Cunningham had startled him with the thought that, peradventure, he might never see death; and although he thought this at first the raving of a maniac, he began to cherish it at last himself as the blessed hope of a Christian.

Anderson had known Edward Irving slightly when that extraordinary man was Chalmers's assistant. He had visited Anderson's school repeatedly. They had at one time lodged near each other—on the same stair-head, we believe. Anderson was a great admirer of Irving's preaching when in Glasgow, although he seems then to have preferred that of Dr Chalmers.

There was a certain affinity between Edward Irving and William Anderson themselves, which, had their lot been cast in our days of freer communication and franker intercourse between clergymen of different denominations, and living in distant places, would have led to intimacy and friendship, although, probably, in their first meeting or two, they might, as Dr Anderson used to phrase it, 'have flown at each other's throats' in eager dispute and manly disagreement. But they were essentially brothers—'two lions, littered' in one age; although Irving was the older, the larger, and the more terrible of the two. In rich simplicity of quotation, in antique cast of phrasology, in long unmeasured sentences, in personal appeals, in sudden short bursts of eloquence, in a fearless and somewhat force spirit, blended with much gentleness, in the mixture of cajolery and real simplicity, in occasional wildness, and in sincere and burning enthusiasm, Anderson was a striking though smaller similitude of that 'Shakspeare of the pulpit,' that embodied flame of meteoric fire, who hung, broadened, fluctuated, shivered, faded, went out in darkness, the pride, wonder, and terror of our ecclesiastical heavens. But Anderson, with something of Edward Irving's wild grandeur and strong vehemence, had more of the plain, the direct, and the practical.

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His first pamphlet, entitled, *An Apology for Millenarian Doctrine*, appeared in April, 1830; but previously to this he had given a course of evening lectures on the subject to very large and promiscuous audiences, including his own 'well-beloved flock,' whom he thanks, because at the commencement of the study of this subject they had endured him with such patience. It was often necessary to go an hour and a half before the service began to have the least chance of getting in on these evenings. This tractate (which was followed by a second part the next year) contains the substance of these lectures.

In the preface to the second part we find the following characteristic sentence:—

The conditions on which the author pledges himself to proceed with the publication of more of these lectures are nearly the same as, formerly—the continuation to him of means, health, and reason, and the suspension of threatened judgments on the world, or a longer delay of the advent of the Lord to transform his saints who may remain alive unto his coming: for 'we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.'

Nevertheless, no others were added to the series, although in 1834 he published a pamphlet entitled, *A Letter to the author of Millenarianism Indefensible*, which is valuable as containing a very complete account of the literature of the controversy.

William Anderson was at various times blamed or praised, according to the pre-possession of the parties, for having abandoned his millennial views. This, however, he never did, although he preached the doctrine less frequently. His hopelessness, however, as to the efficacy of ordinary means of converting the world rather strengthened in later years, and his conceptions of the dark moral misery of the human race by no means brightened. Shortly before his death, he said that he did not expect to lie long in the grave; so what he was so fond of calling 'The Blessed Hope' may be said to be still casting its serene radiance, like sculptured sunshine, upon his sepulchre!

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George Gilfillan, a well known and highly popular writer and speaker in his day, was born on January 30, 1813, at Comrie, in Perthshire, where his father was the minister of the United Secession Church there. He was trained for the ministry; and, like many another young man of great intellect, was in a fair way of becoming a confirmed sceptic, through the difficulty he felt in reconciling popular 'Christianity to nature, to man, to philosophy and science, to literature and poetry.'

Saved from Infidelity by 'A Great Hope.'

But there can be no doubt the turning point was reached, and his resolution to undertake the ministry of the gospel saved from becoming a mere make-shift, by the fascinating hope of a millennium which now broke upon his mind. He speaks of this prospect coming to him, not in the form in which he afterwards believed it—that is to say, as connected with the personal pre-millennial advent—but in the form in which it is held by the majority of Christians. By the glowing picture it opened before him of a time of universal peace and blessedness, by presenting Christ and the gospel as the only means by which this world may become a paradise, Christianity asserted its power and seized his mind. His poetical, sympathetic imagination responded to a great hope. 'I loved the thought for its consoling character, for its sublimity, and its poetry.'*

Thus clinging to the glorious hope of the Lord's return as an 'anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast,' Gilfillan pursued his clerical studies, and was in due course 'licensed to preach the gospel' according to the standards of the United Secession Church, by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in April 1835; and on February 23, 1836, was ordained minister of School Wynd congregation, Dundee.

* *George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals, with Memoirs*, by Robert A. Watson, D.D., 1882.

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The Title 'Reverend' Discarded.

It should be mentioned, to the credit of Mr Gilfillan, that, although he was a regularly ordained clergyman of the United Secession Church, he never voluntarily adopted the title of 'Reverend,' or 'Rev.,' usually assumed by his fellow-craftsmen, but preferred always to be known as plain 'George Gilfillan;' and, years afterwards, when the honorary degree of 'Doctor of Divinity' was offered to him, he very respectfully declined it. It is worthy of note that, in this matter, he took a contrary view from Mr Dale, of Birmingham. Like Gilfillan, the popular pastor of Carr's Lane Chapel objected to the title of 'Rev.,' but he gladly accepted the title of 'Dr,' when it was offered to him, because he believed he could conscientiously use it, which he could not the other.

HADES.

Mr Gilfillan's first publication that attracted attention as something at variance with strict orthodoxy was a *Discourse on Hades; or the Unseen*, which appeared in October 1842. It contained views on the state of the dead which were much in advance of those generally held at that time—approximating, in fact, pretty closely to those subsequently advocated by Dr Thomas—and consequently aroused a good deal of hostility in religious circles. I never saw the work myself; but I may mention that, many years afterwards, when I resided in Dundee, and public attention was being again directed to this and kindred subjects, it was suggested to me that it might be well to have this discourse republished; and as I was then in the habit of occasionally seeing Mr Gilfillan in the way of business, I mentioned the matter to him one day, with the view of getting his sanction to the proposed republication. This, it should be stated, was long after he had recanted all his previously expressed belief in the second coming of Christ as the true Christian hope. I found, however, that he was strongly averse to this, and gave as

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a seemingly decisive reason, that he had not a copy from which it could be reprinted. I said I believed I could get a copy for this purpose (having been previously assured to that effect by the friend who made the suggestion); but Mr Gilfillan seemed rather nettled at this, said it was quite a 'puerile' production, and that he would on no account agree to its republication.

The Clamour against 'Hades.'

Had I known then what a great deal of trouble the original publication of this discourse had brought upon its author, I would have hesitated before proposing its republication to him. From Dr Watson's Biography of Gilfillan—(from which I propose to make a number of quotations in the course of this notice)—I afterwards learned that—

It excited an amount of interest, criticism, and abuse which may seem incredible to the race of to-day. The sermon contained little more than a simple line of speculation, varying in no essential point from the Westminster Confession. The anxious care with which appeal was made to the letter of Scripture, the distinct refusal of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory, the endeavour at every stage of the argument to conciliate those who recoiled from doctrinal novelty, remove the whole, one would think, from any charge of audacity. . . . But his claim alarmed the church of that day. Pamphlet followed pamphlet in criticism and rebuke; recantation was called for. Yet the battle was not fought out. In a long speech to the Presbytery, Mr Gilfillan is described in the minutes as having made some 'candid concessions and explanations,' which were deemed satisfactory. His friends had been talking to him—Samuel Brown and others. An impulsive man is more easily persuaded than another that he has given cause for offence. Though he provoked so much opposition, he felt it keenly, and was glad to bring the matter to an end so far. But his thought had to some extent delivered itself, and was not recalled. . . . The freedom which, from 1843, Gilfillan continued to claim, and was tacitly allowed, of treating the Scriptures from a literary as well as a religious point of view, was unquestionably

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the great element of his distinction and popularity in Scotland.

Sydney Dobell saw clearly and indicated the outstanding features of Gilfillan's work—those which commended him far and wide to the eager minds of the time—when, reviewing the *Galleries of Literary Portraits* in the *Palladium* (July 1850), he wrote:

Here is a man burning with zeal, adamant in faith, but who steps out to spiritual combat with the difficulties of the day, crying, 'It will not do now to skulk from the field under a flight of nicknames. It will not do to call our opponents miscreants and monsters. While we state their doubts, let us pity the pain and sorrow, amounting almost to distraction and despair, which attend them; and let us inquire, if we have no difficulties, may it not be because we have never thought at all?' . . . Here is one who has been on the heights and into the depths of doubt, and everywhere finds them peopled by men and brothers; who has dived into the mines of disbelief, where the eye of the indweller has lost capacity for sunshine—has stood in that mount of confusion where the sight is blinded with bare light, and with the calm, clear voice of sympathy lays bare the hearts of their inhabitants—the sceptic of the eighteenth and the sceptic of the nineteenth centuries. Here is a comprehensive believer in God and in man who asks in hope and hails in love every human effort to solve in love the great problems of the earth—who feels that 'to believe in man is an indispensable requisite to a proper conception of Deity'—but looks for their highest solution to that 'unearthly advent for which the weary world and wearier church are beginning to pant with unutterable groanings.'

Gilfillan on his 'Enormous Offence.'

Gilfillan himself, writing to his friend, the Rev. William E. Robertson (known as Robertson of Irvine), on June 16, 1843, remarks rather jauntily on this subject:

I compare before the Presbytery on Tuesday, I believe, to answer for the enormous offence of *Hades*. I intend taking a low and gentle ground. It is a little thing, and not worth making a big bother or pother about. It might, indeed, be prosecuted and defended so as to involve a great question connected with religious liberty; but I feel daily more and more that I am not the person to defend such a great thesis before God, angels, and men.

This latter statement was, unfortunately, only too true. Instead of being a valiant champion of the faith, so far as he had himself learned it, Gilfillan became apostate from it, and sought to undo what little good he had previously done in the way of disseminating the truth respecting 'that blessed hope.' But of this anon.

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Gilfillan's Retrospect of 'Hades.'

Writing in his Journal, under date October 2, 1863, Gilfillan thus recalls some of the circumstances attending the publication of this noteworthy discourse :

This day, twenty-one years ago, I preached my sermon on Hades which made such a row. It had the effect of filling my evening lectures and making me better known. I had previously passed here only for that 'vile voluntary Gilfillan.' The Presbytery and Eadie behaved rather shabbily in the matter. However, it is past. I preached some far better lectures that winter, including one on infant salvation and one on the Fall. It was a terrible winter that!

GILFILLAN AS A MILLENNARIAN.

It is matter of regret that Gilfillan was so lacking in decision in some of his religious convictions respecting the Coming and Kingdom of the Christ. There can be no doubt that, at an early period in his clerical career, he believed firmly in the return of Jesus of Nazareth to earth to establish his everlasting kingdom; but even then, he spoke in quite orthodox style of some of the prophecies, which clearly relate to the blessedness yet in store for the nation of Israel, as being 'a vision of the future glories of *the church!*'—and such a church! A few selections from his miscellaneous writings, taken from Dr Watson's Biography, may here be cited, before giving similar extracts from Gilfillan's published works.

'This Same Jesus.'

Writing at the commencement of a lengthened correspondence with his friend, Sydney Dobell, under date May 23, 1850, when as yet they were but imperfectly acquainted with each other, Gilfillan says :

We are at one, too, I find, in our notion of what is to remedy the evils of society—namely, an advent, I hope, of the 'same Jesus.' Is yours identical? I ask for information; for my notion of you would remain precisely

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the same even if I found that you hoped for Bramah or Shelley (provided you thought either of them the Man-God from heaven). But is it the Jesus of Calvary you expect? Tell me, the more as I am almost alone in this city of 80,000 in pleading month after month that *He* it is who shall come and not tarry.

Speaking with an Uncertain Sound.

Although George Gilfillan here takes credit to himself for being almost alone in Dundee in his pleading for the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, this really was not the case; because, at the time when these lines were written, a meeting of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God had been organised in Dundee, and it contained some very valiant defenders of the recovered gospel. Further, it does not appear that Gilfillan countenanced, by his presence or otherwise, the lectures upon this and kindred subjects which had quite recently been given by Dr Thomas in the town—as his fellow-millennarian, Dr Anderson, had done in Glasgow, and given the apostle from the far West his hearty support. It may also be mentioned that, a year or two after the above letter was written, and when Mr Gilfillan's reputation as a popular preacher and holder of millennial views was well established, our deceased brother, John Forman, was a Sunday in Dundee, lecturing for the brethren there. Having heard so much about Gilfillan and his advanced millennial views, Brother Forman, in the afternoon, attended the service at School Wynd to hear the popular lecturer, expecting a great treat. In this, however, he was greatly disappointed, as he listened to a very humdrum sermon, as he himself termed it—just such as might have been heard from any ordinary United Presbyterian minister; and there was nothing in it to indicate that the preacher was one of those who were looking for the return of an absent Lord, and who 'loved his appearing.' To so little practical account did he turn the superior knowledge he was credited with possessing.

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The Only Rescuer.

That Gilfillan did, at one time, really long for the Master's 'glad returning,' however, is beyond all doubt. Thus, writing again to Mr Sydney Dobell, on June 20, 1850, he says :

At present, to me, everything sounds hollow, like cavernous earth. The words 'hell,' 'heaven,' 'truth,' 'God,' seem ringing below one, and with strange echoes of denial. Oh, that the Saviour were come! I think that, with all my errors and faults, He would accept me, were it for nothing else than that I have never despaired of the race for which he died, and of him as alone competent to the rescue of us all.

And yet again, in writing to the same esteemed correspondent, on June 9, 1851, he thus breaks out :

Alas! alas! the whole race (misled hitherto by superstition, or fanaticism, or false philosophy) should proclaim a fast, call a solemn assembly as wide as the earth, and on quivering knees should repeat the cry, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly'—otherwise—

Assured Confidence.

Six years later, in a letter to Mr J. Stanyan Bigg, of 30th June, 1847, Mr Gilfillan, speaking of his circumstances and trials, thus acknowledges his firm hold of the blessed hope ;

I have a good congregation, the ear of the town, an admirable wife, a decent, though not a rich competence, a determined spirit, a firm belief in Christ as the 'Coming One,' and a most thorough and growing disgust at a world which I do not scruple to call 'the devil's, although—praise be to God!—I do not add, his and his alone.

Halting Between Two Opinions.

Under the date of March 3, 1863, in his Journal, he thus gives an indication of some observations he had made that evening in one of his usual Sunday evening lectures :

In concluding my remarks on the parable (the Good Samaritan), I referred to my own position as a millenarian.

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There were moments, I admitted, when the pre-millennial advent seemed even to me a dream—too good news to be true. I had been, indeed, always an outlying millenarian, holding no connection and having little sympathy at other points with sects and persons who held the doctrine. But there were moments of deep despondency which nothing but the hope of a future revelation could cheer, and when I felt nothing for it—being impartially sick of pantheistic speculation on one side and of superstitious pietism on the other—nothing for it but despair, sullen and speechless as the lips of death, or a look upwards of hope and a cry upwards of eager desire, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Thou, and Thou alone, art able to open the book of this perplexed and afflictive time, and to loose the seals thereof!

THE BARDS OF THE BIBLE.

The Bards of the Bible was one of the earliest literary works of Gilfillan, and brought him into notice as an author. It extended to 346 pages octavo, and was published in the end of the year 1851, although, in his biography, it is stated to have appeared in 1850. The author himself tells us that a portion of it had been written ten years previously; and he mentions this to account for some inequalities in the composition which the critics had detected in it. It contains some very good things, from which I propose to make a few choice selections; but first I will give an appreciative and graphic critique of its contents by the writer's biographer.

Critique on 'The Bards of the Bible.'

His work is not an examination of points, not an improving of the occasion, not, certainly, a philosophic inquiry; it is a prose poem on the Hebrew poets, as men, as voices, as visionaries. . . . The book is gloriously imperfect—a studio, full of bold and breathing sketches, some worked-up pieces, some mere heads, bits of scenes, and so forth; all, indubitably, the painter's own work, and done with a living hand.*

* *George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals, with Memoirs*, by Robert A. Watson, D.D., 1882.

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Enoch.

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, enjoys a singular and short prominence in the early Scripture narrative. A few sentences sum up his history. All at once he is seen walking with God. In a little while he is heard prophesying, 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints;' and again a little while he is seen and heard of no more. 'He was not, for God took him.' No chariot of fire for him. He was taken, or lifted away by God's own hand. It is a rumour of the rabbis, that he was on the point of being murdered by an assemblage of the flood-deserving and flood-doomed children of Cain, when he disappeared: 'he was not.' It is remarkable that, though the first of the prophets, he yet prophesied of the last event in the history of the world—the coming of the Lord. It is as if no event betwixt were majestic enough for him to touch—as if this coming of Christ from heaven best suited the tongue of him who, even on earth, was breathing the air of the upper paradise, and was, in a little while, to be caught up among the visions of God. Enoch's history rests, like a drop of glory, upon that ancient page.

The Psalms.

In the Psalms, it seems to me, Gilfillan somehow misses his mark; for he almost entirely overlooks the wealth of poetry that might be abstracted from this book with reference to the coming King and Kingdom. Even the 2d and 72d Psalms—which are devoted in an especial manner to these thrilling subjects—he simply links together, and disposes of with the remark, that they possess 'prophetic power and insight!' The extraordinary omission thus indicated leads me to believe that the Book of Psalms was one portion of the *Bards* which, the author tells us, was written ten years previous to its publication, and when his millennarian views had not assumed definite and decisive shape and form. On no other ground can I understand how such graphic pictures of the coming glory are altogether ignored. He reserves all recognition of the prophetic character of the Psalms until his closing sentence, which is as follows:—

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Surely these bright gushes of song, occurring at the close, unconsciously typify the time when man, saved from all his wanderings, strengthened by his wrestlings, and recovered from his falls, shall, clothed in white robes, and standing in a regenerated earth, as in a temple, pour out floods of praise, harmonising with the old songs of heaven—when the nations, as with one voice, shall sing—

Praise ye the Lord. God's praise within
His sanctuary raise :
And to Him in the firmament
Of His power give ye praise.

Because of all His mighty acts,
With praise Him magnify :
O praise Him, as He doth excel
In glorious majesty.

Praise Him with trumpet's sound : His praise
With psaltery advance ;
With timbrel, harp, stringed instruments,
And organs, in the dance.

Praise Him on cymbals loud : Him praise
On cymbals sounding high.
Let each thing breathing praise the Lord.
Praise to the Lord give ye.

Joel.

In dealing with the prophet Joel, Mr Gilfillan gives a graphic and highly coloured picture and paraphrase of 'The Last Conflict,' founded upon the different prophecies. He says :

The object of the fight is the restoration of Judah to its former freedom and power. For this have its scattered members been gathered, organised, and brought back to their own land. God has gathered them ; but He has also, for purposes of His own, to use prophetic language, 'hissed' for their enemies, from all nations, to oppose them on the threshold of their triumph. The Valley of Decision or Excision is that of Jehosaphat, the deep glen lying between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, and which is watered by the brook Kedron. There, 'multitudes, multitudes,' are convened for the final issue. The field has been darkened, and over those multitudes a canopy expands, unlighted by sun, moon, or stars. Under this black sky, the sea of heathen fury and numbers is advancing, and the people of God are, in deep suspense and

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silence, awaiting its first breaking billow. The contest at last begins, when lo! there is a glare on Olivet, which shows also the whole expanse of Jehoshaphat's valley, and also the faces of the foemen, as they draw nigh; and hark! there is a voice from Zion which shakes the earth and heaven, and tells that the delivery is near; and then, between Olivet and Jerusalem, and hanging high over the narrow vale, appears the Lord himself, 'the hope of his people, and the stronghold of the children of Israel.' And as the result of this sudden intervention, when the fight is decided, 'the mountains drop down sweet wine, the hills flow with milk, the torrents of Judah flow with water, a fountain comes forth from the House of Jehovah, and waters the Valley of Shittim,' and innumerable voices proclaim that henceforth the 'Lord will dwell in,' as He has delivered, Zion.

Was there ever preparation on a larger scale; suspense deeper; deliverance more sudden; or a catastrophe more sublime? We stay not now critically to inquire how much there is of what is literal, and how much of what is metaphorical, in this description. To tell accurately where, in prophetic language, the metaphor falls from around the fact, and the fact pierces the bud of the metaphor, is one of the most difficult of tasks—as difficult, almost, as to settle the border line between the body and the soul. But, apart from this, we think there is no candid reader of the close of Joel, but must be impressed with the reality of the contest recorded there, with its modern date, its awful breadth of field, its momentous and final character. . . . It is a contest of whose where and when we may not speak, since the strongest prophetic breath has not raised the mists which overhang the plain of Armageddon. It is a contest, finally, which promises to issue in a supernatural intervention, and, over the smoke of its desperate and bloody battle-field, to show the crown of the coming of the Son of Man.

Micah.

In dealing with Micah's prophecy, he says:

From Zion, as of old, the law is to go forth; and the word of Jehovah issuing from Jerusalem seems to imply that He Himself is there to sit and judge and reign—His ancient oracles resuming its thunders, and again to his

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feet the tribes going up. And the first, and one of the best, fruits of his dominion is peace. 'They learn war no more.' Castles are dismantled, men-of-war plough the deep no longer, but are supplanted by the white sails of merchant vessels; soldiers no more parade the streets in their 'loathsome finery of blood;' swords and spears are changed into instruments of husbandry, or, if preserved, are preserved in exhibitions, as monuments of the past folly and frenzy of mankind. (Perhaps a child finds the fragment of a rusty blade some day in a field, brings it in to his mother, asks her what it is, and the mother is unable to reply!) Peace, the cherub, waves her white wing, and murmurs her soft song of dove-like joy over a regenerate and united world.

All hail, ye 'peaceful years!' Swift be your approach; soon may your great Harbinger divide his clouds and come down; and soon may the inhabitants of a warless world have difficulty in crediting the records which tell of the wretchedness, the dispeace, the selfishness, and the madness of the past!

Zephaniah.

In disposing of the prophecies of Zephaniah, Gilfillan makes some remarks in vindication of the terrible curses against heathen countries pronounced by some of the Hebrew prophets, which may almost be taken as a vindication of the style of invective so often indulged in by Dr Thomas in his writings, and for which he was sometimes taken to task by his own friends. Just listen to this:

Let us remember that the prophets employed the language of poetry, which is always in some degree the language of exaggeration. Righteous indignation, when set to music, and floated on the breath of song, must assume a higher and harsher tone; must ferment into fury, soar into hyperbolic invective, or, if it sink, sink into the under-tone of irony, and yet remain righteous indignation still. Besides, as Coleridge has shown so well, to fuse indignation into poetic form, serves to carry off whatever of over violence there had been in it; by exaggerating, it relieves and lessens its fury. Finally, there is such a thing as noble rage; there are those who do well to be angry; there is anger which may lawfully tarry after the sun has gone down, and after the longest twilight has melted away,

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There is a severe and purged fire, not to feel which implies as deep a woe, to the subject, as to feel it inflicts upon the object. It is the sickly sentimentalism of a girl which shudders at such glorious frowns, and fiery glances, and deep thrilling accents as robust virtue must sometimes use to quell vice, audacity, heartlessness, and hypocrisy, in a world rank with them all. There must be other sentences and songs at times than the perfumed pages of albums will endure, and cries may require to be raised which will jar on the ear of evening drawing-rooms. Such sentences and cries the mildest of men—nay, superhuman beings—have been forced to utter. Can any one wonder at Ezekiel's burdens who has read the 23d chapter of Matthew? Dare any one accuse Isaiah of vindictive scorn to the fallen King of Babylon who remembers the divine laughter described in the 2d Psalm or the first chapter of Proverbs? It is very idle to proceed with Watts to reduce to a weak dilution the sterner Psalms. The spirit of Jude and 2d Peter is essentially the same with that of the 109th and 137th Psalms; and never let it be forgotten, that the most fearful denunciations of sin, and pictures of future punishment, in Scripture, come from the lips of Jesus and of the disciples whom he loved. It is in the New Testament—not the Old—that that sentence of direst and deepest import occurs, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

THE HISTORY OF A MAN.

The History of a Man, edited by George Gilfillan, was a work of 357 pages, and was published in 1856. Although not so stated on the title-page, it was understood to be, to a large extent, an autobiography of its 'editor.' 'Real names, pseudonyms, and initials are introduced—the real names mostly those of well known men; the fictitious either impenetrable or so transparent that the disguise is useless.' In this work Mr Gilfillan tells how he came to adopt millennial views, and how the hope set before him in the pre-millennial advent came as a bright and shining light, at a time when clouds and darkness oppressed his spirit. His experience also is an illustration of the utility of tracts in disseminating the truth. He says:

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In my deepest and darkest hour, I clung to the doctrine of the God-Man, the Word incarnate in the Man of Galilee; nay, methought his beautiful, bending, compassionate form became larger and brighter from the surrounding gloom; and I was tempted to cry, 'If there be no other God, Thou, Jesus, at least, are divine; and to whom can I go but to Thee, for Thou hast the words of eternal life?' And to intensify this affection, there arose to my heart at this time, like a new star bursting on the midnight, the ancient hope of the church—that 'blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.' I had previously despised this as a dream, and wondered, with a great admiration, how a man like Edward Irving ever yielded his giant arms to such gossamer chains.

One night, however, in my absence, a humble millenarian missionary called at my dwelling and left, with my dearest relative, some little tracts on the subject. These on my return I read, sooth to say, with no great admiration and with no credence. I began to revolve the subject in my mind, and the result, at last, was a very decided hope in the pre-millennial advent. 'One clear star the seaman saves;' and for a long time I had only this star in my cloud-shifting sky. Unable to answer many of the objections or objurgations of Carlyle and Emerson, I said to myself, 'He shall, one day, answer them.' Unable to see clearly the relations of reconciliation between science, literature, philosophy, and religion, I cried, 'He shall, one day, form the bright synthesis between these transcendent things.' My faltering Faith began to lean for support upon her younger and fairer sister, Hope.

One day, while wrapped in deep and silent misery, I was relieved by a friend, sitting in the room beside me, murmuring to herself, in soliloquy, 'The Saviour is coming soon!' I felt as if an oracle had opened its lips beside me; and although twelve years have elapsed, and he is not yet here, I am as confident as ever that, as surely 'as Tabor is among the mountains, and Carmel by the sea, so he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.'

Gilfillan's Own Description of the Book.

Writing to his esteemed friend and literary tutor, Thomas Aird, on April 20, 1855, when the writing of the book was nearly finished, Gilfillan says:

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I read a large part of the autobiography to young Gorrie, who thinks it by far my *rarest* and most interesting book. It contains descriptions of scenery, conversations with celebrated men (imaginary, of course), incidents, poetry, sketches of character; and I have closed it with a history of my religious opinions, which will contain some strong hits at sceptical leaders. I think you will like the book as a whole.*

CHRISTIANITY AND OUR ERA.

In this work, which extends to 478 pages, and was published in 1857, Mr Gilfillan gives some attention to the causes of the decline of Christianity, and finds them—first, in the absence from the world of the Author of our faith; secondly, in the superstition which followed Christ's departure and the prevailing absence of a sound belief in the second advent. The church, he says, is to blame for the apostacy, and he adds, 'It is our firm impression that this hope of Christ's coming, renewed in the church, must keep the remains of faith and fervour glowing till they be kindled into an ever-burning flame by the arrival of Christ.' After noticing plans for increasing the power of Christianity, the book passes to the argument for a supernatural interference on behalf of Christianity, and concludes with the signs of the second advent, and a glowing picture of its results.

Gilfillan's Own Description of the Book.

Writing to Thomas Aird, on April 20, 1855, when the book was being written, Gilfillan said:

Christianity and our Era is about half written. It is more elaborate than the other [*The History of a Man*], but not so easy. I hope, in God, it may do some good to these distracted and devil-ridden times. The longer I live I am the more thoroughly persuaded of the truth of our blessed faith, and more anxious to do some little thing in its defence. Oh that I had as much of the spirit and grace of Christianity as I have firmness of conviction in its truth!

* *George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals, with Memoirs*, by Robert A. Watson, D.D., 1882.

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Writing again to Aird on April 7, after the book had appeared, Gilfillan said :

In the two last chapters in the volume, I have given imagination full swing, and these with young people and young poets are likely to be favourites. The two you expect most from are the best intellectually, but are likely to be most disputed. I don't know whether you will admit the characteristic in this new work that I think I see to be its peculiarity as compared to the *Bards*—namely, continued and incessant thinking, in all the better and more laboured passages, at least. There are more thoughts in one or two of its pages than in chapters of the *Bards*. *Valeat quantum valere potest*; and if God give it two or three 'sceptic souls' for its hire, it shall not have been written in vain.*

Invocation to the Coming One.

Christianity and our Era is throughout a masterly plea for and defence of the doctrine of the coming reign of the Messiah upon the earth; and it fitly closes with the following fervent prayer for the speedy return of the Lord Jesus :—

O thou Prince of the kings of the earth! thou thro'ed and sceptred Child!—mighty in thy child-like innocence and truth, as in thy God-like power and exaltation!

Thou that yearnest over this miserable earth, as a parent over the cradle of a sick babe!

Thou that putt'st the tears of thy people into thy bottle, and chroniclest their sighs, and carriest their injuries like arrows in thine own large heart!

Thou to whom the very dust of that earth, where thou livedst for thirty-three years, and didst shed thy blood, is dear!

Come down to the deliverance of thy church and the redemption of this world!

Come down; it is to thee but a step from the throne to the Mount of Olives:

Come down; the tumult of thine adversaries groweth continually:

Come down; the impatience and desire of thy bride—the true church—are daily waxing stronger:

Come down; the lamps of thy golden candlestick are becoming dim, and the stars in thy hand, erst so bright, are trembling towards extinction:

Come down: the earth is groaning more terrible groans under its growing burdens and intolerable bondage, and every groan is crying, 'Come!'

* *George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals, with Memoirs*, by Robert A. Watson, D.D., 1882.

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'The poor crushed slave is crying for thee; the unhappy earnest inquirer is beginning to say, 'Lord, why tarriest thou?' The grave is yawning out, 'He delayeth his coming;' the sins of earth are calling out for vengeance; the harvest of the earth is moaning in the wind through all its ripe ears for the coming of the Husbandman; the mountains of the earth are lifting themselves up, and darting their snowy eyes to see the first smoke of thy chariot wheels—the first ray of thy descending glory.

Come down; for the time—the set time—is nearly come! Thou art looking at the 'dial of eternity,' and thou seest that the finger of the Marvellous Light is trembling toward the point when 'He that shall come will come, and can no longer tarry.' Therefore, even so come, Lord Jesus, O come quickly!

And O! prepare—prepare—prepare us all for meeting thy holy eye, and for standing as saints at thy solemn second advent!

There is something in the agonised wail that runs all through this 'effectual fervent prayer' which goes deep to the very heart. It is the earnest supplication of a soul that thirsted for the living God, even as the hart panteth after the water-brooks. We seem to hear in it the bitter, despairing cry of one who sees no hope for the amelioration of our fallen and suffering humanity apart from the return to earth of the Lord Jesus, and who therefore cries from the very depths of his heart for this glorious consummation of the Redeemer's great work. The whole composition reads almost like the language of inspiration. The Jeremiah-like tone that pervades it, the sublimity of the ideas, the grandeur of the language, and the earnest longing for that which is still a matter of faith and hope, are suggestive of the rapt utterances of some of the old prophets, rather than of the commonplaces of these latter days.

GILFILLAN AS A HERETIC.

Future Punishment.

Respecting his ideas on future punishment, while discarding the popular belief, Gilfillan never seems to have held very clear or decided views. What these were we gather from extracts which have been published from his private correspondence and from entries in his Journal. Thus, writing to Sydney Dobell on Dec. 30, 1850, he expresses himself as follows on the subject:—

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I am no believer in eternal punishment, nor have been for years. And now I find few who, when you come to close quarters, are. But I do not believe in the universal restoration of midges, madmen, tigers, serpents, and all the other dark disarrangements we have called men. I incline to destructionism; or rather to the idea of God selecting His own children from among the mass, and leaving the others silently to die away. Have not whole races of animals expired already? And what were they worse than the majority of men? I believe in the word of the apostle, 'Elect unto everlasting life.' But I believe also that the number of the elect company shall be 'a great multitude which no man can number,' out of every kindred and people and colour and creed—yes, even from ultra-Calvinism itself. Am I not now heterodox to your heart's content?

The following extract from his *Journal*, under date January 12, 1864, also bears upon the subject:—

Have got and read Maurice's letter in the *Spectator* on eternal punishment. It is cleverer than his wont, and very earnest in its tone. I partly agree with it so far as to think that the doctrine of eternal damnation, stated in its crude form, makes God a monster. I can as yet get no further than that it is not His purpose to give any of His creatures eternal death, unless eternal death means annihilation, or on the supposition of their for ever and ever refusing any terms of submission or reconciliation.

Brought to Book by the Church Courts.

It is not surprising that George Gilfillan, by his occasional outspoken 'heresies' and plainly declared dissension from some of the standards of the United Presbyterian Church, should have found himself at times brought to book by the church courts. It cannot, however, be said that he made a very creditable appearance when thus put upon his defence. He was a very impressionable and impulsive man; so that, at a public meeting or lecture, when labouring under the excitement and enthusiasm fostered by the applause of an admiring and almost worshipping audience, he seemed to be bold as a lion in defence

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of what he regarded as religious truth and liberty; but when brought face to face with accusations based upon his public utterances or his published writings, he sang very small indeed, and made 'candid concessions and explanations' which procured for him absolution for the time being. No sooner was the dreaded 'heresy hunt' over, however, than he was at it again; and the same process of concession and explanation was gone through when official notice was taken of his alleged heretical utterances. The fact is that Gilfillan, with all his railing at the U.P. Church standards, was very reluctant to leave that church (although several times he had all but made up his mind to abandon it), and his clerical brethren were very unwilling to lose one who was such a burning and a shining light among them, and consequently were more willing to overlook what they were fain to regard merely as indiscretions of speech on his part, than they would have done if spoken by a brother of less distinguished gifts. He thus came to be simply tolerated among them, until the time of his death, which took place with startling suddenness on August 13, 1878.

GILFILLAN AS AN APOSTATE.

A Jewel of Gold.

Gilfillan never placed much faith in the dates which had been fixed upon by various prophetic expositors as indicating the time of Christ's return, even while still retaining his firm belief and ardent longing for that return. Thus, in the course of a sermon in his own church on Sunday afternoon, June 19, 1859, as reported in the *Dundee Advertiser* of 21st June, he said:

In America, William Miller produced a great impression. He had one glorious truth in him—that of the pre-millennial advent; but it was like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. He could not manage it well. He was always for fixing day and date; but the days passed away, and the dates expired, and no Christ came, and hence men laughed

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at his predictions, and Millerism is now only a memory and a name.

The First Indication of Backsliding.

It is a melancholy fact, that Gilfillan did not remain 'faithful and true' to the measure of divine truth to which, as I have already shown, he had attained. Indeed, he made a complete recantation of it, in terms the most absolute and conclusive. His case is so unique, that I have been at some pains to try and discover how and why it was that one who had become to so large an extent enlightened in the way of life, should so thoroughly depart from it as he did; but I have been unable to find any very definite information on this point. The first intimation, as regards time, which bears upon the matter, I have found in an entry in his Journal, under date January 26, 1864, in which he credits 'Coleridge and others' with having taught him what he must surely be wrong in calling 'a little more sense.' This extract is as follows:—

Cumming is getting it to-day from the *Saturday Review*. He does in many points deserve it. I am sick of all prophecy-mongers, and so will the public become more and more when they begin to understand really what prophecy is, how uncertain in its vaticination, how certain in its moral foundations. Cumming's power over the country is a disgrace to it, though of course all the really intelligent and thoughtful care nothing for him. I was once bit, not by Cumming, but by the common notions about prophecy; but Coleridge and others have taught me a little more sense.

The Scoffer's Prayer.

Those who sympathised with Mr Gilfillan's millenarian views were startled and shocked by an emphatic utterance of his a few years afterwards. At the ordination soiree of the Rev. John Brand, of Bell Street U.P. Church, Dundee, on Thursday, September 20, 1867, he made a speech in which, as reported in the *Dundee Advertiser* of the following day, occurs this remarkable passage:—

The second advent—if I may be allowed to speak of a solemn subject in a single sentence—which a good many

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worthy persons were expecting, has not taken place—
(Hear, hear). The heavens still retain—AND MAY THEY
LONG CONTINUE TO RETAIN—their glorious Guest!

A Humiliating Recantation.

The thorough revolution in Mr Gilfillan's sentiments is unmistakably expressed in the following extract from a letter by him which was published in a magazine entitled *Forward*, in August 1869:—

Were I to re-write my *Bards of the Bible, Christianity and Our Era*, and *Alpha and Omega*, I would in many points recall what I then, and most earnestly and conscientiously said. I would not only declare my abandonment of pre-millennarianism, but my shame and sorrow that I ever could have believed such 'a beggarly Jewish element'—ever accepted such an evasion of our Christian and world difficulties—ever defended the destructive element which is the pervading one in that belief, and is so diametrically opposed to the spirit of on-going, all-forgiving, all-embracing, and, finally, victorious Christian love. The fierce and contemptuous language I use in *Christianity and Our Era*, about the leaders of modern thought, is now entirely abhorrent to my feelings.

Having the Courage of his Convictions.

As still further indicating the complete revulsion in his mind, it may be mentioned that Mr Gilfillan was latterly most anxious to call in and destroy every copy of his writings just mentioned, whenever they could be purchased. At any public sale of books in which a copy of any of the condemned volumes was included in the catalogue, its purchase was deputed to an agent, whose instructions were imperative. 'Go and buy that book for me,' he said, 'whatever the cost;' and these instructions being well known in the trade, the reprobated book was usually run up to quite a fabulous price.

JAMES SCOTT

JAMES SCOTT.

James Scott was a well known writer on prophecy, who was considerably in advance of the time in the views he held, and did a good deal to disseminate these views during a long lifetime. He latterly resided in Edinburgh, where he died on March 20, 1877, aged seventy-six. The following brief biographical notice of him, written by James Cameron, appeared in the *Daily Review* after his death:—

Mr Scott was licensed as a preacher in connection with the Church of Scotland about forty years ago, but cast in his lot with the Free Church at the Disruption. He never had a charge in either church. The reason was, in the first instance, that he entertained views on unfulfilled prophecy, concerning the pre-millennial advent of our Lord, and kindred topics, which he conceived to be so diametrically opposed to the Westminster Standards, that he could not conscientiously subscribe the Confession of Faith, as required at ordination. His advocacy of the views referred to was so enthusiastic and strong, that he wrote a number of works on the subject, and annually, for thirty years, overtured the General Assembly of the Free Church, urging his brethren to give attention to this, as he considered it, fundamental topic of the Scriptures. His first work, *Outlines of Prophecy* (429 pages) was published in 1844. Several others followed, entitled *First Root of Popery Dug Up* (239 pages), *Catechism on Prophecy* (202 pages), &c., in which the same themes were treated. When in London, about fifty years ago, he was a member of the congregation under the pastorate of the late Edward Irving; and it was his attachment to the views propounded by Irving that decided him to devote himself to the study of theology as a profession. After the Disruption, being rather outspoken regarding his favourite topics, his services do not seem to have been relished as a probationer by those having the direction of this department, and he consequently devoted himself to portrait painting, which he continued down to his death. Mr Scott was a native of Earlston, in Berwickshire. He was a man of considerable power of mind, and of an ardent temperament, but what is of more importance, of unexceptionable moral character.

WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF

WILLIAM GLEN MONCRIEFF.

It has already been mentioned* that much assistance in the understanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom was found by honest inquirers in the writings of Mr William Glen Moncrieff. Although Mr Moncrieff himself did not come to a full belief of the Gospel of the Kingdom and the obedience which it requires, yet his works, appearing as they did at a time when much attention was being given to the true nature of the gospel, constituted a valuable link in the chain by which many were drawn to a correct apprehension of the one faith; and a mention of them, therefore, seems warranted in an enumeration of works included in the Kingdom Literature.

Dialogues on Future Punishment.

This was the first publication by Mr Moncrieff on the Life Question, as it came to be called. It was a crown octavo pamphlet of 48 pages, and was published in Dec. 1848. In his preface, the author says:

In presenting the following Dialogues to the public, I may be allowed to state, that I am conscious of no motive except a sincere desire to extend what appears to me the Scriptural view of the punishment to be inflicted on those of the human family who shall be condemned at the great Day of Judgment. As far as I can judge, the prevailing doctrine on this subject is erroneous, and calculated deeply to injure the character of my Heavenly Father; and I have done what was in my power, in a calm spirit, to show that the popular notion is perfectly unscriptural. Believing it wrong to conceal truth—or what appears to my mind to be truth—having a tendency to benefit my fellow-men, and especially my fellow-Christians, with all humility I lay this treatise before them, hoping that, perhaps, some will condescend to read it. What is evolved in the Dialogues is either truth or error: if it is truth, it will live; if it is error, it must die.

* See vol. i., p. 119.

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Mr Moncrieff acknowledged his indebtedness to the Rev. H. Dobney, of Maidstone, for the sound views on the subject which he had obtained from that clergyman's work *On Future Punishment*, and to the volume entitled *Life in Christ*, by the Rev. Edward White, then minister of the Congregational Church, Hereford. Both of these books, being rather high-priced, had not at that time a large circulation; and Mr Moncrieff's *Dialogues*, so far as I am aware, was the first attempt to deal with the question of future punishment in a popular and at the same time Scriptural manner, and which was likewise offered to the public at a popular price. In the form of a familiar dialogue between two friends—Persis and Rufus—the whole subject is thoroughly canvassed; the Scriptural doctrine of life only in Christ being clearly and calmly presented, while objections to it are also considered and satisfactorily answered. The appearance of this little book at the time it did caused the utmost consternation in some Morisonian circles, in which the author was held in high esteem. To those who had the good and honest heart, and were sincerely inquiring the way of life, it proved exceedingly helpful, enabling them to get rid of the old pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which lies at the root of the popular theology of our day, revealing to them what 'the gift of God' really is, and impelling them onward with increased ardour in their inquiry, 'What is truth?' As regards the author of this useful *brochure*, it is painful to remember that he had to pay the penalty which is so often imposed upon those who endeavour to lead in the work of replacing prevailing error with divine truth. The publication of the *Dialogues* led to his expulsion from the Morisonian body, and deprivation of his office of review writer for the *Christian News* (the press organ of the denomination), with a salary of £20 a year, with the help of which he managed to eke out a precarious existence as the pastor of the small Evangelical Union congregation in Musselburgh.

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The Saviour's Promise of Life.

A tract bearing this title, consisting of four pages crown octavo, was the next treatise on this topic written by Mr Moncrieff. It was issued just at the time when the minds of many religious people in Edinburgh and elsewhere were being anxiously exercised on the subject of future punishment, and when Dr Thomas's views on the question, propounded in *Elpis Israel*, had come as a thunderbolt to many, who had experienced little difficulty in accepting his teaching on other points. The purport of this tract was to point to the following three inferences from what was advanced in it:—1. Men have no natural or inherent immortality. 2. Immortality is obtained only through Jesus. 3. The end of the wicked is death. The tract, in its whole tone, savoured strongly of both the spirit and the letter of Morisonianism; but in spite of this—perhaps I should say because of this—it proved of much service to some persons who were just groping their way from clerical darkness and bondage to the light and liberty proclaimed in the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Soul.

Soul; or the Hebrew Word Nephesh and the Greek Word Psuche, was a crown octavo pamphlet of 24 pages, which Mr Moncrieff published after his removal from Musselburgh to Edinburgh. The preface, which is dated 'Edinburgh, 5 Buccleuch Street, April 1852,' explains the object of the work thus:

The design of the following pamphlet is to give a plain and popular view of the two words in the original of the Old and New Testaments, commonly translated SOUL. In the Hebrew, it is *nephesh*; in the Greek, it is *psuche*. The tract, it is humbly presumed, is so written, that any one, merely acquainted with the English language, can, in an easy and satisfactory manner, get a clear conception of the import of these two foreign and important terms. How very widely they differ from the meaning now commonly given to the usual English equivalent 'Soul,' as employed in theological exposition, must be apparent even

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to a very superficial examiner. In our age it is gratifying to observe that the appeal, in all religious discussions, is, as it ought to be, more directly and unreservedly to the Bible—the grand source of sacred truth; and if this small performance shall aid inquirers in their investigations regarding man, his constitution, and the glorious destiny that is mercifully brought within his reach, the writer will judge himself abundantly rewarded for the labour of its preparation.

In 1863, the work having been for several years out of print, a second edition of it was issued, to which was appended some remarks from the author's other writings in refutation of the popular belief that man possesses an 'immortal' soul.

Spirit.

Spirit; or the Hebrew Terms Ruach and Neshamah, and the Greek Term Pneuma, was a work by Mr Moncrieff projected and carried out on similar lines to *Soul*. It was published in 1853, and extended to 97 pages. It was stated in the preface:

The chief object of this treatise is to show how the Hebrew words *Ruach* and *Neshamah*, and the Greek word *Pneuma*, are rendered in the authorised English Bible, and to explain the more important passages where they occur, with a view to determine what is meant by THE SPIRIT OF MAN. All texts, as a general rule, have been neglected where any of the two Hebrew terms, or the Greek one, is obviously applied to God, to the Divine Spirit, or to created intelligent agents, but not of the human family. These texts are never referred to on any occasion save as helping to explain the difference between the spirit of man, and a being who is a spirit. It is with man, in a word, that at present we are concerned; our question is not, What is a spirit? but WHAT IS THE HUMAN SPIRIT?

ELPIS ISRAEL

ELPIS ISRAEL.

Coming now to deal specifically with various books and pamphlets that may properly be classified under the heading 'Kingdom Literature' of the period, first and foremost must be placed *ELPIS ISRAEL: an Exposition of the Kingdom of God*, by John Thomas, M.D. Mention has already been made of the peculiar circumstances under which the writing of this remarkable book was suggested, and of the manner in which it was executed in 1850.* The book itself, we are told by the author, although extending to over 400 pages demy octavo, contained only about two-thirds of what he had originally written upon the important and extensive subject of which it treats. In the first instance, it was published in London; and the pages being stereotyped, Dr Thomas took the plates with him upon his return to New York, where an American edition of the work was printed, after a sufficiently large subscription list had been obtained to warrant this step.

The Scope and Purpose of 'Elpis Israel.'

Dr Thomas, in the preface, thus characteristically explained the *raison d'être* of his wonderful production:

The nature of the work is indicated on the title-page. It is a work showing what the Bible teaches as a whole, and not the elaboration of a new, or fantastical, theological theory; or the new vamping of an old one. It demonstrates the great subject of the Scriptures—namely, 'The Kingdom of God and of His Anointed,' without which they would be as a nut whose kernel had perished. It is a book for all classes, lay and clerical, without respect of persons; for all are included under sin, being all ignorant of 'this Gospel of the Kingdom.' Judging from the lucubrations of public writers of the ministerial class, the nature of the times demands something out of the ordinary periodical and pulpit routine, to awake 'the churches' to spiritual life, lest they sleep the sleep of death. They are truly in a Laodicean state—(Rev. iii. 17)—and ready

* See vol. i., pp. 51-2, 36; vol. ii., pp. 238-9.

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to be spued out of the mouth of the Lord. They say they are 'rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing;' but some of their doctors have discernment enough to see, that they are 'wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' But, alas for them, they know not how to remedy the evil! They do not perceive that the fault is in their systems, which have made them what they are, and which they are pledged to support on pain of 'suffering the loss of all things.' The great desideratum of the crisis is 'The Gospel of the Kingdom.' The State clergy and the dissenting ministry are ignorant of the gospel; and 'like priest like people.' 'The churches' are full of darkness, for the gospel doth not shine into them, being neither believed nor preached among them.

The Title Vindicated.

Here, then, is a book peculiarly adapted to the times. It will show the people what the gospel is, what is the obedience it requires, and enable them to discern the times; that the Lord may not come upon them at unawares, and take them unprepared. It is a book, not for these times only, but for all the years which constitute 'the time of the end,' and thenceforward to the restoration of the kingdom and throne of David. It is named *ELPIS ISRAEL*, or *Israel's Hope*; for the kingdom of which it treats is that which is longed for by all intelligent Israelites, and for which, said Paul, 'I am bound with this chain.' *Elpis Israel's* subject-matter is national, not sectarian. It treats of a nation, and of its civil and ecclesiastical institutions in a past and future age. It is designed to enlighten both Jews and Gentiles in *Israel's Hope*, that, by conforming to the proclamation of their King, they may be prepared for the administration of its affairs in concert with him, when all nations shall be as politically subject to his dominion, as Hindostan and Britain are to Queen Victoria's. It is designed to show men how they may attain to eternal life in this theocracy, and obtain a crown which shall never fade away. To accomplish this, the reader must, in justice to himself and the truth, study it with the Bible at his right hand; for he will find but few pages in which frequent reference is not made to their authority, and without which nothing can or ought to be determined.

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CRITICISMS OF 'ELPIS ISRAEL.'

Appeal to the Reviewers.

Dr Thomas was naturally anxious to know how a work of so extraordinary a character would be received by the press, and he took the unusual course of making a special appeal to the reviewers in the preface. This appeal was as follows :—

As to the reviewers, the author presents his compliments to them, and respectfully invites them to examine this work impartially. While he has no wish to propitiate them, it would afford him great pleasure to convert them to what he believes to be 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' as opposed to the dogmas of their creeds. It is not to be expected that they can approve the work, seeing that, if the things exhibited be received, sectarianism is dethroned, at least in the hearts of those who receive the principles inculcated. By sectarianism the author means everything professedly Christian not according to 'the law and the testimony'—(Is. viii. 20). He therefore uses the word as representative of all state religions, as well as of the forms opposed to them. Being the echo of no living sect, but the advocate only of what is written in the oracles of God, of the faith and practice of that 'sect which' in Paul's time 'was everywhere spoken against'—(Acts xxviii. 22)—he has shown no favour to the heresies which destroy it, and therefore he expects none. The perils to which he is exposed are only to be despised by those whose houses are founded upon the rock. The author is free to admit his weakness and inferiority in every respect that can be imagined. In one thing, however, he feels strong, and armed at all points for a conflict with the giants—he knows what is written in 'the law and the testimony,' and he understands the meaning of it. If they undertake to review this work, they must put it through the evolutions of the Spirit; and if they enter into combat with it, he would advise them to throw away their wooden swords, and encounter it with 'the two-edged sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;' for no other weapon can do more than raise the author's mirth.

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Alexander Campbell's Attack on 'Elpis Israel.'

Mr Alexander Campbell, Dr Thomas's great antagonist in America, thus wrote of *Elpis Israel* and its author in the *Gospel Banner*, a Campbellite magazine then published in Nottingham :—

John Thomas, M.D., and his deserted, dispersed, and withered flock, in Eastern Virginia, have long since ceased to attract any attention in this country. He left Virginia without presuming to answer my essay against his theory, and is now seeking to make a politico-religious impression on the English community by a book and a theory called somewhat whimsically the *Elpis* (or hope) of *Israel*.

He has proved all the apostles to be wrong in making the resurrection to eternal life the hope of God's people, and for it has substituted another terrestrial paradise, of which I shall not now speak particularly. True, I have never read the new book, or the newly discovered *Elpis Israel*, but am informed that it is that maintained by some Jews of the present day, as a substitute for the hope of the resurrection of the just. We Christians have but one evangelical hope of our calling, just as much as we have but 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism.' Ours is the veritable hope of the resurrection of the just, and not the political *Elpis* of the worldly Jews of this day. It is not, in other words, the literal return of the true Messiah to reign in Palestine, or on earth, or in any portion of the present solar system, but the hope of new heavens and a new earth, in which the pure in heart and righteous in life shall reign.

Dr Thomas's Reply to Alexander Campbell.

Mr Campbell thinks *Elpis Israel* a somewhat whimsical title for a book and a theory. I am sorry that here I am obliged to differ from him. The book recently published by me undertakes to show God's 'theory' as revealed in His Word. The testimony every one can read for himself; but what the system, or scheme of things to be developed as taught by that testimony is, every one—or, rather, few—are able to discover by their own efforts, owing to the bias their minds have received from the false theories into which they have been indoctrinated from their cradles. The divine 'theory' exhibited in the

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oracles of God, is demonstrated in my book to have constituted the faith and hope of the Twelve Tribes—a hope implanted in the Jewish heart and mind by the Spirit of God himself. This hope of Israel was the hope of Jesus and his apostles. Israel was to realise it through a renowned Jew, who was to be at once Son of Abraham, Son of David, and Son of God; and because he was to be 'Jehovah's Anointed,' he was called the Christ, or Messiah. This was a 'political question,' or 'Elpis,' with the nation; for the Jew who could prove that he was the true Messiah, proved also that he had a right to be 'the King of the Jews,' 'the King of Israel,' Sovereign of the united Twelve Tribes of the nation; and consequently, to sit upon the throne of David for ever, according to the covenant made with him, and on record in 2 Sam. xii. 12-16; 1 Chron. xvii. 11-15; Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4; 19-29; 34-37; cxxx. 1-18; Acts ii. 29-31; Heb. i. 5. The appearance of Jesus originated a controversy—not as to the national hope—but as to whether he was the Jew through whom that hope was to be realised. The party in power rejected the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship; but the apostles advocated it, and God attested it by the miracles which accompanied their word and the personal ministry of their Lord. The appearance of Jesus did not alter the nature of the hope, but only the conditions of attaining to it. Before he came, it was attainable 'by faith' in it; but afterwards 'through the faith,' or belief of it with a recognition of Jesus as the Messiah. Hence, the proclamation of the apostles on and after Pentecost was 'the hope of Israel' in the name of Jesus; so that, many years after Pentecost, when Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he said: 'For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.' Now, with all deference to Mr C., I submit that a book unfolding such matters as these is not whimsically, but most appropriately, entitled 'Israel's Hope,' or *Elpis Israel*.

Instead of proving the apostles all wrong, I have proved them to be wholly and only right; and all divines, college systems, and denominations wholly wrong. I advocate 'the hope *and* the resurrection of the dead;' and have not substituted 'the hope of a terrestrial paradise' for anything they teach. *Elpis Israel* is a triumphant refutation of such unfounded and malicious calumnies with which it is a sort of fashion to bespatter me on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Mr Campbell disgraces himself; for 'he that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.' Mr C. declares that he has never read *Elpis Israel*; and yet he has had the unblushing effrontery to affirm what I do not teach! Shame, shame upon the man who, sitting in judgment upon others, has no more good conscience than this! What moral right has Mr C. to pretend to state an author's views while he avers that he has not read his book? Is not this 'the exceedingly oblique morality of an exceedingly oblique theory?' Has such a man who commits such things—to say nothing of his 'faith'—any right to style himself a 'Christian,' as opposed even to 'worldly Jews?' I trow not.

But if Mr C. have not read *Elpis Israel*, it is not because it has not been sent to him. I sent six copies to the United States, which have all arrived there safely. Among these was one for Mr Campbell; and I venture to affirm, from the wording of the article before me, that it was within reach while he was writing it, if he were at Bethany at the time. 'True,' says he, 'I never read the book, or the newly discovered *Elpis Israel*, but am informed that it is that maintained by some Jews of the present day, as a substitute for the resurrection of the just.' Will he say he has not received it, and might have read it if he pleased? Who informed him falsely that it maintained such a substitute? Did Mr James Wallace, who bought the book only 'for reference,' and in the first quotation he made from it, stopped short before the passage was concluded? There are only six copies in America, and I know that the five others did not inform him any such thing, for they very much approved the work, which they could not do if it contained any such substitution. Was it not some evil genius at Mr C.'s right hand who pretended to have read it, and imposed upon Mr C.'s credulity by the misrepresentation quoted? This probably is the case.

By his own words, then, Mr C. is condemned as in a state of foolishness and shame; and such is the man who avers of himself and his co-believers—'we Christians'—'ours is the veritable hope.' A Christian is one who believes 'the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ;' whose disposition is that of a little child, one of an honest and good heart; and who, upon this faith, hope, and love, has been immersed into the

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name of the Holy Ones. If this definition be Scriptural, how can Mr C. and such as he claim to be Christians, when, instead of believing 'the things of the kingdom,' as testified in the prophets and apostles, they ridicule them?—instead of love, they persecute those they call their enemies—(and they say I am their greatest)—and try to destroy their characters; and instead of baptism into the hope of Israel, they treat it with contempt.

Lastly, in words, Mr C. and myself would, after all, seem to agree. He says, he and his co-religionists hope for the resurrection of the just and the New Heavens, &c. So do I. I hope for the resurrection of the just and of the unjust. Of the just, because they can have no part in the New Heavens until they rise from the dead incorruptible; of the unjust, that they who have killed the prophets, put to death the Lord Jesus, slain the apostles, and persecuted the saints, may receive according to their cruel and evil deeds. But 'the just' hope to attain to the resurrection not as the end of their hope, but as the means to the end; for many will rise from the dead who will never possess eternal life and the kingdom. They hope to rise that they may become 'equal to the angels,' and inherit the kingdom. This is the hope which is the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls in the Kingdom of God.

The New Heavens and the New Earth is a divine constitution of society upon the earth, in which 'Jerusalem shall be created a rejoicing and her people a joy.' Mr C.'s New Heavens have no place within the bounds even of the solar system! Somewhere then, probably, in the Milky Way! But of such New Heavens there is no testimony within the lids of the Bible. I advocate a theocracy on earth in which the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdoms of Jehovah and of His Anointed; when, the thrones being cast down, 'the saints of the Most High will take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom,' even 'the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' 'for ever, even for ever and ever,' 'reigning with Christ a thousand years upon the earth.' (See Dan. vii. 9, 18, 27; Rev. xi. 15; v. 10; xx. 4). These are the New Heavens and the New Earth I advocate; an imperial constitution of things under a law

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from heaven, which, testified by the prophets, compels the faith of all whose minds are not spoiled through 'the philosophy of vain deceit' taught by presidents and professors, divines and academicians, in their pulpits, colleges, and schools. Mr Campbell, who belongs to this perverse, stiff-necked, and infidel fraternity, unhesitatingly declares that he does not believe it! Daniel, the prince of prophets, is to him a mere 'worldly Jew;' and John, the beloved apostle, but a somewhat 'plausible sophist!' They both testify that a theocracy shall be established within the limits of the solar system—yes, and upon our planet too. What has been may be again. A theocracy has existed among the nations of the earth for many centuries; and though suppressed for the present, Jehovah and His Anointed have both declared that it shall be re-established in the land of Israel, under a covenant based upon 'better promises' than the old. Glad tidings, or gospel, have been proclaimed in the name of Jesus, its sovereign Lord and King, to the nations concerning it; informing them of God's purpose, and inviting them, both Jews and Gentiles, to its glory and honour upon condition of believing what He has testified concerning it; that is, believing the gracious and 'the exceeding great and precious promises' He has made; acknowledging Jesus, His anointed Son, and heir of the world, as its chief in his several relations of prophet, sacrifice, priest, and king; of being immersed into the Holy Name; and of a subsequent patient continuance in well-doing. Thus, 'he that believes the gospel, and is baptised, shall be saved.' These are 'the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus Christ' himself. This gospel is concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus. Mr Campbell proclaims his infidelity in this kingdom, not as it is expounded by me—for, not having read *Elpis Israel*, he knows not how I expound it—but as testified by the prophets, as every one who runs may see. To redeem, if possible, his reputation for literary and moral honesty, I pray him to read the book he has denounced unread. Let him read it dispassionately; and comparing my exposition with the testimonies referred to, let him correct his own iniquitous misrepresentations, and refute it if he can.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 61-63.

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Alexander Campbell and Dr Thomas Again on the War Path.

The Campbellite leader could not refrain from having another fling at a book that was causing such a sensation both in America and in this country ; and nothing pleased the doctor better than to cross swords with such an opponent, as it gave him an opportunity for iterating and reiterating, in language always terse, vigorous, and telling, even if it was at times personally abusive, the grand truths so boldly contended for by him. These noble defences of Israel's hope—fortified as they are, on every hand, with Scripture testimony—are well worthy of reproduction here, and will be warmly appreciated by all of like precious faith. Here is how the doctor returns to the combat with his so-called 'reviewer':—

We war, casting down imaginations and every lofty notion exalting itself against the knowledge of God.—PAUL.

As a part of his note on 'The Throne of David,' our refined and polished friend over the mountains writes concerning *Elpis Israel* and its author in the following chaste and classic style! It may be regarded as a specimen, doubtless, of the 'pure literature' and the Christian spirit it exhales, for the development of which Bethany College, as a Queen of the West, is presented as a nursing mother to Zion: that is, spiritually, 'the church!' Is it not extraordinary that, with such elegant impromptus thrown off from time to time from the pen of our amiable and ecclesiastical friend, 'the brotherhood' is so irresponsive to his eleemosynary hints, exhortations, and demands? Wonderful indeed that 'the disciples' do not bestir themselves amain, and without delay secure 'a little stock in the Bank of Heaven,' by contributing to its endowment, that the nursing Queen may for ever bless the world with dainties such as we now present:

Any one [says Mr Campbell] who wishes to peruse the most conceited, consequential, and dogmatical treatise, based upon a hallucination, and a parody of the words ELPIS ISRAEL, will, if he have a dollar to throw away, have a demonstration of a disease called in Kentucky 'the big head,' probably unequalled in this century; making *the Hope of Israel*—indeed, the Hope of the Gospel in full development—to consist in raising up again a throne of David in Palestine or Jerusalem; as if that throne had been vacant now for 1500 years, or as if Jesus Christ would remove his throne out of the Heavenly Jerusalem, to rebuild it in Old Jerusalem, and there

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to aggrandise the empire of the universe!! But this only in passing, as one of the specimens of the love of notoriety or of the marvellous, in wrecking and bewildering the human mind. We regard this development of the passion for notoriety as one of the most admonitory dispensations in our immediate circle of observation. It has made a man, that might have been useful, worthless to himself, worthless to his friends, and worse than worthless to the world.

While we were in England, our loving friend favoured us with one of his characteristic notices, in which he styled us 'the erratic materialist and rather plausible sophist of no-soul memory.' Previous to this, he announced us to the public as 'a half-sceptic, half-Christian, fit only for the society of Voltaire, Tom Paine, and that herd;' and now the climax is capped by proclaiming us as utterly worthless!—yea more, afflicted with one of the worst of diseases, if we rightly guess what in the 'half-horse and half-alligator' country they elegantly style 'the big head'—as an incurable leprosy, and therefore, in our influence upon society, 'worse than worthless!' Really, when we look at ourselves in the manuscript before us, with this long handle to our name, we inquire of ourselves, is it possible that we are such a character as our sweet friend declares? Why, the most worthy candidate for penitentiary distinction cannot be worse than our unfortunate self? But, even supposing we be as wretched an outcast as our gracious friend affirms, we humbly suggest that it is not very agreeable to be published as such to all the world. Impartial judge as he is in matters affecting himself, still it is not comfortable to be accused, condemned without a trial, or being permitted to show cause why sentence of death should not be pronounced against us, and to be summarily executed. We don't altogether relish this nephew-of-my-uncle style of administering law, especially when we are to be victimised by it. It is bad enough in theory, and it is by no means better in practice. Our judicial friend, however bright the attribute of jealousy may shine in his celestial crown, has not displayed towards us an overflow of mercy—and he should remember that 'mercy and truth meet together' in the true believer, and that 'mercy boasts itself against judgment'—in the treatment he has dealt out to us these seventeen years. He has, or has had, thousands of readers, to whom he has declared, on the honour of a man aspiring to celestial honours in the Milky Way, that we are everything that is contemptible in faith, opinion, acquirements, and char-

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acter. This has been the general indictment—a sort of summary compilation of pestiferousness, by which a pre-judgment has been secured against us. The counts of the indictment have been predicated upon garbled extracts of very scanty dimensions, and on no extracts at all. Our disinterested friend, out of kindness to us, has had it all his own way, taking care, for the good of the cause—that is, the cause of Origenic sublimities and the vested interests dependent thereon—that we should not be permitted to speak to his readers to whom he had written such creditable and delightful things concerning us. Hence, say what we might in our own paper, those to whom we were accused saw nothing of it, because they were not our readers, but his alone. This policy having been carried out for so many years, has not failed to cause us to be esteemed, by those who know us only by name, and as our ingenuous friend has misrepresented, as just such a worthless character as he affirms. We are said to be ‘hallucinated,’ ‘mad,’ ‘a devil,’ and may other things known, or supposed to be known, by like respectable appellatives. It seems strange, yet so it is; though we can produce several of the most *compos mentis* people in society, of good and honourable standing, who know us intimately, and readily testify that we are the very opposite to what our benevolent friend and his reflectors, who have no personal acquaintance with us, aver. But unfortunately, as soon as a respectable man testifies in our favour, the tables are forthwith turned upon him, and he is regarded as no better than ourselves! This is the way the Jews serve the witnesses for Jesus. So long as they are his enemies, their testimony is considered as credible and respectable; but so soon as the truth converts them into friends, immediately they are set down as liars, and not to be regarded. Thus it has been from the beginning, and, we suppose, will be to the end. Error and errorists are essentially oppressive and tyrannical. The part of truth is to contend, protest, reason, testify, and endure, until Christ shall come and ‘break in pieces the oppressor,’ when the truth will prevail gloriously, and all its suffering friends rejoice together in his presence. It is a consolation to know that, contemptible and worthless as we are esteemed by worldly-minded men, we cannot be more sovereignly despised than were Jeremiah, Paul, and his

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co-labourers by their contemporaries, who made them 'as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things unto this day'—(Lam. iii. 45; 1 Cor. iv. 13). Misery loves company; it is therefore very consoling when that company turns out to be the very salt of our groaning world.

But, be we ever so pestilent, that does not nullify the Kingdom of God as expounded in *Elpis Israel*. The building up of the kingdom and throne of David as in the days of old is not disproved by declaiming against us, or proving us to be as worthless as it is said. Our extreme worthlessness does not alter the testimony of the prophets and apostles, who both declare that Messiah shall restore them. Our friend likes to talk about logic; but what logic is there in reviling a book and its author in support of any opposite theory? But, we suppose, we must pardon our celestial friend the indiscretion of which we complain. He is doubtless in a super-excited state, and scarcely knows whereof he affirms. Some months ago, before he had read the book, he said that we had 'proved all the apostles to be wrong in making the resurrection to eternal life the hope of God's people, and for it had substituted another terrestrial paradise. True,' said he, 'I never read the book, or the newly discovered *Elpis Israel*, but am informed that it is that maintained by some Jews of the present day, as a substitute for the resurrection of the just.' He afterwards tells us what his hope is not. 'It is not,' says he, 'the literal return of the true Messiah to reign in Palestine, or on earth, or in any portion of the solar system.' But since telling his readers what we had done in *Elpis Israel* before he had read it, our intuitive friend has probably read it. His report, we think, ought to induce every one to seek to possess it, as a literary curiosity, if upon no other grounds. Our critical friend says it affords 'a demonstration probably unequalled in this century.' We believe he is right in this. We know of no other book that contains a similar demonstration of the truth. Our pathological friend calls it 'a demonstration of a disease,' &c. He is excusable in this; for it is natural enough that he should style that a disease which demonstrates his sky-kingdom throne of David—his trans-solar New Heavens and Earth, and his Origenic sublimities—to be mere 'philosophy and vain deceit.' The reading of *Elpis Israel* has evidently transformed our ordinarily meek friend into a wide-mouthed vial of wrath.

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He calls the book hard names, as well as its author, having no other arguments to bring against it. He finds that it does not even attempt to prove the apostles wrong in anything; and that it does not substitute a terrestrial paradise for the resurrection to eternal life; but that, while it maintains that the promised 'Paradise of God' is to be established on earth, it also shows that the dead must be raised to eternal life to inherit its good things for ever; and the living believers therein contemporary with its formation changed in the twinkling of an eye for the same purpose. Our sky-kingdom friend, we presume, is mortified to find that his informant led him into such an inconvenient error about our substituting one thing for another when there is not a word of truth in the allegation. His honest and virtuous indignation, doubtless, would make his studio too hot to hold said informant. Still, the discovery of the imposition upon his credulity has not put our friend—ever great and undogmatical—in a sweeter disposition towards our unoffending self. We sent him a present of the book all the way from London; studiously avoided alluding to him, or to his Reformation, in its pages; and endeavoured simply to show what the Bible records as the destiny of the earth and of man upon it. But instead of sending us a polite note, gratefully acknowledging our kindness and thoughtful consideration of him though so far away, our astonishing friend falls into a paroxysm of interjections as the only defence he can offer against the overwhelming evidence with which *Elpis Israel* has assailed and demolished his entrenchments. There is nothing easier than to prove the truth of the things that excite his astonishment—that the Hope of Israel and the Hope of the Gospel are identical; that the throne of David will be re-established in Jerusalem; that the Lord Jesus will sit upon it there; and there aggrandise the empire of the whole earth. These are truths which shine from the sacred page as the sun in the midst of heaven; and blind—very blind, yea, even stone-blind—must be the man who says, 'I cannot see them there.'

This short denunciatory paragraph suggests to us that our friend does not suspect the reason of the King of Israel's prolonged absence at the right hand of power. We will inform him. It is, because there is no throne of David for him to sit upon. Had his throne existed

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when he was on earth, or had all things been ready for its erection anew, Jesus would have remained upon earth and in Palestine to enter upon his reign, and to proceed in the work of aggrandising his dominion until it should extend over the whole earth. But the then unknown time, the knowledge of which the Father had reserved to Himself, had not come to erect the throne; therefore he departed to remain in a far country until the time to put down the enemy should arrive, which is equivalent to setting up the throne and kingdom of the united Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Again, we perceive that he uses the phrase 'the universe' in an unscriptural sense when speaking of the chieftaincy of the Lord Jesus. 'Universe' is not used in speaking of Messiah. The universe comprehends all created things in boundless space. This is the Father's dominion, not Christ's. We have nowhere hinted the idea of the Lord Jesus aggrandising the empire of boundless space from 'Old Jerusalem.' No such empire is promised to Messiah. The promise to him is, 'Thou shalt have the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' Jerusalem and Zion restored, and invested with their beautiful garments, are to be the seat of the government of Messiah and his brethren over this empire. The empire of the universe ruled by Jesus in any Jerusalem is one of the many fictions which compose the philosophical religion of our romantic friend; who, being a man of lively fancy and boundless imagination, delights to vary the monotony of terrene pursuits by ideal flights among the nebulosities of the Galaxy, even to the jumping-off place of immensity, until, by oft-repeated excursions, like fabulous relations oft-told, he comes to believe them real, and, speaking as he believes, publishes them to his admirers as the first principles of the oracles of God. *Elpis Israel*, however, takes all this wind out of his sails. It tolerates no flights of the imagination, but brings every high-flown speculation to the Law and the Testimony. But this is a test the articles of our friend's creed cannot endure. Hence his restiveness in gear. But what doth it avail? It is hard for him to kick against the goads. His acceptance or rejection of Israel's Hope will make or mar his destiny for ever.*

* *Herakl of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 57-61.

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Notice by the 'Quarterly Journal of Prophecy.'

Although copies of *Elpis Israel* were sent broadcast to the religious press throughout Britain, for review, scarcely a critical notice of it was published in the journals where such might have been looked for. Those 'reviews' which did appear were exceedingly brief and of quite a virulent character. Among the periodicals appealed to was one from which, owing to the speciality to which it was devoted, there were doubtless great expectations. In this particular case, however, as in all the others, there was only chagrin; and the disappointing and unflattering 'notice' called forth the following caustic remarks from Dr Thomas :—

The *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* is a periodical of about 103 pages of reading matter, printed in Edinburgh, and published by Nisbet & Co., 21 Berners Street, London. It is printed on good paper, in clear type, of a size larger than the *Herald*, with some pages in briefer, and embellished frequently with Greek and Hebrew in their own peculiar character; which, however agreeable to the reader, is 'foreign stuff,' held in low esteem of all the compositors we have had to do with here. The pages are seven lines shorter, and about six lines narrower, than the *Herald's*; but withal a well printed and highly respectable looking affair, at the very aristocratic price of \$6.62 per volume, postage included.

When I was in London, I made inquiry for the best magazine published in Britain on the subject of prophecy, being desirous of procuring some good articles for the readers of the *Herald* on that all-important subject—absorbingly important to him who would be saved. The *Quarterly Journal* was recommended; so I ordered it, in hope of being able to make good use of it for the more effectual and speedy illumination of my readers in the 'sure word of prophecy' than, I presumed, I should be able to accomplish single-handed without its assistance. The cost was great for so small a work; but that I did not regard if the matter it conveyed should prove to be 'speech seasoned with salt.'

Before subscribing for the *Journal*, I sent a copy of *Elpis Israel* to the editor; and have since furnished him

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with the *Herald* gratuitously, in hope of being able to impart light to him for the benefit of his readers, as I expected he would to me for the benefit of mine. But I fear his mind is so darkened by the fog in which he lives, and moves, and has his being, that, like my friend, the Bethanian President, it is impervious to the pure, white light that shines beyond his own peculiar mist.

That copy of *Elpis Israel* defined my position with the *Journal*. Its editor just touched and then dropped it, wringing his hand and blowing his finger-tips, with divers gyrations and contortions, like one that had picked up a live coal from off the altar! He was wonderfully affected. He gave a groan, somewhat like a growl of hopeless anguish, made an ugly face, and then swooned into the peace of the grave. Knowing, however, that 'the religious press,' as it is styled, was in the hands of the ecclesiastics of the country, I was not surprised at the convulsive fit that had seized upon the editor of the *Journal* in perusing *Elpis Israel*. This work is well known to be anti-clerical, and holding no man's person, lay or clerical, in admiration for the sake of advantage. It was not likely, therefore, to be even in common esteem with the reverend incarnations of the clerical system, which fosters pride, vanity, hypocrisy, and self-conceit; and leads men to seek honour one of another, rather than that which comes from God only. I remembered this; and making all allowances for the wounded dignity of the editor's cloth, subscribed for his paper for the reasons already stated.

The editor knows how little use I have been able to make of the viands he has 'cooked' and served up for his readers' refreshment; for he has been in the monthly receipt of the *Herald* as long as I have subscribed for his.

Two thousand copies of *Elpis Israel* have been sold in Britain and America, and another edition is in request in the former country. When an octavo work of over 400 closely printed pages is sold to that amount of copies in spite of the studied silence of reviewers in general, and of the brief, sharp, snappish growl of some particular ones, when they venture upon the experiment of trying to bark, it is evidence, at least, that the book is worthy of respectful consideration. The author has spent nothing in advertising it beyond the limits of the *Herald*, yet three-fourths of the second edition are expended, and the book continues

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to sell. When a thousand of the first edition had been distributed, I left one for the *Journal of Prophecy* at the publisher's, in hope that a periodical professedly devoted to the prophetic word would, at least, acquaint its readers with the new and unique interpretations it presents of passages, which had hitherto served only to make the darkness of the self-styled 'orthodox' mind, intensely visible. But my hope was vain; and instead thereof, there appeared among its 'reviews' the following lines; the italics are mine:—

ELPIS ISRAEL; AN EXPOSITION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. BY JOHN THOMAS, M.D.

That there is *much truth* in this volume, *forcibly put forth*, we do not deny; but there are so many serious counteractions, both in the errors which it contains and the tone in which it is written, that we cannot but disapprove and discommend it. The author's contempt for other men, other churches, other sects, is quite unbounded. To differ from Dr Thomas is to be a fool, if not worse. The advertisement of the author's portrait need not have formed part of his book, but might have been reserved for a newspaper.

On the last page of the number in which this 'review' of *Elpis Israel* occurs, the editor of the *Journal* says: 'It is the Lord's work, not man's, that we are engaged in. It is His guidance that we are seeking, and His honour that we desire to advance.' This is pretty high ground for such a party to assume; but by no means surprising when we contemplate the position assumed by the chief of the clergymen of anti-Christendom in Rome! So, then, the *Journal's* opinion of *Elpis Israel* is the Lord's, and not man's! It is infallible, then, and we have nought to say! Only convince me of this, and I will do my best to recover all outstanding copies, and with the few that remain I will make a bonfire, and never publish a line on prophecy again without first submitting it to the scrutiny of his Infallibility of the *Journal*. Surely when such a man pronounces me a blasphemer, I ought to be as convincingly satisfied of the sobriety of his judgment in the case, as I shall be of Christ's judgment when I shall appear at his tribunal. The *Journal* is the Lord's work—the Lord is the editor!—for, the writer says, 'It is the Lord's work, not man's, that we are engaged in.' Now, he is engaged in editing the *Journal of Prophecy*—that is his work; and one not in the secret would say, it is Nisbet's editor's work; but this gentleman repudiates

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the idea, and says, 'It is not man's.' If *Punch*, the *Journal's* facetious contemporary in London, were asking the question, he would probably say, 'Is it the gentleman in black, respectfully styled his Satanic Majesty's?' 'Avant, no!' is the indignant retort; 'out, Imp of Folly; the *Journal* is the Lord's!'

O the hypocrisy of clerical fellowship with the Lord! They violate all candour, consistency, impartiality, and honesty of principle, and palm their pious frauds upon the Lord! This journalist repudiates from public favour the 'much truth' in *Elpis Israel* because of its errors and its tone; and on the very same page, in noticing *The Last Days*, by Edward Irving, says: 'We have often mourned most sadly over the errors into which, in his latter days, Mr Irving was permitted to fall. Still, let us not refuse the good on account of the evil. Let us not adopt the unmanly, not to say unchristian, tendency of the present day, to despise everything a man writes because he has written many things that are erroneous. This indiscriminate, unreasoning, childish method of judging is wholly inconsistent with the exhortation, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." This blowing hot and cold, as it happens to suit them, they call 'the Lord's work!' Surely the notice of *Elpis Israel* and this of *The Last Days* cannot have been written by the same hand. If they were, then to such a shameless editor there is due only the reprobation and contempt of all good and honest men. Of this we are certain, that the Lord has nothing to do with such editors or their works, but to despise them.

I was glad when this notice of *Elpis Israel* saw the light. It was beyond the power of the *Journal* to injure the sale of the book, so that I could well afford to play with the editor's artillery. He aimed his thunderbolt at the life of *Elpis Israel*; but instead of hurling him to Tartarus, it flit athwart his portrait a will o' wisp. The notice afforded me 'a text,' which I was not slow to 'improve' for the illumination of my reviewer, and his preparation for more honourable displays of his genius in times to come. I fear, however, from recent manifestations, my friendly endeavours have been in vain. But that the reader may see that I was not negligent of his good, I will here publish a copy of the letter I addressed to the editor on receipt of his 'review.'

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Letter to the Editor of the 'Quarterly Journal of Prophecy.'

DEAR MR EDITOR,—Accept my sincere thanks for the flattering notice you have given of *Elpis Israel* in the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*. I feel really quite overcome with gratitude for the justice you have done me, your readers, and God's holy truth, in the half-a-dozen lines, or so, you have bestowed on a work of more than 400 closely printed pages, in which you say 'there is *much truth forcibly put forth*.' Positively, when you re-peruse the inklings of your review department, 'the answer of a good conscience before God,' which shall minister the balm of consolation to your righteous soul, must be truly enviable! The use you have made of 'the two-edged sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God,' is amazing and exceedingly edifying! Your justice, candour, and impartiality (if your notice of *Elpis Israel* be a fair sample) constitute you a perfect prince of reviewers; and must assuredly confirm your election to the theocracy of the age to come, as a fit and proper person to 'rule men justly in the fear of God,' when the Holy and Just One with his saints shall possess the kingdom under the whole heaven for evermore!

But, irony aside, your brief notice of *Elpis Israel* confirms the opinion I had formed, that editors of 'religious periodicals,' so-called, would not venture to give the work fair-play before their readers. Their motto is, 'Disturb not what is quiet,' which is a capital maxim for a rotten cause. They dare not think in advance of the sect or ecclesiastical faction by which their papers are sustained; and the proof of this is that *they do not*; and treat with silence works that put them to the proof. Instead of leading the public mind into truth, and indoctrinating it with noble principles, they are the laggards of the age, folding their arms in spiritual slumber, waiting until the advance of the people themselves shall make it safe to peep abroad, and glorify the crotchet of the day. Public sentiment, and not the Word of God, is the censor of their lucubrations. What is believed, and who believes it, and not what is written in the Word, or what saith the Lord, is the authority to which they defer. Aware of this, I expected that *Elpis Israel* would experience no favour at their hands; for, if what it sets forth be 'according to the Law and the Testimony' (which no Scribe has attempted to disprove), not only is the craft by which they have their wealth, endangered, but one and all of the systems in which they confide for salvation are set at nought as mere doctrines and commandments of men.

I thought, however, that a *Journal of Prophecy* might possibly be an exception to the general rule; but I find that the Diana-spirit is as rampant in you as in the other members of the fraternity. You disapprove 'the errors' and the 'tone' of *Elpis Israel*. This is no more than your duty, if what you call 'errors,' and the 'tone' to which you except, be proved to be such, and exceptionable, from the oracles of God. But you have no literary or Scriptural right to palm your *ipse dixit* upon the public for demonstration. I know not what sect of 'Christendom' you belong to; but if you be of the State Church, your judgment of *Elpis Israel's* errors will have been formed by your Puseyite, High Church, or 'Evangelical' creed; if of some unprivileged sect, by its peculiar symbol. A judgment formed thus is not a judgment according to the truth, but merely according to your party opinion of that truth. Such a judgment is not satisfactory to those who repudiate sectarianism and its unscriptural dogmata. I acknowledge only 'the Law and the Testimony.' They do not regard the opinions of editors or reviewers as settling anything. If

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you are of opinion that a book which contains 'much truth forcibly put, also contains 'errors,' you are bound, in justice and common honesty, to state the error in the author's words, to adduce the testimony he refers to, and then to show the erroneousness of his reasoning, and therefore fallacy of his conclusions. This you have not done, so that your opinions of *Elpis Israel's* errors will weigh only with those who look up to you as an oracle of their creed.

You might have selected a more appropriate word expressive of my views of ecclesiastical men and things than 'contempt.' It is a principle with me to treat all men with respect as men; but when men individually and collectively assume divine honours, and an infallibility known only to a spurious orthodoxy, and unscriptural position in effect to hinder the truth, I have no veneration nor regard for them in this character, nor for their decrees. You say, that 'to differ from Dr Thomas is to be a fool, if not worse.' No such sentiment as this has ever proceeded out of my mouth, nor flowed from my pen. If, however, the Scriptures sustain the exposition set forth in *Elpis Israel*, then certainly to differ from it wilfully would convict a man of worse than foolishness; for unquestionably he is both a madman and a fool who rejects the truth.

'Other churches' and 'other sects,' of which you say my contempt is unbounded, are phrases which seem to imply some particular church and sect of which I am inferred to be the advocate. Well, I do plead for one in particular. It is for that church called in the New Testament the 'One Body,' which is animated by the 'One Spirit,' having many individual members, but only one head, even Christ. But, I confess, I am at a loss where to find it among men, except in so far as I meet here and there a believer of 'the Gospel of the Kingdom of God,' waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of the body, at the manifestation of the King of Israel in his glory. I plead for this church, or aggregation of believers; and therefore I belong to none of what you call 'the churches,' because I do not regard them as churches of Christ. The oracles of God teach me that a church is an assemblage of men and women, who, 'believing the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' separate themselves from sinners, and are imbued with the spirit of truth, as illustrated by the lives of the prophets and apostles; and who, upon an intelligent, heart-purifying, and love-working faith, have been immersed into the name of the Holy Ones; and henceforth perfect their faith by walking in the steps of Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. Where will you find individuals of this description aggregated into congregations, and bearing the names which distinguish the sects and parties of 'the religious world?' I should be happy to know of such, that I might cultivate their acquaintance and fellowship. If you believed in such a church as I have defined above, how much veneration would you have for 'other churches,' which not only differed from it, but preached 'other gospels' than that preached by the apostles? As to 'sects,' I read of but one sect in the New Testament approved of God—namely, the sect of the Nazarenes, everywhere spoken against. I have no veneration for any other sect than this. All 'other sects' are denounced by the apostle as carnal and damnable. The Christian Body will be a sect as distinguished from and opposed to Gentilism and modern Judaism, till the time comes for it to take the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven. Then all the ecclesiastical factions of your 'Christendom' will be abolished, and the nations will serve the Lord with one consent—(Zeph. iii. 9). But for the mystical body of Christ to be a sect in relation to the factions called

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'names and denominations,' State and Nonconformist, is a very different thing to itself being cut up into sects. Sects, or divisions, do not belong to Christ, who is undivided, though trodden under foot. Real Christians 'are all one in Christ Jesus;' Christians only in name belong to the Popish, Protestant, and sectarian system, and are zealous for the traditions of men. These are the 'other sects' to which you refer. I have no faith in them at all. They are extra the fold of Christ, and have neither part nor lot in the truth, as must be evident to a babe in him. They glorify themselves, receiving honour one of another, regardless of the honour that comes from God only; therefore the Gospel of the Kingdom is neither preached, believed, nor obeyed among them. I have proved this in *Elpis Israel*. Doubtless you think not. Show the contrary if you can. For myself, I am convinced that, if our righteousness exceed not the righteousness of the Protestants of the straitest sect of 'Christendom,' we can in no wise enter the Kingdom of God.

The conclusion of your notice by reference to the advertisement of the portrait is truly ludicrous. This is an item with which you have nothing to do. It was addressed to the subscribers, who could not have been reached through a newspaper. As editor and reviewer, your concern is with the 'much truth forcibly put forth,' and what you term the 'errors;' not with the author's notices to his friends. But your reference to this little incident shows the spirit of your mind. You have found *Elpis Israel* too much for the artillery of your creed. It is too well fortified with the Law and the Testimony, which you are unable to gainsay in fair and open combat: therefore you twang your bow, and let fly an unpointed shaft at the author's notice to his subscribers, as a random shot, in hope that, hit or miss, it may help in the fabrication of the unfavourable impression you would like to get up against the writer and his book! But *Elpis Israel* laughs at the reviewers, for his life is beyond all jeopardy from their wooden swords.

As to the 'tone' of *Elpis Israel*, it is written in the tone of one who believes he is right, and therefore, as we say in America, 'goes ahead,' *sans ceremonie*, and without circumlocution. When he speaks truth, he does not fence it around with compliments and apologies. It is this practice that makes the religious literature of the day so vapid and pointless. The truth needs to be spoken out boldly, which you editors and reviewers are unable to do, seeing that ye do not know the truth, or, if knowing it, have not the courage to utter it. Ye are fettered by your contradictory creeds, and hampered by the clogs and shackles of the parties for which you write. An apologetic enunciation of truth makes no impression on the public mind. I believe conscientiously that the clergy and ministers are ignorant of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and consequently do not and cannot preach it. Believing this, I hesitate not to speak it, and that, too, without apologising for so doing. This doubtless gives a tone to *Elpis Israel* which you do not like. I cannot help it. What I believe to be God's truth must come out; if you can show that I am in error, do so from the sacred oracles. The scribes, pharisees, and lawyers by no means relished the tone of Christ's discourses; because in speaking the truth he reproached them. It is the truth of a discourse that gives tone to it; and when that truth unveils ignorance and hypocrisy, it is by no means music in the ears of those whose consciences apply the truth to themselves.

There are several important and interesting prophecies and chronological problems unfolded in *Elpis Israel*, which have hitherto completely foiled

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your sectarian theologians. I may mention the contemporaneous manifestation of the five elements of Nebuchadnezzar's Image, and their simultaneous fracture 'in the latter days;' the comminution of those parts to dust after the breaking of the imperial dominion which united them into one political fabric; and the substitution of the kingdom and empire of Jesus Christ for these kingdoms which he and the saints, and his armies, will have ground to powder. The Little Horn of Daniel's Fourth Beast, and the Little Horn of the Macedonian Goat; the interpretation of the 11th chapter of Daniel, especially from the 36th verse; the prophecy of the Two Witnesses and the Holy City; the Times of Daniel and John; the remarkable prophecy of the 'Unclean Spirits like Frogs;' that of Gog and Magog; the Second Exodus, or grafting in of Israel into their own olive again, &c., &c.—these, and many more that might be named, have been rendered intelligible in *Elpis Israel*. In chronology, Stephen and Moses, Samuel, and Judges, have been reconciled; the passage in 1 Kings vi. 1 interpreted; the forty years of Acts xiii. 21 accounted for; the commencement of the seventy weeks established; the 430 years signified by Ezekiel's days indicated; the age of the world proved; the forty years' interval between the advent of Jesus and the commencement of the millennium brought out, &c. Besides these, 'THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM' has been demonstrated; repentance and the remission of sins in the name of Jesus, exhibited; and as a whole, the subject so manifested as to convict 'the divines' of 'Christendom' of profound ignorance of 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ.' Methinks you might have found some better employment for your pen in handling these topics as presented in *Elpis Israel*, than in penning the splenetic notice which has elicited these remarks.

That your eyes may be opened, and that you may attain to the acknowledgment of the truth, irrespective of human authority in matters of faith, is the sincere wish of,

dear Mr Editor, yours faithfully,

THE AUTHOR OF 'ELPIS ISRAEL.'

3 Brudenell Place, New North Road, London,

April 3, 1850.*

'ELPIS ISRAEL' PRESENTED TO SOME NOTED MEN.

With a view to still further bringing *Elpis Israel* under public notice, Dr Thomas sent a copy of it to several persons of position and influence, who might be supposed to be interested in the political aspect under which certain prophecies were presented, and who might therefore be disposed to give their attention to the weighty matters treated of in this volume. A copy, with an explanatory letter, was intended to have been sent to Nicholas I., but the purpose was not carried out, as a means of transmission could not be found.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 145-155.

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Lord Palmerston.

Among those to whom the doctor thus forwarded a copy was Lord Palmerston, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the British Government. The book was sent with a characteristic letter, which was as follows :—

LORD PALMERSTON,—SIR,—I have taken the liberty of presenting your Lordship with a copy of a work recently published, not for the purpose of attracting to myself the notice of men in 'high places,' but that your attention may be arrested to the destiny predetermined for the Governments of which you and your contemporaries are the incarnations for the time.

I have selected you as the especial recipient of *Elpis Israel*, because, being the Foreign Secretary of State, you are the organ of the Government through whom its policy in relation to the Continental Powers finds expression. And not only so, but because also a copy of the book is on its way to be put into the hands of the Russian Autocrat. Like Alexander of Macedon, though through a different interpreter, he will learn what has been written by the Almighty in relation to the future magnitude and power of his dominion. I know not whether your Lordship, like King Agrippa, believe the prophets. Be that as it may, you will find in their writings, that a power, which can only be that of Russia, as I have shown, is to over-run Turkey and Europe, and to supersede Austria, preparatory to the reconstruction of society, not upon a republican and socialist, but upon a divine basis, such as the world has already witnessed in the original constitution of the nation and kingdom of Israel. If your speech be correctly reported in *The Times*, the imperial Russian chief of the Greeks in Turkey seems to have completely succeeded in persuading you of his sincerity and pacific intentions! You are made to say, in reply to Mr Anstey: 'I have no apprehension of that attack which he seems to think intended by the Russian Government. I am persuaded—a persuasion founded upon assurances given by the Russian Government—that that Government entertains none but friendly feelings towards the Turkish Empire.' Yes, its feelings are so friendly, so affectionate, that very probably, during your Lordship's tenure of office, Nicholas will take it under his most especial patronage, and enfold it in his most ardent embraces. The policy of Russia since Peter the Great has been uniformly aggressive; and its rulers are deeply imbued with the idea that their 'sacred Russia' has 'a mission' to perform. This notion is a divine truth. Russia's mission is stupendous. According to its autocrat, it has 'twice saved Europe;' that is, in plain English, has twice thrown it back into the arms of drivelling superstition and cruel, infatuated despotism; and his policy shows itself in every move he makes, that he is preparing to avail himself of its distractions to plant the Greek cross on St Sophia, and to establish its ascendancy over the enfeebled dynasties of the West.

I have thought it right that your Lordship should know what kind of ideas will be put into the autocrat's mind by *Elpis Israel*. God has appointed Britain to be the political antagonist to Russia; and if your Lordship be in office when she makes her grand move, you will be the instrument by which that antagonism will be brought to bear against her. I have shown the part to be enacted by Britain in the terrible strife which

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is approaching with a giant's tramp. Let me entreat your Lordship to read the handwriting which is upon the wall—Europe has been weighed in the balances, and found wanting: God hath numbered its kingdoms, and is about to finish them; and the autocrat and Britain will contend for the dominion of the East.

Your Lordship's policy already begins to illustrate the correctness of my interpretations. On page 392, I say: 'Britain will, doubtless, make extensive seizures of the Isles of Greece, to strengthen itself in the Mediterranean, and to antagonise as much as possible the power of the autocrat in that direction.' This was written in 1849; and in February 1850 you have startled the world by the reclamation of the Isles of Cabrera and Sapienza from the Russo-Bavarian Kingdom of Greece. But your Lordship is wise. If Russia overshadow Europe and Turkey, England must stretch out her wings over maritime Greece, Egypt, and Syria, if she would prevent the autocrat enacting over again the part of Selim in 1509, by cutting off the British Isles from all communication with Hindostan *via* the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. With Russia in the Old World and the United States in the New, Britain can only perpetuate her commercial and maritime ascendancy by making the highway from England to India by the Isthmus of Suez peculiarly her own.

In conclusion, a very considerable and influential portion of the public are deeply interested in the topics treated of in *Elpis Israel*, of which 1100 copies have been sold unaided by advertisement or review. I trust that your Lordship may prove to be one of this number. The future is a brilliant inspiration to the believer; but dark, ominous, and terrific to those whose horizon is bounded by the empirical and unstable policy of 'the powers that be.' The destiny of our race is glorious, but the probation of the nations in advancing to that consummation calamitous and severe.

That your Lordship may continue to be the exponent of a policy evincing to the world the profound feeling of this nation, that the time is passed away in which 'the right divine of kings to govern wrong' will be tolerated here, or witnessed abroad without expostulation, or more formidable protest; and that you may long retain office in the exercise of this ministry, is the unfeigned and earnest hope of your Lordship's well-wisher, who subscribes himself, with all due consideration and respect,

JOHN THOMAS,
Author of *Elpis Israel*.

London, Feb. 8th, 1850.

Lord Palmerston's Acknowledgment.

Foreign Office, February 15th, 1850.

SIR,—Viscount Palmerston desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to express to you his thanks for the very interesting work which you have been so good as to send to him.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

SPENCER PONSENBY.

John Thomas, Esq.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 167-8.

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Louis Kossuth.

Dr Thomas also sent a copy of *Elpis Israel* to Louis Kossuth, the distinguished Hungarian patriot, who was then lecturing in America. The book was accompanied by the following letter:—

M. LOUIS KOSSUTH, LATE GOVERNOR OF HUNGARY,

EXCELLENT SIR,—I have taken the liberty of causing to be presented to you a copy of a work entitled *Elpis Israel*, which, it is presumed, cannot fail of being interesting to you, seeing that it treats in part of the things which have, and are yet destined to, come upon old and decrepid Europe, and your own unfortunate and suffering country. It is a work reprinted in New York a few weeks since from the London edition, which was almost entirely sold in a month after publication there, without the aid of advertisement or review. A copy was sent to Lord Palmerston, who, as you will see on page xxvi., pronounces the book to be 'a very interesting work.'

I would also take this opportunity of remarking to you, that I have read your eloquent addresses to the peoples of Britain and of these United States, with that deep feeling of sympathy for the oppressed and hatred of oppression which is an instinct of my nature. But while my soul was melted in its mood, my judgment approved the necessity of the visitation which hath fallen so vengefully on your fatherland. In your address to the people of the United States, you inquire, 'Was it not manifest that Austria—who had always, through the help of Hungary, strength enough to oppose Russia—would, when she destroyed Hungary with Russian bayonets, no longer be an independent power, but merely the *avant garde* of the Muscovite?' Again you say; 'Had England and France permitted a few ships to come to Ossore, laden with arms for the noble patriots who had asked in vain for weapons, the Hungarians would now have stood a more impregnable barrier against Russia than all the arts of a miserable and expensive diplomacy.' To this you add: 'I hesitate not to avow before God, that we alone—that my own Hungary—could have saved Europe from Russian domination.'

Yes, Excellent Sir, in these averments is the philosophy of your national overthrow. Hungary was the strength of Austria, and she could have saved both it and Europe from Russian domination. God—whose administration of human affairs you acknowledge, and to whom 'the powers that be' are subjected—saw this distinctly. It was necessary, therefore, that Hungary should be 'plucked up by the roots' by 'the little' Austro-imperial 'horn' of the west, that the execution of His decree—long since revealed in the writings of Israel's prophets—might not be frustrated. Hungary's offence before High Heaven hath been this very devotion to the treacherous and blood-stained house of Hapsburg, of which, Excellent Sir, you speak so complacently. The 'Holy Roman Empire'—*holy* indeed!—hath been for over a thousand years the savage destroyer of God's witnesses upon the earth. Its secular dynastic horn hath been the pillar and support of the Papacy; the blind, infatuated patron of that cruel and liberty-hating superstition whose Pontifex Maximus—the spiritual dynastic horn of the empire—is the Pope of Rome. The time hath come for the Almighty to make inquisition for

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blood, and therefore to pour out upon the house of Hapsburg and its papal prophet, and their conjoint dominion, that righteous retribution which their unparalleled blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in the heaven'—(Rev. xiii. 6)—and their crimes against humanity, demand. So long as Hungary remained strong and independent, 'an impregnable barrier' existed against that inundation from the north which is destined to overshadow the independence of the Austro-papal imperialism of the west. Whom God wills to destroy He first infatuates. This is pre-eminently the case with the Emperor and the Pope. The house of Hapsburg, in cursing with the decree of extermination, and, by Russian aid, in 'plucking it up by the roots'—(Dan. vii. 8, 24)—hath thrust a dagger into its own vitals, wounding itself with an incurable and deadly wound. It hath bound itself hand and foot, and become helplessly subject to the will of the Autocrat of the North—the Russo-Assyrian of the age—(Isaiah xxx. 25, 30, 31).

The Bible—the politician's best manual—reveals, as you will find in *Elpis Israel*, from page 377 to 388, that the Almighty Disposer of human events—(Dan. ii. 21; iv. 25, 35)—hath decreed the subjugation of Europe to the Russian power, whose chief is to become 'Emperor of Germany' ('Gogue of the Land of Magogue') as well as Autocrat of all the Russias (or Prince of Ros, Mosc, and Tobl.) See Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. All things since February 1848 are rapidly tending to that consummation. France—symbolised in the Scripture by 'Frogs,' the old arms of the Franks—(Rev. xvi. 13 and *Elpis Israel*, page 339)—is to complicate everything. Events soon to happen there will convert papal Germany, &c., and Italy, into 'a lake of fire and brimstone'—destructive battlefields, which will be the wreck of the dominion of Hapsburg and the Pope, and the establishment of the Cossack on the Theiss, the Danube, the Rhine, the Seine, and the Po. Thus the house of Hapsburg will have destroyed itself in destroying Hungary, and Russia will have become your avenger.

Still, however, Hungary and Poland will exist no more. The resuscitation of their dominions and that of Italy is hopeless. The populations of earth are not to be for ever cursed by such Governments as the world hath hitherto experienced in all lands. The Bible, to which you appeal, comforts us with the assurance that 'all nations shall be blessed in Abraham and his Seed'—(Gen. xii. 2, 3; xxiii. 18; Gal. iii. 8, 16)—and that when this blessedness shall become a fact, 'the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Jehovah, and of His Christ; and he [the Christ] shall reign for ever'—(Rev. xi. 15). Yea, Excellent Sir, and not 'the kingdoms' only, but all republics too. The accomplishment of this ancient promise, made of God 3500 years ago, will be good news, or 'gospel,' to Hungary and the oppressed of all countries: for it implies the overthrow of Russia and the fall of all thrones, principalities, and powers that now afflict the world.

Well, Excellent Sir, your 'own Hungary' exists no more, and the God of justice wills it, not for the behoof of Austria and its Camarilla, but as a condition necessary to the ultimate benefit of humanity at large. Vain, yet pleasing to those who know not the divine purpose revealed in the Bible, is the hope you express that 'Hungary, free, surrounded by free nations, will be great, glorious, and independent.' Excellent Sir, independent Hungary, the chief of a confederacy of free nations, is an illusion sketched by the fond fancy of its unfortunate children. Providence hath a more exalted blessedness for the peoples than this. Bloody indeed will

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to the coming combat between the populations and the tyrants; but 'the haughty despots,' as you truly style them, will prove too strong for them. Neither Hungary nor her exiled sons can change the current of events that have placed them on these hospitable shores. The freedom of Hungary will be peace, spiritual enlightenment, prosperity, and security, under a divine code and administration. This is the impending freedom and blessedness of all nations, which belong not to this age, but to that which is to come, when all existing governments—the obstacles to their manifestation—shall have been utterly destroyed after the example and by the like agency to that which delivered Israel from Egypt, and planted them in Palestine as in the days of old. The restoration of liberty, then, to Hungary being incompatible with the revealed will of the Almighty, there remains no obstacle to the fulfilment of your prediction, which happens to be in harmony with the things noted in the Scriptures of truth, as I have already stated them. 'I predict,' saith your Excellency—'and the eternal God hears my prediction—that there can be no freedom for the Continent of Europe, and that the Cossacks from the shores of the Don will water their steeds in the Rhine, unless liberty be restored to Hungary. It is only with Hungarian freedom that the European nations can be free; and the smaller nationalities especially can have no future without us.' Yes, sir, Poland and Hungary, the ramparts of the West against the embattled North, being levelled with the dust, Europe is unmasked and open to the invader when he wills to 'enter into the countries, to overflow, and to pass over'—(Dan. xi. 40). Imbecility and folly characterise the diplomacy of 1830, 1848, and 1849. Had not the rulers been judicially blinded, they would have seen that the guarantee of their own independence of Russian domination was the preservation of Poland and Hungary as sovereign states. But God has blinded their eyes that they might not see until it is 'too late' to retrieve the errors of the past.

But, Excellent Sir, when you shall have perused *Elpis Israel*, you will perhaps discern the relation of things more clearly than can be exhibited within the limits of this epistle. Allow me to refer you to my letters to the Autocrat and his Ambassador in London, on pages xix. and xxii., for some additional light upon the subjects before us. The part which France is playing in the great political drama of the age, and that which awaits Britain and the United States, her ally by the force of circumstances, are set forth on pages indicated by inserted slips; as well as other topics interesting to you as one of the actors in the scenes that need not be mentioned here.

In conclusion, though I cannot pray God to prosper your wish for 'universal freedom,' in the popular sense, because subversive of His kingdom, which we are taught to pray may come, that 'His will may be done on earth as it is in heaven;' yet I do pray that He may prosper your mission to this country in committing its Government to the taking of a decided stand with other liberal powers in the approaching conflict with the imperial oppressors of the Continent. And may God preserve you in safety in the midst of that terrible tempest with which He declares He will visit the nations before He blesses them in Abraham and his Seed. That you may prosper in all your lawful undertakings, and live to see the end of the house of Hapsburg, the overthrow of the Autocrat, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, which shall 'break in pieces and consume' all the kingdoms of the Roman earth—(Dan. ii. 44)—I subscribe myself, Excellent Sir, very respectfully yours,

JOHN THOMAS, M.D.,
Author of *Elpis Israel*.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 19-21.

ELPIS ISRAEL

Effects of the Publication of 'Elpis Israel.'

Both in this country and in America, the publication of *Elpis Israel* caused the utmost consternation in many circles, and even among those who had been regarded as favourable to the doctrines propounded by Dr Thomas in the course of his lecturing tour in Britain. Many of these had not apprehended his convictions on the doctrine of life only in Christ; and this was not at all surprising, as the doctor himself afterwards stated that he had purposely avoided giving prominence to this doctrine, with a view to avoid prejudicing the minds of his hearers against the things of the kingdom generally. In *Elpis Israel*, however, his strong pronouncement on the absolute mortality of man, and other kindred topics, came as a thunderbolt to some of his former admirers, and abruptly terminated any friendliness they had previously shown towards him and his teaching. In more than one case, the intense indignation that was felt was practically shown by committing the offending volume to the flames. The greater number of the subscribers, however, and readers generally who were possessed of the honest and good heart, read the book in the true Berean spirit, and were rewarded by receiving the benefit which a perusal was calculated to impart.

Subsequent Editions of 'Elpis Israel.'

Several editions of *Elpis Israel* have since been published, some in America, and others in this country. In the earlier of these editions, a few emendations were made by the author, but they were not so numerous as might have been expected, considering the circumstances under which the work was written, the political developments that had taken place since then, and the additional study which the writer had given to the various subjects. In 1903, an eighth edition was issued from Birmingham, and in 1906 a ninth, and cheaper edition, from the same city.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

I now propose to give brief notices of a number of books and pamphlets of various kinds, which directly or indirectly helped to disseminate the Gospel of the Kingdom. Most of the publications thus to be noticed were written or published, or both, by persons who had believed and obeyed this gospel, and who were desirous of making it known to the utmost of their ability. Some, however, were the production of persons who had only got a smattering of the kingdom's gospel, or whose imagination had been captivated by some of the political or other aspects of the truth.

THE COMING STRUGGLE.

Of this latter description was a remarkable pamphlet, which appeared in the spring of 1853, almost simultaneously with the formation of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, which created a profound sensation all over the country, and obtained an extraordinary circulation, that ultimately reached 100,000 copies. The full title of this phenomenal pamphlet was *THE COMING STRUGGLE AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH; or, the Political Events of the Next Fifteen Years, described in accordance with Prophecies in Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Apocalypse; showing also the important Position Britain will occupy during and at the End of the Awful Conflict.* It consisted of 32 demy octavo pages, in a coloured cover, and was for the most part a cleverly written condensation of the third part of *Elpis Israel*, by Dr Thomas, upon the kingdoms of this world in relation to the Kingdom of God. It was written in very simple, intelligible, and attractive language—quite unlike the style in which prophetic subjects had usually been treated. The sublimity of the subject, the picturesque garb in which it was presented, and the masterly and suggestive manner in which the various details were handled, appealed strongly to the popular imagina-

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tion, and fairly captivated the public taste. This fact, together with the further circumstance that it was published in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Crimean War, when great apprehensions were entertained as to what the result of existing political complications might be, no doubt accounted for the unprecedented sale which the pamphlet commanded.

The Author of 'The Coming Struggle.'

Mr David Pae, the anonymous author of *The Coming Struggle*, was a native of Amulree, Perthshire, where he was born on May 6, 1828. When he had attained the age of 20, he went to Edinburgh, to fill a situation in the establishment of a publisher there. In this position he came into contact with literary men, the effect of which was that he himself turned his attention to a literary career. It was as a writer of novels and dramas that he was best known; and when the *People's Friend*, a popular miscellany, was commenced, he was given the editorship-in-chief, and subsequently the post of dramatic critic of the *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, issued from the same establishment. These posts he continued to hold until his death, which took place very suddenly, from heart disease, on May 9, 1884. Shortly after the publication of *Elpis Israel*, a copy of it fell into his hands; and he was so impressed with the doctor's interpretation of the prophecies yet to be fulfilled in connection with the establishment of the Kingdom of God, that, with his facile pen, he was prompted to write a popular synopsis of it under the title of *The Coming Struggle*. Probably no one was more surprised than Mr Pae himself at the phenomenal success of his little *brochure*, which undoubtedly helped the truth, then struggling hard for recognition, by stimulating inquiry into prophetic subjects. I knew Mr Pae personally for about six years before his death, during which I used frequently to meet him in a professional capacity. Nothing about him impressed me further than

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that he was a very able and brilliant writer of light literature ; and the fact of his being a member of the Church of Scotland did not lead me to expect in him a Believer of the Gospel of the Kingdom, albeit that he was the author of *The Coming Struggle*. It has been remarked that Mr Pae, for some reason or other, always shrank from putting his name to any of his voluminous works ; but possibly, being well aware that he was so widely known as the author of *The Coming Struggle*, he had a feeling about appearing as the writer of so much that was essentially trivial.

Dr Thomas, 'The Coming Struggle,' and the 'Quarterly Journal of Prophecy.'

A copy of *The Coming Struggle* having been sent to Dr Thomas, and also to the editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, the doctor thus severely reviewed the review of the *Quarterly* :

A pamphlet has been recently published anonymously in Edinburgh by a friend of *Elpis Israel*, entitled *The Coming Struggle among the Nations of the Earth*, on the 5th page of which the author states :

The position of the world clearly intimates that the end has come ; and events now furnish an explanation of the hitherto dark visions of Daniel and John ; and by a careful examination of these and other prophets, the political history of the next fifteen years is spread out before us—nay, we are enabled to pass beyond that period, and trace almost accurately the regular course of events down to the beginning of the thousand years. Dr Thomas of America was the first to find the key ; and they who have read his book will at once be able to understand the following description of the period mentioned. For the sake, however, of those who have not seen Dr Thomas's work—and we believe this applies to the majority of general readers—it will be necessary to give a rapid and connected sketch of the prophecy on which the whole hangs, and point out the errors into which former interpreters have fallen.

A copy of this pamphlet was sent to the *Journal of Prophecy*, whose conductor would learn from the cover that 73,000 copies had been sold. This fact, with the extract just quoted, was too much for his equanimity. He had, in 1850, *ex cathedra* 'disapproved' and 'discommended' *Elpis Israel* ; and for it to be brought so exten-

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sively into notice, nevertheless, in 1853, was not to be calmly and patiently endured. Besides, was the like ever heard, since clergymen began to speculate upon the prophets, that it should be proclaimed to 73,000 people and their friends, that a layman, and a practitioner in medicine, in the wilds of America, was 'the first to find the key' to Daniel and John, whose 'hitherto dark visions' had foiled them all? Were Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Faber, Bickersteth, Keith, Elliot, the Duke of Manchester, Moses Stuart, Hengstenberg, and last though not least, the editor of the *Journal*, and a host of others, convicted of error by the expositions of *Elpis Israel*? Our editor could not endure the thought. In the excitement of the hour he forgot that 'God hath chosen that the foolish of the world should confound the wise;' and that He hath hid His wisdom from the wise and prudent, and revealed it unto babes; for so it seemed good unto Him. Zeal for his own craft was the one thing ascendant. He could restrain himself no longer; but seizing his pen and dipping it into the blackness of darkness, he dashed off the following lines, and printed them for a 'review!'

THE COMING STRUGGLE AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH, &c.

As pure a piece of prophetic quackery or claptrap as we ever read. The author seems a disciple of Dr Thomas of America, whose magazine is a specimen of low scurrilous Socinianism and Universalism. Perhaps the author of this pamphlet might not like to identify himself with *these blasphemies*; but we greatly miss in his pages anything that gives us any indication of his theology.

The readers of the *Herald* well know that its pages are never defaced by Socinianism or Universalism, which, like Calvinism and Arminianism—equally absurd creeds—are removed from my faith as widely as the poles asunder. The editor of the *Journal* knows it too. But when craftsmen are roaring hot for their shrines, they would as soon 'invent a lie' to serve their Diana, as receive a guinea for a sermon in her praise. This appears to be the case with him. He sticks at nothing, because he hates the truth which identifies his ecclesiasticism with the apostacy, and converts his sanctimoniousness into the sepulchral whiteness of an ancient Pharisee. Hear the prayer of this *Journalist* who bears false witness against his neighbour. It is a standing 'notice' on the last page of every number:—

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All readers of the *Journal* are earnestly besought to give it room in their prayers; that by means of it God may be honoured and His truth advanced; also that it may be conducted in faith and love, with sobriety of judgment and discernment of the truth, in nothing carried away into error, or hasty speech, or sharp, unbrotherly disputation.

It is not difficult to discern hypocrisy by exhibiting in juxtaposition the words and actions of mankind.

The things we advocate we have a right to call 'the truth' until they shall have been proved to be contrary to the express words of Moses and the prophets, and of Christ and the apostles. We have heard of no one who has undertaken this work—not even this specious and anonymous *Journalist* in Edinburgh or London. He asserts without proof that the *Herald* is 'a specimen of low scurrilous Socinianism and Universalism.' Having imposed this absurd falsehood upon the credulity of his readers, he advances another step, and pronounces the undefined fictions he attributes to me to be blasphemies; and me, therefore, as their utterer, by inference, a blasphemer. Ecclesiastical thunderings may be heard rumbling in these words, which, when clergymen had their way, were 'awful;' but now, in Britain and America, they whom the truth hath freed regard them no more than the idle wind. I would rather be denounced for a blasphemer by the clergy than held to be just and orthodox in their esteem. I advocate that 'Gospel of the Kingdom' preached by Jesus as the message sent from God to Israel; and which, he said, should be preached among all nations. I advocate that gospel, and his claims to its kingdom, as son of David, and son of God by birth of flesh, water, and spirit. If this be blasphemy, it is the blasphemy on account of which he was pronounced 'guilty of death.' 'He hath spoken blasphemy,' said Caiphas; 'what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.' Ecclesiastics have always been great denouncers of blasphemy; but they have never yet Scripturally defined it. They cannot, being ignorant of the truth. Did they but understand this, they would see themselves as some of Christ's freedmen see them—the veriest blasphemers in the land.

But other writers not being blinded by hatred of *Elpis Israel*, do not consider *The Coming Struggle*—(some of which I should expunge, and new matter insert, to make it invulnerable)—as prophetic quackery or clap-trap. A

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non-religious but politico-ecclesiastical paper in Edinburgh called the *Scottish Press*, says :

Although some may be disposed to class this little book among the profitless speculations on the prophecies of Scripture, they ought not to do so hastily ; for any one acquainted with the aspect of the Continent at the present moment will at once be prepared to admit that the author's views are in the main far from being unreasonable.

The *British Banner* says of it :

It is a pamphlet of a somewhat remarkable character. The writer we know not, but he is deeply in earnest, and has written with much feeling and not a little power. The pamphlet is a rush of emotion, the staple of which is an argumentative exposition. Highly improbable as some of its points seem to us, they are worked out with great power. In truth, were we to judge from the merit of the pamphlet, we should be inclined to ascribe it to the eloquent pen of Mr Wylie. We are giving no hint. We are absolutely ignorant of the authorship.

The notice above quoted from the *Journal* is a specimen of the treatment all works receive which do not burn incense to ecclesiasticism and its incarnations, if they find themselves Scripturally incompetent to enter the lists against their opponents. One small octavo line of denunciation is styled a 'review' of a pamphlet of 32 pages by an editor who prays for 'sobriety of judgment,' and to be 'in nothing carried away into error, or hasty speech !' It is evident God pays no regard to the prayers of the editor, or of the *Journal's* friends ; and for the obvious reason, that it is not conducted with love to enemies, sobriety of judgment, and unhasty speech. The readers of the *Journal* have a right to know the demonstration which convicts a pamphlet, illustrative of the interesting and important prophecies of Daniel and John, of 'pure prophetic quackery or claptrap,' seeing that so many thousands of the people have pronounced in its favour. In speaking of a work called *The Jew*, he says : 'We do not need to commend a work like this, that hath reached a fifth edition !' Here the number of editions is taken as indication of so much merit that even the editor of the *Journal* cannot benefit it by his praise ! But then *The Jew* admits that 'the work of redemption' is being 'carried on in' what the *Journal* recognises as 'the church ;' while *The Coming Struggle* refers to 'orthodox' interpretations as 'a mass of obscurity, contradiction, absurdity, and error,' completely mystifying both their authors and the world—as a host of commentaries and

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opinions, that must of necessity be thrown off by the present generation, if it would come to a knowledge of the truth. But, if five editions of *The Jew* be proof of superlative merit, why should not 73 editions of *The Coming Struggle*, of 1000 copies each? Will the editor explain this? But why impose this task upon him? Truth and righteousness are not to be expected from an editor hired by a London publisher to prepare a *Journal* that will be acceptable to pious sinners, who are ignorant of 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God.' He must advocate the literal interpretation of prophecy; but that rule must not be applied to the endangering of the theology or church creed they have assumed, and are determined to glorify at all hazards. This is the key to *Journal* policy—the doctrines and commandments of men first; then God's Word so far as not subversive of these. Hence, the 'quackery or claptrap' is all on the side of the *Journal*, and the 'unwashed generation' it delights to honour.*

'The Coming Struggle' Revised and Corrected by Dr Thomas.

Dr Thomas, in view of the immense circulation commanded by *The Coming Struggle*, was induced to revise and correct it to a large extent, and to reproduce the pamphlet in its entirety, in its amended form, in the *Herald* for September 1853, with the following preface to it:—

Preface.

The above is the title of the pamphlet already referred to in our strictures upon the *London Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*. There are several vulnerable positions assumed by the compiler of its pages, which it is remarkable the reviewers have not seized upon in demonstration of the supposed unscriptural conclusions it contains. But critical orthodox ignorance has been the compiler's safety. 'Theology' has blinded the eyes of 'the ministry,' so that they cannot see afar off. 'Divines,' therefore, being in the dark, and the people being led by them, it is 'like priest, like people;' all are in the fog, and the errors of *The Coming Struggle* have escaped detection.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 149-152.

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In the following pages this renowned pamphlet is not reproduced as it came from the Edinburgh press. I have expurgated it of what I consider its untenable assumptions, and in so doing have converted it into a *brochure* properly my own. The original pamphlet undertook to present my views of the next fifteen years. But no one can present the views of another with sufficient precision to satisfy the original thinker. *The Coming Struggle* does not satisfy me. I have therefore revised and corrected it, as well as I could without re-writing the whole. I have made 312 corrections on the 32 pages, which have materially altered the sense of the compilation in many places. I should not, however, have presumed to do this, but for the peculiar relation I sustain to the original.

I am not able to say who the artist is that has undertaken to work up my ideas of things into *The Coming Struggle*. Some have styled him 'the learned Dr Cumming;' others, 'the eloquent Mr Wylie;' others, 'a journeyman printer in Edinburgh;' others, again, 'a disciple of Dr Thomas,' &c. Be he whom he may, he must be greatly astonished at the success of his doings. Seventy-three thousand sterling sixpences must have afforded him a wonderful profit on the copy of *Elpis Israel* out of which he fabricated his pages. I should have no particular objection to inheriting a dividend; but hitherto the case has strictly fulfilled the saying, that 'one sows and another reaps.' But perhaps good has been accomplished notwithstanding the errors. In this, therefore, I rejoice; but hope that no more of the original may be sold after this revise shall appear in Britain.*

Replies to 'The Coming Struggle.'

As the views propounded in *The Coming Struggle* were not in accordance with strict orthodoxy, various replies to it were published, and Mr Pae was also induced to take up the cudgels in defence of what he had written, by issuing other pamphlets. None of these, however, had a circulation anything like that attained by the first. Mr Richard Robertson, of London, in a letter to Dr Thomas, thus refers to the principal reply:—

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, p. 193.

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The peddling book-makers in Scotland are not altogether unmindful of their time of harvest, having eagerly seized upon the present opportunity to vend their wares of false doctrine; while others, burning with indignation at the successful issue of their competitors, have vented their spleen in vulgar abuse, emitting such trash as is contained in a recent pamphlet entitled *A Quietus for the Coming Struggle*, with a demonstrated answer to the question, 'Is either Beast of Rev. xiii. the Papacy?'—whose anonymous author is evidently writhing under the painful fact, that the pamphlet entitled *The Coming Struggle* has reached the sale of 92,000 copies.*

More Pamphlets by Mr Pae.

Stimulated by his unexpected success as a religious pamphleteer, Mr Pae, as has just been stated, published several other pamphlets, in reply to objections against the ideas he had so ably propounded, and in further elucidation and continuation of the important subject. In these additional works, he again availed himself largely of Dr Thomas's published writings, with but the scantiest acknowledgment of the source whence he had derived his knowledge. It will be interesting to reproduce here the remarks which Dr Thomas was prompted to write upon receiving copies of two of these subsequent publications by Mr Pae:—

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE COMING STRUGGLE AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH; containing Replies to some Objections brought against the Pamphlet; with a Development of the Theory of the Two Witnesses and the 1200 Years; also, additional Reasons for asserting that Britain cannot be one of the Ten Horns. By the Author of *The Coming Struggle*. London, Tenth Thousand. 1853.

A kind friend has forwarded me a copy of the above. It contains nothing new to those who possess copies of *Elpis Israel*. What Mr Pae says about the Two Witnesses is a faithful transcription from its pages; save that he mistakenly attributes their defeat in 1572-1685 to 'the Dragon and the Beast,' which I do not. It was the Beast 'that ascendeth out of the Bottomless Pit that makes

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 258-9.

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war against them, and overcomes them, and kills them; not the Dragon, which is a distinct power, and not concerned in that Book.

My calculation of their death-periods he parades with lines of *italic*, without the slightest hint of his having no more to do with it than copying it into his manuscript.

My calculations also of Ezekiel's 430 years he treats in the same manner. Not satisfied with this, he republishes a page of my chronology as it stands in the English edition of *Elpis Israel*, without discovering that there is a typographical error in regard to the reign of Alexander the Great, which ought to be eight years, instead of seven; and the age of Jesus at his crucifixion $35\frac{1}{2}$, instead of $36\frac{1}{2}$, as he has copied it.

Under the head of Britain he runs wild. Upon this topic he has some *original* matter, which makes him very vulnerable. But fortunately for him, his contemporaries there are as much in the dark as he. I have stated—(and I believe I am the only one that has done so with proof)—that Britain was not one of the Ten Toes of the Image, or Ten Horns of the Beast. I have many reasons for this. Mr Pae has adopted the idea, and given it as his own on page 19; but not understanding it aright, he has jumped to the conclusion that England is not to be 'involved in the approaching storm,' but will have to 'battle for virtue, for morality, for knowledge, for religion, and for Christ; and the struggle is against vice, ignorance, impiety, and the devil.' This is mere 'fal-lal.' Though the British power is not an element of Gog's or Nebuchadnezzar's Image, she is a Gentile power to be humbled by the Stone. Her church is a harlot; and her whole ecclesiastical system mere sham Christianity. Mammon is her god, and her priests his faithful votaries. There will no doubt be a difference in the degree of her punishment as compared with the papal nations; but that she will escape the wrath of God is but the day-dream of speculative patriotism, which is at best but a very fleshly affair.

On page 26, Mr Pae has half a page of my words, which he attributes to 'an American writer on Popery!' This is certainly not particularly descriptive of myself, as I can hardly be styled a writer on Popery more than on any other special form of abomination. His 'Appendix

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No. 1' is also the dates given in *Elpis Israel*, thrown into a tabular form without acknowledgment.

In the circulation of the truth I rejoice, though I may not, as in the present instance, be benefitted a cent. I do not, however, like to see a man work up ideas not his own, and which, if left to himself, he never could have thought of, and publish them to the world as if he were their author. In his *Coming Struggle* he makes as slight an acknowledgment of the source they are derived from as possible. I regret this, because, had he acted with literary candour, several editions of *Elpis Israel* might have been put in circulation in Britain, that would have enabled the public to understand the Gospel of the Kingdom, as well as the coming struggle of the powers; which his own limited means are incapable of doing. The pamphlet has set the people to thinking and inquiring for more information; which, from another pamphlet to be noticed hereafter, he is unable to afford when he loses sight of *Elpis Israel*. He has advertised two works of a clergyman upon Daniel and the Revelation, on his pamphlet cover—works from which he has borrowed only eight lines; while of the existence of the *Herald* and *Elpis Israel*—from the latter of which he has plagiarised everything that has given interest to his pamphlets—he has left his readers and the public in absolute ignorance! It is true, that orders for *Elpis Israel* could not have been supplied (there being now only twelve copies in Britain unsold); still, it would have given the works notoriety, and have created a demand I should have endeavoured to supply by reprinting the work. Mr Pae has been over here, and republished; and caused some of his pamphlets to be exposed for sale in Mott Haven, where I learned his name; yet my face he has never seen! These facts do not exalt my views of his proceeding.

THE COMING REST FOR THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH; or, the Millennium described in accordance with Scripture Prophecy. By the Author of *The Coming Struggle*. London, Seventh Thousand. 1853.

This is a general view of the subject, faintly dauguer-reotyped, as it were, in pamphlet form, from the first and second parts of *Elpis Israel*, as *The Coming Struggle* was from the third. The design of the pamphleteer seems to have been, to secure readers to the widest extent, which was certainly desirable. He therefore trims his sails and

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braces his yards so as not to run afoul of the majority, who believe in a millennium of spiritual influence, in which Christ and the saints, wherever they may be, are not to be found upon the earth.

It can be seen, however, that Mr Pae does not believe in this; for he states clearly the position we occupy, even to an extent beyond what he avows as his own conviction, and shows its Scripturality and reasonableness; while he speaks hypothetically, so as not to be committed to pre-millennialism, which is not popular. He says: 'In the public discussion of this subject, the advocates of the post-millennial theory reject the English translation of the Scriptures. Taken as it stands in our language, there can be no doubt that the Bible teaches the doctrine of a pre-millennial advent.' He then shows, that the practical conclusion of the post-millennial argument is, that 'the English Bible is not to be trusted.' Yet he adds: 'We do not intend by these remarks to intimate our dissent from the post-millennial theory, but merely to press upon the notice of the church the existing difference—which all admit—between that theory and the English Bible.' 'While we neither assert nor deny a personal advent, we consider that the government or constitution of the Coming Rest will be essentially Messianic. It will be emphatically Christ's kingdom; and if not personally or visibly present, he will send forth a personation of his Spirit so visibly, that a personal or bodily presence could not give any stronger evidence of his assumption of universal regal authority on earth.' Such is the non-committal position he assumes. He consequently says nothing about the First Resurrection and the destruction of the powers that be by Christ and the saints; but confines his notice of resurrection to that at the end of a thousand years. On reading what he says, my conviction is, that he believes more than he ventures to confess. But such an exhibition of truth, while it saves a man's popularity, will do little to advance *the* truth.

Sin and Satan are evidently stumbling-blocks in his way. Not understanding the Scripture concerning these, or not willing to come out with what he may see, he is sadly bothered with the binding of the devil. He cannot see how the devil can be bound, and yet six exist for a thousand years after. He admits the existence of death

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in the millennium ; but affirms that 'no sin will be committed during this period,' in the face of the saying, that 'the wages of sin is death.'

He imagines that only one language will be spoken in the millennium, founded upon Zeph. iii. 9. He forgets that Zechariah speaks of ten languages, at least, existing in the day of Judah's glory. These two prophecies must be taken in connection, thus : 'The Lord will turn to the people a pure language in that day, when ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.' Mr Pae does not see that the language is a pure religious language, by which these people of many tongues will be enabled to serve the Lord 'with one consent.' He thinks that the pure language is 'the old Saxon spoken by Bunyan, Shakspeare, and Milton!' But where this is predicted, he testifieth not.

In answering the question, 'When is the millennium to begin?' he again quotes from *Elpis Israel* without acknowledgment. He plagiarises the Second Exodus of forty years ; and the date 1906 as its termination, for its beginning ; also the seven years as the duration of the 'little season' at the end, as exhibited in my chronology on the last page of *Elpis Israel*. The success of this pamphleteer is certainly unexampled. I hope he has done much good, though his way of doing it is far from being in good literary and correct keeping.*

THE DESTINY OF HUMAN GOVERNMENTS.

Taking advantage of the wide-spread interest in the subject of unfulfilled prophecy which had been awakened by the publication of *The Coming Struggle*, James Cameron sought to turn this interest to good account by reprinting, in the form of a pamphlet of 48 pages, a collection of trenchant articles by Dr Thomas, which had appeared in recent issues of the *Herald*. The pamphlet he entitled **THE DESTINY OF HUMAN GOVERNMENTS IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE**. The articles, which had reference to the

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1864, pp. 94-96.

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approaching great crisis in human affairs, were written in the doctor's usual pungent and incisive style; and the pamphlet altogether was of a rather sensational character, as may be gathered from the following list of the headings of the various articles:—

The Fierce Democracy and 'the Powers that be.'
The Military Usurpation of Napoleon Interpreted.
The Great City.
The Tripartite Division of the Great City.
The French Empire.
Politicians, Republican Gospellers, and their Traditions.
The European Prospect.

The Destiny of Human Governments was only of passing interest, however; and after the excitement consequent upon the publication of *The Coming Struggle* had died away, it was very little used or inquired after.

YAHWEH ELOHIM.

In 1864, the members of the church that had seceded from the Edinburgh meeting then assembling in Surgeon Square issued a reprint, in crown octavo, 16 pages, of a manifesto that had been written by Dr Thomas for his sympathisers, who at that time took the name of 'Antipas.' The full title of this manifesto was YAHWEH ELOHIM; or, *A Testimony on Behalf of Original Apostolic Christianity, Revived in the Nineteenth Century in Britain and America.* By Antipas.* 'We, who give currency to this document—not exceeding, perhaps, a thousand persons in America and Britain'—defined the meaning of the name they had adopted as follows:—

ANTIPAS is a symbolic name, representative of all in every place, who hold fast the Spirit's Name and Faith. It signifies 'against all,' and is bestowed upon the faithful, because they are uncompromisingly opposed to all Names and faiths which are not identical with what was 'delivered once for all to the saints,' by the apostles of Christ.

The two last paragraphs of this manifesto were as follow:

* See p. 137.
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This TESTIMONY OF ANTIPAS being intended for circulation in Britain as well as in America—Colonial, Federal, and Confederate—in all of which countries the Antipas brethren are sparsely encamped, it may not be amiss to inform the reader, who may desire to be put into communication with believers, who are not mere theorists and opinionists—professing to believe, but without courage, intelligence, or honesty enough to maintain the testimony as essential and indispensable to salvation from sin and death, to the exclusion of all the creeds and confessions of the world's systems of piety, without exception—that he may safely apply to Messrs Tait, Ellis, and friends meeting every Sunday at the Calton Convening Rooms, Edinburgh, at 11 A.M. and 2.15 P.M. These are THE ANTIPAS in the Modern Athens. For the North of Scotland, apply to William Gill, Neptune Terrace, Wellington Street, Aberdeen; South of Scotland, James Bell, High Street, Galashiels; West of Scotland, James Paterson, Cumnock, Ayrshire; Richard Hodgson, Wishaw; East of Scotland, John Nesbit, Paxton South Mains, Berwick-on-Tweed. For Ireland, apply to William D. Jardine, 21 Bride Street, Dublin. These will be sufficient for all useful purposes, and afford him access to any of THE ANTIPAS that may happen to be located near him.

If the reader reside in England, he can refer to Daniel Bairstow, New Bond Street, Halifax, Yorkshire; Robert Roberts, Reporting Office, 35 Cannon Street, Birmingham; J. W. Moore, 4 Mill Pleasant, Stoke, Devonport; Edward Turney, Victoria Terrace, Queen's Road, Nottingham; and David Brown, 19 Cowley Place, Cowley Road, Brixton, London.

SUMMARY OF THE CHRISTIANITY REVEALED IN THE BIBLE.

This *brochure*, which consisted of 24 pages small crown octavo, was written by Dr Thomas, and appeared originally in the *Herald*, from which it was reprinted in 1865 by Robert Cundall, of Halifax. It consisted of 47 propositions, very tersely expressed, setting forth the Scripture teaching on a variety of subjects relating to the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, each proposition being followed with the necessary Bible proof, printed in very small type.

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TWELVE LECTURES.

This was a work of 212 pages, by Robert Roberts, which, in the several forms in which it has appeared, has had a large circulation, and been exceedingly helpful in making known the Gospel of the Kingdom. Its original title was TWELVE LECTURES ON THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE, AS OPPOSED TO POPULAR RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

Origin of the Work.

The author, who was at the time a reporter in Huddersfield, has given the following account of how the work came to be published;—

As the year [1861] drew towards its close, it was resolved that we should make a more systematic effort, and that I should give a complete course of lectures in exhibition of the whole system of the truth. I accordingly drew out a programme of twelve lectures, to be delivered on twelve successive Sunday afternoons. Of this, I had a thousand copies printed as handbills and a hundred posters, and arranged for their distribution. It then occurred to me that it would be better to write and read the lectures than to attempt the extempore delivery from skeleton notes, as I was in the habit of doing. This idea I was enabled to carry out through having the reporting assistance before spoken of. Many a police court day, I sat in the reporter's room in the *Examiner* office, getting ready the next Sunday's lecture, while my assistant [John Butler] was busy taking notes of the drunk and disorderly and petty assault and larceny cases heard before the magistrates.

The first lecture was delivered December 1st, 1861, and somewhere about a hundred persons attended. At the second (December 8th), the attendance was between 50 and 60. At the third (December 15th), the attendance again rose to 100. At the fourth (December 22nd), it again fell. At the fifth, it went up again; at the sixth, it was 70; and so on up and down till the last, which was delivered February 16th, 1862. There was close attention throughout, and some afternoons questions were put at the close. There was not the same life in a read lecture as in one extemporised fresh from the heart. At the same

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time, there was this advantage: when the lectures were over, I had them in my possession in a written form. I did not know what was to grow out of this. I supposed their work was done when read before the fluctuating audience of Huddersfield people, who heard them in Huddersfield in the winter of 1861.

Publication Suggested.

When the lectures were over, we had a tea meeting of interested hearers at our lodgings. My companion wrote out the tickets of admission. One of these she showed me the other day. It was not a large party, numbering, perhaps, fifteen persons. At this meeting, the suggestion was thrown out that the lectures should be published. I said I had no objections, but how was it to be done? An old stager, having some experience in such matters, suggested that the experiment might be tried with one lecture. 'Find out,' said he, 'what it would cost to print a thousand copies of the first lecture; then see how many friends would take here and there at 1d.; and perhaps you will get them all out in that way.' The suggestion seemed highly feasible; but had the lectures not been in actual writing, it could not have borne fruit. As it was, it was not long in leading to something. My companion wrote letters to all the friends we knew in sundry parts, apprising them of the proposal, and asking how many copies they would take.

Publication Decided upon.

It was a time before the response was complete. It did not come up to the number necessary for the payment of the printer, but it was sufficiently near (something over two-thirds) to justify the venture, relying on future sales. So the first lecture was placed in the hands of the printer (G. & J. Brook, of Westgate, Huddersfield), and in due course it came out, a neatly printed crown octavo in leaded brevier, extending to 16 pages. On being supplied to the various friends who had ordered, they almost without exception expressed their satisfaction, and ordered the succeeding lectures to be sent.

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Success of the Venture.

Once a fortnight, the succeeding lectures came out in penny numbers. They were nearly all disposed of, and the printer's bill duly liquidated, and so far as my impression was concerned, the publishing episode was closed. It did not seem to me possible there could be anything more in that line. Many who had purchased the penny numbers had taken more than they required for the sake of floating the thing. The circle of those who would care to have anything to do with lectures advocating such views was extremely limited. Consequently, any further demand was not to be looked for; and without further supply, there could be no further printing and no further supply.

A Further Demand.

This view might have proved correct but for the circumstance of a Captain Brown, of the Indian service, arriving in the country, and hearing of the lectures and applying to me for a set, which I was unable to supply. He inquired if there was to be no re-publication. I explained the position, which he quickly discerned. He inquired the sum that would be needed to bring out a second edition. I told him. He then said he had about such a sum of money lying idle, which he would hand over to me to have a second edition of *Twelve Lectures* brought out. If the sale brought back the money, I was to return it to him; if not, he would not consider it a debt.

A Second Edition.

With this understanding, I set the printer to work, and a second edition of 1000 copies was in due time produced (this time stitched together as one volume in pink glazed paper covers). Gradually this edition was disposed of, and I was able to return the money without very long delay, and without any balance over from the sale of the books.*

In a preface to the second edition, which was published in 1863, it was said:

These lectures have now been before the public for eighteen months. An edition of a thousand was in the

* *Good Company*, vol. ii., pp. 231-2, 291.

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first instance entirely disposed of with little or no assistance from public sale; and the demand continuing, a second edition is issued, in the hope that they will attain a still more extensive circulation among that class of persons who are interested in the topics discussed, and, in fact, devoutly concerned for their own salvation. It was for this class they were written, that they might be delivered from the grievous incubus of popular error, on the subject of religion, and introduced to the sublime and saving doctrines of Christianity, as comprehensively based on the writings of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles. The accomplishment of this object is all the compensation the author seeks for his labour; and he is gratified to know that it has been attained in several instances since the issue of the first edition.

In the present edition, the Lectures have been extensively revised, and in some instances remodelled, and an appendix has been added for the consideration of certain interesting and important subjects, only alluded to in the Lectures.

Subsequent Editions.

A third edition of the *Twelve Lectures*, which extended to 238 pages, was published in 1865, the title being expanded as follows:—TWELVE LECTURES ON THE RELIGIOUS ERRORS OF THE TIMES AND THE TRUTH NECESSARY TO BE BELIEVED FOR SALVATION; with an Appendix on the Devil, Election, the Promises to the Fathers, and the Name of Christ.

In 1867, a fourth edition of the work, still further enlarged, was issued, and through the munificence of two anonymous friends of the truth, was issued at one shilling a copy.

CHRISTENDOM ASTRAY.

The title of *Twelve Lectures* has since been again altered, and the scope of the work extended. Its title now reads as follows:—CHRISTENDOM ASTRAY; or, *Popular Theology (both in Faith and Practice) shown to be Unscriptural, and the True Nature of the Ancient Apostolic Faith Exhibited in Eighteen Lectures.* In this form it still has a large circulation through Christadelphian channels.

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ELEMENTS OF THE PROPHETIC WORD.

The full title of this pamphlet—the earliest, I believe, issued by any member of the British brotherhood—was *ELEMENTS OF THE PROPHETIC WORD, DELINEATED IN A SERIES OF LETTERS*: by a Working Man. It consisted of 26 pages, demy octavo, and was first published in 1852. The author was Allan Fordyce, then a resident in Dundee, and afterwards in Glasgow, and who was subsequently well known in connection with the brotherhood throughout the country. The 'Letters' were six in number, and the manner in which they came to be written and published was thus explained in the preface:

A gentleman lecturing upon political subjects had his positions called in question. He invited his questioner to conversation upon the grounds of difference; but as this was inconvenient, some of the following Letters were addressed to the lecturer. The writer afterwards being advised that they might interest and benefit many sincere inquirers after truth, he revised and extended the series, and the result is this pamphlet.

The pamphlet was written in a vigorous and forcible style, its key-note being clearly struck in its two opening sentences; thus—

SIR,—In a recent lecture, you endeavoured to expose the fallacy of certain measures which would likely be brought before the next Parliament, and warned all Chartists to keep aloof from any agitation on imperfect measures, as they would be productive of no real benefit. Now, for similar reasons, based on the true sayings of God, I venture to warn you to withdraw yourself from the agitation of imperfect measures, and to call on you to raise your voice, and proclaim the near approach of a perfect Government, presided over by the Messiah.

These Letters, having become out of print, were in 1882 reprinted by the author's son-in-law, James Fraser, of Glasgow.

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THE CONTRAST BETWEEN PROTESTANTISM AND THE GOSPEL.

This was the title of a pamphlet of 82 small duodecimo pages, written by Mr N. M. Catlin, of New York, and originally issued from the *Advent Harbinger* Office, at Rochester, New York, in 1852.

The Authorship of 'The Contrast.'

Mr Catlin, in a letter accompanying a copy he sent to Dr Thomas, said :

It was your writings led me to the consideration of the subject, and which finally resulted in my totally repudiating Protestant faith. In fact, so many ideas gathered from you were in my mind at the time I was writing *The Contrast*, that I hesitated lest I might be guilty of plagiarism ; and it was a query with me whether to give you credit by quotations or otherwise. I finally determined to make my reference to the matter in the preface, and so save the cumbrance of quotations, especially as I had reason to believe you were not a sensitive man about small matters.

Dr Thomas, in noticing this acknowledgment, said ;

Our brother has well judged in this. So that the truth finds circulation, we rejoice, even though stolen from our treasury without acknowledgment. Still, we would prefer to see it credited, that we may be able to note the result of our endeavour to illustrate it to the conviction of the public mind. Brother Catlin has satisfactorily acquitted himself of all discourtesy in the case by saying, in the preface : 'I have been materially aided by the writings of Dr Thomas, editor of the *Herald of the Future Age*.*'

Contents.

The object of *The Contrast* was to show the difference between the popular religious belief on a number of important points and the Scripture testimony. The subjects thus dealt with were introduced in the following orderly manner :—The Plan of Redemption, Conversion,

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 278-9.

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Faith, the Kingdom of God, Repentance, and Baptism. To still further mark the departure that orthodox Protestantism had made from the primitive faith, the two were sometimes exhibited in parallel columns, and the 'more excellent way' made known in the Scriptures was thus emphasised.

Dr Thomas's Commendation of 'The Contrast.'

Dr Thomas gave a very laudatory notice of *The Contrast* in the article in the *Herald* from which I have just quoted, and he introduced a number of extracts from the little book to show the spirit in which it was written. He began his notice as follows:—

We have read it, and can commend it to our readers as setting forth the Kingdom's Gospel in lively contrast with that incongruous affair current by the name of Protestantism—a thing which, while it protests against Popery, and is more favourable to civil and religious liberty than that hateful 'mystery of iniquity,' is equally gospel-nullifying in its traditions, and powerless for the salvation of the soul and the redemption of the world.

And he concluded it thus:—

Brother Catlin's *brochure* is one of the few things issuing from the press that we can recommend to the patronage of our readers. . . . It is his testimony for the Gospel of the Kingdom. Let those who have the means give it a circulation; and however extensively they may do it, after they have done all, let them say from the heart, 'O Lord, we are unprofitable servants!'

The British Edition.

This high commendation of *The Contrast* caused several copies of it to be sent for from Edinburgh. It was thus found to fully bear out the doctor's commendation. A desire was also expressed to put into practice his concluding advice, that those who had the means should give it a circulation. This it was considered, would best be done by having an edition printed in this country. Such a project was occasionally talked over from time to time in

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an informal way by a few of those who had come to believe the Gospel of the Kingdom through Dr Thomas's labours; but unfortunately these believers were at this period 'a feeble folk,' and the financial means available for the purpose were so slender, that no one could be found who was willing to undertake the pecuniary risk attending such a re-issue. It was not until nearly fifteen years afterwards—in 1865—that the way was opened up for what would now appear to be a very small undertaking. Having been trained as a compositor, though now acting as a newspaper reporter, I purchased the necessary type to print such a pamphlet, and in my leisure time set it up, getting the pages stereotyped as the work proceeded. In this way I brought out a British edition of the pamphlet, consisting of 1000 copies, 36 pages, demy octavo, in coloured cover. The first impression having been sold out, a second edition was printed from the stereotype plates in 1866; but since then it has been little inquired for.

Notices of the Press.

The Contrast was advertised to some extent in the daily and weekly newspapers of the period; and as I had at that time a personal connection with a number of newspapers in different parts of the country, I was enabled to obtain favourable notices of it in these, which to some extent helped the circulation. I here give a summary of these notices, which was printed for advertising purposes.

This treatise is somewhat novel and striking in its character, and contains many highly important and, to most persons, perfectly new ideas of Scripture truth, which are well worthy of consideration. Indeed, every Protestant should read it.—*The Newsman*.

From the title of this work, it might be supposed that the author was a Roman Catholic; but the reader soon discovers that this is not the case, and that the writer believes in the Bible, and in the Bible only, as the Christian's rule of faith. The work contains some thoroughly original ideas on most important subjects, which are remarkable for the bold and fearless manner in which they are enunciated. It is a work which should command the attention of all Scripture students.—*Sussex Advertiser*.

This treatise is not, as its title-page might lead one to suppose, a missal of the Church of Rome; but it contains a number of strictures upon

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some of the leading doctrines of the Protestant faith, which are urged with much cleverness and ingenuity. We confess that several of the difficulties which the author has suggested in the way of properly harmonising some of the tenets of the Protestant religion are such as never before presented themselves to our mind, and deserve serious attention.—*Peterborough Advertiser*.

It is a work of much practical excellence, demonstrating the radical unsoundness of every tenet in the much vaunted faith of Protestantism, by a series of succinct and racy comparisons with the teachings of the Word of God. This result is aided by the frequent use of parallel columns, in which the dicta of Protestant theology are placed side by side with the declarations of the Bible. . . . It is a clear, sound, and popular exposition of the truth, written in great simplicity of style, and bringing down its propositions to the capacity of the least informed.—*Ambassador of the Coming Age*.

This is an important contribution to our theological literature, and a work that will well repay perusal. The treatise is quite a novelty in its way, and, from its limits, appears to be more suggestive than exhaustive. Although professedly aiming a death-blow at some of the doctrines held by most Protestants, it is written throughout in a mild and conciliatory spirit; and whilst reserving our own judgment as to the views propounded in this work, we can only say that it will do no one any harm to be referred to defects, real or imaginary, in the foundations of his belief; for truth is the safest investment for human faith.—*Leith Herald*.

The author of this treatise admits that, at its formation, Protestantism established the 'great and glorious principle of justification by faith,' in opposition to salvation by human merit. At the same time he avers that the Protestant Church, since its commencement until now, has endorsed some of the worst heresies of the Papacy. By 'Protestantism,' the writer means the doctrines held by the leading Protestant bodies at the present period; but perhaps 'modern orthodoxy' would have been a happier phrase, and more exactly expressed his ideas. By the term 'Gospel,' he understands 'the plan of human redemption revealed in the Bible;' and he has assumed the onerous task of demonstrating that the principal doctrines of the leading Protestant churches are opposed to that revelation. How far he has succeeded in his task, each reader must determine for himself.—*Leith Burghs Pilot*.

It is indeed startling, as is observed in the preface, to find in this year of grace 1865, the very foundations of the Protestant faith assailed, and a bold attempt made to show that its elementary doctrines are unsound. . . . The work is one of unusual interest and importance at the present time, when questions of such serious moment affecting the Christian faith have been raised in high quarters in the Protestant Church, and have so much agitated the religious mind. It has been penned in a calm, earnest, and persuasive manner, and without the acrimony so frequently to be found in works of a similar character. The author displays an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures, of which he speaks with the utmost reverence, and from which he quotes copiously, continuously, and exclusively in support of the various propositions he makes. . . . To all good Protestants who, like the Athenians of old, desire to hear some new thing, the perusal of this curious and interesting work would have an attraction.—*Caledonian Mercury*.

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DESTINY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

At the annual aggregate meeting of the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, held in Edinburgh in July 1865, among the business considered was the question of the supply of literature for the dissemination of the truth; and as the result of the deliberations, I was appointed to take charge of this matter, and provide a supply of tracts and pamphlets suitable for making known the truth.

Origin of the 'Destiny of the British Empire.'

About this time I had been greatly impressed by an article of Dr Thomas's in the *Herald* on the 'Destiny of the British Empire;' and I thought it might be amplified a bit, and so made a very readable and instructive pamphlet upon this particular subject. Accordingly, acting upon what I considered the free hand given by Dr Thomas with his own writings, as mentioned in connection with the issue of *The Contrast*,* I compiled chiefly, but not entirely, from his writings, a considerable enlargement of the article referred to, putting in bits of padding here and there. With little connecting links judiciously distributed, I got the various selections to fit in smoothly, and I was indeed surprised myself to find how well the whole harmonised. It must be admitted that in some places the doctor has given full rein to his imagination; but he has at least succeeded in presenting a very vivid and highly coloured picture of what it hath entered into the mind of man to conceive respecting the future of our nation and the globe, with a strong body of Scripture testimony in the background to give solidity and substantiality to the whole.

Contents.

The singular literary mosaic thus cunningly constructed was of a decidedly sensational character, as will be seen from the following statement of its contents:—

* See page 286.
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Introduction.
Politics of the Kingdom of God.
Gospel, Politics, and Prophecy.
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Extension of the British Possessions.
The Eastern Question.
War with France, and Fall of the French Empire.
The Coming Conflict among the Nations.
Destruction of the British Fleet.
Divine Proclamation to Britain and the Nations.
The Deliverer come to Zion.
Revelation of Jesus the Messiah.
Britain's Future King.
Queen Victoria paying Homage to Jesus Christ at Jerusalem.
Dethronement of the House of Brunswick.
The Future Royal Family of Britain.
Mission of the Saints.
Downfall of the British Aristocracy.
Mission and Destiny of the Clergy.
Divine Ambassadors to be sent to Britain.
Judgment pronounced upon the British Government.
Britain during the Millennium.

Production of the Work.

This pamphlet, which I entitled *DESTINY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE AS REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES*, was uniform in size and in the number of pages with *The Contrast*. I also, as I had done with this latter work, set up the type myself, getting it stereotyped as formerly, so as to be prepared for the issue of a second edition, should such be found necessary. I likewise arranged with a number of the leading booksellers throughout the kingdom for its sale being pushed in their several localities.

Advertising under Difficulties.

I was well aware that, for such a publication to 'catch on,' as the Americans say, it must be extensively advertised, and I made my calculations accordingly. I was surprised, however, that there were some serious difficulties in carrying out my purpose in this respect. For instance, I sent a copy of the proposed advertisement to the publisher of *The Times*, and asked the price for a series of prepaid insertions. The advertisement contained just the usual particulars in such a publisher's announcement, with the contents given in full, as above. So alarming, how-

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ever, did it appear to the manager, that it was returned to me, with the intimation that it was 'inadmissible' into that staid and highly decorous newspaper. Again, after the advertisement had been accepted and paid for at the office of an Edinburgh newspaper of some standing, it appeared as if treason or sedition had been scented in the sensational headings; for a messenger was despatched in great haste for a copy of the pamphlet before it could be determined whether the advertisement would be inserted. The examination, however, seemed to have allayed the suspicion that had been aroused in the editorial mind, for the advertisement duly appeared, as had been ordered. Other newspapers, however, were not so squeamish in the matter; and I may mention that, among others, I made a contract with the Radical London *Morning Star*—(of which I was at the time the Edinburgh representative)—by which the advertisement was inserted daily in that journal for two months.

Reception of the 'Destiny.'

The *Destiny of the British Empire as Revealed in the Scriptures* was regarded with very mixed feelings by different believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom. By some the ideas advanced were regarded as purely speculative and altogether too sensational; by such, of course, it received the cold shoulder, and was relegated to a place outside of their sympathies. By others, however, it was highly appreciated and cordially welcomed. It has been mentioned, under the early history of the Halifax meeting,* that Frank Shuttleworth wrote to me about it in terms of the warmest commendation. He mentioned that he was then engaged in delivering a course of lectures in Halifax; and when the *Destiny* came to hand, it was found to harmonise so exactly with the subject of his lecture on the following Sunday, that he read it to his audience instead of the lecture he had prepared.

* See vol. ii., pp. 194-5.

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Notices of the Press.

The following are selections from some of the notices of the *Destiny* that were given in different newspapers:—

We heartily commend its perusal to every one who is at all curious respecting the subject of unfulfilled prophecy.—*Leith Herald*.

The author believes that the destiny of the British Empire is made known in the Bible, and may be intelligently understood by all who give their attention to the subject. For the benefit of those who may desire to look into the matter for themselves, he has presented the result of his own researches in the pamphlet before us, which in many respects is a very singular one.—*Huddingtonshire Courier*.

The object of this pamphlet appears to be to show in what manner the author applies Scripture to political events, and especially to the political, religious, and social future of our own country. The pamphlet is characterised throughout by a daring boldness of thought and expression, and shows decided originality of mind on the part of the writer. It is such as not to bear criticism; but we believe those of our readers, who may peruse it for themselves, will agree with us that the subject is dealt with in a very extraordinary manner.—*Nottingham Journal*.

We venture to say that few people who have read their Bibles—and who is there that has not?—have come across anything in their reading that struck them as peculiarly applicable to Britain, or as throwing any light upon the future relationships of this mighty empire of ours. The writer of the pamphlet before us, however—who appears to be a well-read and earnest man—believes he has discovered predictions in the sacred writings which have a special reference to Britain, and others which, while not directly applying to this country, have an important bearing upon its future history.—*Caledonian Mercury*.

Editions of the 'Destiny.'

The first edition of the *Destiny* being exhausted, a second edition was printed in 1866, and was ultimately all disposed of. In the year 1870, upon the outbreak of the Franco-German War, it was considered that the time was favourable for its renewed presentation to the public. By this time the stereotype plates had been destroyed, and the work had to be re-set. This was done on slightly larger type; and advantage was taken of this to make a few slight alterations in the text. The third edition having been disposed of, a fourth was issued in 1871. This latter, however, fell flat, and the greater part had to be given away. In 1901, a fifth edition was issued from the office of the *Christadelphian*, Birmingham, having been revised and brought down to date by C. C. Walker.

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SAVING FAITH.

SAVING FAITH: *a Tract for the Times*, was written by David Lawson, of Newburgh, as a paper for the *Gospel Witness*, published in Dundee in 1858. It filled an entire issue (No. 11) of that magazine, which had to be enlarged from 16 to 20 pages for the purpose. The scope of the pamphlet is clearly expressed in the following summary, with which it concludes:—

Of the things thus brought under notice, this is the sum. The divinely appointed way of salvation is—

1. Believe what God has revealed for faith in order to salvation. No other word has saving efficacy. We cannot be saved without a sincere faith; but this sincere faith must take hold of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation.

2. Believe that God is to establish the Kingdom of Israel anew, gloriously, and for ever, under the government of David's immortal Son—THE SON OF GOD—and that the divine blessings bestowed upon them shall overflow to the Gentiles, who shall do homage unto him who shall reign in Mount Zion and Jerusalem.

3. Believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, or the Messiah; that is, that he is the Anointed, or destined Monarch for the throne of this kingdom.

4. Believe that this kingdom is near to come, and therefore wait and watch for the coming of Christ in this (his) kingdom.

5. Believe that Jesus, the destined King of the Jews, the Son of God, died for our sins, and was raised for our justification; that he ascended into the heavens, and that there, as a priest having the power of an endless life, he made an offering for sin, by presenting his own blood in the presence of God; and that he is the Lord that hath the power of hades and of death, and will give eternal life to all that call on his name.

6. Be baptised. Baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ can only take place after faith in these things. When one believes these things, he should, like Paul, arise and be baptised, and wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

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DISCOURSE ON ETERNAL LIFE.

In 1861, James Steele, of Edinburgh, reprinted from the writings of Dr Thomas a pamphlet of 24 pages, small crown octavo, entitled *DISCOURSE ON ETERNAL LIFE*. This *Discourse* demonstrated the truth that eternal life is the gift of God, upon certain well defined conditions. A number of propositions upon the subject, with Scripture proofs, were submitted to the reader, and the following were given as the corollaries which present themselves from the whole:—

1. In relation to life and death, there are three classes of mankind:—First, the true believers, or heirs of eternal life; second, the unbelievers or rejectors of the truth, who are the heirs of the resurrection to suffer a fiery punishment which will end in eternal death, and, therefore, be an eternal punishment; and third, the descendants of Adam, not yet placed under law, together with those who are physically incompetent of belief or obedience, and whose lot is consummated in death eternal and undisturbed by future life or suffering.

2. Eternal life being a matter of promise, it is bestowed only on those who can prove that the promise was made to them; in other words, a man, to become immortal, must establish his identity as one of the heirs of the will concerning the Christ.

3. Jesus must come again; and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others must rise from the dead in order to realise the things promised to them in the will.

4. Immortality is not a hereditary constituent of human nature, but a free and gracious gift of God super-added thereto; and laid up with Jesus Christ, as treasure in heaven, to be bestowed at his appearing.

5. Eternal life is conferred only on those who conform to certain fixed conditions—namely, obedience to the Gospel preached by the apostles, and a continuance in well-doing.

6. Salvation, as a whole, is deliverance from sin and eternal death.

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THE CHORAL SERVICE.

In the early days of the various meetings united in the Gospel of the Kingdom, the want was frequently felt of suitable hymns or subjects of song in the assemblies of the brethren. Different meetings made compilations according to their different means and tastes—all more or less meagre and faulty, but with which they had to be content from the want of a better. Edinburgh was at that time more favourably situated than any of the other meetings in the matter of musical resources; and it was here that the first effort was made towards providing what all agreed in considering was urgently wanted. George Dowie ultimately took the matter in hand, and commenced the issue, periodically, of a number of pieces suitable for use both in the meetings of the church and in more private gatherings. These, when completed, were issued in volume form in 1864, under the title, *THE DISCIPLES' CHORAL SERVICE OF BIBLE THEMES: a Selection of Short Anthems and Motetts, in the Words of Holy Scripture*. Four-part harmony. Edited, Arranged, or Composed by George Dowie. The work extended to 64 pages demy octavo. It consisted of 35 different pieces, of which no fewer than 23 were marked as being either new copyright compositions, or such as had undergone some modifications. It was stated in the preface that it was 'a variety of the choice sentiments of Holy Scripture set to appropriate music, and meant to be suitable for congregational use, giving expression to worship, exhortation, or solace. In order to make the collection strictly available for that purpose, some of the passages have been new set; other settings have been modified in their arrangements; and the whole has been carefully revised, so that nothing may be presented that is not easy for a church or choir—possessed of average musical ability, and disposed to bring that ability under proper training—to overtake.' The music was given in both notations, arranged in four-part harmony; but, unfortunately, the editor, by his use of the

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tenor clef, rendered it unsuitable for instrumental use—a defect which was afterwards much regretted. As it was, *The Choral Service* was found very useful for the purpose intended, and soon came to be largely adopted by the various meetings throughout the country. The work having been stereotyped, subsequent issues were available as required.

CHRISTADELPHIAN HYMN-BOOK.

After the division among the brotherhood, which preceded the adoption of the name 'Christadelphian' by the seceding section, took place, a desire was expressed by some of the seceders for a hymn-book which should set forth their peculiar faith and hope. It was with a view to meet this desire that Robert Roberts, in February 1865, published *THE GOLDEN HARP; or, a Selection of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, for the Use of Immersed Believers in 'the Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.'* This collection contained only the words of sacred songs, and not the music. In May 1869, it was superseded by the publication of *THE CHRISTADELPHIAN HYMN-BOOK; consisting of Selections from the Metrical Psalms of David (principally Scotch Version); Hymnal Compositions (of varied Authorship) in Harmony with the Truth; and Anthems in the Words of Scripture.* It was 'offered as a help to those who, having rejected apostate traditions, and gone back to the doctrines of ancient times, desire to indulge in the luxury of collective praise, without having their intelligence outraged, and their religious emotions checked and violated by the use of foolish and unscriptural words. It originates in the necessities of the ecclesia in Birmingham, but will form a suitable text-book of praise for all of like precious faith throughout the world.' In 1872, when the first edition of this work was sold out, a second was issued, with the music to each hymn and anthem. The musical editing was by Mary Turney (afterwards Mrs Randles, of Swansea).

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A SYNOPSIS.

In 1864 there was published, in crown octavo, 20 pages, with coloured cover, a rather remarkable pamphlet, which bore this extensive title:—A SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL TRUTHS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE NECESSARY TO BE BELIEVED FOR SALVATION ACCORDING TO THE TEACHING OF MOSES AND THE PROPHETS AND JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES, PROVED BY COPIOUS REFERENCES TO THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT, AND SHOWING THE ANTAGONISMS BETWEEN THE RELIGION OF CHRIST AND THE RELIGIONS OF CHRISTENDOM. By David Brown, C.C.C., of London. The author's literary style was peculiar, being characterised by exceedingly long sentences—one of them extending to twenty-five lines. In this pamphlet he set forth fifteen propositions in this very wordy style, and the conclusions he deduced from the whole were these:

That there is none other NAME given amongst men whereby they can be saved, but the name of 'Jesus the Christ;' and that a belief in that Name is a belief of the things 'concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.'

That HEAVEN is the Kingdom of God in its blessedness and glory, set up on the earth for an Olahn and beyond, or unto the eternal ages, and is the reward of the righteous or enlightened believers.

That HELL is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, after the infliction of the many or few stripes, and is the punishment of the wicked or enlightened transgressors.

And that the REST OF MANKIND are under the sentence of death, written in their members as *constituted sinners* in Adam, and when they lie down in the dust shall rise up no more, according to the apostolic declaration, 'Those who sin without law shall *perish* without law.'

David Brown was a very well meaning man, who did good service to the truth in his time, but who also gave the brethren a good deal of trouble by the manner in which he carried out what some of them regarded as crotchets.

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A DECLARATION OF FIRST PRINCIPLES.

The full title of this remarkable pamphlet, which consisted of 52 pages demy octavo, with coloured cover, was as follows:—A DECLARATION OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE ORACLES OF THE DEITY, SET FORTH IN A SERIES OF PROPOSITIONS, ATTESTED AND ILLUSTRATED BY A RIGHT DIVISION OF THE WORD OF TRUTH, IN A CLASSIFICATION AND FULL QUOTATION OF APPROPRIATE PROOF TEXTS, ARRANGED FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEMONSTRATING THAT THE FAITH OF CHRISTENDOM IS MADE UP OF THE FABLES PREDICTED BY PAUL (2 TIMOTHY IV. 4), AND ENTIRELY SUBVERSIVE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS; THE WHOLE BEING ELUCIDATED BY COPIOUS FOOT-NOTES, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED. The *Declaration* may be said to have comprised the whole 'body of divinity,' according to the Christadelphian standpoint; and, indeed, it has been accepted as the 'creed,' *in extenso*, of the body who now take that name. It comprised 37 propositions on various Scripture subjects, to each of which was appended the Bible proofs, given in full, with the proper references; and there were numerous foot-notes explanatory of the matters dealt with. It was compiled by R. C. Bingley, 'a gentleman originally from London, but who had been living for some time in the United States, and who was in England at this time on a visit of some duration;' and had the benefit of revision by Robert Roberts. Brother Bingley, besides the literary labour bestowed upon the work, arranged that the first edition of 6000 copies should be offered at one penny each—a sum that fell far short of the actual cost of production. The first issue was in May 1867; and the whole 6000 copies were disposed of in a comparatively short time. 'Since then (27 years ago),' says R. Roberts, writing in 1894, 'the *Declaration* has circulated in thousands and thousands of copies, and remains to this day the most largely circulated publication connected with the truth.'

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THE BIBLE AND THE SCHOOL BOARDS.

At the time when public attention all over the country was taken up with the question of the proposed system of education which it was proposed to introduce by the establishment of local School Boards, Frank R. Shuttleworth took advantage of the bitter controversy that was raging to deliver some lectures upon the subject. He subsequently issued the substance of these lectures in the form of a crown octavo pamphlet of 16 pages, with the title, *THE BIBLE AND THE SCHOOL BOARDS: being the Substance of Three Lectures, delivered in the Temperance Hall, Birmingham.* In the course of his lectures the writer said :

The Bible and School controversy presents a favourable opportunity for putting an all-important matter in a right light. As regards the subject to be considered, it comprises two principal questions—namely, first, shall the Bible be taught in day schools? and secondly, How shall it be taught, and to what extent?

Having expressed approval of Bible teaching in the day schools, he next proceeded to inquire what was the proximate cause of the diverse thinking which obtained upon Bible subjects. He referred specially to such subjects as God, Jesus Christ, the atonement, inspiration, eternal punishment, the immortality of the soul, the Kingdom of God, and kindred topics. The conclusions he arrived at were—

1. Clergymen, ministers, School Boards, and school-masters of all degrees do not as a class understand the Bible, and the interests they severally represent are all antagonistic to the principles and object of the Bible, therefore they are not fit and proper persons to expound, or say a word about it, to either children or adults.

2. Nevertheless, by all means let the Bible be read in Board Schools, but for the truth's sake let it be without note or comment.

3. Better still, or supplementary to this, let parents begin in good earnest to search the Scriptures for themselves.

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DISCUSSION ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

A public discussion on the question, 'Is the Bible against the Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul?' took place in the Temperance Hall, Birmingham, on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 10th and 11th, 1866, between R. Roberts and R. C. Nightingale, minister of the Free Church, Severn Street, Birmingham. R. Roberts took short-hand notes of the speeches of his opponent, and reproduced his own remarks from memory, the whole being published in a demy octavo pamphlet of 50 pages, including an appendix by R. Roberts on some points not noticed in the discussion.

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE.

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE: or, Watching and Waiting for the Beloved. This was a collection, in royal 32mo, in a stiff cover, of sixteen texts of Scripture, each having some bearing upon the Return of the Lord Jesus. A page was devoted to each text, which was followed by remarks of a stimulating and encouraging character to the believer who is waiting and watching for the return of his absent Lord and Master. It was the compilation of David Lawson, Newburgh, Fifeshire, and was printed in 1868.

'WHAT IS THE TRUTH?'

This pamphlet was a reprint of an article by Dr Thomas which appeared in the *Herald*. Its nature is pretty plainly indicated in the full title, which was, 'WHAT IS THE TRUTH?' or, *Pilate's Question Answered in a Scriptural Exposition of the 'Gospel of the Kingdom.'* Several editions of this pamphlet have been issued in various shapes, and it has been found very useful for putting into the hands of persons interested in the truth.

A DEFENCE OF THE FAITH.

A DEFENCE OF THE FAITH; being an Answer to a Clerical Attack on 'Twelve Lectures.' This was written by R. Roberts, and extended to 92 pages crown octavo.

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'THE SOUL AND THE KINGDOM' REVIEWED.

The full title of this work was 'THE SOUL AND THE KINGDOM' REVIEWED; or, *the Teachings of the Old and New Testaments respecting the Soul and the Nature of Christ's Kingdom briefly Vindicated in Reply to Five Lectures by the Rev. R. A. Fyffe, D.D., of Toronto.* The author was John Coombe, of Toronto, in which town it was originally published, and was reprinted in 1867 by Charles Smith, of Edinburgh. In the form of a reply to certain clerical lectures, the Scriptural teaching respecting the nature of man, the state of the dead, eternal life, the doom of the wicked, the Kingdom of God, and kindred topics, were very pithily set forth, and the popular errors advocated by the lecturer thoroughly refuted.

SUMMARY OF THE CHRISTIANITY REVEALED IN THE BIBLE.

This pamphlet was a reprint of an article by Dr Thomas which appeared in the *Herald*. It occupied 24 pages crown octavo, and consisted of a series of 46 propositions of various matters relating to the truth, with Scripture proofs, sometimes at considerable length, attached. It was printed in 1865, by Robert Cundall, Halifax.

THE BOOK UNSEALED.

The full title of this book was, *THE BOOK UNSEALED: a Lecture on the Prophetic Periods of Daniel and John, in their Historical Verification and Approaching Climax, in the Perdition of all Human Governments, and the Establishment of the Kingdom of God.* The lecture was by Dr Thomas, and was delivered at a social meeting held on August 17th, 1869, in explanation of the three Prophetic Charts, and published from a shorthand writer's notes. It consisted of 40 pages crown octavo, in coloured cover.

TRACTS, LEAFLETS, &c.

The circumstances in which the several meetings were placed for many years after their formation were not very favourable for the dissemination of any large amount of literature bearing upon the faith. The writings of Dr Thomas—in *Elpis Israel* and the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*—were about the only literature then in existence which could be utilised for making known the Gospel of the Kingdom; and these were much too costly to be largely available. The various communities were small in number; and being for the most part composed of persons who had to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow, the means at their disposal for spreading the truth through the press were comparatively limited. Still, advantage was sought to be taken of this mode of enlightenment as far as possible; and various tracts were issued from time to time, the Edinburgh Church usually taking the initiative in their publication.

The Wisdom of the Clergy Proved to be Folly.

While Dr Thomas was travelling from Plymouth (where he had been lecturing, on his first evangelising tour in this country), he had a conversation with a clergyman, respecting what was at the time known as the Gorham controversy in the Church of England. The talk naturally diverged to such subjects as the Bishops, the Church, Repentance and Remission of Sins, Eternal Life, and the Kingdom of God. The conversation was published at the request of friends who had seen the manuscript; and the doctor sent copies of it to the principal bishops, including the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, Mr Gorham, certain lords and members of the Committee of Privy Council, and to all the daily and weekly London journals, and the principal religious magazines. The impression consisted of 1000 copies, all of which were disposed of.

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

What is the Gospel?

This was a four-paged tract, taken from the writings of Dr Thomas, with some slight corrections. It is designed to correct a very common mistake respecting 1 Cor. xv. 1-4, by demonstrating that the gospel preached by Paul at Corinth embraced the doctrine of the Kingdom, as well as that of the death and resurrection of the Christ. It was originally printed under the circumstances that have already been told.* Despite the acerbities of the doctor's style, it was found useful for giving away to inquirers, and has been reprinted more than once.

The Bible.

The first attempt by the Edinburgh Church to utilise the press, by means of a special publication setting forth the Gospel of the Kingdom, was made in the beginning of the year 1855. An eight-page crown octavo tract, bearing the title of THE BIBLE, which had been for some time in preparation by James Cameron and George Dowie, was read at the forenoon meeting on Sunday, January 14, 1855. It was generally approved of, but it was agreed to be submitted for the consideration of the brethren in Glasgow and Dundee, before being printed. This was done, and it came back from both of these places, having received cordial approbation and one or two verbal alterations. At the week-night meeting of the Edinburgh brethren on Wednesday, April 5, it was again read, after having been finally revised, and agreed to be printed. The purport of this tract is to exhibit a comprehensive summary of the things set forth in the whole Scriptures respecting the divine purpose in the creation and ultimate destiny of the human race. It was deemed very appropriate for general use, and had a pretty extensive circulation among the different meetings of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

* See vol. i., pp. 87, 126.

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

The Kingdom of God.

On the last page of Dr Thomas's *Herald* for August 1855 (page 192) there appeared a brief summary of the Bible teaching respecting the Kingdom of God, the whole being put in the doctor's terse and telling language, a number of Scripture proofs being given in support of each statement. It occurred to John Forman, on first seeing it, that this summary would be very useful in aiding inquirers after the truth; and at his suggestion I had the page reprinted as a leaflet, and several thousand copies of it in this shape were put in circulation.

A two-page demy octavo tract, also bearing the title of THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and reprinted from the *Gospel Witness*, was issued from Dundee in 1859. It was a short catechism of eight questions, with Scripture answers, giving in sequence the Bible doctrine of the Kingdom of God. This tract, which was issued in 1859, was received as a welcome addition to the slender stock of tract literature then available for free distribution.

Phrenological Bearings of the Christian Faith.

A paper bearing this title, by George Dowie, was read before the Edinburgh Phrenological Association on Dec. 30, 1857. It subsequently appeared in the *Messenger of the Churches* for November and December 1861, and was afterwards published by request in the form of an eight-paged demy octavo tract. In this tract the writer proposed 'to demonstrate that the only force within the reach of man which can afford a reliable co-operator, proving as serviceable as another limb to the maimed, is the Christian Faith.' The writer showed that this faith had relation to the establishment of the Kingdom of God, as predicted by the prophets; and it was shown that an intelligent understanding and belief of this gospel 'afforded a solution of the most puzzling enigmas of life.'

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

Plea for a Revival of the Religion of Jesus.

During the years 1859-60, all over the country there was a marked religious 'revival,' which attracted much public attention at the time. Taking advantage of the wide-spread interest in religious subjects which had thus been aroused, James Cameron wrote an eight-page tract, with the suggestive title, PLEA FOR A REVIVAL OF THE RELIGION OF JESUS. This tract contained a succinct statement of the foundations of the faith, in harmony with the idea that the only satisfactory revival must be a return to the faith and practice of the first disciples. Shortly after its appearance, it was reproduced by Dr Thomas in his *Herald*, under the title 'The Truth as it is in Jesus;' and at a later period it was reprinted by David Brown, of London, along with several other short treatises upon the one faith. This tract, also, so highly commended itself to the Christadelphian meeting in Leicester, that, in May 1869, they printed 5000 copies of it, with Bible mottoes on the top of the pages, and the following intimation before the title:—'Published by the Leicester Christadelphian Ecclesia, for gratuitous distribution.'

Recollections of a Revivalist.

The great religious revival of 1859-60 also suggested material for a four-page tract by John Menzies, of Dundee. He was one of those who received his first deep religious impressions during the revival agitation in 1860. Having subsequently learned the 'more excellent way' presented in the Gospel of the Kingdom, and having yielded the obedience of faith, he wrote RECOLLECTIONS OF A REVIVALIST for *The Home Circle*, a manuscript magazine then emanating from Dundee. It was so interesting as a personal experience, and written in a style so unusual in our evangelical literature, that I had it printed for circulation in tract form. It was subsequently reprinted in *The Restitution*, an American periodical.

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

Reasons for Re-Immersion.

'Because of imperfect faith in the first instance, many have found it to be their duty to be re-immersed.' This is stated at the outset of a tract of three pages, written by George Dowie, presumably as the reason for its being written. It appeared originally as an article in the *Messenger of the Churches* for May 1861. The whole tract was a strong plea for 'believing before baptism,' and a contention that the whole virtue of baptism must depend upon the correctness of its antecedents. The *Messenger*, in noticing this tract, said: 'The title of this tract is a sufficient description. It is not for public circulation at all, therefore it has not been advertised. A small number have been printed for *select use*, and may be had by those who have the right persons to give them to.'

The Gospel.

Under this title, a reprint from the first number of the *Gospel Witness*, consisting of four pages, was reprinted in tract form in November 1861. It contained a demonstration of four points—the Kingdom of God, the Gospel of the Kingdom, Jesus is the Christ, and Christ died for our sins.

Elements of the Gospel.

A tract bearing this title, eight pages octavo, was issued from Glasgow in 1861. It was written in the form of a catechism, and was explicit on most things having any bearing on the first question, 'What must I do to be Saved?' This tract was notable as introducing, in two or three cases, criticism of the words of Scripture, to ensure the greater accuracy and force in the argument.

The Terms of Salvation.

Two different two-paged tracts (one without the definite article prefixed, bearing this title) were issued in 1859 by the brethren in Dundee, to aid them in an effort they were making to enlighten the Campbellites of that city.

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

Things Most Surely Believed Among Us.

A two-page tract with this title was reprinted from the first number of the *Gospel Witness* in November 1861. It contained a series of eight propositions, with Scriptural reasons for holding them, and also a concise summary of things necessary to be believed.

In the *Messenger of the Churches* for November 1864, there was published a statement which had formed the subject of two Sunday evening lectures by William Laing. In the autumn of 1866, when it was deemed desirable that the church then meeting in Union Hall, Edinburgh, should give a statement of the things most surely believed by them, this document was handed round among the brethren to have their approval or suggestions for its amendment. After being modified in compliance with various suggestions, it was approved at the meeting on Sunday, October 14, 1866, and agreed to be printed for circulation.

What Shall I Do to be Saved?

A two-page tract with this title was issued by the brethren in Dundee. It was called forth because of the fact that Protestants generally neglect the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and that their ideas of the gospel are so much apart from the idea of the kingdom, that the Bible phraseology sounds to them strange and untrue.

The Gospel of the Bible.

Among the articles that appeared in the short-lived *Gospel Witness*, was a very able one entitled THE GOSPEL OF THE BIBLE, by James H. Stoddart (afterwards Dr Stoddart, editor of the *Glasgow Herald*). This article was so highly appreciated in some quarters that I was induced to reprint it in the form of an eight-page tract, for circulation in the interests of the truth.

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The Doctrine, Faith, and Practice of Apostolic Times.

A tract bearing this title (with an alternative one), consisting of four pages crown octavo, was issued by the Edinburgh Church, and went through several modifications and alterations in subsequent issues, so as to localise it for distribution in different localities. In some of the earlier issues the title was altered to 'TO THE PEOPLE OF — AND ELSEWHERE,' the name of the locality being inserted as desired, and the names and addresses of persons in several places being given, to whom the interested reader might apply for further enlightenment upon the subjects treated of. In the case of the larger towns, the address of the meeting was given instead. This scheme of localising the tract was the idea of its author, George Dowie, who in August 1868 'hanselled' it as an *Address to the People of Fifeshire and Elsewhere*, copies of which he distributed in the course of an evangelical tour in 'the Kingdom'—this being the manner in which he sought to utilise a week's holiday. The tract was reprinted in 1866 under the title, THE DOCTRINE, FAITH, AND PRACTICE OF APOSTOLIC TIMES. As this title would seem to indicate, the object of the tract was to advocate what is really the Scripture teaching on the subjects mentioned, and in such a manner as to suggest that the current theology was faulty in this respect.

Jesus Both Lord and Christ.

Under this heading James Cameron wrote a paper which he 'offered as a small contribution towards the exposition of a long-neglected Bible truth, and one of a thoroughly fundamental character—the central element of the Christian faith.' The tract, which was eight pages demy octavo, showed very pointedly 'that there is a broad and clear distinction between the terms "Lord" and "Christ," and that they were but parts of a great whole, which was bound up in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.'

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

The Coming Kingdom the Hope of the Early Church.

This tract, the proper title of which latterly was, **THE LORD'S COMING AND KINGDOM THE HOPE OF THE EARLY CHURCH**, consisted of sixteen pages crown octavo, and was written by William Laing. It was first printed in July 1869, the Edinburgh Church agreeing to take the responsibility of paying for 2000 copies, and selling them to others. The tract clearly demonstrates the prominent place which the return of Christ held in the minds of the early believers. It was found so useful as a means of introducing the Gospel of the Kingdom to those who were quite ignorant of it, that it has several times been reprinted since.

Immortality the Gift of God.

The doctrine of eternal life only in Christ was one to which William Laing had given much study, and he was therefore well qualified to write the treatise entitled, **IMMORTALITY THE GIFT OF GOD THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS**. Within the compass of a pamphlet of thirty-two pages, he practically comprises all that can be said upon the subject to show that man is naturally mortal, and that immortality can only be obtained as the gift of God upon the conditions which He has imposed. This tract has been found of great service in showing the popular error on this subject which lies at the root of the orthodox faith.

The Restoration of Israel.

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL was a tract of sixteen pages, by George Dowie. It gave an outline of the origin of the nation of Israel, its remarkable history, its scattering, the Scripture testimonies that predict its restoration to the land promised to its fathers, showing that this restoration has not yet taken place, and that the ingathering and exaltation of 'the people of Israel' as a nation hold an important place in the Gospel of the Kingdom.

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Christian Baptism as Practised by the Early Church.

The design of this tract of sixteen pages, by William Laing, is to show that baptism was an institution of the Lord's appointment, for the observance of his disciples; and as there is much difference of opinion as to its proper nature and application, to show what was the practice of the early church in the matter. From his examination of the various Scriptures bearing upon the subject, and from the eminent authorities as to the original language of Scripture, he demonstrated pretty clearly that believers are its proper subjects, and that immersion, not sprinkling, is the proper mode in which it should be performed.

Can You Believe?

A small leaflet with this title, putting some questions on the popular doctrine of immortality, was issued in 1864 by Robert Cundall, Halifax.

Can You Believe the Creed of the Clergy?

The church meeting in 1861 in Little Toll Street, Nottingham, issued a tract of four pages, crown octavo, in which 36 queries, directed against popular religious errors, were put in a very pointed form, and likely to arrest the attention of the intelligent reader. It was, I believe, from an American publication.

Spiritual Gifts.

A MODERN CLAIM TO THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT EXAMINED was a tract by James Cameron, in which a claim by modern sects to the possession of spiritual gifts was subjected to the test of Scripture. Examined in this light, it was shown that they were wanting, and must be set aside as unfounded. The claims particularly referred to were those put forward by the Mormonites or Latter Day Saints and the Catholic Apostolic Church, both of which had drawn away many disciples after them.

TRACTS AND LEAFLETS

First Principles of the Doctrine of Messiah.

This was a four-page tract, setting forth in a series of 13 propositions, that 'the Scriptures do present, in a clear and tangible manner, our present position, and something worth hoping for in the future.' It was, I believe, written by Mark Allen, of America, and was reprinted in more than one form in this country.

The Good Confession.

THE GOOD CONFESION, ELABORATED IN A CONVERSATION BETWEEN A CHRISTADELPHIAN AND A BELIEVING STRANGER DESIRING TO BE IMMERSSED INTO THE NAME OF CHRIST. The nature of this publication, which was by R. Roberts, is fully indicated by the title.

The Bible Companion.

THE BIBLE COMPANION; *or, Tables for the Profitable Daily Reading of the Holy Scriptures*, compiled by R. Roberts, was first published in 1864. The plan adopted 'gave the reader three portions in a day, which it will only take a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes to read, and enable him in the course of a year to get through the whole Bible.' Several editions of the *Companion* have been issued, and improvements introduced in the arrangement of the readings so as to conduce to the benefit of the reader.

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THE MORNING WATCH.

The members of the Catholic Apostolic Church who had met in conference at Albury, the seat of Henry Drummond, towards the close of 1828, deemed it expedient to commence a quarterly journal of prophecy, to which they gave the name of *THE MORNING WATCH*. The first number appeared in the spring of 1829. Its editor was a Mr Tudor, a gentleman who afterwards held a high office in the Catholic Apostolic Church; and while Mr Drummond was understood to have been the financial backbone of the periodical, Edward Irving, according to Mrs Oliphant, his biographer, 'pervaded the whole publication.' In particular, a series of papers by him, on 'Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in the New,' were remarkable for the manner in which fulfilled prophecies were shown to be a guarantee for the accomplishment of still unfulfilled predictions.

Man's Testimony Credited in Preference to God's.

How adroitly Irving could turn the tables upon his opponents will be seen in the following extract from his writings, in which he repudiates the allegation which is sometimes made, that those who preach the Gospel of the Kingdom ignore the death of Christ:—

With respect to the charge that such of the students of prophecy as teach omit the crucifixion in their teaching, we point blank deny the fact, and dare their accusers to the proof. While, on the other hand, we retort the charge, and maintain, that they who do not proclaim Christ glorified, do not preach the principal subject of the Bible. We beg to be distinctly understood as intending to assert that the glory of God in Christ, revealed as to be hereafter manifested, but now an object of faith in God's elect, is the subject of the Bible, and that the religious world has missed the end in confining their attention to one mean. With respect to faith, it stands

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upon the promises of God, and so far rests no more on one declaration than on the other. But if it be said by any one, that he believes the fact of the literal dying on the cross, which is past, but not the literal sitting on the throne of David, which is future; then we suspect that the fact of the crucifixion is believed, not upon God's testimony, but upon man's; not because it is in the Bible, but because, besides being in the Bible, men have said so.

The World Not Getting Better.

As showing the spirit in which Irving wrote and combated some of the popular religious errors of his times, the following extract may be given:—

It is impossible to deny that there is an irreconcilable difference of opinion between the students of prophecy and the religious world itself, upon the merits of this latter body; and the discrepancy arises from the following causes:—The religious world has taken it into its head that it is going to convert the heathen world—Jews, infidels, and papists—by means of books, tracts, and missionaries. It has been labouring at this work for above a quarter of a century; and annually prophesies, at all the annual meetings of all its societies, and of all their provincial auxiliaries, its positive certainty of so doing, provided only the people will give them money enough; and that, in the meantime, the world will get better and better every day. The students of prophecy have got a very perplexing mode of consulting the Word of God as to future events, rather than speakers on platforms; and they have therein found that the world is not to be converted by any such means; that, in the first place, the papal apostacy is not to be converted by preaching at all, but to be destroyed by violence, war, and bloodshed; that the Jews, as a nation, are not to be converted until *after* the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; that at his advent the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, will be caught up to meet him in the air; and that at that period, instead of the world being better than at any preceding period, it will be worse; and that the worst characteristics of it will be found among those 'having the form of godliness,' which expression they hold to be synonymous with the modern phrase, 'the religious world.'

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The Organ of a Single Church.

Mrs Oliphant, in her *Life of Edward Irving*, thus refers to the unique position which *The Morning Watch* came to hold after the expulsion of Irving from the Presbyterian Church in London for alleged 'heresy':—

The Morning Watch, notwithstanding its dignity as a quarterly review, and its oft-repeated declaration that the majority of its readers were members of the English Church, occupied itself, throughout these exciting months, in the most singular manner, with the ecclesiastical prosecution, which only the great fame of Irving, and the remarkable character of the spiritual question involved, prevented from being a merely local and individual matter. Though a periodical of the highest and most recondite pretensions, it palpitated with every change in the fortunes of the Regent Square Church, and was as truly the organ of that expelled band, large as a congregation but small as a community, which followed Irving, as its adversary *The Record* was the organ of English Evangelicism; and not only abounded in discussions and expositions of the miraculous gifts and cures, and of the doctrines specially identified with Irving, but went so much further as to represent 'Mr Irving's Church as THE Sign of the Times,' and to discuss the position of the body in its temporary and disagreeable refuge as 'The Ark of God in the temple of Dagon.' Perhaps the presence in the new community of a man so rich, so determined, so swift, and self-acting as Henry Drummond, sparing no cost, either of money or labour—a potentate considerable enough to have an 'organ' in his own right—goes far to explain the possession, by a single church, of a representative so magnificent as a quarterly review.*

Discontinuance of 'The Morning Watch.'

Mrs Oliphant gives an interesting account of the strange vicissitudes of this remarkable periodical, and the peculiar position in which it was latterly placed, and which led to its discontinuance. She says:

* *The Life of Edward Irving, Minister of the National Scotch Church, London*, by Mrs Oliphant, two vols., 1862.

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The most singular proof of the advance and development of the community is to be found in the winding up of *The Morning Watch*, and the very remarkable reasons assigned for the ending of that strange periodical, the history of which breaks in like an episode of pure romance into the duller records of ordinary literature. Commenced, at first, to afford a medium by which the consultations and conclusions of the Albury School of Prophets might be brought before the public, it had faithfully followed all the gradual expansions of the new Spiritualism. Vague but grand expectations had been in the hearts of its originators. They believed the Lord to be at hand—the world's history to be all but concluded. The night was over, the day breaking, when Henry Drummond and his brother seers set their *Morning Watch* upon the battlements, that the sentinels might communicate to each other how the shadows dispersed, and the gleams of coming sunshine trembled from the east. Now a strange fruition was coming to those hopes. Not the Lord indeed—for the gates of heaven still closed serenely in azure calm upon the far celestial glory; but a Church, with all its orders of ministers called by direct inspiration—a spiritual tabernacle, constituted by God Himself—had been revealed to their faith; and all that close band of true believers stood breathless with expectation, each man listening whether, perhaps, his name might not be the next upon the prophetic roll. One by one the sentinels thus summoned dropped into other offices; and at last it became necessary for their leader to make the following announcement—such an intimation as, I presume, no editor of a periodical made before since literature was:—

The followers of Christ and the followers of Antichrist are now gathering. Each is now requiring, not merely the nominal but the personal services of their respective adherents. Christ is gathering his children into the true church, to do him service there, and, in so doing, to be prepared for his coming. Satan is gathering his hosts under the banner of Liberalism to become the pioneers of that 'Wicked One, that Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition,' the personal Antichrist.

In the progress of this work—of gathering and preparing his followers—Christ, for some months past, hath been calling for the personal services of nearly all the regular correspondents of this journal, one after another; and he hath at length called the editor to take the place of an elder in his church, and hath claimed all his time and services for the special duties of feeding and overseeing a sixth part of the flock of Christ in London. To this higher calling the editor now resolves to devote himself wholly, and at the same time brings *The Morning Watch* to a close, as he will not transfer to any other person such a solemn responsibility.

The Morning Watch came to a conclusion in June 1833.

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THE INVESTIGATOR.

A periodical bearing this name was commenced to be published in London in 1831, and existed for three years. It was devoted to the subject of prophecy, and one volume contained a letter arguing for the non-immortality of the soul.

TIME OF THE END AND PROPHETIC WITNESS.

This was the name of a magazine which advocated the pre-millennial advent and kindred truths, which was issued from Brighton, and was edited by John Wilson. It was commenced in 1843, and only lasted nine months.

THE LAST VIALS.

A monthly publication with this title, devoted mainly to the coming kingdom, was issued from Torquay by the Rev. R. A. Purdon, Episcopal minister. It was commenced in 1845, and was continued for twenty-eight years.

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF PROPHECY.

The Morning Watch, notwithstanding the vagaries respecting miraculous gifts and other matters in which it latterly indulged, had created and fostered an interest in the subject of prophecy; and when it was discontinued a felt want was experienced by the more earnest students of the prophetic word. It was not until some years afterwards that an attempt was made to supply the gap, and this was ultimately done by the establishment of the **QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF PROPHECY**. The avowed objects of this periodical were 'to awaken and help forward inquiry,' and 'press home the proof of the pre-millennial advent of the Lord, and remove objections' regarding it. It was commenced to be published in London in 1848, and was continued for twenty-five years. Its editor during a portion of that period was the Rev. Dr Horatius Bonar.

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It has already been seen* how Dr Thomas fell foul of this magazine because of the manner in which it reviewed *Elpis Israel* and *The Coming Struggle*. Dr Thomas's further impressions of the *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* may here be given :

There has been a good deal of Greek and Hebrew criticism, which has displayed the respectable acquaintance of the writers with the grammars, lexicons, and uninspired authors in those tongues; and at the same time their very superficial knowledge of 'the things of the Spirit'—Hengstenberg, Eliot, &c., to wit. Such essayism may do for the blind men of Oxford, Cambridge, Highbury College, and a College nearer home; but it will not do for my readers, who care more for the meaning of 'the Word' than the opinions of disputatious ecclesiastics, who are ever reading and writing, reviewing and being reviewed, and yet are never able to come to an individual or mutual understanding of what the truth is! If one gets a few good ideas in a consecutive page or two, presently whole paragraphs of theological foolishness thrust themselves in and throw all into confusion and mystification. Still there is one commendable thing pertaining to this trumpet of uncertain sound—it advocates the literal interpretation of prophecy, in opposition to the absurd spiritualism of its pseudo-orthodox contemporaries. With all its faults, I like the *Journal* for this. There is hope of an editor, even though a clergyman, who admits this rule. Unfortunately, the *Journal* is not over skilful in the use of it. A man may know all the uses of a saw, and yet be unable to shake it aright. He is not a good workman, being literal only where it suits his theology, whatever it may be; but more mystical, or even mythical, than literal, where it don't.

The *Journal's* head-piece seems to be pretty well 'crammed' with the learned lumber of the schools; but this is manifestly a disadvantage to him. It prevents him setting his house in order. Everything is, as the old ladies say, 'higgledy-piggledy'—without arrangement or neatness. The 'philosophy' of his confusion, which Paul has associated with 'vain deceit,' is his unhappy ignorance

* See pages 252-9 and 263-72.
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of the gospel when he sees it, whereby he lets it slip, and seizes hold of some church creed, which he glorifies instead thereof. He seems to believe in the kingdom, though his understanding of it appears very limited and confused. This confusion is his weakness, and prevents him from stepping in advance of the rank and file, and saying, 'Come on! this is the way; let us charge the foe!' He is rather content to keep his associates in line. He has an idea that the enemy is lurking somewhere about; he is, therefore, afraid to move from his position for fear of a surprise. Timid as a hare, he screams out like an hysterical maiden, if a man but look at him.*

A TRIO OF CAMPBELLITE MAGAZINES.

At the time when Dr Thomas made his first visit to Britain, there were three periodicals issued in connection with the Campbellites, which were all turned to less or more account in furthering the purpose of his visit. These were—the *British Millennial Harbinger*, edited by James Wallis; the *Bible Advocate*; and the *Gospel Banner*, published at Nottingham. Speaking of these three magazines, Dr Thomas said:

We afterwards found that the feeling between the editor of the *British Millennial Harbinger* and the proprietor of the *Gospel Banner* was not harmonious. The latter conceived that Mr Wallis had done him injustice. We do not pretend to decide between them, but the fact is unquestionable, that his unpopular course towards certain of his brethren has originated two papers besides his own—the *Bible Advocate* and the *Gospel Banner*. These three papers are more than Campbellism can sustain in Britain. The influence of the *Advocate* is nothing, if indeed it yet lives, or rather lingers out its existence. Mr Wallis's *British Millennial Harbinger* hardly pays its way; we rather think that extraordinary contributions are made for its support. Be this as it may, its fortunes will not improve. Its traditions are effete, and its pages without life. The *Gospel Banner* is now a proscribed paper—interdicted by Messrs Campbell and Wallis. It has

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, page 149.

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done good service, however, for the truth in Britain as a medium of defence against the misrepresentations and untruths published by Mr Wallis and his American correspondents. It was more than we could have calculated upon, that a paper was awaiting us in England ready to aid us in neutralising the slanders, and in defeating the machinations and machivellianism of the enemies of the Kingdom of God, although its editor and proprietor might be said to have scarcely any item of belief in common with us. Yet so it was, and thanks to God for the providence.*

THE GOSPEL BANNER.

How It Came to be Started.

Dr Thomas gives the following account of how the *Gospel Banner* came to be started:—

Some little while previous to Mr Campbell's visit to Britain, Mr Wallis had induced a young man of his church to buy a press and types by promising to give him the *Harbinger* to print. It was being printed by this brother when Mr C. was in England. Mr Wallis was the proprietor of the periodical, and Mr Hudston of the office, in which he had the right of course to publish any other things he pleased without Mr Wallis's permission. He gave Mr Campbell an order for all his works; paid for them, and had his consent to republish from them anything he pleased. He accordingly republished several articles from Mr Campbell's pen in the form of tracts. But this was a sacrifice of an ill savour in the nostrils of Mr Wallis, who seemed to think that no one had a right to publish Campbellism but himself. Mr Hudston objected to the monopoly, and contended that he had as much pecuniary interest in the 'ism' as Mr W. The question of the right to publish Campbellism in tract form for the British became the ground of difficulty between them. Mr Hudston had clearly as much right to publish as Mr Wallis, and *vice versa*; but Mr Wallis deemed it inexpedient, incompatible with his policy, that Campbellism should get at the public through any other printed medium than the *Harbinger*. Mr Hudston, however,

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, page 79.

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continued to exercise his right to issue tracts, which so incensed Mr Wallis that he was determined to punish him by giving the *Harbinger* to some other printer in the town to publish. By all this Mr Hudston considered himself much aggrieved. He had been induced by his 'dear brother' to buy an office and to venture into business under the promise that he should print the *Harbinger*, and now, because of a difference in publishing Campbellism in tracts, Mr Wallis wounds him in the pocket, which is the tenderest part of most men's consciences, and gives his monthly to an alien to publish. This was intolerable. A feud was originated that time has as yet been unable to heal. It grew into a church question, and was submitted to arbitration. This was unfavourable to Mr Wallis, and caused him to kick against the goads. Mr Hudston and he could not fraternise in the same church; the former, therefore, withdrew to Bullwell, about four miles from Nottingham. The Bullwell Church, having examined the case, received Mr Bullwell into their fellowship, which they withheld—and do still, we believe—from Mr W., until he should amend his ways towards Mr H.

The prohibition of tractifying Campbellism, and the taking of the *Harbinger* out of Mr Hudston's hands, reacted upon Mr Wallis's heavenly-mindedness very unsavourily. It originated the *Gospel Banner*, which created in Mr W. a very evil eye towards his 'young brother.' It became an eye-sore—a prick in his eye and a thorn in his flesh. The *Banner* was conducted prudently. There was nothing Mr Wallis could lay hold of as a handle against it. Its Campbellism was perfectly orthodox, and it made no attack upon him. The fire of discord smouldered under the surface having found no vent, Mr Wallis, as appeared from private conferences, was in no very heavenly or amiable state of mind; but what could he—what dared he—do so long as the *Banner* behaved itself with propriety and kept itself aloof from heretics? The *Bible Advocate* was a 'cut' upon his monopoly and supremacy; the *Banner* was an unkind cut; our reception by the *Bible Advocate* Church was an unkind cut; but when the *Gospel Banner* became the impartial medium of both sides of all questions, ecclesiastical and theological; and presumed to allow us—the proscribed of Campbell, of Wallis, and others of like spirit—to speak for ourself

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in its pages—Oh! this was 'the unkindest cut of all.' The smouldering embers of the tract difficulty began to find vent in the *Harbinger*, not so much in the editor's own words, as in the letters of correspondents from America, which he must have elicited from willing tools by his intrigues and misrepresentations.

Here, then, was Mr Wallis between two adverse influences—the *Advocate* and the *Banner*, the latter of which was an unpardonable offender against his will. We and the *Banner* were to be destroyed, if possible. It became necessary, therefore, to bring to bear against us even the smallest antagonism available, upon the principle that 'every little makes a muckle,' as they say among the Scots.*

The doctor then entered at considerable length further, in his own peculiar style, into this dispute between leading Campbellites, showing how it resulted in his getting practically a free hand in the pages of the *Banner* while he was in England.

Dr Thomas's Farewell to the 'Banner.'

Dr Thomas availed himself pretty largely of this privilege, and his farewell address to his friends in Britain, previous to taking his departure for America, was published in it.† Dr Thomas, in concluding this address, acknowledged his indebtedness to the *Banner* thus :

Farewell, then, for the present, Mr Banner, and all the friends of truth and justice on this side the Atlantic. Having returned from a tour of 1700 miles, through Holland and Prussia, Germany, Belgium, and France, I am now upon the eve of setting sail for the New World. My literary labours in the Old will close with this communication to you. For the liberality you have shown, though agreeing with me in scarcely any of the questions in dispute, I return you sincere and hearty thanks; and so long as you continue to show regard to justice, mercy, and truth, my friends in this island, who are not few, will give you their countenance and support. And that you

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pages 107-8.

† See vol. i., pp. 111-15.

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may at length be brought to see the truth, as I conscientiously esteem it, and in the end receive a crown of righteousness that fadeth not away, is the unfeigned desire of, yours faithfully,
JOHN THOMAS.*

Contributors to the 'Banner.'

The *Banner* was edited by W. J. Dawson, was begun in 1849, and continued two years. It contained communications from David Lawson (Newburgh), John Duncan (Dundee), Allan Fordyce (then of Dundee), and other brethren, all of whom were afforded full scope in its pages for writing on matters connected with the faith.

THE PROPHETIC STUDENT.

Dr Thomas's visits to Glasgow, in the course of his lecturing tours through the country, had the effect of awakening a considerable interest in the subject of prophecy, and a desire to know more about the matter. It was in Glasgow that the proposal was made which led to the publication of *Elpis Israel*; and after the doctor's return to America, the spirit of inquiry still remained unsatisfied. With a view to meet the requirements of this spirit, a small monthly magazine, to which the name of THE PROPHETIC STUDENT was given, was commenced to be published in 1851. It contained articles on the coming kingdom, man's mortality, and on prophecy generally. It was worthy of remark, however, that the persons thus interested in the study of the prophetic word had already begun to show that tendency to disunion which has always been characteristic of believers in Glasgow. We are told that *The Prophetic Student* 'was only discontinued for want of time to carry it on;' but perhaps the want of a sufficient number of subscribers had also something to do with its stoppage after only seven numbers had been issued.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pages 23-4.

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THE REFLECTOR OF DIVINE TRUTH.

During the lengthened Scripture investigations which led to the formation of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, it was suggested by some of those who took part in these deliberations, that it would be a very serviceable thing if a monthly magazine could be established which would afford something like a free platform for the more elaborate discussion of some of the subjects which had been under consideration. The suggestion was deemed a good one; and after a number of preliminaries, it was finally arranged that such a publication should be attempted, its title to be THE REFLECTOR OF DIVINE TRUTH. A prospectus, explaining purposes and plans, was accordingly issued, as follows:—

The Reflector of Divine Truth.

A religious periodical, unfettered by any party creed or influence, in the investigation of divine truth, being much required in this country at the present time, it has been resolved to issue, on the 1st of March [1853], the first number of a magazine, the aim of which will be, by integrity, candour, and impartiality, in relation to all men, to merit the first place among religious periodicals.

Its peculiar characteristics may be thus briefly summed up:—

I. It will set out with a distinct recognition of the authority of the Bible on all questions, and will insist on a respectful submission thereto.

II. On every subject it will grant an impartial hearing to all sides, as far as is compatible with decorum, the space afforded by its pages, and the importance of the subject as indicated by its apparent prominence in the Word of God.

III. For the more thorough attainment and preservation of liberty of speech, as well as to secure the advantages of a variety of taste and discrimination—(rarely, if ever, found in one person)—it will be conducted by a Committee of Editors, whose diversity of judgment, it is expected, will conduce to the integrity of its character.

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The magazine will be called THE REFLECTOR OF DIVINE TRUTH, and will at first contain 16 pages (same size and type as Prospectus), price 1d., and be issued on the 1st of every month.

It is gratifying to its promoters to be able to state, that the encouragement already received warrants them in issuing it on the above terms; and further, that if the friends of divine truth prove themselves increasingly alive to the importance of its investigation and dissemination through the press, there can be but little doubt that THE REFLECTOR may, in a short time, be increased in size at the original price.

Its General Management.

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Singularly enough, the first issue of this periodical synchronised with the formation of the Edinburgh Church, although the two were not formally identified with each other. At the same time, those who took the leading part in commencing and conducting the magazine were members of the church about to be formed. The mottoes on the title-page of *The Reflector* were 'Bible Authority, Freedom of Inquiry, Liberty of Expression.' The articles were on a great variety of topics, many of them being on what are generally supposed to be subjects difficult to be understood, and being treated in a controversial spirit.

Dr Thomas and 'The Reflector.'

Copies of the first three issues of *The Reflector* were sent to Dr Thomas, and he thus noticed them in the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*:—

THE REFLECTOR OF DIVINE TRUTH.—A monthly periodical, 12mo, pp. 14. Numbers 1, 2, and 3 have been received from Edinburgh, where it is issued by the friends of the Kingdom and its Gospel. Success to it and to all efforts diffusive of the knowledge of the truth.*

Its general bearing towards the teaching of Dr Thomas may be gathered from the fact that, at the special request of James Cameron, one of the Committee of Editors, the letter addressed by Dr Thomas to Louis Kossuth, on the

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, page 120.

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political prospects of Hungary, as outlined in prophecy, and which was published by the doctor in the *Herald*—(and reproduced in this volume*)—was inserted in *The Reflector* for August 1854, Brother Cameron, in making the request, trusted 'the present state of Europe, and the various conditions prescribed as essential to the establishment of a lasting peace, would be deemed a sufficient apology' for so doing.

A Financial Failure.

The hopes entertained by the promoters of this magazine, that it might 'in a short time be increased in size at the original price,' were not realised. Its financial condition was all along unsatisfactory, and it never paid its way. The number of copies printed monthly was 500, although nothing like that number were sold. The actual receipts, after deducting carriage, postage, and booksellers' discount was only £1 11s., while the cost of paper and printing was £2 1s., leaving a deficit of 10s. At the close of the 10th number, it was proposed to discontinue it, but several subscriptions towards its funds being then received, its existence was prolonged through another volume. On reaching its 22d number, however, the financial prospect was so hopeless that it had to be discontinued.

THE EXPOSITOR OF LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

This was the title of a small monthly magazine, conducted by William Glen Moncrieff, commence in March 1853, and continued for sixteen months—nearly up to the time of his departure for America. It was devoted specially to the exposition of the Scripture doctrine of life only in Christ; and commencing as it did at the same time as *The Reflector*, the two came to be regarded as in some sense rivals, the readers of both publications being mostly obtained from the same class.

* See pages 202-4.
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THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

At the annual aggregate meeting of the brotherhood in Edinburgh in July 1857—the first time the meeting was held in the month of July—a good deal of time was taken up in considering a proposal to have a printed magazine for the British brotherhood of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Several different proposals were suggested, and various details connected with them were gone into. Ultimately it was agreed that such a magazine should be commenced, that its name should be *THE GOSPEL WITNESS*, and that the management should be vested in John Duncan, of Dundee.

The First Printed Magazine of the Brotherhood.

The first number of *The Gospel Witness* appeared in January 1858. It consisted of 16 pages demy octavo, and its price was twopence. Its motto, which was printed under the title, was, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.' No printed prospectus of the magazine was issued, but it simply introduced itself to the notice of the brotherhood by the following brief address:—

To the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

DEAR BRETHREN,—This magazine is addressed to you, that through God's blessing it may stimulate your faith and hope and love, and incite you to 'shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of truth,' that others may become partakers with us in the patience, and hope, and Kingdom, of our God and His Christ.

Brethren, pray that our work may prosper, and that we may witness for the Gospel in all holy boldness and sobriety.

THE EDITORS.

The Conducting of the Magazine.

The plurality of editors here indicated consisted of John Duncan (who was the leading and guiding spirit in the concern), David Lawson (Newburgh), and Allan Fordyce (Glasgow)—three very capable men for such a task. *The*

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Gospel Witness was a really well managed periodical of its kind, so far as regarded the sort of articles that appeared in it. John Duncan was a clear and vigorous writer, and, when fully aroused to throw his whole energies into the undertaking, he could accomplish most satisfactory results. Unfortunately, however, he had a good deal of the lymphatic temperament in his mental composition, and this prevented him from being so reliable as could have been desired. It did not contribute to the success of a publication which had to appear periodically; and towards the close of its short-lived career this defect was painfully manifest. As implied in its name, the *Witness* was devoted mainly to the exposition of matters relating to the Gospel of the Kingdom; and it contained many well written, pithy, and brief articles of this nature, some of which, as has already been stated when treating of tracts and leaflets, were separately printed in this form, and found very useful in making known the truth.

A Non-Paying Concern.

Like so many of the literary ventures of the brethren, *The Gospel Witness* was not a financial success. At the July Meeting of 1858, John Duncan stated that he intended to continue it to the end of that year, but that he would not be able to conduct it longer than that period. The claims of this periodical upon the brethren, as a means of promoting the truth, were universally acknowledged, and a desire was expressed that its scope might be somewhat enlarged, so as to include what were termed practical matters, as well as doctrinal. The number of subscribers was stated as 300, and this did not prove remunerative. It was not supposed that any difficulty would be found in making up the expense connected with the carrying on of the magazine; but considerable difficulty was found in getting a person to undertake its literary management. John Duncan finally agreed to continue it during the following year if one or two others were appointed to

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co-operate with him; and it was arranged that James Taylor, in Paisley, and William Norrie, in Edinburgh, should act as assistants in procuring and preparing matter for the *Witness*.

A Brief Prolongation of its Existence.

In accordance with the arrangements here mentioned, the *Witness* was continued to be issued for some time longer, and an effort was made to give more vitality to it. On his part, in spite of the tendency to dilatoriness, the editor must be credited with having done excellent service for it in one way and another. As showing the spirit in which he exercised the editorial office, and his anxiety to maintain a high standard of excellence for the magazine under his charge, it is worth while giving an extract from a letter I received from him. It is as follows:—

Dundee, 23rd October 1858.

DEAR BROTHER NORRIE,—I expected the pleasure of spending an evening with you when in Edinburgh, but business broke in upon my plans and prevented me.

I have received Brother Wilson's articles. I would be glad to know your mind as to their suitability for the *Witness*. When they came to hand, they were examined by one or two friends, and we all deemed them unsuited to the then stage of the *Witness's* existence. Now, however, as we propose to extend its range of subjects—(by-the-bye, can you suggest an appropriate second title?)—these articles fall to be looked at in another light. I have not read them lately, but mean to re-peruse them in this spirit—1. Are the positions Scriptural and the arguments sound? 2. Is it desirable that the attention of the readers of the *Witness* should be directed to the theme? 3. Is there anything in the articles, or the treatment of the subject, that would excite prejudice in the 'Gospel' teachings of the *Witness*?

I hope you are collecting a mass of matter to enrich our pages. I find it very hard work to bring up my arrears, but I am making some progress, as you will see by-and-by.

Your well-wisher in the Lord,

JOHN DUNCAN.

An Erratic Style of Publication.

All, however, failed to perpetuate the existence of the magazine, and it was discontinued some months after the issue of the 12th number. I say *after* the publication of the 12th number, because the 11th was not issued until

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nearly a year after the 12th. This was caused by the fact that the 11th—consisted entirely of the article, 'Saving Faith,' already referred to, which was issued as a pamphlet, and with which there was some unexpected delay. The first ten numbers bore consecutively the names of the month when they were issued; but not so the 11th and 12th.

Valedictory Note.

The introductory address of the editors of the *Gospel Witness* was a model of brevity in its way, and their valedictory note was like unto it. It was so brief, indeed, that it did not intimate the discontinuance of the magazine, but left the fact to be inferred—thus:

The Editors take this opportunity to express their thanks to all those brethren and friends who have favoured them with communications in aid of their undertaking, and also to the readers for the patience they have exercised in regard to the irregularity in the issue of the various numbers. May God hasten His kingdom, and through Christ keep us all, and grant us an abundant entrance into it at the coming of our Redeemer. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

A magazine with this title was commenced to be published in Bristol in 1852, its editor being the Rev. J. Panton Ham, Congregational minister. It was chiefly devoted to an examination of the subject of immortality, in its various aspects, though taking a wider range in its antagonism to popular religious errors, as is indicated in the following extract:—'We have been led to see more than one "enormous error" in the faith of popular Christendom. The constitution of man; state of the dead between death and resurrection; future punishment; the doctrine of redemption; theology of the cross; the second advent; and Kingdom of the Messiah;—abound in radical errors in their popular presentation.' *The Christian Examiner* continued to be issued for 23 months.

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THE MESSENGER OF THE CHURCHES.

A monthly magazine with this name was issued for about a couple of years in manuscript before it ventured to appear in print ; and a notice of its career in caligraphic form will be given presently, when Manuscript Magazines come to be dealt with. In printed shape, the first number of this serial was published in January 1860, and consisted of 16 pages crown 8vo. The full title of the magazine, as given on the title-page of the first completed volume, was thus : *THE MESSENGER OF THE CHURCHES : a Magazine of Scripture Exposition and Medium of Intercommunication on all Social and Practical Topics of Importance to the Brotherhood ; with the Congregational Intelligence of the Year 1860.* The brethren having already become familiarised with a magazine bearing this initial title, no prospectus was issued ; but the general scope of the periodical, and the means by which it sought to accomplish its aims and ends were sufficiently indicated in its opening number by the following

Introduction.

The pages which follow contain the expressions of thought and of brotherly kindness blended together. No apology is needed for the appearance of a book containing these. Faith should be spoken, that we may become familiar with all its features, and know its application to the common life ; hope should elevate the tone of our thought, lending dignity to the present by glorious prospects of the future ; and love, which it is not always easy to infuse even into our speech, should be sedulously cultivated and constantly employed.

The present time affords more scope for book writing and literary utterance than has ever been afforded ; and we were behind our compeers, even in worldly accomplishments, could we not afford to have a vehicle for our thoughts and intercommunications. This, however, is not sufficient : we do not write, we do not print, because other men do, but because we need it. Those utterances which else have only a local audience, although deserving more, here find hearers and attain permanence of form ; and

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those ideas and suggestions which we have heretofore essayed to make serviceable by manuscript circulation, are now made more abiding and more accessible to all by means of the press.

The success of our yet untried experiment depends entirely on our individual selves: the duties of the *writer* must be fairly met and honourably discharged, and the responsibilities of the *reader* must be accepted in all good faith. The latter is not a mere passive person: the eye to scrutinise, the judgment to discern, the heart to give award are his; and on his right use of these much of the prosperity of our writing depends. The mind of all the readers is expected to concentrate in the editors, and the wisdom of all the writers to be controlled by them.

Those who essay to instruct should bear upon their hearts these considerations—they are addressing the most august assembly on earth—choice men, beloved of God, heirs of the promised kingdom and authority over all; and this nobility is familiar with a literary style so pure and excellent as to be beyond all imitation and above all peer. The Bible contains the finest writing, the clearest logic, and sublimest poetry. What God has spoken is clothed with beauty as well as filled with truth; and therefore ought His children to have a pure and exalted speech. We shall have none of the drivelling twaddle of the teachers of the mob, whether that be the orthodox or the atheistical; both are alike hollow and empty sounding.

The Editors reserve the power to reject whatever is unworthy; wishing above all things to do what is right and God-honouring, and will only please their neighbours when it will be for their good to edification. This implies an assumption of very exalted wisdom. They will not be proud of it, but shall endeavour to vindicate the character they aim at, by meekly instructing those who oppose themselves; having a good conscience, that all their severity is tempered by love of the brethren and fear of God. Such a course they shall endeavour to justify by arrangements whereby the deficient may be filled up and the imperfect improved. That which they find good in an ill-constructed article they shall study to avail themselves of (with the consent of the party contributing it), either by absorption into another paper or by reconstruction. And, as improvement in utterance as well as thinking is much to be desired, they anticipate by such schooling

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a gradual elevation of the literary standard for the profit and honour of all.

It is not to be overlooked, however, that this purity of speech and correctness of diction are only sought for their moral value; for though we be able to speak with all the eloquence of men or angels, and have not love, we are no better than brass or tinkling cymbals. But with the Lord Jesus the Christ before us as the beautiful exemplar of the divine perfections, let us go forward, strengthened by the power of God, and enlightened by His wisdom in all things; and if so furnished, our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

EDITORS.

The First Year of its Existence.

At the July Meeting, held in Glasgow on July 7th, 1861, a report was given of the experience of the brethren's periodical during the first year of its existence. This report was as follows:—

'THE MESSENGER OF THE CHURCHES.'—James Cameron stated that when this publication commenced, it had a circulation which enabled it to clear its own expenses; but at the beginning of the present year there was a falling off in the circulation, which caused a deficiency of from 7s. to 10s. per month in the income of this periodical. It was mentioned that the church in Dundee had resolved to make a collection in aid of the funds required to carry it on, and a similar course was recommended to be adopted by other churches. Various alterations in its character, size, price, and mode of publication were suggested; but it was agreed to continue the present arrangements until the end of the year, after which several changes of the kind mentioned will probably take place.

The Conducting of the Magazine.

Following upon this report, the readers of the *Messenger* were invited to give their opinions as to the manner in which they considered the magazine had been conducted, and any suggestions they had to offer for its improvement. In response to this invitation, a number of communications were received, as follows:—

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Our Periodical—What It is to be.

As a satisfactory answer to this question is expected by December, I submit the following hints for general consideration; trusting that all who have any distinct plan to propose will take the earliest opportunity of doing so:—

And first I would ask—For whose benefit, in present circumstances, should our periodical primarily and mainly exist? I am strongly of opinion that the only answer to this question should be—The British Brotherhood.

1st. The brethren actually need a medium of intercommunication for their own exclusive use.

2nd. There is not a sufficiently numerous *public* outside of, yet connected with, the brotherhood, to warrant such a modification of plan as would make our periodical suitable for both classes.

3rd. Such a public as we have (say those attending our meetings) are already within the sphere of an influence of greater power—namely, the public teaching and conversation of the brethren, aided by such tracts and books as we can command.

These reasons satisfy me that our periodical should be to the general brotherhood, as regards mutual instruction, edification, and exhortation, what the church meeting is to the local brotherhood. The church meeting is a means of intercommunication to those assembled, affording opportunity for the utterance of instructive, edifying, and comforting words, to such as feel qualified and disposed for such service. But the British Brotherhood are located in groups here and there, and have but few opportunities of mutual edification. Hence the need of a 'Messenger' to carry the words of the brethren.

Such a periodical should not be regarded as 'our organ' in the popular sense of being an exponent of our common faith. The brethren who speak in our church meetings are not deemed the exponents of our common faith; so neither need we or others consider a printed medium of brotherly exchange of good services as necessarily the expression of our common faith.

And what though a brother's views may be deemed novel, or, it may be, decidedly erroneous on a given subject, by many of the brethren? Is such a brother, in laying his mind before his brethren, not affording his

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brethren the very best opportunity of doing him, and others it may be, a piece of good service in setting him right, which but for such medium might not readily occur? If our fellowship, either through church meetings or periodicals, fails in doing this for us, it fails in an important point. Do not many of our errors spring from ignorance? And how is this to be removed if it is not manifested? And how can it be manifested if brethren are to be discouraged from making it known even in the form of an endeavour to instruct the brotherhood?

I conclude, then, that there must be a magazine for the brotherhood, even though it should be found expedient to publish a second fitted for general circulation among the public.—JAMES CAMERON.

I cordially endorse the remarks of J. C. on page 126. Are we not learners endeavouring to instruct and cheer each other till the Lord come? And how can we accomplish this beyond the narrow range of our separate meetings, unless by a periodical?—WILLIAM LAING.

The value of the *Messenger* primarily consists, not in the intrinsic worth of the articles produced, but in the character of the magazine as a means of developing and sustaining oneness in all the British ecclesias. The *Messenger* should be what it has been; and being in the hands of the brethren at large, its literary character will be what they choose to make it. Its constitutional character was established at the beginning, and cannot, in my thinking, be improved. Its chief value is in its being a *messenger*.—ROBERT ROBERTS (Huddersfield).

I would like the *Messenger* to be enlarged to the same size as *The Gospel Witness* (demy octavo), with a separate slip for intelligence, &c.—say to sell at threepence. In addition to notices of books of a good preferable character, it should specially take up what are commonly called 'prophetic subjects,' with a view to obtaining and enforcing correct views of prophecy among the brethren, and also of helping to gain a slight increase of circulation among prophetic students.—JOHN DUNCAN (Dundee).

We think the *Messenger* should be continued much the same: no higher price; but the *Intelligence* separate. Some means should be provided for increasing the circulation.—JOHN WILSON (Halifax).

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I like the *Messenger* as it is; but would like to see it larger, so as to give more space for the discussion of weightier subjects than have been generally brought forward; provided always that its present character of a *monthly messenger* of intelligence be retained. This is its most interesting feature.—WILLIAM GILL (Aberdeen).

I am very well satisfied with it as it at present exists; but think it would be an improvement if you could convey a great deal more 'Intelligence' every month, which it might also be an advantage to print separately.—WILLIAM NORRIE (Lewes).

The *Messenger*, to make it edifying, ought to be conducted by a master spirit, and to the exclusion of all vagaries and untruthful thinkings of the flesh. Such discussions, instead of strengthening the brethren, serve a different purpose.—J. GRANT (Strathspey).

I do not think it would be well to make any alteration in the *Messenger* for the sake of any one outside. Talent that would make truth enticing to outsiders is not plentiful among us. And if we were all to be as laborious and zealous for its prosperity as some of you in Edinburgh, the *Messenger* would be well enough as it is.—DAVID LINDSAY (Dundee).

The Council of Literature.

Having received these several opinions, though more had been desired, the brethren who had hitherto managed the affairs of the *Messenger* determined, with the concurrence of some other brethren, to convene a Council of the brotherhood on the question of church literature generally, and respecting the future of the brethren's own periodical specially. They accordingly invited the various churches to send deputies to this Council, which was to be held in Edinburgh on the evening of Saturday, November 23rd, 1862, and, if necessary, to be resumed on the following day. Where delegates could not be sent, it was requested that letters might be sent, setting forth the course recommended by the brethren in the several places. The conference took place on the evening mentioned, but it was not favoured by the presence of any other brethren than

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those belonging to Edinburgh. The business consisted principally in putting into practical working shape the various suggestions of the brethren for the future magazine, and the arrangements necessary as to editing, topics, circulation, &c. The official report of the deliberations stated as follows:—

The opinions respecting the *Messenger* already expressed in its pages, with a few others since received, were carefully examined and balanced; from which the following resolutions were deduced for immediate action:—

1st. As the regular income of the past year has not proved sufficient to meet the expenditure—having been supplemented by a few contributions from the churches—it is not now safe to enlarge the magazine at all, either in size or number of pages.

2nd. A very general wish having been expressed so as to have the Intelligence so printed as to be detachable from the other matter, this will be attempted with its present size. Attempted, because there are practical difficulties, known only to experienced persons, which are much increased by this alteration, particularly as our room is so small for any new evolution.

3rd. The character of the papers and the nature of the intelligence are both entirely dependent upon the communications of the brethren; therefore no legislation can affect either. Fresh matter is promised, however, and there are some other arrangements, calculated to be of service, which we cannot announce till fully matured.

4th. It seemed desirable to have a change of editorship; but as there were no immediately available means of effecting this, it was decided that the present editors continue until others are applied to in the matter.

It was further concluded, that any change as to number of pages, or editorial management, could be effected in the middle as well as at the beginning of a year: whenever the funds rise, the one can be done; whenever the proper men are got, we can accomplish the other. The *Messenger* being the instrument of all the churches in Britain, there is no absolute necessity why Edinburgh should always be its focal and radiating point.

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Result of Another Year's Publication.

It was in the year 1862 that the secession in the Edinburgh Church took place, the seceders finding a great deal of sympathy from brethren in several parts of the country. This told prejudicially upon the circulation of the *Messenger*, whose publication, however, was still continued. No change was made in the editorial staff, who, at the end of the year, gave the following account of their stewardship:—

The *Messenger of the Churches*, vol. iii., is now finished, and it is thought proper to make a brief statement of its circumstances:—

Firstly. Its financial experiences have not been of a very encouraging kind. For some time it has not cleared its own expense; therefore some have thought it should be discontinued. But against that we must consider,

Secondly. It is, and has been, the only regular organ of intercommunication among the brethren; and were it to be given up, a now very necessary means of fellowship would be taken away. It has been, as far as possible under the circumstances, the brethren's newspaper; for we know that on all hands the intelligence which it has contained has been appreciated, and generally looked for with interest. The only cause of regret here is, that details for this purpose have often been scantily furnished. The correspondents of the churches need a little stirring up on this point.

Thirdly. The *Messenger* was started to be a vehicle for the utterances of the brethren on matters of doctrine—to afford scope for them to speak their minds freely, but discreetly, on all matters affecting our congregational or individual standing and well-being. This it has furnished so thoroughly, that it has used up nearly all the essays, papers, expositions, exhortations, &c., which the brethren have sent. So nearly, indeed, that what is left, even if all fit for publication, would not be sufficient for the material of a single number. We have repeatedly called attention to this, and repeat it once more—the *Messenger* is, in the matter of it, exactly what those wish it to be who put to their hand to help; and the only way by which it can acquire a different character, is for those who so wish, to

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well digest and carefully write out their ideas for the gratification and edification of the brotherhood. This republic of letters has within itself the power of expressing its own character and exhibiting its own features.

The £ s. d. of our affairs is easily stated. The circulation of the *Messenger* has been of late under 300 per month; its expense, for printing and postage, £2 10s. We have had a surplus of copies over our needs, and therefore our expenditure might be retrenched a little by printing fewer. Reckoning on even a lower minimum circulation than we expect, we think that it might be conducted for the ensuing year at a loss of not above 8s. per month. To meet this, we have confidence that a few brethren will come forward to help; and in future we shall endeavour to keep as short reckonings as possible with every one. It is also possible that these expenses may be further reduced.

In the faith of this help, No. 1, vol. iv., will (*D.V.*) be issued by 1st January 1863. And we request the brethren in all quarters to write immediately, to state any alteration they wish made in their orders, failing which we shall hold them at the same figure as before, for the next three months at least. At the same time, we shall be prepared to consider any practical suggestions which the brethren may have anent the matter or the management of the *Messenger*.

New Series of the '*Messenger*.'

In accordance with the intimation thus given, the *Messenger* was conducted for other two years without any material change, except that the Intelligence was printed on the four outside pages of the sheet, so as to be easily detachable. At the close of the year 1864, the commencement of a new series of the magazine was announced as follows:—

The fortune of this magazine, as a business speculation, has always been of a very questionable kind; for it has not in any year—except perhaps the first—paid itself by its own sales. It has, however, been so generally respected, as a necessary existing medium by those who should best appreciate it—both solitary brethren and those in more prosperous association—that it has been sustained year after year, even at a loss.

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Now it seems as desirable as ever to continue it; for it is, as it has ever been, the only organ by which the brethren in Britain can express their thoughts freely—that is, as freely as a Christian prudence could allow. We say this out of no disrespect to magazines now or ever supported by the brethren; for some of these are avowedly managed after a different style altogether—the productions of the editor having the preference to all other communications. It is therefore determined, next year (God willing), to try again what can be done to sustain a magazine for the brethren's communications; and the conductors beg to announce a new series, with these modifications:—

1. It will have a larger page, and be printed in double columns, the price remaining the same—namely, twopence per number, threepence by post; or four copies and upwards post free.

2. It is intended that each number shall contain, in addition to other matter, one or more papers on elementary principles, setting forth the faith in a style suitable for inquirers. This, it is anticipated, will increase its utility, as in several cases it may be found serviceable as a tract.

The features which have heretofore characterised the *Messenger* will be continued; and it is hoped that the brethren will do their best to second the efforts of the conductors to make it successful. Contributions of clearly written papers on subjects of Bible teaching are solicited, particularly from those who are in the habit of exercising their gifts as teachers by tongue or pen.

On the other hand, it is expected that the brethren will do what they can to promote its sale, either among themselves or others. It is suggested that a little more energy on the part of the agents in the several localities would soon increase its circulation to a point which might make it pay, even at the advanced cost which is now about to be adventured; and the beginning of a new series affords a natural opportunity for new subscribers.

Dr Thomas and 'The Messenger.'

The *Messenger* did not have so many friends as to make it a paying concern. It unfortunately had enemies, who made no secret of their hostility to it, and their desire that it might be discontinued. One of the bitterest of its

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enemies was Dr Thomas, who expressed this amiable wish in a letter to Andrew Tait, which letter was published in *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* for December 1864—the same month in which the conductors of this struggling periodical made an appeal to its friends for increased support. In this letter the doctor said :

Had I the authority and power, I would very soon suppress, without one warning, much less three, such twaddling sheets as the *Messenger*, with you, and the *Banner*, *Harbinger*, *World's Crisis*, *Voice of the West*, &c., with us. The public head is crazed enough with nonsense without putting more into it than is already there.

I wonder how Dr Thomas would have felt if some one, who had 'the authority and power,' had suppressed, say, the *Gospel Banner*, published at Nottingham, whilst he was reaching the public ear through it. The doctor has told us how, as I have already recorded, that there was some dispute among the Campbellite community in this country at the time of his visit, and 'the *Gospel Banner* became the impartial medium of both sides of all questions, ecclesiastical and theological; and presumed to allow us—the proscribed of Campbell, of Wallis, and others of like spirit—to speak for ourself in its pages.' And in acknowledgment of this favour, Dr Thomas, before returning to America, said in a farewell letter to the editor :

For the liberality you have shown, though agreeing with me in scarcely any of the questions in dispute, I return you sincere and hearty thanks; and so long as you continue to show regard to justice, mercy, and truth, my friends in this island, who are not few, will give you their countenance and support.*

Why should not Dr Thomas have given his countenance and support to the *Messenger* as well, instead of desiring to suppress it, seeing that it was much more at one with

* See pages 321-2.
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him upon first principles than the *Banner* was? In this matter, it seems to me that the doctor displayed an unjust and ungenerous spirit similar to that manifested by the early Puritans, who felt constrained to exile themselves from their native land that they might have what they termed 'freedom to worship God;' and of whom it is recorded that, no sooner had they obtained a settlement in the New World, where they had their heart's desire, than the elders among them began to exercise a despotism and a persecution which was more galling than the bondage in the old country from which they had fled. Such is human nature all the world over and in all ages. Besides, as Dr Herron has said: 'Private property in righteousness is the worst form of private property, and self-interest in the pursuit of righteousness is the essence of evil.'

'Word Twisting and Torturing.'

This feeling of antagonism on Dr Thomas's part seemed to increase as time went on. In another letter in the same periodical, he thus returns to his attack upon the *Messenger*:—

I perceive that G. Dowie, at length, confesses the true character of *The Messenger of the Churches*. He says: 'There have been so many papers of late on out-of-the-way, weird topics, of which the present number of the *Messenger* contains a full share,' &c.; that he calls for articles 'of a sunnier character.' It is truly a weird concern! 'Weird' means 'skilled in witchcraft.' 'Weird topics' are subjects of discourse 'skilled in witchcraft.' This is the meaning of the phrase as nearly as it can be got at. It may, indeed, be expressed by the word 'sorcery,' which is divination by the assistance, or supposed assistance, of 'evil spirits.' Weird topics, in their elaboration, are divination by evil spirits. The evil spirits are the writers; and the divination their guessings and conjectures, in which they 'discuss everything and settle nothing.' We learn from the said Dowie that his miscalled *Messenger of the Churches* is full of sorcery—therefore a Messenger of Sorcery! Surely I have not been uncharitable in styling it the Messenger of Satan! If sorcery

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do not belong to Satan, to whom is it to be assigned? Sorceries belong to the rest of the men who repent not—(Rev. ix. 20, 21)—and by which they deceive the people—(Rev. xviii. 23). 'Churches' that endorse and sustain a Messenger full of 'weird topics' are deceived communities, and no better than 'the names' of which the Gentile scarlet-coloured beast is full—(Rev. xviii. 3). Surely such a messenger, if he were ever alive, should be put to death according to the law in Leviticus xx. 27.*

Robert Roberts, in one of his encounters with David King, of Birmingham, accused his opponent of 'word twisting and torturing.' I question very much whether a more glaring instance of 'word twisting and torturing' by David King could be cited than this by Dr Thomas. One can only grieve over the pitiable frame of mind that could produce such a diatribe.

The End of 'The Messenger of the Churches.'

The publication of the *Messenger* was removed from Edinburgh to Dundee in 1867, in consequence of the exigencies of business having called George Dowie, its principal and real editor, to reside in that town. The magazine, however, did not seem to make any progress in any direction. Financially it had always been a failure, although pecuniary assistance was given to it from time to time. Thus, on Sunday, April 27, 1867, the Edinburgh Church voted the sum of £3 10s. in its aid, and agreed to make a special collection once a quarter for the same purpose. I am not sure, however, that this resolution was carried out—I rather think it was not. At any rate, all the efforts that were made for its prolonged existence were ineffectual. Literary material could have been provided in sufficient quantity, if not of quality, but the monetary resources were sadly lacking. Finally, from this cause, the publication of this series came to an end with the issue of the number for December 1870.

* *The Ambassador of the Coming Age*, 1866, p. 223.

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THE MESSENGER OF THE GOSPEL.

It is going beyond the period to which it is intended that this EARLY HISTORY should be confined; but as there were three different series of a periodical named *The Messenger*, published continuously, and all somewhat similar in style, though also differing in some respects, it may be well just to take a brief notice of the other two, each of which may be said to have arisen, phoenix-like, out of the ashes of its predecessor.

General regret was expressed at the discontinuance of *The Messenger of the Churches*, to whose periodical visits the brethren had been so long accustomed; and many proposals were made with a view to its continued existence. The only alternative that seemed at all feasible was to commence what was practically a new periodical, still retaining the old name of *Messenger*, and altering its character somewhat, so as to appeal to a larger circle of readers. The brethren were indebted to James Cameron for stepping into the breach that would otherwise have been occasioned; and accordingly, in January 1871 there appeared the first number of **THE MESSENGER OF THE GOSPEL: a Magazine devoted to the Exhibition of Scripture Doctrine concerning the Christ and his Personal Reign on the Earth.** This magazine, like its immediate predecessor, consisted of sixteen pages, demy octavo, with a coloured cover, and its price was twopence. Its distinctive literary character was fully set forth in its first article, which was as follows:—

To Our Readers.

Perhaps a few words of explanation, if not of apology, are necessary on the appearance of a new Religious Magazine, when a superabundance already exists. Why add yet another to the list? Our apology is, that although we greatly rejoice to know there are several in the field advocating much that will be contained in our pages, yet those things wherein we will differ from our contemporaries, are deemed by us of such vital importance, that, although our position were even more isolated than it is,

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we should still feel urged to attempt the bringing them under the attention of the thoughtful and inquiring.

The responsibility of such an undertaking is great, even although our qualifications were much higher than they are. We may have an idea to induce men to think out of habitual channels—to think independently—to think for themselves; but it is one thing to have such an idea, and quite another thing to give it such expression as to be effective in moving numbers to reconsideration of pre-conceived views, especially on religious subjects. Hence, we would not seek to set ourselves on a high stool to sit as dictators and dogmatise. But recognising a right which all men claim for themselves, our aim shall be not so much to teach as to educate. This is the field we wish to occupy.

The tendencies of modern thought have given rise to much anxiety in the minds of many, in regard to what shall be the future of Religion and the Church. It is a subject of vital moment, because upon the prevalence of thought depend all the results we strive after. Thought is the stream which moves the wheels of progress.

Here are two extremes to be guarded against. The one is the attempt to think while ignoring the past: the other is to claim perfection for the past, and resist all progress.

We invite the reader's attention while we give a brief statement of our position as regards the true basis of religious thought. The almost universal appeal is to the Scriptures; and although to this all professing Christians agree, how diverse are the results! Now, while we appeal to the Scriptures as the only source of religious truth, we maintain that there is a proper, an exclusive stand-point. It will be admitted by even all churchmen—high or low, broad or narrow—that the truth existed before the church. The question, then, which claims precedence of all others, is the question with which Christianity originated. That was a very simple question—namely, Is Jesus of Nazareth the Christ? This was the question, the affirmative of which originated, among the Jews, the party subsequently known as Christians. The real ground of difference between them and the Jews was thus confined within a very small compass. 'Thou art the Christ,' said his followers; 'Thou art not' was practically the language of their opponents.

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But it is important to note, that while there was this strongly marked line dividing the disciples of Christ—the Church—from the Jews, there is no evidence that the Jews ever charged the Christians with inventing a new idea of the Christ. They were at one as regards the essential conception of the Christ, and differed only in reference to the question whether Jesus was the person who had the rightful title to the office.

Another question that arises here is—What was the Jewish idea of the Christ? In the meantime, we confine ourselves to another inquiry—namely, What was the source of that idea? There is but one answer—Moses and the prophets. And these had their origin in the interposition and inspiration of God. To comprehend the Christ, therefore, we must study the prophets; for there and there alone can the knowledge of the Christ be found.

Our study of the prophets will be prosecuted with a view to demonstrate what is involved in Jesus being the Christ, as a vast amount of ignorance prevails upon this subject. It is true that all professing Christians in the world acknowledge that they believe in Jesus Christ, although the great mass do not regard such profession as having anything to do with the proposition that 'Jesus is the Christ,' but view the words 'Jesus Christ' as mere name and surname in the ordinary sense. There are many who are far in advance of the mass, who confess the name in the form of the proposition, but who have not the same ideas regarding it as the first confessors. If, therefore, we examine this proposition, in order to know what Jesus claimed to be, we must go back to the prophets.

But what Jesus claimed to be is one thing, and what may be called his claims are another. His claims involve all the evidences of miracles, inspiration, and interposition—a subject of paramount importance, and necessarily embraced in our programme. If we admit a revelation at all, it involves a distinct source of thought; for, if God has given us a revelation, He has thought for us, and it only remains for us to imbibe the thoughts so revealed. In thus acquiring a knowledge of God's thoughts, we have to consider the manner in which He has presented them to us. Through the utterance of Jewish prophets, He has fixed our attention upon Jesus as the greatest prophet. What, then, has this great prophet done for the religious thought of mankind? Has

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he written volumes of theology—analytical, systematic, or dogmatic? Nay, he came not so much to speak as to act—not to utter so much as to fulfil utterances. By the fulfilment of these utterances, God has fixed attention upon all His former utterances, fulfilled and unfulfilled, by presenting them to us in a new form in one cardinal proposition. He has brought into one focus all the rays of light that have ever emanated from Him as 'the Father of lights.' In that proposition, we have thought accumulated, arranged, and concentrated. This is the true basis of thought, at once a starting-point and stand-point, from which we may have a clear view of all things. This, studied in its various collateral propositions will give a comprehensive view of 'the truth as it is in Jesus.'

A number of those collateral propositions have been investigated by our contemporaries, but, as far as we know, there has been no attempt to concentrate the truth. Thus modern religious thought is too diffuse. Our aim shall be to concentrate, and we hope to assist in the work of religious reform and progress, by seeking to develop personal conviction.

But while we aim at stimulating to a study of the prophets, in order to understand what is comprehended in our proposition, we by no means overlook the apostles, who have taught us the use to be made of the truth, its relation to man's salvation, and to the unity of Christ's church. Our aim shall be to make the proper use of both, while we do not forget that they are different. Prophecy is pure dogma. The apostles reasoned, elaborated, and demonstrated; and in order to be understood, their writings must be studied and mastered in all their bearings. The epistles are not dogmatic declarations of truth either in the abstract or concrete form; and we do not know of any one thing that has done, and continues to do, so much evil as the misapplication of the epistles, and making them almost a sole court of appeal. These epistles originated in the discussion of secondary, not of primary questions, some of which were of a temporary character, in which succeeding generations had no direct interest. 'But are they not inspired?' it might be asked. True; but inspiration can never change the nature of things: it cannot change prophecy into history, or a logical argument into a proverb. We must study prophecy as pure dogmatic truth; fulfilled prophecy as demonstrated truth; and thus,

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by a study of prophets, evangelists, and apostles in their utterances concerning 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' we may come in time to understand those questions that are discussed in the epistles. But we may never arrive at a knowledge of first principles, if we make the epistles our first and almost only study.

But it is not only necessary to know the right subject and the right starting-point; it is equally necessary, in order to make progress in right thinking, to have some rules to go by—some general principles growing out of the subject upon which our thoughts are exercised. There is one by which we desire to be guided, and which all must acknowledge—namely, 'Prove all things.' According to this, all ideas presented to the mind must be received or rejected according to the law of evidence. Testimony is the only source of faith, whether it be divine or human. We receive human testimony, and act upon it; so should we receive and act upon the testimony of God, which alone constitutes the ground of religious faith. Where God has given no testimony, we can have no faith; and the measure of true faith is what God has uttered. No proposition, therefore, that can be presented to us as matter of religious faith can be received as such unless it be a direct utterance of God in His own words. Any proposition deduced from Scripture by a process of reasoning, however logical, can only be received as matter of opinion, and should ever be treated as such. The apostles were great reasoners, but they reasoned from revelation or fact to corroborate other revelation; but they never dreamt of their reasonings adding to the faith. They only illustrated, compared, and established the faith. Their advice was: 'Hold fast the form of sound words.' We are decidedly conservative in religion. One of the prophets of Israel has defined our position in these words: 'Ask for the good old paths, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.'

Dear reader, we have briefly outlined where we wish to stand. It will take some time to tell what we see. Is our stand-point the right one? If so, stand with us and help. If you think us wrong, still help—help to put us right. We antagonise no party, neither do we address ourselves to any special party, but to all men. 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' May God help us all according to our need.

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The Conducting of the Magazine.

The Messenger of the Gospel was very ably conducted during the brief period of its existence, some new contributors, who had not previously written for the brethren's magazine, making their first appearance in it. Two special features in it were a series of 'Letters to a Son,' by Alexander Black, of Edinburgh, and a series on 'The Hope of the Gospel,' by George Greenwood, of Liverpool (afterwards published in a volume). For the first time, also, in the history of the literature of the brethren, it was offered for sale through the bookselling trade, in the ordinary way of business; and a few copies were thus disposed of monthly among the general public.

The End of 'The Messenger of the Gospel.'

The same old financial difficulty was again experienced in conducting this magazine, and even in an aggravated form. Its demise was accordingly intimated on the cover of the 20th number, as follows:—

It is with feelings of deep regret that the Conductors of *The Messenger of the Gospel* announce their intention to discontinue the publication of this Magazine. They feel compelled to adopt this step in consequence of the periodical not being self-supporting, and the comparatively few who approve of this mode of promoting the spread of the truth, do not feel it to be an imperative duty either to assess themselves with the deficit, or to resort to general importunity for assistance. The present number, therefore, will close our issue, and a title-page and contents form part of the number, so as to make the numbers already issued complete for binding. As there is a considerable deficit to clear off at present, we shall gladly welcome any help that may be volunteered towards its liquidation.

In taking leave of our friends and contributors, we cannot do so without expressing the pleasure it has given us to co-operate with them in the attempt to set forth the truth concerning the personal reign of Christ upon the earth, in its gospel bearings, as an element of the faith and hope of the primitive church. We trust some may have been stimulated to cultivate this field to the advantage of themselves and others, and bring forth fruit to perfection.

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THE CHURCH MESSENGER.

Yet another *Messenger*! This new series of a magazine with the now familiar title was commenced in September, 1872—the month following the discontinuance of *The Messenger of the Gospel*. Along with others, I felt very sorry at the threatened stoppage, and resolved that one more effort should be made to perpetuate a literary institution to which the brethren had now so long been accustomed. Accordingly, appended to the notice discontinuing the publication of *The Messenger of the Gospel*, was the intimation of a successor to it in THE CHURCH MESSENGER. The *raison d'être* of this new-comer's existence was thus stated in its opening address:—

To Our Readers.

It was with great regret that the resolution to discontinue the publication of *The Messenger of the Gospel* was arrived at. . . . Various proposals were suggested, with a view to the continuance, in some form or other, of a printed periodical devoted to the interests of the brotherhood; but in them all, the difficulty was, how, with the necessarily small circulation such a periodical could command, the inevitable cost of production could be met. By only two means, did it appear that this difficulty could be removed—either by increasing the price of the magazine or by reducing the quantity of matter supplied at the former price. By adopting the latter expedient, it is now endeavoured to prolong the existence of the *Messenger*, if it should only be for a season. By dispensing with the cover, and reducing the size of page to something like its original dimensions, the actual cost will be so far lessened, that, with a continuance of the former number of subscribers, there will be a monthly deficiency so small, that the continued appearance of the magazine may be undertaken. Of course, it will be for the brethren to judge whether, under these altered circumstances, and in the somewhat different character it will now assume, the *Messenger* is worthy of support; and upon that judgment will depend its continuance after the close of the present year.

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In entering upon this new phase of its history, it is proposed that the *Messenger* should be devoted, in a more special manner than it has latterly been, to the interests of the brethren. While not ignoring the claims of 'outsiders,' and not discarding papers dealing with the elementary principles of the faith, it is desired that particular attention should be given to the requirements of the brotherhood; and papers calculated to stimulate, encourage, instruct, and gratify those who have received and obeyed 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and are rejoicing in the hope of our Lord's speedy return, will have the preference. Papers of this description are respectfully solicited from the brethren in different places.

The introduction of 'Fraternal Utterances' is a new, and, it is to be hoped, an acceptable feature in the present series of the magazine. In the various meetings of the brethren, there are frequently remarks made which are well worthy of a wider circulation than is to be had in the assembly in which they were uttered. . . .

It is also intended to bestow more attention than hitherto upon the 'Church Intelligence' Department of the *Messenger*, and to report more fully and minutely incidents of interest occurring in the various localities where there are brethren. . . .

The Conducting of the Magazine.

It was unfortunate that two questions of great importance engaged the attention of the brotherhood during the period that *The Church Messenger* was published. These were the relation which the doctrine of life only in Christ occupied in the Gospel of the Kingdom and a proposal to unite with the Christadelphians. The consideration of these questions had a disturbing influence upon the brotherhood, and a good deal of unpleasant feeling was generated, two very opposite views being expressed, and that very strongly, respecting the various matters under dispute. In the circumstances, I deemed it prudent to discontinue the periodical with the publication of the 14th number. Then followed an interregnum of three years before another series of the *Messenger* was begun.

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THE RAINBOW.

This periodical was a monthly 'magazine of Christian literature, with special reference to the revealed future of the church and the world.' It consisted of 48 pages, demy octavo, in green cover, and was edited by W. Leask, D.D., Congregational minister, in London. It was commenced in 1864, and for many years Dr Leask edited it without fee, and at his own risk. 'In the face of opposition, misrepresentation, and obloquy, and under a constant load of care,' the editor sustained the 'entire pecuniary as well as literary responsibility of a work which, from its very nature, can never become a commercial success,' the aim of which was to teach 'that the only hope of the church is the second coming of her glorious Head; and the only hope of the world the return of its rightful King.' In 1869 Dr Leask came to see and to 'declare plainly that the doctrine of natural immortality is nothing else than a figment of a heathen philosophy, and opposed alike to reason and Scripture.' His experience, in consequence of this addition to the unorthodox character of *The Rainbow*, is thus briefly stated: 'A few months ago, at the bidding of conscience, and in the fear and love of God, we did a thing which offended many of our old friends. They have deserted us because the great truth, after many years of earnest study, has come like the light of a glorious sun upon our mind, that there is no immortality out of Christ, and that therefore the dogma of endless torment to the unsaved is not and cannot be true.' A number of the brethren were occasional contributors to *The Rainbow*, after its adoption of the Scriptural doctrine of 'Life only in Christ.' Its editor, however, somewhat chilled the ardour of both readers and correspondents by subsequently adopting, and making what Dr Thomas would have called 'a crotchet,' of the ancient theory that the earth is not spherical in form, but square. This theory, it was deeply regretted, was propounded with great zeal and earnestness.

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After Dr Leask's death, *The Rainbow* was conducted for a few years longer by Mr J. B. Rotherham, a gentleman well known for his linguistic attainments and his services in connection with the revision of the text of the Scriptures. The support received was insufficient for its maintenance, however, and it had to be discontinued after an existence of about a quarter of a century.

THE ARMOURER.

In April 1864 the first number appeared of an extraordinary monthly magazine, with this title—*THE ARMOURER: a Warning Voice for Perilous Times; showing that our Present Difficulties in Church and State, and the Impending Struggle, Confusion, and Overthrow that await this Nation have been Distinctly and Literally Foretold, as the Unavoidable Consequences of our Unfaithfulness and Cowardice as Christians and Protestants.* An alarming title enough, surely! Its editor and proprietor was 'John Hampden, Esq., Redland, Bristol;' and he would appear, from what he published, to have made a special study of the prophecies that speak of woes and 'judgments to come,' without having been impressed with those 'standing in the midst of the glories,' as one writer has put it. In a manifesto respecting his magazine, which Mr Hampden issued in the beginning of the year 1866, he said:

It also declares that England, during the year 1866, will be exposed to a crisis that few dream of and fewer still are prepared for. Twelve months ago it warned its readers and the public that 'the 25th of December, 1864, would be the last Merry Christmas for England.' Nine months had not elapsed without the country being threatened with open rebellion, our flocks and herds decimated by pestilence, and our senate-house deprived of the services of the *only* faithful and trustworthy statesman that it possessed! Neither will all the prayers and fastings with which we can mock the Almighty move Him to withdraw His chastening hand until we cease to resist His will, and to harbour and support idolatry in our land. As surely as His Holy Word is true, England's sun will

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THE AMBASSADOR OF THE COMING AGE.

There had been for some time a growing dissatisfaction with *The Messenger of the Churches*, particularly among those brethren who had seceded from the Edinburgh Church and formed themselves into a separate meeting, and among those brethren in different parts of the country who sympathised with them. To those who had been accustomed to read Dr Thomas's *Herald*, the *Messenger* was deemed very insipid reading, and as giving forth a rather uncertain sound. Latterly, also, because a difference of opinion was found to exist between the doctor's strong pronouncements on certain prophetic subjects and the views which found expression in the brethren's monthly magazine, and Dr Thomas's openly expressed denunciation of it, that periodical was coming to be regarded with suspicion, and as not being a worthy champion of the truth. Something more Dr Thomas-like came to be desired, and the wish was very plainly expressed in some quarters. In consequence of this, Robert Roberts, who had only recently removed from Huddersfield to Birmingham, was induced, in the summer of 1864, to make an attempt to supply the want thus felt. The title he at first selected for his literary venture was—THE AMBASSADOR OF THE COMING AGE; a *Monthly Periodical devoted to the Exposition and Defence of 'the Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ,' as comprehensively unfolded in the Writings of Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles.* He gives the following account of how he came to publish such a magazine :—

The Origin of the 'Ambassador.'

Among other things, the idea of starting a monthly magazine began to be agitated. Dr Thomas had suspended the *Herald of the Kingdom* some two years previously, and there was nothing in the field in the way of an adequate periodical representation of the truth. There were two magazines, but they lacked vigour or certainty in the sound they gave out, and received but a very feeble

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attention. Dr Thomas advised me to start a magazine, but said it was better there should be no magazine at all if there was to be nothing better than the twaddling incoherences and feeble uncertainties that some professors of the truth were prepared to be content with. I shared the doctor's feelings on this head, but doubted my own ability to provide what was needful after the clear-eyed and trenchant vigour to which Dr Thomas's *Herald* had accustomed us all. In the presence of this I felt bloodless and tongue-tied in a literary sense. At the same time, I felt sure I would be able to improve upon the weak and adulterated article with which some were disposed to be content; so, after a period of indecision, I decided to make a plunge, with this consolation ahead, that if, as I verily believed, I should be pumped out at the end of twelve months, I could stop, seeing that nothing would depend on the continuance of a publication which I should supply to readers at the price charged by the printer.

The Selection of a Name.

After turning the matter over, I decided to call the new magazine *The Ambassador of the Coming Age*, which I now see was an absurdity; for an age cannot have an ambassador, still less an age not yet come. The idea was to have a name that was new and at the same time expressive of the character of the publication: and the strength of the desire somewhat blunted the discernment that might have detected the unfitness of the title.

The Motto.

The next thing was to find a motto. One with the word 'Ambassador' in it was a *sine qua non*. Proverbs supplied 'A faithful Ambassador is health.' The very thing, thought I; and adopted the verse in which the words occurred, without noticing the first part of it, which declared that 'a wicked Messenger falleth into mischief.' Now, the *Messenger* was the name of one of the aforesaid weak and uncertain publications. The new motto was, therefore, an impeachment of the work already in the field, as well as an assertion of the character it was desirable to attain; but I did not observe this till the magazine actually appeared. The friends of the *Messenger* were of course quick to pounce down upon the motto. Some even

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declared their belief that I had adopted the name *Ambassador* because it fitted a verse in which the *Messenger* was condemned. This was as far from the truth as possible. My eye was wholly filled with 'faithful ambassador.' The 'wicked messenger' was invisible to me till the magazine was in the hands of readers.*

The True Story of Name and Motto.

I must confess that I was perfectly amazed when I first read the foregoing account of how, it is alleged, both the name and the Scripture motto of the *Ambassador* were adopted; and I can only account for the version Robert has given of the affair upon the supposition that, writing, as he did, thirty years after the event, and trusting to a treacherous memory (I suspect), he had forgotten the real facts. He doubtless remembered that there was something about the choice of the motto that had at first been overlooked by him, and his vague recollection induced him—no doubt without meaning to say what was untrue—to allege that he was entirely innocent of the charge of having 'adopted the name *Ambassador* because it fitted a verse in which the *Messenger* was condemned.' That he actually did so, however, I will show.

In the first place, it was not the case that the name *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* had been decided upon, and 'the next thing was to find a motto. One with the word "Ambassador" in it was a *sine quâ non*.' If so, a reference to a Concordance would at once have supplied him with a choice. I was in Birmingham in October 1864—three months after the first number of the *Ambassador* was issued; and while in the house of Robert Roberts, my sister (Mrs Roberts), in the hearing of her husband, gave me the following account of how they came to adopt both a name and a motto for the proposed magazine. She said that they had been puzzled to find a name for it; and while the matter was still unsettled,

* *Good Company*, vol. ii., pp. 466-7.

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the 13th chapter of the Book of Proverbs occurred in the Daily Bible Reading. They were in the habit of reading the lessons together, both in silence. After they had finished the reading, Mrs Roberts asked her husband if he had noticed anything in the reading from the Proverbs which suggested a title for the magazine. He replied that he had not; and she asked him to look through the chapter again, and see if he could not find a suggestion in it. Robert accordingly read the chapter a second time very carefully, but could find no help in his difficulty. His wife then directed his attention to the following verse:—

A wicked Messenger falleth into mischief, but a faithful Ambassador is health.—PROVERBS xiii. 17.

The juxtaposition of 'Messenger' and 'Ambassador' in this verse, and the diverse and strongly pronounced characterisation of each, at once suggested the name and the motto for the proposed magazine, and *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* was accordingly decided upon—although, as Robert has told us above, he afterwards discovered that this name was an absurdity. However, it served its purpose and its time. Both Robert and Mrs Roberts laughed heartily when they found how exactly this Proverb of Solomon fitted their requirements both as to name and motto; and they enjoyed immensely, in anticipation, the discomfiture of the friends and supporters of the *Messenger* when they discovered its extraordinary applicability in the circumstances. It was certainly adopted, with the full knowledge, by both, of its strikingly antipathetic character, so far as the *Messenger* was concerned, and therefore of its thorough mal-appropriateness. I find, on reference to *The Bible Companion*, that the date on which the reading of the 13th chapter of the Book of Proverbs occurs is the 3rd of April; and as the first number of the *Ambassador* was not issued until the 1st of July, this date would be just the time when the proposal for a new magazine was under consideration, and the

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idea taking shape. On the face of it, the statement by Robert Roberts, 'The "wicked messenger" was invisible to me till the magazine was in the hands of readers,' is simply incredible, and I wonder how any one could really believe it. After all, it is but a small affair; but if it is worth notice at all—and Robert Roberts seems to have thought it was—it is surely desirable to have the matter correctly stated.

A Remarkable Coincidence.

It may be mentioned, as showing how dissimilar events will sometimes synchronise, that the announcement of the intention to commence the publication of the *Ambassador* was made in the number of *The Messenger of the Churches* for April 1864—the number containing the article by G. Dowie which led to the repudiation of his brotherhood by R. Roberts.*

Prospectuses of the 'Ambassador.'

Robert Roberts has stated that he had been unable to find a copy of the original prospectus—'the various office removals that had since taken place had been fatal to lumber.' There were, in fact, two different prospectuses issued, besides a circular to those whom he desired to act as correspondents in the various places throughout the country. I happen to have preserved a copy of all three documents, and it will be interesting to reproduce them here.

'THE AMBASSADOR OF THE COMING AGE.'

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A NEW MAGAZINE

TO BE CONDUCTED BY

ROBERT ROBERTS, OF BIRMINGHAM,

(LATE OF HUDDERSFIELD).

Since the suspension of the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, by Dr Thomas, of America, many have expressed a desire for a magazine of like character,

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\* See vol. ii., pp. 90-6.  
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in which the truth should be advocated definitely and without compromise, and defended from all aggression, whencesoever proceeding. To meet this want, the author of *Twelve Lectures, &c.*, has decided (in compliance with the request of many) to commence the issue of a magazine, under the above title, demy octavo—about the size of the *Herald of the Kingdom*—16 pages, neatly stitched in a printed cover, and cut in the edges. The price will be 3d. per copy, or 3s. a yearly volume. The magazine will be issued once a month.

The plan of the magazine will be to advocate and defend the truth according to the fixed standard expressed in the phrase, 'The Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.' Subordinately to this object, it will contain occasional biographical and other sketches, illustrative of the workings of the truth in individual and collective experience, and will publish from month to month, intelligence of such proceedings in various parts of the kingdom, in connection with the truth, as are likely to be interesting to all of 'like precious faith.'

The matter will mainly be contributed by the editor, who, however, will be assisted by those tried and trusty friends of the truth who are 'grounded and settled,' and not easily 'moved away' by every plausible novelty that may be brought forward. The strictest editorial supervision will be exercised, to the exclusion of all writing of a pernicious or unprofitable character. This will not necessarily shut the door on the objector or the inquirer; these will find an ample door of utterance in the correspondence department, where, however, they will be dealt with individually by the editor.

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N.B.—The carrying out of this project will entirely depend upon the amount of support extended to it in the shape of guaranteed subscriptions.

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### SUBSCRIPTIONS, MONTHLY, IN ADVANCE.

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*Orders and Remittances to be sent to R. Roberts, 35 Cannon St., Birmingham.*

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ORDERS NOT ACCEPTED FOR LESS THAN ONE MONTH

*Volume*

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\* \* \* Copies forwarded at the Cost of Subscribers.

PERIODICALS

'THE AMBASSADOR OF THE COMING AGE.'

A NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE, PRICE THREEPENCE.

TO BE CONDUCTED BY

ROBERT ROBERTS, OF BIRMINGHAM,

(LATE OF HUDDERSFIELD).

*Author of 'Twelve Lectures on the Religious Errors of the Times.'*

The Bible reveals a Coming Age, in which the government of mankind will be solely vested in Jesus Christ, who will be personally present on the earth to administer the functions of his high position; and it sets forth that everything wrong will then be put right. Men will universally be brought to submit, with bended knee and confessing tongue, to the sovereign supremacy of God, and to do His will even as it is done in heaven. They will be influenced to abandon hatred and selfishness, and to show mutual good-will, which will become the order of the day. The oppressor will be destroyed, and the downtrodden set free. Arrogance and pocket pride will be driven from the high places of the earth, and replaced by the meek and the needy, who will have undergone previous preparation for the position. Ignorance and debasement will give way before the spreading glory of the Lord, which shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The people shall learn Jehovah's ways, and no more walk in the imagination of their evil heart. Truth and righteousness, abounding like a mighty stream, shall sweep away the subterfuges and hypocrisies of the present time. In a word, the effulgent rising of the Sun of Righteousness will dissipate the shades of night which have so long brooded over the world, and restore the day for ever.

This coming age of glory is heralded on almost every page of the Bible. Moses, the prophets, and apostles, all unite in sounding its prophetic fame; and their report reaches down to this late generation; yet its approach is almost unknown. A shapeless tradition, that a good time is coming, is all the trace that can be discovered in Christendom of the glorious and definitely-worded proclamation of Heaven's messengers. How lamentable that God's

PAGE 360 IS NOT IN MY PHOTOCOPY  
- EITHER NOT COPIED

## PERIODICALS

promises should be so little understood and appreciated! The change is near, even at the door. 'The times of the Gentiles' have nearly run their course. The gathering storms of the political atmosphere, coincident with the expiry of the prophetic periods, are a sure omen that the close of this dispensation is at hand; and that the present generation may witness the unparalleled judgments by which the kingdoms of this world are to be wrested from the powers that be, and transferred to 'that Man whom God hath appointed.'

The mission of the *Ambassador* will be to faithfully delineate the verities of the coming age for the enlightenment of those who would be saved, and to warn the people, ere it is too late, to prepare for the advent of the King of kings and Lord of lords, that they may escape the destroying judgments of the period, and be welcomed into his joy.

A department will be provided for the inquirer and the objector, whose demands will be attended to by the editor.

The magazine will, at first, consist of 16 pages demy octavo, in printed cover, neatly stitched, and cut in the edges.

The issue will be commenced on a sufficient number of orders being obtained.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS MONTHLY, ON RECEIPT OF THE NUMBERS.

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*Orders and Remittances to be sent to Local Agents, or to R. Roberts,  
35 Cannon Street, Birmingham.*

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The issue of this second prospectus was suggested for several reasons. In the first prospectus, it was stated that the *Ambassador* would only be commenced if a sufficient number of guaranteed subscribers was received. The responses to that first prospectus, though not so numerous as to meet the actual cost of printing the proposed magazine, were yet sufficiently near the paying point as to encourage the hope that it would ultimately be reached. Another and more powerful reason was the correspondence, already referred to,\* which had just taken

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\* See vol. ii., pp. 90-5.

## PERIODICALS

place between G. Dowie and R. Roberts, and which led to the repudiation of the fellowship of the former by the latter. After the correspondence that had taken place respecting the secession in the Edinburgh Church, in 1862, and subsequently, Robert had perceived how, even then, things were drifting. His correspondence with G. Dowie brought matters to a crisis; and, so far as he was concerned, Robert determined to take a stand for what he believed to be the truth. Hence the issue of this second prospectus, and the clear and well-defined purpose that runs all through it.

### Circular to Correspondents.

When it was finally determined that the magazine was to be commenced, Robert issued a circular to a number of brethren in different parts of the country, whom he desired to act as local correspondents for it. I have preserved the copy he sent to me, which reads thus:—

### 'THE AMBASSADOR OF THE COMING AGE.'

*25 Cannon Street, Birmingham.*

DEAR BROTHER,

I shall be greatly obliged if you will send me all intelligence arising in your neighbourhood within the last month in connection with the progress of the truth or the interests of the brethren, for publication in *The Ambassador of the Coming Age*, the first number of which will appear on the 1st of July next; and I shall be further obliged if you will consent to undertake the performance of this duty from month to month. The intelligence desired should relate to additions, removals, deaths, marriages (where the parties are brother and sister), lectures, special meetings of every kind, any step taken to promote the cause of the truth, or anything else likely to be interesting to those of like precious faith throughout the kingdom.

All intelligence to be sent in before the 22nd of the month.

Your affectionate brother in Christ,

ROBERT ROBERTS.

### The Launching of the 'Ambassador.'

The founder of the *Ambassador* gives the following account of his personal experience in starting the magazine, and in its management during the early period of its existence:—

## PERIODICALS

The prospectus was sent to all who had subscribed for the penny numbers of *Twelve Lectures*. The response was just about sufficient to cover the printer's monthly charge; and, as I had never set my mind on anything beyond this, I resolved to go ahead. A brother in Halifax, Yorkshire, undertook the printing of the magazine, and, I think, attended to the despatch through the post of the first few numbers. This arrangement continued for about two years, and was on the whole satisfactory. The only inconvenience was the tendency on the part of the said brother to edit as well as print the magazine, which compelled me to request him to set up the type exactly according to 'copy.' This undeservedly earned for me the character of being 'the most pepperish customer on the books.' The arrangement continued till the request of a Birmingham printer to have the work coincided with the occurrence of an accident to the Halifax printer, from the effects of which he died.\*

### The Conducting of the Magazine.

The appearance of the first number of the *Ambassador* was a surprise to most of those who had subscribed for it. The offensive motto R. Roberts had adopted for it, coming after his renunciation of the fellowship of G. Dowie, was looked upon as a declaration of war against the *Messenger* and all who supported it, although it was some time before it was fully realised what this meant. On his part, Robert was not unwilling that it should be so regarded; and those who sympathised with him, and had been dissatisfied with what they considered the milk-and-water style of the *Messenger*, were loud in their praise of the bold attitude which he had assumed. This proved to be the real parting of the ways with a large section of the brotherhood; for the differences that had previously existed now became more pronounced, and a feeling of decided hostility between the two was fostered. To do Robert justice, he fully carried out the programme he had outlined in his second prospectus, so far as contending earnestly for the faith was concerned. He was young, ardent, and full of zeal—a

\* *Good Company*, vol. iii., pp. 28-9.

## PERIODICALS

zeal, however, which was not always tempered with discretion—with a tendency to extremes that sometimes led him into rather awkward predicaments. He thus laid himself open to many complaints, for some of which there was only too much cause.

Thus, he let it be understood that the *Ambassador* was not an 'impartial' magazine—that, in his burning desire to maintain the truth at all hazards, he would not allow any one who differed from him to have a hearing in his pages. This was all very well in its way; but the resolution, carried out in the extreme way it was by him, in the opinion of some whose opinion was worth listening to, injured rather than helped the truth he was so anxious to serve. He himself said in his first prospectus: 'The strictest editorial supervision will be exercised, to the exclusion of all writing of a pernicious or unprofitable character.' He no doubt exercised a strict enough supervision over the generality of his correspondents; but there was one of them whom he appeared to exempt from all supervision. This was Dr Thomas, whose communications, published in the *Ambassador*, sometimes contained slanderous statements respecting certain of the brethren. These slanders were freely admitted into the magazine, and spoken of approvingly by its editor. Dr Thomas was a man who had suffered much himself from the misrepresentation and falsehood of his opponents; and it might have been expected that he, of all men, would have been careful to observe what has been well called the Golden Rule in dealing with what he regarded as erring brethren. Instead of that, he at times indulged in the peculiar style of superlative personal abuse in which he was a past master; and R. Roberts, instead of exercising 'the strictest editorial supervision,' and deleting the offensive passages, welcomed them gladly, and gave them ready circulation in his periodical. In view of this partiality for the scurrilities of Dr Thomas, it seems quite ludicrous to read the following self-satisfied declaration by the editor:

## PERIODICALS

Our rule is to exclude everything from the pages of the *Ambassador* at all tending to personalities, believing it to be a healthier policy to bestow exclusive attention upon its cosmopolitan relations, which will wear out all the petty heats and jealousies of a passing generation.\*

A 'healthier policy!' truly, Robert. Then why did you not carry it out yourself, and insist that Dr Thomas should also conform to it?

### THE CHRISTADELPHIAN.

In July 1869, the name of the *Ambassador* was changed under circumstances which have been narrated by its editor as follows:—

During Dr Thomas's stay in Birmingham [in 1869], he suggested the change of the name of the monthly magazine from *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* to *The Christadelphian*. He did not do so directly; he was too much of a gentleman for that. He said one day in the office, if he should ever conduct a monthly magazine again (which he thought very unlikely) he should call it *The Christadelphian*. He had a reason for it. He judged from the progress that was being made in numbers that, by-and-bye, there would arise ambitious men, lacking depth, who would desire to lead without all the qualifications for it—mediocrities who would start magazines for the liking of the thing, or for the ventilation of crotchets; and if the name *Christadelphian* were unappropriated, it would be sure to be taken by some of this class, to the detriment of the truth. I expressed concurrence in his views, and intimated that, if he did not object, I would substitute the suggested name for *The Ambassador*. He was evidently pleased at my agreement with him on the matter. I adopted the new name at once, without, however, making an immediate change. I used both names together for a while, gradually enlarging the size of the type in which the new name was printed, from month to month, until in about six months I dropped the name *Ambassador* altogether.†

\* *The Ambassador of the Coming Age*, 1865, p. 236.

† *Good Company*, vol. iii., pp. 470-1.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES.

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In the early days of the revival of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in this country, manuscript magazines played a not unimportant part, especially in Edinburgh, where the revival may be said to have first taken deep root. A number of periodicals of this kind have from time to time existed in connection with the meeting. Some of these magazines were open for the perusal of, and the reception of articles by, all the brethren and sisters, both in Edinburgh and at a distance; whilst others were restricted, both in their list of readers and writers, to select circles—generally of the more youthful members.

#### THE MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINE.

So early as the days of the Free Communion Meeting in High Street, a periodical of this kind, which simply had the name of THE MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINE, was established to aid the small company who were wont to assemble there in their gropings after the truth. It was edited by Thomas Lawrie, and it may be said that in it some of the good seed of the kingdom was sown. I remember one article in it, in particular, which caused some sensation and a good deal of discussion. It was headed, 'What shall Reform the World?—by Andrew Jeffrey.' The writer was thoroughly orthodox in his views; for, after considering a number of the reforming agencies of the time, he came to the conclusion that none of them would effect the desired end, but that it was *love* that must be the means of reforming the world. Those who had come under Dr Thomas's teaching took quite a different view of the matter; and I can recollect how eagerly this article was discussed in certain domestic circles. The idea was ridiculed that the world could be reformed by love, John Forman and William Wilson maintaining that the only real reformation that could possibly be looked for was

#### MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

associated with the return of the Lord Jesus to free the earth and its inhabitants from the curse which had been pronounced upon it because of man's first disobedience, and from which curse it had been suffering ever since. It was the first time I had heard of such a termination to the evils that at present afflict humanity, and I was much impressed by it.

Another noted contributor to *The Manuscript Magazine* was Francis Renwick, then in the United States, who, under the title of 'Words, Words, Words,' sent a lengthy article, which was transcribed in a neat and legible hand by Margaret Inglis (afterwards Mrs Richard Alexander), in which Francis narrated some of his experiences in the backwoods of America, and philosophised upon them.

#### THE NIGHT LAMP.

*The Manuscript Magazine* had a brief existence. After the re-constitution of the High Street Hall meeting, and more attention was being given to the subject of the Lord's second coming, and the necessity of our preparation for it, another manuscript magazine was commenced, of a more distinctive character. It was named 'THE NIGHT LAMP,' and was specially intended for the study of prophecy, as a light shining in a dark place, to which we do well to take heed. John Forman, if I remember rightly, was the editor, and suggested the appropriate name for the magazine. He experienced the same difficulty that the editors of all manuscript magazines have had to contend with—that of getting a sufficient number of suitable articles. I was then only a lad of fifteen or sixteen; and I remember I was venturesome enough to send a short anonymous contribution to it. I suppose, in his poverty of articles, the editor could not afford to comply with the usual rule that relegates anonymous communications to the waste basket, because my small communication was inserted; but no one suspected who the author was. This magazine also had an ephemeral existence.

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### THE CHURCH MOUSE.

A manuscript magazine—if such it really could be called—bearing the not very pretentious title of THE CHURCH MOUSE, made its appearance within a year of the formation of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Its birth is recorded in my church register as having taken place on Monday, April 24th, 1854, and it happened in this wise:—On Sunday, March 30th, Grierson Mitchell, James Lawrie, and I—who at that time usually went under the name of 'The Trio,' in the meeting, as we were 'great 'chums,' and always associated together in all sorts of fanciful schemes, which we supposed would be for the benefit of the church—had a long consultation on various matters. These included, amongst other things, the starting of a manuscript magazine, which, in the first instance, should be confined to The Trio, who assumed the following *noms de guerre*:—Roland (G. Mitchell), Albert (J. Lawrie), and Arnold (W. Norrie). The plan adopted was this:—A small volume of ruled writing paper (large post octavo), containing 160 pages, was procured, in which the first article was written by Roland, who then handed it to Albert, who, having written in his article, passed it on to Arnold, by whom, after his article had been added, it was returned to Roland; and then the same process was continued *ad infinitum*. The first page was occupied by the title, which was as follows:—THE CHURCH MOUSE: *a Series of Papers by The Trio*. This singular title was at first suggested in a joke by James Lawrie. It was, however, taken up seriously by the other two, in spite of a protest against it by him. This title was grandly illuminated by Roland. The design represented the entire globe, entirely encircled by 'The Trio,' and underneath was a shield, on which three mice, with very curly tails, were conspicuously emblazoned. The objects and methods of the magazine were thus explained in the

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### Preface.

The design of this work is only the improvement of its contributors. Its pages, therefore, are intended to be filled with original articles by them, to the length of which no limits shall be prescribed. The only restriction imposed as to the subjects is, that they be written a spirit becoming the Christian character—a condition which none of The Trio will be disposed to violate.

It is understood that *The Church Mouse* be read only by The Trio and such select individuals as they may unanimously agree to favour with a perusal. This precaution is taken not because we love darkness better than light, but because we are willing to forego the pleasure it would afford us to give others a perusal, rather than that, having enjoyed it for a season, we should be compelled to relapse into worse than Egyptian darkness.

ROLAND.

ALBERT.

ARNOLD.

The articles written were of a very miscellaneous kind, and included some poetical fragments by Roland; and the appearance of the volume was also enlivened by a few graphic pen-and-ink sketches by Roland and Albert. The end of the volume was reached at Christmas of the same year. The second volume began with the New Year (1855), and with that also commenced a trouble which proved 'the beginning of the end' of the magazine. During the earlier part of its existence, it was kept almost entirely to The Trio, although extracts from it were occasionally read at social gatherings in connection with the Saturday Night Meeting. At a social meeting of the younger brethren and sisters, held on the evening of New Year's Day, 1855, it was announced that in future the magazine should be 'open' to all those attending the Saturday Night Meeting. The invitation, however, was not accepted, at least so far as the contribution of articles was concerned; and the magazine was only continued for six months afterwards.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### THE VIOLET.

Following the example of the conductors of *The Church Mouse*, a trio of the younger sisters in the Edinburgh Church, in the early part of the year 1855, commenced a manuscript magazine of their own. It originated in a rather peculiar manner. The fraternal Trio were a good deal disappointed that no addition was made to their number after the *Mouse* was declared 'open' to all the younger brethren and sisters in the meeting. At one of our Saturday Night Meetings, when a personal appeal was made to the younger sisters to 'come over and help us,' and they persistently declined to respond to the appeal, I was ungallant enough to say, in a bantering spirit, that I did not think they were able to do anything in the literary line. This aspersion seemed to touch their sense of honour; and to show how unjust it was, they straightway took sweet counsel together, formed themselves into a rival Trio, and resolved to start a magazine of their own as the best way to give the lie direct to the depreciatory remark which had been made respecting them. The Trio consisted of Jane and Agnes Norrie and Margaret Swanson, Agnes being the leading spirit in the project. They gave the pretty title of THE VIOLET to their little bantling. Like the modest flower whose name was assumed, *The Violet* shrank from the public gaze, its readers being restricted to the brotherhood and sisterhood, and it was only as a great favour that this privilege was conceded. Occasionally, at social gatherings in connection with the Saturday Night Meeting, selections from it were read, in compliance with urgent requests from those not within the extremely select circle of its contributors. Like *The Church Mouse*, *The Violet* was a small ruled manuscript book, in which the writers in succession inscribed their articles. It did not extend to more than one volume—indeed, I think that the one volume never was quite filled.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### THE ASSISTANT.

*The Church Mouse* being defunct, another manuscript magazine, bearing the name of THE ASSISTANT, was commenced, at the suggestion of Grierson Mitchell and myself—I undertaking the editorship. The first number was issued on November 17, 1855. This was the first manuscript magazine that was open to all the brethren and sisters. The following extract from the 'Prefatory Remarks,' by the editor, explains its aims and objects:—

The object of *The Assistant*, as its name imports, is, in one word—improvement. We wish to improve in knowledge, in wisdom, and in every Christian virtue; and believing that it is in the power of every individual in our meeting to do much—more, perhaps, than is supposed—to mutually aid each other in the attainment of these good qualities, we consider that, amongst the various means by which this may be accomplished, that afforded in the pages of a manuscript magazine is not the least effective.

In view of the lamentable fate of other manuscript magazines that we could mention, we are free to confess that we can afford calmly to contemplate the probable history—perhaps untimely end—of the present one. That it eventually may, and will, give up the ghost, we have not the slightest doubt; for *The Assistant* is not expected to possess inherent immortality any more than does any individual member of the human family; and, possibly enough, may only maintain a brief and languishing existence, terminating in death. What then? Will our object thereby be frustrated?—our purpose foiled? By no means; at least we hope not. Rather, we say, with such a prospect before *The Assistant*, let us endeavour to make the most of its short-lived career, and cause it to 'live all the days of its life.'

In addition to 'articles,' it also had pen-and-ink illustrations by the artistic brethren. It was intended to be issued monthly, but some months it failed to come out, from the lack of sufficient material. Nine numbers in all appeared, the last being in November 1856.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### EXCELSIOR.

One of our longest-lived manuscript magazines, which was at first under the editorship of Grierson Mitchell, rejoiced in the somewhat ambitious title of EXCELSIOR. The first number appeared on August 9, 1857. Two new and interesting features were introduced into it. One of these (for which I was responsible) was the giving of a report of the proceedings at the First Day meetings of the church during the month, and any other intelligence of interest. The other (which was the device of the editor) was the 'Readers' Page,' and consisted of a number of blank pages at the end of each number, in which the readers were invited to enter remarks, suggestions, and criticisms upon the various articles. This latter was a privilege that was appreciated by all the contributors, and by a number of the readers, who did not venture to appear in *Excelsior* as article-writers; and some original and interesting remarks were occasionally found in the Readers' Pages.

After circulating in Edinburgh, *Excelsior* paid a round of visits to select circles of readers in Glasgow and Dundee, besides also being sent to various isolated brethren and sisters in different parts of the country, by whom its visits were always most welcome. So highly was it appreciated in the Glasgow circle of readers, that when it was proposed that *The Messenger of the Churches* should be issued in printed form, some of the Western readers suggested that *Excelsior* should rather be printed, and the *Messenger* continue in its manuscript form. *Excelsior* had several editors during its existence. Grierson edited it until June 1863, when the duty was undertaken by John R. Norrie, who was succeeded in March 1872 by James Dowie. *Excelsior*, as has been said, had a much longer lease of life than any of its predecessors; and, with occasional intervals of much more than a month, continued to make its appearance for a great many years.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### THE MESSENGER OF THE CHURCHES.

It might be supposed, from the number of manuscript magazines, all more or less ephemeral, which have already been mentioned, that the Edinburgh Church made something like a hobby of this description of literature. Possibly they did; and because they thus had experience of the benefits which might be gained from such a literary medium, it occurred to them that it would be for the advantage of the whole brotherhood if a periodical of this description, specially designed for the brethren at large, were commenced. This suggestion was made at a social meeting of the Edinburgh Church, held on Sunday, April 13, 1858. The proposal was heartily approved of; and so promptly was it acted upon, that, at the social meeting held on the evening of the Fast Day, which was the succeeding Thursday, papers intended for the first number were read and approved, and the name agreed to be THE MESSENGER OF THE CHURCHES. This initial number was issued for the following month (May). It introduced itself to the brotherhood by the following

#### Preamble.

The brethren in Edinburgh have thought that much good might result from a more frequent communication among all the churches, and submit to the disciples in other parts the following scheme:—

They shall at stated times—once a month, if possible—issue a collection of letters and papers bearing upon congregational usages and church improvement. This collection will be sent to some church for perusal, who shall read them, and despatch the same to the next indicated on the list given on the opposite page, within one week. If anything is found worthy of more attention, we shall expect that there shall be found some one ready to copy it for preservation. It is recommended that a portion of the time of the best attended meeting—say, on the First Day of the week—should be devoted to reading aloud the magazine; but that whatever plan be employed, there be the strictest punctuality observed, that no disappointment may be experienced by those succeeding.

#### MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

In suggesting this to the brethren, we in Edinburgh are only expanding an idea which is very familiar to us in a practical form. We have had amongst ourselves a M.S. magazine for some years, which, after passing through various fortunes, has now become almost a congregational institution. The monthly appearance of *Excelsior* is looked for with much interest by all. This magazine contains articles of a very varied character, and circulates among all the brethren. The advantages of it in a social way are very manifest. On that account we think a wider experience of the same thing would be eminently beneficial to the churches.

For the successful maintenance of this, it will be necessary that the brethren in other parts should freely communicate as briefly and as plainly as possible, and on paper the same size as this. (Take a pattern of it.) The Edinburgh Church supply the whole of this issue; but it is hoped that the abundance from other parties will allow of the reduction of the Edinburgh contributions to a mere moiety in the future. If there is a deficiency of time or ability to dress these up in the regular form suitable for circulation, they may be sent in their rough state to Edinburgh, where persons will be found ready to transcribe them.

There are two kinds of communications we hold ourselves open to—first, matter approved by the church, and sent by its authority; second, papers from private individuals. The second will, of course, be more amenable to editorial criticism than the first. In both cases, we trust the above recommendations will be attended to, and also that the epistolary form be avoided, to prevent any infringement of the regulations of the book postage.

The following pages are intended to give a sample of the kind of material which is deemed most suitable for this *Messenger of the Churches*.

The congregation here will see to its editing and first issue in every case; and all communications must be addressed to George Dowie, 12 Beaumont Place, the secretary of the Edinburgh Church.

The articles in the first number were—'Musical Experiments and Experiences in Edinburgh,' 'Jesus,' 'Letter Writing,' 'Condition and Prospects of Israel,' and 'Apii Forum.'

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### Its General Management.

George Dowie was the managing editor of the *Messenger*, being assisted by James Cameron and William Laing. To expedite its circulation, two copies were issued, one for circulation in Scotland, and the other in England. The places to which it was despatched included Aberdeen, Dundee, Newburgh, Dunkeld, Cupar-Fife, Crossgates, Glasgow, Paisley, Wishaw, Lanark, Airdrie, Halifax, Derby, Nottingham, Devonport, Berwick (Paxton South Mains), Barrow-in-Furness, and Portsmouth.

### Its Speciality.

The nature of some of the contributions sent to the editor caused him to insert the following notice in the fifth number :—

We take this opportunity of reminding our contributors that papers in discussion of 'the faith' would be fully as much in place if inserted in *The Gospel Witness*. We seek to occupy other and vacant ground; to promote as far as possible mutual help in the matter of congregational improvement—preferring the social to the political aspect of that question.

In carrying out the *Messenger's* speciality, among the suggestions which it contained was a proposal for a methodised inter-communication by letter for inquiry on all points, at the persons who offered to give instruction. An elaborate scheme, with list of subjects, on which information was offered, was submitted, but no practical result followed.

### The Change to Printed Form.

The manuscript *Messenger of the Churches* was continued to be issued monthly until the end of 1859, altogether fifteen numbers having appeared. It was so highly appreciated by this time, that a very general desire was expressed that it should be printed; and this change was accordingly made with the beginning of the year 1860.

## MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINES

### THE INVESTIGATOR.

Some of the brethren in different parts of the country while well satisfied with the manuscript Messenger, as a medium of intercommunication among the churches, came to think that it would be an advantage to have, in addition, a manuscript periodical more especially devoted to the consideration of first principles and the various aspects of the faith. This desire was first felt in Halifax; and the brethren there, finding a good deal of sympathy in various quarters, resolved to take the initiative in the matter. The magazine they agreed to commence was named THE INVESTIGATOR, and it had for its motto the appropriate Scripture injunction, 'Search the Scriptures.' The editor was Robert Roberts, who was at that time in a situation in Huddersfield, and a member of the Halifax meeting. The first number of the magazine was issued on August 7, 1858—just three months after the appearance of the first number of the Messenger. The meaning of the new venture was explained in a long article by the editor, from which I take the following extract:—

#### Introductory.

Herewith we present the brethren with No. 1 of *The Investigator*. Its character has been so well explained by the editor of the *Messenger*, that anything further in that way is almost unnecessary. It is to be what its name implies—an investigator of truth as contained in the Scriptures. There are many minor matters of Scriptural knowledge which are not known to some; in reference to others, great difference of opinion exists; while in some cases there is misunderstanding of the fundamental principles of our faith: and when it is considered how inadequate are the facilities which the brethren—who are poor and scattered—possess for intercourse on any subject, and how frequently, from inadvertence, those who are together overlook those matters of doctrine which form the basis of the spiritual building—the seed which produces the fruit of acceptable holiness—the importance will at once be seen of having some means by which brethren

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may have an occasion for bringing forth their treasures of knowledge for the general benefit, and by which the strength of our faith in any idea may be made to appear in the strong reasons which can be shown for the hope that is within us. Such a means does *The Investigator* purport to be. It may be regarded as a general place of meeting, where brethren from different parts may assemble to 'speak often one to another' on those wondrous things which are contained in the Scriptures of truth; and in this character is it only to be regarded. It is not to be a place of general gossip, but one where men of sober minds shall come together (to keep up the figure), to reason with each other of 'sound doctrine' in words of courteous earnestness. *The Messenger* is the hall of social chat and general converse; *The Investigator* is the solemn meeting of the brethren to examine whether they be in the faith; so that there will be a time and a place for both, and a relish for each. In all affection, then, we invite the brethren to muster once a month, or at least as often as they can. To drop the figure, we solicit the brethren for support. We ask them to show their interest in the things that perish not by responding (to the things set forth) in the shape of articles on the subjects treated of, or on any matter touching Scripture doctrine. Further, we invite all brethren and sisters to state in writing the difficulties which may occasionally arise in the course of their studies, and forward the same to the editor of *The Investigator*, who will attend thereto or lay it before the brethren generally for explanation. In this way will the object of *The Investigator* best be attained.

#### Its General Management.

*The Investigator* was conducted in a similar manner to the *Messenger*, two copies being provided, one for England and the other for Scotland. During its existence it dealt with a number of queries and difficulties suggested by readers; and the editor himself had a series of articles in it entitled 'Conversations with a Campbellite,' in which some of the errors held by the members of that body were handled in a way to expose their unscripturalness. In the closing months of its career, R. Roberts was unable to continue the editorship, owing to his illness, and

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the duty was thereupon undertaken by Frank Shuttleworth. It was discontinued with the commencement of the printed *Messenger* in January 1860—it being understood that, with the additional accommodation that would thus be afforded, the purposes of both periodicals would be combined in one.

#### THE OBSERVER.

A manuscript magazine with this name was commenced in Nottingham in 1860, but only lasted a few months. A notice of it has already been given in these pages,\* and need not be repeated here.

#### THE TRAVELLER.

The Edinburgh Church, in its early days, earned a good report from the whole brotherhood from the manner in which it looked after their interests in various ways. Amongst other modes in which this kindly feeling was manifested was the starting by a few of them of a special manuscript magazine, very appropriately named *THE TRAVELLER*. This magazine was intended primarily to circulate among persons who had at one time been members of the Edinburgh Church, but had left the city; the object being to keep them still in touch with their former religious associates, by keeping them well posted up in what was going on in the meeting, and offering words of brotherly sympathy and encouragement to those who were isolated from fellowship. The idea was an excellent one; and as I was at the time in a position to qualify me as a reader, I highly appreciated the visits of *The Traveller*. Grierson Mitchell was, I believe, the prime mover in this undertaking, and the first number of the magazine was despatched on its rounds on March 16, 1862. It was issued at irregular intervals, its visits being only too like those of the angels. Its existence was of much too short duration, it coming to an end about April 1863.

\* See vol. ii., pp. 351-6.

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### WILD FLOWERS.

This was a manuscript magazine, both the writers and the readers of which were restricted to the sisters in the Edinburgh Church. The plan adopted was the same as that of *The Church Mouse* and *The Violet*—a blank ruled book being obtained, and it being passed from one contributor to another. It was a pretty conceit of the fair writers that they should masquerade as flowers, each adopting the name of a particular flower, with which she signed her articles. By this device it was hoped to preserve the anonymity of the writers, at least to outsiders, should the volume ever pass into their hands (which it sometimes did). The flowers thus represented were—the Lily, Mrs Winter; Blue Bell, Jane Kirkland; Forget-me-not, Elizabeth Adam; Wallflower, Barbara Tod; Craigfortune Rose, Mrs Methven; Violet, Mrs Dowie; Primrose, Helen Watson; Snowdrop, Margaret M'Kechney; Hyacinth, Anna G. Miln, Dundee; Daisy, Kate Bennett, Mumbles; besides Pink, Crowfoot, and Fern, whose individualities I have not been able to identify. *Wild Flowers* blossomed in the spring of 1865, but, alas! they drooped and faded with the approach of the following winter.

END OF VOLUME III.