VOL I
Pages 1 to 116

# 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 I.

(PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION)

EARLSTON

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1904

'*My earnest desire is to see developed in Britain a people who shall be separate and distinct from all others; the foundation of whose distinctiveness and separation shall be the intelligent belief and obedience of the truth, not mere opinionists and speculators, but a people in whom is "full assurance of faith," and "full assurance of hope." Such a people would be "a people prepared for the Lord." The "religious world," so called, is the apostacy foretold by Paul. A prepared people must be separate and distinct from this in faith and hope and love.*'—Dr John Thomas.

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'*A new generation of men has sprung up since we took our determined stand for "The Things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ;" but we make no apology to them for our stern conservatism of those words which were so hard for us to learn nearly forty years ago; because we have tested and tried and proved them. And it would be the solace and pleasure of our ripe years to find that when we must leave the field, our sons take stand on the same part we have occupied, and are fighting valiantly for every inch of the hallowed ground. The tendency of every old community is to deteriorate, and there must needs be reforms age by age. If we could by any means secure our testimony unbroken over a second generation, we should do the whole world a good service, and be more able to ensure a people faithful, united, and ready for the Lord when he comes. Forget not we are "made partakers of him if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end."*'—George Dowie.

Vol I

# NOTE.

As is stated on the title-page, this book, of which only ten copies have been printed, is intended for private circulation among those who are interested in the subject of which it treats. That subject is the varying fortunes and misfortunes of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God during the twenty-five years that succeeded its introduction into Britain by the late Dr John Thomas, of New York. The impression has been made thus limited, because those interested in such a narrative are a 'little flock,' and the number of those whose interest takes the form of approval is believed to be much less.

I have to acknowledge having received valuable assistance in carrying out my self-imposed task from JAMES CAMERON, who, during a long lifetime, has done much, both by voice and pen, to propagate the Gospel of the Kingdom in this country after its introduction by Dr Thomas. I have drawn largely from James Cameron's writings in the following pages, as being exceedingly relevant to the matter in hand.

To GRIERSON GORDON MITCHELL, also—the esteemed and intimate associate of those early years—I have been much indebted for great help, most willingly rendered; and I think the reader will acknowledge that some of the most interesting passages in this volume are among the selections given from his facile pen.

From the circumstances in which this volume has passed through the press, it contains a number of typographical errors, which the critical reader is asked to overlook.

W. N.

EARLSTON, BERWICKSHIRE,
JULY 1904.

Vol 1

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# EARLY HISTORY

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# IN BRITAIN.

COMPILED BY WILLIAM NORRIE, EARLSTON, N.B.

## INTRODUCTORY.

### Explanation of Terms.

LET it be distinctly understood that, in this 'Early History,' by the phrase, 'Gospel of the Kingdom of God,' is meant, in other words, 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ'—(Acts viii. 12)—the only gospel that is treated of in the Scriptures, although it is mentioned under a variety of different names, with the exception of 'the everlasting gospel'—(Rev. xiv. 6)—whose proclamation is still a thing of the future. Another term which has been derisively given to it by its opponents is

### 'The Gospel According to Dr Thomas.'

This phrase, though originating in a spirit of contempt for the great system of religious truth which it is thus sought to ridicule, is at the same time singularly expressive and also absolutely truthful, inasmuch as it links with the Gospel of the Kingdom the name of the man to whom, humanly speaking, we are indebted for having revived and rescued Bible truth 'from the rubbish heaps piled upon it by the man-pleasing traditions of ages.'

### The First Preacher of the Gospel of the Kingdom in America.

Although the claim of John Thomas, of New York, to be the first preacher of the Gospel of the Kingdom in these latter days has been so well established as to

be altogether indisputable, yet there are persons who, for various reasons, have called it in question, and endeavoured to assign the distinction to others. The following statement, for instance, from an American source, has received more or less currency in religious publications on this side of the Atlantic :—

THE FIRST PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM IN AMERICA.

Elias Smith, a 'Christian Baptist' minister, had this honour, as well as the honour of first advocating in a paper the doctrine of eternal life through Christ alone; indeed, he published the first religious newspaper in the world.

In September 1808 Smith published the first number of *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, a 4to of 4 pp., semi-monthly, at Portsmouth, N. H. It was afterwards published in Portland, Me., and afterwards in Philadelphia, Pa., but is now still published with its original name at Newbury Part, Mass., though its enterprising editor has passed away. In the first number the editor observes: 'A religious newspaper is almost a new thing under the sun; I know not but this is the first ever published in the world.'

In the *Herald* Smith taught that the four great earthly ruling monarchies prophesied of in Daniel were in the past, and that the fifth abiding kingdom was at hand, when the whole world would be governed by a Jew—Jesus Christ. That the Redeemer would come visibly and personally at the beginning of the Millennium to reign with his saints during that happy period on the earth. That there would be two resurrections, one thousand years apart, the millennial era of Rev. xx. being located between these two events—'the first resurrection to occur at the advent, when all the good will arise.' That immortality was God's free gift, to be inherited through Christ, and bestowed on the just alone, in their resurrection—all the wicked will finally perish in 'the second death.'

These facts are significant, no matter who Elias Smith was, or what he came to be afterwards. William Miller or John Thomas did not begin to write on the subject of the near second advent till a quarter of a century afterwards.*

* D. T. Taylor in *The Crisis*, [illegible] *Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 22-3.

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* D. T. Taylor in *The Christ*.

The statement of things here said to have been advocated by Mr Elias Smith may be all perfectly true, but if the above is the whole that can be said about them, it will at once be seen that they come far short of 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas,' and do not at all invalidate the claim that is put forward on his behalf, that he was the first, in a generation that is now nearly passed away, to demonstrate that the gospel is 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' and to show from Scripture the necessity of baptism subsequent to a belief of this gospel in order to obtain the eternal life and the blessedness brought to life through it.

**Dr Thomas's Claim Vindicated.**

'A Baptised Believer of the Gospel of the Kingdom,' who will not be suspected of any undue personal feeling in favour of Dr Thomas, seeing that he was moved to write some very severe things in condemnation of certain acts of the doctor, interrupts the flow of a perfect torrent of fierce vituperation to make the following candid admission of his own and our indebtedness to this same much maligned individual :—

But, brethren, let us by all means give honour to whom honour is due, and praise to whom praise is due. We have been noticing the evil John Thomas has been doing; justice requires that we also take notice of the good he has done. . . . I frankly admit that I did not know what the 'gospel' was until I read part second of *Elpis Israel* and other portions of J. T.'s writings. It would be ungrateful as well as untrue in me if I were to deny this. Previous to J. T.'s visit to Britain in 1848, I do not believe there was a 'baptised believer of the gospel' in Britain. I know there are a few who say they were baptised believers of the gospel previous to that time; but upon interrogating these persons, their confessions sadly belie them. At that time, many of us in Britain had learned through the writings of Alexander Campbell, of Bethany College, in America, that a bath in water was essentially necessary for sanctification in order to salvation. It is written, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' But John

*Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 22-3.

Thomas let us know then that there was more than a bath in water necessary—that there was a certain 'word' and its concomitants to be understood and heartily believed before a bath in water could, by any means whatever, be efficacious in cleansing from sin or sanctifying. So that the meetings or churches of 'baptised believers of the gospel' which now exist in Britain can be said, I think, with all justice, to owe their origin, directly or indirectly, to John Thomas's instrumentality at that time, by pen and voice, in arousing and calling men's minds to the inexorable fact, that if they would be saved from eternal death they must believe the things of the Kingdom of God and name of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Law and the Testimony, and the writings of the apostles, and then be baptised into this name.

Many years previous to 1848, A. Campbell showed abundantly the nature and design of the ordinance of baptism—that it was instituted to sanctify and cleanse the believer from his old sins, and initiate him into Christ; and that it is a second birth, in which the believer dies to sin, and rises to walk in newness of life, resigning himself to the will of his Lord, to serve Him from henceforth and for ever. This is so far good in Mr Campbell; but it was impossible that baptism could either sanctify or cleanse him, seeing he altogether ignored 'the word of the kingdom,' and was in a great measure ignorant of the things concerning the name of Jesus Christ, which alone can make baptism efficacious in sanctifying and cleansing.

Again, there was a work published in three volumes, in the years 1828–9, entitled *Dialogues on Prophecy*. The theologian, Edward Irving, took part in these dialogues, and, as I am informed, speaks under the fictitious name of 'Aristo.' Now, in vol. iii., from page 438 to 41, Aristo graphically sets forth the truths concerning the Kingdom of God, as revealed in the writings of the apostles and prophets. I shall here quote a sentence or two of Aristo's words, which are as follow:—

> 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 thing we pray for in the Lord's Prayer—'Thy Kingdom come,' adding this commentary 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.

This shows that Edward Irving knew what the gospel was; but it is impossible that believing this gospel could save E. I., seeing he altogether ignored that 'obedience' which the gospel absolutely requires—even baptism, which God has instituted for the cleansing and sanctifying of the believers of the gospel. John Thomas, then, has the honour of making this very important step in advance of Campbell or Irving, and showing that the *water* and the *word* are inseparable associates in God's plan of sanctification; and that whoever would be saved from eternal death must conform to this plan, which is, first, to believe the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, and then to be baptised into this name. 'He that believeth' (the gospel), says our Lord, 'and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned'—(Mark xvi. 17). Paul's words in this matter are: 'Christ 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. 26). Notwithstanding that this truth is most emphatically taught in Scripture, it is a remarkable fact that it has been entirely ignored and condemned these many centuries by professors of Christianity; consequently great credit is due to John Thomas for discerning this and for making it known to his fellowmen. I am not aware of any person, sect, or party who has any just ground whatever to rival John Thomas in claiming the honour of making this discovery.*

**An American Testimony.**

From the other side of the Atlantic, also, and from one who cannot be regarded as one of the doctor's admirers, we have this testimony:—

Perhaps it is not too much to say that, as a writer, Dr T. has done more than any other man of this generation, in opening up the Scriptures, and showing the intimate connection between faith and obedience in order to salvation. This we think is due to him—we give him full credit for what he has done, and for what we have received at his hands.†

* Tract addressed 'To the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God,' by James Lamb, December 1865.

† Benjamin Wilson, in the *Gospel Banner*, March 15, 1865.

### The Son's Tribute to his Father.

Finally, from his own acknowledged 'son in the faith,' we have this hearty appreciation of Dr Thomas's service for the truth :—

> Dr Thomas is not an apostle as a matter of commission ; but as a matter of fact, he has fulfilled the function of an apostle for the truth in relation to this age of the world. He has brought to light and expounded the gospel when, humanly speaking, it would never have been known in the nineteenth century. His patient and clear-minded studies, providentially directed, have extracted from the mists of theological absurdity on the one hand, and philosophical speculation on the other, the clear shining of the truth as harmoniously developed in the whole Scriptures of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles ; and his self-sacrificing labours have made it known over an extended circle which would otherwise have remained unilluminated. This is a fact which no generous and candid mind can ignore. It is a fact which entitles Dr Thomas, apart from all other considerations, to the deference and esteem of those who are sufficiently wise to appreciate the truth he has made manifest. In saying this, we do not inculcate hero worship. It is a Scriptural principle to hold in reputation and esteem highly those who are distinguished in the work of ministering the truth to perishing men ; and this principle needs no defence. It is only strictly accordant with the feeling which actuates the bosom of Deity, and which which will find judicial expression in causing to shine as the stars those who have turned many to righteousness.*

All this is to some extent anticipating what is immediately to follow, but it is desirable to have a proper understanding from the beginning.

### Concerning the Compiler of this Work

It need only be said that he is one of the now few remaining persons who heard Dr Thomas lecture in this country in 1848 and again in 1850 ; that he believed the Gospel of the Kingdom as unfolded by him in *Elpis Israel* and

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* Robert Roberts, in *The Ambassador of the Coming Age* (Christadelphian), August 1865, p 237.

the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*; that he rendered the obedience of faith which that gospel enjoins; and that, during all these intervening years—sometimes in active association with those of like precious faith, sometimes in isolation and solitude—he has remained firm in his allegiance to the divine truth, so providentially revived in these latter days. As to his fitness and the means at his disposal for executing the task he has undertaken—having been deeply interested, and to some extent personally concerned, with the remarkable movement that followed Dr Thomas's first visit to Britain, and which ultimately resulted in the organisation of small companies of 'baptised believers of the gospel of the kingdom' all over the country; having preserved many of the letters, records, and other documents relating thereto; and having also, during a considerable portion of the time referred to, kept a private journal, in which special mention is made of many of the ecclesial proceedings of the period—he believes he may claim, like the apostolic historian Luke, though in a very humble and qualified way, to 'having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first' —(Luke i. 3). At any rate, he is in a position to give authentic information respecting the early development of the gospel of the kingdom in this country, much of which has probably been forgotten by the few early believers who still survive, and the greater part of which will be entirely new to the present generation.

### Plan of the Work.

The 'Early History' will, in fact, be to a large extent a reproduction of documents bearing upon the subject in hand, and which tell their own tale. The writer will, however, intersperse the narrative with his own personal reminiscences and experiences, speaking of that which he knows, and testifying of that which he has seen. Reference has already been made (and will presently be made at greater length) to the great work that has been done by Dr Thomas as 'a man raised up of God among us to revive His truth in its simplicity and power, for the sal-

vation of such of the last generation of "the times of the Gentiles" as are ordained to eternal life.' It may be necessary to state here, however, that it does not follow from this that there will be an endorsation of all that has been said and done by Dr Thomas in the accomplishment of his divinely appointed work. As his own 'son in the faith' has well remarked—

> Shall we say that he is perfect?—that he has no peculiarities which we might think him better without?—that he never says things which would be better unsaid? If we did, we would be saying that which never could be said of any mortal man, living or dead. We should be claiming for him attainments which are impossible in the present imperfect state of existence. But while we cannot do this, we do claim that his achievements for the truth entitle him to great consideration and forbearance, and in our hearts, we believe that this attitude will be taken towards him by every genuine and grateful-minded lover of the truth, however much he may think he sees to lament in his style of writing or deportment in minor matters. Love covers a multitude of sins in this respect.*

### Not a One-Sided Record.

We heartily say 'Amen!' to these words, and in their applicability to the writer of them as well. To be a true record, this 'Early History' must of necessity contain some statements that will not tend to the glorification of either Dr Thomas or Robert Roberts. But while this is inevitable, the writer will endeavour to state nothing but what is absolutely true, and to comply with the apostolic precept to 'speak the truth in love.'

### The Mother Church.

One of the earliest churches to be formed in Britain, after the visit of Dr Thomas, and based upon what, for convenience, has been termed 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas,' was that in Edinburgh, which, from exceptional circumstances to be afterwards detailed, was regarded as

* Robert Roberts, in *The Ambassador of the Coming Age (Christadelphian)*, August 1895, p. 237.

in some sense the mother church of the new religious denomination, and a centre from which the recently recovered gospel radiated over the whole country. That it no longer merits this distinction, must be confessed with great sorrow. As, however, the historical period proposed to be dealt with has reference to the time when the Edinburgh Church might justly be regarded as the 'pillar and ground of the truth'—(1 Timothy iii. 15)—it will naturally have to figure somewhat prominently in the succeeding pages. The writer was one of those who originally formed the Edinburgh Church, and took a very interested, though very humble, part in the proceedings which led to its formation, and, as has already been stated, was in the habit of jotting down memoranda, more or less detailed, of everything of importance in connection with its history just as it occurred. From these memoranda he a few years ago printed, for private circulation, his 'Personal Recollections' of that church. These were very well received: and a desire having been expressed for further information, on similar lines, but on an extended scale, this 'Early History' has accordingly been prepared in accordance with the wish so expressed.

### Outline of the Work.

It only remains, in these introductory remarks, to give the following as a synopsis of the work for the period with which it is intended to deal:—

Brief Account of the manner in which Dr Thomas arrived at his clearly defined understanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom and the necessity of Baptism after such belief.

His Visit to Britain in 1848 to make known this Gospel of the Kingdom.

His reception, mode of procedure, and lectures in the various places visited.

Writing of *Elpis Israel* and its reception by its subscribers.

The manner in which small Meetings or Churches were organised in various places, as the result of his visits, lectures, and writings.

Origin of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God: Correspondence with Dr Thomas upon the subject.

Origin of Meetings in Dundee, Glasgow, Nottingham, Birmingham, Halifax, Derby, &c.

Institution by the Edinburgh Church of an Annual Aggregate Meeting of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Reports of the proceedings at these Annual Aggregate Meetings for a number of years.

Early Publications, Periodicals, and Tracts issued by the Brotherhood.



...Kingdom and Age to Come, 1851, pp. 22-3.

Peculiar Church organisation and arrangements in Edinburgh; social Church life; use of Curative Mesmerism; fireside meetings; 'the truth as it is in Jesus' presented to the Chief Rabbi; correspondence with other Churches.

Different Names suggested for the correct and distinctive designation of the Brotherhood—'Royal Association of Believers,' 'Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God,' 'Antipas,' &c.

Robert Roberts at Huddersfield; active efforts for the proclamation of the truth; publication of the *Twelve Lectures;* business tour, in which many Churches were visited; return to Huddersfield.

Publication of the Church Roll, a Directory of the Brotherhood in 1860.

Division in the Nottingham Church on the Tudor Heresy; Aggregate Meeting and warm discussions upon the subject; the position of some of the members of the Edinburgh Church impugned; explanations of the statement requested; re-immersions.

Dr Thomas and the Edinburgh Church in collision—'The Editor rebuked from Auld Reekie.'

Divergence of views on important subjects—the literal understanding of the Scriptures, the doctrine of the Devil, mortal resurrection, pre-existence of Christ, &c.

Secession from the Edinburgh Church.

Visit of Dr Thomas to Britain in 1862.

Misunderstanding between Dr Thomas and Robert Roberts.

Difficulty with George Dowie and Robert Roberts; Correspondence between the two and final break; the name 'Dowieism' originated.

Adoption of the name 'Christadelphian' by a section of the brotherhood.

Origin of the Birmingham Church; removal of Robert Roberts to Birmingham; reorganisation and active work begun; challenges to David King, the Campbellite leader.

The *Ambassador of the Coming Age (Christadelphian)* commenced.

The doctrine of 'Eternal Life only in Christ' a bone of contention in Edinburgh—extraordinary discussions on the subject.

The Edinburgh Church in consequence disowned by Birmingham and Mumbles.

'Things most surely Believed' by the Edinburgh Church adopted and published.

Final and extraordinary meeting between George Dowie and Robert Roberts.

New terms of fellowship introduced by the Christadelphians; additional matters for belief insisted upon; the breach between the two parties widened.

Visit of Dr Thomas in 1869.

Death of Dr Thomas.

Fraternal Gathering at Birmingham in 1872.

'The Life Question' in Dundee; renewed hostile discussion; Dundee Meeting in consequence disowned by the Aberdeen Meeting.

Union with the Christadelphians proposed by the Aberdeen Meeting; alleged concession by Robert Roberts; responses by Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee; free criticisms of 'The Birmingham Christadelphian Ecclesia.'

# DR THOMAS.

### Three Notable Men.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, three young men—natives of England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively—at different dates emigrated to the United States, where, in the providence of God, they were destined to exercise a remarkable influence on religious thought, which influence, under the same divine guidance, was subsequently to be extended to the countries whence they had emigrated.

Alexander Campbell, born in Ireland in 1788, arrived in America in 1809; Walter Scott, born in Scotland in 1796, took up his residence in the New World in 1818; and John Thomas, M.D., born in London on April 12, 1805, and landed in New York in June 1832. The two former had been educated for the Presbyterian ministry; the last-named had been trained as a physician. All three, during a protracted career in the land of their adoption, undoubtedly did good service to the cause of religious truth, as public speakers, editors of periodicals, and in other ways. Alexander Campbell—whose name latterly came to be specially identified with the movement in which he took a leading part, although Walter Scott was claimed as the original founder of what was known as 'Campbellism'—having in 1812 become a Baptist, was engaged for a number of years in the correction of errors, &c., among his religious contemporaries—high Calvinism being one of the dogmas which found in him an uncompromising opponent. Campbell and Scott, it is stated, first met in the winter of 1821-2. About this time Scott claimed to have found what he regarded as the central idea of the Christian religion—namely, the truth that 'Jesus is the Christ'—and which he called 'The Golden Oracle.' Another prime factor in Scott's religious system was the

simple nature of saving faith as belief in testimony, in place of impression produced on the mind by direct action of the Holy Spirit, as commonly understood. Both principles had seemingly been derived from the writings of another Scotsman, Robert Sandeman, who belonged to the religious community known as 'Glasites,' their founder having been the Rev. John Glas, at one time a minister of the Church of Scotland. In 1827 Scott proclaimed the doctrine of 'baptism for the remission of sins,' whilst Campbell claimed that he had contended for the same thing, in a public debate, as early as 1823, though not preaching it in his ordinary discourses.

### The 'Reformation,' or 'Campbellism.'

These two—Scott and Campbell—were for years afterwards intimately associated in the work of establishing and confirming what were termed 'Reformation' (popularly 'Campbellite') churches throughout the United States, and were most assiduous in disseminating the religious doctrines for which they contended, by means of press and platform; and largely by their efforts what came to be recognised as a religious denomination was built up.

The American 'Reformation,' although not really establishing 'the gospel of the Kingdom of God' on its true Scriptural basis, yet served an important purpose in elaborating a religious system which necessitated a constant appeal to the Scriptures—at least the New Testament portion—and thus in a manner preparing a people who would be the more ready to accept and obey the true gospel of the Bible when its principles and conditions were afterwards more fully developed by one who should come after them, and who did not rely for his authority solely upon the more modern New Testament, but appealed largely to the Law and to the Testimony as being, upon the very highest authority, able to 'make wise unto salvation.' Campbellism, in fact, was, like the the Law, a sort of 'schoolmaster,' whose training tended towards, but stopped short of, the actual 'truth as it is in Jesus.' This will be fully perceived as we proceed, and thus much is

necessary as an explanation for the introduction of the names of Walter Scott and Alexander Campbell into this narrative.

### A Remarkable History.

Of the three young men whose names were mentioned in the opening of this chapter, the greatest of these, in the Scripture sense, was undoubtedly John Thomas: and it is with him we shall mainly have to do in the following pages. His history, as has been well remarked by his biographer, is altogether a remarkable one.

It is not that of a man starting out with a crotchet, or a theory, or an enterprise, to which he successfully applies the energies of a lifetime. It is that of a mind circumstantially driven into a path of research which he was not seeking, and impelled forward in it by a series of unwelcome incidents and experiences, which imposed on him the acquisition of knowledge not, in the first instance, sought for, and conclusions as unexpected as they were startling and disastrous to popularity. The narrative shows a clear intellect, and an inflexible conscience arriving at convictions unpalatable to coadjutors, and advocating them with a recklessness of consequences which unsuited him for sectarian schemes.*

### Dr Thomas's First Religious Impressions.

In the course of his voyage from London to New York, Dr Thomas had a very narrow escape from shipwreck; and his being thus brought face to face with death in an appalling form, and the fact that he had not a well grounded hope of a future state, caused him to form a resolution that, if his life were spared, he would make the knowledge of the future life, as revealed in the Scriptures, the subject of special study. Being mercifully preserved from the threatened danger, he faithfully carried out the vow he had made when death stared him in the face; and the whole of his subsequent career was made subservient to this one determined purpose.

* *Dr Thomas: his Life and Work*, by Robert Roberts, p. 2.

### Dr Thomas Embraces Campbellism.

Very soon after his landing in New York, Dr Thomas met at Cincinnati, Ohio, Walter Scott; and it is rather remarkable to learn that only a few hours in the company of this gentleman sufficed to induce the doctor to be 'immersed for the remission of sins;' and thenceforward for some time he was closely identified with the Reformation party, under the leadership of Messrs Scott and Campbell—preaching, lecturing, and writing for various periodicals. In 1834, at Philadelphia, he commenced to issue a magazine entitled *The Apostolic Advocate*, in which, with an article on 'Anabaptism,' his difference with Alexander Campbell was begun, and was continued with a controversy on Immortality, &c.

### Dr Thomas's Re-Immersion.

For about fifteen years, Dr Thomas continued in connection with the Reformation. At an early part of this period, he had become what for brevity's sake may be termed a Millennarian; and by March 1847 he had become so convinced of the vital character of the Gospel concerning the Kingdom of God, that he was re-immersed. His biographer records the fact thus:—

Led by the convictions indicated in these remarks, the doctor came to the conclusion that he was an unbaptised man; that when he was immersed by Walter Scott, he was immersed into a sect merely, and not into Christ; that being ignorant at that time of the one faith and one hope, he was yet in his sins. Accordingly, the doctor asked a friend to accompany him to the water, and there addressed him in the following terms:—'I desire you to immerse me. All I ask of you is to put me under the water, and to pronounce the words over me, "Upon confession of your faith in the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, I baptise you into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." I don't ask you for any prayer or any ceremony. All that is necessary I will do for myself, except the mechanical part of putting me under the water, and your utterance of these words.' With this understanding, the doctor's

friend immersed him. The doctor did not ask for re-immersion on the supposition that the administrator could add anything to its efficacy.

Thus [says the doctor], after a journey of fourteen years, I had found the truth, which, on the ocean I had declared I would not rest till I had found, should I be permitted again to tread on *terra firma*; but, in all this journey, I had been directed in a course very different from what I would have selected had I been left to map it out for myself. I had been entangled into preaching and editing, and taking part in distasteful theological controversies, which, however, in their combined influence, brought me to a knowledge of the one faith, and the obedience which it demands.*

### THE DOCTOR COMING TO THE LIGHT.

It is interesting to know the manner in which Dr Thomas was led, step by step, to renounce 'Campbellism' as a religious system, and declare boldly, as he during many years subsequently did, for the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. He himself gave a very lucid statement upon the subject. In commencing his magazine, the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, he gave an explanation respecting other periodicals he had previously published, the successive changes his mind had undergone in relation to the one faith, and the position he intended to take up in this new publication. Some slightly abridged selections from this explanatory article are here given.

#### Previous Publications.

The Editor's first paper was to advocate what he then supposed to be the doctrine of the apostles, under the impression that the New Testament, as expounded by certain writers, was a sufficient rule or measure of faith and practice. He therefore called it the *Apostolic Advocate*. But in process of time he perceived that this impression was not made upon his mind by the Scriptures of truth. From the study of these, he discovered that the measure of a man's faith was exceedingly defective which did not embrace an intelligent belief of the Old Testament as well. The words of the apostle to the Gentiles sounded in his ears, that he testified to the people and their rulers, 'saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come'—(Acts xxvi. 22). It was

* *Dr Thomas: his Life and Work*, by Robert Roberts, p. 204.

evident, therefore, from this and numerous other passages which might be quoted, that a Christian should know and believe the things that God had spoken to the fathers of Israel by the prophets. Under this conviction he applied himself to the study of them, and proceeded to call the attention of his readers to them also. Thus the interpretation of the 'sure word of prophecy' was superadded to the advocacy of what was supposed to be the apostles' doctrine. This was an advance which seemed to indicate the propriety of amplifying the title of the paper; and it was accordingly named *The Apostolic Advocate and Prophetic Interpreter.*

In 1839 the last volume of the *Advocate* was concluded. Having removed to the North-west, to a country which was being filled up with raw materials from all parts of the Union and the British Isles, the Editor thought that the state of things there at that time rather demanded investigation of what existed than the especial advocacy of what he then believed. Whether this were a correct view of the nature of things or not, he acted upon it; and in recommencing his literary labours, he styled his paper *The Investigator.* The country, however, was too new, its population was too much engaged in 'subduing and replenishing the earth,' for examination of the high and important matters pertaining to things unseen and eternal. The Editor was, therefore, removed from this place to another, where spiritual ideas command more attention and respect. The mission of the *Investigator* came to an end, but the Editor still survived.

### Two Principles.

The principle which first turned up as the result of proving all things, was that the immersion of an individual whose 'faith' was not the faith of the gospel was a valueless immersion—it was not Christian baptism. This principle has been a leading one, implied if not expressed, in all the Editor's teaching from 1834 to 1850. From this he has never swerved, and cannot possibly depart so long as reason holds her own. Out of this principle grew another—namely, that a knowledge of the truth acquired subsequently to such an immersion did not convert it into obedience of the gospel or Christian baptism.

* * * *

But to return to the principles. While they were

maintained by the Editor and others, they were advocated under the supposition that the faith of the gospel consisted in believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, in his death for sin, his burial, and resurrection, and that 'baptism was for remission of sins.' They did not then perceive that these things did not constitute the faith of the gospel, although some of them are unquestionably items of the mystery of the gospel. 'Baptism for remission of sins' was then proclaimed throughout the land as the 'Ancient Gospel' to all who should repent and believe that Jesus was the Christ. Many of the leaders in this proclamation had been preachers in the Baptist denomination, who, when this 'Ancient Gospel' was first propounded to them, violently and acrimoniously opposed it. It was obvious, then, that when they were immersed they were, if not ignorant, at least entirely faithless of it. But afterwards they ceased their opposition, and declared that they believed that faith in Jesus as the Christ and remission of sins by baptism were the gospel, and so they continued to preach. Now the two principles stated above became to these people so many thorns in the flesh; for they resolved their immersion into a mere introduction into the Baptist body, instead of a putting on of Christ by union to his name. They therefore turned upon the Editor, saying in effect, 'Forbear; for in teaching these things thou condemnest us also!' This, however, was a trifling consideration; for he had assumed the position that the truth must be spoken, maintained, and defended, though all might be condemned, including himself. This position he has consistently and perseveringly maintained for years, and is prepared to uphold it to the end of the chapter.

### Immortality.

Shortly after the controversy about the Scriptural foundation of immersion commenced, the Editor propounded certain questions for examination without affirming his belief in any of them. Among these were some bearing upon the subject of immortality. No sooner were these announced than the rulers seized upon them as a sort of godsend. They declared that they were not simply inquiries, but *bona fide* articles of his faith—a creed to which he proposed to convert their community. They raised a great dust, hoping, doubtless, thereby to obscure the real question at issue about the two principles. But good very often is educed from present evil. It was so in

the case before us. The clamour and attacks made by the rulers compelled the Editor to study the subject of immortality so that he might be able to defend it from assaults on every side. The result was, that he discovered for himself that immortality is a good thing, which, like all other good things to come, is promised to the righteous, and to them alone.

### Resurrection.

This hope of immortality raised the question, When will this hope be realised? He saw clearly that it was not at death, but at the resurrection of the righteous from among the dead. This resurrection, then, was a great epoch in the future history of the world, and the commencement of an era of wonders upon the earth. It was introductory, in truth, to an Age and Dispensation in which the 'exceeding great and precious promises of God' would be realised by all the saints. The Scripture testimony of these things created in his mind a hope which looked beyond the resurrection epoch, and contemplated a kingdom, glory, and dominion under which all nations would be blessed. This economy is styled by the apostle 'the age to come'—(Eph. i. 21)—or the future age. Of this age the Lord Jesus is the founder, and therefore he is styled 'the Father of the everlasting age,' which being an age of undisturbed repose, confers upon him the honourable and glorious title of 'the Prince of peace.'

### The Time of his Appearing.

To advocate the claims of this age upon the faith and hope of his contemporaries, the Editor recommenced his literary labours, and bestowed upon the periodical devoted to it the name of the *Herald of the Future Age*. He was the more induced to designate it by this title, because he believed that the age was at hand or fast approaching. If he had thought that it was far off, he would not have styled it the *Herald* of that age. He believed then as he believes now—that it was near, even at the doors; he therefore heralded forth that announcement, though upon different principles from 'the cry' that was then sounding throughout the land. That cry, as a question of time, has been shown by events to have been discordant with the Word; the truth of the advent, however, has not been at all affected by the mistake. The Word of the Lord lives and abides for ever; and though men may err in

their interpretations, the declaration of His will standeth firm, that all things here shall be subjected to His dominion, so that 'His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

### The Gospel in Ruins.

From 1834 to '45 or '47 the Editor had been bringing out and advocating great and important truths. During this period, every effort had been made by the rulers to prevent their discussion and to turn away the ears of the people. But the Editor was bound to persevere, although discouragements obtained pre-eminence on every side. He advocated the truths because he believed them to be true; and because all truth that God has condescended to reveal in His Word is worthy of being known, and when known, is calculated to soften the heart and improve the dispositions of men. At that time he would not have said that the knowledge and belief of them was indispensable to a participation of the everlasting blessings of the age to come. He had not the testimony before his mind to justify such a conclusion; consequently, could not venture to affirm it. But in process of time he came to see that they were the gospel in ruins—its integral parts lying as the fragments of a wreck all around. Having made this discovery, he proceeded to rebuild the fabric—to bring the dismembered elements together, and to set them forth as one harmonious whole.

### The Faith of the Gospel.

His faith had now attained an amplitude it had not possessed before. It embraced the hope of God's calling to His kingdom and glory in the name of Jesus as the future Lord and Sovereign of the world. He now perceived what the faith of the gospel was that was necessary to constitute an immersion Christian baptism. It was nothing less than the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and name of Jesus as the Christ; and he discovered accordingly, that if a man would inherit that kingdom, he must believe with an honest and good heart the things concerning it. It was not simply a future age of glory, but it was 'a kingdom, glory, and dominion' in that age, with 'honour and immortality,' that were the glad tidings of 'the truth as it is in Jesus.' To become a joint-heir with him of this kingdom, the Editor was immersed in 1847. Having thus obeyed the gospel himself, he forth-

with commenced its announcement to others in the United States, and afterwards in Britain. Thousands upon thousands have heard the joyful sound during the two years that are past; and if it be God's will that it should be still further proclaimed in these States, the Editor holds himself in readiness to do it to the full extent of the means afforded him.

**'Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come.'**

Having returned from Europe for this purpose, he begins his work by the issue of the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*. As the things of the Kingdom of God and His Anointed will be the great theme of this periodical, he has amplified the title of the former work. The 'Future Age' and the 'Age to Come' signify the same thing: he has therefore, for the sake of euphony, adopted the latter phrase as a substitute for the former, and inserted 'the Kingdom' before it. This is the great fact of the Age to Come, and the promise made to the fathers, the hope of Israel, and the faith of all believing Gentiles, who are not high-minded and too wise in their own conceit to learn. The kingdom has become the topic of the present age which cannot be set aside. The acceptance or rejection of the doctrine concerning it will determine the destiny of every man that hears it; for it is the subject of the gospel, by which we must all be saved.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 1-4.

# DR THOMAS'S VISIT TO BRITAIN.

**Good Resulting from a Mistaken Interpretation of Prophecy.**

If we do not regard Dr Thomas as having been divinely and specially called to the great work of making known the Gospel of the Kingdom, which had been lost sight of for many generations, it must at any rate be admitted that there was something very remarkable—quite chivalrous and even heroic, indeed—in the circumstances under which, in the year 1848, he undertook a mission to Great Britain to call public attention to this long-forgotten and neglected truth. It is noteworthy that this self-imposed mission of the doctor, which was fraught with such excellent results in making known the kingdom's gospel, and in preparing a people for the return of the Lord, should have been undertaken under a misapprehension. The year just named was memorable in modern history for the series of startling political events that took place on the Continent of Europe. Misled by these staggering political upheavals, and misinterpreting their prophetic significance, Dr Thomas made the same mistake as did some of the disciples of old who listened to the teaching of our Lord, when 'they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear'—(Luke xix. 11). The doctor, from his study of the prophetic word and what appeared to him to be the signs of the times, was strongly impressed with the idea that the day of the Lord was close at hand. Subsequent events showed that he was mistaken as to the *time* when he expected the Lord's return, although the correctness of his teaching in other respects has only been confirmed by the lapse of time. His mistake does not lessen our indebtedness to him for having, under the divine guidance, brought to our comprehension an understanding of the foreordained purpose of Infinite Wisdom and Mercy in the creation of man, and our duty in rela-

tion thereto. The fact is remarkable, and to some persons may be indeed staggering; but if, in the accomplishment of the purposes of Jehovah, even the wrath of man may be made to praise Him—(Psalm lxxvi. 11)—surely it need not be wondered at that a mistaken conception of the time for the development of a portion of the divine plan should be utilised by the Almighty Disposer of the hearts of all men for carrying out His eternal decrees. 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us'—(1 Cor. iv. 7).

### The Doctor's Arrival in Britain.

Having decided to visit Britain for the purpose named, Dr Thomas made the necessary arrangements, and, accompanied by his daughter Eusebia (afterwards Mrs Lasius), then a girl about twelve years of age, sailed from New York for Liverpool on the 1st of June, 1848.* The return voyage of the doctor to his native land took place before the advent of the splendid fleet of Atlantic greyhounds, with their maximum of speed and creature comforts with which we are all now so familiar; and the passage, which had to be made in an old-fashioned sailing vessel, occupied twenty-one days. At that period, this was regarded as a pretty quick voyage, and the good ship *De Witt Clinton* must have been favoured with fair wind and weather to do it in the time. We can imagine how, during the three weeks that the vessel was bounding over the blue waters of the Atlantic, the doctor's mind would revert to the danger through which he had passed on his former voyage, to the solemn vow he had then taken, and to the providential manner in which he had been aided in its complete fulfilment; and how his thoughts would be at times absorbed in contemplation of the excelling glory which he believed was just about to burst upon this sin-cursed world, with the important message he felt impelled

* 'A Missionary for Europe.—John Thomas, M.D., president of the Scientific and Eclectic Institute of Virginia, sails in the *De Witt Clinton* for Liverpool, on a tour through England and Scotland, to invite public attention to European affairs, "as evidential of the near approach of the Kingdom of God." We understand that Dr Thomas bears his own expenses.'—*New York Morning Star.*

to deliver in British ears, and with the manner in which that message was likely to be received. All these, and many similar reflections, I have no doubt, helped to relieve the tedium of the voyage for the doctor, until at length he again set foot in the old country at Liverpool.

### Attempt to 'Closure' the Doctor.

The doctor, it may be supposed, was not over-burdened with means for engaging in an extensive pilgrimage through the leading cities and towns of Britain; but he hoped that his previous connection with the Reformation churches in America might procure for him a hearing in various places in this country. Unfortunately—or, perhaps, I should say fortunately, as the result proved—Dr Thomas's renunciation of Campbellism, which he had published in America a short time previously, had found its way to Nottingham, then the headquarters of the Reformation party on this side of the Atlantic, and it naturally was used in the most hostile manner against him by both James Wallis, at Nottingham, and by David King, in London—then the two leading spirits in the connection in England—with a view to prevent him from being received or given a hearing in any of the Reformation churches.

### Dr Thomas's Peculiar Position.

A very remarkable correspondence, and of considerable volume, ensued, which the doctor subsequently published in his magazine, the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, and it has been incorporated in the *Life* of Dr Thomas by his biographer. It is too lengthy for reproduction here, and, frankly, I have to confess that, with every desire to regard the course adopted by the doctor in the most favourable light, his proceedings, in view of his attitude towards Campbellism, both previous and subsequent to his coming to England, are simply inexplicable. Briefly stated, repeated perusals of the whole documents in the case have left on my mind the impression that the doctor, after having, in America, renounced Campbellism and denounced it in very severe terms,

desired, upon his arrival in this country, if not to pose as being still a Campbellite, yet to have a certain connection with it, such as entitled him to some of the privileges of membership, which he desired to use as aids in his work of disseminating the truth.

### The Doctor Vindicated.

Fortunately I am not called upon to vindicate the doctor's course of action; but if a defence of it is wanted, possibly nothing better can be urged on his behalf than what has been so well said by his biographer and apologist, which may be quoted here :—

These matters are placed before the reader as a necessary exculpation of the doctor's character from charges industriously circulated against him, which, with a seeming foundation, have no foundation in truth. They originated, doubtless, in the peculiarity of the situation. The doctor, emerging from Campbellism, but not yet disentangled ecclesiastically, naturally clung to an old connection, in the hope of being able to lead the Campbellites forward on the path of enlightenment on which he (himself a Campbellite for years) had entered. The Campbellites, on the other hand, revolting against his principles, were naturally stung at the facility this connection gave him for the dissemination of principles so subversive of their claims to be considered Christians. This led to mutual recriminations, which were probably carried too far on both sides. The nature of the time, in relation to both, has to be distinctly taken into account, to come to a just view of a dispute which at the time appeared to contain grave reflections on one side or other, according to the view taken; but which, considered at this distance of time, in the light of all the facts, when the heat of controversy has subsided, appears the natural and unfortunate fruit of a state of transition.*

As the doctor characteristically remarked, respecting the opposition he encountered at the very outset at Nottingham: 'Everything seems to have worked together happily for the promotion of our enterprise;' and his

* *Dr Thomas: his Life and Work*, by Robert Roberts, p. 266.

biographer also refers to 'the Providence that was at work in the very midst of the doctor's enemies, to foil their schemes, and to open the way for the promulgation of the glorious gospel of the blessed God.'

### Millerites to the Rescue.

As an illustration of the manner in which all things worked together for the accomplishment of his enterprise, the doctor cites his remarkable experience at Nottingham. As a result of the hostility shown to him by the Campbellites then meeting in Barker Gate, Nottingham, a Millerite* church at New Basford, near Nottingham—with whom the Campbellites had previously been in co-operation, but were then in some degree estranged—sympathised with the doctor in the treatment he had received at the hands of their brethren in Barker Gate, and they showed their sympathy by offering him the use of their meeting-place for his lectures. This was done in a very kindly letter, which closed as follows :—

J. Wallis states further that 'the Second Advent brethren—[Millerites]—or those who believe in the personal, literal, visible reign of Christ for 1000 years in this world, are anticipating a high treat on the occasion' of your visit. This is true; and he might have added with equal truth, that *a great body of the 'New Testament disciples'*—[Campbellites]—*anticipated this treat also.* Now, in order that we and they may not be disappointed, we have unanimously agreed to offer you the use of our hall of worship at any time you may make it convenient to visit Nottingham. We have accommodation for 300 to 400; and we might, if it were deemed necessary, perhaps be able to obtain the use of some larger place. Our society is not composed of the rich and influential, according to the world's estimation, but we are united, and waiting the speedy fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers, and rejoice in the hope of Israel. There is

* 'Millerites' were so named after William Miller, who was a leading man among them. They were a small body of Second Adventists in America, and Miller confidently believed, and succeeded in inducing his followers to believe, that Christ would certainly come upon a given date in the year 1843. Great preparations had been made by the Millerites for the reception of Christ upon the date anticipated, and there was great disappointment when the appointed day passed away, and the Lord still delayed his coming.

an earnest desire on the part of the brethren to see and hear one who holds the like views and entertains the same hope as themselves; and although it may not be in their power to extend to you that accommodation they could wish, yet they are ready and willing to receive you as a brother, to give you encouragement and God speed in your labour of love, and to contribute in temporalities in so far as the Lord may enable them.

That the Lord may direct your course and uphold and strengthen you in the cause of truth, is our earnest prayer. Believe me, dear brother, yours in the blessed hope, on behalf of the Advent brethren,

D. WIDDOWSON, *Secretary.*

**'Behold, I have Set before Thee an Open Door.'**

'Thus, says Dr Thomas, 'from an unexpected and unknown source, a door of utterance was opened to us in "the Jerusalem of this Reformation" in Britain, even in Nottingham, where it was "deemed inexpedient and improper" by the Simon Pures of that town for us to receive an invitation to visit. The invitation, however, came, and we accepted it, promising to deliver our first discourse at the Second Advent Meeting House on Lord's Day morning, July 30th, 1848. . . . Our introduction to Nottingham opened the way for us to Derby, Lincoln, Birmingham, and Plymouth, which we afterwards visited at different times.'*

**'Honour to whom Honour is Due.'**

All honour to the Millerites of New Basford! When a determined attempt was made to slam the 'door of utterance' in the face of the greatest preacher of righteousness in these latter days, they boldly pushed it wide open; and thus the way was prepared by which 'the word of the kingdom' was ultimately 'sounded out' over the whole British Isles. Even at this comparatively early period of his career, Dr Thomas had well learned to 'endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ'—(2 Tim. ii. 3); but who can say what were his feelings

* *Dr Thomas: his Life and Work*, by Robert Roberts, pp. 251-2.

when, on his arrival in this country, almost friendless and alone, he found those very Campbellites, whom it was his heart's desire to show the way of the Lord more perfectly, and for whose benefit he had set out upon a self-denying expedition, thus arrayed in hostile front against him; and how cheered and encouraged he must have felt by the hearty good-will and active support thus unexpectedly shown to him at New Basford in his hour of need? If 'the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies in peace'—(Heb. xi. 31)—surely the frank courtesy and practical sympathy of these Millerites will be not less generously remembered in 'the day of the Lord!'

## LONDON.

### FIRST VISIT.

It was in the Metropolis that the great Campbellite opposition to Dr Thomas culminated. Upon his arrival in Liverpool from New York, he proceeded to London, and lost no time in calling upon Mr John Black, to whom he had a letter of introduction from a Campbellite friend in New York. Mr Black was an elder, or pastor, of a church meeting at Elstree Street, Camden Town, and known among the Campbellites as 'the London Church.' What followed had better be given in the doctor's own words.

#### Dr Thomas Interviewed by the Campbellite Leaders.

We do not remember if Mr Black invited us to speak at his place. A few days after, however, we received a note from Mr King, dated July 6, 1848, requesting us to meet *him* at Mr Black's the next day at half-past three; and stating that, in the event of our not being able to do so, he would thank us to send him a line appointing time and place, as *they* deemed some conversation requisite before next First Day.' We accordingly went at the time appointed, and had an interview with Messrs Black and King, and a third person whose name we forget.

**The Doctor's Views on Fellowship and the Breaking of Bread.**

The object they had in view in inviting us to this conference, as stated by Mr King in a letter to the *Gospel Banner*, was to inquire 'whether we, when in the States, refused to fellowship those Christians who had not been baptised while possessing those opinions which we held.' He meant by this to inquire whether we refused to fellowship those professors called Campbellites, who, when they were immersed, were ignorant or faithless of the hope of Israel or Kingdom of God as expounded by us. To this inquiry we answered that we did not refuse; which is well known by every one to be the fact. We do not feel that we are called upon to do more than testify to and for the truth. We have not been appointed a judge in these matters by God or men; therefore, whatever we may think of the Christianity of persons called Reformers and Baptists, we feel at liberty only to show them the position they occupy in relation to the truth, and neither to refuse nor admit them into the fellowship of God. This is beyond our jurisdiction. We believe that God has admitted us into this fellowship through faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom in the name of Jesus. Having obeyed this gospel by immersion in the name of the Holy Ones, and continuing to walk in the truth, we have 'fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ,' and the apostles of the Lord—(1 John i. 3, 6, 7). If others do this, then 'we have fellowship one with another,' not else. We do not regard the breaking of bread at the same table as a test of fellowship, but the 'walking in the light as God is in the light.' We leave others—such as Messrs Campbell, Wallis, and King—to cast men out of fellowship; for our own part, we pass not sentence, whatever we may think the party may deserve, 'until the Lord come.' We show what the truth is, where it condemns and justifies, and leave the application to particular cases to the individuals themselves. We are not lords over men's consciences: when these become sufficiently enlightened, they will not rest until they do the truth, and then all will work well. That we do not 'refuse' those who are immersed on Campbellite and Baptist principles, is manifest from the fact that the churches we visit are principally composed of such. We desire to enlighten and save them—not to anathematise and proscribe them; while at the same time we testify that no immersion is worth a stiver which is not

predicated on faith in the things of the kingdom and the name of Jesus.*

### The Doctor 'Accepted' by the Campbellite Leaders.

The end of the conference was, that we were 'invited' to assemble with them, and to speak on certain Lord's Day evenings. We accepted the invitation, and, though distant three miles, we met with their church two mornings and evenings, making our travel twelve miles each day. The house was full in the evenings, and the audiences very attentive.†

In continuing the report of Dr Thomas's experiences at the hands of the London Campbellite leaders, I take that given by Robert Roberts, as being more condensed and succinct, and also as putting the facts in as favourable a manner as possible towards Dr Thomas. This is no more than the doctor's due, having regard to the manner in which, unaided and in the face of a most determined opposition, he had engaged in a very important and arduous undertaking.

### A Campbellite Explanation.

In a subsequent letter of explanation, Mr King said:

We could not reject Dr Thomas without giving a reason for so doing; and had it not been for the remarks on the cover of the *Harbinger*, we never should have thought of so doing. We therefore called the doctor to a private meeting, and inquired whether he, when in the States, refused to fellowship those Christians who had not been baptised while possessing those opinions which he held? His reply was that such was not the case. We told him that it was not our intention to *permit* him to be inconsistent in London, and that if *he refused* our brethren in the States, we should not receive him here for the sake of proclaiming his views. He assured us that, so far from having refused them, he was glad to receive them wherever they would accept him, and that, on his way to England, the disciples at New York had granted him their meeting-house. He brought with him letters of recommendation from brethren *known* by us. Under these circumstances, we could find no ground for rejecting him, and therefore he was invited with us on the last two Lord's Days. We also informed him that we should be glad to hear him speak in the evenings, if he would proclaim the gospel, and not more than *incidentally* introduce his favourite topic. He has spoken twice, and, to say the least, he is well worth hearing.

* It will be found further on that the views and the practice of the doctor in regard to fellowship, as here expressed, afterwards underwent a great change.

† *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 82-3.

### Serious Charges against Dr Thomas.

Shortly afterwards, Mr Wallis made the following declaration in the *British Millennial Harbinger* (October, 1848) :—

> We affirm, on the testimony of *The Herald of the Future Age*, that Mr John Thomas, in the month of March, 1847, publicly abjured not only all connection with the Reformation, but also all that he had learnt whilst in connection with its churches; asserting that the leading men of the Reformation held damnable heresy; were ignorant of the true hope of the gospel, and, consequently, blind leaders of the blind. Now, we have no right to question or to interfere with this abjurgation—regarding it as emanating from the firm conviction of the confessor's mind; but still the position occupied by John Thomas ought to be known to all the disciples; and that his object in visiting this country is not to build up and enlarge the churches already planted, but to proselyte as many members out of them to his own spirit and theory as he possibly can, and that, too, without any compromise whatever.

### The Doctor Called to Account.

The London Campbellites, on reading this, applied to Mr Wallis, who furnished them with a copy of the doctor's 'Confession and Adjuration;' upon obtaining which, they wrote to the doctor as follows :—

> 71 High Street, Camden Town, November 8th, 1848.
>
> DEAR BROTHER THOMAS,—No. 4, vol. iii., of the *Herald of the Future Age*, containing your 'Confession and Adjuration,' was presented to a meeting of the London Church last Monday evening. The meeting was entirely of opinion that the paper contains the very abjuration of the brethren in the United States which you most positively denied ever having made. It appears to them to be a duty to order this note to be sent immediately to you, expressing their surprise and sorrow at finding such matter in print, and to give you an opportunity to explain, should you desire. In the absence of any explanation, they will feel it their duty to announce that your fellowship with them was obtained by misrepresentation.
>
> Wishing you every present and future good, in the deepest sorrow on account of the above, I remain, yours, in the hope of immortality,
>
> D. KING.

### Defence by the Doctor's Biographer.

The doctor replied to this, but unfortunately mislaid the copy which he made of this letter. Consequently, the reply is not extant. The substance is on record, however. The doctor never did deny the confession and abjuration. He denied having refused the fellowship of the Campbellites in America; which was the fact, for wherever they received him, he met with them, not having yet reached the conviction which afterwards led him to

separate from all who did not understand, believe, and obey the hope of Israel. The confession and abjuration had reference to principles and transactions, and **not** to persons and communities, though, doubtless, enunciating principles which, in their ultimate application, affected persons and communities. As the doctor says in his account of the matter (*Herald of the Kingdom*, vol. i., p. 64):

**Dr Thomas's Explanation.**

We did not abjure 'churches,' but a certain 'transaction,' 'mistakes,' errors of compromise, the dogma of the immortality of the soul, and 'other things' of a kindred nature. After giving six reasons for regarding our immersion by Mr Walter Scott, in 1833, as 'no better than a Jewish ablution,' as Mr A. Campbell styles an invalid immersion, we add: 'These, we consider, are sufficient reasons why we should *abjure the whole transaction*'—a transaction between Mr Scott and ourselves before we knew anything at all about 'Mr Campbell and his associates,' or their churches.

Again, the word 'abjuration' occurs in the following connection:—'Had we been properly instructed, we should not now have to make this confession and *abjuration of our mistakes*.' In the October number of the *British Harbinger* for 1848, Mr Wallis accuses us of especially 'asserting that *the leading men of the Reformation* held damnable heresy.' This is a perversion of our words. We said nothing about 'the leading men of the Reformation:' we wrote in general terms, our words being as applicable to the leading men of all denominations, and to all who held the heresy, as to ourselves on the supposition of our having also once entertained it. Our words are: 'We do not remember that we ever taught the existence of an immortal soul in corruptible man, and the translation thereof to heaven or hell at the instant of death; if we have, so much the worse: *no man* can hold this dogma and acceptably believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and His Christ: *we abjure* IT as a 'damnable heresy.' In the next paragraph we say, 'There may be other things, errors, which have escaped our recollection; whatever they may be, &c., *we abjure them all*.' Then, referring to the treaty of peace and amity between Mr Campbell and ourselves at Pineville, in 1838, in which, *so long as we were not misrepresented*, we consented to hold certain *inferences* from a great truth in abeyance, because of the prejudices the publication of them was supposed to create against what we then all considered 'the ancient gospel:' referring to this, we say, 'We erred in holding in abeyance the most trivial inference from the truth on any pretence whatever: *we abjure all errors of this kind, &c.*' Then, lastly, we finish our 'confession and abjuration' of the things confessed by saying, 'Had our opponents let us alone, &c., we might have been teaching the same fables, which, however, would have deprived us of the pleasure of confessing our *errors and mistakes*, and of publicly *renouncing and bidding them adieu*.'

The public renunciation and adieu are the 'errors and mistakes' confessed; for these, and not 'them and their leaders,' are the antecedent to 'them.' Our 'pleasure' consists in renouncing and bidding our errors and mistakes adieu; our sorrow, in having to turn from men who, like Messrs Campbell and Wallis and their associates, prefer darkness to light, and will not come to the light lest it should be discovered that their deeds are not wrought in God. But we have not altogether turned from and renounced them even yet. Our duty is to endeavour to open their blind

eyes that they may see the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom; at all events, so to deal with them, that by enlightening the people, their power and influence for evil may be restrained, if not entirely destroyed.

### The Campbellites Return to the Charge.

The malice of the London charge lay in making the doctor's denial of disfellowshipping Campbellites apply to the publication of the 'Confession and Abjuration,' which, though related to the same matter, was not the same thing. It is easy to understand that the Campbellites would feel hurt on discovering that Dr Thomas, whom they had fellowshipped, held principles which constructively put them in the position of unjustified persons; and it is not altogether difficult to see how they should feel that their fellowship had been conceded on a misunderstanding; but to lay this misunderstanding at the door of 'misrepresentation' on the part of Dr Thomas, and to charge him with falsehood, was a cruel mistake. The doctor's missing answer called forth the following reply:—

London, December 6th, 1848.

Dr J. Thomas.—Dear Sir,—Yours of November 22nd, 1848, was presented to the church on the 28th of the same month, and I am requested to say to you as follows:—

1st.—That, in the examination of your abjuration, the church here did not (as you suppose) confound persons with opinions. They fully understood your words in the lines pointed to in your letter as referring to errors and mistakes, and not to persons.

2nd.—They consider you to have abjured the brethren in the United States; and here also, by pointing to their position, as being one which would forbid any Christian to fellowship them. For instance, many of our churches in this country unanimously hold the 'existence of an immortal soul in corruptible man;' nearly every church has a large number of its members of the same opinion. You say, 'No man can hold this dogma and *acceptably* believe the gospel;' you also abjure it as a 'damnable heresy:' *ergo*, most, if not all, of the churches with which we stand connected, do not believe the gospel *acceptably;* and if not acceptably, are unbelievers; and, holding a 'damnable heresy,' are damnable heretics. Now, as no Christian may fellowship heretics and unbelievers, the brethren in this country, and those of similar character, wherever existing, are abjured by you. Again: 'Men are saved by the hope; being ignorant *in toto* of that hope, he (Dr J. Thomas) was not saved by it, and while he writes this must be in his sins.' You teach that, as you were with respect to 'the hope,' our churches now are,—they receive not what you call 'the hope.' You call the system into which you were baptised an 'erroneous one;' they were baptised into and remain in the same system, therefore are yet in their sins. You claim to be a Christian; and as Christians cannot fellowship men while in their sins, you thus abjure the churches connected with us.

Seen and approved by a meeting held November 28th, 1848, and signed for them. D. King.

### The Doctor Again Explains.

To this the doctor made the following rejoinder:—

Newark, Nottinghamshire, December 9th, 1848.

DEAR FRIENDS,—Yours dated December 6th, 1848, has come to hand to-day. By it I am able now to comprehend that you have *construed* what *you* think I ought to do with my views on the truth, on the ground which you consider the principles stated place persons holding the traditions quoted, into a non-fellowshipping of those you call your brethren (by eminence) in the United States. This, then, is your indictment—that I have *constructively* rejected the brethren of the Reformation in America, which you consider equivalent to an *actual excision* of myself from the churches there, or them from my fellowship, and consequently of myself from similar churches in England.

But I object to your *constructions;* first, because you have no right to put constructions upon any one's principles, save your own; and, second, because your constructions are not in harmony *with facts.*

1.—You have no right to construe for me, neither have you the ability till you are made intelligent upon the subject of my views of fellowship. I claim the sole right of construing my own sentiments; and when I shall have construed and published them to the world *in their application*, it will be high time for you to express your approval or rejection of them and their author. You have your views of fellowship; they may or may not be mine: I discuss them not. My duty is to state and advocate what I believe to be God's truth according to the manner which appears to me (not to you) most Scriptural. It is for me to state, illustrate, and prove principles, and to interpret the Word; and to leave men's consciences to make the application—it is not for me to adjudge them to ecclesiastical pains and penalties. I have stated in my writings that 'the immortality of the soul, as taught in dogmatic theology, is the Hymenean and Philetan heresy;' and I have shown from Paul's words that it is in his estimation a 'damnable heresy.' The arguments you have not seen: yet you judge. Is this wisdom? I have received the conclusion to which Paul leads me. Did he tell the orthodox Christians to cast their heterodox friends out of their synagogue, or to non-fellowship them? No; and further than this, he still fraternised with the church, although they gave him so much annoyance on this very subject. His object was to enlighten and reclaim, not to cut off, and treat as enemies those whom this cancer-eating sentiment led to the denial of the resurrection of the dead, and by implication, the resurrection of Jesus himself, and the subversion of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God.

Your logic does not appear to me to keep pace with your zeal. A man may hold 'a damnable heresy' and not, therefore, be 'a damnable heretic.' Simon Magus held the 'damnable heresy' that the gift or power of bestowing the Spirit could be purchased with money; but he was not finally condemned, inasmuch as scope was afforded him for repentance and forgiveness. This was not the case with others. If you hold 'a damnable heresy,' I pray God that the light of knowledge may find an entrance into your understandings, that you may recover before you make shipwreck of faith.

You say that your churches do not receive what I call 'the hope.' Very well. Now, suppose it should turn out that what I demonstrate is indeed 'the hope of the calling'—(which Platonism, new or old, is not)—and you admit that 'we are saved by the hope,' what becomes of you and your

urches? But you are unacquainted with what I call 'the hope;' for I all not one item of itself 'the hope;' why, then, jump to conclusions and nstructions at present? You may regret it some day (as others here ave already) when your logic, peradventure, may be directed by a more riptural and experienced zeal.

But there are a great many in 'your churches' (if I guess them rightly) o reject the immortality of the soul as mere heathenism. Why do you ot construe conclusions for them? Are not Newark, Lincoln, Nottingam, Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c., some of your churches? There are many this class among them; why do you not undertake for them? Why solicitous to construe conclusions and officiously to apply them for me? really do not feel at all indebted to you for intermeddling. If you do not wish anything to do with me, say so and have done with it. I believe am your debtor for nothing but a little past civility. On two occasions, at some inconvenience and a trifling expense, I did the best I could to lighten you. Much satisfaction was expressed by some. To this labour f love I bid you welcome. But a change hath come o'er the spirit of ur dream since Mr Wallis's visit to London, or that of your delegate to lasgow. If you think your ecclesiastical reputation hath been defiled by ne little politeness of the past, then make your repentance known as far d wide as you please, and upon any ground you choose, actual or constructive. I shall regret your shutting yourselves out from what many your brethren freely and candidly admit is the irrefutable truth of God. But you must do as you please. The loss will be yours, not mine.

Without comparing you to Judas, I would inquire, Was not he in his ins when Jesus broke the loaf with him as well as the rest of the twelve? is will be a sufficient *quid* for your *quo*, that I necessarily abjure urches, because there are those among them who on my principles are in their sins.

2.—I object to your constructions because they are not according to fact. There are many in American Reform churches, in which I am well aived, who believe in the Platonic dogma of the 'immortality of the soul.' We have learned, however, the important lesson of bearing and bearing with one another, in hope that all will come to see the real uth, on which side soever it may be, before it becomes too late. But, our dogma is that I ought to reject them, and they me; we, however, do t think so. We regard such a spirit as the one actuating you as both ntolerant and proscriptive, and well calculated to place the person who ponds to it in the situation neither to advance the truth nor to benefit his contemporaries. It is the dark spirit of popery, and characteristic all sects whose fear of God is taught by the precepts and commands of men.

Trusting that whatever you may do may be to the glory of God and the tterance of the truth, and not to the gratification of personal pique, nd leaving you, henceforth, to work out your own conclusions as you may m most expedient, but declining any further correspondence in the case, subscribe myself, dear friends,

Yours respectfully,

JOHN THOMAS.

### The Campbellite Sentence of Condemnation.

Two years afterwards, just as the doctor was about to ve England, it transpired in the pages of the *Harbinger*, hat the London Campbellites, on receipt of the foregoing tter, placed the following minute on record:—

Having called upon John Thomas to explain his conduct towards us, or to renounce his abjuration of the churches of the Reformation—(of the existence of which fact we had no idea when we received him into the church)—but, not obtaining anything more satisfactory from him than that he held fellowship with all the disciples who would receive him on the same principle that the Lord did Judas! and perceiving that with his state of mind, he could only desire connection with the brethren in England for the purpose of creating separation and confusion among them, the church in London, at a large assembly, with only two objectors in it, passed the following resolution :—

Resolved,—That as we, the disciples of Christ, are commanded to mark those who cause divisions, and to avoid them; and, as John Thomas teaches by direct implication, that all who are in our position are yet in their sins, unless baptised into what he calls the hope of Israel, we must avoid him, except he has renounced, or until he does renounce, his printed abjuration against our brethren in the Lord.

JOHN BLACK, *Pastor.*
DAVID KING, *Preacher of the Gospel.*

**Dr Thomas has the Last Word.**

On this minute the doctor remarks :

Mr Black's declaration that we went to England for the purpose of creating separations and confusion among their churches, is utterly false. The congregations in Edinburgh and Glasgow can testify to the contrary of this. That difficulties might possibly ensue was not improbable; for when was 'the sure word of prophecy' ever caused to shine into a dark place without either dispelling the darkness, or being itself expelled? Luther advocated justification by faith without the works of Romanism. This was Scriptural ground; but look at 'the separations and confusion' that followed! Who was to blame for these?—was Luther or the truth? Or should Luther have suppressed the truth for fear of what should happen? By no means. Now we went to Britain to call men's attention to 'the Gospel of the Kingdom.' In this work we were no respecter of persons. We were *invited* to speak to the Eltreans and to worship at their house. We accepted the invitation, and spoke much to the satisfaction of those who heard us. We said nothing about fellowship or re-immersion. We produced no separation nor confusion there; and but for Messrs Wallis, Black, and King, there would have been no trouble there at all. But the wicked flee when no man pursueth. So it was with them. Ignorance and fear possessed them; and not knowing what might come to pass, they raised a light-darkening cloud of dust; and, shaded by its obscuration, sought protection within the barred doors of their conventicle. And there we propose to leave them till doomsday.*

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In strictly chronological order, the doctor's visit to a number of other places should follow here; but it will be more convenient now to give what has to be said about his return visit to London, and so complete the account of his proceedings in the Metropolis.

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* *Dr Thomas: his Life and Work*, by Robert Roberts, pp. 259-66.

## SECOND VISIT.

Although Dr Thomas, on his second visit to London, ade a much longer stay than he did anywhere else in e course of his tour, there is not much to record respect- g it. He does not appear to have visited any of his oundam Elstrean friends, or to have had any communi- ation with them. His time, however, was very fully and efully occupied, as we learn from his own record.

### The Writing of 'Elpis Israel.'

Having completed a tour of nearly five months, I again and myself in London, with health considerably impaired m the fatigue I had undergone. Recuperation was, herefore, the first thing to be attended to. Rest of mind nd a little medicine—(for, however professional it may to prescribe much, I have a very great aversion to the onversion of my own interior into a receptacle for the quantities usually exhibited on the placebo principle)— restore the cerebro-organic equilibrium of the system, ffected this in two or three weeks; so that, by the beginning of the New Year, I was enabled to commence the mposition of *Elpis Israel*. I did not allow the grass grow, but worked while it was called to-day, and much of the night also. For six weeks, the world without as a mere blank, except through a daily perusal of the ndon *Times*; for during that period I had no use for at, boots, or shoes, oscillating, as it were, like a pendulum between two points—the couch above and the desk low. In about four months the manuscript was completed; but whether it would ever behold the light of the public countenance, or remain in the obscurity of an old ast, with the blessing of the enemy upon it so long as mouldered there, depended on the humour I should find the people in on visiting them again.

### Difficulty of Engaging the Public Attention in London.

With the exception of two discourses at Camden Town, nd two at a small lecture-room near my residence, and an opposition speech at a Peace Society meeting, I made no ort among the Londoners to gain their ears. I distributed printed bills, indeed; but a few hundreds or thousands of these among upwards of two millions of people, re but as the drops of a passing cloud to the ocean.

For the truth to create a sensation in London, its advocates must have a large purse, or be introduced to public attention by some influential religious party. The latter alternative is an impossibility; for there is no party in that great city of any weight on the side of the truth. The press, secular and ecclesiastical, is death against it; the former, because it is satisfied with what exists, or has no faith in anything but its own faithlessness; and the latter, because, like Ephraim, it is joined to its idols, and welcomes no truth at variance with them. Could I have hired Exeter Hall at a hundred and twenty-five dollars a night, and have placarded the town in all its thoroughfares—from the India House to St James's Palace and Hyde Park, and from Shoreditch Church to the Elephant and Castle—I might have obtained a crowd. But the expense would have been equal to the purchase of a small Virginia farm; and though by charging something for admission, as the custom is, the cost might have been reduced, perhaps covered; still I did not feel justified in encountering the alternative of success or incarceration in the Bench Prison for debt. This would have been too gratifying to the enemy; for he would then have got the advantage over us indeed; being seized of one's body, wind, and limb.

**Extraordinary Peace Society Meeting.**

The Peace Society people seemed to be the only available medium of access to the public on a large scale. They were trying to convert the world to the 'peace and safety' cry which precedes the sudden destruction from the Lord; and to bring about a system of arbitration for the settlement of national differences, faith in which would of necessity prevent faith in Moses and the Prophets, who preach peace only to the righteous; and to those generations of humanity which shall be blessed in Abraham and his Seed, when Christ shall have 'subdued' them to himself by the energy of God. This society is treading upon gospel ground; and by its emissaries hardening the hearts of the people against the Kingdom of God, which is to 'grind to powder and bring to an end' all the dominions of the world. I felt called upon, therefore, though but one feeble voice in the vast wilderness of the people, to protest against their utopian and unscriptural conceit.

On Thursday evening, February 22, 1849, a public meeting was to be held at the British Institution, Cowper

Street, City Road, for the purpose of adopting a petition to Parliament in favour of Mr Cobden's motion for special treaties of arbitration instead of war in the settlement of national disputes. I determined to attend the meeting.

* * * *

The reader is not to suppose that while these ideas were being expressed, the peace meeting was in a very peaceable state. Peace was in the petition, but war in the people's hearts, and on their lips. The audience proved to be nothing more than a mob of anti-tax fanatics. They were prepared to applaud any absurdity provided that its key-note was anti-taxation and the costliness of war.

* * * *

It was Mammon shouting, and hissing, and yelling through this unthinking multitude, who made the delivery of my protest almost an impossibility. When I could get a chance, I told them they might just as well hear me peaceably, as I intended to maintain my ground, if I had to stand there till morning. I saw a well-dressed, white-headed man in the centre, gymnastycising with awful energy. Of course I could hear not a word he said; but by the shaking of his head, beating the air, and flourishing, now his cane and then his fist, I interpreted his signs as very ominous to the security of my cranium, were it within his reach. The tumult was terrible, and I doubt not instigated by peace-loving enemies to peace, except according to their own crotchet.*

The doctor was ultimately able, with great difficulty, to move an amendment, to the effect that Mr Cobden's arbitration scheme was visionary, utopian, and impracticable, and ought not to be sustained by petitions in its favour; but when put to the vote, only about eight hands were held up in its favour.

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With this episode of the Peace Society meeting, of which the foregoing is a very short abridgement, Dr Thomas brings his account of his second visit to London to an end; and I shall therefore from this point take up the doctor's itinerary through the country in the order given by himself.

† *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 227-32.

## NOTTINGHAM.

Accepting the invitation of the Millerites in Nottingham, already mentioned, Dr Thomas spoke several times in the Assembly Room, which was packed by eager and attentive audiences. Speaking of the results of his visit, he says:

We accepted their cordial and pressing invitation to visit them in Nottingham, and laid the truth before them. It disclosed the absurdities of Millerism, and caused them to perceive that their house was built upon the sand, and certainly about to fall. Though convinced of this, and of the necessity of flight, they had neither wisdom nor knowledge enough to direct their course aright. They saw they were in error, but they did not see into the truth. The natural consequence was, that they became the helpless victims of the fowler who might be disposed to ensnare them. About twenty of them were entrapped by the Mormons, whose earthly and sensual dogmas suited their natures best. Others dropped off on various pleas, until, by the subsequent accession of a small party, their numbers stood at sixty. This was their numerical force when we left them in the possession of the Assembly Room.

Their course, however, since has thinned their numbers still more. In the small party that joined them were one or two believers in modern miracles. One of them, in fact, mesmerised another, and cured her, and absurdly imagined that the Spirit of God had performed the cure through him miraculously in answer to prayer. There was another similar case in the same town. A Mormon priest mesmerised a woman to produce lactation, which had failed her with all her children. He succeeded, and assured her that it was the work of the Spirit in answer to his prayers. She and her husband believed him; and though better things might have been expected, they became devoted Mormons, and prepared for any absurdity that might be propounded. The former miracle-worker and his patient did not become Mormons, though their proceedings led to their exclusion. What crotchets they profess, as proved by their miracles, we have not heard, though we are told they have become bitter enemies to the truth they once declared themselves attached to. Be it so. The truth can only flourish in honest and good

hearts; and the sooner the sons of evil manifest themselves the better. Thus Millerism has divided and subdivided until, as we are informed by a dearly loved friend in Derby, there remain only twenty of them who have rejected human folly and tradition, and have embraced the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. If this be so, then the truth has not only overturned Millerism, and defeated the machinations of Campbellism, but has maintained its own in Nottingham, and 'turned' twenty of 'the Gentiles from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.'

* * * * *

But before Millerism fell into ruins, it was useful in obtaining for the truth a large and attentive hearing. We addressed the people in the Assembly Room frequently through its management. On Sunday night they were literally packed together, so that we had to edge and squeeze along in order to obtain our place upon the platform. It is calculated that about 2000 people were assembled. We spoke on the subject of Jesus Christ the Heir of the Kingdom and throne of David. The audience listened with great attention; and, judging from the following note, received the next day from two principals in the Scotch Baptist Church in the neighbourhood, they must have been deeply interested:—

New Basford, Aug. 7, 1848.

Dear Sir,—The very able and instructive discourse delivered by you in the Assembly Room on last evening has elicited in us a particular desire that the same should be published, not in part only, but if possible as a whole, that not only those who heard may be able to consider at leisure the subject, the issue of which is so vastly important; but that others who were not so favoured may have the same opportunity. We think the publishing of that discourse would be a means of helping forward the object you have in view, and of informing the minds of those less informed upon those great truths so eloquently advocated by you.

Yours very respectfully,

Thomas Robinson.
John Sisling.

To Dr J. Thomas.

Reporters from the several journals issued in the town attended the lectures, and published an outline of them in their respective papers, though with many vexatious typographical errors. In this our first tour we spoke about thirteen times at Nottingham, yet Mr Wallis, who volunteered his services to enlighten the public in regard to our heresies, was present only at one of them![†]

† *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 152-60.

## DERBY.

We visited Derby on the 9th August. Application had been made to the Mayor for the Town Hall. He referred the request to the Bench of Magistrates, which, it is probable, would have granted it, had not one of them reminded his brethren that there had been a man there from America some time ago, named Dealtry, who had created a great excitement among the people; and therefore he counselled them not to grant it to another from the same country. Being denied the use of the Hall, though granted to the Chartists, the Mechanics' Institute was engaged for three successive nights. We desired to secure it for Sunday also; but the librarian stated that he could only let it during the week nights, the committee of the institute having reserved to themselves the letting of it for that day. Though Derby is one of the darkest and most bigotted of towns in England, a disposition to hear was at first manifested to some extent. Our audiences were, it was thought, about 1000. A physician who heard us inquired if we were not a Mohamedan! What others may have thought we know not. The impression, however, does not appear to have been promotive of our popularity in 'the heavenlies.' For on applying to the committee for the continued use of the institute, they refused to let us have it, on the ground that the magistrates had forbid it. This was ascertained about ten o'clock on Friday night. We were determined, however, not to be foiled by Satan, if we could help it. We succeeded in obtaining the Old Assembly Room, and in getting out some bills and placards. One being pasted on a board, was suspended on a boy's back, who was sent about the town as 'a walking advertisement' from 4 P.M. till night. They would not allow us to put a bill on the board before the institute advertising the people of a change of place, although we had given out that we should meet there if no obstacle were thrown in the way. To remove this difficulty, we stationed a man at the gate to direct the people who might come, to the Assembly Room. This incident diminished our congregation considerably, though at night the room was filled. The *Derbyshire Chronicle* intimated that a report of our lectures would appear in its columns; but Satan was at work with the press also, so that it failed to see the light. The Mayor of Derby, who is an 'infidel,' inconsistently enough declared that we spoke blasphemy! An excellent judge

doubtless is he. Our blasphemy, we suppose, was against 'the powers that be,' in showing that the time was fast approaching when all civil and ecclesiastical authority and power would be transferred from 'the wicked spirits in the heavenlies,' who were now 'the rulers of the darkness of this world,' to Jesus, the King of Israel, and the saints.

### LINCOLN.

From Derby we proceeded to Lincoln, an old cathedral town. There is there a small congregation of friends to the truth, who, with a disposition to benefit their contemporaries, find Satan too strong for their endeavours.

* * * *

The clerical influence is strong in Lincoln, because both aristocratic and wealthy; and wherever rank and riches are concentrated in a third-rate town, the people are servile and timid. The dissenters are not bold in Lincoln; because, being of the trading and humbler classes, they fear to offend the clerical power, lest their interests should perish. We obtained a tolerable hearing at first in the Council Chamber; but when our teaching was found to be subversive of the state superstition, and of nonconformist divinity, it was found impossible to bring them out. The Unitarian minister was quite captivated for a time with what he heard. He attended nearly all our lectures, and urged us to publish them for the public good. He invited us to his house, where we passed a very agreeable evening with him and his family; and also visited us at the friend's with whom we sojourned. He was quite stirred up to the study of the prophets, upon whose writings, as far as fulfilled, he delivered a course of lectures when we had departed. After we had concluded our lectures, he arose, and thanked us in a speech addressed to the audience for our labours in Lincoln.

* * * *

We spent a very pleasant time in this town in a family much attached to Mr Wallis and devoted to the Bethanian theory. Some of them were quite opposed to our being invited to Lincoln; but when they came to hear for themselves, the tables were completely turned, and they were as unwilling for us to leave. Two were immersed while we sojourned there.*

† *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 160-62, 181-2.

## NEWARK.

### An 'Official' Invitation could not be Given.

While lecturing at Lincoln, several members of a Bethanian congregation in Newark came over to hear us. They appear to have been much gratified at what they heard; and consequently very desirous for us to visit Newark. The whole of the active and influential members of the church were canvassed, and a unanimous wish to hear was the result. They accordingly went to Mr John Bell, the manager of the bank there, and elder of their congregation, to ascertain whether an *official* invitation could not be forwarded to us, 'that they might have the pleasure of hearing more particularly concerning the things we testified about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.' Prior to this visit to Mr B., they had made arrangements for our 'comfortable accommodation.' Mr Bell, however, replied that, from the disorderly position we occupied in visiting England without an official recommendation, he could not sanction it; and that as he was one of the committee appointed at Chester to regulate the affairs of 'evangelists' from America, he could not throw off his allegiance to said committee in officially introducing us to Newark without their consent. To this it was objected that we were not an 'evangelist.' He replied that he could not have fellowship with us, and so exhibit ingratitude towards his brethren at Nottingham, and towards Messrs Campbell and Henshall for their valuable services. He consented, however, that they should have the room in which they ordinarily convened for us to lecture in. Finding they could do no better, they availed themselves of this permission in forwarding to us the following note:—

Newark, Aug. 31, 1848.

DEAR BROTHER,—We, the undersigned, being members of the Church of Christ here, beg most gratefully to acknowledge, and to thank you for your generous offer to come and declare unto us 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God.' We are very anxious you should come, but the result of an interview of the subscribed with our respected elder, Mr Bell, causes us very much regret that the church—(that is, Mr Bell)—cannot, for certain reasons, give you an *official* invitation. We, rather than incur any grievous consequences, must forego the pleasure which we had strongly and anxiously anticipated.

We beg to express our highest approval of the nature of your valuable services in the cause of truth. We are yours in the hope of the gospel, very affectionately.

[Six signatures follow.]

**First Visit.**

Things remained thus until our return to Lincoln from Scotland in November. At that time an intimation was forwarded to us that the friends at Newark would be glad to receive us, and that their room would be at our service all the week with the exception of the First Day. The way being thus open, we made our appearance there, and addressed the people on three or four successive nights. The room was crowded to excess, and Mr Bell was there. His attentions were polite and friendly, notwithstanding his allegiance to the committee, and gratitude to his allies elsewhere. Having an appointment at Lincoln, we left on Saturday morning. But before our departure, Mr Bell surprised us by a visit of adieu. He said he had nothing to do with bringing us there, but he was very glad we had come, and to prove that he meant what he said, begged our acceptance of a trifle towards our expenses, which must be considerable. 'Next time,' said he, 'you must write to me, and I will make all necessary arrangements for your comfort and for the accommodation of the public.'

**Second Visit.**

When, therefore, we proposed to revisit Newark in 1849, we wrote to Mr Bell as he requested. The following was his reply :—

Newark, 28 June, 1849.

Brother Thomas.—Dear Sir,—Your letter with programme is to hand. I have applied for a more eligible building in which to hold the meetings you propose to convene. I cannot obtain an answer for this post, but may do so to-morrow. At all events, our old meeting-place will be available for your lectures should we be prevented from obtaining more desirable accommodation; and therefore you must stand engaged for the period named in your programme; and in a day or two, when my arrangements are complete, I will write you again. At present the public will expect you to appear on Sunday, July 7.

I am, dear sir,

Very faithfully yours,

John Bell.

Accordingly, in two or three days we received the following note :—

Newark, 1 July, 1849.

Dear Brother,—I enclose to you a bill which I have struck off announcing the lectures. I shall expect your arrival on Saturday, and have provided for you your old quarters. I do so because I think you will feel more independent, &c. At the same time you will allow me to say that my house will always be open for your reception and for your retreat; and I hope whilst you are in Newark you will take your seat with me at my table whenever you are able.

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I shall meet you (D.V.) on your arrival at the station; but should any unforeseen circumstances arise to prevent me, my brother will supply my lack of service.

I would just observe that our Corn Exchange, where you are to lecture, is a beautiful large room, and I trust you will not sustain any inconvenience as that experienced during your last visit to Newark.

I am, dear sir,

Very sincerely and affectionately yours,

JOHN BELL.

*P.S.*—I intend to strike off a small bill announcing the publication of *Elpis Israel*, which I shall take care to have distributed after each of the week day lectures as the people retire at the doors. J. B.

### Nothing but Changes.

These letters show that what Mr Bell had heard, had produced an entire change in his views concerning us. He had evidently renounced his allegiance to the Chester committee, and ceased to be grateful to Messrs Campbell and Henshall for their alleged 'valuable services.' Unfortunately, however, we saw Mr Bell no more, or we might have strengthened his new-born zeal, and have given a different turn to his future course. He failed to meet us at the station on our arrival. He had fallen sick, and was so severely afflicted that his physician recommended that no visitors should be admitted to his room. We accordingly left the town without an interview; and to our astonishment heard that, some time after his recovery, Mr Bell had abandoned 'reformation' in despair, and had cast himself into the fascinating embraces of the harlot Church of England!*

## GLASGOW.

### FIRST VISIT.

We arrived at the city of the Clyde—great, populous, magnifical, and filthy—at half-past four P.M., on Friday, September 15th, 1848; where we found our only acquaintance in Scotland—[Mr Gowans]—acquaintance by correspondence alone—waiting for us in great anxiety lest we should not appear in time for meeting at half-past seven that night. Our arrival set his mind at rest. He had made appointments, and we were on the spot to avail ourselves of whatever might turn up propitious to the truth in the undeveloped, and to us unexpected and astounding future.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 182-3.

### A Small Beginning.

Our correspondent's ability to do being very limited, our introduction to Glasgow was not of a very promising character. He did the best he could, however; and the most able can do no more. He rented the meeting-house in Blackfriars, formerly occupied by the 'Christian Chartists' (but then vacant) for a week; and advertised the appointments for every night at eight o'clock, and three times on Lord's Day, as extensively as he deemed prudent, trusting to the supplies afforded by the Scottish custom of casting pence into a receiver at the doors of all the temples at each hour of meeting, for the means of meeting the expenses incurred. The house will seat from 800 to 1000 people; so that when we entered for the first time on Friday evening, the small collection of about 200 people appeared still smaller; and, it was feared, ominous of little or no result amid the 400,000 to whom our existence even was unknown. We had learned, however, not to confide in omens, nor to despise the day of small things. And, though it was a difficult house to speak in—from the boy-babel without, and the high pulpit within, the scattered few sitting in the depths below, and the gallery on a level with the speaker's head, and entirely empty—we went to work sustained and energised by the majesty and power of the great truths to which we had called the attention of the public. We got through, and invited the people to come again.

### Remarkable Increase of Interest.

On Saturday evening things improved a little, though an unfavourable night for meeting. On Sunday night there might be about 500 present. Interest increased, until it expressed itself through a member of the 'Reform Baptist Church,' commonly called 'Campbellites,' rising in his pew after we had finished, and proposing that a committee should be formed, whose business it should be to advertise the lectures and get the people to attend. He thought it was a great pity that such interesting and important subjects should not be heard by a multitude. The suggestion was adopted. A committee of fourteen was organised. Placards and bills were printed. Some were posted on the walls, others converted into 'walking advertisements;' and the bills circulated by hand, and exposed in the windows of the shops.

### The City Hall Taken.

The effect was soon manifest. The Blackfriars meeting-house filled up, and was judged too small for the multitude expected on Lord's Day, Sunday, 24th. The City Hall was proposed for the meeting on that day. We were invited to visit it, and see if we thought we could make ourself heard in every part. We found it large indeed, and of capacity to seat 5000 or 6000 people. We concluded, however, to make a trial, though we questioned the policy of venturing on so large a place, having considerable doubt as to the possibility of making it appear even respectably seated. A small place filled is much more gratifying than an immense hall with a scanty audience. But our misgivings were overruled, and the place was engaged for Sunday night. We arrived at the time appointed to begin. On ascending the platform, 10,000 or 12,000 eyes were turned upon us. The effect was singular. A sea of upturned faces was spread out before us. It was calm, but might easily have been lashed into a storm, were our course as the enemy describes it. What had brought this multitude together? Not our personal influence, nor that of a party potent in wealth and number. It was not our 'eloquence;' for we do not condescend to ape the orator, or play the fool, for the amusement of the people. No, it was none of these—it was the sterling, heart-moving nature of the things we presented that concentrated this crowd in the City Hall. It was a multitude of thoughtful men and women—the former greatly predominating, as in all our meetings—who had convened to hear more of the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, which is soon to effectuate the casting down of thrones, and the social regeneration of the world.

### Glasgow Stirred up.

In eight days, our hearers increased from 200 to 5000 or 6000; and this not on one occasion only; but at three subsequent occupations of the City Hall.

* * * *

We lectured fifteen times in Glasgow before the delegates assembled; so that, having had the ear of the public, it was beyond their power to affect us injuriously, if they should prove so disposed. We suspended our lectures on the 26th, that we might rest, and have leisure to attend to their proceedings on the 28th. On the

following Lord's Day morning we were to speak at Blackfriars, and at night at the City Hall. These appointments were fulfilled. At the former place, we spoke on repentance and remission of sins through the name of Jesus; and at the latter, on the apostacy and its influence on the nations. On the 26th, the last week night lecture, multitudes could not obtain admission to the house. It was crowded to overflowing; and during our remarks the approbation of the hearers was expressed in a 'ruffing' with the feet—a custom 'more honoured in the breach than the observance;' and from which we requested them to abstain. We suspect it is long since Glasgow has been so stirred up by the interpretation of the Word of the Kingdom.

**Clerical Opposition and Countenance.**

It is not to be imagined, however, that the feeling excited was one of universal admiration and good-will. We heard that some of the clergy were crying out lustily against us. The Rev. Mr Pollok, of the State Church, brother of the poet, told his audience that 'a villain had come among them from America with his mouth full of lies!' Another of some other sect was denouncing us to crowds on Glasgow Green in unmeasured terms. This was all right. It raised the curiosity of many to hear the 'lies' that filled the clergy with so much wrath. All, however, were not of this spirit, among whom was the Rev. William Anderson, Relief minister in the city. But he was unpopular with the clergy himself; for he believed the prophets, whose doctrine he advocated, and exposed the profound ignorance of his preaching brethren. They had the wit to convert him into 'a specimen,' but the times and the seasons are not convenient for spiritual anatomy. He knows they love him not, and would silence him if they could; but being rich—it is said 'very rich'—he is very independent, and beyond the power of their hate and interdiction. He showed himself quite polite and friendly.*

**Conference of Campbellite Delegates.**

While Dr Thomas was lecturing in Glasgow, a 'meeting of delegates of the Churches of the disciples' was held in that city—(and to which reference is made in the previous

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 216, 226-8.

paragraph but one)—'for the purpose of promoting the best interests of the congregations of disciples in Great Britain and Ireland.' The church at Lincoln was on the printed roll of the denomination, and Dr Thomas, learning that the church did not intend to send a delegate to the convention, on account of the expense, offered his services as their representative without any cost to them. This was not done, as the doctor explains, with any intention by him to take any part in the proceedings at the conference; but having reason to believe that a personal attack was to be made upon himself, he desired to be in a position to be able to speak in his own defence, if necessary, 'so that Satan might not have the advantage over him.' His offer was unanimously accepted, and the doctor accordingly presented himself at the conference as the duly accredited representative of the Lincoln church. Exception was taken to him, however, on the ground that he was not a member of any Reformation Church in Britain. This objection gave rise to a long and very acrimonious discussion, which lasted over two days, and of which the doctor gives a very graphic account. It ultimately resulted in his claim to represent the Lincoln church being recognised; but he did not avail himself of this to take any part in the subsequent proceedings of the conference.

### Campbellism in Glasgow.

At the time of the convention, the Glasgow congregation consisted of seventy-one. Of these, we were informed by one of the members, sixty-six were in favour of inviting us to meet with them at their First Day meetings. But the remaining five (two males and three females) were opposed to it, and for the sake of peace allowed to rule. This was a forbearance characteristic of our friends on both sides of the Atlantic. Our opponents make all the trouble. We maintain the right, and desire it alone; yet though power sometimes favours us, we submit to the wrong rather than resort to compulsory measures enforced by majority-votes.

### Closing Addressss.

Lord's Day, October 1, were our last two addresses at Glasgow on our first tour. The citizens assembled at our lecture on the 25th September prolonged their sitting on our retirement to the vestry, to consult about having a soiree as a public testimonial and acknowledgment of their obligation to us for our disinterested labours in their behalf. The soiree was resolved upon, and a committee of management appointed, who were to invite us in the name of the meeting.*

## SECOND VISIT.

### Soiree to Dr Thomas.

On Friday night, October 12th, 1848, the 'Grand Soiree,' as it was advertised, was held in commemoration of our visit to Glasgow. Mr Turner, one of the city magistrates, was in the chair. This gentleman is an octogenarian of the Radical and Cameronian schools. He was incarcerated in 'good old Tory times,' as some call them, for permitting a meeting for 'Radical Reform' to be held on the lawn before his house. He was just the right sort of man to preside at a soiree 'in honour of' Ishmael among the parsons! Though so advanced in years, he seemed as lively and vigorous as a man in the middle of life. May he live long, and witness the triumph of the saints in the Kingdom of God, when the seed of his enemies shall be put to shame!

The Rev. Mr Anderson, Relief minister, was invited to attend and make a speech on the occasion; which he did, and a very excellent one it was. He is a man of learning and high standing in Glasgow; although, by pietists of mystical opinions, accounted 'daft.' But that matters not; it is their way of olden time to impute idiotcy or insanity to those who have more discernment, honesty of purpose, and Scriptural information than themselves. Mr Anderson told the meeting that he was once as blind and ignorant as they, knowing nothing of the prophets, though professedly a teacher of the truth. He was indebted to the late Mr Cunningham, a notable writer on prophecy, for a knowledge of his ignorance, which was the first step to his comprehension of the truth.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, p. 253.

Mr C. made him ashamed of himself; so little did he know of the great things God had revealed in His Word. This he determined to study, and to blot out his reproach in the understanding of the matter. His investigation of the prophetic writings had led him to see that the purpose of God was to establish *a kingdom in the land of Israel under Jesus Christ which should have rule over the whole earth.* He then traced the idea of Theocracy from Eden through subsequent developments of the divine will; and concluded by a glance at what God had promised should come to pass hereafter. Mr Anderson seems to have been the only preacher in Glasgow that believed that Jesus Christ would reign upon David's throne a thousand years over the nations of the earth, and that feared not to avow his faith. It was no small encouragement, therefore, to him for us to visit the city, and boldly to publish the doctrine with such cheering effect.

J. B. Rollo, Esq., also addressed the meeting on the subject before it. We had likewise, as a matter of course, to make a speech, which on such an occasion we find more difficult than to expound the sounding of the Seventh Apocalyptic Trumpet. The meeting, which consisted of some 250 persons, was edified and strengthened in its good purposes by the late Mr Richardson, the Scotch Baptist Church's preacher at Paisley. Altogether—what with the addresses, the music, singing, and good cheer—the evening, till eleven P.M., was spent in a very agreeable manner.

**Suggestion from which 'Elpis Israel' Resulted.**

At this hour, the soiree was at end; but before they arose to depart, a gentleman remarked that

> He did not think that Dr Thomas had treated—or rather was about to treat—them well. He had announced that he was to leave Glasgow in the morning, and that it was uncertain if he should ever visit them again. Now, what he thought the doctor's friends had a right to complain of was, that he had come among them and roused their minds to an interest in subjects of more magnitude and importance than all others, and was now about to leave them with no other memorials than treacherous and fading memory could afford. Was it not possible for him to defer his return to America, and to publish the matter of his lectures in a book, that his friends and the public might possess it in a tangible and permanent form? He hoped he would find it possible, and give them a favourable reply.

This seemed to be responded to by many present. Though not famed for what pious sinners call 'charity,' our phrenology, say cranioscopists, is illustrated by 'Bene-

volence, 6 on a scale of 7.' We thought it a pity to leave the demand for knowledge of the truth unsatisfied. We replied, therefore, to the meeting, that

> When we left the United States, our intention was to return in the autumn. We had made no provision for a longer stay, and the probability was that our affairs would suffer in consequence. That, however, was a matter of secondary importance when it became apparent that the truth could be subserved by the sacrifice. We were glad to witness so great and abiding an interest in our labours, and could not therefore find it in our heart to refuse their request. For their gratification, then, we would prolong our stay in Britain. When we had got through our appointments at Edinburgh and Lincoln, we would return to London; and if they would busy themselves in obtaining subscribers for the work, we would employ our time during the winter in preparing it.

This seemed to meet the approbation of the meeting, and with this understanding we parted. Thus was originated ELPIS ISRAEL: *an Exposition of the Kingdom and Age to Come.**

### PAISLEY.

#### First Visit.

On Monday, October 2nd [1848], we visited Paisley by invitation—a town of some 60,000 inhabitants, about seven miles from Glasgow. We sojourned in this place ten days, during which we resided with the pastor of the Scotch Baptist Church, to which and the public we addressed ourselves about eight times. He was a friendly man, highly esteemed by his brethren, free to talk, ready to listen, and desirous to learn. We experienced much attention from him; and hoped, from the interest he seemed to take in us and the things we advocated, that hereafter he might prove an efficient advocate of the Gospel of the Kingdom. But the end has shown that the Lord had no use for him in the case; for not many months elapsed ere he was laid low; and he is now a mouldering skeleton in the sides of the pit, waiting for the resurrection to life or condemnation as his works have been.

The interest excited in Paisley was very considerable. The church members seemed to hear without prejudice until the spirit of Campbellism began to agitate them after our second visit, when trouble began to brew and disturb the peace of the camp. There were not more than two or three Campbellites in the church, but unfortunately they were wealthy and pillars of the establishment.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 43-4.

### A Surprising Incident.

An incident occurred on Lord's Day morning after we had finished, which deserves to be noted. One of the audience arose and stated that he had been combatting against baptism for thirty years; but that he now saw, for the first time in his life, the relation of the institution to the Kingdom of God. He added, that he wished to be immersed, if any of them would do it, without his pledging himself to their opinions, or being under the necessity of joining their body. No one present could be more surprised at this application than we; for not many days before we had met him at a friend's house in Glasgow with several others, among whom was one exceedingly pressing on the subject of baptism with this same gentleman. The former had the better of the argument; but neither of them the most amiable disposition on the occasion. By management, civility was maintained between them, though it was often a question if its flimsy cuticle had not been abraided. In our speech on Lord's Day, we had not been discussing baptism, but showing the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, which in quoting the testimonies presented baptism incidentally. This case is proof to us that the way to bring people to a union with the name of Jesus by baptism is to enlighten them on the kingdom and name; for when they get to understand these, they will demand to be baptised of their own accord. His request was acceded to, and on the following evening, he was immersed with his wife and daughter.*

### Second Visit.

Morning came, and with it the steamer, which, having taken in a cargo of Highland cattle, pigs, fish, &c., left the pier at ten A.M., for Glasgow. Our destination was Paisley, where we were to speak the next day; and as we wished to vary the route, we concluded to leave the steamer at Greenock, and take the rail thence to Paisley, where we arrived at four P.M. We spoke twice at this place next day, which was Lord's Day, Oct, 23, 1848. About this time twelve persons were immersed by authority into the church; but upon what premises in each case we are not prepared to say.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 255-6.

### Third Visit.

We may remark here, as we shall not return to Paisley again, that on our third visit we found a change had come over the spirits of some who had made us welcome there before. *Elpis Israel* was now in the hands of over seventy persons there. The things it contained had called into activity the spirit of Campbellism latent in the heart of the gentleman referred to. Our friend of Fergusliе was rusticating at Dunoon; but they whom we found in Paisley rejoicing in his name were by no means gratified at seeing us again. Had we been a Campbellite, we should have been welcome to their pulpit on Lord's day as before. But the doctrine we taught was found to have no affinity with the theology of the 'Evergreat;' so that, although the church is a Scotch Baptist Church, and refuses to be identified with the 'Reformation' churches of Britain, we were given to understand by a friend, that the Campbellite spirit in one or two rich men was so excited, that if the house were applied for to be used by us on Lord's Day, it would not be granted; but no objection would be made to our having it in the week. As our object was not to create unnecessary difficulty, we acquiesced in our friend's advice; being desirous, also, if trouble did arise, the question should be 'What is the Gospel?' and not, 'Shall the author of *Elpis Israel* speak in our pulpit on Lord's Day, or not?'*

### ABERDEEN.

The writing of *Elpis Israel* being accomplished, I set out on my second tour through Britain. It will be unnecessary to enter into the details of this, inasmuch as it was pretty much a repetition of the first. I revisited all the places I had been to before, with the addition of Dundee and Aberdeen. I came to visit the latter city in consequence of a friend being there, with whom I was intimate, a resident of Northern Illinois. Through him I became acquainted with several members of the Campbellite Church of liberal and candid minds, who, though not believing, or rather not clearly understanding, what I contend for, desired to hear and judge for themselves whether I said aught than what the Scriptures revealed. My visit there resulted in some submitting themselves to the 'obedience of faith,' and the subscription of several to the forthcoming book.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1852, pp. 106, 107.

### Soiree to Dr Thomas.

On the night before I bade adieu to Aberdeen, I met about a hundred persons, I think, at a soiree, to which I was invited. This was a farewell tea-drinking, at which 'all and singular' were at liberty to ask any questions concerning the things I had introduced to their notice, and the contents of the Bible generally. The time was occupied in this way till past eleven. The minister of the chapel we had occupied was among the guests. He would have asked some questions, but it was then too late, and he had not wished to prevent others from questioning by occupying the time. He thought they were all under great obligation to me for subjecting myself to a public cross-questioning upon so many topics, and for so long a time. He confessed that he should not like to go through the same ordeal. After a few more remarks in this strain, he concluded, and the soiree was closed.

### A Clerical Enemy at Work.

'The Gospel of the Kingdom' preached in this city of the north was not without effect. The audiences were large, but not to be named after those of Glasgow. The attention was strict, and, I suppose, the impression somewhat more than superficial. I come to this conclusion from the following words in a letter from that city :—

> Friend H—— had two Sundays' hard labour after you left to undo what you had done in his tabernacle. He was making a sore handling of matters, as I am informed. Poor gentleman! he could scarcely crow in his own Zion, though there were none to oppose him.

* * * *

The reverend gentleman having succeeded, I suppose, in undoing the little mischief I had done among his flock, all things relapsed into their former sheolitic condition.

### Campbellism at Work.

This was not the case, however, with 'the Campbellite church,' as it is called there. A correspondent, writing from Aberdeen, says :

> The dust has been raised amongst us since you left. The teaching of 'the things of the Kingdom of God' gave offence to some of the friends, and to one of our elders who is Campbellised, and spiritualised with a double distillation. He could stand it no longer, and therefore gave in his resignation. He could sustain his theory by neither Scripture nor reason. He went privately to all the members he thought favourable to

his notions, and got about half the congregation to side with him. We told them they could please themselves. If they thought fit they could go; but for ourselves, we were resolved to teach what we believed to be the truth, and were willing that they should exercise the same right: but we would not be restricted by the elder in question. By advice of some of his party, he gave in; but he next made a proposition that no brother should speak longer than a quarter of an hour at a time. This, however, did not take. He lost his proposition, and in the meantime we are settled down; and I have hope that most of his friends will in the course of time come to see the truth. He did them great evil, I fear; nevertheless, I think some of them are beginning to see things in their true light. But, let the result be what it may, we are determined to be faithful. They are the intelligent and talented of the congregation that contend for 'the Gospel of the Kingdom.' Of this there can be no doubt; for it is only such that have the sagacity to discriminate between things human and divine.*

**Robert Robert's First Impressions of Dr Thomas.**

Among Dr Thomas's auditors in Aberdeen was Robert Roberts, who, in the first of a series of autobiographical articles, entitled 'My Days and My Ways,' which he published in his periodical, *Good Company*, thus records his first impressions of the great teacher:

At ten years of age, I was taken by my mother, along with my brothers, to hear a Dr Thomas in a chapel opposite the Baptist chapel in John Street, which my mother then attended. The usual preacher in that place was a Mr Hart, an eccentric sort of man who had once been a soldier, and who made a trade of 'christenings' at 2s 6d a head—anybody welcome. On this occasion, he did not appear in any way. The pulpit was occupied by two men—one an Aberdeen tradesman and the other the Dr Thomas we had come to hear. Dr Thomas was a quiet, stern, firm, neatly-made gentleman with a jet-black beard. His companion in the pulpit gave out the hymns and offered the prayer. Dr Thomas delivered the address. I discovered from the remarks afterwards made as the congregation were dispersing, that the address was regarded as something extraordinary, and that it was on baptism. The address had not struck me at all. I was too young to receive any impression. I had, in fact, wearied and slept under it, and was glad when it was over. The one thing that interested me and my brothers was the speaker's beard, which was a novelty in those days. As we went home together arm in arm, we vowed

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 135-36.

we should never shave. I had much occasion afterwards to know who this Dr Thomas was.*

## DUNDEE.

### FIRST VISIT.

The reader will not have entirely forgotten the tumultuous Campbellite convention at Glasgow in 1848, and that among the delegates there were certain very zealous opponents to myself. Belonging to this party were representatives from the Campbellite church in Dundee, meeting at Hammerman Hall in that town. They had observed my progress, and the interest created by my lectures in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and elsewhere, and concluded that it was possible I might be heard in Dundee without danger to what they considered 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'

#### Invitation to Tea and Conversation.

They determined, therefore to invite me; and, supposing I was still in Edinburgh—though, in fact, in Aberdeen—they sent the following invitation, which was forwarded to me from thence:—

13 Nelson Street, Dundee, 26th July, 1849.

DEAR SIR,—Being informed that you are to visit Aberdeen, we beg to say that a number of friends here are desirous to see you, and have a conversation with you *over a cup of tea*. If you could find it convenient to come this way, on your return, please say on receipt of this, and at what time. You will have a friendly reception, and your expenses will be paid

Yours truly,

JAMES AINSLIE,
J. G. AINSLIE,
JOHN WATSON,
ALLAN FORDYCE.

John Thomas, M.D., Edinburgh.

#### The Invitation Accepted.

I received this note a day or so before my departure from Aberdeen. I concluded, therefore, to change my route; and instead of making my way through Aberdeen to Perth, and thence to Paisley, to take the steamer, and, landing at Arbroath, proceed by rail to Dundee. This accomplished, I was welcomed to Dundee by two of the

* *Good Company*, vol. i. pp. 31-32.

friends, who met me at the station, and conducted me to 13 Nelson Street, the residence of one of the signers, who had been cicerone to my friend, President Campbell, during his sojourn there.

Soon after my arrival, tea was introduced, and disposed of, without anything unusual. A walk into the town was then proposed and accepted. It terminated at the coffee-house where the President had resided, and which was to become my domicile also for the time. About nine o'clock the coffee-room was occupied by a considerable company, who had convened as the 'friends desirous to see and converse with me.' Cakes, coffee, and tea were served up by Mr Lamb, whose guest I was to become. After a sufficient interval, conversation turned from generals to particulars, and I was asked for an outline of the things I generally laid before the public in my lectures. Having given this, the question was mooted among them whether I should be invited to lecture in Dundee. I suggested the propriety of my withdrawal from their company while they should discuss that, supposing that there might be some opposed to it, who would feel more at liberty in their opposition in my absence. It was not thought necessary; but I preferred it should be so, and withdrew.

### Formal Invitation to Lecture.

On being recalled, I was informed that it was their wish that I should come and lecture in Dundee. But I could not then say, as I had sent an appointment to Liverpool, where I proposed to be after finishing at Paisley. I arranged, however, that I would return to Dundee from Paisley, if I could get released from Liverpool; which I managed to do, as the appointments there had not as yet been made. The friends in Liverpool wrote to me at Paisley, and to them at Dundee, by the same mail, of which I obtained information as agreed upon by the following note:—

13 Nelson Street, Dundee, 10th August, 1849.

DEAR SIR,—As all arrangements for your lectures on Sabbath and the following days have been advertised by bills and in the newspapers, we shall look for you by the evening train to-morrow, by the Perth and Dundee Central Railway. The mail train arrives here about seven o'clock in the evening.

I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

JAMES AINSLIE.

### SECOND VISIT.

On the morrow, accordingly, I went and delivered, I think, some seven lectures while I remained. During my stay there, I was well cared for and kindly treated.

#### Interview with 'The Christian Philosopher.'

President Campbell's cicerone was my guide in visiting around. He accompanied me on a visit to Dr Dick, author of *The Christian Philosopher* and other popular works. The doctor received us politely, being free in conversation, and obliging in showing us his telescopes, through one of which he gave us a view of St Andrews, from his observatory, six miles distant, on the other side of the Tay. He accompanied us from his house on the way to the station, which afforded a brief opportunity to exchange a few words on the appearing of Christ and the millennial reign. He asked my views on these subjects, which I gave him as concisely as possible.

'I suppose,' said he, 'you allow others to differ from you?'

'Certainly,' I replied; 'I have no alternative, were I ever so disposed to be arbitrary; which I am not.'

Upon which he gave me to understand that he looked for a millennium, and a gospel reign, the result of a universal diffusion of science and philosophy, which would pave the way for a general reception of the gospel! Living four miles from Dundee—[at Broughty Ferry]—he did not attend my lectures there; though I have since learned he expressed regret to a mutual friend in Edinburgh that he had been unable to do so.

#### Opposition to the Kingdom's Gospel.

Affairs progressed very smoothly in Dundee until my last lecture in the town, which treated of 'The Gospel of the Kingdom.' This, though a Scriptural statement of the subject-matter preached as gospel to Abraham, the contemporaries of Moses, and to those also of John the Baptiser, Jesus and his apostles, without any allusion to sects or persons, kindled a flame among the Campbellites which had not ceased to burn in Dundee when I left Britain. One of the Campbellite bishopric 'became obedient to the faith.' This turned everything upside down. My 'affectionate' guide to Dr Dick's, being 'a

bishop,' if I mistake not, was greatly frustrated; and all his affection evaporated into alienation and opposition to the kingdom's gospel.

**Persecution.**

Persecution [writes one] has now assumed a very formidable appearance against us in Dundee. The first step was the deposition of him you baptised from what they term 'the bishops' office:' and, strange to tell, this has been done while as yet he had not opened his mouth upon any subject in the meeting since you were here. James Ainslie and Company have become determined to check 'the new light' in the bud; but, contrary to their expectation, the blade has made its appearance, and a stalk of no inconsiderable size has already sprung up. Since I last wrote, five have been baptised. Two of these have delivered addresses to the brethren upon the subjects of the 'new light,' which have thrown the people into a complete consternation. On Sunday week the deposed bishop is advertised to give a trial discourse before the church, on the 'new doctrines' before he can be again elevated to the bishopric; which he says he will do in earnest.

**An Inquisition.**

1849. At the meeting of their office-bearers, held on September 3, the following questions were proposed to him to answer impromptu, upon which the questions and answers were recorded in the church-book:—

1. Would you have fellowship with a paidobaptist church?—No.
2. Have you not virtually cut us off by rejecting our baptism without precedent in the New Testament, or being authorised by the apostles?—No.
3. If yours be the only Scriptural baptism, why fellowship us who are unscripturally baptised according to your notions of it?—I never stated anything connected with *your* baptism. I say, 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.' If you had faith according to your own showing, you were baptised; if you had not faith, you deceived me, and 'to your own master you stand or fall.'
4. Why are there two baptisms practised in the church?—I am not aware of two.
5. Have you not been baptised twice?—No.
6. Have you not stated that we were introduced into the kingdom?—I have not taught the brethren any other thing even yet.
7. Say six months ago. Did you consider yourself baptised?—I now consider myself as having been deceived.
8. What is faith?—'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

After all this questioning, they declared themselves as ignorant of his views as ever, and said, 'We really do not know what to think of him, or what to do with him.' Upon which he was deposed until they should think over the matter. They concluded that his deposition should be permanent after his discourse, because the things believed 'are subversive of the foundation of the Reformation.'

### A Stumbling-Block.

It was alleged that the doctrine I had taught 'had seriously damaged the cause in Dundee, and cast a stumbling-block before the weaker brethren and the world.' Yet I had said no more than what every one may read for himself in the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles. A correspondent, writing from Dundee, says :

If I were to examine into this allegation, and inquire who most seemed to stumble, or be afraid of this stumbling-block, I should find that they are not these who think themselves the weaker brethren. And were I to give judgment in the case, it would not be unlike that of the sailor who, on being reminded that his wife was the weaker vessel, smartly replied, 'Then she should carry less sail.' The weak should not be stubborn. And yet when we inquire if you taught anything they did not know before, 'O no,' says one, 'we knew it all our days;' 'we knew it these twenty years,' says another; 'I got nothing from Dr Thomas,' says a third; and so on to the end. These are the sayings of those who are offended at, and afraid of the doctrine you teach.'

### The Two Gospels.

The same writer continues :

On the evenings of the Sundays that have intervened between your visit and the present time, the principal topic of conversation at our meetings at the hall, has been 'the kingdom.' Old fancies stand firm in the minds of some, but others are abandoning the fabrication of men, although they are not as yet appreciating the truth in full. Some light broke in upon them last Sunday, and a storm of wrath has been raised about my head. I spoke too strongly. They see the gospel is held by me to be somewhat different from their gospel; and they who advocated and defended a fanciful kingdom, seem to have abandoned, or at least temporarily left that position, and come forward with their full strength to the menaced point. None will venture to establish an inquisition on my account; but I should not wonder if an 'act of conformity' were not sought to be passed for speakers, or something else of like potency to prevent 'the same words being again spoken to them.' I wish they may not; but I cannot help consequences. Honeyed words will not do with some.

### Continued Agitation.

In December following, it was proposed to prohibit members from speaking the 'new doctrines, under pain of being compelled to withdraw from their fellowship.' It was, however, moved and seconded, that the question be not entertained. Twenty-two said, 'Do not entertain the motion,' and twelve said, 'Do.' My 'affectionate' cicerone, who, by inviting me, introduced the 'new doctrines,' voted their suppression, and so lost his vote. But our friend did not rest here. After about six months' agitation, the majority changed sides. One of the most active speakers

was voted out. This proved their numerical superiority, and emboldened our redoubtable friend to a renewed effort for the exclusion of heretics. It was no longer loss of Campbellite fellowship if they spoke out their convictions, but the absolute expulsion of 'all who had been baptised in such doctrines.' This was Mr James Ainslie's proposition. The effort was opposed by the persons aimed at, but unsuccessfully. A resolution was carried by the majority, that 'we separate and appoint arbiters to arrange the secular matters.' Arbiters were accordingly appointed, and on the first Thursday evening this convener reported, that by a majority they had decided, that those who disapproved, or had voted against a separation, should in the meantime have the use of the hall. This was objected to, and a counter resolution was proposed. A couple of hours was consumed in stormy debate, at the expiration of which the meeting broke up without any formal decision being arrived at. But after thunder comes the hail. The Campbellites, finding they could not resolve things to suit them, determined to 'descend into the streets,' as the phrase is, and throw up barricades against the advocates of the kingdom. This was the fashion of that epoch in the Old World. Republican barricades were everywhere thrown up by the rebellious against monarchy, and the Dundee Campbellites formed no exception to the rule. They would have none of the kingdom, nor would they tolerate any of its adherents. If they could not vote them out of their territories, they were determined to expel them by force from their citadel.

### A Lock-Out.

Some time in March, 1850—about seven months after my visit—the crisis came. The believers in the kingdom's gospel, suspecting nothing, went as usual to Hammerman's Hall; but, to their great surprise, found it locked against them, although one of their number—the deposed bishop, I think—was responsible to the owner for the rent. On examining the outworks, they discovered an undefended window, out of which the last of the evacuant garrison had retreated. Through this opening one of the excluded passed into the hall, where he found the doors barricaded with forms and tables, and the windows made secure. The locking and barring out was twice repeated. On this first occasion, the barricades were overturned, and the battlefield with forms and tables, the trophies of the

fight, remained for one day in the hands of the anti-hammer-men; and those who thought to pound their fellows in a fool's mortar, exposed themselves to the contempt that ever attends the rage of imbecility.

### Proposed Cave of Adullam.

This defeat of the enemies of the Gospel of the Kingdom could not supersede a regular and formal settlement of affairs. The anti-tyrannists—though one in opposition to our 'affectionate' friend of Nelson Street and Arthur Lee, his valiant Sancho's barricade theology—were not united on the truth, nor on their views of how their victory should be improved. Many a brave and noble cause has been lost for want of wisdom and singleness of heart. One of their number informed me, that some of them wished to form from the victors, what he terms 'a motley association something like David's army at Adullam'—(1 Sam. xxii. 2). That is, to organise a new congregation out of the old materials, on the basis of simple opposition to Campbellistic proscriptiveness. This would have created a church of some forty members, of which about half a dozen only would have been 'obedient to the faith;' the others being but friends to the proscribed from distaste of proscription, and not from fellowship with them in the faith of the kingdom's gospel.

### The Right Basis Contended for.

But such an association as this, having a name to live, but really unbegotten of the word of life, was demurred to by Brother George Schleselman, late secretary to the Glasgow Campbellite Convention, and others. They thought that now, if at any time, was the crisis for the formation of a society at Dundee, all of whose members should have been baptised upon a confession of faith in 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ'—(Acts viii. 12). They considered that 'without faith it is impossible to please God;' and that that faith which is alone pleasing to Him is 'the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen'—(Heb. xi. 1)—'which are eternal'—(2 Cor. iv. 18). They applied this principle to churches as well as to individuals, considering that God could be no better pleased with a misbelieving church, than with a misbelieving person. They would not give in, therefore, to the work of founding and building up a new Babel of iron and clay, destined to

fall to pieces when the excitement which gave it birth should have passed away. They wanted to guard against the repetition of the late displays of ignorance, arbitrariness, and unbelief; and the only way to fulfil this indication was to begin in the truth and in the love of it, and all other good things would follow of necessity.

It was contended—[in the words of one of them writing to me]—that human traditions and practices should receive no quarter; that human praise and popular plans should be treated as dangerous; and that instead of conformity to the world, we should strive to conform to the doctrine of Christ, and the simplicity of conduct that almost (if not altogether) of necessity follows. You know we disapprove of all clericals of whatever name or degree, and discountenance the assumptions of all hierarchs, from Christ's pretended Vicar on earth to Baptist pastors, and their mimic 'presidents.' We know the public has no true faith, therefore we do not countenance it in its idea of offering acceptable worship to Israel's God; but repudiate the confection Christianity of our day, moulded and sweetened as it is to please the depraved taste of a world lying under sin.

No objection could be urged against this but expediency. Its Scripturality was admitted, but some did not think it expedient to be too rigid, or rather so rigid; and therefore withheld their co-operation, preferring to invite the others to join them in establishing a more popular and liberal institution. But they declined, and each pursued the course best suited to their own views of things.

### THIRD VISIT.

#### Roots of Bitterness.

On my second—[third?]—and last visit to Dundee, in 1850, I was sorry to find a want of union, confidence, and co-operation among all who had yielded obedience to the Gospel of the Kingdom. Roots of bitterness existed, connected with total abstinence and what was supposed to be a tendency to episcopal ambition, or leadership. Alas! when will they who would be the greatest learn to become the servants of the least of Christ's flock? I judge not in the case before us, because I am not sufficiently informed of its real demerits; but I do most sincerely tender to all the friends of the kingdom's gospel the advice which I aim to practice myself; and that is, have patience till the kingdom comes, and seek no lordship until then. If we are found worthy of that kingdom, we shall share with Christ in his absolute and divine lordship over Israel and the nations. Surely this will be honour and distinction enough for the most ambitious. Till then, let us despise the microscopism of a little powerless and brief

authority in the household of faith. A man of knowledge and wisdom will have more authority and power thrust upon him by his fellows than he will care to exercise, if his mind be rightly chastened by the truth. Let each esteem other better than himself, and all will be well. Men are sometimes made usurpers by the suspicious insinuations of others and their intrigues to prevent usurpation. Let us beware of this; and let all things be done with love as unto God and not to men, and then harmony will be undisturbed.

**The Total Abstinence Difficulty.**

Our Dundee friends of the one part were zealous for 'teetotalism,' as well as for the gospel, and in so far embarrassed its relations. The others were for keeping these two things distinct, which was not interpreted by that charity which 'thinketh no evil.' I pretend not to judge between them.

We considered [said one] that our righteousness should not be less, at all events, than that of the scribes and Pharisees of the day; and accordingly, for preventing danger, preventing or stilling the whispers of slander and their influence, it was deemed proper to express our sentiments, especially upon the present damnable drinking customs, and the practice of countenancing drinkeries. Other points are not overlooked; but as the apostle directed letters to the churches, warning them of the dangers that surrounded them, so it was deemed that this gigantic evil should be particularly avoided, and testified against, and that on no account should we drink of the Abana and Parphar of hell. We saw that night-shade was poisonous; so, instead of cultivating and pruning it, we resolved to hew it down and cast it into the bottomless pit, so far as we were concerned. Popular precedent might be found for a mixed race of tipplers and 'avoiders of evil;' but in view of public opinion, and of God, and regarding, too, the necessity of purity in the primary advocates of any doctrine, we concluded without hesitation, that on this, as well as on every other evil, our position and practice should be such as we could always honestly pray, 'Lead us not into temptation.' If any person advocated the hope of God's promises as incomparable incentives to morality, it would be very damaging that any one should be able to say at the conclusion, 'Oh, he takes a dram!'

**Teetotalism and the Gospel.**

Upon the compound principle, then, of teetotalism and the gospel, a few associated themselves to the exclusion of others, who had obeyed, but refused to pledge themselves to total abstinence. If the ebriety of any of them were doubted, they should have been received upon gospel principles, and dealt with accordingly, when they were proved to have infringed culpably the example and pre-

cepts of Christ and his apostles. This would have vindicated their zeal for Christian morality far more conspicuously than by barring the door of their association with total abstinence. It is strange that believers cannot be content with what satisfied Christ and his apostles. They were as much troubled with 'tipplers'—and probably more so in the wine-growing country of Palestine—than we can possibly be in these climes; yet they were contented to 'purify men's hearts by faith,' and forbore to 'tempt God to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples.' But we are more sensitive to public opinion;'—that is, the opinion of a vain, foolish, and evil world—than they; therefore we must fence ourselves in with barriers to fellowship, such as pious but misbelieving sinners approve!

### The Dundee Church in 1850.

When I visited Dundee in 1850, I found a church of about fourteen members, with whom I assembled early in the afternoon. Everything was conducted decently and in order, and harmony seemed to prevail among them. On inquiring after my 'affectionate' friend and his companions in the sky-kingdom fancy, I was told that the scattered fragments of the old body had been regathered under his sceptre, and continued to meet, a cold and lifeless skeleton, on the arena of their defeat, which had been handed over to them in default of union among the proscribed, and upon their agreeing to pay the rent.

### Introduction of the Gospel of the Kingdom into Dundee.

Such is as correct a narrative of the introduction of the kingdom's gospel into Dundee as I am able to give from all concerned. A goodly number of *Elpis Israels* and pamphlets on *The Wisdom of the Clergy proved to be Folly* has been put into circulation among the people, which, I doubt not, will some day or other open the eyes of many blind. On reading the book, the opinions expressed of *Elpis*, and its author's motives and sentiments, were both exceedingly diverse and amusing. Some 'admired it.' Others 'never saw nor read anything like it before.' Some desired to know 'when he is coming back?—Is he to set up a kirk?' For, said they, 'we should sit under him with much pleasure.' Dissentients objected that 'the author was a Baptist.' Others, that he was 'something similar in sentiment to a Mormon.' 'The principal thing,'

said one, 'I don't like him for is, that he makes everybody out wrong but himself.' 'He seems to be clever,' said others, 'but then the wisest of men may err.' Speaking of the sky-kingdomers, a friend says: 'They are more bitter, more devilish, in their opposition to *Elpis Israel*. Everything that is good is attributed to evil; and what is true is insinuated as being only there for the purpose of deceiving, and getting people to believe what is false.'

### Soiree to Dr Thomas.

My intercourse with Dundee was brought to a close by a soiree, at which I had the pleasure of meeting many persons who professed to be interested in the things of the Kingdom of God. After tea and coffee were removed, questions and explanations became the order of the evening until a late hour. It was then I bade farewell to Dundee, and not long after to Britain itself.*

### PLYMOUTH and DEVONPORT.

Through friends in Nottingham, I became acquainted with a preacher in Plymouth, whom I will name Wood. He was formerly a zealous Millerite, or anti-Jewish Restorationist. This crotchet, I think, he never got rid of; at least, so long as I knew him. In other respects, he receded from the Millerism of which Mr Himes of Boston is the incarnation, and became what I am unable to define. He was the pastor of a church in Plymouth, consisting of about seventy members, from whom he drew his suppor, which was restricted and precarious. They generally believed in the speedy personal appearance of Christ Jesus, which was the one idea defining their belief; but as to any other particular articles of faith distinguishing them from other professors, I am not aware that they possessed them.

By this Mr Wood I was induced to visit Plymouth. What his motive was for urging me to it, I know not. I supposed it to be referable to a desire for the diffusion of as much knowledge as possible of the Scripture testimony concerning the times, and the crisis connected with the personal advent of Jesus. He was friendly, promoted the sale of *Elpis Israel*, and quite zealous in getting the people to hear me. The Mechanics' Institutes at Ply-

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 33-35.

mouth and Devonport were hired for lectures, which I delivered at intervals during the eighteen days of my sojourn. At the latter place, the audiences were quite large—several hundreds; but at Plymouth not so many. The hearers seemed deeply interested; but, save the sale of forty-six copies of *Elpis Israel* and a very animated soiree before I left the town, I have no means of knowing what faith the Gospel of the Kingdom commands in the hearts of those that heard it.

### LIVERPOOL.

A notice of my visit to Liverpool brings me to the conclusion of the narrative of my journeyings in the service of the Gospel of the Kingdom. I visited that important city after being at Dundee. The effort to bring out the people, however, was but feeble there. Their energy had been overtaxed by their expenditure in support of President Campbell's demonstration, so that they had only infirmity for 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God,' which he contemns. They did what they felt like. A few handbills invited the people to the usual place of meeting. The attendance was very limited. Yet twenty-three copies of *Elpis Israel* were sold; and after my discourses were finished, Mr Campbell's friends, who had also become mine, regretted that a greater effort had not been made.*

### BIRMINGHAM.

In recording the opposition he encountered from the Campbellites at the very commencement of his lecturing tour through Britain, Dr Thomas states that the very violence of this opposition was the means of his introduction to Nottingham, and also opened the way for him to Derby, Lincoln, *Birmingham*, and Plymouth, which he afterwards visited at different times. Curiously enough, in the detailed report of his progress through the country, no mention is made of his having visited Birmingham on his way. That he did visit the Midland capital, is undoubted, and of this I was reminded by the fact that, on my being in Birmingham some years afterwards, I was lodged in the house that had been the doctor's residence

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 157-59.

during his stay in that town. It is rather remarkable, however, in view of the eminence which Birmingham has since attained as the very headquarters of 'The Gospel of the Kingdom' in Britain, that Dr Thomas has omitted all reference to the place in his itinerary; and therefore, I believe, no authentic record of it is extant. The fact probably was that he took Birmingham on his way to Plymouth, and that his visit created so little excitement, and appeared to be attended with so little result at the time, that he quite overlooked it when writing the account of his travels. Birmingham is indeed a very striking illustration of the grain-of-mustard-seed principle—of how, from a very small and unpromising beginning, an extensive and efficient organisation for the dissemination of the kingdom's gospel was developed. Of this anon.

# DR THOMAS IN EDINBURGH.

I have deferred the account of the visits of Dr Thomas to Edinburgh to the last, because, though not the latest in point of time, yet, as has previously stated, from the active and prominent the Edinburgh Church at first took in establishing the gospel of the kingdom throughout Great Britain, I deem it advisable to give a much more detailed report of the doctor's proceedings in that city; and for this reason I also devote an entire chapter to it. It is also worthy of note that the doctor himself, in his narration, assigns more space to Edinburgh than to any of the other places he visited.

### Religious Condition of Edinburgh.

A glance at the religious condition of Edinburgh, at the time of Dr Thomas's first visit, and of the state of things that had existed some little time previously, will the better enable us to understand the spirit in which his discourses were likely to be received by the professedly Christian portion of the community, and the effect which they were likely to have upon the comparatively small company who gladly received the word of the kingdom as propounded by him. The doctor himself has given a very graphic and very truthful picture of the religious society of the Modern Athens when he first startled it with the 'certain strange things' which he proclaimed in its ears. He says:

When I went to Edinburgh, I found the city asleep, dreaming over justification by faith in sacred history; and with all its wisdom, no further advanced in divine knowledge than when John Knox fulminated anathemas against papistry from his domicile in the High Street. If there were any believed in the kingdom and throne of David restored, being the Kingdom of God promised to Jesus and the saints, of which the gospel treats, I have yet to learn it. There were doubtless some who believed in the

restoration of the Jews, the personal return of Jesus, a millennium, &c.; but no one regarded them as essential. They might be believed or not without periling a justification by faith; for it was not perceived, that to deny the restoration of the twelve tribes, or the personal return of Jesus in power and great glory, was to deny the Kingdom of God—it was not seen, that no restoration or return, there could be no kingdom.*

### Local Political Agitation.

It has already been mentioned that Dr Thomas's visit to Britain was suggested by the extraordinary political events that were taking place on the Continent of Europe. These events were noted with much intelligent interest in Edinburgh, and turned to account in a variety of ways by different parties. The political reformers known as Chartists had for some years been agitating for what was called 'The People's Charter;' and the revolutionary spirit that had broken out on the Continent had given a very decided impetus to the Chartist movement all over the country. Especially had this been the case in Edinburgh just before the doctor's arrival, where what was deemed the seditious language employed by the principal speakers at Chartist demonstrations, brought them within the pale of the law; and the violent proceedings on some of these occasions necessitated the intervention of the military.

### A Religious Grievance.

Further, for a number of years previously, the religious dissenters in Edinburgh had a very sore grievance in being compelled to pay what was known as the Annuity Tax, this being a municipal impost to provide stipends for the ministers of the Church of Scotland in the city of Edinburgh, and which took the form of a rate per £1 of rental on all householders. Numerous dissenters refused to pay this tax on conscientious grounds—just as many nonconformists in England have of late years become 'passive resisters' under the recent Education Acts. The consequence of this was, that these defaulters were either

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 86-7.

imprisoned in the Calton Jail, or had their goods or furniture seized and 'rouped' to pay the sum demanded as Annuity Tax. I have a distinct remembrance of going, some time before the doctor's first visit, to the Calton Jail along with my oldest sister, on a visit to Bailie Stott—who was the superintendent of Brighton Street Chapel Sunday School, in which my sister was a teacher and I was a scholar—who was being imprisoned for non-payment of the obnoxious tax. I can remember, also, one day, only a month or two before Dr Thomas came to Edinburgh, seeing an immense crowd collected in Hanover Street, a large space in the centre of the street being kept clear by a detachment of the 33d Regiment of Foot from the Castle, while an attempt was being made to sell the goods of an Annuity Tax defaulter, an auctioneer having been brought from Glasgow for the purpose, as no auctioneer in Edinburgh would undertake the disagreeable duty. The attempt to sell the goods was unsuccessful, owing to the hooting and yelling of the large and excited crowd. This state of things having existed for some time, had caused a general feeling of dissatisfaction, alarm, and unrest, had very much inflamed the public mind, and had excited a feeling of indignation against the powers that were. It therefore made the more reflecting and religiously inclined of those who came to Dr Thomas's lectures listen with the most interested attention, while he reasoned of judgment and justice to come, and proclaimed the near approach of a time when the oppressor would be put down, and the poor and the needy would have cause to rejoice in the establishment of a righteous reign under a righteous King. This seemed to offer a reasonable and Scriptural solution of the political and religious problems which then perplexed the minds of many intelligent persons.

### The Doctor's Audiences.

These who came to listen to the doctor's discourses were mostly drawn from several of the smaller and unpopular religious bodies of the city. The Campbellites, of course —with whom he had been previously connected, and was

still willing to recognise as Christians, though strongly condemning some of the doctrines held by them—formed probably the larger portion of his audiences, they being specially interested in him, and hearing more or less fully of his proceedings in other places, and the interest which his lectures had everywhere created. As the result subsequently showed, however, by far the larger number of those who were influenced by his teaching, and ultimately adopted 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas,' came from a small 'Free Communion' meeting in the High Street. The bulk of the members of this church had previously belonged to the Morisonian or Evangelical Union Church then meeting in Brighton Street Chapel,* under the pastorate of the Rev. John (afterwards Dr) Kirk. Four of their members—John Forman, Francis Renwick, William Wilson, and Andrew Hart—had been expelled because their views on what was known as the Sabbath question were considered heterodox; and other members sympathising with them, also left, and formed themselves into a church, in which 'the one-man system,' as it was called, was discarded, and mutual instruction and edification were the established order. In addition to these two small bodies, a few of the more intelligent thinkers and Scripture students in Brighton Street Chapel; in the Baptist Church then under the pastorate of the Rev. Francis Johnston, and meeting in the Waterloo Rooms, Waterloo Place; and in one or two other dissenting churches in the city—came to hear Dr Thomas. These formed altogether a rather motley company, all of whom, besides possessing more or less of the spirit of the Ancient Athenians, might be considered somewhat in advance of the members of the several Presbyterian bodies who constitute the great bulk of the religious community in Edinburgh.

* It is a curious illustration of some of the social and religious tendencies in these latter days, that Brighton Street Chapel, which was for many years the head-quarters of a very active total abstinence propaganda, under the energetic direction of Mr Kirk, has within the last few years been converted into a warehouse for the storage of spirits—a transformation which is a suggestive commentary upon the statement so frequently made that the world is getting better.

## FIRST VISIT.

In recording Dr Thomas's proceedings on the three different occasions when he visited Edinburgh for the enlightenment of its people in the things of the kingdom, I shall, as before, take the doctor's own account, as subsequently given by him in the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, only slightly abbreviating it in some places. From this point, also, I take the liberty of making the doctor write with the singular first personal pronoun, using 'I' instead of the editorial 'we.' The doctor had himself made this change in the latter part of his narrative, and, in the peculiar circumstances, and occurring so frequently, the 'I' seems much more appropriate than 'we.'

### Invitation from Edinburgh Campbellites.

The Glasgow Convocation brought together delegates from various parts of Scotland as well as from England. Among these were friends from Edinburgh, now settled in Wisconsin. They witnessed the violent and unprincipled proceedings of the Wallis faction in that scene of confusion with disapprobation and disgust. These delegates were not sympathisers with me. They had heard of me, indeed, through the British and American *Millennial Harbingers;* but to hear of me in these periodicals was to hear of me only that which was evil. The 'infidel,' 'factious,' and 'wicked madman,' they saw for the first time defending the Lincoln church from expulsion and excommunication, because it had requested him to represent it in a convention assembled to consider how the gospel might be best disseminated throughout Britain. Their faith was Campbellistic; his was altogether the reverse. It cannot be said, therefore, that there was any factious sympathy between us. They came to the convention on the side of the enemy, but departed from it, if not as friends, at least more favourably disposed than before.

When they arrived in Edinburgh, they reported to their brethren what they had seen and heard. The rumours which had reached them concerning me had made an unfavourable impression; still they felt a curiosity to hear what I had to say, for they had heard that great interest had been created in Glasgow in my discourses there. It was determined, therefore, to invite me to visit Edinburgh

at my earliest convenience. I received the invitation before I left Glasgow for Islay, and was assured of a respectful, if not a cordial, reception in Auld Reekie. I accepted, of course, being thankful under any circumstances that a door of utterance to speak the Gospel of the Kingdom was opened in so important a city as the Athens of Caledonia.

**Campbellistic Differences in Edinburgh.**

I arrived in Edinburgh on the 27th October [1848]. I was met at the station by two friends, who conducted me to a Mrs Petrie's, 21 Lothian Street, near the University. As nobody in Edinburgh had any confidence in me, I was kept at such a distance as was compatible with civility. This was the reason of my being taken to private lodgings, and not permitted to share in the hospitality of the domestic hearth. I did not know that this was the feeling towards me at the time. But I had no reason to expect otherwise.—All strangers together, and my proscribed self in bad odour; certainly not in the 'odour of sanctity' with my dear friend Campbell's coreligionists. Of these there were two parties, which had formerly been one church, of which one was much more Campbellistic than the other. The Oak Hall* and the South Bridge Hall† are the styles by which their churches are known. The former was said to be of the real Covenanting spirit, which did not partake much of the 'milk of human kindness.' Law and authority, unencumbered with the bowels of mercy and compassion, were supposed to hold their own in the Hall of Oak. The demerits of the case between the two halls I am unable to give. It is no affair of mine. All I know is, that there was no union or communion between them, and that I was in questionable relationship to them both. My invitation to Edinburgh came from the South Bridge friends, whom I found, with three or four exceptions, to be kind, just, and liberal. Their religious theory was Campbellistic, but their disposition was in advance of their theory. They were willing to hear, and to 'prove all things;' and did not endorse the notion that all wisdom and knowledge was comprehended in the Bethanian theory of baptism for the remission of sins.

* [Oak Hall has since been known as Bristo Place Hall.]

† [The South Bridge Hall, which was opposite the entrance to the University, now forms part of the premises of a firm of drapers.]

There were three or four among them disposed to kick against the goads. They found, however, at length, that in kicking they hurt no one but themselves. They therefore wisely concluded to kick no more; but though they ceased to kick, the disposition to lift up their heels against me continued hardly latent to the end.

### Alone in Edinburgh.

My quarters were very comfortable. It is true, I was alone; but then, I am 'never less alone than when alone, nor less idle than when idle.' With the Bible and materials for writing, I can neither be idle nor alone. Studying this great Book, and writing upon its contents, have become a habit which rather impatiently endures interruption. The luxury of silence and solitude, after much speaking and conversing, none can duly appreciate who have not enjoyed it. But in my three tours I tasted not much of this enjoyment. I was, so to speak, not my own. I was a bearer of 'strange things' to the people's ears, and was, therefore, expected to be at the service of every one; and which I endeavoured to be with as much affability as I could command.

### Rival Invitations to the Doctor.

I was waited on at separate times by individuals from both the Halls. The Oaks wished me to be at their meeting on the following Lord's Day, but I declined; intending to be at neither theirs nor at the South Bridge, but to attend to my own appointments elsewhere in the afternoon and evening. Certain of the South Bridgians, having heard my version of American troubles—in which a more remarkable effort has been made than history furnishes for many a year, to extinguish a humble individual for daring to think and speak his convictions independently of religious factions and their self-important inflations—they insisted on my attending their meeting, and worshipping with them. I demurred to this for several reasons. I had not come to Britain to put individuals or churches to the test of fellowship. I came to announce to them the Gospel of the Kingdom, and to call their attention to the signs of the times as indicative of the Lord's approach. I asked fellowship of none, but a patient hearing from all. They insisted. I objected; especially as I understood that the Campbellite spirit was

rampant in a few of them. I had so often been tilted at by drones of no personal weight or consideration, just to lift themselves into notice by an affected zeal against heresy in me, who am regarded as fair game for any unprincipled fowler, that I declined being made an occasion of unprofitable controversy in the church. They urged that they wished to test the question, whether one or two were to dictate to all, what they should hear and whom. I declined being made the test, but agreed to attend their meeting as an observer of their doings, when in church assembled.

**Soiree at South Bridge Hall.**

On the evening of my arrival in the city, I attended, by invitation, a soiree given by the friends at South Bridge Hall. I found a very respectable company assembled to partake of the good things provided for the inner and outer man. It was here I became acquainted with some whom I hope to call my friends 'till the Lord comes;' when, I trust, as the result of their obedience to the faith originally delivered to the saints by the Spirit of God, and of a patient continuance in well-doing, we shall rejoice together in His presence.

The evening, or soiree, was harmonious and interesting. *Pieces*, called 'sacred,' were well sung; and speeches, humorous and instructive, delivered with agreeable effect upon the hearers. Mr Alexander Melville Bell, Professor of Elocution,* and a very successful practitioner in the art of teaching the tongue of the stammerer to speak with ease, convulsed us all with mirth, by his imitative illustration of the pseudo-sublime and real-ridiculous exhibited by speakers, who, fuller of themselves than their subject, repeat the speeches they have conned by rote. From this, it will be seen that the evening was not devoted to the subject of religion exclusively. The topics were various, and the company likewise—persons of other sects, and of no sect, partaking in the proceedings, as well as those of

* [Alexander Melville Bell, F.E.I.S., F.R.S.S.A., Professor of Vocal Physiology, Lecturer on Elocution, London, was also noted as the author of a work which attracted some attention at the time of its publication, entitled *Visible Speech*. He also wrote *The Science of Universal Alphabetics; or Self-Interpreting Physiological Letters, for the Writing of all Languages in One Alphabet*. The work was illustrated by tables, diagrams, and examples. He was also the author of *Principles of Speech and Cure of Stammering*, *Elocutionary Manual*, *Standard Elocutionist*, *Emphasized Liturgy*, *Reporter's Manual*, &c. He also wrote a small work in quarto, 16 pp., entitled *English Visible Speech for the Million*, for communicating the Exact Pronunciation of the Language to Native or Foreign Learners, and for Teaching Children and Illiterate Adults to Read in a Few Days. Alexander Melville Bell was the father of Professor Alexander Graham Bell, of America, well known as the inventor of the telephone.]

the South Bridge congregation, who got up the meeting. Mr Bell—whom I have the pleasure of calling my friend (for he proved himself such both in word and deed)—belongs to the Baptist church in Edinburgh, presided over by the Rev. Mr [Jonathan] Watson; and my humble self, to no human ecclesiastical organisation whatever.

I was unexpectedly invited to address the audience, which I could not very well avoid to do. What I said, or what was my text even, I do not now remember. Suffice it to say, it was my opening speech in Edinburgh, and advanced me a 'wee bit' in the good graces of them that heard me.

**Difficulty as to the Doctor's Fellowship.**

The Lord's Day following was October 8th. I was guided to the place of meeting by the friend who insisted upon my going thither. Very reluctantly I consented to accompany him, with the assurance that no difficulty would be provoked. But it availed not.

When the congregation was gathered, he arose and observed, that he understood that there would be opposition, by some, to Dr Thomas' breaking bread with them. He therefore wished to know, before the meeting was opened, what was the decision of the church in the case. He was opposed to proscription for opinion's sake, and with American difficulties they had nothing to do. He and another brother were acquainted with both sides of the question between Dr Thomas and A. Campbell; and without assuming to judge between them, they were satisfied that there were not just and sufficient grounds for them to refuse Dr Thomas the bread and wine, if he pleased to partake of them.

The opposition, whoever they were, seemed taken aback by this initiative. Whatever they felt, its expression was feeble. Some dissent was expressed, but their premises were vague, and easily overturned; and their conclusions, consequently, without effect. The *pros* and *cons.* having subsided into silence for want of more to say, I interjected a few remarks before sentence was pronounced.

I observed that I had come there as a spectator, at the request of the friend who had introduced the subject before them. I came not to test their fellowship, or to raise any question of the kind in their midst. I came to Edinburgh at their instance, indeed, but for a very different purpose—it was to lay before them the Gospel of the Kingdom, and to define the signs of the times as evincing

its near approach. I asked none for their fellowship, but simply to hear with candour what I had to say, and then to search the Scriptures and see if what I said were not the truth of God. Fellowship was an after-consideration. —We eat bread, not as an act of fellowship, but as an act of remembrance, discerning no test there, but only the Lord's body. If they said I might eat of the bread they had provided, it was well; if not, it was also well. Either way, I was content.

Whatever was the opinion of these remarks, nothing more was said on either side; and it was agreed, on the responsibility of Messrs Muir and Gray, who had testified in my favour, that the bread and wine should not be withheld.

**The Doctor's Opinion of the South Bridge Hall Meeting.**

I was quite pleased at the order of the meeting. The Scripture readings were from the Old and New Testament, in regular course; the prayers were not random outpourings, but the thoughtful petitions of the thankful and the necessitous; the singing was scientific, melodious, and appropriate to the words chosen from 'the Songs of Zion,' which used to be sung in Israel's praises of Jehovah and His goodness for evermore; and the exhortations were words of truth and soberness. Still there was a something wanting. They were courteous, but there was not that sunniness of aspect indicative of unanimity and oneness of soul. It requires a hearty belief of the Gospel of the Kingdom to bring a church to this—a faith which, at my advent to Edinburgh, I did not find at all occupying the minds of the ungodly or devout. As a society, the South Bridgians were liberal and independent; and though believing in the Bethanian philosophy, they refused to recognise its president-professor as their master.

**The Doctor's Lectures and his Audiences.**

I sojourned in Edinburgh two weeks, during which I spoke to audiences amounting sometimes to more than a thousand people. This was very well for so Presbyterial a city, whose inhabitants, though mainly addicted to Free-Churchism, are but little disposed to make excursions beyond the pale of 'orthodoxy' and conventional 'respectability.' Edinburgh is a beautiful city, favoured of nature and adorned by art. Royalty, Covenanter-Calvinism, physic, literature, and arms are enthroned there, attracting,

consequently, crowds of retainers, and expectants of the good things ordinarily dispensed to those upon whom 'Fortune' smiles. These constitute 'society' in Modern Athens, in ministering to whose wants they, who are not 'society,' obtain their daily bread. This is the substratum of the upper soil, under which are things villainous and without estimation in the purlieux of the Cowgate and Grassmarket of the lower town. This is the *base* upon which society rests—as base as it is low in the scale of being; the swinish multitude, whose habitations, filthy in the extreme, are a malarious and piggish exposition of its brutality and desolation. Though sent to the poor and humble, for 'dogs' and 'swine' the kingdom's gospel was not proclaimed—(Matt. vii. 6). The advertisements, therefore, of our meetings, where the holy things and pearls of God's truth would be exhibited for the admiration and acceptance of the public, found no response among the 'baser sort.' Neither were they responded to, to any remarkable extent, by Athenian 'society;' which is so pious—so highly refined, in such favour with Heaven, and on such complacent terms with itself, knowing and believing all that is 'essential to salvation,' that it cares not to trouble itself with the 'strange things' and 'new doctrine' brought to its doors by the 'setters forth of strange gods,' as it regards Jesus and the resurrection prophetically exhibited at this day. Our audiences were drawn neither from the high nor low, but from the odds and ends of Edinburgh, who in every city are the most independent and Berean of the population.

I addressed them some ten or a dozen times, mostly at the Waterloo Rooms, in Waterloo Place, a spacious and elegant apartment, capable of seating some thousand to fifteen hundred people. The impression made upon them was strong, and, for the time, caused many to rejoice that Providence had ever directed my steps to Edinburgh. My expositions of the sure word of prophecy interested them greatly, causing my company to be sought for at the domestic hearth incessantly, to hear me talk of the things of the kingdom and name of Jesus, and to solve whatever doubts and difficulties previous indoctrination might originate in regard to the things I teach.

### The Doctor Taken Out in Edinburgh.

My new friends had but little mercy upon me in their demands upon my time. They seemed to think that pre-

meditation was unnecessary; and that I had nothing to do but to open my mouth, and out would fly a speech! Of my two hundred and fifty addresses in Britain, all were extemporised as delivered. There was no help for it, seeing I had to go, oftener than otherwise, from parlour conversation to the work before me in the lecture-room. Indeed, my nervous system was so wearied by unrest, that I could not have studied a discourse. Present necessity was indispensable to set my brain to work. Certain subjects were advertised, and had to be expounded. I knew, therefore, what was to be treated of; and, happily, understanding 'the word of the kingdom,' I had but to tell the people what it taught, and sustain it by reason and testimony. In this way I got along independently of stationery and sermon-studying, which would have broken me down completely, and would have absorbed more time than my friends allowed me.

### AN 'AT HOME' BY ALEXANDER MELVILLE BELL.

'Come,' said one, 'and take a quiet cup of tea with us on Saturday evening.' I hesitated, being desirous to have the last night in the week to myself at least. 'There'll only be two or three whom you have met before. You can just take it as easy as you please—talk or not, as it suits yourself.' This seemed very fair, so I agreed to go.

I found some two or three additions to my friend's domestic circle, as he had said; and among them one of the pastors of the church to which he belonged. The tea-table conversation was without point; that is, nothing was touched upon concerning which the pastor and I would find ourselves in opposition; for he is respectably orthodox according to Athenian concession, while, as for me, it is well known that I have no pretensions that way. Wherever 'a divine' is present, there is generally formality and stiffness in the circle, all 'feast of reason and flow of soul' being quenched by the mystic affliation of his presence. His 'people' look up to him as their theological syntax—the rule by which they are expected to order their words in speech. Hence their sentences are measured, and their tone subdued into harmony with his supposed approval. This is irksome to a free spirit who knows what is in the clergy, and, therefore, hath no admiration for them, yet wishes to give no cause of offence to friends who hold them in esteem. This irksomeness was fatiguing, and predisposed me to accept, with a good grace, any event that might turn up to dissolve the spell that bound us.

### Arrival of the Company.

Nor was a change of affairs far off. It was even at the doors. The tea service was not removed ere the bell at 13 Hope Street, Charlotte Square, announced frequent arrivals from divers parts of the city. The ladies and gentlemen were ushered into an adjoining room, where my friend is wont to teach clergymen and others to read their sermons and to speak with fluency and propriety. Our little quiet tea party was invited to adjourn to this arena, when, to my surprise, I found there, in fashionable costume, a company of from twenty to thirty individuals. This was too bad.

'O,' said my friend, 'I thought you wouldn't mind it.'

The assembly was pleasant to the eye, but how it would prove to the ear was another question. Its materials were not homogeneous. I cannot define them. Some were deacons, others members, of Mr Watson's church; some officers of the United Service, lawyers, sons of Abraham in flesh and spirit, &c.—all honourable persons, courteous, and well esteemed.

Having been introduced to them, my friend remarked that, 'not wishing to monopolise the good things to himself, in which he knew they were interested as well as he, he had taken the liberty, without consulting the doctor, of inviting them to meet him on the present occasion, to hear conversationally more about them. He hoped, therefore, by way of introduction to an interchange of ideas, he would favour them with a brief outline of the subject matter brought to their ears in the interesting lectures they had attended.'

### Compendium of Dr Thomas's Lectures.

In doing this, I called their attention to what the prophets had spoken concerning 'the powers that be,' the nations, Israel, and the saints—that 'the 'powers' were to be abolished; the nations to be subsequently universally blessed; Israel to be organised into the Kingdom of God; and that, to the saints and their Chief, immortalised and made equal in nature to the angels, are to be given eternal glory, honour, and dominion over all the inhabitants of the earth. That these were the things of the invisible future revealed in the Scriptures of truth as gospel, or glad tidings of great joy to all people. The prophets had

given us the signs by which we might know the times when those things were about to be. These signs were political events, whose character was discernible by the light of their testimony shed upon the present and the past. That I had more particularly to do with the present, in which predicted events were speaking to us trumpet-tongued of the speedy coming of the Kingdom of God.

**The Doctor Explains his Mission to Britain.**

I had come from the sun-setting to call the attention of the people in Britain to the prophetic significance of the notable events affecting the French, Austrian, Papal, and Turkish dominions, for their practical, individual, and everlasting weal. If they inquired how they were to be benefitted by comprehending the import of these things, I replied that, seeing the day approaching when the King of the Jews was about to appear in his kingdom and glory, they might separate themselves from '*the error* of the wicked,' and 'be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.' To do this, they must believe the Gospel of the Kingdom—the glad tidings of that kingdom which the God of heaven had promised in a multitude of places to set up in Israel's land, given to the fathers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their seed in Christ, for an everlasting possession in the age to come—not the gospel of kingdoms beyond the skies. This gospel—which indeed is no gospel—is 'the error of the wicked,' from which a man must cleanse himself if he would find salvation in the Kingdom of God. The world is full of gospels. Every sect has its gospel, and the world is full of sects. These are very well in their way. They give order to society, and give the wicked pause; but can give no man an introduction to the Kingdom of God. There is but one gospel can do this; that gospel, namely, preached by Moses, promised and amplified in the holy prophets, and preached also by John the Baptist, Jesus, and his apostles before and after Pentecost: this gospel it is that is the power of God for the salvation of those who believe—(Rom. i. 16). God's power to save is in no other gospel than the Gospel of the Kingdom I advocate. It is that concerning which the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus aver that, 'he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, *he that believeth not* shall be condemned'—(Mark xvi. 15, 16). To this effect I spoke as nearly as I can recollect at this time.

### Dr Thomas and his Clerical Hearer.

Having resumed my seat, our host observed, that 'the subject was now before them, and he doubted not it would afford Dr Thomas pleasure to consider any difficulties his outline might have suggested to the minds of his hearers;' and then turning towards his pastor, sitting on a sofa near the door, he inquired if he would not favour the company with his views upon these important themes.

To this the pastor replied, that 'he agreed with several of the particulars expressed by Dr Thomas, but that as to prophecy, we could not know much about it before it was fulfilled, and was of opinion that time might be more profitably engaged in attending to what could be understood.'

Thus he delivered himself substantially, and then relapsed into silence; from which it is to be inferred, that, though a professional interpreter of the Bible, the greater part of which is composed of history and prophecy, he had no views upon these important themes! Being convened for friendly social interchange of thought, I did not wish to disturb the harmony of the evening, by seeming to enter the list against my ecclesiastical friend. Having put himself in my power, I might have made him contemptible before the eyes of all. I might have demonstrated his utter incompetency for 'the work of the ministry,' in which he claimed to be engaged; and have convicted him of extreme presumption in assuming to speak to men in the name of the Lord, while confessedly and profoundly ignorant of what the Lord had spoken by the mouth of His holy prophets. But, out of respect to my worthy host, and that I might not be accused by any of acting offensively, I lost sight of the pastor, and imposed silence upon myself, for a time at least, that others might offer their ideas if so disposed,

### Dr Thomas on the Prophetic Word.

The silence being unbroken, as I thought, sufficiently long, I observed that I would briefly hold their attention to what the Scripture testified for our instruction in Peter's second epistle—(i. 19-21; iii. 17). I then read the following words:—'We have also the prophetic word more sure, to which ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until its day dawn, and a light-bearer arise in your hearts.' These, I observed,

are 'wholesome words,' and the literal rendering of the original. The prophetic word is sure, and the things Peter, James, and John had witnessed on the Mount of Transfiguration confirmed it, or made it surer. Thus made doubly sure, it became a shining light—not a feeble, invisible light, such as pure hydrogen burning in day-brightness; but a light blazing as the sun in a place otherwise dark—dark as Egyptian night with blackness. We need not wonder at the sure prophetic word being radiant with brightness; for Jehovah, who gave it, is light—the Light of the Universe, 'in whom is no darkness at all.' It is 'a light that shineth in a dark place.' The heart of man is this dark place. The word *auchmeros* signifies not only 'dark,' but 'squalid and filthy.' This is a man's mental and moral condition—squalid, filthy, and dark by nature; a condition before God, if not in the estimation of his fellow-men, in which he continues hopelessly until the sure word, termed by Paul 'the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shine into him'—(2 Cor. iv. 4). Consider the savage, the semi-barbarian, and the 'civilised man.' Not to go beyond 'Christendom' for examples, contemplate the man of letters, philosophy, politics, and 'religion,' not to mention the thoughtless multitude, whose minds embrace no other topics than such as arise spontaneously from their 'fleshly lusts that war against the soul.' Converse with these several classes of mankind upon 'Moses and the prophets,' the apostolic testimony, the mission of Messiah, the future of nations, the destiny of the earth, and of man upon it, &c., and you will find that 'darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people;' and as the necessary consequence of this general ignorance or blindness of heart to the sure prophetic word, their works are evil, and that continually.

Now, to this sure prophetic word, or glorious gospel light—(for the gospel is still almost wholly a matter of prophecy) the apostle says, 'Ye do well to take heed to it.' Surely he is an authority in the case, and one whose exhortation should be respectfully entertained. Would he tell us to take heed to the sure prophetic word if it were unintelligible? Can we take heed to a thing we do not, and cannot understand? *Prosechontes*, rendered 'giving or taking heed,' signifies 'having in addition to.' This is its derivative signification, and imports that we should have the sure word of prophecy added to our minds; but can this addition be accomplished unless we apply our minds to the word, or give heed to it? And what would

be the use of studying it if it were essentially enigmatical, and insusceptible of rational interpretation? On the contrary, we conclude, from the terms of the apostle's exhortation, that it is clear, worthy of diligent study, reasonable, and improving.

* * * *

To deny that we can know beforehand what is to come to pass, is to deny that we can understand the gospel; for the gospel is glad tidings of what is to be to all nations and to the saints. It is the report of good things promised. A promise is a prediction, and a prediction is a prophecy. The gospel is a great prophecy of what God intends to do; and they who believe it know before hand what is to be done. The little that has been fulfilled in Jesus is an assurance to the believer that what remains will certainly be accomplished. He foresees the crushing down of the thrones, the abolition of all kingdoms, empires, and republics, the setting up of a divine kingdom in Israel's land, the blessedness of all nations under the Messiah and his brethren, and the will of God done on the earth as it is in heaven; with many more great and glorious things too numerous to mention at present.

**An Undignified Clerical Retreat.**

When I sat down, a dead silence ensued. Whatever was thought, no one offered, or seemed disposed to offer, a word of comment on what had been spoken. The pastor had sighed deeply while I was speaking—thinking, perhaps, that he had fallen upon evil times in consenting to be one of our quiet tea party. But this is only supposition with me. He may have been vastly pleased at my vindication of the prophetic word; for there are some minds so nobly constituted, that they rejoice in the triumph of truth, even when the result of their own defeat. I fear, however, that he did not rejoice greatly. If he did, it was with joy unspeakable, for he said nothing; but rising and bending sufficiently forward to clear the sofa, he moved noiselessly toward the door, with his body at an angle of forty-five degrees with his understandings, and slid off into outer darkness, leaving us all in blank amazement at his sudden and not very dignified retreat! No remark was made, but the silence was very expressive. The truth proved unanswerable, and was yielded to with prudence as the 'better part of valour.' The fugitive's vanishment

from the light must have been mortifying to his friends; his retreat, however, was agreeably covered by a concerto performed on the piano and flute, which restored the balance of the evening, and prepared us for a new beginning, without reference to what had gone before.

### A Jew Lectured by the Doctor.

A natural son of Abraham being present—a Continental Jew who professed conversion to Gentile Christianity—our kind host invited him to deliver himself upon the subject of Messiah's coming.

It was soon evident, however, that upon whatever topics he might be profound, he was far from being at home upon this. He had been a candidate for admission into Mr W.'s church, if I remember rightly, but grounds existed for suspicion that his motives were not loyal and true, so that he still remained a candidate. He was aware, doubtless, that the company was divided into believers of Christ's personal reign on earth, and those who rejected it. He spoke so as to please both if possible; at any rate, as far as he was concerned, so as to leave them both in the right, rather inclining to the idea that it might be personal.

I could not permit such stuff to pass without a word of comment. I expressed my surprise that a Jew could hesitate distinctly to affirm the personal appearing and reign of Messiah in Israel's land as the only reign taught in the Bible concerning him. The figurative coming and reign of Christ was a mere Gentile tradition—a fiction of the apostacy—which no Jew instructed by the prophets could possibly entertain. I hoped he would make himself sure on this matter, and abandon the illogical supposition, that a proposition could be at once true and not true according to the opinion of an audience.

### A Forlorn Hope.

The repetition of music, and the introduction of refreshments, relieved our Jewish acquaintance from his entanglement, and, together, imparted a gift of tongues to the company at large. A cross-firing soon after commenced from all sides of the house. One question led to another, until a lawyer and a deacon, pious members of the fugitive pastor's flock, led on a forlorn hope against my gospel-position, based on 1 Corinthians xv. 1-4.

# WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?*

'Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.'—1 Cor. xv. 1-4.

## The First Things.

Great stress is usually laid on the phrase 'first of all,' to prove that when Paul preached the gospel, the first thing he did was to deliver himself concerning the crucifixion and death of Jesus for our sins, which is called 'preaching him crucified.' But to this it is objected that Paul did not say 'first of all,' but *en protois*—'among the first things.' 'I delivered to you among the first things that which I received—how that Christ died for our sins,' &c. When he went among those who had the Scriptures of the prophets, and professed to believe them, the first thing he did was to lay before them THE THINGS CONCERNING THE CHRIST; and when he thought he had sufficiently enlightened them on these matters, he then submitted to them THE THINGS CONCERNING JESUS, AND HIS NAME. But when he went among idolators, who knew not the prophets, he first showed them the absurdity of idol-worship, endeavouring in so doing to turn them from dumb idols to the living and true God, whose messenger he announced himself to be; he then proclaimed God's future viceregent reign over the nations by A RIGHTEOUS MAN whom He had prepared for the purpose, having raised him from the dead; which resurrection was an assurance that said Divine Kingdom would certainly be established. Having thus introduced the subject of the King's resurrection, he then PREACHED TO THEM JESUS—that is, the things concerning him; who confirmed the apostle's testimony 'with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and distributions of the Holy Spirit, according to his will.'

## Paul's Wise Procedure.

The foregoing statement is proved by Paul's course at Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth; for thus it is written: 'And Paul, *as his manner was*, went into the synagogue of the Jews, and three Sabbath days [or Saturdays] reasoned with them out of the Scriptures [of the prophets—the only Scriptures then in being], opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from among the dead' *(ek nekroon)*. While he confined himself to this, the general question, he was listened to without tumult. The Jews had no objection to listen to the discussion of the question, '*Is the Anointed One to suffer death, and to rise from the dead, before he assumes the reins of government over Israel and the nations?*' This is clear from Paul's adventures at Corinth as well as at Thessalonica. There he reasoned with the Jews for several Sabbaths, during which all was peace and quietness; and obviously, because he said nothing about Jesus; he spoke only of the Christ, without affirming whether he had appeared or not. But when Silas and Timothy joined him from Macedonia, he was encouraged, and being pressed in spirit, could no longer

* [The portion of the doctor's discourse given in smaller type, commencing here and continuing to p. 91, has been printed as a tract, under the circumstances explained on p. 129.

for him to affirm that *the Christ had appeared, and that the crucified and resurrected Jesus was he!* This avowal drew the hitherto peaceable Jews into an uproar, as the announcement of the same truth had at Thessalonica. It is evident, therefore, from the effect produced at both places, that *Paul did not preach the things concerning Jesus 'first of all.'* If he had, his first discourse would have resulted only in tumult. He would not have convinced a single Jew. He had first to *prepare the minds of the Jews* by convincing them from the prophets that, whoever the Christ might be, and whenever he should appear, he must prove himself worthy of exaltation to David's throne by *obedience unto death*, from which God would deliver him by a resurrection to everlasting life. If he could get the Jews to believe this, he would remove the great obstacle in the way of their confessing that Jesus was the Christ. This obstacle consisted in their belief that the Christ, whenever he came, would *appear at once in power and great glory*. If Jesus had appeared thus, they would have received him gladly; but because he appeared in humiliation, contrary to their expectation, he became an obstacle, 'a stone of stumbling and rock of offence.' Knowing the state of their minds upon the subject, Paul proceeded cautiously and wisely; first opening to them the prophets—that is, expounding the Scriptures, that they might understand their teaching concerning the Christ. When they comprehended this, they perceived that the King expected by the nation was to appear as 'a poor and needy man,' despised and persecuted by his contemporaries to an ignominious death, and afterwards to rise from the dead; and that this crisis of his fate was to be made *the foundation of a mystery*, through which remission of sins, and a right to share with Christ in his kingdom for ever, might be obtained. A mind so prepared would have no difficulty in assenting heartily to the proposition that *the Jesus whom Paul preached was that Christ*, when the declaration was confirmed of God by the miracles wrought in His name before them.

### The First Things Stated.

Now, the things first preached by Paul—namely, concerning the Christ—were the things of the kingdom; for 'Christ' is equivalent to 'king,' because kings are *anointed ones*. In preaching Christ to the Thessalonians, he taught them that there was another king than Cæsar—(Acts xvii. 7)—who should come from heaven with the angels of his power, taking vengeance on those who obeyed not the gospel he preached—(1 Thess. i. 10; 2 Thess. i. 7–10). He invited them to a participation in his kingdom and glory—(1 Thess. ii. 11)—a resurrection from among the dead if accounted worthy of it, and deliverance from the wrath to come—(1 Thess. iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 5; 1 Thess. i. 10). In PREACHING JESUS CHRIST, he taught them that Jesus was that King in whom would be fulfilled all the things written concerning him in the prophets. This doctrine of a King from heaven to rule the nations upon the earth, as Jehovah's vicegerent, sounded out from Jerusalem to every part of the Roman dominion until it reached the ears of the reigning emperor, whose jealousy it excited so much that he made decrees forbidding any one to proclaim it. Now, if Paul had taught that Jesus was king of a dominion in the skies, or beyond them, would the Roman Emperor have forbidden his subjects to affirm it? He would have regarded it with as little concern as Victoria does the preaching of the kingdom by the Dissenters, who declare that the Lord's kingdom is not of this world, but purely spiritual and ethereal.

### The Resurrection.

Paul had a special reason for reminding the Corinthians that he delivered to them the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for sins, 'among the first things.' It was this. There were some of Hymenæus and Philetus's disciples among them, who affirmed that 'the resurrection was past already'—(2 Tim. ii. 17, 18)—and that, consequently, 'there is no resurrection of the dead' hereafter—(1 Cor. xv. 12). They had embraced again that old clairvoyant fable of heathenism concerning souls, or 'separate spirits.' They affirmed that man had a soul in him which was capable of a disembodied existence, which it actually assumed at death. This was the current and universal opinion of the day, which made Paul's doctrine of the resurrection of the mortal body so absurd in the estimation of the people. The holders of this fabulous tradition argued from their assumption to conclusions subversive of the truth. As souls are received by the pure ether, and joined to the company among the stars, a resurrection of the body to inherit a kingdom in the land of Israel is manifestly unnecessary. They denied it, therefore; and so rejected both the resurrection and the kingdom. Now, it was to vindicate the truth concerning these, and to demolish their 'philosophy and vain deceit'—their 'science falsely so called'—to the conviction of every reader, that he wrote this chapter. In verse 11 he declares that he preached a resurrected Christ, in whom they believed. He did not preach a Christ who died for sins, whose soul was received by the ether, and joined to a company among the stars. The Christ he preached was raised bodily from the dead, and not from among the living in a world of spirits; after which he was seen by five hundred and twelve persons, and last of all by himself, as one born out of due time. 'Now,' says he, this being so—'if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?' Here is the reason for his reminding them that Christ's resurrection was preached to them 'among the first things.' It was to elicit from them self-condemnation for admitting the resurrection of Christ, the first-fruits, and denying the resurrection of the dead in him! He did not introduce the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for sins, *as a definition of the gospel*, but as among some of 'the first things' of which the gospel treats. The gospel, stated in the fewest words, is: '*In Abraham shall all nations be blessed*'—(Gal. iii. 8; Gen. xxii. 18); but if there be no future resurrection, there can be no blessing of the nations in him and his seed—(Dan. xii. 3; Gal. iii. 29); for both he and they are sleeping in the dust of the earth, where they must for ever remain if the dead rise not.

### The Great Gospel Truths.

Though objecting to verses 3 and 4 containing a definition of the gospel, it is admitted that the chapter at large contains *a declaration of the gospel preached by Paul*. It is evidently so; for he informs the reader, in the first verse, that he is about to declare the gospel which he had preached to them. It had become necessary to do so, for some of them were letting slip the things they had once believed.

Now look at the topics treated of by the apostle when he preached the gospel:—The death of THE CHRIST for sins, his burial, and resurrection; the future resurrection of the dead *at his coming*; his subsequent reign *till* the end; his subjugation of all enemies *during his reign*, and the destruction of death *at the end of it*; the delivering up of *the kingdom*

to the Father then, when the mediatorship shall be abolished, so that God may be all and in all; the *kind of body* the resurrected saints shall possess, and their *glory*, to fit them for the possession of the Kingdom of God; the *transformation* of the faithful contemporary with the resurrection; and the church's victory over 'the gates of hell' through Jesus Christ the Lord. These are the great gospel-truths contained in that *word* which Paul taught in Corinth for a year and six months; and which 'many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptised'—(Acts xviii. 11, 8). There is not a syllable here about 'separate spirits' and sky kingdoms; but everything to the contrary—adduced, too, to refute them. The major part of the Corinthians remained faithful to the things declared, as the apostle says in reference to them, 'wherein ye stand;' and adds, 'by which ye are saved *if ye hold fast to a certain word* I preached to you, unless you have believed in vain.' In the common version these italics read, 'if ye keep in memory *what*.' They are two words in the dative case in the Greek answering to 'what'—namely, *tini logo*, 'to a certain word'—the Word of God, 'the law and the testimony'—from which, by the reasoning of the apostle, were brought out the things set forth in the declaration of the Gospel of the Kingdom so interestingly filed in the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. 'I worship the God of my fathers,' said he. How did he worship Him? '*Believing*,' he adds, '*all things* which are written in the Law and in the Prophets'—(Acts xxiv. 14); and as he believed, so he preached, 'witnessing both to small and great, *saying none other things* than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come'—(Acts xxvi. 22). This was that 'certain word' which he preached, and upon the holding fast to which the salvation of men is predicated.

### One Kingdom and One Gospel.

The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for sins, according to the prophets, is only an item of the declaration. The great multitude of professors believe this in our day in a certain sense; that is, they assent that in some way remission of sins is connected with, and dependent on, the death of Jesus; though of the prophetic and law-instruction in the case, they know nothing. But while this is credited, they ridicule the other items of Paul's declaration with Epicurean and Stoic mockery. If they assent to the resurrection of Jesus, they nullify the resurrection of the dead at his appearing, and *a posteriori* his, by their doctrine of separate spirits, making it perfectly unnecessary and superfluous; which is in effect denying it—nay, numbers say boldly, that all the resurrection there is, is the awakening of the soul at its final separation from the body when the heart ceases to beat. The item of the declaration about the appearing again of Jesus in the world, is one against which they are particularly spiteful. They crack fool-jokes at the idea of his coming to this cursed and sin-polluted earth again; not having wit enough to perceive, that it is this very defilement of earthly things that makes his return absolutely necessary, that he may take away the sin which curses them. The kingdom meets with no more favour at their hands than the appearing of its King. This is an item of the declaration they have nullified as completely as the resurrection of the first-fruits. Paul preached **one kingdom only.** He said nothing about a 'kingdom of grace' distinct from a 'kingdom of glory.' Moses, the prophets, John the Baptiser, the apostles, and the whole Israelitish nation, hoped for and discoursed about but one kingdom—namely, 'THE KINGDOM OF GOD.' This, our contemporaries say, was set up on Pentecost, and that men enter into it when they believe or are baptised! Surely if men are in the kingdom they must be in

possession of it. So the leaders of the people teach; for they say the apostles ascended the thrones of the Twelve Tribes of Israel on Pentecost, when they entered and possessed it! According to this, flesh and blood can and do inherit the Kingdom of God, which is contrary to the declaration of the apostle, which says 'they cannot;' in other words, the putting on of incorruptibility and immortality are indispensably necessary to the inheriting of the kingdom. Then as to the nature and place of the kingdom, they resolve it into principles assented to, and locate it among the stars; while the apostles, being in the promised land, placed it at the *coming* of Christ to reign over his enemies, not at his *going* to; and exhibit it as a proper kingdom with the Twelve Tribes as its subjects, the nations for its empire, and Jesus and his brethren as Jehovah's kings and princes throughout all the earth. Look at the declaration, item for item, and analyse the reasoning which elicits them, and then let any man of sense and candour deny this position if he can—namely, that *the thing now preached for gospel, and assented to by the people, is not the gospel preached by the apostles at the command of Jesus, but* **'another gospel,'** *which can give no one that trusts in it remission of sins and a right to eternal life in the Kingdom of God.* If the apostle worshipped the God of his fathers, modern 'Christians' do not; for they not only do not believe all things written in the Law and Prophets, but are destitute even of respect for their authority, treating them as old, unintelligible records, which have long since answered their end, and are of no further account to the generations of an age so enlightened as the present.'

### The Forlorn Hope Paralysed.

My exhibition of the declaration filed in this remarkable chapter had the effect anticipated. The forlorn hope was paralysed, and those who led it, if not convinced, had nothing more to say; and as midnight was fast approaching, a move was made that terminated the evening, leaving all in apparent harmony with themselves and one another.

### Tribute to Dr Thomas.

I discoursed to the people in Edinburgh about ten times, and seemed to gain credit with them the longer I remained among them. This was better than being received with a great character, and leaving with none. They had received me hesitatingly, but relinquished me with regret; as will appear from the following epistle written by one who, though an officer in the Queen's Navy, rejoices in righteousness and the truth:—

Edinburgh, Nov. 9th, 1848.

DEAR SIR AND BROTHER,—Myself and —— are anxious to express to you the interest we feel in your welfare and progress. We *heed* our share of the unfavourable impression produced by certain rumours, and we are thankful we were not suffered to listen to the voice of the 'accuser of our

brethren,' who is at the bottom of all mischief. Having seen and heard for ourselves, we can now bid you 'God speed;' and hope you will not be discouraged, either by the craft of designing men, or the mistakes and short sight of ignorant ones; but pursue steadily the path you have marked out for yourself, 'despising the shame,' and 'overcoming evil with good;' so that when your course is finished, you may say with Paul, 'I have kept the faith.'

We will esteem it a favour if you will accept a pencil case as a memorial of your visit here; and specially of our personal regard and esteem. I wish I had been so circumstanced that I could have exercised a greater degree of hospitality towards you. —— joins with me in wishing you health, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit; while for myself, I remain, your brother in the faith and hope of the gospel, J. W. S.*

The writer of this letter and his friend, both members of South Bridge Hall congregation, were not the only persons whom my discourses had dispossessed of the evil which had been created in them by the enemy of all righteousness.

### Soiree to Dr Thomas.

A desire was created in many to give a public testimony in my favour as an expounder of the prophets and apostles. They proposed to hold a soiree, or evening, at the Waterloo Assembly Room. Although I do not like to be the subject of public demonstrations, I acquiesced, as it seemed to be much desired; and on the ground also that it would give no aid or comfort to the accuser and adversary in America and Britain, who was doing all he could to close the ear of the people against me as an utterly worthless fellow.

A very considerable and respectable company of the odds and ends of Edinburgh society assembled to express their gratitude and good-will towards me for my work of faith and labour of love on their behalf; and to bid me 'God speed' in my future enterprises connected with the interpretation and defence of 'the Testimony of God.' The business of the evening was very well and orderly conducted under the auspices of Alexander Melville Bell, Esq., who presided as Chairman of the soiree. Speeches

* [The writer of this letter was Captain Symonds, who subsequently wrote several other letters to Dr Thomas, acquainting him how matters had been proceeding in Edinburgh after his departure, and particularly as to what had been transpiring in the South Bridge Hall meeting; and the doctor, on his part, reckoned him among his friendly correspondents. Captain Symonds, however, did not accept Dr Thomas's views respecting the Gospel of the Kingdom; although, after a church on that basis had been formed in Edinburgh, he occasionally forsook the meeting in South Bridge Hall to attend it.]

were made appropriate to the occasion, and in the intervals the audience was charmed into the blandest disposition by the sweet strains of instrumental and vocal music furnished *con amore* for the evening. It was 'a quiet tea party' on a large scale, at which music, refreshments, speeches, and the questioning of my humble self for the resolution of doubts and difficulties, were the entertainment of the friends.

### Presentation to the Doctor.

There was a little bit of display, however, which, as far as my feelings were concerned, would have been more satisfactory in the breach than the observance. It was the unexpected presentation to me of a purse of six sovereigns, with a complimentary speech by the Chairman. A man cannot travel in Britain without money, and as I was 'running to and fro' for the benefit of the public, and not of myself,* I had no hesitation in accepting it; but then, I had rather it had been given in a more private and business-like way. All who are acquainted with me know that I do not labour for gold and silver, or present reward. I can neither live nor get along without it any more than other people; not having discovered the art of paying printers, steam companies, and domestic necessities with air and ether, however abundant the supply. But though it is indispensable as a means of operating, a public presentation of gold to a labourer in the gospel has an unseemly appearance. It looks as though he had been labouring for that as his reward; a semblance which, although it might not be observed by others, the practice being familiar, was perceived by myself, and made the acceptance of it, under the circumstances, more painful than agreeable. The intention was kind, though its expression was not the happiest. I therefore made the best acknowledgment I could, in hope that it would be the last time my friends, in being 'at charges with me,' would give it the appearance of a reward conferred, rather than a contribution to a common enterprise, in which the only persons advantaged were themselves.

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* [illegible] proved by the fact that my receipts did not cover my return voyage to [illegible], having not received more than four shillings over travelling expenses in Scotland. Much money was raised, but it was necessarily expended in printing, assembly rooms, and paying board for me during my sojourn in divers cities. [illegible] just accomplished what I have said.

### A Philanthropic Opponent.

About 11 P.M. the soiree was brought to a close by the Chairman proposing a vote of thanks to me, for the instruction and edification they had received in the interesting lectures they had heard; and at the same time suggesting that a committee of gentlemen should be formed, whose business it should be to get subscribers for the publication of the book I had promised to write at the request of many of the citizens of Glasgow, setting forth the great and important truths they had listened to with so much delight.

The proposal for a committee was adopted, and fourteen of the audience were named, who agreed to serve.

But before the vote of thanks was put, a very zealous philanthropist arose in the midst, and objected to the vote being taken until I defined my position in regard to American slavery; as though the favours conferred on the Modern Athenians were lessened or increased by the complexion of my opinions upon that exciting topic of the day.

Zeal without discretion has but one idea, which it obtrudes under whatever circumstances, without regard to time, place or fitness. This was the case with the objector, and the Chairman perceived it. He therefore pronounced the objection irrelevant, and not to be entertained at that crisis. Dr Thomas had laid the audience under obligation by his disinterested endeavours to enlighten them in the Scriptures of truth. They appreciated his services, and did not at all conceive it necessary to ascertain what were his opinions upon all the debateable questions of the day, before they expressed their heart-felt thanks for what had been accomplished in their midst. He should therefore submit the motion, which had been seconded, to the company, which would doubtless respond to it unanimously.

The motion was agreed to *nem. con.* save the philanthropist, who persisted in withholding his thanks—which, of course, left me a prey to the most poignant grief!

Our friend then vacated his seat, and his able conduct in the chair being testified and approved in due form, the evening was closed, and the company retired to their respective abodes.*

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* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 106-13, 159-61.

**Personal Recollections of Dr Thomas's Lectures.**

Although I was very young at the time, I have a distinct recollection of the first visit of Dr Thomas to Edinburgh, and of the great sensation that it caused in the little circle in which I then moved. My brother-in-law, John Forman, who was the principal source of our information, attended the doctor's first lecture—(in what was then known as Roxburgh Terrace Chapel, and subsequently, after being considerably enlarged and improved, as Roxburgh Street Hall)—and was so much interested as to attend nearly all the rest. On the strength of some of Dr Thomas's supposed utterances, all sorts of extraordinary predictions were current as to things which must shortly come to pass in this sublunary sphere. With my curiosity thus greatly excited, I accompanied my father and mother to one of the doctor's lectures, which was on an evening during the week, in the Waterloo Rooms. I was much struck with the personal appearance of the lecturer, as well as with his peculiar pronunciation. He had a long and jet-black beard and moustache, his whole face being one mass of blackness, relieved only when he was speaking by the strip of red caused by the opening of his lips. The spectacle was something most unusual in my then very limited experience. A peculiarity in his speech, also, was that he invariably pronounced the indefinite article 'a' as in the word 'may,' and not as in 'man,' as is usually done in this country. I do not now recollect what was the particular subject of lecture, but I do recollect that I was very much disappointed with it. I had expected that the doctor would 'prophesy' right off; but instead of that it seemed to me that the discourse was all about 'beasts,' and 'horns,' and 'goats,' one particularly fierce animal, as it appeared to me, being an 'Austro-papal beast'—of all of which I could make nothing. After listening to it for some time without having the least idea of what it all meant, I tried to induce my mother to leave and go home, but I could not prevail upon her to do so. I then tried to sleep, but did not succeed in this either.

## SECOND VISIT.

### The Interest Still Well Maintained.

On my second visit to Edinburgh, which preceded that of Dundee, a committee previously appointed engaged the Wesleyan Chapel in Richmond Street as the place of meeting. The interest in the lectures continued, and resulted in raising the subscription to *Elpis Israel* from a dozen copies to a hundred and fifty.

### Another Presentation to the Doctor.

An incident of this will more fully mark it than anything I can say on the subject. After meeting at South Bridge Hall one afternoon, a gold pencil and pearl-handled, silver-mounted, gold pen were presented to me with the following note :—

> Beloved Brother,—Will you accept of the accompanying pen and pencil from a few of your sisters in Edinburgh, and consider that it is not from a desire to pay you wages for your good services in the cause of Christian enlightenment; but as an expression of our gratitude for the instruction and entertainment we have received from your excellent lectures; and as a token of our respect for your disinterested devotion to such a noble work as the unfolding of divine truth, that we take the liberty of presenting you with these mementoes. We shall hope nothing else than that their service may aid you in the duty which you have marked out for yourself; that we shall continue to peruse occasional essays of your pen in the elucidation of prophecy; and enjoy a pleasure almost as great as we have heretofore received from your living voice in your emphatic and concise discourses.
>
> Pursue that benevolent enterprise, and know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Your path is watched over, and your progress observed with great interest, by your affectionate sisters in Edinburgh.
>
> Farewell; and may the blessing of the Most High always accompany you.
>
> Edinburgh, Aug. 4, 1849.

The wish expressed in the above has been pretty fully responded to; for the original matter of the first and second volumes of this periodical, elucidating 'the word of the kingdom,' has been mainly written by the pen so kindly and graciously presented. I only regret to add, that its nib is the worse for wear, and likely soon to fail in its co-operation with the hand that holds it, and the brain that gives it inspiration, in the great and important work of stating, illustrating, proving, and defending the truth.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 79-80.

## THIRD VISIT.

After the publication of *Elpis Israel* [in 1850], I made a third visit to Edinburgh, accompanied by my daughter. We were very kindly received and hospitably entertained by Mr A. M. Bell, of Charlotte Square, Mr Symonds, and others. This time I addressed the public in the School of Arts Lecture Room, on the things of the kingdom and name of Jesus Christ.*

### Personal Recollections of Dr Thomas's Lectures.

I had the privilege of again hearing the doctor on his third visit to Edinburgh, and was much better pleased with what I heard. This time it was on a Sunday afternoon, and the lecture, as just stated, was given in what was then the School of Arts, in Adam Square, since taken down for the formation of Chambers Street. I do not now remember his subject, but I remember that he brought in incidentally the importance of studying the Old Testament Scriptures. I was strongly impressed with what he said on this point, which was something quite new to me; and I own to having derived much instruction from the lecture.

### Report of a Lecture by the Doctor.

Among those who were greatly interested in the lectures of Dr Thomas was James Cameron, subsequently very intimately associated with the early history of the Edinburgh Church. He took copious notes of some of the lectures of the doctor, one of which, curiously enough, turned up among his papers quite recently—more than fifty years after the lecture was delivered. Mr Cameron re-wrote the faded pencil notes in ink, handed them over to me, and kindly placed them at my disposal for the purposes of this narrative. I have accordingly transcribed them; and thus, 'after many years,' I take the liberty of reproducing the lecture here, as follows:—

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 106-13, 80-81.

EARLY HISTORY OF

# REGENERATION—NATIONAL AND MUNDANE.

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.—Matt. xix. 16-22.

There could not be a more important question than this that was put by a young man to Jesus Christ—'Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' The young man claimed that he loved his neighbour as himself; but Jesus adduces convincing evidence to prove the contrary; for he puts his love to his neighbour to the proof in calling on him to sell all that he had and give to the poor; and the young man showed that he did not love his neighbour as himself, for he declined to sell all that he had and give to the poor.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.—Verses 23-4.

This was astonishing doctrine, and amazed his disciples exceedingly.

When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.—Verses 25-6.

With men this is still an impossibility. Let any one try the experiment in these times, and singling out a rich man in society, call upon him to sell all that he hath, and to subject himself to that obloquy which in all ages attaches itself to the belief and practice of that which the apostles preached and practised. God has done, and may perhaps yet accomplish this most impossible thing, that is impossible when men labour to accomplish it in their own strength and by their own reasonings.

We remark this afternoon, that the power which God hath given to men to enable them to become His sons, resides in the truth concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. This truth is indeed power—all God's truth is power; and when that truth in its unadulterated character comes in contact with good and honest hearts, whether these hearts be in the possession of immense riches or extreme poverty, God can revolutionise their natures and can develop a new creature; and when that truth gets possession of men's understandings and affections, although it might be kings upon their thrones, that truth causes them to descend from high estates, and renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. The proof that the truth, which is the power of God, can do this, is found in the fact that it has done it. We observe that, in connection with this matter, the Apostle James has said:

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.—James i. 9-10.

And for what reason? Because, as a member of the present constitution of things, the poor man is almost regarded as a criminal on account of his poverty. He has too little influence in society; and if he is permitted to

earn a few shillings a day, he may be thankful if he does not come under the laws of the Gentiles. He looks forward to the time when the kingdom shall be established. The rich man, on the other hand, has ground to rejoice in his humiliation, because the Scriptures say that the rich man fades away in his way as the glory of the perishing flower. Therefore, seeing that, notwithstanding all the riches he possesses, he can only hold those riches for an exceedingly short space of time, when he shall be called upon to surrender his breath into the hands of Him who gave it, when a rich man, having a good and honest heart, receives that truth of which we have been speaking, he is willing to sacrifice the time present in order that he may secure the future. Therefore, well might the Apostle James say, 'Let the poor man rejoice in his exaltation, and the rich man in his humiliation.' There is therefore a use of riches; since by that use of them men may secure to themselves eternal life. For you remember, the young man asked, 'What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' He was told, among other things, to sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and he should have treasure in heaven.

This doctrine is still more emphatically exhibited in the parable of the Unjust Steward, the lesson of which Jesus enforced in these words:

> I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.—Luke xvi. 9.

How are we to make to ourselves friends, by the use of riches, who shall be able to give us an introduction into everlasting habitations? Who are those friends who are able to give us admission into everlasting mansions? There are but two, and these are—Jehovah and His Son, JESUS CHRIST THE LORD. The answer is this—that we may make such a use of riches as to commend us to the Father and to the Son, so that when they fail we may be received into everlasting mansions.

What sort of use do the Father and Son require? The answer is found in Paul's first letter to Timothy:

> Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.—1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

I have said that the truth of God is able to work this great revolution in the hearts of men.

> And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.—Acts ii. 44-45.

Thus, they sold their possessions and goods, as Jesus had commanded them to do.

> And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.—Acts iv. 42.

Does this not show that there is something radically wrong in the present times? There are many hearts and many souls—as many as there are affections in the religious world. We see, then, that when men believe what the apostles taught, the same results will follow; but if you ask the poor in the present times who it is that oppresses them, may they not answer, as James said? Do not the pious rich oppress you? But it was not so in the days of the apostles. It caused men to sacrifice self, that, 'denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ'—(Titus ii. 12). It caused them to live here as pilgrims and sojourners who

are seeking a city—a constitution of things—whose maker, constructor, and architect is God. 'The multitude were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed were his own; but they had all things common.'

In dismissing this part of the subject, we remark, that the only class of persons among whom there was a community was the Jews, and not the Gentiles; and hence those Gentile philosophers err in teaching communism among Gentile communities. The obvious reason is this. After that the Holy Spirit was given to Peter to convince the Israelites of these things—of sin, because they believed not in Jesus; of righteousness; and of judgment to come. Although we have not that part of Peter's discourse given to us in detail, yet we are told that 'with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation'—(Acts ii. 40). Part of his discourse is given, in which he urged upon them the coming judgment of the Jewish nation; told them that a time was near at hand when Jerusalem was to be destroyed and the land of Israel to become desolate. They would naturally argue, If such things are coming upon the city and land, had we not better convert our lands into money, that we may be able to flee from the calamity? They made the apostles the repository of their wealth, to make distribution of the money according to their need. In tracing the history of these proceedings, it will be found that it was not very long before all the funds so raised were expended; and under certain conditions the Gentiles had to make collections and to send to the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem.

Returning to the 19th of Matthew, in consequence of this remark of Jesus, that it was necessary to sell all they had, and give to the poor, we read:

> Then answered Peter, and said unto him, 'Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?—Matt xix. 27.

It is true that Peter and the rest of our Lord's followers were not rich men. They had their boats, nets, and other implements by which they earned their livelihood. Reasoning as men would naturally reason when Jesus commanded them to arise and follow him, it was only natural that they should say, 'How are we to live? You are yourself supported by the contributions of your friends; and if we forsake our boats, nets, &c., we see not how we are to be supported.' But this was not their reasoning. They were commanded to arise and follow him; and they forsook all and followed him. Having done so, Peter wished to know what should be their reward. If you were to ask the clergy of this or any other city what will be your reward for forsaking all and following Christ, they would tell you that when you die, you would have the hope of going to heaven. Well, now, did Jesus give this reply to his apostles? No. It is worth your while to pay particular attention to what was the reply of Jesus. Verse 28—I omit the first part of the verse, which will be referred to immediately:

> Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

It is obvious that Peter might have put another question, and might have said, 'If we are to sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, when shall it be so?' The answer to this is contained in the words I have omitted—'Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones *in the regeneration*.' Peter might still have put another question, 'When is the regeneration?' The answer to this is also contained in the words before us, 'When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory.'

This passage sets before us the reward or recompense which stands

related to the kingdom; thrones which belong to a certain nation—the nation of Israel. The period is 'the regeneration,' respecting which I refer you to what Peter says in the third chapter of Acts. Addressing a Jewish audience, he says:

God shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.—Acts iii. 20-21.

We perceive, then, that the apostle, in preaching the gospel to a Jewish audience, tells them that the heavens are to receive Christ until a certain period, which time has been fixed. If we cannot answer the question, 'In what particular year?' we can mention events that will characterise the end of his absence—'the times of the restitution of all things.' The apostle tells us that the things to be restored are all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the foundation of the Jewish age. This passage has been quoted to prove that all mankind are to be restored—restituted. If that be the case, then we will find that doctrine taught in Moses and the Prophets. But we may safely defy any man to produce any such doctrine from the writings of Moses and the Prophets. What are the things to be restored? Are they *things* relating to the Gentiles? We say to those of you who know anything of the history of the nations, Take a review of the ages that are past, and ask yourselves, What institutions have existed in former times among the Gentile nations that are worthy of a restoration? We hear a great deal about the wisdom of our ancestors; and if we are to judge it by the institutions of the Middle Ages, we shall find it to be nothing but incarnate folly. At the present time there is a great struggle between two parties in this country—the one desiring to rectify abuses that exist and have institutions suited to the intelligence and the advancement of the people; the other party are those who profit by the abuses, and are desirous that they should continue. These institutions, however, are fit subjects for abolition rather than of being either perpetuated or made the subjects-matter of a restoration. The more it is looked into, the more clearly will it be seen that the restitution here spoken of is affirmed of something not of Gentile origin.

What we say of this country is equally applicable to all the nations. If you review the history of all Gentile nations, you will find nothing in them that is desirable to be restored. The answer, then, is, 'the restitution of all things' does not refer to anything in connection with the Gentile nations in whole or in part. Is there anything in connection with that most remarkable of all nations—the nation of the Jews—the restoration of which is desirable? The answer is that there is; that Moses and the Prophets have spoken in their writings of many things in that nation as the subject matter of a restoration. That nation has a hope which no other nation has. It is called 'The Hope of Israel.'

Jesus showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.—Acts i. 3.

We thus find what was the subject on which Jesus discoursed to his disciples, for forty days after his death and resurrection; it was 'the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.'

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.—Acts i. 6, 7.

The only question to which an answer was here desired was as to the time. The Lord again plainly shows that it was a kingdom to be restored which previously had an existence. At the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the King (Zedekiah) was deposed.

And thou profane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.—Ez. xxi. 25-27.

How could the apostles sit upon twelve thrones, unless Jesus Christ should restore again the kingdom to Israel? When they asked this question about the time, they did not perceive that if he had restored the kingdom then, it would have been to give them their recompense before they had done their work. God does not act upon this principle: therefore Jesus simply told them that it was not for them to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. In both Matthew and Luke it is recorded that he had told them: 'The day and the hour knoweth no man—no, not the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.' Hence he merely gave them the signs of the breaking up of the Jewish polity.

It will thus be seen that the 'restoration of all things' must have relation to the Israelites. How could the kingdom be restored again to the people if they had never possessed it? When this comes to pass, we want to know what will be the condition of the Jewish people when the kingdom is restored to them as 'the restitution of all things.' The answer is contained in the prophet Ezekiel (xxxvi. 24-38). When Israel were living under the old constitution of Moses, they were divided into two kingdoms and nations, the kingdom of Israel consisting of ten tribes. The throne of that kingdom was not set up by Jehovah. The other kingdom consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. These two kingdoms are spoken of as 'the house of Israel' and 'the house of Judah.' The new constitution is to consist of both houses united. What will be their condition? The answer is contained in Ezekiel xxxvii. 21-28. Verse 24th: 'And David my servant shall be king over them.' How could David be king over them when he had been dead for 700 years? The answer is, It is David the Second that is to be king over them. The literal meaning of the word translated 'David' is 'Beloved.' Hence the term is applied to the Christ, David's Son. 'This is my beloved Son'—literally 'my David.' Verse 28—'And the heathen [or nations] shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel when my sanctuary [or temple] shall be in the midst of them for evermore.' That temple is described at full length in the 40th and 41st chapters of Ezekiel.

We might sum up here and say that the kingdom to be established will be the antitype of that which existed under Solomon. If you can make yourself familiar with the kingdom 'as it was in the days of old,' you will be able to form some idea of what it is to be under 'the greater than Solomon.' But Solomon was a mortal king, but the greater than Solomon is 'a prince for ever.' The Kingdom of God under the first constitution was 'left to other people,' but the Kingdom of God under the second constitution will not be left to other people. In the nature of things, this kingdom cannot last longer than a thousand years, for it contains within itself the priestly and sacerdotal principle. Sacrifices will be offered for sins. In I Cor. xv. 24 we read of the time 'when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.'

A testimony or two in relation to the glory and majesty of the kingdom when reconstituted:

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, before His ancients gloriously.—Isaiah xxiv. 23.

The transfiguration was an earnest of the glory and majesty of the kingdom under the new constitution.

What will be the character of the times as contrasted with the times now?

The Lord is exalted, for He dwelleth on high: He hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness. And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure. . . . Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off. Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? where is the receiver? where is he that counted the towers? Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand. Look upon Zion the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.—Isaiah xxxiii. 5-6, 17-20.

The Jewish people will be regarded by other nations as an honourable people, which by no means are they regarded now.

Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that 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. . . . Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the Holy Land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord; for He is raised up out of His holy habitation.—Zec. viii. 22-23; ii. 10-13.

It is customary for systems of theology to interpret the term 'Zion' as expressive of their respective denominations.

In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever.—Micah iv. 6-7.

In fact, there would be no end to reading testimonies relating to the restitution of all things in relation to the nation of Israel. The question, however, arises here, As we are Gentiles, what interest have these things to us? In answer, I have simply to remind you of what Paul argues concerning the Jews in relation to the Gentiles, in his letter to the Romans. He tells us that Jews in the past were broken off from their own national olive tree because of their unbelief of the Gospel of the Kingdom preached in the name of Jesus. This was 'the riches of the Gentiles;' for in consequence of what happened to Israel, the gospel, anticipating that event, was sent to the different nations to invite the Gentiles to partake of the Kingdom of God. This is called by the apostle 'the riches of the Gentiles.' Thus it will be seen that there is nothing presented before us Gentiles, but what we are to obtain through the Jewish people. You will perceive the meaning of the apostle when he says, 'He is not a Jew who is one outwardly.' We are invited, as foreigners, to become adopted citizens, that we, Gentiles, may be prepared for the time that is coming. The philosophers knew nothing about the promise, 'In thee, Abraham, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' There is no cause for the Gentiles to boast. 'Be not high-minded, but fear.' As if the apostle had said, 'You are not the trunk of the tree—you are only grafted branches.' If that be riches to the Gentiles, the grafting in into their own olive will be life from the dead. It is not to be brought about by any combination of wise men among the nations. God has at His right hand a personage whom He has constituted the originator of the world, the repairer of the breach. This is expressed in the testimony contained in Isaiah:

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people from far. The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name.—Isaiah xlix. 1.

We are able to identify the personage spoken of here as Jesus—the angel Gabriel named him Jesus before his birth.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcases of their detestable and abominable things. O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.—Jeremiah xvi. 14-19.

Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent.—Zephaniah iii. 8-9.

Men can only respond to two things—reflection and sensation. The sword of God's indignation must be drawn upon them, and they must be subjected to His will.

It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.—Isaiah ii. 2-4.

It will not be the Peace Society that will bring this about.

Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied, and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it: neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.—Jeremiah iii. 14-17.

What is the meaning of all nations being gathered into Jerusalem to the name of the Lord? All nations will flow to Jerusalem, the city of the imperial government which will be erected there. They will no more look to London, Paris, or Vienna as the great centres of dominion, but to Jerusalem.

The human family will have certain wants that will not then yet be fulfilled. When Jesus ascends the throne, he has to sit upon that throne a thousand years. His government is to increase. 'Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.' It follows, that when that throne is first established, it will not be set up in its full extent.

When all things are created anew, what will be the condition of things on the globe? The answer to this is outlined in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse, where we find the new constitution of this terrestrial system in relation to its planet and its population. Verse 1—'There was no more sea.' This of itself indicates a physical change. Verse 3—'The tabernacle [or dwelling-place] of God is with men.' In other words, we are not to suppose that God is going to leave the heaven of heavens; but

that [illegible]rth will then have been developed as a new province of His dominion, fitted for Him to reside in every inhabitant of it. He manifested Himself through Jesus in the flesh; at this time there will not be a single inhabitant but in whom God will reside, as He did through Jesus. God will be all and in all men. There will be no more any such division of mankind as now into sons of men and sons of God. Verse 4—Nothing will exist among the population which will give any occasion for anguish, or sorrow of mind of heart. There will be no more death—only contemplation of it in the past history of our globe. Verse 5—'Behold, I make all things new.' It will be observed, then, that what is in the future is not destruction and the burning of the earth and the human race. Everything is progressive, with a view to this final perfection of things, when all things shall be created anew. Who is to do all this? It is no less a personage than him with whom we are familiar in other parts of the Scripture as Jesus of Nazareth. Will he not then have earned, as it were, the name of 'Wonderful,' 'Counsellor,' 'The Mighty God,' 'the Founder of the Everlasting Age,' 'the Prince of Peace?'

### A Cleric's Remarkable History.

Among Dr Thomas's audience during his third visit was a Baptist preacher, who had diligently attended all his lectures, and had also read *Elpis Israel*. This preacher called upon the doctor at Mr Bell's, and occupied two hours of his time in narrating his remarkable experiences as a Church of England cleric, a Congregationalist, a Baptist, first in England, and latterly in Edinburgh.

Having arrived in this city [says the doctor], he hired a hall for preaching. It was pretty well attended, and yielded enough to pay the rent, and support the family with a little extra effort of their own. Thus were things with him when he attended my lectures at the School of Arts.

'Now,' said he, 'you are in possession of my story in its general outline, but I have not told you my belief. I believe that immortality is the gift of God to the righteous only; and that the 'immortality of the soul' is a mere heathen speculation. I believe that Jesus will return in power and great glory to establish the kingdom and throne of his father David; and sitting upon it in Zion, will rule in righteousness with his saints. I have read *Elpis Israel*, and believe it sets forth the truth: but here is the extremity to which I am reduced. The support of myself and family depends on my preaching what is generally approved. Believing what I do, I cannot continue to preach as I have done; and if I preach what I believe, my living is gone. What am I to do?'

Preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and walk by faith, trusting to God for all the rest. But, as it is the poor to whom it is preached, and who principally embrace it, the living obtained by the gospel from them is neither delicate nor sumptuous: but oftentimes quite scant and self-denying. If the people will not hear you in behalf of the truth, turn to some secular employment, and labour in the gospel as you have opportunity.

'I cannot,' said he, 'preach at the hall any more; but what is to be done doth not evidently appear.'

Having discussed the question of emigration to America, and presented him with a copy of *Elpis Israel*, he departed with an expression of good intentions; but whether he carried them out, I have hitherto had no means of arriving at the proof.

**'Elpis Israel' Denounced.**

The committee which undertook the bringing of the public together to hear me, were two Scotch Baptists, a Morisonian, and, I think, a Campbellite. They were quite zealous until *Elpis Israel* appeared, when their orthodox feelings experienced great revulsion. The Morisonian, whose zeal was of a business character, remained firm: while the others became positively incensed. This was between the publication of the book and my last visit. A friend writing previous to this says:

> I fell in with one of the committee who agreed with the good (!) folks of Derby, that you were the most dangerous man who had visited them. After half an hour's conversation I left him in a rather more reasonable frame of mind. Some speak against *Elpis Israel* who are quite ignorant of its contents; others, because you speak against the clergy, &c. There are not many whose minds are free from priestcraft. I don't know who in Edinburgh are your friends now. *Elpis Israel* has repelled some, but has, I hope, attracted others better worth. Mr Campbell can never succeed in any attempt he may make to neutralise the truths it contains. He might deter, or induce many not to read it; for the very influence of his name has already done so.

One of the committee subscribed for four copies. He sold two, made a gift of one, and retained the fourth; but when he came to read it, it took all the music out of him, and set him on fire, so that he endeavoured to get them back, that he might commit them all to the flames. Such is pietism—unreasoning, sickly sentimentality turned to rage, when the peace of its morbid conscientiousness is disturbed.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1850, p. 82.



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### 'Elpis Israel.'

This is the name of the work I published in London. When I come to reflect upon it, the publication was really a remarkable event. Having been absent from Britain so long, I returned to it almost a stranger. Those of my acquaintances I found alive were of no use to me religiously; and those to whom my name was known by report, only thought of me as one who was 'the greatest enemy of their faith.' It was, therefore, quite an extraordinary circumstance that such an individual should publish an octavo volume of 400 pages and dispose of nearly 1200 of them in a few weeks.

The reader may know from this that there was something in connection with this book that does not belong to books of an ordinary kind. It is considered the most readable book published on Bible subjects; at the same time, one that requires thought and collateral examination of the Scriptures in the reading. The author has been warmly thanked for its publication, both in public and private; and several have declared that if another copy could not be procured, they would not take its weight in gold for their's. This may be an extreme estimate of its value; but it results from the fact that it unfolds connectedly to the lover of the Word of God that wonderful system of things which is revealed in the Bible. In short, it makes the Bible intelligible to the ordinary capacity.*

### John Forman's Impressions of Dr Thomas.

Among those who were constant and interested attenders at the public lectures of Dr Thomas, was our esteemed brother John Forman, then a member of the High Street meeting, whose mind had for years previously been undergoing a process which specially prepared it for the reception of the truth which Dr Thomas unfolded. Writing in *Ecclesia*, the manuscript magazine of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, in 1858 (the year of his death), at a time when the [illegible] was coming to be rather disparaged by some of [illegible] admirers, John Forman thus warmly acknowledged his personal indebtedness to Dr Thomas:—

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, p. 21.

## JOHN THOMAS.

I am not so indiscriminately rabid as to desire to hear and speak about every new thing. Still, I reckon it a pardonable passion to desire more than silver the knowledge of Jehovah, and what He has revealed touching the destiny of our race and the planet on which we tread. Hence, when I heard in 1848—that year of earthquake and revolution—that a medical gentleman from America was about to visit our city, and tell to its inhabitants what strange and unthought-of things the Scriptures make known about Europe, Asia, and the world and its dwellers, resolution to hear was quite unnecessary. With Bible, pencil, and note-book, long before the hour of meeting, I sat with expectancy awaiting the lecturer's appearance.

The attendance was very small. Orthodoxy feeds only from clerical spoons, and little churches rejoice in their own exclusive diminutiveness; so neither turned out. I should think it better to be an Ancient Athenian philosopher, and give a Jewish tent-maker a hearing *from* the Areopagus, *by request*, than a Modern Athenian, with all the pompous conceit of his religious ignorance.

The preacher appeared, ascended the pulpit, rose, Bible in hand, and proceeded to speak. He disclaimed being 'a prophet,' as he only made known what was revealed; further, he said, 'I am no missionary, not being sent by any person or society.' He then announced the object of his visit to this country—to call attention to political events occurring in Europe, and to point out their prophetic significance. His lecture embraced the past, present, and future 'heavens and earth' in their general outline. To me, very much was new and strange; yet, in the general, it commended itself to my judgment; and I think I heard every public address which the doctor delivered in the city afterwards. His style and mode of address were unvaried, and that night will suffice to speak of these.

His propositions—always clearly deduced from Scripture statements—were plain, distinct, and easily comprehended. He had no superfluous words, and his simple language, burdened with facts and God's truth, fell upon the heart with startling effect. His knowledge of the writings of the divine authors, including the despised ancient Hebrew prophets, was very extensive, and his use of 'the sword of the Spirit' betokened a skilful and valiant warrior in

the Lord's battles. His manner was singularly unobtrusive, calm, yet powerful. It did not approach to the dignified, for this would have turned the audience to the lecturer, who possessed the rare qualification of riveting the attention of the people on his subject, without even thinking on himself. Finally, his manly countenance in every feature, and the keenness of his eye, spoke a thorough earnestness of purpose, irresistible. Like the 'Ancient Mariner,'

> He held him with his glittering eye;
> The wedding guest stood still,
> And listens like a three years' child:
> The mariner hath his will.

Early-taught reverence for God and His Word will ever prevent me from receiving any man's words without due caution; hence I disclaim being a 'follower' of John Thomas, but gratitude must acknowledge that I have learned much from him.

On one occasion I had walked twenty miles of unknown way, guided by a small meagre chart, and sat on the banks of a lake not knowing my next step. A gentleman kindly showed me his guide-book, displaying on a large map the desired route. For this I thanked him, and took the way. John Thomas found many following a puny clerical chart, and very ignorant of the full revelation of God. He unfolded

> The map of God's extensive plan,

and told, as few can tell, the wondrous workings of the Mighty One, and pointed to the graphic words of Holy Writ, that spoke of blessings yet to dawn upon our cursed earth.

Ye whose eyes have been opened, and your minds enlarged by the words of this man, as you value the truth of God, cherish affectionate remembrance of him, and think less of his infirmities. Some people fancy that when one learns more, he should forget, or does it, what he previously knew of the Bible. Little minds may; the intelligent man, with 'honest' and 'enlarged heart,' the Book of God in his hand, and His fear before him, will not, but will gratefully receive comfort from every ray that beams from heaven. May he who has spoken to us the word of life, have many years of usefulness, and many for his crown in the day of the Lord Jesus.

### Last Words about Edinburgh.

During all the time Dr Thomas was in this country, and afterwards, until the account of his visit appeared in the *Herald*, the doctor was occasionally receiving letters from correspondents in Edinburgh, who, while professing to be favourable to the doctrines he was promulgating, took no steps to identify themselves with those who were endeavouring to establish a church upon the basis advocated by the doctor. In closing the account of his visit to Edinburgh, he says:

On Sept. 3, 1850, I received a few last words from Edinburgh, which will conclude what I have to present, illustrative of things as they were in that city till I left Britain. The writer says:

I am happy to say we are all well in this quarter. Inquiry is still rife about 'the kingdom;' and I perceive no diminution of interest in Bible matters amongst those who have formed the society for investigating its contents.

Mrs ——'s former 'episcopal shepherd' came looking after her a short time ago, and discussing the merits of the party she had joined. Some observations were made on our non-payment of our pastor; and the very clear distinction that existed between the office of a pastor and that of an evangelist. 'He could not see it;' and said that 'there was nothing he disliked more than these distinctions; that there was none; and that Paul expressly laid down the rule, that the labourer is worthy of his hire;' and so on. By what fatality is it that they have united the pastoral duty with the evangelist's maintenance in their own persons, and yet seem to be ignorant of their double-dealing? The greater part seem to be as much victims of the system as the people over whom they rule. Any church with him is a Christian church, though the Papist, &c., are! What strange infatuation!

Things as they were give no assurance of the character of things as they will be. 'Ye did run well,' says Paul to the Galatians; 'who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?' They received him as an angel of God, and would have plucked out their eyes to serve him; and afterwards treated him as people bewitched would treat a man who sought to disenchant them of an agreeable delusion. This change in their minds towards him was superinduced by the influence of the zealous advocates of 'another gospel,' or faith by which the sinner may be justified, than that word of faith which he preached. The same cause has operated in Edinburgh. When I arrived in that city, it was not perceived what I was driving at.

The times were exciting, and my lectures were mainly illustrative of their prophetic character. They attracted thousands, of whom hundreds, by their subscription to *Elpis Israel*, afforded me the means, through that work, of re-announcing to this generation Paul's gospel for the obedience of faith. When it was in the hands of the people, and the printer duly paid, I made the Gospel of the Kingdom a primary subject of my discourses in my third tour. It may be said that, 'being crafty, I caught them with guile.' Be it so. You must angle to catch trout. I was fishing men for the Kingdom of God, and baited my hook with its gospel things. Some swallowed the bait, but, their struggles not being exhausted, they have not yet come quietly to shore. Hence, one of these who believes, but who struggles against obedience to his new faith, writes:

> What has tended greatly to deaden the interest felt in the *Herald's* exposition of the kingdom and age to come in Edinburgh, is, in my opinion, the position you have taken up in respect to the ground of a sinner's justification; the faith by which a sinner may be justified, &c. . . . You will be aware, of course, that secessions have taken place from some of the churches, owing, I believe, to differences on this point; and in some cases, to the unwillingness of the church to hear the expositions of those who had received your views. I hope it may be to their advantage, but I fear not.

There is disputation, then, in Edinburgh in regard to what men must believe and do to be saved. This is good. And though the *Herald* was for some considerable time without a subscriber there, I am happy in knowing that, as the controversy goes on, its subscribers are increased.*

### Dr Thomas's Valedictory Address.

Previous to leaving Britain, on his return to America, Dr Thomas wrote a farewell address to the numerous friends he had made in the course of his several tours through the country. This address was published as an 'extra' by the *Gospel Banner*, a monthly Campbellite magazine, then published at Nottingham by a Mr Hudston, who had been very friendly to Dr Thomas during his tours. The address, which was reproduced in the *Herald*, I here give, in a slightly abridged form:—

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. v., i.

FAREWELL TO THE FRIENDS IN BRITAIN.

* * * *

Moved by the interesting and exciting events of February and March, 1848, I was stirred up, as it were, to visit Europe; and to call the attention of the people of this island to the prophetic signification of passing events, as indicative of the approach of the Kingdom of God; that those who desired to attain to it might have the opportunity of preparing themselves for its introduction. Having been so long absent from England, I arrived here almost a stranger; and although known to many who read the American and British *Harbingers* of an imaginative millennium, by report, I was known only as a 'half-sceptic, half-Christian, fit only for the society of Voltaire, Tom Paine, and that herd.' This is the choice and elegant phraseology applied to me by Mr Campbell.

Sowing the Seed.

However, notwithstanding the prejudice thus created, and the efforts made by Mr C.'s partisans to prevent it, I gained the ear of the public. I believe I should be far under the mark, in saying, that I have addressed 20,000 people in this country. Being composed of various sects and shades of opinion, they doubtless heard me with very different feelings. This, however, is known—that the congregations, though ever so few in the beginning, increased to a multitude before I left the towns—Derby and Lincoln excepted.

If one inquire, 'What is the result?' I reply, God only knows. I have sown 'the word of the kingdom' as seed broadcast into the minds of the promiscuous multitude. It is for me to sow, others to plant, and others again to water; but it is for God alone, in His own way, to 'give the increase,' if the fruit be unto eternal life. How much of the seed sown will come to maturity it is impossible for me to tell. Others may boast in what they have accomplished—in the numbers they have converted, the multitudes they have immersed, the triumphs of the gospel through their agency; but I have nothing to boast of after this fashion. I have perfected nothing. I have ploughed, broken up the clods, harrowed and sowed the land, and 'laid it by' for the present. I now wait with patience to see what it will bring forth. If my eyes be shortly closed in death, I shall rest from my 'labour of

### The High Street Hall Meeting.

In the High Street Hall it was different. The constitution of this church, as appears from a leaflet which was issued some time after its formation, a copy of which I have preserved, was as follows :—

# THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

ASSEMBLING IN

**STRANGERS' FRIEND SOCIETY HALL, 84 HIGH STREET,**

HOLD MEETINGS,

AT THE USUAL HOURS, THREE TIMES, EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

ALL ARE RESPECTFULLY INVITED.

---

## FREE GOSPEL.

It is the duty of Churches to maintain the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ to every sinner; that God seeks the salvation of all men; that in the obedience unto death of Jesus, as the propitiation for sin, there is the fullest proof of Divine Love; that in believing the Gospel we possess peace with God, the forgiveness of sins, and, by patient continuance in well-doing, eternal glory; that his real disciples live not to themselves, but to him who died for them, enjoying his friendship, walking in his steps, and waiting for his appearing the second time without a sin offering unto salvation.

John iiii. 14-17. Mark xvi. 15. Rom. iv. 25. Rom. v. 1, 2. 1 John iii. 1-3.

## FREE COMMUNION.

Believers ought to meet as Churches, by the authority of Christ, in the Holy Scriptures, under no other name nor denominational distinction; to discard all creeds and human authority; to be careful to receive all the brethren of the Lord, and avoid a sectarian spirit; while they put away from themselves every wicked person, to separate no believer from the table of the Lord, for want of uniformity of views; to look upon all the churches as one, only sub-divided by locality, carrying out the principles of inter-communion, as if they were all meeting in one place.

Matthew xviii. 15-20. Rom. vir. 1. Eph. ii. 19-22.

## FREE MINISTRY.

Christian Churches are under law to Christ, to recognise him as their Lord and Master—ascended on high, having received gifts for men, and, by the providence of 'His Spirit,' 'giving unto every man severally as he will.' They should shun every arbitrary interference with the distribution he has made of those gifts, neither allowing an exclusive ministry—one man hired to exercise all the gifts of the rest—nor recognising functions where no gifts have been bestowed. Avoiding the absurdity of counting one member the whole body, or misplacing any member to perform the functions of another; but, where any have the gift of wealth, or wisdom, or utterance, to minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, seeking to edify the body in love, and convert the world to God.

1 Cor. xii., xiv. Rom. xii. 1-10.

EDINBURGH. MAY, 1849.

love and work of faith,' ignorant of present results; but when I awake from my sleep of death, and meet my friends and enemies before the tribunal of Christ, I shall then know what the toil of the two past years has produced. I have no anxieties. The truth will accomplish its destiny, for this is God's decree.

### The Doctor's Labours.

If it be inquired, 'But what has your labour consisted in since your arrival in Britain?' I reply, that I have travelled through this island thrice; addressed the people 250 times, averaging an hour and a half each time; talked with them at soirees and in private about the kingdom, &c., early and late; written an octavo volume on the kingdom, of upwards of 400 pages, which would only receive about two-thirds of what was written; published hundreds—yes, thousands—of ephemeral articles for gratuitous circulation; written a multitude of letters; and last, though not least, have published a pamphlet of forty pages octavo, entitled, *The Wisdom of the Clergy proved to be Folly.*

* * * *

### Proximate Results.

The proximate results of my labours have been the convincing of many persons that what I laid before them was God's truth; the baptism of several who have believed, both men and women; the regeneration of the views of a church of some sixty persons in Nottingham, who will probably obey the truth they acknowledge; the organist of the Unitarian church in Derby became obedient to the faith, by which their music was stopped; a church of twelve or fourteen has been commenced in Dundee; a church in Aberdeen brought over to the faith; the greater part of churches in Edinburgh * and Glasgow also, where societies have been established for the investigation of the Bible and the things brought to light in *Elpis Israel.*

* [Dr Thomas had evidently been misled, by the much too encouraging tone in [illegible] some of his correspondents wrote to him, as to the actual state of matters in the [illegible] in Edinburgh—by which, it is presumed, he meant the Campbellite meeting in [illegible]outh Bridge Hall. So far from the greater part of it having been brought over [illegible]ith,' as here stated, when, nearly three years afterwards, a church based upon [illegible]l of the Kingdom was organized in Edinburgh, only three of its twenty-four [illegible]came from the South Bridge Hall meeting].



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* * * *

From Birmingham a writer says: 'We meet under the New Jerusalem Church to read the Scriptures together with *Elpis Israel*, and to discuss the various subjects, with a view to be as well informed as possible, in the absence of a teacher, previous to forming a church.' In Newark, 'the elder' has apostatised from Mr Campbell to the State Church; but the flock whom 'he has deserted' are found on the side of 'the Kingdom and name of Jesus.'

### 'He has Done What He Could.'

Such are some of the visible results of my humble efforts in this land. The points indicated will, I doubt not, become centres, from which will radiate and sound forth the glad tidings of the coming kingdom to cheer the hearts of the few of this generation that may yet remain to complete the number of the guests required to fill the house and table of the Lord. I have done what I could, and would have done more through the press had means been more abundant. In what I have done, I have the satisfaction arising from the answer of a good conscience. I have coveted no man's silver or gold, nor anything that is his. What has been contributed has been spontaneous and of good-will, though considerably short of my expenses. I mention this not complainingly; but as an evidence of the unselfish character of my enterprise. Mr C., and those who traduce me, are worldly wise enough to look to their own interests first, before they will stir hand or foot in carrying what they call the gospel to a foreign land. This has not been my rule of action. I have served what I believe to be the truth first, to the neglect of my temporal interests. Who of them, I would like to know, would go abroad for two years at his own cost, trusting to the effect their teaching might produce for a mitigation of the expense, for the advantage and behoof of men of whom they know nothing in the flesh, and many of whom were their enemies, and would rejoice in their perdition? This I have done, and rejoice to know that many who were filled with bitterness against me, are now among my best and firmest friends. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and by my fruits I am willing to be judged.*

* * * *

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, pp. 22-3.

## RETURN OF DR THOMAS TO AMERICA.

Having now accomplished his work in Britain, Dr Thomas sailed from Liverpool in the *Marathon*, a vessel of about 1100 tons, chartered to convey emigrants to the United States, on October 11th, 1850. He had been appointed as physician to the vessel, this being, I believe, the last occasion on which he acted professionally as a medical practitioner—he having, as he himself so pithily expressed it, decided to turn from the 'patching up the crazy mortalities of the children of the dust for filthy lucre's sake,' to the service of the Gospel of the Kingdom.* He arrived in the United States on November 19th, after an absence of about two years and a half.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, p. 272.

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# 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 I.

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# EDINBURGH AFTER THE VISIT OF DR THOMAS.

Beyond creating a spirit of inquiry into the matters which Dr Thomas had brought before the public notice in Edinburgh, his lectures did not produce any immediate or visible result; and it was not until fully two years and a half after his last visit that a Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was formed, based upon the principles which he so strongly advocated. It will be both interesting and instructive to recall the circumstances under which this result was ultimately developed.

### South Bridge Hall Meeting.

In the South Bridge Hall meeting—some members of which had originally invited Dr Thomas to Edinburgh—some interest was continued in the subjects that had been brought before them; but *Elpis Israel* had given a rather rude shock to a number of persons, who found in it much stronger food than any that they had received from the doctor personally, and which they found exceedingly difficult of digestion. Some of his friends, who were desirous of benefitting from his teaching, found that they could not do so without renouncing some of the most dearly cherished traditions of Campbellism, and the sacrifice was more than they could find it in their hearts to make. They therefore remained on in the meeting, as before, while professing to have an open mind on the momentous truths that had been presented to them by Dr Thomas.

### An Emphatic Pronouncement for the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Several of those who had attended Dr Thomas's lectures continued their inquiry in the right spirit; and the result of their Scripture study was that they became convinced that the Kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus and his apostles, formed an element of the gospel, which was essential to be believed in order to constitute a person a child of God, and consequently ought to enter into the basis of church fellowship. The first to arrive at this conviction was James Cameron; and, acting upon it, he quietly withdrew from membership in the High Street meeting. This step, so far as is known, was the first decided testimony of the kind for 'the Gospel of the Kingdom' ever taken by any one in Edinburgh, and from this fact, his letter of resignation has a peculiar interest. Like all the writings that have since come from the same pen, it is remarkably clear, pointed, and moderate in tone:—

Edinburgh, 16th Nov. 1850.

*James Cameron to the Church assembling in Strangers' Friend Society Hall.*

I am sorry to intimate my withdrawal from the church, which I do for the following reasons:—

It is acknowledged by all that an intelligent belief of 'the gospel' is essential to the fellowship of a Christian Church. If defective or erroneous views on this subject are held, it must be the source of disagreeable dissensions in the church, and also prevent its usefulness in the world. Now, it appears clear to me, from the numerous testimonies regarding the preaching of Jesus and his apostles, that the gospel which they preached was not limited to the fact of atonement for sin, but also included the things concerning the Kingdom of God. 'Jesus went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God'—(Luke viii. 1)—which accords with what he said in Luke iv. 43: 'I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.' Let these passages suffice as a specimen of many others, showing that the gospel is not preached nor believed in its fulness if the things of the kingdom are omitted. I have to say that I have no wish to enter into controversy with the church, but simply to state the reasons which have induced me to take this step. It must be evident to all, that where difference of opinion on such an important point exists, there cannot be that harmony which should characterise church fellowship, neither can there be that influence exerted on those who come to hear which union on such a subject can alone command. I do not in these remarks refer to the views of any individual in the church, but only to the view generally understood as constituting the basis on which the church is formed.

On these grounds, then, I think it my duty to withdraw from the fellowship of the church, and in doing so to bear [illegible] of the word,

[illegible]

### The Doctrine of Life only in Christ.

The members of the High Street meeting at this time derived considerable and unexpected help in their inquiry into the things of the kingdom from the writings and teaching of the Rev. William Glen Moncrieff* on the subject of future punishment. Mr Moncrieff was at one time a minister in the Morisonian connection, and pastor of a small church at Musselburgh. Having, in the course of his study of the Scriptures, arrived at the conviction that man is not naturally possessed of immortality, but that it is a gift to be conferred by Jehovah upon those who believe the gospel, and having the honesty plainly to avow this conviction, he was in consequence expelled from the Morisonian body. After his expulsion, he removed to Edinburgh, where he gradually gathered a small congregation around him, to whom he faithfully preached the new doctrine of life only in Christ. His outspoken yet calm and convincing utterances upon this doctrine, and

* Mr Moncrieff was a native of Hamilton, his father being Professor of Hebrew in the Andersonian University, Glasgow. He was trained for the ministry, and appointed to the pastorate of the Morisonian Church in Musselburgh. It was while here that, in consequence of reading the volume by H. H. Dobney, entitled *The Scripture Doctrine of Future Punishment*, he was led to understand in the Scriptural sense that 'the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.' In December 1848—just two months after Dr Thomas's first visit to Edinburgh—he published a remarkable pamphlet of forty-eight pages, entitled *Dialogues on Future Punishment*, in which, in the form of a series of conversations between two truth-seekers, the doctrine of 'Life in Christ' is very clearly set forth. The publication of this pamphlet caused a profound sensation in Morisonian and other religious circles, and led to the author's expulsion from the Morisonian denomination. He removed to Edinburgh in 1852, and for two years had a hard struggle for bare existence, while he taught the unpopular doctrine of man's mortality and eternal life only in Christ. This he endeavoured to do both in the pulpit and also through the press. He published a booklet entitled 'Soul; or the Hebrew Word *Nephesh*, and the Greek Word *Psyche*;' which was shortly afterwards followed by 'Spirit; or the Hebrew Terms *Ruach* and *Neshama*, and the Greek Term *Pneuma*'—both being works of considerable research, and throwing much light on the new doctrine. He also, in March 1853, commenced a small monthly magazine, *The Expositor of Life and Immortality*, which was continued for sixteen months. All this time, however, it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained the necessaries of life, and the means of providing for the requirements of his wife and family was a source of constant and increasing anxiety to him. It was with a view to provide for the wants of 'this mortal' that he was induced to emigrate to Canada. Previous to his departure from Edinburgh, his friends entertained him at a soiree in the Calton Convening Rooms, on the evening of Monday, October 16th, 1854, and presented him with the sum of eighty guineas. Mr Melville Bell presided, and a select choir from the recently formed Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom—consisting of George Dowie (conductor), James Cameron, William Wilson, William Norrie, Susan Mark, Jane Norrie (afterwards Mrs Robert Roberts), and Agnes Norrie (afterwards Mrs William Wilson) sang a number of pieces of music in the course of the evening's proceedings. In Canada he found congenial and remunerative employment in journalism and literary work generally; and amidst his various occupations he found time to write and speak which he did with great ability—on the important truth for which he had suffered so much. He died at London, Ontario, on September 27th, 1895, in the 75th year of his age.

upon that of the state of the dead, although strange and startling to the more orthodox portion of the religious public, had a considerable influence in disseminating the true Scripture teaching on these important points; and they accorded entirely with 'the gospel according to Dr Thomas,' which was then engaging serious attention. Mr Moncrieff's views found acceptance with a number of intelligent and honest truth-seekers, whose minds were also thus prepared, from having discarded one of the greatest theological errors of our times, to make still further advances in divine knowledge.

### More Believers in the Kingdom's Gospel.

Several other members of the High Street meeting afterwards arrived at the same conviction as James Cameron as to what was included in the gospel. Among these may be mentioned his brother Richard and James and Mrs Bannerman—all of whom were at one time members of the same meeting, but, although not leaving for the reason assigned by James Cameron, latterly found themselves isolated from church fellowship because of the decided belief they had all come to entertain respecting the Gospel of the Kingdom. Others, again—among whom were John Forman and William Wilson—had also become well enlightened in 'the Kingdom and name of Jesus,' and gave these things a prominent place in their teaching in the meeting, but did not then see their way to severing their connection with the Free Communion meeting.

### Efforts to Enlighten the Public.

After James Cameron and James Bannerman left the High Street meeting, they were not in any regular church fellowship until the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was formed, as will presently be noticed. In the meantime, however, neither was by any means inactive in the way of making known to others the cheering truth which they had themselves received. Bannerman was a rather ready and effective public speaker, although he had a somewhat

monotonous voice; but he never lost an opportunity that presented itself of introducing the things of the kingdom at any gathering at which he was privileged to speak; and he did this so repeatedly—so in season and out of season, as it seemed to some of his auditors—that it had come to be regarded as rather tiresome by them. James Cameron had not yet entered upon his career as a public speaker, but he was already engaged in that methodical system of clear and vigorous writing for which he was subsequently so well known.

James Cameron and James Bannerman being at this time both out of church fellowship, naturally became associated in a number of ways in efforts to make known the Gospel of the Kingdom to others. Their first joint effort in this way was made in the year 1851, under the following circumstances:—At that time there was considerable agitation all over the country in consequence of what was known as the papal aggression by the Pope, in re-establishing the papal hierarchy in Britain, which had had no existence in this realm since the time of the Reformation. The Protestant blood of the country was up at this outrage on the national religion as by law established, and meetings were being everywhere held to denounce the audacity of His Holiness, and to expose the errors and iniquities of the Church of Rome. One of these indignation meetings was announced to be held in a temporary wooden building in the Lothian Road, the subject of the lecture being the popish doctrines of 'Purgatory and Indulgences,' and several well-known local champions of the Protestant faith were expected to be present and to take part in the proceedings. Taking advantage of the public interest that was being aroused, and that was thus to be directed to the Protestant view of purgatory, Messrs Cameron and Bannerman drew up a one-page tract upon the subject, which they got printed, and they went themselves and distributed a large number of copies of it to the people as they were entering the meeting. This leaflet—which was subsequently inserted in *The Restitution* of February 1, 1899—was as follows:—

'THE DEAD KNOW NOT ANYTHING.'—Solomon (Eccl. ix. 5).

The doctrine of Purgatory depends entirely upon the state of the dead between death and the resurrection. It has generally been taken for granted that man, when dead, is capable of thinking and feeling—of enjoying pleasure and suffering pain. This doctrine is founded upon the idea that man is possessed of an immaterial, immortal soul, which can live, and move, and have a being independent of the body, and before the resurrection. This is a very important subject, and it becomes us to ask seriously if it has any foundation in Scripture. It is always considered a safe principle of interpretation to take the teaching of plain, direct, and unparabolic passages in preference to those which are parabolic or in any other way obscure. Let us examine a few of that class of passages bearing on this subject.

Moses, in his account of the creation, informs us that 'the Lord God formed MAN out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul'—(Gen. ii. 7). God did not create a separate soul and join it to a body; but the thing made out of the dust became a living soul by the breath of life being breathed into it. The breath of life was possessed by the lower animals as well as by man. 'And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man; all in whose nostrils was the breath of life'—(Gen. vii. 21). Man, therefore, in having the breath of life, has no pre-eminence over the beasts—(Eccl. iii. 19). The withdrawal of the breath of life causes death, as Elihu testifies. 'If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together, and MAN shall turn again unto dust'—(Job xxxiv. 14, 15). Thus it is not an important appendage of MAN, but man himself, that returns to dust; the spirit, or breath, returning unto God who gave it—(Eccl. xii. 7). But it is said that the thinking part of man survives, and man continues to think. Solomon says, 'The dead know not anything'—(Eccl. ix. 5). And also, 'There is no work, nor device, nor KNOWLEDGE, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest'—(Eccl. ix. 10). And David puts the question beyond a doubt when he says, 'His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his THOUGHTS

perish'—(Psalm cxlvi. 1). This agrees exactly with the testimony of the Apostles. The Apostle Paul expected no advantage without a resurrection. He says: 'If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, IF THE DEAD RISE NOT? let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die'—(1 Cor. xv. 32). These are plain statements of Scripture. They condemn both the Popish and the Protestant ideas of the state of the dead between death and the resurrection. Their plain teaching appears to be that man is mortal, and that his only hope of future existence is by a resurrection from the dead. This is in strict harmony with the words of the Saviour himself—'I am the resurrection and the life'—(John xi. 25). It is important to observe the order of the Saviour's language—resurrection first, life after.

Search the Scriptures, then, for yourselves. Cease from man and from man's systems. 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye PERISH from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him'—(Psalm ii. 12).

A copy of the leaflet fell into the hands of one of the speakers; and as it assailed the common Protestant doctrine regarding the state of the dead, this speaker referred in his speech to the leaflet, and endeavoured to controvert its statements.

### Reorganisation in the High Street Hall Meeting.

About this time, there was a partial break-up in the High Street Hall meeting. It was not upon any doctrinal question, but as a result of personal misunderstandings between some of the leading men in the church. In consequence of this there had been a very small attendance at the meetings for some months, and it looked as if the meeting would have to be given up. At this juncture, about the beginning of August, 1851, the late Mr John Bowes—an evangelist of the Free Communion type, whose headquarters were then at Manchester, but subsequently at Cheltenham and Dundee—appeared upon the scene, and was successful in reorganising the shattered meeting, whose numbers were further augmented by the joining of several new members, among whom were Grier-

son Gordon Mitchell, James Lawrie, and myself, this being the first time that any of us had been members of a church. We came to be known as 'The Trio,' as we were all about the same age, and we generally acted in concert in everything, and did a good deal in our own peculiar way to promote the interests of the brethren.

### The Truth Making Headway in the High Street Meeting.

The constitution of the church remained the same, after this reorganisation under the auspices of Mr Bowes as it had been previously. More attention, however, was now given to prophetic subjects than formerly—John Forman and Andrew Tait being the two, perhaps, who were most deeply interested in this study. In consequence of a desire that was expressed by several of the members, on Sunday, June 27, 1852, there was commenced the first of a series of fortnightly meetings, held in the afternoon, for the study of prophecy with special reference to the signs of the times. These meetings were held only once a fortnight because A. Tait, who was then station-master at Drem, some twenty miles from Edinburgh, got in to town only once a fortnight, and they were arranged for his convenience, as he was very specially concerned in the subject. I remember one of these meetings was spent in a rather peculiar manner. They were conducted for the most part in a conversational manner; and in the course of the talk this particular afternoon, some one made reference to the fact that the error in doctrine which existed in the so-called Christian church had been predicted by one of the prophets, who had said that in the latter days the Gentiles would declare that they had inherited lies—or something to that effect. The 'chapter and verse' for this were called for, but no one could give them, and a good deal of time was spent in the turning over the leaves of the various Bibles, but the desired passage could not be found. When what seemed to some a reasonable time had been spent in this way without any one having come upon the passage, it was suggested that they should go on with the consideration of the subject in hand, as this

seeking for a particular text was wasting time. 'No,' replied Andrew Tait, very emphatically, 'it is not wasting time—it is "searching the Scriptures," and we cannot be better employed. Let us go on with the search until we find it.' The search was accordingly continued, and it engaged the attention of the meeting for the rest of the afternoon, but without success, until the time for closing had arrived. Just as the concluding psalm was about to be given out, some one came upon the desiderated passage, which was as follows :—

> O Lord, my strength and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.'—Jer. xvi. 19.

It was a rather unusual way for a meeting to be conducted, but I do not think it was on that account less profitable than some other meetings that I can remember.

### 'The Night-Lamp.'

Another direction in which the members of the High Street Hall meeting sought to promote the study of prophetic subjects was by starting a manuscript magazine to circulate among all interested, the title of which was *The Night-Lamp*—a name that was deemed very suggestive of the special subject with which it was intended to deal. From my journal I find that the first number was issued in September 1852, but I have made no other entry respecting it, and I cannot remember how long it was continued. It could not have been many months, however, as I believe it had ceased to shine on our path previous to the month of March 1853, when there was a total break-up of the High Street meeting. The month just named, also, it may be observed, witnessed the advent of two small printed magazines, devoted to kindred topics—*The Reflector of Divine Truth*, issued by a committee; and *The Expositor of Life and Immortality*, conducted by Mr William Glen Moncrieff.

### Attempt to Enlighten Morisonians.

An incident, showing the position to which some at least of the High Street members had attained, may be here recalled. It has already been mentioned that most of these members had formerly been connected with Brighton Street Chapel, in whose congregation they still took a lively interest. For several Sunday evenings during the summer of 1852, the evening services in connection with that church were held in the open air on Bruntfield Links.* Taking advantage of these services, and of a spirit of inquiry which seemed to have been awakened among some of its members, a few of the old Morisonians had Dr Thomas's exposition of 1 Corinthians xv.† reprinted in the form of a four-page tract, and at the service on Bruntfield Links, on the evening of Sunday, September 12th, they circulated upwards of eight hundred copies of it among the crowd convened on that occasion. This action caused some stir at the time, but it was not followed up by any further efforts.

* '*Sunday, Aug. 15th.*—To-day intimation was made at the meeting of the death of Mary Douglas, which had taken place at Musselburgh on the Friday afternoon previous; and as her funeral was to take place this afternoon, we stopped our forenoon meeting at half-past twelve o'clock, that the brethren might be able to go down to her funeral, and also be able to attend the Musselburgh Church meeting before going to it. A good many of the brethren went. I had some difficulty about going, as I was wearing a light-coloured waistcoat; but remembering that we did not profess to be orthodox in doctrine, I thought it was not necessary to be orthodox in funeral dress either; so I went with the rest, buttoning up my coat so as to save appearances as much as possible. On the way down, it was talked about who should speak at the afternoon meeting in Musselburgh, and Brother Rose was urged to get up promptly, so as to be before Bannerman, who was expected to be there, and who always speaks about 'The Kingdom.' This Rose did, and Bannerman also had his say afterwards. In the funeral procession to the churchyard I walked arm-in-arm with David Lawrie, and we were amused at some remarks made by two men in front of us. Speaking of some persons whom he was running down, the one said to the other, "Oh, they're jist a wheen drucken wretches—*like oorsel's!*" At the grave, Robert Murray read the 11th chapter of John, and made some impressive remarks on the saying of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life." In the evening we walked in to Portobello, and there took the train back to Edinburgh. Grierson and I went to meet Hart and Roughhead, who had walked all the way. This same evening Tom Lawrie went to Bruntfield Links, where Mr Kirk was preaching, and at the close of his sermon Tom addressed the people on some popular religious errors. . . . *Sunday, 22nd.*—This evening, along with Hart and Tom Lawrie, I went to the Links, and heard John Kirk preach. At the close Tom again addressed the people. . . . *Sunday, Sept. 5th.*—This evening Tom Lawrie returned from Dreu. He, along with Hart, Roughhead, Grierson, and I went out to Bruntfield Links, and, along with Stewart Greig, James Cameron, and others agreed to print a tract for distribution on the Links next Sunday night. . . . *Sunday, Sept. 12th.*—This evening, Mr Rutherford of Kelso preached on Bruntfield Links, where we distributed upwards of 800 copies of a tract, "What is the Gospel?" by Dr Thomas.' —*Journal of William Norrie.*

† See pp. 87-92.

### Attempt to Form a Meeting Based on the Kingdom's Gospel.

In the summer of 1852 there were some half-dozen persons who had formerly been members of small meetings, but who now found themselves unconnected with any church, in consequence of the decided attitude they had taken up in connection with the Gospel of the Kingdom. In addition to James Cameron and James Bannerman, already mentioned, there were also William Ellis and Henry and Thomas Wilson (brothers)—these three latter having been members of the Baptist Church under the Rev. Francis Johnston, but having now come to see that a belief of 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ'—(Acts viii. 12)—was essential to a valid baptism; and consequently the place that had once known them in the Waterloo Rooms now knew them no more. These five had considered the advisability of forming a meeting by themselves, and had been looking at a room in Advocate's Close, High Street, with that view. The proposal, however, somehow fell through—chiefly, I believe, because of the temporary removal of William Ellis to Glasgow.

### Attempted Amalgamation of Meetings.

About this time, also, an attempt was made at an amalgamation with the High Street meeting by another small meeting somewhat similarly constituted. A Dr Hamilton, a medical practitioner in Edinburgh, was the principal personage in the other meeting, and a copy of the constitution of the High Street meeting having fallen into his hands, and it appearing to him to be very like his own idea of what 'The Christian Church' ought to be, and what he tried to make the little company with which he was connected, he did not see any reason why the two should not form 'one body.' So he told us at a conference we had with him on the afternoon of Sunday, Nov. 21, 1852. The topics of the coming kingdom and reign of Christ, the restoration of Israel, and life only in Christ, were by this time receiving a prominent place in some

of the addresses given in the Strangers' Friend Society Hall; and in the conference with Dr Hamilton it appeared that these and cognate subjects received very little sympathy from him. I remember that James Bannerman was present at this interview, and very much interested in it; but not being now a member of the church, he of course was not at liberty to take part in the conversation that was going on, though I daresay he would have liked very much to have done so. He sat next to me; and several times he whispered to me to put a particular question to Dr Hamilton—the question always having some direct bearing on the things of the kingdom or the name of Jesus. I felt very much inclined to put the questions, as prompted to me; but I was then a mere boy—the youngest member of the meeting—and I could not for the life of me muster the necessary courage to do so. The conference with Dr Hamilton was continued on the following Sunday afternoon, but came to nothing.

### Lectures on the Kingdom.

How far the Word of the Kingdom had taken hold of the leading speakers in the High Street meeting may be gathered from the following, which is a copy of a small hand-bill announcing a course of lectures by John Forman, at the commencement of the winter of 1852–3:—

## 'GLAD TIDINGS.'

**It is intended to hold a series of Sabbath Evening Meetings**
IN
STRANGERS' FRIEND SOCIETY HALL, 84 HIGH STREET,
COMMENCING OCTOBER 10th;
TO CALL THE ATTENTION OF THE THOUGHTFUL TO
**The Coming Age and Advent of the Messiah,**
AND TO ANNOUNCE
**The Gospel of the Kingdom of God.**

Subjects of Address for the first three Evenings will embrace the following:—The present Political and Ecclesiastical Institutions destined to be overturned by the setting up of the Kingdom of God; the Nature of the Future Kingdom; the Restoration of Israel; &c., &c.

N.B.—At the conclusion of each Address, opportunity will be given for Question or Remark. Time of Meeting, half-past Six o'clock.

'They do well who take heed to the sure word of prophecy.'—2 Pet. i. 19.

### Rough Treatment by a 'Protestant' Lecturer.

Since the printing of pp. 120–23 of this work, containing an account of 'Efforts to Enlighten the Public,' I have received from James Cameron a copy of a letter by James Bannerman, which appeared in the *Scotsman*, which states the circumstances under which the leaflet was distributed rather differently from those already mentioned, and furnishes some additional particulars. On that account the letter is well worth inserting here, although a little after its proper place,

357 High Street, Edinburgh, Dec. 4, 1851.

Sir,—Having been present on the evening of Sunday, 23rd November, at the meeting of the Irish Scripture Readers, under the superintendence of Mr M'Menamy, held in the brick building, Castle Terrace, when the subject of Purgatory was being discussed, I took the liberty of asking a question concerning the state of the dead. Mr M'Menamy answered the question by referring to a passage of Scripture; and on my objecting to his interpretation of the passage and offering another, he immediately proclaimed this a new form of popery, and then stigmatised me as an infidel, and called for the police. The police were prevented from getting near me on account of the crowd, and Mr M'Menamy resumed his teaching. At the conclusion, he again took occasion to refer to me, calling me an infidel, and said I had no right to speak in the meeting. Upon this I rose and said that, if I had no right to speak, all that Mr M'M. was entitled to ask was an apology, which I then offered. At the same time, I took the liberty of stating that I was no infidel, the Bible, and it alone, being the rule of my faith. Mr M'M. said, 'Very well, but I don't believe you; an infidel is fit to say anything.' I was detained by the police at the end of the meeting, but ultimately dismissed. Feeling justly aggrieved, I called at Mr M'M.'s for an explanation. He declined to see me, but through his servant asked me to meet him on another occasion, which I agreed to, naming a time. On the morning of the day named, I was waited on by a person who was sent to inquire if I was employed by the Roman Catholic clergy. Having ascertained that I was not, he left, but called again, stating that Mr M'M. declined to see me. I then wrote to Mr M'M., stating that I was anxious for an interview; but receiving no answer, I again attended the meeting last Sunday night, expecting an explanation, but was disappointed. Some friends having distributed a tract bearing on the subject, and composed chiefly of Scripture passages, Mr M'M. at the close of the meeting stigmatised it as an infidel tract, and advised the people not to read it. He also intimated that he would have a body of police to prevent the distribution of such tracts in future. Having thus failed in obtaining redress at the hands of Mr M'M., will you be so good as insert the above statement of facts in the *Scotsman*, and oblige,

Yours very respectfully,

J. B.*

* *Scotsman*, Wednesday, December 4th, 1851.

## The Bible Investigation Society.

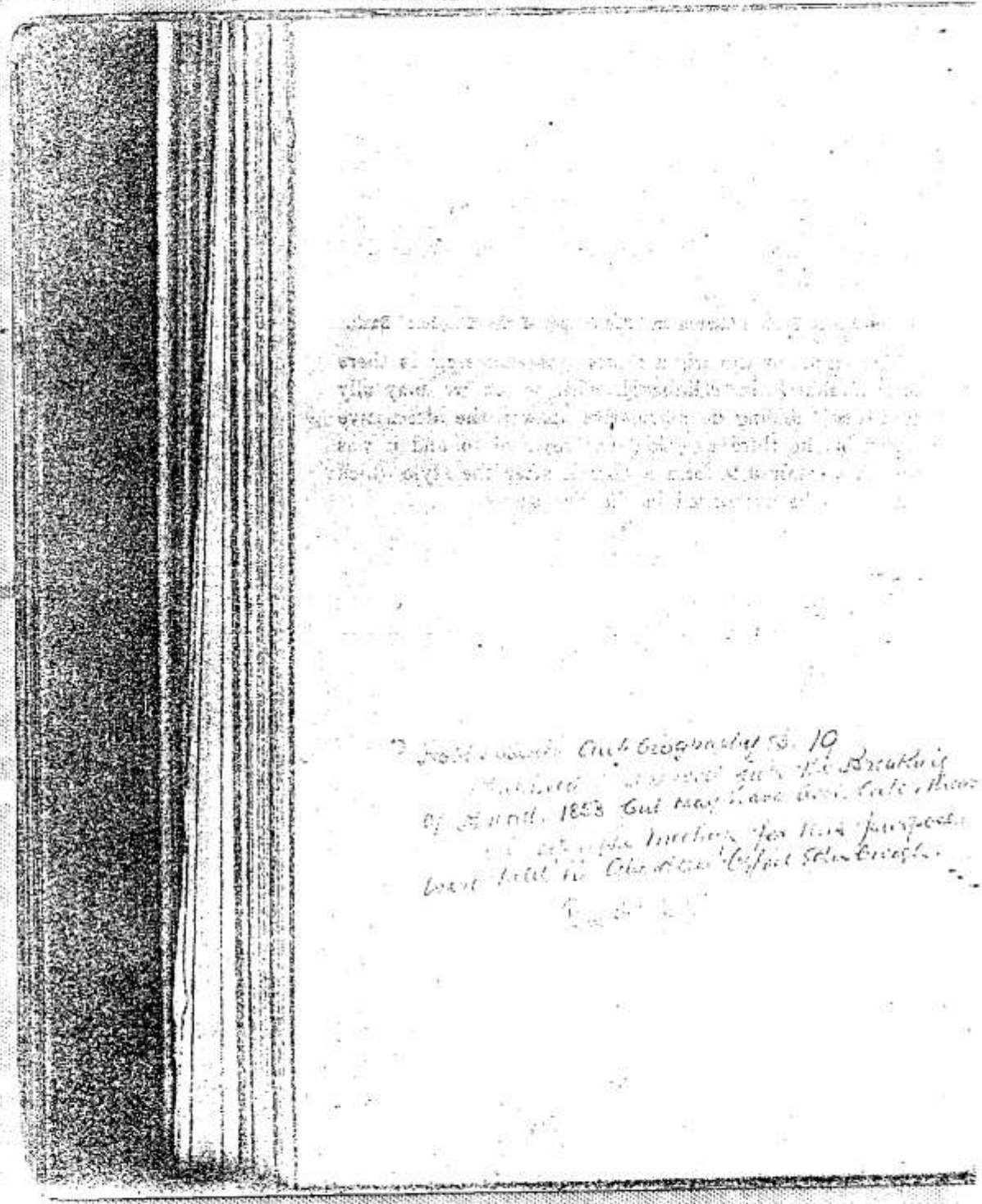
On the occasion of his second visit to Edinburgh, in the summer of 1850, previous to his return to America, Dr Thomas suggested the organisation of a weekly meeting for the purpose of reading and studying the Scriptures, and he particularly advised the study of the Old Testament as a commencement, this being the portion of the sacred writings which was most neglected.

Acting upon this suggestion, an association was formed which took the name of 'The Bible Investigation Society,' and held its weekly meetings in the South Bridge Hall. The members consisted principally of persons connected with some of the smaller religious bodies in town, those from the South Bridge and High Street Halls preponderating. One of Dr Thomas's correspondents, writing at the time when it was in its most flourishing condition, thus spoke of it:—

> You will be glad to learn that our Bible Investigation Society in Edinburgh, which had been formed during your tour north and west, has since been progressing favourably. The avowed object of the society is to know the Scriptures, and we have proceeded consistently with that avowal. No authority is recognised but the writings of the Book of God, while every available source is made subservient to our object.*

I only attended one or two of the first of these meetings. The members commenced with the study of the Book of Genesis; but it appeared to me that they spent far too much time in the consideration of comparatively unimportant matters, and thus made exceedingly little progress, so that I soon discontinued my attendance. The society was at first attended by a considerable number of persons, but one by one dropped off, until there were ultimately only about a dozen members, who, under a modified arrangement, continued their meetings for about eighteen months.

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, p. 23.



### Important Inquiries.

By the end of the year 1852, the residuum of the Bible Investigation Society consisted of a few who were members of the Reformation, some who belonged to the Free Communion Church, and one or two who, as already mentioned, found no suitable connection. The protracted inquiry in which they had engaged led all to doubt the correctness of the principles at the base of the several churches with which they were, or had been, connected; and, dissatisfied with the results of their organisation, it was proposed to institute a series of meetings to consider these practical questions—'What is the Scriptural Basis of a Christian Church?' Having found that, 'Is there such a Church in Edinburgh with which we may ally ourselves?' and 'If not, should we not form one?' The meetings for the examination of these questions were arranged to commence upon the termination of the Bible Investigation Society, and to be held on Sunday evenings in what was then known as Johnston's Temperance Coffee House, Nicolson Street.

### First Formal Meeting for Inquiry.

I have received from James Cameron his short-hand notes of the proceedings at the first meeting to enter upon the inquiries just mentioned, of which I subjoin a transcript. The date of this meeting has not been preserved. Those who were present were as follows:—Gilbert Macdougall, George Dowie, James Cameron, Richard Cameron, William Ellis, Thomas Wilson, Henry Wilson, Wm. Laing, James Bannerman, Thomas Stewart, John Leitch, — Pillans, James Watson, and Isabella Leithhead—15 in all. It may be remarked of the last-named, that she was very much interested in the inquiry, and would have been a frequent attender of the meetings, but finding that she was the only one of her own sex who came, she felt constrained to discontinue her attendance. It is also noteworthy that there was no representative of the Free Communion Church at this meeting, although they subse-

quently formed the great majority of thse who constituted the Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. The reason for their absence was, I believe, that, as stated on page 128, lectures on the Gospel of the Kingdom were being delivered in their own meeting-place on the Sunday evenings, and they did not care to be absent from them. George Dowie was called to preside. James Cameron's report proceeds :—

The CHAIRMAN stated the origin and object of the meeting. Two weeks previously, a few friends had some conversation in the house of Gilbert Macdougall about church matters, at which meeting it was agreed to hold another, to which a few more individuals were to be invited. At that second meeting, the subject of church fellowship was more fully entered into; and it was ultimately agreed that a few other interested persons should be invited to meet and consider the subject more fully. The present meeting was accordingly the result of that invitation. The subjects agreed to be considered were as follows:—1. What, according to the Scriptures, constitutes a Christian? 2. How were the first Christians associated? and 3. Can we reproduce Christian churches of that primitive model? The first inquiry would accordingly be the first to be taken up.

JAMES BANNERMAN introduced the subject by referring to the conversation between Christ and Nicodemus. Nicodemus admitted Christ's claim as a teacher sent from God, and capable of teaching the truth. He dwelt upon the fact that Christ taught him that unless a man were born of water and of the Spirit, and thus made spirit, he could not possess eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

WILLIAM ELLIS cited Paul's letter to the Galatians, third chapter, to show that persons, by believing the gospel before preached to Abraham, concerning the blessing of the nations through Abraham and his Seed, and being baptised, thus put on Christ, and became the sons of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.

JAMES CAMERON suggested that another way to bring the inquiry to a narrower point would be to consider the commission which Christ gave to the apostles, and quoted Matt. xxviii. 19 to show that the apostles were commissioned to make disciples by baptising them into the name, &c.: compared with Mark's report of the same commission (xvi. 15): 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved,' &c.

The CHAIRMAN admitted that this was bringing the subject into a much narrower compass; and he suggested, seeing that the gospel was to be believed in the first instance, that the question should be, 'What is the Gospel?' Perhaps all the passages bearing on that subject could be taken up and considered.

GILBERT MACDOUGALL suggested another mode of arriving at a correct definition of a 'Christian.' This was by asking the question, 'What is a Christ, from whom the name Christian was derived?' He quoted the second Psalm to get the idea of the Anointed One, or Christ; and he found that it was descriptive of the King whom God was to set upon His holy hill Zion. Compared with Acts fourth, it was seen to be the same with Christ. He then quoted Luke i. 32 to shew that it was an important part of the Christ's office to sit upon the throne of his father David, and

pointed out the distinction which existed between Jesus and the Christ or Anointed One.

JAMES WATSON asked the question when it was that Jesus became Christ.

The CHAIRMAN quoted Acts x. 38 to show when this was. Matt. xvi. 16 was also adduced to show that Jesus was the Christ according to Peter's confession.

JAMES CAMERON said he thought the meeting was wandering a little from the real point in hand, which was the question, What is the Gospel? and which appeared to him to include in it the other subject which had been engaging their attention.

JAMES BANNERMAN quoted Acts viii. 12, and last verse of last chapter, to show what the disciples believed in early times.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that, if passages could be adduced to show the identity between these things and the gospel, it would go a great way to settle the question.

WILLIAM LAING quoted 1 Cor. xv. 1–4 to prove that the gospel was limited to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

JAMES CAMERON said there was probably a good reason why Paul, in this statement of the gospel, used the official title, 'The Christ' or 'Anointed One,' rather than the proper name 'Jesus.' He illustrated the point by remarking upon the difference between 'Louis Philippe' and 'the King of the French,' showing that, five years previously, the phrase, 'King of the French' was properly used when applied to Louis Philippe; but a year later he was simply a private individual, living in England under the name of Louis Philippe. So that Paul, in the passage cited, stated the kingly element of Jesus. The preaching of Philip to the eunuch was also instanced as being limited to Jesus; but the statement of the eunuch's belief included the other element.

JOHN LEITCH submitted Acts ii. 20-38 as showing that men were saved without being called to believe that Christ was to sit upon the throne of David.

JAMES BANNERMAN adduced Acts xiii. to show, from Paul's address in the synagogue at Antioch, that the sure mercies of David formed part of the subject-matter of his discourse.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the 32nd verse referred exclusively to the resurrection of Christ, and that the following verse alluded to the same event.

WILLIAM ELLIS read 1 Cor. xvii. to show the promise made to David. The 55th chapter of Isaiah was also read in this connection.

The hour of adjournment (8.30) having come, it was agreed to adjourn the meeting until the following Sunday evening at six o'clock.

### Result of the Inquiries.

I am not aware that any detailed report of the meetings that followed this initiatory one has been preserved. It may be stated, however, that after mature deliberation, the first step in the inquiry brought it to this form: the early churches were composed of those who believed the gospel and were baptised. The conclusion thus arrived at suggested as the next question, 'What is the gospel?' This

was as deliberately examined, care being taken to ensure the correctness of every step, by ascertaining the precise meaning of the Scripture teaching and example. The disposition of every one seemed to be to learn the will of God; there was no one to take the lead in the inquiry—no one to domineer or be obstinate. What every one had to say was heard with attention, and no one seemed in a hurry to arrive at conclusions until they were inevitable. Singularly enough, also, there was a remarkable unanimity in the various conclusions arrived at. The result of this second inquiry was a very decided conviction that 'the gospel' and 'the things concerning the kingdom of God' were synonymous—that the one could not be believed without the other.

### The Observance of the Lord's Supper.

The continuance of these meetings for three months longer, was productive of a most excellent moral as well as intellectual discipline; and they were ultimately brought to a fitting conclusion by some inquiries into the proper manner of conducting church meetings, and particularly into the right method of observing the Lord's Supper. On this latter point it was established that this institution was a supper in honour and remembrance of an absent and dear Lord, victim, and looked-for Redeemer, and not a mere ritual ceremony, far less a sacrament; and that its observance—of which there was a somewhat full record in the first and some subsequent earlier instances—should be of that easy, natural, and affectionate character, which ought to characterise any festival or supper for similar purposes; also that it should be eaten in the evening.

### No Creed Adopted.

In connection with these inquiries, it should be stated that it was distinctly understood that no conclusion which might be come to should be deemed final or absolute, but that it should be quite competent, at any future time, to reconsider any point upon which a decision had been come

to, or any matter which had not been taken into consideration, and, upon sufficient cause being shown, to alter, amend, or vary it, as the circumstances might warrant. This understanding was deemed necessary, as there was a strong objection on the part of some to drawing up and adopting a 'creed,' which should be binding for all time to come.

**Resolution to Form a Church on 'The Gospel of the Kingdom' Basis.**

The second of the original questions—namely, 'Is there such a church in Edinburgh with which we may ally ourselves?' finding no affirmative answer, the alternative stated in the third question was resorted to, and it was therefore resolved to form a church after the style which seemed to be authorised in the Scriptures.

# THE EDINBURGH CHURCH.

### Invitation to Sympathisers.

Before actually carrying out the resolution thus deliberately arrived at, the persons so determining, about a dozen in number, deemed it advisable to put themselves in communication with the Free Communion Church which used to meet in the High Street, but which had only a month previously removed to the Odd Fellows' Hall, Rose Street. As I have already indicated, it was known that there were a number of persons who, although remaining members of this church, had come to know and believe the things of the kingdom, and were now dissatisfied with the antagonism between truth and error which had thus been engendered. The following letter was accordingly addressed to this church :—

*To the Congregation assembled in Odd Fellows' Hall, Rose Street.*

Edinburgh, 6th March, 1853.

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,—You are probably aware that a few of us have been conversing over the matters of Christian faith and church organisation this some time back, with a view to the establishment of a congregation of disciples on correct principles. We have now nearly terminated our preliminary interviews; but ere we make final arrangements, a few of us have deemed it advisable to inquire whether there could not be a coalition with you, hoping that the augmentation of numbers, as well as the union of disciples, may tend to the greater efficiency of any efforts for mutual edification and public enlightenment.

The point at which we have latterly arrived is this:—That, so far as we can judge, a restoration of the apostolic or primitive Christian doctrine and practice could only be properly effected by an imitation of them in their imitable points. This necessitates, among other things, the enforcement of that old adage—'they that gladly received the apostles' word * were baptised;' also that the apostles' word is defined as 'the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.'

* In the original of this letter, which I have in my possession, by a slip of the pen it has been written, 'apostles' *world*.'

Now, we simply ask whether you would be willing to meet with us to make final arrangements, understanding those things alluded to as fixed principles of organisation. If agreeable, will you therefore appoint one or two of your number to bear your message and meet with us to-night at six o'clock in the house of G. Macdougall, 13 Salisbury Street ?

I have received sanction from as many as I could conveniently see to indite this note. I hope its request will receive attention from you; and wishing you all joy and peace in believing, and a fulfilment of the things promised, I am,

Your friend and brother,

GEORGE DOWIE.

**Reception of the Invitation.**

I well remember what was the extraordinary effect produced by the reading of this letter in the Rose Street meeting. As I have just mentioned, for some time previously a very unsatisfactory state of things had existed, and several secessions had in consequence taken place. A number of the members had been baptised with a knowledge—more or less imperfect it may have been—of 'the things of the Kingdom,' yet still taking account of them; and latterly a feeling had been growing among them that a knowledge of the kingdom was necessary in order to a proper comprehension of the gospel. These members, in their hearts, welcomed the letter, as affording the hope that a church organisation on a more Scriptural basis might thus be obtained. There were other members, however, with whom the things of the kingdom found no favour, who wished to continue the 'free communion' basis on which the meeting had been originally constituted, and who looked with the utmost alarm upon the letter which was thus submitted to them. One of these—(Peter Marshall, father of Dr Marshall, Rector of Edinburgh High School)—spoke very strongly in condemnation of the action of the writer, characterising it as 'an attempt to rend asunder the body of Christ,' and warning the brethren very solemnly against giving any heed to it.

The feeling both for and against was so strong, that the church resolved not to comply with the request contained in the letter, to appoint one or two of their number to bear their message to the meeting in the evening; but it was left to those who thought proper to do so, to attend

the meeting for themselves. About a dozen, who had it in their power, attended; and at the conference which ensued, full explanations were mutually given and received, which were regarded as perfectly satisfactory by all parties. The making of final arrangements, however, was delayed until that day fortnight.

### A Dissentient's Protest.

It may well be imagined that the more staunch adherents of Campbellism in the South Bridge Hall meeting viewed with some anxiety the protracted inquiry which had just been brought to a close. Although, as the actual result, it robbed them of only three of their members, yet the prospect, at the outset, was sufficiently alarming, as a considerable number of the members of the Reformation Church had attended the inquiry in its early stage. One of the leading men in that meeting, in whose eyes Dr Thomas had found considerable favour,* who had been much interested in the inquiry, thinking that the conclusions which were being arrived at were extreme, was moved to write to the doctor, stating his objections to the very pronounced views held by him, and which were now being so heartily adopted by a number of persons in Edinburgh. The date of the epistle is just between that of the letter sent to the Rose Street meeting and the formal arrangements being made for the organisation of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It was not until the following month (April) that the letter, with Dr Thomas's pungent reply to it, appeared in the *Herald*, and they caused a great sensation among the members of the then newly formed church. I give both the dissentient's protest and the doctor's reply to it.

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* Dr Thomas, in publishing his correspondent's letter, did not print his name, but it was generally understood to have been written by Captain Symonds, who has already been mentioned as an occasional correspondent of the doctor's. The writer, I understand, was very displeased with the reply which Dr Thomas gave to his communication, and especially at being spoken of as 'one of these, who believes, but who struggles against obedience to the new faith'—(see page 111)—and I believe he had no more correspondence with the doctor after this.

## OBJECTIONS STATED.

'Did Philip preach ALL the things of the kingdom? The answer must be, No.—*Edinburgh Correspondent.*

'I have not shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God.'—*Paul to the Ephesians.*

DEAR BROTHER THOMAS,—What has tended greatly to deaden the interest felt in the *Herald's* exposition of the kingdom and age to come in Edinburgh, is, in my opinion, the position you have taken up in respect to the ground of a sinner's justification; the faith by which a sinner may be justified, &c. After much examination and mature reflection, I find myself unable to coincide with those views of the matter which you have expressed in the earlier sections of part second of *Elpis Israel*. Not being able to discuss this matter, I will content myself with noting down such brief reasons as occur to me at the present moment, for not adopting your views.

### The Things of the Kingdom.

The Lord Jesus, in his preachings, commonly, if not constantly, proposed himself—the man, the individual—as a guide, a protector, a leader, and a Saviour. In short, and irrespective of what he would do in future—as the object of faith. 'Come unto *me* all ye who are weary.' 'Ye will not come unto *me*.' 'I will draw all men unto *me*.' 'Believe in *me*.' Thus he showed that faith was a personal thing. In order to elicit this faith, it was necessary for sinners to know who Jesus was, and what was his character, his authority, and power. Now, this was what the apostles did. 'What we have seen, heard, and handled, we declare unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us.' Philip truly preached the things concerning the 'Kingdom of God;' but did he preach ALL the things? The answer must be, No. For primitive Christians of some years' standing had something to learn: (so Paul tells the Ephesians, Corinthians, Hebrews, Galatians, &c.) To my apprehension, the things which concern and regulate the conduct of men and women who have been called out of darkness into God's marvellous light—during their probation, &c.—are as much a part of the 'things of the kingdom,' as those which concern the future destiny of Israel, of Christ, or his saints, or of the political and dominant aspect of that kingdom.

### What is Meant by Faith in Jesus Christ?

My idea of 'faith' in Jesus Christ is, then, such, that my faith cannot be altered in character by any increase in my knowledge of what Jesus will hereafter do. Having chosen him for my 'portion for ever,' my choice remains unaltered, although his riches were proved to be even greater than they are. The knowledge of his future glory on earth certainly gives me additional motives for faithfulness. The language of faith is after this manner: 'Though the fields shall yield no meat, and the flock be cut off from the fold, yet will I rejoice in God.' 'Though all men forsake me, though death stare me in the face—yea, though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.'

### Secessions from the Churches.

You will be aware, of course, that secessions have taken place from some of the churches, owing, I believe, to differences on this point; and in

some cases, to the unwillingness of the church to hear the expositions of those who had received your views. I hope it may be to their advantage, but I fear not.

### Head versus Heart.

All who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, ought to keep together, and bear with each other's inequalities of intellectual power. Christianity is an affair more of the heart than the head. It seeks to engage the affections, and so win souls to Christ. 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' 'Ye will not come to me.' Paul says: 'They who had been aliens to God, hating Him, were reconciled by the death of Christ.' God seeks men's affections—men who will 'worship Him in spirit and in truth.' 'We love Him, because He first loved us.'

### Promises versus Deeds.

How did God manifest this love? Was it by His promises? Nay, but by His deeds. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' 'He who hath the Son, hath this life.' Therefore, in what has been done, lies apparently the 'converting' power, and in what is to be done, the strengthening and sustaining power.

### One King and One Kingdom.

Jesus, 'the Son of man,' a wanderer, with not a place to lay his head; and Jesus, the Son of man, seated on the throne of his glory, with all nations gathered before him, are one and the same being. Even so, to my apprehension, the Kingdom of God, in its planting, in its forming, in its probation: and the Kingdom of God, when it is manifested in its political dominion and glory, are one and the same dominion. As the 'things' connected with Jesus in humiliation, differ from the things concerning him when on the throne of his glory, so do the things concerning the kingdom, in its separate aspects, differ. The 'stone' laid in Zion—the tried, sure foundation stone—and the same stone, when it has become a great mountain and filled the whole earth, are one and the same 'kingdom.' It seems to me only a question of development, like the grain of mustard seed compared to the future tree. The 'stone' is, and has been long, in preparation.

### Concerning Periodicals.

Such are the ideas which I have obtained from the Scriptures. You will see, therefore, how it is that I am not a subscriber to the *Herald*.

You will be aware of the cessation of the *Gospel Banner*. It lingered on some months after A. Campbell denounced it. This denunciation was its death-blow. We are now (many of us) without a periodical, as the matter in the *Harbinger* is not to the taste of all. I would like a periodical that would take up a middle position between you and A. C. Fee both have excellencies, and, as I conceive, defects also.

I must now conclude, by wishing you health and peace from God our Father; and I am, dear brother, in the hope of seeing Jesus as he is, and of being like him, yours very faithfully,

* * *

Edinburgh, Scotland, March 13, 1853.

## OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

'There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.'—*Proverbs.*

### Sin and its Consequences.

That men are sinners, by nature and practice, is pretty generally admitted as an article of faith by all the sects of anti-Christendom. This admission brings the conclusion that they are therefore all under sentence of death; for 'the wages of sin is death.' Sin reigning in them, they are the slaves of sin, because they obey him. This obedience to sin is in consequence of the strong impulses of the flesh, unsubdued and unrestrained by the truth, understood and assuredly believed. Thus the understanding of sinners is darkened, and blindness pervades their hearts; and the consequence is that they 'are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.' 'Sinner,' then, is a term indicative of one who is a transgressor of the law of God; who refuses to submit to His commands, is ignorant of His truth, alienated from His life, and therefore under condemnation of death.

### The Necessity for Faith.

But one may be an enlightened sinner. Such a person is one who knows what is right, and still the wrong pursues. He acknowledges that thus and so is the truth, which enjoins such and such obedience; but he abstains from becoming the subject of it. He invents a refuge in which to hide himself from a literal conformity to the Word, vainly flattering his conscience, that if he abstain from immorality, profess friendship to God and His people, assent to a theory of truth in sincerity of mind, God will not be over-particular in the literal construction of His Word. Such a one forgets—if, indeed, he ever knew it—that 'God has magnified His Word above all His name.' He will therefore more readily pardon any offence than a slight upon, or want of conformity to, His Word. Men think God is such a one as themselves—that He thinks as little of His Word as they do of theirs. But no mistake is more fatal than this; for 'without faith it is impossible to please God;' and 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord;' and there is no holiness attainable except by faith, and through the faith in the obedience which it requires.

### The Ground of a Sinner's Justification.

But God and men are at variance on that point. Practically, these creatures of His power think He ought to account them holy upon principles approbated by the thinking of the flesh. Philoprogenitiveness attaches them to their offspring, as it does all other animals to theirs. Hence they will believe in no heavenly state hereafter which makes no provision for them. They think sincerity of mind in the belief of error ought to be accepted as an equivalent for the belief of the truth; judging thus because their feelings are so shocked at the idea of the few that will be saved by the obedience of faith. In all generations have God and His creatures been at issue on this point. He says, 'Believe and do the truth;' they say, 'Sincerely believe, and do what you think is true; and though

it may not really be so, you shall be saved.' Thus, God predicates salvation, justification, holiness, &c., on 'the obedience of faith:' while men inculcate sincerity of opinion as the panacea of their souls.

### Saint and Sinner.

This diversity between God and man is the source of that distinction that obtains in the world between true religion and superstition—saint and sinner. A saint is one who believes and does the truth with the docility and readiness of an obedient child. He is therefore styled a saint; that is, a separated or holy person. He is separated from sinners in the obedience of the truth, which unites him to the name of the Holy, through which he is sanctified. The saints are God's representatives in this evil world, who, having acknowledged God—or rather, being acknowledged by Him—are the pillar and support of His truth in His controversy with sinners. God has given them the Scriptures to wield in combat as the two-edged sword of their present warfare against 'reasonings and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God' therein revealed.

### The Mission of the Saints.

The odds is, therefore, *the saints against all the world*, which they overcome by their faith, preparatory to its subjection by the sword of judgment, which they lay hold of as a substitute for the Spirit's sword, when the time comes for them to possess the kingdom under the whole heaven for evermore. Into their hands God has committed His Word, in the absence of His Son, commanding that they 'contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.' They are to be lovingly intolerant of all principles nullifying the faith; for this faith is for the justification of sinners; and if they be unfaithful to their trust, how shall men attain to the life of God? If the saints make void the Word of God by tradition, what scope is there for the transition of sinners from death to life? Can the blind lead the blind and escape the ditch? When sinners undertake to teach sinners the way of salvation, we are reminded of one with a beam in his eye fumbling over his brother's to remove a mote.

### Antipathy to the Divine Order.

But confessedly ignorant though they be of Moses and the prophets, sinners generally are vastly wise in their own conceit. Though knowing little, or perhaps nothing, of the Scriptures, which can alone make wise unto salvation, they turn with contempt from everything incongruous to the thinking of sinful flesh. Sophistry is the 'logic' of the carnal mind, which is always ready with an apology for coming short of the divine law. It is willing to impose upon itself a burdensome ritual, and the necessity of doing some great thing, to recommend itself to the favour of the Most High—it will even be immersed and believe the gospel; but no, it will run the risk of eternal reprobation before it will adopt the divine order exhibited in the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus—believe the gospel and be baptised.

### Romanism and Protestantism alike Opposed to the True Faith.

Romanism is the mystery of iniquity—the sophistry of sin; and Protestantism in all its forms is that same sophistry attenuated to the rarest subtilties. Though antagonistic systems, yet are they essentially one and

indivisible in antagonism to the principles of the oracles of God. They are opposed to each other on 'the ground of a sinner's justification;' but they agree against God in repudiating 'the faith by which the sinner may be justified.' When Luther appeared, 'the ground of a sinner's justification' was the great question of debate between him and his brother Catholics. These contended for justification by works—such works as papists approve; while he advocated justification by faith without such works. Paul taught justification by faith, so that there seemed to be an agreement between him and Luther. The agreement, however, was only in appearance; for the subject matter of justifying faith was known only to Paul. Luther was as ignorant of it as the papists, and as they who glory in his leadership and name. He was neither a believer in the Gospel of the Kingdom, nor had he ever been baptised; his idea of justification was therefore restricted to faith in what our sky-kingdom friend at Bethany styles 'Sacred History'—the history of 'the man, Jesus, the individual, as a guide, a protector, a leader, and a Saviour.' He took no account of his message. Like modern Protestants, he would probably have rejected this, while professing faith in the messenger; not knowing that justification from all past sins is predicated on a love-working faith in both.

### What Faith Is.

Yes, as our correspondent says, 'faith is a personal thing;' but he errs in avowing only a part of the truth. Paul shows that it is something more. He says, 'it is the substance [or full assurance] of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen;' and when we inquire what the baptised Samaritans believed before their immersion, Luke replies, 'The things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Christ.' Our correspondent says Philip did not preach all the things of the kingdom. What did he omit? Certainly nothing that made the doctrine of the kingdom good news or gospel. If he left out anything, he certainly did not omit the kingdom itself; for the gospel preached in Jesus' name was the kingdom's gospel—omit the kingdom, and the gospel is no more.

### Edinburgh Fifty-Five Years Ago.

When I went to Edinburgh, I found the city asleep, dreaming over justification by faith in sacred history; and with all its wisdom, no further advanced in divine knowledge than when John Knox fulminated his anathemas against papistry from his domicile in the High Street. If there were any believed in the kingdom and throne of David restored, being the Kingdom of God promised to Jesus and the saints, of which the gospel treats, I have yet to learn it. There were doubtless some who believed in the restoration of the Jews, the personal return of Jesus, a millennium, &c.; but no one regarded them as essential. They might be believed or not without perilling a justification by faith: for it was not perceived, that to deny the restoration of the twelve tribes, or the personal return of Jesus in power and great glory, was to deny the Kingdom of God—it was not seen, that no restoration or return, there could be no kingdom.

### The Faith that Justifies.

It therefore startled many minds in their dreams to show that the gospel was concerning this kingdom, and that justification was predicated on believing that gospel in the name of Jesus as its king. Several who heard me had been immersed in ignorance of the nature, place, attributes,

and circumstances of that kingdom; and therefore had believed something else for gospel than the kingdom's gospel. This proved, and their supposed justification was shown to be null and void: for being destitute of the 'full assurance of things hoped for,' their immersion was not obedience to the faith which Paul preached. Nevertheless, they seem zealous to establish their own righteousness. They argue that their faith is as good without the kingdom as with it. They 'knew what Jesus was, and what was his character, his authority, and power.' But the devils believed this, and trembled; they were not therefore justified. . . .

### The Israelitish Hope.

True, Jesus said, 'Come unto *me*;' 'Believe in *me*;' 'This is the work of God, that ye should believe on *him* whom He hath sent;' and so forth. But this was not spoken to ignorant, misbelieving, or unbelieving Gentiles. It was spoken to Israelites, in whose ears Moses and the prophets were read every Sabbath-day, and whose 'hope' was the promise made of God to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: to which hope their twelve tribes, constantly serving God day and night, hope to attain. This hope, was the nation's hope, and had been planted in the national mind ineradicably by the sure word of the prophets—it was the hope of national felicity and glory under a son of David reigning for ever in Zion and Jerusalem. The hope was the kingdom restored again to Israel, and proclaimed by Jesus, the royal prophet to Israel, as approaching, when he preached 'the gospel of the Kingdom of God.' In announcing this, however, he also advanced his own personal claims to the throne of that kingdom as that Son of David who was to reign over the house of Jacob for ever. Thousands of Israel who believed the gospel of the kingdom, did not believe that its majesty was nigh, nor that Jesus was the king who was to bear it; therefore, said he, 'Ye will not come unto *me* that ye may have life.'

### The Gospel Preached to Gentiles.

But the Gentiles were in different case. Paul says that they had 'NO HOPE,' and were 'atheists'—*atheoi*—'in the world.' They had no interest or desire for God's Israelitish kingdom, and knew nothing about the 'glory, honour, and immortality' to be obtained in obtaining it. Jesus never preached to them at all; nor did the apostle ever address them as he did the Jews, who had hope towards God. The 'work of God' for Gentiles is that they believe the gospel of the kingdom, and on him whom He hath sent, and will send to sit on its throne to reign over all nations 'with a rod of iron,' in power and great glory. Israelites, uncontaminated by Gentilism, in ancient and modern times, believe in the kingdom, but deny that Jesus is its Lord and Christ; while the most pious of orthodox Gentiles—'evangelicals,' as they style themselves—confess with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Son of God, but at the same time hold in pious contempt 'THE THINGS OF THE KINGDOM' we have expressed. And this is not all. They are not only infidels in regard to the Kingdom of God, as set forth in the Scriptures of His prophets, but they despise, reject, and ridicule things concerning his name. Jesus offers BELIEVERS IN THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM 'repentance, remission of sins, and eternal life' in his name; and commands them to be baptised into the name of the Holy, that by baptismal union to that name, they may receive those necessary prerequisites to the possession of the kingdom. . . .

### Re-Immersion.

There were immersed people in Edinburgh, unacquainted with 'THE HOPE OF ISRAEL,' before I called attention to it. They were pious, and their faith simply historical, which the Bethanian philosophy teaches is the best kind of faith! They differed from him, however, in this, that when they heard and read, they examined in a Berean spirit, and acknowledged that the things presented were the truth. But even these were not all agreed. Some admitted that the kingdom we set forth, with its attributes, or things thereunto belonging, were the gospel hope—the one hope of the calling; others, that the things were true, but no part of the gospel, which they regarded as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for remission of sins to those who believed this. Practically, however, both classes agree in that they both assume that they were justified by faith before or in their immersion—(they are not agreed in the prepositions)—although that faith did not embrace 'the *hypostasis* [or full assurance] of things hoped for.' I say they assume their justification—inferring, as I do, that being honest men, they would not put off re-immersion, if they did not think they were justified by their lame faith about the time they were immersed. Those who admit that 'the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Christ' are the subject-matter of the gospel; and that when they were immersed they knew not the kingdom, and but little of the name as they ought; and believing that it is a love-working faith in the gospel that justifies the sinner—they are certainly at fault, and very inconsistent, in delaying their union to the name of the Holy Ones by a second immersion. It is the kind of faith a man has that characterises his immersion. If he have such a faith as Paul defines, then one immersion is enough, and ought never to be repeated on any pretence; but if he have a lame faith—or 'a vain faith,' rather—an immersion, no matter how oft repeated, is not 'the obedience of faith,' as preached and ministered by Paul. 'According to your faith be it unto you.' This is a rule given by Jesus. If, therefore, our faith be a belief of truth made void by human tradition, it is vain, and we get no good thing as the result. If we believe what is not promised, and cannot, will not exist, we shall get nothing, no matter how pious we may feel, or on what good terms we may be with our own selves; but if our faith embrace the unadulterated truth—'the things hoped for and unseen'—which God hath promised; justification unto life will then 'be unto' the immersed who have been subjected to an immersion subsequent to their acquisition of such a faith.

### Faith and Knowledge.

They are, indeed, consistent in rejecting re-immersion who, admitting the truth of 'the things,' yet say, it is of no consequence whether you believe them or not. They have compressed their faith into a nutshell, although in the Scriptures the truth is found pervading the whole Bible. With them this has no significance; for being minute philosophers, their anxiety is to discover how little knowledge is absolutely necessary for getting into heaven with the skin of their teeth! But in this they are not wise. The character of a man's faith is altered by the quantity and quality of his knowledge. If a man be acquainted only with what is past, his knowledge is small in quantity and not of the right quality for justification by faith. His faith is of a historical character—mere sacred history—and devoid of doctrine. Such a faith is not justifying. If another be acquainted with the past, understand the mystery or doctrine of its incidents, and be familiar with what God has promised concerning

His kingdom and the age to come, the quantity and quality of his knowledge is altered, and the character of his faith is relatively changed. It is justifying. The eyes of his understanding are opened, and, like Abraham, he can see afar off. We may choose Christ, but he may not choose us. Our election turns not upon our choice, but upon his. He chooses us through a belief of the truth, the unadulterated truth; men choose him by believing what suits them, and rejecting the rest. Such may choose Jesus as their 'portion for ever,' but they will assuredly have no portion in his joy.

### Heart versus Head.

It is a mistake to say that 'Christianity is an affair *more* of the heart than of the head.' Paul was sent to the Gentiles 'to open their blind eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.' This was an affair of the head, without which the heart could not be touched. God has ordered His servants to be *sealed in the forehead*, which is the seat of intellect. They who are not sealed there do not belong to Him. A pious heart, without due intelligence, is an unrenewed heart, and always ready to apologise for disobedience and ignorance, which, Paul says, 'alienates from the life of God.' The heart of ignorance, however pious in feeling, is never right with God; because it is not 'turned from darkness to light,' and consequently not to Him in whom is no darkness at all. When the forehead is sealed, the heart responds, and the man's faith works by love to the fulfilling of the truth.

### The 'Herald' not Appreciated.

From the foregoing letter of my highly esteemed friend, it appears, that if the *Herald* is to be popular in Edinburgh, it must assume more compromising ground in regard to a sinner's justification. Suppose it did, WOULD THAT ALTER THE FACT? If the *Herald* accommodated the truth to the taste of its editor's personal friends, WOULD THAT CONVERT THEIR BELIEF IN SACRED HISTORY INTO JUSTIFYING FAITH? It might make them more comfortable when they happened to read it; it would disturb their consciences less; BUT IT WOULD NOT ALTER THE IMMUTABLE FIAT OF HEAVEN.

### No Compromise!

No! when the *Herald's* subscription list is reduced to such a few that its existence can only be perpetuated by heralding forth a system in accordance with 'the thinking of the flesh,' its editor will lay down his pen, and write no more. **Better far break granite on the roadside for a crust of bread, than to garble God's truth to please one's friends, or to propitiate the foe.** The *Herald* takes its stand on 'the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus;' in THEIR LETTER, SPIRIT, AND ORDER, that '*he who believes the gospel and is baptised, shall be saved; and he that* BELIEVES NOT *shall be condemned*'—(Mark xvi. 15, 16). When the Samaritans and others believed that gospel, Luke says 'they believed the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus the Christ.' Believing these things, he adds, 'they were baptised, both men and women.' Hence, the words of Jesus, historically defined by Luke, read thus: 'He that believes the things of the Kingdom of God, and of my name as Jesus the Christ, and is baptised, SHALL BE SAVED; and he that believes them not SHALL BE CONDEMNED.' This is my position—who is general enough to turn it?

### The Divine Order.

The order is—FIRST, understand the word of the kingdom and name; THEN, believe it; NEXT, obey it in baptism. Who can improve this arrangement? Nay, who has any right to alter it? Or who, but one whose heart is not subdued by the truth, dare dispute against it? People of this class would have it thus: FIRST, believe on Jesus; NEXT, be immersed; AFTERWARDS, understand, perhaps, the word of the kingdom. Seek, say they in effect, righteousness, or remission of sins, first: and then the Kingdom of God. But Jesus himself reverses this dictum, and exhorts us to 'SEEK FIRST the Kingdom of God;' because no man can be the subject of 'His righteousness,' or justification, who has not found the kingdom: the righteousness being for those who believe what He has promised concerning it. This is the *Herald's* 'defect'—the head and front of its offending. It is too adherent to the letter, and therefore spirit, of the Bible, to suit the vain philosophy of a sceptical and Laodicean generation. But this we consider as an excellency, which will be duly appreciated by all who prefer honesty of purpose and the simplicity of truth, to the double-minded latitudinarianism of the age. We go for our friends; but also for the truth before them all.*

### The Reception of Dr Thomas's Article.

It is anticipating events a little, but it may here be stated, that the number of the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, containing the foregoing letter, with its pungent reply, came to hand a week or two after the Edinburgh Church had been formally constituted; and it is refreshing, at this distance of time, to call to mind the pleasurable thrill of excitement which their appearance caused in the little community so recently banded together by the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. O how their hearts burned within them as they perused this able defence of the position they had just assumed! If any lingering doubt had remained in any mind as to the perfect propriety of the solemn step which had been taken, it was thoroughly dispelled by the doctor's trenchant vindication. At that time, comparatively few copies of the *Herald* came to Edinburgh, and usually several persons clubbed together for a copy among them. The remarkable article was read and re-read, intensely appreciated, and approvingly commented upon at numerous deeply interested fireside gatherings, where all—sisters as well as brethren—were free to express themselves respecting it; and it was

**Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 84-90.

unanimously agreed that no more complete justification could be given of the action of the twenty-three persons who originally formed the Edinburgh Church. It greatly confirmed the faith of all, and stimulated every one to 'hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end'—(Heb. iii. 6). The latter part of the doctor's reply was held in special admiration, particularly the sentence I have printed in black Gothic type, and that in which he boldly declares: 'This is my position—who is general enough to turn it?' The challenge here given has never, so far as I am aware, been accepted; and even in these latter days, when there is such a strong disposition to 'remove the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set'—(Prov. xxii. 28)—nothing has been advanced which has at all turned the position—rather the reverse.

## JAMES CAMERON'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH 'THE CHRISTIAN NEWS.'

Before resuming the record of the proceedings which resulted in the formation of the Edinburgh Church, it may be as well to insert here a correspondence which James Cameron had with *The Christian News*, then the organ of the Morisonian body, published in Glasgow, on the gospel of the kingdom, and which should have appeared earlier in this narrative. It is another instance of the indefatigable manner in which this now veteran pioneer of the one faith and hope, at the time when he was unconnected with any meeting, was ever upon the alert to seize upon, and even to create, opportunities for presenting the claims of the despised gospel of the kingdom upon public attention. Although over fourscore years of age, James Cameron is as keen and active with his pen as ever, and as resolutely set for the defence of the one faith as he was in more youthful days. The correspondence, which explains itself, was published in the *Herald* by Dr Thomas, who introduced it to his readers with the following commendatory remarks respecting the writer:—

The following correspondence appeared in a paper published in Manchester, England, styled *The Truth Promoter*. 'J. C., Jun.,' I suspect, is one of our friends in Edinburgh, named James Cameron, a communication from whom will be found in No. 8. The reader will perceive how shy the editor of *The Christian News* is of a close examination of the gospel. This is characteristic of all errorists near and afar off. Being ignorant of it, they prefer rather to eulogise it as a glorious mystery than to attempt to define it in detail. J. C., Jun., has proved at once his own intelligence and the Protestant Jesuitism and timidity of *The Christian News*.

The following is the correspondence under the caption of

**'Life or Death—The Gospel Distinguished.'**

*To the Editor of 'The Truth Promoter.'*

Edinburgh, July, 1852.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The following letter was sent to the editor of *The Christian News* for insertion, but was declined, for reasons which I consider very inconclusive. Considering the almost unlimited liberty of expression allowed on 'Election,' 'Predestination,' and kindred topics, the editor's aversion to admit the question, 'What is the Gospel?' tends to confirm me in the views I have expressed in the letter. Presuming on your impartiality in conducting *The Truth Promoter*, I take the liberty of requesting you to insert it, along with the correspondence to which it gave rise, inviting you, or any of your correspondents, to put it to the test of 'the law and the testimony,' feeling assured that truth, on whatever side it lies, can never be injured by free investigation.

I remain, yours faithfully,

J. C., Jun.

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*To the Editor of 'The Christian News.'*

Edinburgh, 7th June, 1852.

DEAR SIR,—In the number of your paper for June 3, I observe an article entitled 'Life or Death—The Gospel Distinguished.' The writer, speaking of the gospel, says: 'There is one fact in that word, and but one work in all that God has done, the knowledge of which can give peace and safety to the soul of man. The statement of this ONE FACT is THE GOSPEL.' The one fact here referred is stated to be (in substance) that a sacrifice has been offered by Jesus, and accepted by God, for the sins of every man. Now, while believing and rejoicing in this as a fact, it does not appear to me that the limiting of the gospel to this fact is in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. I am desirous of being put right, if wrong, and therefore take the liberty of shortly stating some of the reasons which lead me to this conclusion.

1st. The first reason is, that the subject-matter of the gospel consists partly of accomplished facts and partly of promises which have not yet become facts; whereas, in the article alluded to, the gospel is stated to consist of a past event. The subject-matter of the gospel, when preached to Abraham in these words, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed'—(Gal.

iii. 8)—was entirely future; and at this day, the blessedness of the nations through Abraham is as much a thing of the future as it was in the days of Abraham, although, in point of time, nearer its accomplishment.

2nd. Paul, in preaching the gospel, was brought before Agrippa, and distinctly brought out the future element of the gospel when he said, 'I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers,' &c.—(Acts xxvi. 6). Paul was not judged for his belief in the past fulfilment of a promise, but for the 'hope' of a promise the fulfilment of which was yet future.

3rd. The faith of the gospel is defined by Paul as having a distinct reference to the future—'Now, faith is the substance—[or *confidence*, margin]—of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.' This definition of gospel faith, having for its object 'things hoped for,' appears to me to necessitate the idea of an element of the gospel which was then, and of course yet, in the future.

4th. When Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth, it is testified that he opened the Book and found it written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. . . . And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' And immediately afterward he went to Capernaum, where the people 'stayed him that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent'—(Luke iv. 18, 42, 43).

From these passages it appears to me, that being 'anointed to preach the gospel' was capable of being expressed by the language, 'I am sent to preach the Kingdom of God.' This appears to include something more than the one fact of sacrifice or propitiation. What was one of the results of this preaching of the gospel or Kingdom of God? Luke testifies that 'Jesus added, and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said, therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return'—(Luke xix. 11). His preaching seems thus to have had a reference to Jerusalem, when it should 'cease to be trodden down of the Gentiles, when the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled'—(Luke xxiv. 24). The effect of which was, that he being nigh to Jerusalem, the Jews expected that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear, thus showing their slowness of heart to believe *all* that the prophets had spoken—namely, 'the sufferings of Christ, as well as the glory that should follow'—(verse 25). 'Jesus sent the apostles to *preach the Kingdom of God*. . . . And they went through the towns *preaching the gospel* and healing everywhere'—(Luke ix. 2, 6).

After the day of Pentecost, the apostles preached the same gospel. 'Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. . . . And when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God AND the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women'—(Acts viii. 5, 12). When Paul was at Ephesus, 'He went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God'—(Acts xix. 8). That Paul considered the Kingdom of God and the gospel convertible terms, may be seen from Acts xx. 24, 25: 'The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the *gospel* of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone *preaching the Kingdom of God* shall see my face no more.' Also Acts xxviii. 23: 'He expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus.' Verses 30, 31: 'Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house. . . . Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching

these things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.' That the kingdom Paul thus preached constituted the future element of the gospel seems to me plain, from the passag (already quoted) in Luke xix. 11: 'A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.' Verse 15: 'When he was returned, having received the kingdom,' he proceeded to place his faithful servants over the cities, as a reward of their faithfulness. Compare this with Daniel vii. 13, 14, where the return of the Son of Man is predicted: 'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven. . . . And there was *given* him dominion, and glory, and a *kingdom*,' &c.

It may be objected, that Paul's definition of the gospel in his epistle to the Corinthians excludes this element of it. This is by no means the case. Paul there declares the gospel to be—'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,' &c.—(1 Cor. xv. 4). What does Paul mean when he says, 'CHRIST died for our sins?' What Paul preached at Corinth is summed up by the sacred historian Luke, in Acts xviii. 5 thus: 'Paul testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.' This was the point which the Jews denied. They knew at least in part the character which the Messiah of their prophets was to sustain. He is called by Gabriel, in Daniel ix. 15, 'Messiah the Prince.' The Jewish high priests understood distinctly this part of his character when they said, 'Let Christ, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe'—(Mark xv. 32). The approved confession of the guileless Nathanael is perhaps still more valuable: 'Philip findeth Nathanel, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets did write. Nathanael saith unto Jesus, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.' Jesus distinctly commended Nathanael in his reply in the next verse—(John i. 45, 49). The words of Paul would thus have been understood by Nathanael, Christ the King of Israel died for our sins, &c. In this passage, then, the Kingdom of God is not omitted—it is a concise statement of the gospel which Paul preached, not only at Corinth, but at Ephesus, and wherever he proclaimed the glad tidings.

Your inserting these remarks will oblige,

Sir, yours faithfully,

J. C., Jun.

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*Notice to Correspondents in 'Christian News' of June 27.*

J. C. J. has been perused. The writer, whose view he opposes, would quite readily admit that all good news connected with the dispensation of grace are *of the gospel*, but he was treating of the gospel which a sinner has to believe in order to his justification. Hence we think the article sent ill-judged and unnecessary.

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*To the Editor of 'The Christian News.'*

Edinburgh, 18th June, 1852.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry that you consider the article I sent you, ill-judged and unnecessary, and that because of a distinction which you make between what is 'the gospel,' and what is 'of the gospel.' The very reason for which I took the liberty of troubling you was, that there is no such distinction hinted at in the passages I adduced. I humbly think,

therefore, with all deference, that my remarks were well-judged and not unnecessary, especially as no reason has been given why such a distinction should be admitted. I therefore wish it to be understood, that I employed the phrase, 'the gospel,' precisely as you define it—namely, that which a sinner has to believe in order to his justification; that gospel of which Paul declares, 'though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed:' that gospel of which the Messiah himself said: 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations'—(Matthew xxiv. 14)—a consummation which Paul testified had been accomplished concerning the gospel he preached—'the word of the truth of the gospel which is come unto you, as it is in all the world;' 'the gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven'—(Col. i. 5, 6, 23). Should you still decline to insert the article for the above, or for any other reason, I have only to request you to take up the passages I adduced in it, stating in your own way my views of them, and what you consider their correct teaching. Having no other object in view than what I give you full credit for—namely, the furtherance of truth—I trust you will do justice for the truth's sake.

I remain, yours faithfully,

J. C., Jun.

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*Notice to Correspondents in 'Christian News' of June 24, in reply to above.*

J. C. J.—We have perused his letter, and see no reason to alter our opinion already expressed. This only would we say, that no man who knows the gospel, in bringing it before a sinner, would deem it necessary to expound to him any or all the passages which J. C. quotes in his first letter; he would regard it as enough to put him in possession of the great master truth for the salvation of sinners, satisfied that, this received, a way is immediately opened in his understanding and heart for the reception of all gospel truths.

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*To the Editor of 'The Christian News.'*

Edinburgh, 29th June, 1852.

Dear Sir,—I have read in your Notice to Correspondents, your answer to my letter of June 18; but so far from finding in it a reason for your decision, I find in it the best of all reasons why you should have inserted my first letter. The language you employ differs materially from that employed in the article entitled 'The Gospel Distinguished.' In that article, one fact was singled out as 'the gospel,' while you now distinctly class that one fact, among other gospel truths, as that truth which has first to be preached to a sinner. Your qualification of it as a masterly truth does not, in my view, materially alter the case. It simply amounts to this, that an important fact connected with the gospel is *first* to be preached to sinners. This differs so much from 'The Gospel Distinguished' that I will content myself with what is stated above, only adding, in taking leave of the subject, that, considering the freedom of expression which, in matters 'of the gospel,' you allow in your paper, I am not a little disappointed that you seem to be so averse to that freedom when the question is, 'What is the Gospel?' Paul determined not to know any

thing among the Corinthians 'save Jesus Christ *and* him crucified.' Here is a distinction between the person and his work. Paul must have known Jesus Christ as the King of Israel, as well as the Priest and Prophet predicted by the prophets. Christ himself, in preaching the Kingdom of God, distinctly allowed its importance as part of the gospel, when he said, 'Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein'—(Mark x. 15).

I remain, yours faithfully,

J. C., Jun.

There was no response to the above in the paper for 1st July.*

### Another Rejected Communication.

The mention of the *Truth Promoter*, in connection with its insertion of a correspondence that had been rejected in another publication, reminds me that its editor had previously done me the honour of declining insertion to a communication I sent to him upon the same important topic. It was my first attempt at writing for the press, and, like many other first productions, was not deemed suitable for appearing in print. It is not considered more worthy of that honour after the lapse of upwards of fifty years; but I give it here merely to show the light in which the gospel had come to be regarded by the writer in the beginning of the year 1852.

### The Gospel Preached by Christ and his Apostles.

We shall introduce this subject to our readers by making two assertions—namely,

I. *Negatively*, that the preaching of Christ and his apostles, prior to the death of Christ, was not about his death and resurrection.

II. *Affirmatively*, that it was about the Kingdom of God.

We shall now attempt to prove these assertions. And first, that Christ and his apostles did not preach to the people about the death of Jesus. A strong presumption against such a supposition is the fact that we have no mention, in any of the gospels, of them doing so. A conclusive evidence, however, is the fact that the apostles themselves were ignorant that such an event was to happen. When Christ first intimated to his apostles—and this was *after* he had sent out the twelve and the seventy to preach—that he should suffer death, they would scarcely credit the statement. Peter was deeply incensed when he said so, and rebuked him for it. 'From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Far be it from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 260 ff.

things that be of God, but those that be of men'—(Matt. xvi. 21–23). Mark also informs us that this intelligence was received by the twelve with great surprise—(Mark viii. 31–33; ix. 31, 32; x. 32–34)—which Luke also confirms, and adds that 'they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken'—(Luke xviii. 34). And John writes much the same thing.

Now, if the apostles were ignorant that Jesus was to be crucified, and that he was to rise again the third day, how could they tell the people about his death and resurrection? It was not till after they had been sent out by Jesus to preach the gospel, and had returned from having accomplished their mission, that our Lord made them aware that he should suffer death. And even when he did inform them, we are told that 'they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him'—(Mark ix. 32). And, moreover, after he had suffered death, they could scarcely believe it, and even began to doubt that he was really the Christ, and that he should rise again from the dead. As two of them walked to Emmaus, they expressed their surprise at the event, and said: 'We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel; and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done'—(Luke xxiv. 21). We do not say but that they might have known these things were to take place. Doubtless they were *culpably ignorant of them, as they might have read about them in the prophets.* But that is immaterial: they *were* ignorant of the fact that Jesus should be crucified, and consequently could not proclaim it to the people.

We shall now endeavour to show that it was the Kingdom of God that Christ and his apostles preached. That which Christ personally proclaimed to the Jews is termed in some places 'gospel' or 'glad tidings:' and these glad tidings, we also learn, were concerning 'the Kingdom of God.' In the first intimation we have of his public teaching, we are told that he preached 'the Gospel of the Kingdom of God'—(Mark i. 14). He was sent to do this. 'I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities, for therefore am I sent'—(Luke iv. 43). And Matthew says: 'Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people'—(Matt. iv. 23). When Christ sent out the twelve, their commission was to preach 'the Kingdom of God'—(Luke ix. 2). Such was also the commission of the seventy—(Luke x. 9). And in the case of the man who wished to follow our Saviour, but wanted first to go and bury his father, our Lord's answer was: 'Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God'—(Luke ix. 60).

The gospel that is almost universally preached at the present day is confined exclusively to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Why such exclusion? This, we have seen, was not what Jesus and his apostles preached; yet they 'preached the gospel.' 'The things concerning the Kingdom of God,' therefore, are as essentially part of the gospel as are the death and resurrection of our Saviour. The 'gospel' and the 'Kingdom of God' are synonymous terms. To preach the one is to preach the other. Hence we read that Christ sent his twelve apostles 'to preach the Kingdom of God'—(Luke ix. 2): and that 'they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere'—(verse 6).

OMEGA.

In a private note which I sent along with the article, I requested that, if not inserted, it might be returned to

me, a stamped and addressed envelope being enclosed for the purpose. In a few days, accordingly, back it came to me with the following intimation of declinature appended to it in John Bowes's handwriting :—

1 Bold Street, Upper Moss Lane, Manchester,
10/1/52.

As one article has already appeared on this subject in *The Truth Promoter*, and as there is nothing so remarkable in this as to call for its insertion, it is declined with thanks.—EDITOR.

### A Meeting of Believers Organised.

On March 20, 1853, the consideration of the letter that had been sent to the Rose Street meeting was resumed in that meeting. John Forman, Andrew Tait, Thomas Lawrie, William Wilson, and I successively expressed our approval of the letter having been sent, and intimated our withdrawal from the church. A number of others subsequently decided to leave, although not stating so at the time. The number who left, in fact, was so large, that in a week or two afterwards the Rose Street meeting had to be discontinued.

### The Original Members.

The persons who thus agreed to meet as a church, and who composed the original members, were as follows :—

FROM THE MEETING IN ODD FELLOWS' HALL.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mrs Forman. | Thomas Lawrie. | Grierson G. Mitchell. |
| Andrew Tait. | James Lawrie. | Elizabeth Renwick. |
| Mrs Tait. | William Norrie. | Margaret Steel. |
| Mrs Wilson. | Agnes Norrie. | Susan Mark. |
| William Wilson. | John C. Forman. | |

FROM THE SOUTH BRIDGE HALL MEETING.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| George Dowie. | Gilbert Macdougall. | James Watson. |

UNCONNECTED WITH ANY MEETING.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| James Bannerman. | Richard Cameron. | William Ellis. |
| Mrs Bannerman. | Thomas Wilson. | |
| James Cameron. | Henry Wilson. | |

# RE-IMMERSION.

### Rendering the Obedience of Faith.

During the ensuing week, James Bannerman, George Dowie, Gilbert Macdougall, and James Watson, having become convinced that their former baptism was illegitimate, having been attended to in ignorance of the gospel, resolved to save themselves from the danger of such an anomalous position, by renewing their arrangements with God after the fashion He has required. These four brethren, having intelligently confessed their belief in the things of the Kingdom of God, were baptised in the South Bridge Hall, by James Cameron, on the evening of Monday, March 21.

### Opposition to Re-Immersion.

In addition to these cases of re-immersion in Edinburgh, there had also been a number, under very similar circumstances, in Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, and other places. These re-immersions had in some instances been attended or followed by the breaking up of meetings which had been based upon free communion or Campbellite principles. This was very annoying to Mr John Bowes, completely undoing, as it did, the work which he so much prided himself upon having accomplished. He therefore felt impelled to make a strong protest against what appeared to be a growing practice among 'the followers of Dr Thomas,' and this attack he published in his magazine, the *Truth Promoter*. I give his protest against re-immersion, and also its vindication by Dr Thomas, both as appearing in the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*.



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## RE-IMMERSION DENOUNCED.

Some years ago, Mr Thomas, a surgeon or doctor, was associated with Mr Alexander Campbell of America, in preaching the peculiar views of that talented discussionist. Three or four years ago, Dr Thomas came to England, having previously withdrawn from A. Campbell. He has since made havoc of some of the churches in Scotland, which identified themselves with his former fellow-labourer. As I have met with the followers of Dr Thomas nowhere but in Scotland, my remarks must be understood to apply to them.

### A Church Split into Three Parts.

In giving the case of a single church, I shall be able both to say all I wish on the subject, and warn my readers, from the Scriptures, against the deplorable errors into which they have fallen. In one large city in the North, twelve months ago, a church existed, which numbered about sixty members. When some of them discovered that, although they had been all baptised, yet they required *to be baptised* over again *for the kingdom*. Accordingly, some got baptised over again, because their previous baptisms were regarded as worthless. The natural result was, that they required all to be baptised for the kingdom; but some were unwilling to follow their dictation, and the result is, that for this and other causes, the young church drawn together by Dr Thomas's views is split into three parts.

### Three Baptisms instead of One.

From the first they could not allow any child of God to break bread with them who was not immersed. But, when they had been immersed, was not this enough? Not for some of them. Even years ago, it was deemed requisite to be immersed for the remission of sin in their view of it. This stood for a time only; for after the arrival of the American teacher, every other baptism was discarded but baptism into the kingdom. So that some of them have had three baptisms, instead of one—namely, baptism in the name of 'the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:' baptism for remission of sin; and baptism into the kingdom. Whereas the Word of God says: 'One



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Lord, one faith, one immersion'—not three immersions—(Eph. iv. 5). To my mind, baptism is a most solemn dedication of the whole man to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When the believer is dead to sin, and to the world, then is he buried with Christ by immersion—(Rom. vi. 1–4). And surely those who thus trifle with God's one institution, as though they could die to sin and the world three times, and need as many burials, place themselves in a position as solemn as it is deplorable, and on their part unstable and worse than childish. Their plea is, that they did not understand the kingdom when they were previously immersed, and that they do now.

**Man's Baptism versus God's.**

1. Admit that their views are now Scriptural on the kingdom—but in some respects, soon to be noticed, they are not. Yet so far as they expect the restoration of Israel, and the Lord Jesus to reign on the earth, they are. What, then—are we always to be immersed over again every time we get more light on God's precious truth? Certainly not. The first Christians were constantly making advances in their knowledge; but 'one immersion,' in the name of Jesus, served them; while those baptised with John's baptism were baptised into the name of Jesus when they believed on him—(Acts xix. 3–5). When once they were baptised into the Three-one God, we never hear of a second baptism. The new converts on Pentecost, at Jerusalem, and at Philippi, had learned enough in a few hours to be immersed; but they had many great truths to learn after baptism, yet their 'one immersion' stood for all time. Let us thankfully take from God any teaching that He may give us, but let not man's baptism set aside God's.

**Baptism into the Kingdom.**

2. For what is the baptism into the kingdom but a conceit of Dr Thomas, utterly without foundation in Scripture? I call on him or his admirers to bring a single command or example for baptising any one into the kingdom. I believe none can be produced. Baptism into the kingdom is Dr Thomas's institution, not Jesus Christ's—well worthy of a man wishing to be the leader of a party, but unworthy of any disciple of Christ.

### A Kingdom which has No Existence.

3. Beside, how can they be baptised into a kingdom which, according to them, is not yet set up? In this view also they are in the dark. The kingdom of Christ is set up over his church, although it is not extended to the whole earth. Hence Paul addressed the church at Colosse thus: 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son'—(Col. i. 13). The apostle does not say '*will* translate us,' but '*hath* translated us;'—the work was already done. Will these over-confident followers of Dr Thomas tell us how the Colossians could be translated into a kingdom which had no existence? How taught the King himself? 'But rather seek ye the Kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you'—(Luke xii. 32). What kingdom was this? The same as we read of in Luke xvii. 21: 'Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for behold the Kingdom of God is within you' (margin, 'among you.') Paul thus speaks of it: 'For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost'—(Rom. iv. 17). In the same sense the Kingdom of God is used in many other parts of Scripture, such as the following:—Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17; xi. 12; xii. 28; and about twelve times in the xiii. chapter, and in Matt. xxiii. 13. Christ was given to be 'the head over all to the church'—(Eph. i. 22). 'Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be subject unto their own husbands in everything'—(Eph. v. 23, 24).

### An Absurd Doctrine.

But if Christ is not a king now, he has no right to give law, and his church is under no obligation to obey his commands at all; and thus the Christian's subjection to Christ is set aside by this new, incoherent, and absurd doctrine. Every true Christian is now in the kingdom of Christ; the kingdoms of this world are not yet subdued to him, but they will be when he comes.

### Dr Thomas's Views Refuted.

I will not deny Christ's coming to reign on the earth, as my 'Six Lectures on the Lord's Second Coming' testify. They may be seen in vol. i., Nos. 33, 34, 35; vol.

ii., Nos. 4, 11, and 20. Dr Thomas's views of the sleeping of the soul after death, or its extinction until the resurrection, are sufficiently refuted in my 'Two Lectures on the Immortality of the Soul, or Mind of Man, proved from Reason and Scripture,' and may be found in this volume, Nos. 2 and 3. So that I am not aware of any important view which he holds different from what is taught in this periodical which I have not refuted.

### The Spirit in which Dr Thomas Writes.

Before closing, I would call attention to the spirit in which he writes. It may be consistent with his system to denounce all as 'aliens' and condemned who reject his peculiar views; but that taught by the Lord Jesus is love, leading us to 'salute every saint in Christ Jesus.' No system can be of God which infuses into the church hatred and schism. What can be more schismatical than first to sit in communion with those baptised, and then when some get 'baptised into the kingdom,' to drive the rest away? Consistent this may be, because, if their own previous baptism was useless—and this they confess in re-baptism—then consistency requires that they should declare baptism in all cases to be no baptism, if it is not baptism into the kingdom; and then who can tell, but some new view may lead them to a fourth baptism, when the first three may also be declared useless?

### Believers or Hypocrites.

Let me ask them, when you were baptised at first, were you believers or hypocrites? If the former, you were baptised Scripturally; if the latter, your baptism was worth nothing. I should never hesitate to immerse a believer who had been either sprinkled or immersed before faith; but I should never immerse any one who had been immersed before, being at the time a believer. But if it is said, 'I did not believe the Gospel of the Kingdom before,' I should think you did, although you did not expect the kingdom quite so soon as now. At least, before I saw the Lord's coming to be pre-millennial, I believed in his coming, and in the restoration of Israel, and in his kingdom filling the whole earth after the millennium, and I believe thousands do the same; therefore, had we been baptised over again, it would not have been into the kingdom that we believed before, but into a

particular time of the kingdom! To such a trifle as this, is Dr Thomas's baptism reduced. It is a baptism of signs and seasons. If any one, when immersed, believed in his own sinfulness, in the love of God in giving the Lord Jesus to die in order to put away sin, in his resurrection, and that forgiveness, and eternal life, freely given of God, and if he enjoyed them, and took Christ as his Saviour, let nothing ever induce him to renounce these precious truths.—*Truth Promoter.*

## RE-IMMERSION DEFENDED.

The article entitled 'Dr Thomas and his Followers' is taken from a paper styled *The Truth Promoter*, printed by the editor, Mr John Bowes, at Cheltenham, England. The number before me is the second I have seen from Mr Bowes' press. The paper appears to be worth reading, and is calculated, I daresay, to promote truth to some extent, though, in my judgment, short of the limit defined by the Scriptures. The article before us is not, I suspect, a fair specimen; for the truth has been rather sacrificed than promoted by its strictures. Mr Bowes, I suppose, is the writer; and he has no doubt written his honest convictions of the reality. He errs, however, in his statements. It would be remarkable, indeed, if he did not, seeing that he is personally unacquainted with my views.

### Baptism and 'Re-Baptism.'

In reciting the case of a church 'in one large city of the North,' I suppose he refers to Glasgow, and to the church there organised some time after my return to America. He says, they had all been immersed, but that some of them afterwards discovered that they had not been baptised for the kingdom, and therefore submitted themselves to what he styles 're-baptism.' This very much astonishes Mr Bowes, though he says, 'I should never hesitate to immerse a believer who had been either sprinkled or immersed *before faith*.' Speaking for myself, I would say to Mr Bowes, this is precisely the ground I occupy. Over and over again have I reiterated that immersion is of no value unless the subject immersed previously believe the truth. How can the apostle's saying, 'Ye have purified your souls in the obedience of the truth,' be Scripturally applied to an immersed religionist who, before his immersion, was ignorant of the truth? He could not obey what he knew nothing about.

### The Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

O, but, says Mr Bowes, 'I should think your followers did believe the Gospel of the Kingdom when they were first immersed.' But of what account is Mr Bowes' 'think-so' in opposition to their affirmative to the contrary? 'I think they did,' says he, 'although they did not expect the kingdom quite so soon as they do now.' When Mr Bowes believed what he called the truth at the time of his immersion, he held to *a* coming of Jesus, *a* restoration of Israel, and Messiah's kingdom filling the whole earth, *after* the millennium; all of which he now believes to be of pre-millennial accomplishment. I am glad he believes so much of the truth now—a confession, however, which convicts him of not having believed the truth at his immersion; a condemnation of himself to which I readily agree, for there is no coming of Jesus, nor restoration of Israel, nor filling the whole earth with Messiah's priestly kingdom, after the thousand years are passed. For a man to believe there is, is to convict him of ignorance of the Gospel of the Kingdom which pertains to the thousand years. A gospel of a post-millennial kingdom is not the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

### The Real Kingdom.

This is the essential difference between Mr Bowes' pre-immersional faith and that of my Glasgow friends who were 'baptised for the kingdom.' It is not a question of 'a particular time,' as he supposes. Mr Bowes' kingdom is a nonentity—a Utopia unpromised in the Word of God; while that they look for has already existed once in Israel's land; and, as he now admits, is destined to be restored under a new and better covenant. Their baptism is not predicated on the belief of the near or far-off establishment of the kingdom, but on the 'the things of the Kingdom of God and name of Jesus' themselves. Believing that there will be a kingdom in some sense, is not believing in *the* kingdom *covenanted* of God. No matter how many kingdoms we believe in, if we do not believe in the particular one promised, we do not believe 'the exceeding great and precious promises,' and are, therefore, not prepared for remission of sins in the name of the Lord Jesus. The kingdoms of Gentilism are multitudinous—'kingdoms beyond the skies,' 'the kingdom of grace, 'the church,' 'the post-millennial kingdom,' and so forth. The gospel

has nothing to do with such Gentile notions. They are the creations of the apostacy—the vain imaginations of men's evil and unsanctified hearts. The kingdom we contend for, as the subject of pre-immersional faith, is no 'trifle.' It is God's truth, and subversive of every Gentilism extant. Suppress this monarchical truth, and the Bible is reduced to a book of Jewish annals, moral apothegms, and proverbial sayings. The Kingdom, in its proper time, place, and circumstances, or none. It is the great subject of the Bible, and the faith admits no other.

**Believers or Hypocrites.**

'When you were baptised at first, were you believers or hypocrites?' says Mr Bowes. He does not perceive that they might be neither. They were, like himself, *misbelievers*. He seems to have believed too much, and they too little. Baptism, predicated on hypocrisy, he says, is valueless. It is; and it is equally worthless when a misbeliever is the subject. The immersed are not justified by a belief of error, which is misbelief; but by *the* belief of *the* truth. Believers are 'Scripturally baptised' when they believe the Gospel of the Kingdom which Jesus commanded his apostles to preach to all the nations of the Roman habitable world for a witness unto them—(Matt. xxiv. 14)—otherwise no. 'He that believes, and is baptised, shall be saved.' Believes what, Mr Bowes?—'In his own sinfulness, in the love of God in giving the Lord Jesus to die, in order to put away sin, in his resurrection, and in that forgiveness and eternal life freely given by God?' A person may assent to all this, and yet be heathenishly ignorant of the gospel. Mr Bowes' answer is too barren of particulars to be Scriptural. The Lord Jesus informs us that it is the Gospel of the Kingdom that must be believed for justification by faith; and declares that he that believes it not shall be condemned. Now, what truth-loving man, in view of this, I ask, will approve the immersion of an individual who believes not the Gospel of the Kingdom? If he believe in his own sinfulness, in God's love, in Jesus' resurrection, that God forgives, and bestows eternal life freely—is that believing that God will set up His kingdom again in Israel's land, re-establish David's throne, place Jesus upon it as King of the Jews, make Jerusalem the place of his throne, subject all nations to his sway, give his resurrected saints power, and glory, and dominion with Christ for ever, and

so forth? These are things almost universally denied and ridiculed; yet are they the things of the kingdom covenanted in the Gospel of God. A faith, defective of these things, does not embrace, far-off or near, the promises of God; and, therefore, is not that faith which justifies the immersed.

**Gentile Baptisms.**

There are baptisms many among the Gentiles as there are also lords many, gods many, and faiths many; but in regard to the Gospel of the Kingdom, there is only 'one baptism.' That which distinguishes the Gentile baptisms from one another is the particular crotchet connected with the immersion administered. Mr Bowes was immersed on the belief of a post-millennial nonentity; therefore his baptism is a mere Gentile formality in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which no one has any right to invoke, being ignorant of the truth, or sincerely believing 'a lie.' It is not the use of this Scriptural formula that converts an immersion into the 'one baptism;' but the subject's additional belief of the Gospel of the Kingdom and Name. 'Baptism for remission of sins,' in the Campbellite sense, is another mere Gentile immersion. The crotchet that characterises it is *historical faith in Jesus*—a faith common to all Greek, Roman, and Protestant religionists, and illustrated by all their evil works. Greek baptism, Mormon baptism, church-door baptism, Millerite no-restoration-of-Israel baptism, post-millennium baptism, sky-kingdom baptism, and so forth, are all crotchety immersions, which are of no more value for new covenant purposes, than is the putting away of the filth of the flesh contracted by infringements of the Mosaic law, for the answer of a good conscience before God in Christ Jesus.

**The Point at Issue.**

The point at issue between us and our opponets is, not whether there be more Scriptural baptisms than the one; but *what constitutes an immersion the 'one baptism.'* This is the point. We do not believe that 'a man can die to sin and the world three times, and therefore needs as many burials.' We believe that sinners of the Gentiles, immersed on the belief of Gentile crotchets, have never *died to sin*, and have *therefore never been buried in the* Spirit's sense of the word, though buried in water as a bodily act. There is nothing can put a man Scripturally

to death, that he may be dead to sin and dead to the world—and, by consequence, alive to God—but the truth Abrahamically believed. Gentile crotchets make no man alive to God; a life which is evinced by a child-like, self-denying devotion to the truth as it is in Jesus. Look at Gentile pietists, and behold how wrathy and petulant they become when you try their systems and practices by the Word of God! Behold their enmity to faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom as a pre-requisite to immersion! They will tolerate with much pious sentimentality anything for faith, if the professor be sincere. An immersed deacon in New England told me the other day, that he had no doubt there were good Christians among the Mohammedans and Papists; but was quite irritable when it was testified, that there was but one gospel—namely, 'the Gospel of the Kingdom,' and that it had been preached to Abraham and to the Israelites, whose carcases had fallen in the wilderness! He was ignorant of this gospel, therefore the enmity naturally existing in the flesh had not been slain; and hence his impatience of the truth.

### The 'One Baptism.'

We advocate the 'one baptism' as distinct and opposite to all Gentile immersions. Its subject is one who understandingly and lovingly believes the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ; its action is a putting out of sight in water; and its design, the union of such a believer to the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that through the name of Jesus he may have his renewed disposition counted to him for repentance, and his belief of the truth for righteousness unto life in the Kingdom of God. This is the only true baptism, and, as may be perceived, as diverse from current Gentile immersions as the thoughts and ways of God from the traditions of men.

### Frequent Immersions Unnecessary.

'Are we,' inquires Mr Bowes, 'always to be immersed over again every time we get more light on God's precious truth?' By no means. But there is a certain necessary amount of knowledge to begin with; and that is, a heart-renewing knowledge of the exceeding great and precious promises of God. When this knowledge is attained, the believer will understand the covenants made with Abraham and David, and how far they have been fulfilled in Jesus,

and therefore what remains to be accomplished. In other words, he will be intelligent in the Gospel of the Kingdom as it is preached in Jesus, and fit for union to his name by baptism, which thenceforth must be repeated no more. The apostolic command to such a one is, 'Add to your faith goodness and knowledge.' It is not to be supposed that a man is expected to know all the Bible before immersion. The more he studies this, the more he will come to know. Believe the gospel, and then go on to understand all that the prophets testify about the past, the present, and the constitution of things to come. The first Christians were constantly advancing, not in the knowledge necessary to make them Christians, but in that which is necessary to perfect the Christian character. The cavillers among the Gentiles are not like them. Our contemporaries begin in error, which is mere human tradition, with a mere colouring of truth. The 'light they get on God's precious truth' is just such a glimmering as slowly to reveal to them one error after another, until they come to see that nearly all their previous knowledge, faith, and practice, was mere vanity. They call this advancing in the knowledge of God's precious truth; it is rather making a discovery that they know nothing as they ought —a very necessary preparation, however, in these times for coming to the knowledge of the truth.

**The Plurality of Immersions.**

It is while passing through this transition period that they subject themselves to a plurality of immersions. A man may travel from Millerism to the Gospel of the Kingdom through Mormonism, Baptistism, and Campbellism. Believing that Christ was coming in 1843 to burn up the world, he was immersed for '43; but this passing, he recognises that the Indians are God's lost tribes, and that Joe Smith was His prophet. He is immersed again, but this time for Israel's kingdom at Nauvoo. Joe Smith is shot, and he comes to see that his system is an invented lie. He abandons the imposture, and seeks admission to a respectable Baptist church. The Baptists reject, with merited contempt, the Mormon baptism; and he is immersed again to enter the Baptist church—baptism with them being the door of entrance to the church. In process of time, Campbellism turns his new society upside down, preaching 'baptism for remission of sins' as the ancient gospel. This is a new gospel to

him, and he comes at length to recognise it as the truth. So doing, he is immersed a fourth time, and now for remission of sins, on the ground of believing that baptism is for the remission of sins. Now, had this man known the Scriptures in the beginning, he would rather have lost his right hand than have been immersed into Millerism, Mormonism, Baptistism, or Campbellism. He would have regarded them all as mere Gentilisms, and have had nothing to do with them; for coming at length, as our Glasgow friends did, to the elementary understanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom, he renounces them all, and declares himself still unwashed, unjustified, unsanctified by the name of the Lord Jesus and the renewing of the Word. What shall he do in this case? Shall he refuse to be immersed a fifth time, because he had erred four times from sheer ignorance of the truth? By no means; for his fifth will be the first enstamped with the signature of Heaven.

**The Early Believers.**

'The new converts at Pentecost, &c., had learned enough in a few hours to be immersed.' This proves them to have been apter scholars than modern Gentiles. Their case, however, was different. They believed the Gospel of the Kingdom, and needed only to be instructed in the things of the name of Jesus. The Holy Spirit was their teacher, through Peter, and confirmed his teaching by evident signs. They learned of God in a few hours, indeed, what our contemporaries can scarcely comprehend in a lifetime; some of them not at all. The cases are not parallel, and therefore irrelevant to the matter in hand.

**Baptism into the Kingdom.**

'What is the baptism into the kingdom, but a conceit of Dr Thomas, utterly without foundation in Scripture? I call on him or his admirers to bring a single command or example for baptising any one into the kingdom. I believe,' continues Mr Bowes, 'none can be produced. Baptism into the kingdom is Dr Thomas's institution, not Jesus Christ's, well worthy of a man wishing to be the leader of a party, but unworthy of any disciple of Christ.' Mr Bowes has made a very important mistake in this paragraph. He has confounded Mr Campbell's baptism with that advocated by me; and as I reject 'baptism into the kingdom,' I do not feel myself under any obligation to answer Mr Bowes' question. He very pertinently

inquires in the next paragraph, 'How can they be baptised into a kingdom which, according to them, is not yet set up?' Indeed, Mr Bowes, I cannot tell. I preach resurrection, not baptism, into the kingdom. 'We are baptised for the dead'—(1 Cor. xv. 29; Rom. vi. 5)—saith Paul; that is, 'for,' or in hope of the resurrection of 'the dead.' And why baptised for the resurrection? That by resurrection we may enter the Kingdom of God. 'Baptism into the kingdom' is President Campbell's conceit, not mine. I can adduce no command or example for it. Let Mr Bowes inquire of him concerning it. I do not believe in it.

**The Church Not the Kingdom.**

'The Kingdom of Christ is set up over his church.' If so, how can the church be 'heirs of that kingdom?' A kingdom set up over a people converts them into its subjects. But the church of Christ are not the subjects, but joint-heirs with him of the kingdom. Christ is the heir to the kingdom of his father, David, which has had no existence for upwards of 2400 years. This is the Kingdom of Jehovah and of his Christ; but I see no such kingdom existing over his church. Where is his church? A scattered and despised few, which the world doth not know.

**The Nature of Christ's Kingdom.**

Mr Bowes errs, not knowing the nature of Christ's kingdom. The twelve tribes of Israel are the King of the Jews' subjects, at present in rebellion—not the King's brethren. These are his household, for whom he is making reconciliation within the veil. The kingdom, *preparing* for them from the world's foundation, is as yet only a matter of hope. They are waiting for it, having come to it by faith in the gospel concerning it, as they have come to Mount Zion, and the blood of sprinkling. A voyage to the covenanted land would take them into the kingdom, in the sense of being in its territory. They have been by faith translated into the hope of it; for they walk by faith, and not by sight. When they see it, they will possess it, and be in it, but not before. Seek this kingdom by faith and obedience.

'The Kingdom of God is among you.' This was spoken to the scribes and Pharisees, whose King stood in their midst as the stone rejected of the builders. In this sense,

the Kingdom of God, sometimes synonymous with God's King, was 'among them.'

'The Kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit,' because, when its gospel or glad tidings are believed, it produces these effects, and not a regard to the Mosaic distinctions respecting 'meat and drink.'

**Christ as a King.**

Christ is a king now, and died for maintaining his right to the throne of Israel. Louis XVIII. was many years a king before he obtained the throne of France. But David's case is more in point than Louis's. David, the representative of his Son and Lord, was king anointed several years before he sat upon his throne as King of the Jews, in Hebron. So it is with David II. God anointed him with His holy oil at his baptism. He then became king and high-priest of Israel *elect;* but prevented from ascending his throne by the Mosaic law, which would permit no man of Judah's tribe to sit as a priest on David's throne, because it had covenanted the priesthood to Levi only. Therefore, as Jesus could not be the royal high priest of Israel while the law of Moses continued in force, he set out upon his travels into a far country, until all legal obstacles to his rights should be removed. All this time, however, he is king and priest elect of Jehovah's nation, although for the present it refuses to acknowledge him as such. When Mr Bowes comes to understand this, he will write more sensibly and Scripturally than he has done upon this great question among the Jews. Our view of it will not then appear 'incoherent and absurd.' He will then see that he is now incompetent to define 'a true Christian,' and 'the Kingdom of Christ.' He doth not yet know them, for they are not yet Gentilistically discerned. The true Christians are marching onward to the kingdom through much tribulation. When they find themselves in it, all their troubles will cease, and their jubilee begin.

**'Concerning Them that Sleep.'**

I do not say that 'the soul sleeps after death,' but that certain being dead, 'sleep in Jesus,' and out of him, dwelling in the dust. Therefore, says Jehovah, 'Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.' And Daniel writes, that 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.' There are some in the dust who do not

sleep, but are perished. They only are said to sleep in death who are to awake again; and there are some of whom Isaiah saith, 'They are deceased, they shall not rise.' If the resurrection were universal, all the dead might be said to sleep: but Isaiah says it is not; therefore sleeping can be Scripturally affirmed only of them who are to rise. The *man* sleeps—not a supposed disembodied entity, called by Mr Bowes 'the mind of man.' I use no such jargon as that 'the mind of man sleeps after death.' The mind of man falls asleep every night, if the man be sound; but in death, it is the man—the whole man, commingled with his native dust—that reposes there until the trump of God awakes him to glory or shame.

**Saints and Aliens.**

Yea, 'salute every *saint* in Christ Jesus.' This I am ever glad to do when I can find one. But there are such multitudes of pretended saints, that one is obliged to be cautious. I do not define 'aliens' to be 'those who reject my peculiar views:' nor do I condemn any. The Scripture defines an alien to be one who is not a citizen of Israel's Commonwealth; and the Lord Jesus condemns all to perdition who do not believe the Gospel of the Kingdom he preached. The 'love' he taught teaches men to obey his word with willing and affectionate hearts; and to encounter hardship and reproach in the practice and advocacy of his truth. This love I profess, bearing 'hatred' towards none.

**The Real Church.**

I admit that 'no system can be of God which infuses into the church hatred and schism.' But where is 'the church?' Is it Mr Bowes's church, or the Church of England, or the Methodist Church, or the Baptist Church? Really, there are so many churches, that the phrase 'the church' has long ceased to define any particular thing. Hatred abounded in these churches long before I visited England; nor was schism a stranger in their midst. I never yet caused hatred or chism in a church of Christ, though, I daresay, the doctrine I have taught has caused considerable disturbance in congregations of misbelievers. But this is of no consequence. Infidel encampments ought to be disturbed; and all are infidel that believe not the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

### Dr Thomas's Views Refuted.

Thus I have noticed all that seems to require a note to be made on't in Mr Bowes' endeavour to promote the truth at my expense. I suppose he thinks that the article, together with his two lectures on the immortality of the mind, have used me up. What he has said in the lectures, I know not; but if they are no weightier than the article before us, we need not be terribly afraid. Mr B., however, has doubtless done the best he knows how; and what more can a man do than his best? We will then accept the will for the deed, and thank him for his good intentions. May he do better next time! In the meanwhile, may he come to the knowledge of the truth, and to the obedience it requires; and at last having suffered for the kingdom, may he obtain an abundant entrance to the possession of all the good things which it affords.*

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## RE-IMMERSION DENOUNCED.

### 'Dr Thomas Again.'

Dr Thomas has inserted my article, headed 'Dr Thomas and his Followers,' which appeared in vol. ii., p. 268, in his *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*. For inserting it, entire, I thank him. When he affirms that I am 'personally unacquainted with' his views, he mistakes; I have read enough of them to know their meaning. Dr Thomas, however, denies the notion which I understood his 'followers' to teach—'baptism into the kingdom.' Of course I accept his denial; but then, pray tell us, Dr Thomas, why you immerse over again true believers? Is it not into a hope of the kingdom? Then I ask you, first, to give me a text, a command, or an example, to show that any New Testament saint was immersed into the hope of the kingdom. Nowhere do we read of immersion into either the faith or hope of the kingdom; forgive me, therefore, for saying, that you appear to me more anxious for people to follow you, than Christ or the Scriptures. I have read your article twice over, but I cannot find that you attempt to set aside Col. i. 13: 'Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath translated* us

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, pp. 264-5.

into the Kingdom of His dear Son.' Paul believed that the Colossians were in the Kingdom of Christ, Dr Thomas does not. There is therefore a great difference between the faith of Paul and Dr Thomas, since the latter denies what Paul affirms. I agree with Paul, and therefore reject, most heartily, whatever contradicts Paul, as Dr Thomas's teaching does.

## RE-IMMERSION DEFENDED.

### The Question Answered.

The above is from Mr John Bowes' *Truth Promoter*, published at Cheltenham, England, in connection with the sect known there as 'Plymouth Brethren.' He thanks me for inserting his article against me and my 'followers' entire. I am sorry, however, that I cannot return the compliment, his policy affording me no scope for thanksgiving. Do to others as you would they should do to you; which may be fairly rendered, Do to others as you approve their doings to yourself. But this is no article of Mr Bowes's creed, if we may judge of his faith by his works. I have inserted his denunciation, or whatever he may call it, 'entire,' but he has taken special care not to publish my vindication at all. What are we to infer from this? Had I failed to convict him of error, I suspect his patrons would have been treated to a perusal of my entire article, with some triumphant demonstrations, according to the taste of Plymouth-Brotherism, from his own pen, showing the shallowness and absurdity of my lucubrations! But he has not done this, from very obvious reasons.

### Baptism into the Kingdom.

He accepts my denial of the practical dogma of 'baptism into the kingdom,' so characteristic of the Campbellite creed. Strange would it be if we practised baptism into a kingdom in whose present existence we have no faith.

### The Plurality of Immersions.

'But,' says he, 'pray tell us, Dr Thomas, why you immerse over again true believers?' Mr Bowes did not intend me to answer this question when he penned it, or he would have sent me a copy of his paper containing it, which he has not done; for the copy before me came not from him, but from a personal friend in Birmingham. Seeing, however, that after several months it has arrived at last, I will now answer it.

The wording of his question does not express the real point at issue between us. It should read, 'Why do you immerse over again those whom I, John Bowes, regard as true believers?' To this I reply, Because I, John Thomas, can prove that they do not believe the truth. I do not re-immerse 'true believers;' but should, if such a one presented himself for re-immersion, decline to assist him myself, and protest against others going down with him into the water a second time.

### Who are 'True Believers?'

This is the view of the matter held in common with me and those styled of Mr Bowes my 'followers.' Professors who are ignorant of the things spoken by the prophets are not 'true believers.' They assent to certain theological technicalities about Jesus; but of its kingdom and glad tidings they are as ignorant as Hottentots. He has promised salvation to Gentiles believing in him as the Son of God, delivered for offences, and raised again for justification; who also believe the Gospel of that Kingdom which he is to found in Palestine, and which is to destroy all the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers of the Babylonish Heavenlies; and to such, and to such only, does he command immersion into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those who deny this kingdom, which is preparing, and has been preparing for the 'Blessed of the Father from the foundation of the world,' and to which and its glory they are called or invited in its gospel, are not 'true believers,' whatever their creed may comprehend about the personality of Jesus, restricted to the facts of his first appearing.

### The Real Baptism.

The darkness of Mr Bowes' mind upon the gospel is discoverable in the question he puts, saying, 'I ask you, to give me a text, a command, or an example, to show that any New Testament saint was immersed into the hope of the kingdom, in the apostles' days.' In answer to this, I would say, that every immersion in those days was for the kingdom, and that only. I say 'only,' because to 'possess the kingdom' is to obtain all that its gospel promises; and to fail of obtaining that kingdom, is to lose its glory, honour, incorruptibility, and life. What else could a man be baptised in hope of, seeing that the gospel, or glad tidings are emphatically the good news of

that kingdom, which is to rule over all the earth? To be baptised for resurrection only, would be a hope short of the gospel hope; for many will 'awake from the dust of the earth' who will have no part in the kingdom, but rather inherit 'everlasting shame and contempt.'

### An Example.

But Mr Bowes will be satisfied with 'an example.' Well, we cite the case of the Ephesians as in point. 'For the space of three months,' says Luke, 'Paul spake boldly in the synagogue, disputing, and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.' Mr Bowes will, no doubt, admit that some were baptised during this three months; for Paul was 'persuading,' as well as 'disputing' with success. Mr Bowes will, perhaps, admit also, that Paul was 'testifying the gospel' while he was 'preaching the Kingdom of God;' but whether he will or not, Luke affirms it. Now, 'reason,' which was one of Paul's spiritual weapons, asks of Mr Bowes, 'For what other hope than that of the kingdom could they have been baptised, whom Paul persuaded concerning the Kingdom of God?' His preaching of the kingdom he styles 'the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation,' in which he made known to them the secret of God's will, which He had purposed in Himself, according to His good pleasure. He told them what this kingdom purposed of God would be, and what it would comprehend.

### The Appointed Time.

It would be 'for an economy of the fulness of the appointed times.' These were times far-off from Paul's day, and which have not quite expired yet; for the 1335 years of Daniel, at the end of which is the resurrection of the heirs of the kingdom, are not yet run out by a dozen years. When this appointed time shall have elapsed, the work of establishing the kingdom's economy in the land promised to Abraham and Christ, and to all constitutionally in them, will be commenced. He also told them what that royal economy should consist in—namely, a heading up of all things in the Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things of the earth—(Acts xix., xx.; Eph. i. 13, 9, 10). These things he declares to be 'visible and invisible.' Some of them in his day were visible, others invisible, but now visible to us; and defines as 'thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers'—(Col.

As far as I can see, Dr T's argument about 01 1:13 is nonsense. Dr T is quite wrong in trying to translate πρόθεσις as he translates. It looks as if Dr T has taken a Greek Grammar and misunderstood what it says about the Aorist tense.
He is ducking the whole issue here I think.

i. 16)—all of which are to be subjected to him, as declared in Daniel and all the prophets—(Dan. vii. 14, 27; Heb. ii. 8). These are the things which Paul says he preached at Ephesus when he preached the Kingdom of God, 'saying none other things,' as he remarks elsewhere, 'than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.'

### The Hope of their Calling.

Now, when he preached the same things in Thessalonica as the Gospel of Salvation—for there is but 'one faith'—he says the people there were 'called,' or invited to 'God's kingdom and glory,' and for whom he prayed that they 'might be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God for which they suffered.' Now, if immersed people are called to a kingdom, and suffer for a kingdom, or seek through much tribulation to enter a kingdom, is not that kingdom 'the hope of their calling?' And could they be immersed for any other hope than that hope to which they were called in the Gospel of the Kingdom? Certainly not. There is, says Paul to the Ephesians, 'one hope of the calling.' For that 'one hope' he immersed those he persuaded: therefore he immersed his converts for the hope of the Kingdom of God, and they were what Mr Bowes styles 'New Testament saints.' They were immersed in hope of belonging to that glorious company of whom it is testified that 'the saints of the High Ones shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom, for the age, even for the age of the ages.'

### Translation into the Kingdom.

As to Col. i. 13, I have already published at least two expositions of it, showing, first, that it is not 'hath translated' in the original; and secondly, that the word rendered 'translated' relates in the text to a state of mind as opposed to the 'power of darkness,' or ignorance—a state which Paul had superinduced by opening their eyes to the things of the Kingdom, and so turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of the adversary unto God; to effect which, the Lord Jesus had sent him to Colosse—(Acts xxvi. 17, 18). But for Mr Bowes' illumination, I will remark that the original word is *metestese*, the first aorist tense, and not *metestheke*, in the perfect. The aorist is indefinite as to time, when simply affirming the action. 'He translates,' or, metonymically, he causes to pass from one mode of thinking to another;

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means here.
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mean exactly the same
in every passage?

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or, he causes to change sides. This, in relation to the kingdom, is God's doing through an appointed means; for of the heirs of that kingdom it is written, 'They shall be all taught of God.' God's teaching had caused certain Colossian Jews and Gentiles to change their intellectual and moral positions; or to change sides. They forsook the synagogue and the idol-temples, renounced the traditions of the rabbis and priests for the kingdom of His beloved Son. This was a past event in relation to them, but an aorist process in relation to God, which is not yet completed, nor will it be until the kingdom comes. Hence, His work of delivering from the power of darkness, and causing men to declare for His kingdom as the result of their eyes being opened, is expressed in the indefinite tense of the Greek verb, which equally indicates what God has done, is doing, and will yet further accomplish in delivering men from Gentile 'piety' and philosophy, and turning their minds to the Kingdom of his Son.

### The Nature of Christ's Kingdom.

Paul did not believe that the Colossians, whose eyes he had opened, were in the Kingdom of Christ. It is merely Mr Bowes' opinion that he so believed. Paul, as a Jew and a Christian, was too well instructed in 'the Hope of Israel,' in the testimony of Moses and the prophets, and in the doctrine of Jesus, to believe any such foolishness. He understood the nature, or elemental constitution of the kingdom he preached, too well for that. It is reserved for Mr Bowes, and 'pious' Gentilists of his class, while the times of the Gentiles are closing up because of their faithlessness in God's Kingdom and its Gospel—(Romans xi. 22)—to believe in so palpable an absurdity. Paul pointed to 'the fulness of the appointed times,' when 'the fulness of the Gentiles should be come in,' as the epoch of introduction into the kingdom of millennial rest—the sabbatism of the saints, the priests and rulers of the world, blessed at that time in Abraham and his seed. I wish no one to follow me. Let my readers hear Moses and the prophets; for if they believe not their writings understandingly, they cannot receive the words of Jesus and the apostles in the sense in which they were spoken. This is Mr Bowes's misfortune. His head is too full of Plymouth Brotherism to afford scope for the teachings of God. If he can be exorcised of this, there will be hope in his end. But till that desideratum is accomplished, his policy will

continue crooked as Leviathan, and his views vulnerable as Achilles' heel.

**An Appeal to Mr Bowes.**

I have published all he has written against me that has come to hand, which is quite gratifying to him, or he would not thank me. Now, one good turn deserves another. Will he not then gratify me in returning the compliment? It may not promote what Plymouth Brethren call 'truth,' but it will tend to show that their leaders, in contending for 'truth,' do not eschew the fruit thereof, which is impartiality and justice, though the heavens fall.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1854, pp. 224-6.

# THE EDINBURGH CHURCH.

## ORGANISATION.

### Intimation to Dr Thomas.

When the arrangements for the formation of a Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, in Edinburgh, were nearly completed, James Cameron —who was an occasional correspondent of Dr Thomas— knowing that the doctor would be very much interested in the course that events were now taking, hastened to send him the welcome intelligence. The intimation was conveyed in the following letter, which Dr Thomas gave in the *Herald*:—

265 High Street, Edinburgh,
March 18, 1853.

DEAR BROTHER THOMAS,—I cannot help wishing for your 'Second Visit to Britain,' and the second British edition of *Elpis Israel*. You were welcomed by many during your first stay, and I am sure that a second visit would be hailed as a new era in the history of 'the Latter Days.'

The truth is gaining ground here gradually; as an illustration of which I may mention that a congregation is now in course of being formed on principles historically set forth in the Acts of Apostles in such language as—'They that gladly received his word were baptised'—interpreting the 'word' by Peter's speech in the light of his commission, and the teaching of Jesus and the first preachers, as 'the word of the kingdom'—(Matt. xiii. 19); as 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' which Philip gospelised, or announced as glad tidings—(Acts viii. 12—see Greek). We are made up mainly from three sources. First, wandering believers of the kingdom's gospel who have been trying for some time to get embodied. Second, some who have left the meeting in South Bridge Hall. Third, the majority of a meeting in High Street for some years conducted on what are called 'free communion' principles, and who have for a considerable time believed and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, and have been baptised. The number in all may be nearly thirty.

I remain, in the One Hope, yours,

JAMES CAMERON, JUN.*

* *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1853, p. 214.



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### A Meeting of Believers Organised.

On the evening of Sunday, March 20, 1853, another meeting of those who intended to form the church, was held in the house of Gilbert Macdougall, to make final arrangements. At this meeting it was agreed to meet on the following Sunday, in a church capacity—at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, for worship and mutual instruction; and at half-past six in the evening, to eat the Lord's Supper. As no place for meeting had been secured, it was arranged to meet for this occasion in the house of George Dowie, at 12 Beaumont Place.

### The Original Members.

The names of the original members of the church—twenty-four in number—have already been given; and it may be interesting to place on record here what were the various occupations they severally followed. John Forman was foreman of the bookbinding department of Messrs W. & R. Chambers, publishers; George Dowie was a journeyman bookbinder under him; while I was serving my apprenticeship as a compositor in the same establishment. Andrew Tait was then station-master at Drem, on the North British Railway, about twenty miles distant, and, as has already been mentioned, he and Mrs Tait had the privilege of coming into Edinburgh every alternate Sunday. James and Richard Cameron were in partnership with their father as brushmakers and curled hair manufacturers. Gilbert Macdougall was a clerk in an insurance office. William Wilson followed the occupation of a gilder and picture restorer. James Watson was employed as a meter maker in the establishment of the Messrs Laidlaw. James Bannerman was engaged in the drapery line of business. William Ellis had originally been a cabinetmaker, but was now conducting a school in Leith. Thomas and Henry Wilson (brothers) were both shoemakers. Thomas Lawrie was engaged with his father and brother David in a grocery and provision business; while James had a short time previously completed his

apprenticeship as a coach-painter. Grierson Mitchell had originally been in a draper's warehouse, but had recently gone as a clerk in the office of the Electric Telegraph Company. As regards the unmarried sisters, Elizabeth Renwick was in domestic service, Margaret Steel was a dressmaker, Agnes Norrie was a milliner, and Susan Mark was a map colourist.

The members of the church thus formed were a rather youthful company to enter upon so important an undertaking. One (myself) was under eighteen years of age; three were under twenty; the bulk of the members were between twenty and thirty; and not more than one (if there actually was one) had reached so mature an age as thirty-five. With respect to their wage-earning capacity, I do not think that any of them earned more than twenty-five shillings a week, and the greater number did not earn so much as one pound a week. These facts will show that the original members were all pretty much upon an equality, and that there was no person of out-standing influence or social position among them.

In the list of the original members there ought to have been included the name of Isabella Leithhead. She had formerly been a member of the Baptist Church meeting in the Waterloo Rooms; but having become instructed in the things of the kingdom, she withdrew from that church, and, like several others of the original members, had for some time been unconnected anywhere. She took a great interest in the preliminary meetings held in Johnston's Coffee Rooms, and attended them for some time, only discontinuing her attendance when she found that she was the only female present. At that time she was in domestic service at Trinity, and was thus rather out of the way, and so did not know of the proceedings of the 6th March until fully a fortnight afterwards, when I called and told her. She had, however, the honour of being the first new member added to the church, as she was re-immersed at the Argyle Square Baths on the evening of Wednesday, April 6, and received into fellowship on the following Sunday.

### Preliminary Arrangements and Appointments.

In making arrangements for the conducting of the meeting, it was the expressed conviction of all that, as far as possible, official appointments of every kind should be dispensed with, and that whatever arrangements were made should be understood as being of a provisional or temporary character. As there would necessarily be some expense connected with the meetings of the brethren, it was deemed advisable that a custodian of the church funds should be appointed, and the duty was accordingly assigned to James Cameron. It was also deemed probable that there might be some correspondence with other parties, and it was therefore agreed that Gilbert Macdougall should serve the brethren in the capacity of secretary.

Some discussion took place as to the propriety of having some one to act as president or chairman at the meetings. There was a strong feeling against a formal appointment of this character, but at the same time it was generally admitted to be desirable that some provision should be made for the due regulation of the various exercises, and to see that the proceedings were not protracted beyond the proper time; and that this could only be attained by assigning the duty to some particular brother or brethren, was also generally admitted. Gilbert Macdougall proposed that it should be left for each meeting to appoint its own chairman; but this proposal was not approved of, and it was ultimately agreed, as an experiment, that two brethren—John Forman and George Dowie—should be appointed to preside, their appointment to be only for a period of three months, until it was seen how the arrangement worked. William Wilson and James Watson were also appointed to provide for the supper, and to make other necessary arrangements. It was also resolved that the bread should be unleavened and the wine unfermented. No appointment was made to lead the singing, but this office was voluntarily undertaken by George Dowie, who continued to fill it until his removal to Dundee in 1867.

### The First Church Meetings.

The first meetings of the church were held on Sunday forenoon, March 27, in the house of George Dowie, about twenty brethren and sisters being present. It was agreed that, at the forenoon meeting, a chapter from the Old Testament, and one from the New, should be read and considered in a conversational style, and that what time afterwards remained should be devoted to exhortation and teaching. The portion selected for the Old Testament lesson was the Book of Daniel, and the Gospel of Matthew was that from the New.* The church met again in the evening in the same place, for the breaking of bread; and at this meeting, in addition to those who had arranged to form themselves into the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, was John Seton, from Musselburgh, who took part with the brethren in their first observance of the Lord's Supper.

### The Tailors' Hall.

Before the next Sunday, the Tailors' Hall, 22 Potter Row, had been engaged for the meetings of the church. This was a small, dingy, low-roofed, dimly-lighted, and badly ventilated 'upper room,' reached by a 'cork-screw stair, and it was situated in a narrow, confined, and dirty thoroughfare, in one of the most poverty-stricken localities in the city.

I believe [says Grierson G. Mitchell] it was myself who suggested the Tailors' Hall, in Potter Row, having seen a ticket 'To Let' upon it. However, it was rented by us, and from that time afterwards, for several years, a series of very happy meetings were held in it. These days may be considered the honeymoon of our meeting.

> No strife had raged, nor hostile feuds
> Disturbed our peaceful years.

* It may be mentioned that this system of Scripture study was followed for many years, and that on Sunday, July 23, 1871, when the reading of the Song of Solomon was finished, the whole of the Scriptures had thus been methodically read through and considered. The portion over which most time was spent was the Book of Psalms, whose study engaged attention for five and a half years.

We lived and loved together; and so far were we from dreaming of evil days, that those who subsequently left spoke perhaps the strongest of the happy security of our fellowship.

The Tailors' Hall was a curious old place. Low in the ceiling and sloping at the sides, and it was not well lighted. It was reached by a narrow and precipitous winding stair. It had an odour of extreme age about it —musty; and yet, when we spoke about leaving it for a larger meeting place, some regretted the necessity. Andrew Tait was one of them. They had become so attached to the place in which they had enjoyed so much. Over the old fireplace was hung an ancient symbolical design, the property of the Tailors' Corporation, and above the centre window a couple of old heavy matchlocks were crossed, which we were told had been out in some hard-fought field—I forget which; while the busts of Byron and Scott looked down from either side of the ample and high-backed chair, all carved and gilded. There were also arranged along either side of the table a set of the strongest and most uncomfortable chairs ever sat upon; but we sat upon them cheerfully for all that. Ah! these were the good old times. There was no gall in the cup—no moral thunderstorm had as yet soured the milk of human kindness. We grew in peace in this old dingy hall, and the brotherhood throughout the country also grew.*

Externally, the surroundings of the Tailors' Hall were anything but pleasing, there being occasionally sights, and sounds, and smells that were really offensive. Internally, the accommodation was better than might have been expected from an outside view. A long table extended down the centre of the hall, and at the end opposite to the entrance was a most capacious arm-chair, with elaborate carving and gilding, the latter being now very much faded. This chair, it may be remarked, was never by any chance sat upon at any of the ordinary meetings, but was generally utilised as a receptacle for top-coats, hats, music-books, and other impedimenta. At the other end of the hall, over the fire-place, as emblematic of the corporation to whom the place belonged, was carved a pair of open

* G. G. Mitchell, in *Excelsior*, July 1872.

scissors, a striking peculiarity of which was that the artist had so completely set the rules of his art at defiance, that the scissors, supposing they were real, could not by any possibility have 'clipped' a piece of cloth. There were also, above the fireplace, some curious insignia emblematic of the knights of the thimble, with the very appropriate Scripture quotation :

> And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, for glory and for beauty.—Ex. xxviii. 2.

But perhaps the most striking feature in this ancient hall was supplied by two rusty old guns, which occupied a conspicuous position over the principal window. The appearance of these warlike weapons suggested a further paraphrasing of the well-known lines :

> They hang the musket in the hall,
> And study war no more.

Such was the quaint old hall in which the Edinburgh Church commenced its meetings, and in which they were continued to be held for seven years. It is needless to say that there are many pleasant and not a few painful associations connected with the place to those few now remaining persons who were members of the church in its earlier years. There we had our first loves, our first enjoyment of the sweets of fellowship, our first roots of bitterness in our midst, and our first experience of the ravages of death. Amidst them all, however, the pleasant decidedly preponderate in my mind over the unpleasant; and the recollection of very many happy hours spent in that unprepossessing old hall, in the society of those of like precious faith, many of whom now sleep in the dust of the earth, is a source of much pleasure to me. Frequently, during my visits to Edinburgh in after years, have I gone along the Potter Row; and it gave me quite a shock when, in passing along the familiar street, in the autumn of 1892, I observed that the old hall was in process of being taken down in connection with the erection of the Empire theatre! *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

# CHURCH ORDER.

### Working Arrangements.

For some time after the meeting had been thus formally constituted, the various arrangements that had been so deliberately made were methodically carried out, and found to answer, on the whole, fairly well. This could scarcely fail to have been the case, when it is remembered how carefully and Scripturally everything had been considered, and how much practical experience, gathered in various former religious associations, was brought to bear in the organisation of this small community upon New Testament principles. Amongst those who composed the meeting were persons of very varied character and attainments. There were men of strong religious faith and highly devotional feeling; men of keen mental perception and highly intellectual powers; men of much practical energy and great force of character; and men who had known the Scriptures from their youth, and who had been accustomed to study the Word of God for themselves;—and the bringing together of individuals of such diversified capacity to engage in the various exercises pertaining to a company of baptised believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, had something like the charm of novelty in it. The service rendered by each was spontaneous, and very rarely had to be prompted by the president, whose function did not appear with any conspicuousness, he being rather an indicator than a master.

### Mode of Conducting the Meeting—the Conversational Style.

The consideration of the Scriptural lesson in the forenoon occasionally led to something very like discussion, which was not appreciated by some of the brethren and sisters, who had a strong *penchant* in favour of a more orthodox form of instruction. The preponderance of this discussional style of Scripture investigation also gave dissatisfaction to John Forman, one of the two brethren

who had been appointed to preside in the meeting, and induced him to resign his office before the expiry of the three months for which he had been elected.

### The Presidency.

The presidency system, however, was deemed so advantageous, that it was resolved to continue it for some time longer at least, and William Ellis was chosen to fill the vacancy that had thus been occasioned. At the end of about a year from the origin of the church, however, the office of president, from the very slight demand there was upon the services of this functionary, and the unobtrusive manner in which the duties of the office were exercised, had gradually fallen into disuse, and was shortly afterwards abolished. Several attempts were subsequently made to revive it, but without success.

For many years afterwards, the office was virtually abolished, except for special occasions, when particular business required to be transacted. Looking back as I do now, with many years' experience as a newspaper reporter, accustomed to attend every description of meetings, it appears to me remarkable how well, and in what an orderly manner these church meetings were for so long a period conducted without a recognised president. The revival of the office in more recent years was found to be a necessity in consequence of the increased membership of the church.

### The Secretaryship.

For the first two years of the existence of the church, the office of secretary or correspondent was held by Gilbert Macdougall, but afterwards he resigned the post, which was then assigned to George Dowie, in whose hands it remained until his removal to Dundee.

### The Observance of the Lord's Supper.

As has been already stated, one of the subjects of inquiry during the protracted investigation that preceded the formation of the church, was the proper mode of

observing the Lord's Supper; and as the result of the examination given to the matter, it was considered that the most appropriate as well as the correct time for the observance of this institution was in the evening. It is difficult at this distance of time, and with the changed sentiment which now prevails, to realise the strength of the conviction on this point which existed in the minds of some of those whom I may designate the leading brethren. 'It is a *supper*—an evening meal,' remarked one brother, when advocating that the observance should be at the evening meeting, and not at that held in the forenoon. 'I do not take my supper before my dinner,' was the argument of another in support of the evening observance. In fact, the conviction of some of the brethren was so strong, that they held it would have been improper to attend to this ordinance at the forenoon meeting. The practice, therefore, which was followed for a considerable time was to have the breaking of bread at the evening assembly, at half-past six, and to make this the principal feature of the evening.

The manner of observing the institution, also, was rather different from what was to be found in most religious assemblies. Before proceeding to the breaking of bread, an appropriate passage of Scripture was read; and after thanks had been given, and while the bread was being passed round, a conversation took place upon the passage that had been read, or remarks or reflections of a conversational character were made upon some circumstance or incident connected with the great event that was being celebrated. These observations sometimes occupied a good deal of time; and as thanks for the cup were not offered until the conversation had terminated, the greater part of the time of the meeting was thus occupied in celebrating the Lord's Supper.

As it was found that fewer brethren could attend the evening meeting than the forenoon one, after four years' experience, the scruples of all concerned gave way, and from Sunday, June 7, 1857, the breaking of bread was observed in the forenoon.

### Breaking Bread in Private Houses.

After the meeting had been a year or two in existence, taking into consideration the fact that some of the brethren and sisters resided at a distance from the city, and that others were prevented by age, ill health, and other circumstances from attending the regular assembly of the church for the breaking of bread, it was deemed quite becoming in those so situated to meet occasionally in their own houses and celebrate the institution of the Lord's appointment. It was also deemed quite proper that those so isolated should be visited by other brethren and sisters, to join with them in remembering the death of their Lord. Celebrations of this house-to-house character came to be of frequent occurrence, and proved seasons of refreshing and blessing to those who participated in them, as well as affording a means of attending to the injunction, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' which could not otherwise have been had.

### Agreement as to Prayer.

Another noteworthy practice which was followed for some time after the meeting was formed, was this. Before engaging in prayer, which was always offered spontaneously by one of the brethren, an opportunity was given for any one to suggest something which should be included in the petition about to be offered up. Remembering the promise of our Saviour—'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven' —(Matt. xviii. 19)—it was considered this was the best way in which such agreement could be secured. Some remarks on this subject by Gilbert Macdougall, which occur in his first secretary's report, may be worth quoting here :—

This brings up a feature of our little body which cannot be passed unnoticed. We pray to God unitedly, artlessly, fervently, and confidently as to a living God. In this respect, we have practically enjoyed a privilege which for

many a day some of us, and probably to this day some others, have made the subject of plain, earnest, but fruitless teaching, where too frequently prayer is made as superstitious words are uttered to an idol, or the impassioned utterance of frantic, raving orgies. Brethren, we have deliberately preferred our earnest requests to our living God, and God has answered us. Let us never cease to approach Him with the enlightened, chastened, devout feelings of rational and Heaven-taught creatures, with our effectual fervent prayers; and until we have occasion to celebrate our next anniversary—and to the end of our days—may we increase in wisdom, love, and every good thought, feeling, word, and work, and finally end a course of usefulness with joy and peace, to rise in a better resurrection.

I always thought the practice of this deliberate 'agreement' previous to prayer was a good one, and was sorry when it fell into disuse. The fact was, however, that sometimes the subjects suggested for united prayer were rather trivial, and I daresay this was the reason why the practice was given up.

### The Week-Night Meeting.

Within a fortnight after the formation of the church, a week-night meeting in connection with it was commenced: and this meeting, with numerous changes in its order, time, and place, with variations in the attendance, and with occasional suspensions during summer time, was afterwards kept up as one of the permanent institutions of the church. With so many and so varied tastes to satisfy, it was from the first found to be a very difficult matter to conduct it in a style that would please every one; and in consequence changes were made from time to time, the exercises variously including Scripture study, the practice of sacred music, literary composition, and devotional exercises. For two months the evening was devoted to the reading of the phrenological delineations of the brethren, useful hints and suggestions being given to the subjects of the various delineations as they came up.

# EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS.

### Early Indifference to Evangelistic Work.

Is is a somewhat remarkable circumstance, that, in the earlier years of the church's history, there was considerable reluctance on the part of some of the leading brethren to unite in any organised effort to make known the Gospel of the Kingdom. To whatever cause this unwillingness was to be ascribed, such was certainly the case; and all the early attempts that were made to proclaim the truth were not undertaken—as they subsequently were—with the approval and guaranteed support of the church, but at the individual risk and responsibility of the lecturer, with the pecuniary assistance of one or two brethren who approved. There were, it is true, a few who were thoroughly in sympathy with every effort of an evangelical nature, but the bulk of the members were not.

### Lectures by James Bannerman.

The first attempt to publicly announce the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ was made by James Bannerman, who commenced a course of afternoon lectures in the Tailors' Hall on Sunday, Nov. 30, 1853. These lectures were continued for about two months, and were advertised every Saturday in the *Edinburgh News*—a weekly newspaper, published every Saturday, and which, in those days of high-priced journals, was very popular with the working-classes.* Very few of the brethren and sisters attended the lectures, and latterly so few strangers came that they had to be given up. In response to an appeal by James Bannerman for individual aid in carrying on these lectures, I was informed by him, at the close of the course, that only two persons had offered a contribution.

* These lectures were given just after the repeal of the advertisement duty—a tax of 1s. 6d. being levied upon every advertisement that appeared in every newspaper. The price charged by the *Edinburgh News* was 2s. 6d. for the first advertisement, and 1s. 6d. weekly afterwards.

### Lectures in Musselburgh.

On Sunday, April 23, 1854, John Forman commenced a short series of evening lectures, setting forth the Gospel of the Kingdom, in the town of Musselburgh. On one of these occasions he was prevented from fulfilling his engagement in consequence of ill health, and his place for that evening was taken by James Bannerman. These lectures were delivered in the Freemasons' Hall, and were not very largely attended.

It is significant, as showing the little interest which was then taken in evangelistic efforts, that no mention is made of these lectures, or of those given in the Tailors' Hall, by James Bannerman, in the first and second annual church' reports. After George Dowie was appointed secretary, as successor to Gilbert Macdougall, he wrote an enlarged version of the first annual report, giving some additional details of the early history of the church, but still no notice was taken of these first public lectures.

### The Truth Presented to the Chief Rabbi.

The next effort towards making known the truth, which deserves to be noticed, was of rather a peculiar character. In the early part of the year 1854, from reports published in the newspapers, it appeared that great destitution prevailed amongst the Jews in the Holy Land; and, sympathising as the brethren did with the suffering that had thus been brought upon the fleshly descendants of Abraham, it was deemed advisable that something should be done towards their relief. Accordingly, a special subscription was agreed to be made; and the treasurer was instructed to write to the Chief Rabbi (Dr Adler) in London, to ask if he would receive the sum and transmit it for the benefit of the suffering Jews in Palestine. The identity of faith that existed between the senders of the money and the proposed recipients, in looking for the Messiah, was pointed out, and also the reason for believing, from the Old Testament Scriptures, that Jesus is the Messiah. The correspondence was as follows:—

## EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS IN EDINBURGH.

Edinburgh, June 12, 1854.

DEAR SIR,—I take the liberty of writing to you to inquire if you would be willing to take charge of, and transmit, a small contribution to assist in relieving the wants of the destitute Jews in Palestine. The contribution is from a congregation of between thirty and forty members, whose attention has been directed to the subject by several communications in the newspapers. The members of this congregation have been led to take a more than ordinary interest in the people of Israel, from the fact that they believe, in their obvious sense, the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as recorded in the books of Moses; and are confidently expecting their fulfilment, and the consequent blessedness of the nations of the earth. They are looking for, among other things, the restoration of the kingdom and throne of David in the *Holy Land*, when both the houses of Israel shall be united in one nation, when the 'tabernacle of David which is fallen down shall be raised up as in the days of old,' and when 'the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established in the top of the mountains, and many nations [of the Gentiles] shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the *God of Jacob*; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'

Clearly understanding these things as coming events which are even now casting their shadows before, and deeply feeling their importance in connection with the realisation of the world's blessedness as promised to Abraham, it would ill become us to look with indifference either on the sufferings of the Jewish people in past times, or on those now more especially pressing on them in their own country. We have accordingly made the contribution referred to; and although, from the limited means of those contributing, it may not present the appearance of a large sum, we have no doubt that it will be received in a right spirit, and duly despatched to its destination. It will be sent by post-office order, on receipt of your compliance with our request.

While rejoicing in so much unity of sentiment with the Jews in reference to their faith and hope, it must of necessity be a matter of regret that there should be any important difference of opinion between us. As it would, however, be mere affectation in us to conceal the main point on which we differ from you, we trust you will forgive a plain allusion to it. We believe that Jesus of Nazareth shall sit on the throne of David, when the kingdom is restored to Israel. I believe we are agreed as to this point—namely, that, according to the testimony of God Himself by the prophet Ezekiel, the future occupant of David's throne must be one 'whose right it is;' and also that one element of that right, as defined in the covenant made with David, consists in this—that the Messiah must be of the house and lineage of David. The covenant is in these terms: 'And when thy days be fulfilled, . . . I will set up thy seed after thee, . . . and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever'—(2 Sam. vii. 12, 13). The prophet Jeremiah, also, referring to the same matter, says: 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall rule and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth'—(Jer. xxiii. 5). Now, in view of these testimonies—in the understanding of which I presume we are at one—we believe there is no evidence to show that there exists on the earth at present, a son of Abraham who, by virtue of his hereditary right, could present a valid claim to the throne of David, if the kingdom were now to be established. The reason of this appears to us to be, that the last heir to David's throne died without issue, having been put to death

by his own nation, as represented by the chief priests and rulers, aided by a mob which they instigated to raise a clamour for his death, by appealing to the fears of Pontius Pilate, then Roman governor of Judea, who delivered him to be crucified. Jesus—as we learn from the genealogies of the elder and younger branches of David's family—was the son of Mary, who was descended from Joseph through Nathan and Zorobabel, constituted Mary's only son, Jesus, heir-apparent to the throne of Israel. The death of Jesus, then, in the circumstances referred to, rendered the house of David extinct.

But the question arises, How, if this be true, are the promises of God to be fulfilled? It appears to us that if the throne of Israel is to be occupied by a son of David, either Jesus, or some other of David's descendants who have died, must either have been, or yet be raised from the dead. Indeed, the fact is, that whoever the Messiah may be, this very thing is predicated of him by David himself, in the 16th Psalm. His words are: 'For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore'—(Psalm xvi. 10, 11). Now, David could not have spoken these words concerning himself, for he remained in the sepulchre until he not only saw corruption, but had completely returned to the dust whence he came. Moreover, this passage not only indicates that the Messiah's path of life from the grave was by a resurrection, but also that that path had its immediate termination, not in the throne of David, but at the right hand of Jehovah in the heavens. This again is corroborated by the fact that the Messiah is, in another psalm, represented by David as remaining at Jehovah's right hand until the time should come to give him the kingdom. David says: 'Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool'—(Psalm cx. 1). In exact accordance with this testimony, Messiah's descent from this exalted position to occupy the throne of David is thus described by Daniel: 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with 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 people, nations, and languages should serve him, &c.—(Dan. vii. 13, 14).

These testimonies convince us that the Messiah was to die and be buried; that he was to have an early resurrection from the grave; and that he was to ascend to the right hand of God, whence to come in power and glory, 'to raise up the tribes of Israel,' and also to be for 'a light to the Gentiles, and the salvation of God unto the end of the earth.'

We trust that, should any apology be necessary for intruding at such length on your attention on the present occasion, it will suffice to state, that we felt anxious to inform you that, although Gentiles, and differing from you on a very important point, we have no sympathy with the purely Gentile idea of a Messiah coming for no other purpose than to burn up the earth, convey his friends to some ethereal paradise, and consign his enemies to everlasting torment in the flames.

We have only further to state that, should you feel disposed to communicate with us on the subject of these remarks, we shall be glad to give an attentive ear to anything you may have to say to us. In the meantime, awaiting your reply in reference to our request, we are, dear sir, yours sincerely,

(Signed on behalf of the congregation),

JAMES CAMERON, Jun., *Treas.*

To Dr Adler, Chief Rabbi, London.



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Office of the Chief Rabbi,
June 14, 1854.

Dear Sir,—I am requested by the Chief Rabbi to acknowledge your kind favour, and, while thanking you for the sympathy you express for his suffering co-religionists in the Holy Land, most respectfully declines entering on any religious discussion.

I have the honour to be, dear sir, your obedient servant,

Aaron Levy Green.

Mr James Cameron.

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Office of the Chief Rabbi,
4 Crosby Square, London, 5614—1854.

Sir,—I am requested by the Reverend the Chief Rabbi and Sir Moses Montefiore, Bart., to acknowledge with grateful thanks the sum of ——*, being the amount of your generous collection towards the fund now being raised for the poor Jews of Palestine.

I have the honour to be, your obedient servant,

Aaron Levy Green, *Hon. Sec.*

To Mr James Cameron, Edinburgh.

By the direction of the Edinburgh Church, this correspondence was sent to Dr Thomas, by whom it was inserted in the *Herald* for September 1854, with this note appended to it:—'We shall be happy at all times to publish epistles of like point and character.'

### Miscellaneous Lectures, Correspondence, &c.

After a little while, a decidedly evangelistic spirit seemed to take possession of the brethren in Edinburgh, and systematic efforts for 'sounding out' the Gospel of the Kingdom were energetically made. These took the form of lectures in such places as Leith, Cupar, Dundee, Lanark, Dalkeith, Tranent, Kirkcaldy, and other localities; and visitation and correspondence with inquirers in Berwick, Birmingham, Devonport, Dunkeld, Falkirk, and other places. In some instances, the result of these efforts was the formation of a small meeting; and more or less detailed reference to these evangelistic operations will be made in a subsequent section of this work. Meanwhile, lectures were commenced to be given regularly in the Tailors' Hall during the winter months, although the attendance of strangers never was large, and sometimes

* The sum collected was £3 13s. 10d.

the lectures had to be discontinued sooner than had been proposed, in consequence of the absence of persons of the class for whom they were intended. The Tailors' Hall, however, as has already been indicated, was a very unattractive place for the purpose, and not easily found out by strangers. To the several halls which subsequently served as the usual meeting-places of the brethren, this objection did not apply, and fairly good audiences were from time to time had. As the result of a suggestion by Alexander Black, at the annual meeting of the church on Sunday, March 29, 1868, the meetings of the church were commenced to be advertised in Saturday's *Scotsman* on May 30 of the same year; and since then this mode of giving publicity to the proceedings of the church has been largely adopted.

### Proposed Conference with John Bowes.

In the end of the year 1858, some conferences were held by the brethren in Dundee with John Bowes, on matters pertaining to the faith, and a good deal of interest in the things of the kingdom was thereby awakened. Encouraged by what had thus been accomplished in Dundee, the church in Edinburgh, in December of that year, sent an invitation to Mr Bowes, asking him to come and have a conference with them. The result of the conference in Dundee, however, had been so little to his liking, that he did not feel disposed to accept of the invitation.*

* John Bowes, whose name occurs several times in this 'EARLY HISTORY,' was a Yorkshireman by birth, and for many years itinerated in England as a sort of evangelist in connection with a number of small churches of the Plymouth Brethren stamp. He ultimately removed to Dundee, which he made his head-quarters while itinerating as formerly. As has already been mentioned in these pages, he published a magazine entitled *The Truth Promoter*, in which some of our brethren occasionally had articles, but his publication was at times thought to belie its title. On the occasion of the first visit of Messrs Fowler & Wells, the well-known American phrenologists, to Dundee, about the year 1862, at one of their largely attended lectures in the Kinnaird Hall, Mr Bowes, on the general invitation usually given by these gentlemen, went upon the platform to receive his phrenological delineation at the hands of Mr Fowler. Among other things stated respecting him, Mr Fowler very kindly said that he was averse to much active exertion—in fact, was rather lazy. John did not at all relish this assertion, and took exception to it, but the acclamation of the audience rather testified to the accuracy of the phrenologist's pronouncement. One of Mr Bowes's publications was a revised translation of the New Testament—a production that did not by any means add to his reputation as a literary man. As a specimen, one of the Beatitudes was thus rendered by him: 'Blessed are the mendicant in spirit, for

### Conferences with Campbellites.

On Nov. 24, 1860, the first of a series of conferences with the friends meeting in Roxburgh Place Chapel (of the 'Reformation' connection) was held. These meetings were occupied in considering the Bible questions of 'The Kingdom of God,' 'The Christ,' and other subjects bearing upon the Gospel of the Kingdom. In accordance with the democratic spirit of those times, and in order to render the conference more serviceable to the truth, every individual who attended it was supposed to become an inquirer, and all were understood to be upon a level in this respect, while no sides were to be taken. On the second night of the conference, however, this understanding was rather roughly called in question. Mr Thomas Hughes Milner, who had taken the most active part in opposition to the things of the kingdom being regarded as the gospel, upon being reminded that the spirit of the meeting was one of inquiry, and that he had taken the position of a teacher, answering all questions that were asked, and

theirs is the reign of the heavens.' This is an illustration of the manner in which 'the Kingdom of Heaven' sometimes suffered violence at his hands. When Robert Roberts lectured in Dundee in 1873, I happened to learn that John Bowes intended to go and hear him, and mentioned the fact to R. R., who stayed with me in my house during his visit. On the night of the lecture, in the Thistle Hall, J. B. was there; and at the close, an intimation was given that the lecturer was willing to answer any questions that might be asked in elucidation of matters that had been touched on. Like many other persons in similar circumstances, J. B. interpreted this as an invitation for any one who chose to refute what had been advanced; and he at once rose and commenced a reply to the lecture. He was suffered to go on at what I considered an unreasonable length, until R. R. was constrained to rise and remind him that he was only privileged to ask a question in explanation of anything that had been said in the lecture, but not to make a speech in opposition to it. J. B. replied that he wished to show the lecturer where he was in error, and he would require to make some remarks in order to do this. R. R. said the hall had been engaged that evening in order to give an opportunity for the proclamation of certain truths—not to give an opportunity for opposing them. As that was what was now desired, the opposer's proper course was to engage a hall for the purpose, and not to take advantage of a meeting convened for the very opposite. J. B. strongly demurred to this, and considered it was only fair that he should be allowed to point out the errors into which the lecturer had fallen. R. R.—'May I ask if you are Mr Bowes?' J. B.—'My name is John Bowes.' R. R.—'Then, since you wish to point out what you consider the error I have been teaching, I shall be very glad to give you the desired opportunity, and I now challenge you, John Bowes, to a public discussion upon the subject at issue between us, upon some evening to be afterwards arranged.' Mr Bowes seemed completely taken aback at thus having the gauntlet thrown down to him. He declined the challenge point blank, however, although it was again and again strongly urged upon him by R. R. Another of Mr Bowes's publications was an extraordinary work—*Autobiography of the Life of John Bowes*, which had some very amusing reading. In his later years, Mr Bowes was, I believe, in rather straitened circumstances financially, and this caused a subscription for his benefit to be set on foot among his friends. A considerable sum of money was in this way obtained, and presented to him. This was done only a short time before his death, which took place about the year 1877.

promptly replying to everything that was advanced in advocacy of the things of the kingdom, replied, in rather a defiant spirit, that he must be allowed this privilege, or he would not come. The fact was, however, that he was somewhat irritated, because it had come to be known, even at this early stage of the conferences, that some of his members had confessed their belief of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and their desire to be immersed upon that belief.

The attendance at these conferences at first and for some time time was good. Ultimately, however, the patience of Mr Milner appeared to be exhausted, and he discontinued further attendance at the meetings. His retirement was the signal for the withdrawal of a number of others, who sympathised with his views. The meetings were continued for some time longer, however, and ultimately resulted in no fewer than twelve persons coming to accept the Gospel of the Kingdom as the only true gospel. These twelve were all re-immersed upon that confession, and joined the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. The highest testimony that could be given to the standing of these believers was perhaps the pitiful complaint made by Mr Milner, that, as a consequence of these conferences, some of the best of the members in Roxburgh Place Chapel had left it and gone over to the 'Thomasites.' Mr Milner himself, as an antidote to what he considered the pernicious teaching which had been so freely disseminated at them, printed and circulated a four-page tract entitled 'The Kingdom of God,' in which he gave his own peculiar ideas on this sublime theme. Every paragraph in the tract began with the phrase, 'The Kingdom of God is or includes'—so and so. The one idea appeared to be to eliminate from it everything that had any relation to 'the hope of Israel,' and to show how many other things could be made to do duty as substitutes for this.

# SERVICE OF SONG.

Among those who formed the Edinburgh Church at its commencement were a number of persons, both male and female, who had a fair knowledge of music, who had pretty good voices, which had received more or less of training, and who had been accustomed to sing in concert psalm tunes and sacred pieces of music. It was only natural that those who were thus musically inclined should endeavour to devote their vocal powers to some good purpose in connection with the church service; and the process by which the latent musical abilities of the members was thus developed and turned to good account in a variety of ways, forms one of my most pleasant recollections in connection with the early days of the Edinburgh Church.

On this subject I cannot do better than reproduce here a short paper which George Dowie wrote, and which appeared in the first number of the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*, issued in May 1858:—

**Musical Experiments and Experiences in Edinburgh.**

The church in Edinburgh has been very happily circumstanced, with regard to music, from the beginning. Of the twenty who constituted the meeting at its first gathering, nearly all were capable of singing their proper parts in ordinary psalmody, while some three or four were quite competent to take the lead when necessary. As the meeting increased in numbers, some attention was bestowed upon the cultivation of an acquaintance with musical notation and a familiarity with higher forms of ecclesiastical music than the psalm tune. We wish to draw your attention to the results of this cultivation and application.

At an early period we found that the Scotch version of the psalms, and the small collection of hymns always accompanying it, were inadequate to express our minds in song on a variety of topics which we desired to sing. The acknowledged versatility of the psalms made them useful to a great extent; but we demanded more. Their rude, although precise, metrical form was hardly satisfac-

tory. We therefore made ourselves acquainted with *chanting*, so as to be able to recite these fine compositions in their unmeasured or prose form. This, however, was not enough. Our next care was to make a selection of passages from the Old and New Testament, suitable as subjects for song, with the intention of finding suitable music for them. In this we were successful to but a small extent. To accomplish it to the full, we found that the presence of musical genius was necessary, since the old composers had only selected a few of our passages as themes for their anthems and choruses. The greatest length to which our constructive musical ability could be depended upon was in the adaptation of some pieces to our special use by slight alterations, and in the setting of parts to those melodies which we found useful for our purpose.

* * * *

We have, however, given more attention to what are termed anthems than to chants, as they are preferred when accessible. Of the subjects in use amongst us in the anthem form, we enumerate the following :—

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain—Rev. v. 9–12.
Behold, I show you a mystery—1 Cor. xv. 51–57.
O praise God in His holiness—Ps. cl.
I was glad when they said—Ps. cxxii.
Blessed and holy is he—Rev. xx. 6.
How beautiful upon the mountains—Is. liii. 7, 9.
Our Father who art in heaven—Matt. vi. 9–13.
O praise the Lord—Ps. cxlvii. 1–5.
Make a joyful noise—Ps. c.
The earth is the Lord's—Ps. xxiv.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts—Is. vi.
Hosannah ! blessed is he that cometh—Mark ix. 9, 10.
The Lord bless thee—Num. vi. 24–26.
O praise the Lord, all ye nations—Ps. cxvii.
Now unto the King eternal—1 Tim. i. 17.
Thine, O Lord, is the greatness—1 Chron. xxix. 11.
Blessed be Jehovah—Ps. cvi. 48.

### The Choir.

With a view to making the most of the musical resources that existed among the members of the church, both in improving the service of praise in the meeting and cultivating the social element among the members, a select choir was formed in Feb. 1856. The original members of this choir were : bass—William Wilson, James Cameron,

Grierson G. Mitchell, and James Lawrie; tenor—James Watson and William Norrie; alto—John Forman; soprano Susan Mark, Jane Norrie, Jane Naismith, and Margaret Swanson. George Dowie was the conductor, and we met weekly in his house for practice. Among those who subsequently joined the choir was Robert Roberts, who gave his services in it during the time that he sojourned in Edinburgh. The choir made a number of public appearances, and very successfully, in connection with several benevolent and philanthropic institutions in the city.

**'Pleasant Sunday Evenings' Suggested.**

The success which attended these efforts induced George Dowie, in the autumn of 1856, to suggest that, during the ensuing winter, the brethren should rent a large hall somewhere in the centre of the city, for the purpose of delivering lectures to the public, to be illustrated with appropriate pieces of music, showing the superiority of the Christian faith and hope, and its present and future reward. It was, in fact, something on the lines of the 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon' idea, which has in these latter days been taken up in some of the leading religious denominations. In pursuance of this suggestion, George Dowie prepared the first of these intended lectures, which was entitled 'This Life and the Best Means to Enjoy it,' and submitted it to the brethren at their usual week night meeting on the evening of Thursday, Oct. 2, 1856. It was generally approved of, although there was a lack of heartiness on the part of some. No definite arrangement was made for practically carrying out the plan, however, until the beginning of 1857, when the secretary of the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society (Richard Cameron, formerly a member of the Edinburgh Church), having heard of the lecture, George Dowie was requested to deliver it under the auspices of that society, which he did on the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 17, 1857, the choir 'assisting.' The scheme for such a course of lectures by the church was not carried out, however.

'The Concert Wreath.'

The most important public appearance of the choir was on the evening of Wednesday, Aug. 25, 1858, when they gave a performance in aid of the funds of a church library, which it had been resolved should be formed. Robert Roberts, who was one of the singers, wrote the following paragraph about it, which appeared in the *Caledonian Mercury* on the following day :—

Concert at Portobello.—As we anticipated, the inhabitants of Portobello made a very good turn-out last night on the occasion of Mr Dowie's concert, the Union Hall, Tower Street, in which the entertainment was given, having been quite crowded. The choir, though small, was very effective, and the manner in which they executed the pieces entrusted to them called forth the hearty plaudits of the audience. The running narrative by Mr Dowie was a composition of much literary merit, and contained a number of valuable suggestions which it would be well to see put in practice. The first part of the entertainment was devoted to the holiday ; and the remarks of Mr Dowie, and the singing of the choir, were illustrative of the adaptation of music to out-door enjoyments. The last part was confined to an elucidation of the facts that home is the place where music ought to be cultivated, and that the influence of choral exercises on the family circle, conjointly and individually, is remarkably beneficial. The audience were highly delighted with the address and the performances of the choir ; and at the close of the proceedings a cordial vote of thanks was, on the motion of Bailie Craig, accorded to Mr Dowie and those who assisted him. A wish was also expressed that they should soon give another concert in Portobello ; and there can be no doubt that, should they think favourably of the matter, they would meet with a large measure of success. We likewise believe that Mr Dowie has been invited to give a similar entertainment in Musselburgh, where he would doubtless be received as warmly as he was at Portobello.

After deducting the expenses connected with the production of the Concert Wreath, the sum of £2 remained, which was expended in the purchase of books ; and thus was laid the foundation of the church library.

## CURATIVE MESMERISM.

A remarkable experience of the Edinburgh Church in the early years of its history, was the manner in which 'the laying on of hands'—or, to express it in more purely scientific terms, the practice of mesmerism—was employed as a curative agent for many of the ills to which 'this mortal' is subject. This experience was the more remarkable, as it appeared to last for only a few years, and subsequently was almost entirely unknown.

### Messrs Davey and Jackson.

It was just a week or two after the Edinburgh meeting was formed, that two gentlemen—Messrs Davey and Jackson—came on a professional visit to Edinburgh. Mr W. Davey was a native of Devonshire, if I remember rightly, and was a very powerful mesmerist; while his colleague, Mr J. W. Jackson, who came from London, was a highly intellectual gentleman, an eloquent lecturer, and an expert in the science of phrenology. In personal appearance, he bore a considerable resemblance to Dr Thomas, having a long and jet-black beard, which was arranged in glossy ringlets. His style of speech and his manner gave one the impression that he belonged to the order of seers or prophets. These two gentlemen, who made a speciality of curative mesmerism, had been lecturing and demonstrating very successfully in the south and east of England, and also in Ireland, and had founded a mesmeric infirmary in Dublin. Several members of the Edinburgh Church had their attention arrested by the novel announcement which Messrs Davey and Jackson made of their arrival in the Scottish Metropolis, and were desirous to know something about this extraordinary mode of treating disease which these gentlemen were desirous of bringing before the public notice.

Accordingly, four of us—James Cameron, John Forman, James Watson, and I—took the liberty of waiting upon these gentlemen at their place of business, and had a friendly talk with them. We found them very frank

and intelligent in the two subjects that were their speciality, but rather disheartened at the seeming failure of their visit to Edinburgh, so far. So dispirited, indeed, were they, that they had all but decided to leave Edinburgh, as being a place so wholly given up to orthodoxy and orthodox ways, that there seemed no chance for any one who proposed a departure from the beaten path. To a small religious community like ours, which had just made so marked a divergence from the ordinary theological track, and who were ever on the alert to hear of something new, there was a kind of fascination in the doctrine of healing by the laying on of hands as expounded and practically illustrated by these two gentlemen. James Cameron, in particular—who all through was the leading spirit in this movement—was most anxious that something should be done to bring a knowledge of the healing art under the notice of the public.

### Lectures and Classes for Curative Mesmerism.

As a result of this interview, arrangements were made for a public lecture, with demonstrations, on the art of curative mesmerism. This lecture was given in the Tailors' Hall, the meeting place of the Edinburgh Church, on the evening of Friday, May 6th; and it was so successful, that on Saturday, the 14th of the same month, the first meeting of a class for practical instruction in curative mesmerism was commenced. A number of the members of the Tailors' Hall meeting joined this class, and among its members also was Mr Alexander Melville Bell, who has already been mentioned as one of Dr Thomas's friends during his stay in Edinburgh. All the members entered very enthusiastically into the work, and soon were able to produce some remarkable results in the way of cures of various ailments, and in the relief of suffering in different forms.

### The Scottish Curative Mesmeric Association.

One of the earliest fruits of the labours of Messrs Darey and Jackson was the formation of the "Scottish

Curative Mesmeric Association.' It was 'instituted for the purpose of applying mesmerism gratuitously to the cure of disease, and promoting its general use by all classes of the community.' Professor Gregory (Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh) was the president; James Cameron was the secretary; Mr A. B. Bell was one of the directors; and among the acting committee were four of the members of the Tailors' Hall meeting—namely, G. Macdougal, J. Bannerman, W. Laing, and James Swinton. The association was from the first very successful in its treatment of disease. I have now before me a copy of the second annual report, in which a number of cases of cure are recorded, and among them I recognise one in which I was the operator. The patient was a friend of my sister Jane, who was the first to mesmerise her; but being unable to follow out the treatment, she handed the case over to me, the result being thus recorded :—

Ann Duncan, Haddington Place, Leith Walk, aged twenty-four, about five months ago came to Edinburgh from Shetland, for the purpose of obtaining medical treatment for epilepsy. She had been subject to fits for seven years. They were at first occasioned by a violent fright, and were afterwards induced by any excitement. The fits generally lasted for six hours, during which the patient frequently spoke incoherently; and they always left her in a state of great exhaustion, sometimes accompanied with headache. She was also subject to faluting fits. An eminent physician in Edinburgh had been consulted by letter, and had prescribed for the case, the medicine being sent from Edinburgh, but with no good result.

The mesmeric treatment was commenced soon after her arrival in Edinburgh, by the advice of some friends whom she consulted. She was mesmerised for about two months —for the first fortnight almost daily, but less frequently afterwards. The result was that she never had a fit after the mesmeric treatment was commenced, now upwards of six months ago, although on several occasions circumstances such as formerly used to cause fits have occurred.

### Curative Mesmerism in the Church.

The utility of mesmerism as a curative agent was so palpably demonstrated in a variety of ways, that it came to be recognised as a most valuable auxiliary in the art of restoring health; and the brethren were favoured in having among their number several who were found to be powerful mesmerists. One of the most noted of these was James Swinton, whose success was so marked that he was induced to become a professional mesmerist, and in this capacity he afterwards removed to Great Malvern, where he got into a lucrative practice. As there were among the brethren and sisters several who were more or less of the character of invalids, scope was found for the efficient staff of mesmerists in affording temporary or permanent relief to them.

### The Church Records on Curative Mesmerism.

In the third annual church report (1856–7), mention is thus made of the manner in which this curative agent was successfully employed in the case of Francis Renwick :—

During the past year there has been a marked improvement in the health of our Brother F. Renwick—sufficient, indeed, to enable him to resume working to some extent from about the beginning of the winter of 1855–6. It is well to record that, of the means apparently most beneficial towards his recovery, the laying on of hands has been most marked; thereby on several occasions one or other of the brethren has been enabled to invigorate his exhausted frame by the transmission of more healthy force. For this capability and these effects we are thankful to our Heavenly Father.

Again, in the sixth annual report (1858–9) :—

The illness of these brethren and sisters has called forth the lively sympathy of the church, which has found expression in monetary help where necessary, and the ministration of vital energy and soothing magnetism. In this latter all the suffering ones have been partakers. The brethren are grateful to God for the acquirement of ability and skill to relieve the sufferings of their brethren in affliction by the laying on of their hands.

### OPPOSITION TO CURATIVE MESMERISM.

The new curative agent was not cordially welcomed by all the brethren. Andrew Tait was one who did not take kindly to it. He had a strong impression that the warnings in the prophets against seeking to 'wizards,' those who had 'familiar spirits,' and such as were said to 'peep and mutter,' was applicable to persons who had dealings with this new-fangled nostrum, and he was not backward in expressing this opinion when the occasion seemed to him to demand it. In spite of his opposition, however, the art continued to be very successfully practised by both the brethren and the sisters.

### MESMERISM DEFENDED.

A great sufferer, who had experienced the benefit of this valuable adjunct to health, was very much pained to hear it spoken of as 'impious;' and she straightway made a gentle but vigorous protest against such an application of the opprobrious epithet. Her protest took the form of a

#### Poetical Vindication of Mesmerism.

Call not the gift unholy; 'tis a fair, a precious thing
That God hath granted to our hands for gentlest ministring.
Did Mercy ever stoop to bless with dark unearthly spell?
Could impious power whisper peace, the soul's deep throes to quell?
Would evil seek to work but good—to lull the burning brain?
And linger in some scene of woe, beside the bed of pain;
To throw upon the o'erfraught heart the blessings of repose;
Untiring watch the eye of care in healing slumber close;
And as the agony of grief felt 'neath the spirit's will,
O'er the wild billows of despair breathe tenderly, 'Be still!'
Speak gently of the new-born gift, restrain the scoff and sneer,
And think how much we may not learn is yet around us here;
What paths there are where Faith must lead that Knowledge cannot share,
Though still we tread the devious way, and feel that Truth is there.
Say, in the world so full of joy—hath each so fair a lot,
That we should scorn one bounteous gift, and, scorning, use it not?
Because the finite mind of man grasps not its hidden course,
Do we reject the stream, because we cannot track its source?
Hath Nature, then, no mystic law we seek in vain to scan?
Can man, the masterpiece of God, trace the unerring plan

That places o'er the restless sea the bounds it cannot pass?—
That gives the fragrance to the flower, the 'glory to the grass?'
Oh! life with all its fitful gleams, hath sorrow for its dower;
And with the wrung hearts dwell the pang and many an aching hour.
Hail, then, with gladness, what may soothe the aching brain to rest,
And call not 'impious' that which brings a blessing and is blest.
The gladdened soul re-echoes praise where'er this power hath been;
And what in mercy God doth give, O call not thou unclean.

And so George Dowie also with his

**Hymn of Health.**

CHORUS.

We come, we come, with happy heart,
And voice attuned to song,
To bid that weariness depart
That dwelt with thee so long.
Every youth and every maiden
Comes to thee with pleasure laden;
Comes to thee with love and song.

Many days has sickness laid thee
Prostrate, heartless, hopeless here;
Sore distress and pain have made thee
Prey to many a boding fear.
But we come with health and spirit,
Youth and cheer, and kindly love,
And desire ye may inherit
Every favour from above.
Chorus—We come, &c.

Health, that has been long a stranger;
Hope, that has been dim so long;
Confidence—there is no danger;
Pardon comes for every wrong.
All God's blessings sweet combining,
Weave a web of hope to-day;
No more grief or sad repining—
You shall wipe the tears away.
Chorus—We come, &c.

Every sister, every brother
Wish you joy with all their heart,
Thanking God for one another,
And the hope we can impart.
Go, disease, with sad depression,
All this cause of sickness cease;
God imparts His Father's blessing,
Hope, and joy, and love, and peace.
Chorus—We come, &c.

## CIRCULAR TO THE CHURCHES.

The benefits derived from the mesmeric treatment of disease were found to be so marked, in the case of the Edinburgh Church, that it was deemed desirable to call the attention of the other churches of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, in all parts of the country, to the matter, that they might also participate in its advantages. With this view, a circular upon the subject was prepared by George Dowie, submitted to the church, approved of by them, and afterwards sent to the various churches by being inserted, as a message from the Edinburgh Church, in No. 2 of the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*, issued in July 1858. It was as follows :—

### The Preservation and Restoration of Health.

There is a matter of some importance to the well-being of all ; which, although generally kept out of view in our search after the things of the future life, is not to be lost sight of—we mean, the doctrine of health. The most superficial thinker is aware that not only is the physical enjoyment of the present life enhanced by the possession of good health, but that the mental perceptions and general tone of character are affected to a very great extent by it. This truth is woven into our language, colouring our idiom with such phrases as 'good-humoured,' 'clear-headed,' 'choleric,' 'splenetic,' &c. We do not disregard the voice of universal experience. Again, the reasonable inference from the sanitary appointments of the law of Moses is, that God intended these to minister for good in all respects to the people of Israel. But as Christians, the duty is doubly ours to attend to the nourishing of our natural life in such a style as to elicit all its real utilities and enjoyments ; and that when, through inheritance, infection, or accident, we find the body in sickness, debility, or pain, it is our duty to remove these, and as far as possible restore the system to health. It should not be forgotten that, although the mission of Jesus of Nazareth was to announce the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God in its immortal and incorruptible phase, yet he invited the sick, the blind, the halt, the demoniac, the lunatic, to receive the immediate blessing of health, which flowed from him to bless them all. That, furthermore, his apostles, not only when acting as mere heralds of the

Christ of Nazareth, but when endowed with power from on high for their own set mission—to 'preach the gospel to every creature'—carried with them and also imparted to others a reviving power to heal the diseased in all places: the spiritual gift of 'healing' was of no lower rank than that of 'tongues' or 'governments.' This exhibition of the mercy of God to mortal flesh is worthy of our regard, as showing that the Teacher of the most transcendant truths and most exalted hopes should have a sympathy for the evil fortunes of common life, and exercise himself to alleviate all its distresses. Perhaps this may be deemed too long a plea for so manifest a matter; but we quote these things to demonstrate not only the general question, but the special duty of the disciples to exercise themselves for the preservation and restoration of health, in their own persons and those of others.

In our own day there prevails a conservatism of several duties which properly should be exercised by all. We are familiar with the monopoly of ecclesiastical teaching which obtains among the sects, and we decry it. If we can with any success supplant or render quite unnecessary the assumed prerogative of the clergy, why should we not question the monopoly of physic? This may perhaps be deemed a bold step; but a little consideration will show how practicable it is. As far as the preservation of health is concerned, there is a general intelligence abroad, which it were culpable in the highest degree to be ignorant of; cleanliness, temperance in all appetites, industry, calmness of mind, &c., are known to be the efficient preservatives of good health. And in most cases dietetic change, salubrity of residence, and the simplest medicines serve to recall the tone of health when it is inadvertently vitiated. Nay, even in cases of the most virulent nature, whether epidemic or endemic, the confident application of cold water to the skin, or skilfully selected herbs to the stomach, have proved generally efficient as restoratives. On these points it seems well for every one to have a simple but entire comprehension of the general nature of his physical system and its most likely ailments, with the particular effects which certain remedies are found uniformly to produce. We are far from advocating such intense study of these things as some have given them; well knowing that too much attention bestowed upon any organ of the body is calculated, not only to excite morbid sensa-

tions in that particular part, but to induce actual disease. This extreme, however, is quite avoidable.

But there is another method of cure, or at least of alleviation, to which we wish to direct your attention; concerning which we speak with the confidence of experience; for many of us practise it, and many more have experienced the benefit of its dispensation. We have learned that every healthy person has a power to bless his fellow-men by a communication of his health to those who are distressed; that, as there is sometimes a contagion of disease from contact of bodies, there is as certainly a contagion of health through the same means. This is most copiously eliminated and transmitted through the hands. When, therefore, any one lays his hands on another (passive) person—observing, as a general rule, that the right hand be laid on the left side, and the left hand on the right side of the patient; covering, as far as possible, with one or both hands, the part affected—in a short time a vital current is established through the region lying between the extremities of the operator's hands. (This reversion of polarity or sides tends to augment the natural intensity of the vital influence). In most cases an agreeable tingling sensation is experienced in the part operated upon; although sometimes the pain is intensified, as if all its virulence were aroused previous to its departure. When the case is one of weakness rather than pain, care should be taken not to allow the current to be too strong—disagreeably strong: a partial withdrawal of the hands will qualify it to any extent desired.

We find, also, that almost every case of pain may be alleviated by another (healthy) person stroking with his hand (downwards) over the part affected; those strokes or passes being made in contact when the pain is not too severe on the surface; or at a short distance when it is—the intervention of the clothing does not much matter. Care should be taken in bringing up the hands again to turn the backs of them towards the patient, or to keep them at a distance, that the current thus established may not be reversed by the upward motion. If the pain is very acute—as in toothache, headache, or severe rheumatism—an advantage is gained by using exertion, as if drawing the pain out; making the passes towards the nearest angle, joint, or extremity of the body, or to the head of a sore.

After the pain is removed (which may be generally expected within half an hour), gentle breathing on the place will prevent its return. As far as practicable, the above directions regarding polarity should be attended to in those strokes or passes; and in breathing upon any part, the precaution should be taken to withdraw the mouth to inhale fresh air, turning the head from the patient. There is a danger of the acting hand being infected with the pain of the part operated upon; consequently the necessity for occasionally blowing upon it, or shaking it in the air, as if to disperse the morbid *aura* which may be hanging about it; and after the operation is done, the hands should be washed with cold water. Every one essaying to be a healer should study to observe personal cleanliness and all the other conditions of health already alluded to.

For all derangements of the nervous system, no remedy seems to be so efficient as this. When a general nervous irritation is experienced, it may almost always be soothed by long passes being made down the whole body without contact. Thus the vexatiousness incident to teething may be soothed, and the general disposition quieted; soothing passes and breathing made on a burn or scald will accelerate its cure; whitlow may be dispersed, even in its earlier stages, by drawing passes; toothache sometimes removed in a few minutes by the laying on of hands; paralysis cured by daily or twice-a-day applications of long passes; falling sickness or epilepsy has always a ready tendency to fall asleep under the gaze of the eye and passes made on the face and head—this *coma* or sleep is the proper restorative in such a case; insanity, as it arises from incessant restlessness of the brain, may frequently be removed by repeated applications of the soothing passes; and so of many other cases.

The greatest care must be taken to avoid the infections above referred to. The means before stated will be found sufficient in ordinary cases; but if it appears that the operator is always and permanently affected with those pains he seeks to alleviate, this must be taken as a very sure indication that he should discontinue the practice.

Not men alone, but women also, may employ themselves to advantage in the way of healing, as above directed. Of course, their patients should be principally or entirely of their own sex, or children. The man or woman thus

essaying to heal should have general good health—a robust constitution is preferable—and at the time of operating must have no temporary affection, as thus he needs all the energy he has for his own recovery, and could not benefit the patient. After every heavy operation, it is desirable to spend some time in the open air to invigorate and refresh the wasted energies.

The power thus possessed is increased and the well-disposed person enriched by the means which minister to the increase of all good. Thus, by communicating to others, his own power to bless is increased, and God is not unmindful of the prayer of him who entreats for power to heal and who desires preservation from infection.

We hope, beloved brethren, that you will give good heed to this matter. As we before stated, we speak from considerable experience, both as givers and receivers of the blessing. We give witness that this thing we do, and those ends we seek, through the blessing of God our Father; and desire that we may show forth the praises of Him who is worthy of all honour, and majesty, and dominion, and might. Halleluiah!

### The Disuse of Curative Mesmerism.

I am not aware that any of the churches were induced to adopt the practice of curative mesmerism in consequence of this warm recommendation and these lucid instructions. By the time the foregoing circular was issued, the mesmeric treatment had been gaining ground with the general public, though it never came to be popular.* It is rather singular, also, that from the time of this address to the brethren, the practice of curative mesmerism began to fall off, and soon afterwards was entirely discontinued. Why so useful an art was given up, I never understood.

* 'Some medical men of eminence have openly avowed their belief, and acted upon it; and large numbers, it is insinuated, of the profession are secret disciples, but have not the courage to confess their faith, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for the leading medical professors, and nearly all the medical periodicals, are violently—almost fanatically—opposed to mesmerism. There is a respectable number of eminent men, not of the profession, who, being witnesses of the success of mesmeric treatment, have ranged themselves with the ridiculed and, in a social sense, almost martyred mesmerists. "I am myself," says Dr Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, "a living proof of the truth of mesmerism." He had been treated for rheumatism, which had almost laid him aside from all active duties, and been perfectly cured.'—*The Family Economist*, November 1850.

# THE MARRIAGE RITE.

In a small religious community like that of which the Edinburgh Church was composed, and which had in a very marked manner emancipated itself from everything in the shape of clerical leading strings, it was only to be expected that they should be desirous to maintain their independence of clerical assistance or control in such an important matter as the regular performance of the ceremony of marriage. It was not long after the formation of the meeting that it began to be known that there was 'a purpose of marriage' by two of the members; and the question had to be considered, How were these parties to carry out their intention without having recourse to any of the orthodox officials by whom candidates for matrimony were married?

### The Marriage Ceremony.

The expediency of appointing certain brethren as 'Ministers of Matrimony,' to perform the ceremony of marriage when required, was considered at a special meeting of the church, held on the evening of Saturday, Dec. 30, 1855. At that time, the antipathy to having any such officials as pastors or presidents amongst us was particularly strong on the part of some of the brethren, who insisted that it should be expressly provided, if such appointments were made, they should not carry with them any position of power or authority in any other respect in the church. This condition was readily conceded on all hands; and the following carefully guarded resolution, moved by James Cameron and seconded by George Dowie, was agreed to unanimously:—

Resolved—That in the event of one or more members of the congregation being appointed ministers, it shall not be competent for such to exercise any authority in the meetings of the congregation other than they possess in virtue of their common membership; except in so far as any given meeting may authorise them to do so; but this shall be held to apply only to the meeting at which such authority may be given. They shall, however, be at

liberty to officiate at marriages without any other warrant than the fact of their being duly elected and appointed as ministers of the congregation.

**Appointment of 'Ministers of Matrimony.'**

At this same meeting, a further resolution was moved by James Watson, seconded by Francis Renwick, and also unanimously adopted, as follows :—

That John Forman, residing at No. 4 West Adam Street ; William Naismith, residing at No. 12 St Leonard Street ; and George Dowie, residing at No. 12 Beaumont Place—be elected and appointed ministers of the congregation, and are hereby elected and appointed accordingly, the congregation retaining the power to depose should they at any time see fit.

Andrew Tait was not present at the meeting at which these resolutions were passed, and the appointments in question did not by any means meet with his approval. In subsequent years, it was a special grievance of his, of which he made us hear a great deal, that George Dowie, in the marriage certificates of those couples whom he joined together in holy wedlock, should be in the habit of signing himself as 'minister' of the congregation assembling in Tailors' Hall ; with the aggravation, in some instances, of describing this as a 'Baptist Church!' As a set-off to this, however, it may be mentioned that the appointment of these ministers of matrimony was made serviceable to brethren and sisters in other places ; and that the church in Glasgow subsequently followed the example of that in Edinburgh by appointing three of their number to officiate in matrimony after the fashion and requirements of the national law affecting the marriage of dissenters.

In consequence of the removal of William Naismith to Glasgow (Aug. 1, 1857), and the death of John Forman (July 1, 1858), on Oct. 10, 1858, James Cameron and W. Laing were appointed to succeed them as ministers of matrimony.

### The Legal Status of the 'Ministers.'

So long as a person so little qualified for the office as an illiterate blacksmith could legally perform the marriage ceremony, there was no difficulty as to its performance by these regularly appointed ministers. In the year 1856, however, a change was made in the Scottish Marriage law which raised a serious doubt in the matter. In that year Parliament passed the Act 19 and 20 Vict., c. 96, which was generally known as 'Lord Brougham's Act.' The object of this measure was to prevent the notorious clandestine marriages that used to take place at Gretna Green and other places in the South of Scotland, in which the celebrants might be a tailor, a blacksmith, or some other equally unecclesiastical official. One of the remedies provided by this Act was to require that marriages must be performed by a 'clergyman' or 'minister,' and heavy penalties were enacted against any person, not being a clergyman or minister, who performed the marriage ceremony. This caused some doubt to be entertained as to whether the appointments which had previously been made by the church would now stand law; and to set the matter at rest, James Cameron was deputed to make the necessary inquiries at a legal agent, and report to the church. This he accordingly did; and at a meeting of the church, held on the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 12, 1858, he reported as follows:—

> The opinion of a legal agent as to the proper party to officiate at a marriage was to the effect that any person appointed as 'minister' by any Christian congregation, was recognised by the law as competent to celebrate any marriage in regular form, and so as to constitute a regular marriage. Of course the question of dispensing with proclamation in the ordinary way was not raised—simply what constituted a 'minister' as recognised by the law.

Acting in accordance with this legal opinion, the ministers of matrimony, when the occasion arose, continued to exercise this function as formerly; and no attempt was ever made to call their authority in question.

### The Marriage Ceremony.

At this same meeting (Sunday, Dec. 12, 1858), there was submitted the draft of a 'Marriage Service,' which had been drawn up by George Dowie and William Laing, and which was designed as much for the perusal of those contemplating marriage as for the use of those who might officiate at the rite. The service was approved by all the brethren except two. One of these was Andrew Tait, who strongly objected to the whole plan of procedure, and bluntly proposed instead, that those who wished to be married should go to the parish minister, and that the Marriage Service which had just been submitted should be put into the fire! Of course this 'amendment' was not carried. In spite of this strong pronouncement against the Marriage Service, it was ultimately adopted by the church, and was afterwards commonly used as the occasion arose. It was as follows :—

#### MARRIAGE SERVICE.

When the institution of marriage is attended to, the following order is recommended :—

1st. That the parties to be wedded be announced at a regular meeting of the church. No one presenting any hindrance to their union,

2nd. A time be selected, and a meeting arranged, in any way suitable to the wishes, taste, or ability of the bridegroom and bride—providing only that there be at least two persons present as witnesses of the rite. It is recommended that, as far as possible convenient with other domestic arrangements, the presence of some of the brethren be secured at said meeting. This may, if agreeable, be most easily managed by celebrating the marriage in the usual place of meeting, and admitting all the brethren to it.

3rd. The company being assembled and arranged, the bridegroom and bride present, the minister of matrimony shall state the object of the assembly, proceeding in such a style as this :—

Dearly beloved,—We are gathered here in the sight of God and of one another, to celebrate the union of our dear brother and sister, A. B. and M. M. The marriage relation is one of the most solemn and important into which we, as Christians, can possibly enter. While it is not a religious, much less a Christian ordinance,—being as much needed as a civil and social institution for the ungodly and unbelieving as for the pious and faithful,—still it is to the Christian, who marries in the Lord, peculiarly sacred and endearing. When God made man, He who knew best what was good and becoming for the work of His hands, declared that it was not good for man to be alone, and that He would make a help meet for him—(Gen. ii. 18). The help—the companion—He gave him was a woman.

When, after the lapse of many centuries, God manifested in flesh appeared on our earth, he ratified the original divine institution of marriage, and in most emphatic terms maintained its authority, saying, 'Have ye not read that He who made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh; what, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. . . . Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her who is put away committeth adultery'—(Matt. xix. 4–9).

The apostles of the Lord also have given counsel in the nature and proper duties of such an alliance in these words: 'Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty'—(2 Cor. vi. 11–18). Also with regard to the duties of this relation: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them'—(Col. iii. 18, 19). At greater length the same teacher inculcates: 'Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the

wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as 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, 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. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband'—(Eph. v. 22–33). And another apostle: 'Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the olden time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters ye are, so long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life: that your prayers be not hindered'—(1 Pet. iii. 1–7).

Beloved brethren and friends, such things well considered and understood, and if no one proposes let or hindrance to the union of these two, we proceed to the rite of marriage.

4th. The bridegroom and bride, with their attendants, shall then stand forth; and the minister, directing them to join hands, shall address them respectively:—'A. B. and M. N., you have heard the divine teachings concerning the new relation you now propose to assume. In the understanding of what it requires of you, do you, A. B., take this woman you now hold by the hand to be your wife? ('Yes.') Do you promise before God and these witnesses to abide by her in health and sickness, in fortune and misfortune, to love, cherish, and honour her after the style which these holy teachers instruct? ('I promise to

do so.') And you, M. N., in the acknowledgment of these Scriptures, do you take this man, whom you now hold by the hand, to be your husband? ('Yes.') Do you determine before God and these witnesses to be faithful to him —to love, reverence, and obey him as these apostles instruct you, abiding in the doing of these duties so long as God is pleased to spare both your natural lives? ('Yes, I do.') By these promises and declarations you are married, having committed yourselves to a union approved by the very highest authority, and fraught with the richest natural blessing.—Blessing, however, contingent on faithful adherence to those duties devolving upon you respectively, and to which you have pledged yourselves. If the character of our Lord Jesus be carefully observed by you, and its holy and admirable features faithfully imitated, you cannot fail to ensure a due measure of that prosperity and happiness which our Father and God has so kindly associated with the discharge of the onerous but pleasing responsibilities of the married state. See that you make the Word of God the rule of your life, so that your path be sure, and always tending more and more to the glory of God our Father; to whom be honour, and glory, and might everlasting. Amen.

5th. Thanksgiving and prayer.

6th. After which the minister presiding shall pronounce the parties married—saluting and blessing them accordingly. When the salutations of the company are ended, a marriage hymn or anthem may be sung.

### The Marriage Service 'Hanselled.'

The first couple to avail themselves of the Marriage Service were Robert Roberts and Jane Norrie. The former had been a member of the Edinburgh Church from Oct. 1857 until Aug. 1858, when he removed to Huddersfield. Eight months afterwards he returned to take a bride from our midst; and on the evening of Friday, April 8, 1859, the Marriage Service was 'hanselled' by George Dowie. The minister also furnished a special Marriage Psalm and also an Anthem for the occasion, while the recently appointed poet laureate (Grierson Mitchell) was inspired to write a beautiful

### Farewell to Jane.

Our dearest Jane, ere thy farewell is spoken,
For other homes and other friends away,
Our hearts would speak one loving parting token
To thee to-day.

From all the happy years we've passed together,
No memories come of sorrow or regret,
Which was not blessed to one or other—
No, never yet.

But pleasant hours, with smiles, and eyes love-lighted,
Day after day our souls grew closer twined,
Till now we are for evermore united
In heart and mind.

Thou hast the deepest love of all that love thee—
Their brightest hopes, their prayers, and joyous tears;
God's guardian angel shall keep watch above thee,
To bless thy years.

And as ye toil life's ever-changing story,
By noble deeds, by great thoughts, day by day,
Bright on thy brows a chaplet of His glory
Shall rest alway.

Though lie between us fields of field or foam,
We shall remember with fraternal pride
How thou didst leave us for thy southern home,
Our sister bride.

Soft summer woos thee yonder with her smile;
Obey the order of thy fate's control,
So flowers of bliss shall blossom out the while
Within thy soul.

That ye may dare whatever must be done,
Though hard the task, among the acts of life,
Remember this high honour thou hast won—
A Christian wife!

Thou shalt be armed against all coming ill,
Thou shalt be strong to do thy woman's part,
Because of that which evermore doth fill
Thy gentle heart.

Farewell! God gift thee with His richest dower;
His tender love light wheresoe'er you dwell;
This, dearest Jane, for thee we humbly crave—
Farewell! farewell!

# EARLY SEPARATIONS.

Separations, from whatever cause, are an inevitable experience in the history of any community; and the church assembling in the Tailors' Hall had not been long in existence before it sustained losses by the withdrawal of members. Many losses were of course caused by death, and of these I have given a more or less detailed account in the 'PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS' I wrote some years ago. I shall here, however, only notice one or two important separations which had reference to matters pertaining to the one faith.

### 'Certain Strange Things.'

The first break in the fellowship of the meeting was occasioned by the resignation of Thomas Lawrie, which took place under rather peculiar circumstances. On various occasions during the summer and autumn of 1853 he brought certain strange things to our ears, which caused quite a flutter amongst us. Thus, on Sunday, Aug. 7, he took advantage of the opportunity usually afforded for teaching, to deliver an address, the purport of which was to show, that those who now believe the gospel, and have the Spirit of God, should be also possessed of immortality, even in the present life. Gilbert Macdougall asked him several questions, to make perfectly sure that he really meant that we now should have immortality in us by having the Spirit; and when Thomas Lawrie assured him that he really meant that, it was agreed to go into an investigation of the subject on that day fortnight.

At the forenoon meeting on that day, John Forman, in the course of an exhortation which he gave, incidentally remarked that all the brethren believed the Bible contained the whole revelation which God had made to man. When he had finished speaking, Thomas Lawrie rose and said, 'I beg to take exception to Brother Forman's assertion that the Bible contains *all* the revelation which God has made to man'—and then resumed his seat. No notice was taken by any one at the time of this singular statement.

The second Sunday forenoon afterwards, however, when the opportunity for exhortation had arrived, Thomas Lawrie again stood up, reminded the brethren of this observation, and said he would offer a few remarks in explanation of why he took exception to Brother Forman's statement. He had a rather confused manner of expressing himself, which rendered his remarks difficult to be understood. So far as could be gathered, however, he was understood to say that God did reveal things to His people which were not contained in the sacred volume. These revelations were made through His Spirit, and believers might know whether they were from God if they were according to what was written in His Word. He quoted Isaiah viii. 20 : 'To the law and to the testimony : if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' Here, he said, God had made known things through persons who had familiar spirits, and through wizards ; and His people were to know that they were really revelations from God if they did not contradict what was written in His Word. He referred also to 1 John iv. 1 : 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God'—to support his assertion that God has other means of communicating His truth than through the written Scriptures. Having spoken at some length in this strain, he next directed attention to the importance of faith in relation to this subject, and read Matt. xvii. 14–21, from which he inferred that if believers had strong enough faith they might work miracles similar to those performed by Jesus and the apostles, and that this faith would be materially increased by prayer and fasting. Additional testimony to the same effect, he said, was to be found in Mark xi. 20–23, which he also read. As a conclusion to his remarks, he said that to look for the restoration of the kingdom to Israel was 'after the flesh ;' that such a thing might be desired by the fleshly descendants of Abraham, but that Christians were called 'to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light ;' which inheritance, he took some pains to show, was the Spirit of God.

The result of holding these views was that Thomas Lawrie was induced to withdraw from the fellowship of the brethren, his resignation being intimated on Sunday, Oct. 2. For some time after his withdrawal he continued to visit a number of the brethren privately, related to them divine revelations that he professed to have received, and urged upon them the importance of giving themselves to fasting and prayer, in order that they might have similar spiritual manifestations.

On Sunday, Sept. 28, 1856, a letter from him was proposed to be read to the meeting, but this was objected to by some of the brethren, and it consequently remained unread. On Sunday, Nov. 2 following, he was present at the forenoon meeting, and asked for permission to address the assembly. As the greater number of the brethren were against it, the request was denied, upon which he immediately rose to withdraw, after having made a statement to the effect that we would all need to be born again. James Cameron asked him to stay a minute, and he would make a reply to what he had said; but he would not remain to listen; and as he passed out at the door, he was heard to mutter very slowly and solemnly, 'Six—six—six!'

When the first of the annual aggregate gatherings of brethren and sisters from different places, which used to be held at the New Year season, was held in July, 1857, Thomas Lawrie was one of those who attended and took part in the proceedings, no one offering any objection to his doing so. Apparently presuming upon the liberty thus extended, he attended again at the meeting on the forenoon of Sunday, Aug. 30, 1857, and made some remarks without asking permission, which caused a little disturbance to the proceedings. He was, however, given distinctly to understand that, not being a member of the church, he could not be allowed to address the meeting. He was quite at liberty to attend the meeting, if he thought proper, but he must not presume to interrupt the proceedings in any way. From this time his visits both to the meeting and to the brethren quite ceased.

### Worship to the Christ in this Age.

For about a year after the withdrawal of Thomas Lawrie, nothing occurred of a nature to seriously mar the peace and harmony of the church. In the autumn of 1854, however, a subject was brought under the notice of the brethren which had a very disturbing effect upon the minds of some, and led to a protracted discussion, which placed three of the members of the meeting in a very unpleasant relation to the rest of the brethren, and induced their ultimate separation.

In the course of the usual Scripture lesson, the propriety of according worship to the Christ was incidentally referred to, and one of the brethren questioned whether they were warranted in doing so. This was a matter which, James Bannerman maintained, did not admit of being questioned, as it was one of the things included in 'the name of Christ.' He therefore took the step of suspending himself from the fellowship of the brethren, at least in so far as regarded the breaking of bread, until the church had given a decisive answer to the question, 'Is worship to the Christ, in this age, one of the things pertaining to the name of Christ?' This course was also adopted by Mrs Bannerman and James Aitchison, who were undertood to hold the same views as himself upon the subject.

At the meeting on the forenoon of Sunday, Oct. 8, 1854, the misunderstanding which had existed for some time was brought to a crisis. Both Aitchison and Bannerman spoke very warmly upon this subject, and succeeded in creating quite a sensation by what they said. Bannerman concluded a stirring address in a thoroughly dramatic fashion by calling upon the brethren to decide that day whether they would serve God or Baal, and wound up by declaring that, as for him and his house, they would serve the Lord! After he had finished speaking, Andrew Tait rose and made a most earnest and solemn appeal to these two brethren, urging them, before God, to consider whether they had not been guilty of

falsehood in the charges they had insinuated against the brethren. Francis Renwick also made a very impressive appeal to them to consider well the words that had been spoken, and to weigh properly their grave import; but apparently his admonition was unheeded.

The remarks made by James Bannerman at this meeting were understood to convey his resignation, and that of his wife and James Aitchison; but they continued to attend the meeting as usual, and the two brethren took part in the proceedings just as formerly, with the exception that none of the three broke bread with the church. This proceeding was objected to by some of the brethren as irregular; and in consequence a special meeting of the church was held on the evening of Wednesday, Oct. 18, to consider the whole question. James Aitchison and the Bannermans attended this meeting, and the subject was very fully gone into. The church, however, could not see that the addressing of prayer and praise to Jesus was enjoined upon Christians in this age, but declined to give any formal deliverance upon the subject. At the same time, Aitchison and Bannerman were given to understand that, if they could not hold fellowship with the church under these circumstances, the church could not extend to them the privilege of speaking in their meetings, as had previously been done. These three individuals, in consequence, discontinued their attendance at the meetings of the church, and it was understood that for a short time afterwards they met by themselves and observed the breaking of bread.

Some further communication, however—extending over a year—took place between them and the church before they were finally disunited. It appeared that James Bannerman had said to some of the brethren that he had voluntarily resigned his connection with the meeting; to others he accused the church of having cut him off from fellowship; whilst to others, again, he asserted that he had not left the meeting at all, but was simply waiting until the church should give a decision upon the question at issue between them. The matter was brought before

the church at a social meeting held on the evening of the Fast Day, April 26, 1855, in the form of the question—suggested by Alexander Swanson—'How should we conduct ourselves towards those brethren who have left us, particularly towards James Aitchison and James Bannerman?' A good deal of conversation took place upon the subject, and various suggestions were thrown out. Finally James Cameron was deputed to wait upon James Bannerman, and ask an explanation of the contradictory statements he had made regarding his leaving the meeting.

James Cameron accordingly had an interview with James Bannerman, but other six months elapsed before the result was communicated to the church. This was done at a social meeting held on the evening of the next Fast Day (Oct. 25), when James Cameron read the following memorandum he had jotted down respecting what had passed at their interview:—

The meeting professed to be constituted on belief of the 'things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' and immersion subsequent to that belief. James Bannerman holds the question of the nature of Christ to be one of the things of the name of Christ, and consequently a matter about which there should be correct knowledge, and hence no difference of opinion. He and some of the brethren, however, seem to differ as to the nature of Christ, and he considers it to be the duty of the meeting to ascertain whether the nature of Christ be really one of the things of the name. He withdrew from the meeting because what he considers the truth on the subject was called in question. He now waits to know the mind of the meeting on the subject. If the meeting does not think the nature of Christ to be one of the things of the name, he should like to know the reasons. If they do, he wishes to know precisely what they believe concerning it.

The reading of this memorandum was followed by a lengthy discussion; and by the direction of the meeting, the Secretary, on the ensuing Sunday, submitted a letter, as follows, which was approved by the church, and sent to James Bannerman:—

Tailors' Hall, 22 Potter Row,
Edinburgh, 28th October, 1855.

DEAR BROTHER BANNERMAN,—We have received from Brother James Cameron a report of a conversation which he had with you (a summary of which is subjoined), from which it appears that you are still in expectation of an answer from us regarding the matter of 'the nature of Christ.'

Your demand is not one which we can grant; for it cannot be said that *the church* has a mind upon the question. Individuals can answer for themselves to you or to any one; but we have not found reason to determine that those ideas to which you refer are included in any category of the 'things of the name of Christ' which we can gather from the teachings of the apostles to unbelievers. The presumption that these constitute a part of the gospel is therefore of no value to us.

If you have found reason to conclude that they are, we shall be happy to receive any communication of knowledge from you on this head, as we make a point not to be sealed against any reception of more information on matters of such vital importance. Nor do we decline to enter upon the fullest examination of the question when it comes up in course in our meeting.

But, even granting that the church had one mind upon this thing, and had given utterance to that, we question the propriety of your demand, conceiving that you well enough know our foundation truths, and that your duty would be more in the way of putting yourself *en rapport* with the church, by keeping within the range of its membership and judicature, to aid in its research, and to be amenable to its forbearance.

This is all we can now advise in the matter—a frank avowal of the untenableness of your position and a return to duty. Any other matter requiring consideration and judgment we shall cognise when it comes in course. Till then, we hold you as, by your own act and freewill, separate from our association.

In name of the church, yours faithfully,

GEORGE DOWIE.

*P.S.*—If Brother James Aitchison maintains the very same position as we understand you to do, and is disposed to make the same demand, you will be kind enough to show him this letter.—G. D.

With this letter was terminated the official recognition of these three individuals by the church. Some years after the death of her husband, Mrs Bannerman returned to the fellowship of the church.

### 'Church' versus 'Association.'

The resignation of Francis Renwick—with whom also Robert and Mrs Somerville went—caused great surprise and much regret to every one in the meeting. Francis was a man who, despite certain personal peculiarities, stood exceedingly high in the estimation of all the brethren; he had previously remonstrated very strongly against the action of all those who had left; and his own withdrawal came as a perfect staggerer to us all.

Francis Renwick, who was a saddler to trade, was a member of the High Street meeting in its earlier days, but went out to America some four or five years before the Tailors' Hall meeting was formed. He returned to Edinburgh, in shattered health, in the autumn of 1853, and met with us for the first time on Sunday, Aug. 7. On Wednesday, Dec. 27, he underwent a difficult and dangerous operation in the Royal Infirmary; and the consequences of the operation were such as to cause serious fears to be entertained for his life. The sympathies of every one in the meeting were strongly excited on his behalf, and incessant prayer for his recovery was made by the brethren, both individually and collectively; and, in the good providence of God, his life, though with impaired health, was spared. Francis was a man of a noble presence, of even handsome personal appearance, and of a decidedly superior cast of mind. His addresses, when he spoke in the meeting, were frequently incomprehensible to the ordinary intellect, in consequence of a difficulty he sometimes seemed to have in expressing himself; but when—as he often did—he offered up the united prayers of the assembly, his utterances were grandly eloquent, and his manner so profoundly reverential, that it never failed to strongly impress the listener. Altogether, Francis was a man so completely above the average of humanity, that we cannot expect to look upon the like of him again.

On Sunday, Oct. 26, 1856, Francis Renwick addressed the brethren in the forenoon. He said he had three things to state—first, that we had never acknowledged ourselves to be a church; second, that there was on the part of some of the brethren a denial of all spirituality of relationship to God; and third, that there was not a sufficient recognition of the importance of faith in all our deeds. He also alleged that the principles of morality were not the proper guide and stimulus of life; thus, in the service of earthly masters, we are to reckon ourselves as serving the Lord rather than man. The first and second points he held to be plain and indisputable, although the third might be questioned. Having thus delivered himself, he

sat down, and the question was then asked, what was to be done with the statements made, or what was the object in view by thus expressing them? To this there was no satisfactory answer, and the brethren began to remark upon the first point. The correctness of it was questioned by many of the brethren present, several making the avowal that they did recognise themselves as a church. Only one—Archibald Gilmour—made any opposite averment: he did not reckon that we were the church of Christ, because we wanted many of the qualities and capacities which were indispensable in the apostolic churches. At the same meeting, some of the brethren questioned the precise meaning of the second point advanced by Brother *Renwick*, but he seemed indisposed to give any further explanation respecting it.

On the following Sunday (Nov. 2), William Naismith introduced some question as to the meaning of the allusions to honouring elders, &c., which occurred in the chapter read (1 Tim. v.) During the conversation which ensued, Thomas Lawrie, who had entered and taken a seat at the table, rose and asked if he had liberty to address the meeting. After a few of the brethren had spoken in reply, it appeared that the majority denied him the privilege, upon which he withdrew. After he was gone, an attempt was made to resume the consideration of the former question, but the time was now too far gone for that. Francis Renwick then intercepted the closing psalm by asking what stage his subject was in, complaining that the forenoon had been occupied with another subject, to the exclusion of that which he had introduced on the previous Sunday. After several attempts at explanation, he rose to leave, and said he did not intend to come back. There were some persons in the meeting whom he deemed brethren, and some he did not; the latter might be—indeed were—the best men as men, yet he could not have church fellowship with them. Certain questions and remarks followed, and elicited a charge against George Dowie and James Cameron of being 'double-tongued.' He was quite beat, he said; for the question which these

brethren put—'What do you mean?' or 'I don't understand you'—was an argument he could not answer. Vindications ensued, but he would neither give an explanation nor promise to afford any opportunity for clearing up the matter, and left. At the evening meeting it was deemed necessary to assert the confidence of the church in the two brethren who had been maligned.

A letter was subsequently received from Francis Renwick, setting forth in detail the reasons of his withdrawal. This letter was a very lengthy document, extending to nineteen pages of note-paper, a great portion being taken up with Scripture quotations. The letter began as follows :—

*To the Association meeting in the Tailors' Hall, Potter Row, Edinburgh.*

That you should know my reasons for withdrawal from your fellowship, is quite proper. Here they are:—

1st. Some of you do not profess to be a part of the body of Christ—'the Church.'

2nd. Some among you do not acknowledge any spirituality.

Then followed seventeen pages, mostly filled with texts of Scripture, and explanations and applications of them in various ways, concluding as follows :—

I am as much united to those who are in Christ Jesus as ever I was. By the kindness of God I hope we ever shall remain so.

I have not said that any in the Association have denied some particular doctrines which I think revealed.

I have said but two things, to be found on the first page of this letter, marked 1st and 2nd.

FRANCIS RENWICK.

4 Gifford Park, 16th Dec., 1856.

This letter contains all that I have to bind me to any number of the body of Christ; that is, my obedience to the truth of the gospel, my acknowledging the Son of God.

You will only think amiss if you imagine I have ceased to remember doctrines and truths are also revealed. I have not forgotten, but I keep them in their proper place, when I honour the person of the Lord, in whom I am complete, by the faith of him.

If you wish to acknowledge him in me, as I do to those who confess his name, I hope you will let me know. I desire such a correspondence.

F. R.

After some delay, a reply was sent to this communication in the following terms :—

Edinburgh, 18th March, 1857.

Mr F. Renwick,

Dear Brother,—After so long a delay, the only apologies I can render for not acknowledging your letter sooner, are that several of us—myself in particular—have been much absorbed with other things; but perhaps the long pause will make coolness of judgment on both sides the more practicable.

We do not find that your letter tends to accounting for the singular step you have taken in leaving the church. All that really pertains to us to notice are the two reasons you tender in the first page—namely, 1st. Some of us do not profess to be a part of the body of Christ, the church; 2d. Some among us do not acknowledge any spirituality.

On the first point, you have heard oftener than once all that need be said by us, and may remember that only one demurred to the acknowledgment of ourselves as the church of Christ, on the ground that we had not any of those spiritual gifts which characterised the apostolic churches. But although we had all said so, would such an avowal have presented a reasonable ground for the withdrawal of any one? We think not. We have been very much astonished at the course you have pursued, and not less so at this reason which is meant to defend it.

The second point of your letter appears to us equally indefensible as a reason for leaving, even if it were true. But we are not aware of any of our number in such a state of non-belief of spirituality as you say. The two persons whom you have most distinctly named—(not in your letter, but by word)—James Cameron and George Dowie—have expressed their idea of the spiritual relationship between God and men in the hearing of the congregation, to the perfect satisfaction of all. What more do you wish?

In replying to your letter, we find ourselves more in the way of courtesy than duty, for all we can say you must have heard already, and should be prepared to judge of it. We had expected, indeed, that it would have led you to form very different conclusions, not only regarding us, but your duty toward us—to be patient and considerate, and rather bear with the shortcomings of your brethren, than peremptory in the demands of rights and respect.

We must also express our decided protest against the application of a new test of faith and fellowship which your letter implies. It does not appear to us that the disciples of old were asked if they believed in spirituality. We have need, in these times, to be careful how we frame our judgments, and how we bind our brethren.

Trusting you will give these matters due consideration, we remain, your brethren for Christ's sake,

George Dowie, *Sec.*

On Sunday, Dec. 21, 1856, Robert Somerville sent a letter intimating the resignation of himself and wife, and assigning as one of their reasons for this step, that the brethren met to discuss more than to exhort and edify one another.

After the withdrawal of these three, they continued to meet by themselves on the First Day of the week to break bread; and when the first aggregate July Meeting of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom was

held, in Edinburgh, in 1857, Francis Renwick attended it, and was permitted to take part in the proceedings, or rather to make statements which properly had nothing to do with the proceedings. He was, however, apparently so well satisfied with what took place, that the following claim to recognition by the united brotherhood was subsequently made :—

Cattle Market,
Edinburgh, 16th August, 1857.

To George Dowie, Secretary.

*From the Church meeting in Robert Somerville's, Cattle Market Gate.*

As a small company, separated from the world, by the favour of God in the Gospel of the Kingdom, and desiring very much to participate in the unity prayed for by the Lord himself, we wish the names given below to be enrolled along with the other brethren throughout the country who acknowledge the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

Francis Renwick, Saddler, 4 Gifford Park.
Robert Somerville, Cattle Market.
Elizabeth Somerville.

This claim was not opposed by any one, but it was not followed up by the claimants themselves. Before another July Meeting came round, all three had connected themselves with a small meeting of Plymouth Brethren, and their desire to be enrolled amongst the Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom existed no longer. Very shortly after this, poor Francis—who, during all these years, had been bearing about with him a body of disease and death—had to succumb to the all-powerful enemy. He fell asleep on Nov. 15, 1858.

### Falling into Infidelity.

It is a lamentable fact that a number of the brethren, both in Edinburgh and elsewhere, had declined from the faith, and become unbelievers in the Book of divine inspiration, from a very early period in the history of the several churches. As a means of checking this tendency, in Oct. 1859, a class for the study of Christian Evidences was commenced, James Cameron taking the lead. This class was held in the houses of different brethren, and was continued for several years during the winter months.

# CASES OF RE-IMMERSION.

The subject of re-immersion, on its own merits, and as it affected several churches of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, has already been dealt with at considerable length, the arguments against it by Mr John Bowes, and its vindication by Dr Thomas, having been reproduced *in extenso* as they were put forth at the time (see pp. 156–177). I come now to record several noteworthy cases of re-immersion that occurred in the early history of the Edinburgh Church, and which created much interest at the time.

## DELAYED APPLICATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP.

Two cases of a peculiar kind very soon engaged attention, in which applications for fellowship had to be postponed for a time in consequence of a difficulty connected with re-immersion.

### Robert Somerville.

The name of Robert Somerville has been mentioned in the immediately preceding pages as one who sympathised with the views entertained by Francis Renwick, and who withdrew from the meeting along with him. An application for fellowship by Robert Somerville was intimated to the meeting on Sunday, May 21, 1854. It was stated that he had been immersed some time previously, when he had a different understanding of the gospel from what he had now; that he himself did not think it necessary to be immersed again, but that if the brethren thought so, he was willing to submit to it. The brethren, in deliberating upon this application, could not consider that baptism performed under such circumstances would be the obedience of faith; and they therefore sent an answer to the applicant to the effect that, while fully appreciating his willingness to accede to the wishes of the church, they would recommend him to defer his baptism and admission into their fellowship until he should have a better comprehension of the true nature and importance of baptism.

This he did; and subsequently—on Thursday, May 24, 1855—he made the good confession, and was baptised into the one name, being received into fellowship on the following Sunday.

**Charles Smith.**

The second case was very similar to this. The applicant was Charles Smith, whose application was submitted on Sunday, Dec. 9, 1860. It was mentioned that he had previously been immersed, but it was afterwards found that he had submitted to the divine institution without the right preparation of faith. In the circumstances, the application was agreed to be withdrawn for a time. He was re-immersed on June 9, 1861, on a proper understanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and admitted into the fellowship of the church.

**RE-IMMERSIONS AFTER LONG FELLOWSHIP.**

There were also cases of persons being re-immersed a considerable time after they had been members of the meeting, from a conviction, on their part, that they had not sufficiently understood the gospel when they were first baptised.

**Mrs Robert Roberts.**

The first case of this description was a rather peculiar one, and caused considerable surprise at the time; and the circumstances attending it were such as to give rise to proceedings of an unusual kind. It occurred in this wise:—In the summer of 1860, during the period that I was living in Nottingham, a disruption in the church there took place in consequence of a disagreement upon the question of the amount of knowledge that was necessary before a person could be baptised. On this question several members—William Tudor in particular—held that a belief in the restoration and exaltation of Israel as a nation, as predicted by the prophets, was not essential to baptism, and should not be insisted upon. While this question was agitating the meeting, and was still unsettled, an aggregate meeting of brethren and sisters from various places was held in Nottingham on Sunday, May 27; and

on the following day a small company were met in the house of Samuel Richards, and talking over the Nottingham difficulty. Among them were Grierson Mitchell, from Edinburgh; Robert Roberts, from Huddersfield; and others. The talk was at times very animated, and in its course Robert Roberts, with great warmth, laid down the proposition that the restoration and exaltation of Israel was the very essence of the gospel, and no one could be properly baptised who did not understand that. I demurred to this extreme statement of the matter, but Robert insisted.

'If that be so,' I said, 'I could mention several members of the Edinburgh Church who did not believe so at the time of their baptism.'

'Who are they?'

'Well, we need not go so far to discover them, for one was your own wife.'

'She did believe that when she was baptised.'

'No, she didn't.'

'But I tell you she did.'

'And I can assure you that she did not, because she and I were both baptised about the same time, and had pretty much the same amount of knowledge, such as it was. We have often talked over the matter since, and wondered whether our apprehension of the things of the kingdom was such as to render our baptism quite valid. We were troubled with doubts about it; but as the result of our many talks, we always fell back upon what Paul wrote to the Corinthians. There were some among the Corinthians who said there was no resurrection of the dead; and we invariably came to the conclusion that, as there is no mention of the apostle's requiring persons who were ignorant of so important a doctrine as the resurrection to be re-immersed, no defect in our faith was so serious as that; and so we have allowed the matter to rest.'

'Then she SHALL be re-immersed so soon as I get back to Huddersfield,' said Robert, most decisively.

And he kept his word.

### William Norris.

From what has just been stated, it will be seen that my own position, as regards my baptism, had been far from satisfactory. The crisis through which the Nottingham Church was passing directed my attention anew to the matter; and having been appointed secretary to the Nottingham Church, and also a member of a committee of five brethren—Leonard Bell, William Tudor, Joseph Stones, Edward Turney, and myself—to draw up a statement of things necessary to be believed in order to fit a person for baptism, I had to give special consideration to the subject. That committee had a number of meetings, and went very fully into the question, and, as secretary, I had to take a note of the proceedings, and to report them to the church. The work of the committee proved abortive, so far as securing unity in the meeting was concerned; but the result was, that, while I could not bring myself to say that my baptism was altogether invalid in consequence of my paucity of the right kind of faith at the time, it was more than ever a matter of doubt; and after much careful and prayerful consideration of the subject, I came to the determination that, if there was to be any error in the case, it should be on the safe side, by being re-immersed. It caused much surprise when I mentioned my intention. Joseph Stones was among the first to whom I spoke of it, with the request that he would immerse me. At first he positively refused to do so, considering that it was altogether unnecessary; but when I fully explained to him my position, the dissatisfaction I had long felt in consequence, and my resolution to put an end to it, and further said that if he could not oblige me in this matter, I would have to ask some one else to do so, he yielded to my persuasions, and very kindly rendered me the desired service. This took place on the evening of Saturday, June 30, 1860, in the Pelham Street Baths; and I may add that I have never had cause to regret this act of obedience and faith, though so tardily rendered.

## EDINBURGH JEALOUS OF ITS REPUTATION.

The warm discussion over pre-baptismal faith, which took place in the house of Samuel Richards, as above recorded, and the re-immersion of Mrs Roberts, which so immediately followed it, gave rise to a great deal of heart-burning in Edinburgh when the facts became known there. Grierson Mitchell had given an account of the proceedings at the aggregate gathering in Nottingham, and the subsequent proceedings; and among other things, he had mentioned my allegation respecting the faith of some of the members of the Edinburgh Church at the time of their baptism, which was considered equal to charging them with not having the right faith at the time when they were understood to have put on Christ. As reported to them, my statement aroused a very strong feeling, and even loudly expressed indignation, on the part of some of the brethren.

The matter was deemed so serious, that the secretary of the church was instructed to write to me requesting an explanation of a statement which seemed to reflect injuriously upon some of them. I do not seem to have preserved any of the letters included in the correspondence which followed, and can therefore only give their general purport from memory, aided by the mention I find made of them in my journal. By the latter, I am reminded
1860 that on June 12 I received a letter upon the subject from Grierson Mitchell, and two from George Dowie. One of the letters from the latter was written as secretary of the church, and informed me how, with pain and regret, they had learned that, in the hearing of the brethren in Nottingham, I had made a statement which was considered to impugn the faith of some of the Edinburgh brethren at the time of their baptism. I was told that the Edinburgh Church was very jealous of its reputation as a congregation of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and therefore must ask me for an explanation of what I had said. The other letter by George Dowie was written to me as a personal friend, expressing regret

that the necessity for writing such an official letter had arisen, his belief that there must have been a misunderstanding somewhere, and his hope that I would be able to clear up the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. I wrote a long letter to George Dowie the same day, telling exactly what I had said, and detailing the conversation that led up to it. I find from my journal that another letter was received from George Dowie on the 16th inst., to which I replied; but I have not the least recollection of the contents of either. Another letter came to me on the 28th, asking me for 'the names of those in Edinburgh who did not, in my estimation, come up to Robert's standard of faith at the time of their baptism.' I replied to this on the following day, and gave the names of seven such persons. (I have the names recorded in my journal, but I do not think it advisable to repeat them here). I included myself among the number, but said I had arranged to have my name removed from the category on the following evening, as I intended to be re-immersed then. I further said, respecting the other six, that I did not say that their baptism was invalid. That was a matter between each individual's conscience and God alone. I judged none of them; but I had a right to judge myself, which I had done, with the result just stated. This explanation seemed to be satisfactory; and I had a brief note from George Dowie saying so, and that none of the six persons supposed to have been incriminated by my remarks had any doubt as to the legitimacy of their baptism.

It may be mentioned that there was a special reason why the Edinburgh Church should have been so jealous of their reputation in this matter. A 'Church Roll' of the whole British brotherhood had just been issued, and the compiler had been severely censured for having included in it two churches, in each of which were one or two persons who had not been immersed since believing the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Edinburgh was particularly anxious not to be regarded as a third church in that position.

## A BATCH OF RE-IMMERSIONS.

Readers of the *Messenger of the Churches* for June 1863 were somewhat startled by the appearance of the following paragraph among the intelligence for that month :—

HUDDERSFIELD.—During the past month, three brethren and a sister—namely, Robert Roberts, Gilbert and Mrs Oliver, and Isaac Clisset (of Heckmondwike)—finding that their faith at the time of their immersion had been incompetent, have taken a new start, with more correct knowledge, and been (re)-immersed into the name of the Lord Jesus. They request notice of this in the *Messenger*.

### Robert Roberts.

Three of the four persons here mentioned had been at one time members of the Edinburgh Church. I had forgotten the circumstances under which Robert Roberts was re-immersed, and finding no mention of the circumstance in his autobiography, I recently applied to his widow for information. In reply she wrote as follows :—'In answer to your inquiry as to the reason of Robert's re-immersion, it was the outcome of a conviction—the result of more mature understanding of the Word—that his knowledge of the nature of Christ's death, as a sacrifice for sin, was defective at the time of his previous immersion, he being at that time, I believe, only thirteen years of age.' A very sufficient reason, surely.

### Gilbert E. Oliver.

In a letter to me, dated May 27, 1863, intimating his re-immersion, Gilbert Oliver stated his reason for it as follows :—

As far as I am concerned, it is a year or two since I became dissatisfied with my first immersion. At first I felt doubtful as to whether I believed sufficient in reference to the whole gospel, to render my immersion a valid one; but latterly I felt persuaded that my understanding of the things of the name of Jesus Christ was imperfect and to some extent incorrect. When I look back to the year 1858, when I was first immersed, I find that the death of

Christ did not receive that prominence which, in the teachings of the brethren, it ought to have received, and I am sure I did not understand why it was necessary that Christ should die for me, nor did I see the importance to be attached to the resurrection. I now see that, without the death and resurrection of Christ, no son of Adam could be redeemed from death.

**Mrs Gilbert E. Oliver.**

I do not exactly remember the reason why Mrs Oliver also saw it to be her duty to be re-immersed, but I believe it was not that she was ignorant on any particular doctrine, but that her general knowledge of the gospel hope was not up to the standard she now considered necessary in candidates for baptism.

**A Re-Immersion in Glasgow.**

It was reported in the *Messenger*, from Glasgow, that, in consequence of special consideration which was given in the end of 1864 to the preaching concerning the Kingdom of God, one of the brethren—William Smith—determined to be re-immersed, he averring that at the time when he before submitted to the institution of baptism, he was not sufficiently instructed in the matter.

## OPPOSITION TO RE-IMMERSION FROM WITHIN.

At an early stage in the history of the church, there was found to be some opposition to re-immersion under the conditions which had been assented to when the church was formed.

**William Laing.**

The one, in particular, who, during many years, showed that he had no sympathy with re-immersion because of a defective faith, was William Laing. He was one of those who attended the first meeting that was held to consider the conditions under which a church could be Scripturally organised, and at that meeting—(see p. 133), he expressed his conviction that, according to 1 Cor. xv. 3, the gospel was limited to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

The other inquirers, however, saw reason to believe that the gospel had a much more extensive scope than this; and finding that he did not agree with what was the general conviction in the matter, he did not continue his attendance at the inquiry meetings. At that time he was a member of the small church then under the pastorate of Mr W. G. Moncrieff.

Within a month after the formation of the Edinburgh Church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—on the evening of the Fast Day (Thursday, April 21, 1853)—the members held their first social meeting. Several 'strangers' were present at this meeting, among them being William Laing; and an invitation having been given to them to make some remarks, William Laing took the opportunity to animadvert upon the basis on which the meeting had been formed as being far too exclusive. Recalling from memory what he spoke, it was something like the following:—'I am more of a latitudinarian than you are. I believe that Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth to establish his kingdom and bless all the nations with his righteous reign; but I would not unchristianise a person who did not believe that. I believe that the Messiah is to restore Israel as a nation to the land promised of God to their fathers; but I would not unchristianise a man who thought otherwise. I believe that we have eternal life only through Jesus Christ, and as the gift of God; but I would not unchristianise one who did not agree with me in this.' And some more in a similar strain. As John Forman remarked privately, after the meeting was over, William Laing just 'kicked' at our order, and took all the pith out of the gospel. His remarks very much displeased some of the brethren; but as it was not thought desirable that our first social meeting should be turned into a controversial one, by re-opening a discussion upon first principles, which had already been fully gone into, and very clearly defined, William Laing's critical observations were suffered to pass without note or comment, although I afterwards learned there was one individual who would fain have had a go at him.

After Mr Moncrieff had left Edinburgh, and his small church was broken up, William Laing attended the meeting in the Tailors' Hall for a considerable time; and finding that he could not do better in the matter of fellowship, he made application for admission into the membership of the church. The mode in which his application was treated was altogether unique. His application was considered after the forenoon meeting was closed on Sunday, Nov. 23, 1856; and in consequence of his former seeming condemnation of the basis upon which the church had been formed, the applicant was asked to give a statement of his faith, which he did in the presence and in the hearing of all the brethren—just as his former remarks had been. He gave a very full statement of his personal belief, with which no fault could be found; and he was consequently unanimously received into fellowship.

### Mrs William Laing.

William Laing's opposition to re-immersion still continued, however, and opportunities for showing it afterwards occurred. Mrs Laing had been in much the same position as her husband when first immersed, having but a hazy perception of the Gospel of the Kingdom, if she perceived it all. Three years after her husband's reception into the meeting, with more enlightenment, she was desirous to rectify the deficiency by being again immersed. This step was strongly disapproved of by her husband, however, who tried all in his power to dissuade her from it, and it was stated at the time that he even threatened to leave the meeting himself if she persisted in her purpose. All these attempts to prevent her from 'fulfilling all righteousness,' however, proved unavailing, as she could not satisfy her own conscience that her former immersion was valid. As her husband would not assist her in putting her in what she considered the right position, James Cameron was got to do it for her, and she was immersed at the Public Baths, along with Catherine Preshaw (afterwards Mrs William Wilson), on the morning of Sunday, Jan. 29, 1860, and received into fellowship

the same day. It is curious that no mention is made in the annual church report of Mrs Laing's baptism, although that of Catherine Preshaw is reported; and in the *Messenger* for Feb. 1860 it is merely said that 'on the last Sunday of January, one young woman was immersed and added to the church'—Mrs Laing being again ignored.

**Mrs Henderson.**

In another case, William Laing had nearly succeeded in persuading an applicant for fellowship, who had become dissatisfied with her first immersion, and had made up her mind to be re-immersed, to abandon her intention, and be received upon a baptism before an understanding and belief of the things of the kingdom. The applicant in this case was a Mrs Henderson, an elderly woman, who had just come from London, where she had been a member of a Campbellite meeting. I had met her in London some time previously, having learned through Mrs Noble that she now believed the Gospel of the Kingdom, and desired to be immersed upon that belief, having come to see that her Campbellite election was defective of vital elements in the gospel. Owing to difficulties in the way, she had never been able to carry out her purpose; and I was rather surprised when, one Sunday forenoon, William Laing intimated that Mrs Henderson, an aged believer, who had just come from London, desired to have fellowship with us, and would have been present that day, but having only arrived the previous night, she was rather fatigued, and had not ventured out; but it was her intention to unite with us. I was sitting beside Gilbert Oliver, and said to him, in an under-tone, 'She has not been immersed since believing,' and was about to say so to the meeting; but thinking it just possible she might have been immersed without my having heard of it, I checked myself, and decided to make inquiry first. Accordingly, that same evening I went out to the house of William Laing, where she was staying, to ascertain how the matter stood. After a little talk, I said to her, 'When were you re-immersed, Mrs Henderson?' This question at once

put her into a state of great agitation, and she told me that she had not been re-immersed, as William Laing had persuaded her that it was not necessary, she having, at the time of her baptism, believed that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was her Saviour, having died for her sins, and that her subsequent knowledge of the things of the kingdom did not make any difference. I expressed my surprise at this, as she had, when in London, been quite convinced that her first baptism was invalid, through defective knowledge, and had made up her mind to be re-immersed upon the Scriptural basis. As a result of our talk, I deemed it my duty to mention the circumstances to James Cameron and George Dowie; and, without going into detail, I need only say further, that she was re-immersed on Feb. 25, 1866, and received into fellowship. The case is thus recorded in the secretary's report for the year :—

Our aged sister Mrs Henderson is a woman whose vigour of life to all appearance is nearly quite used up; yet in her old age and frailty she has found that it was good for her to yield obedience to the Lord Jesus in his appointed way, and this notwithstanding her having passed current for years as a baptised believer during a portion of her term of residence in London. This extraordinary step is to us not extraordinary; for we have long satisfied ourselves that only those who have believed the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ have any right to be baptised.

### 'A Little Leaven.'

These last two cases show how, at a very early period, 'a little leaven' was introduced into the Edinburgh Church. The leavening process went on for years, till ultimately the whole mass became so permeated, that, in 1894, it was agreed to receive persons whose pre-baptismal knowledge did not include the things of the kingdom and the name—only two persons dissenting. Eight years later (with two dozen dissenters) the Gospel of the Kingdom was discarded as pre-baptismal faith, and the communion made 'free to all baptised persons holding the common faith of Christendom!' How are the mighty fallen!

# TERMS OF FELLOWSHIP.

### No 'Creed' Adopted.

As has already been stated, 'in the beginning' there was no written constitution, owing to the decided objection which some of the brethren had to adopting what might be considered a 'creed.' I have always thought that this was a mistake, and never could see the great danger which these brethren perceived in merely putting into an intelligent form, and in writing, what was clearly understood and firmly believed by all the original members. Had this been done at the first, it would have saved some serious misapprehensions in after years, and prevented some rather unpleasant discussions. As a matter of fact, they were ultimately compelled, in self-vindication, when misrepresentations were current as to what they believed, to draw up and print a statement of the 'Things most surely believed amongst us.' Of this, however, a good deal will have to be said further on in this history.

### Freedom of Inquiry Agreed to.

Although there was perfect unanimity on the matters of examination at the preliminary meetings, and a resolution that 'whereunto we had already attained we should walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing,' yet the provision was made that any brother introducing to the attention of the church any new question or a new phase of an old one, was to be considered perfectly in order, and that the duty of the church was to hear, examine, and judge. This liberty of sifting and examining was to be extended to things that had been agreed upon as well as to all others, provided the Scriptural teaching were taken as the rule for the discussion of the topic in question. No danger was anticipated from such freedom; indeed, the greatest evils previously experienced by any in ecclesiastical matters had arisen from the check put upon such inquiries.

### The Spirit to be Shown in Preaching.

The unobtrusiveness recommended seems proper and becoming, not only because circumstances in our day require it, but it appears to have been the very thing recommended by the apostle to those in similar circumstances. Peter exhorted those scattered abroad to 'be ready always to give an answer to every man that asked them a reason for the faith that was in them, with meekness and fear.' The position of those scattered ones was somewhat similar to our own; and this seems to be the utmost that was expected of them in regard to witness-bearing for the truth. The apostolic bearing, however, was very different. They prayed that God would grant signs and wonders in order that they might speak this word with boldness; and it is added that, being filled with the Holy Spirit, they 'spake the Word of God with boldness, and with great power gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus'—(Acts iv. 33).

### Dealing with Popular Religious Error.

In regard to general tactics, when coming to close quarters with the enemy, I would just make a general remark. Make known the truth with the least possible reference to popular errors, consistent with making it thoroughly understood. It is of the utmost consequence to secure the sympathy of those we would teach; but how can this be done if the course pursued be rather fitted to rouse their antipathy? It should be remembered that, in the mind of the religious portion of the public, certain degrees of divergence from popular theology are associated with infidelity, and that to give any countenance to such views, even by attending a meeting where they are discussed, is considered the incipient stage of unsoundness in the faith. Hence advertisements containing offensive statements of the popular faith, and repetition of such in public addresses, as well as disparaging remarks on the clergy, should be avoided. Is it not sufficient matter of rejoicing, that persons are willing to lend an ear to the truth, without expecting them to exercise such an amount of self-abnegation as to be content to listen to an indictment charging them with error on some of their most cherished religious views, or perchance to a tirade of what is almost certain to have the appearance of the abuse of those whom they have been accustomed to revere as the

authorised teachers of Christianity? In such circumstances, the most natural impression would be, that the main object was the exposure of error, rather than the advocacy of truth, and that the speaker was jealous of the clergy, because he aspired to a similar position himself. Besides, does it not argue a want of faith in the truth when its advocate is so impatient of error as to attempt its destruction by other means than the truth itself? If the truth be received into a good and honest heart, will it not supplant error of every shade, without the aid of the questionable means referred to? Paul's advice to Titus regarding the bishops is much to the point. 'Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, THAT HE MAY BE ABLE BY SOUND DOCTRINE both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.' And again to Timothy: 'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.'

### A Poet Laureate's Suggestions.

Grierson Mitchell entertained views on the subject very similar to those stated by James Cameron towards the close of the foregoing article; and he expressed them in his own favourite favourite fashion, as follows:—

### The Preacher.

What should the preacher preach,
  And how should his words be told?
He should stand, and meekly teach,
  As they taught in the days of old.

He must be bold beside,
  That the truth he hath to tell
May make all honest hearts confide
  In what is told so well.

How should the preacher walk
  When his wise words are done?
He should straightway go and work those words,
  Omitting never one.

### Proposed Special Appointments.

Carrying out his scheme of church improvements, George Dowie, at the forenoon meeting on Sunday, June 8, 1856, gave a long address upon the harmonious working of the various members of the Christian church, and concluded by making a suggestion to the effect that we should look out from amongst us the persons best fitted to speak, to pray, to read, or to do any other duty that had to be performed, and that these best fitted persons should be specially appointed to do these respective duties. The proposal met with strong opposition from some of the brethren. It was fully considered at a subsequent week-night meeting, and several speakers thought it would interfere too much with the liberty of individual action; and as, from the continued hostility that was shown, it was evident that it would not conduce to harmonious working, it was agreed not to be adopted.

### Proposed Liturgy.

Another of George Dowie's proposed improvements was submitted at the evening meeting on Sunday, May 3, 1857. On that occasion he spoke on the subject of prayer, and dwelt particularly on the desirability that our words should be well ordered when we unitedly approached the throne of grace in our public assembly. To give point to his remarks, he proposed that, for certain special occasions, written or previously arranged prayers should be substituted for extemporaneous ones. This proposal, however, was received with anything but favour by some of the brethren, who saw in it the thin end of the wedge which was to introduce a full-blown liturgy into the services of the church—a thing that was peculiarly abhorrent to them. It consequently had to be abandoned.

### A Lapsed Arrangement.

In going through my memoranda, I find notes of a number of resolutions come to by the church at different times, which, for various reasons, were afterwards suffered

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# 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

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### A Difficulty and How it was Treated.

It was not long before an opportunity occurred for practically applying the principle that had thus been laid down. It so happened that, among the relatives and friends of some of the brethren, there were a few persons who, though having believed the things of the kingdom, and having been baptised in that faith, remained in connection with the religious associations to which they belonged prior to thus yielding obedience to the truth. On several occasions during the first few months of the church's existence, believers in this position were present at the meeting, and permitted to take part with the brethren in the breaking of bread. This proceeding was objected to by some as irregular, and the subject was taken into consideration, to know what course ought to be adopted in the circumstances, at the week-night meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 1853. Great difference of opinion was expressed in the matter, some of the brethren advocating a continuance of the liberty that had been previously enjoyed, others urging that it should be granted only under certain restrictions, whilst a few contended for strict exclusiveness, in limiting the fellowship of the church to persons who had believed the things of the kingdom, been baptised upon that belief, and separated themselves from those who did not hold the faith of the kingdom as the gospel. It was ultimately resolved that the fellowship of the church should not be open to those Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom who remained members of churches in which baptism upon a belief of the Gospel of the Kingdom was not recognised as the basis of union; except in cases where these baptised believers were so situated as to be prevented from meeting regularly with a church constituted on such principles. The propriety and expediency of making the exception here indicated were condemned by one or two of the brethren; but the proposal received the concurrence of the majority of those present, and was adopted as the decision of the church.

### Baptism and Fellowship.

In connection with this same subject, another difficulty which engaged attention about the same time was the fact that, occasionally persons were baptised by some of the brethren, the individuals so baptised not joining the meeting, but remaining in the several churches with which they had been connected. Thus, on the evening of Friday, Sept. 8, 1854, Robert Norrie, James Forman, and Andrew Hart were baptised in the South Bridge Hall by James Cameron, after giving a satisfactory confession of their faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom; but none of the three at that time joined the meeting. There was a disposition on the part of some to condemn the conduct of the baptiser under such circumstances; but, after consideration, it was found that there were no Scriptural grounds for censure, although it was unanimously agreed to be desirable, in all cases, that persons baptised in the one faith should identify themselves in fellowship with those of the same faith.

### The Temperance Question.

Another subject that received a good deal of attention was the advisability of requiring, as a condition of fellowship, abstinence from intoxicating liquors. As a matter of fact, I believe that at that time it was the practice of nearly every member, if not of every individual member, to so abstain, and some had never tasted alcoholic liquors all their lives. While unanimous, however, in recommending abstinence as the rule for all, it could not be shown that there was Scriptural authority for making this a condition of fellowship; and in the absence of such authority it was therefore resolved to leave the matter just as it had been. It was a little remarkable that the next number of Dr Thomas's *Herald* which was received after this decision had been come to, mentioned that the church in Dundee had had this same subject under consideration; and it was found that the doctor's remarks on the matter coincided exactly with the view that had been taken by the brethren in Edinburgh. (See pp. 63–65).

### The Gospel of the Kingdom Impugned and Maintained.

Towards the end of the year 1859, a rather remarkable case occurred, in which an attempt was made to subvert the faith upon which the Edinburgh Church had been founded, but which resulted in that faith being firmly but meekly maintained. Margaret Sinclair, a young woman who had previously been a member of one of the meetings in Glasgow, having come to reside in Edinburgh, was received into the fellowship of the church then meeting in the Tailors' Hall on Oct. 23, 1859. Not long after her admission, in the course of conversation with some of the brethren she spoke in a way not at all in accordance with the principle upon which the meeting had been constituted. She also wrote to three of the brethren to the effect that it was not necessary to believe the things of the kingdom previous to baptism. She herself acknowledged that she had not so believed before baptism. She affirmed that she had believed with her whole heart that Jesus had died for her sins, and she had joyfully accepted him as her Saviour, and she had been baptised upon that belief, but without knowing or taking any account of his coming again to establish his kingdom and fulfill all the promises made unto the fathers. She maintained that her subsequent enlightenment in the things of the kingdom and the name was simply adding to her knowledge, and that her previous immersion was not invalidated, although she was not so well informed. As this was quite contrary to the terms on which the church had been founded, and to which all the members had assented, her case was considered at the meeting of the church on Sunday, March 18, 1860. In consequence of what was then stated, it was reluctantly decided to suspend her from fellowship until she had properly obeyed the gospel conditions; and James Watson and William Wilson were appointed to wait upon her and endeavour to bring her to a proper state of mind. These two brethren accordingly had an interview with her on April 1. They endeavoured to show her that the gospel had relation to the Kingdom of God, and that an

# SOCIAL CHURCH LIFE.

### A Special Feature of the Edinburgh Church.

If there was one feature more than another that specially characterised the Edinburgh Church in its earlier years, it was the remarkable manner in which the social element was developed in the members. Consisting largely of persons in the very hey-day of life, full of restless activity, and overflowing with youthful spirit, to such an extent were the social amenities cultivated, that in certain quarters this cultivation by and bye came to be spoken of as if it were something to be deprecated. 'Singing, marmalade, and prayer,' was the reproachful phrase one traducer invented to cast discredit upon the leading members of the Edinburgh Church. The fact is, however, that until doctrinal differences had arisen, and had caused unhappy dissensions among the brethren, there did not appear to be any incongruity in this *tria juncta in una*, and the traducers themselves appeared to enjoy the social amenities of the Edinburgh brethren as much as any one.

### A Necessary Record.

It may perhaps be deemed rather out of place, in a record of this nature, to include the social proceedings of the Edinburgh Church. Without this, however, I feel that my task would be incomplete, and that any reader whose knowledge of that church was derived solely from this narrative, would not receive a correct impression regarding it. Considering the leading position which the Edinburgh brethren for many years held in propagating the Gospel of the Kingdom, and in organising and assisting small companies of believers in all parts of the country, it seems to me desirable that this feature of the Edinburgh Church should not be omitted in the work I have undertaken, and in the execution of which there are documents extant which give interesting glimpses into the social church life of bygone days.

### The Key-Note.

The key-note to the whole matter was clearly and firmly struck, and in no uncertain tone, at the very origin of the church, and, most appropriately, at its first social meeting (April 21, 1853), to which reference has already been made. In an interesting address which he gave at that meeting, George Dowie drew an elaborate and highly coloured picture of what the Christian Church ought to do and to be. In addition to witnessing for the truth, and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, he said it 'should be a benefit society, a building society, a mutual improvement society, a choral society, and every other kind of society that was or could be desiderated.' This was certainly aiming at a great deal, and yet I do not think any one can reasonably urge that it was aiming too high, or endeavouring to accomplish too much. For myself, I must say that I was quite charmed with the dazzling picture which our indefatigable brother set before us as something to be attempted, and quite capable of accomplishment, if set about in the right way. George Dowie himself undoubtedly believed in the practicability of his ideal, and no man laboured more assiduously than he towards the realisation of the high standard he thus set up for us.

### Separation from the World.

As a first principle in the social system of the church, George Dowie urged that there should be a separation, as far as possible, in our intimate relations with those who were not of the household of faith. To be mixed up in our social relations with aliens, he contended, had a tendency to weaken our efforts for the propagation of the truth, and our interest in the meeting. This view he developed and enforced at some length in an article which he wrote for the manuscript *Messenger*, and which was subjected to some severe criticism at the time. This article, which is well worth reproducing in these pages, was as follows :—

## THE BOUNDS OF SECULAR ALLIANCE.

When the apostle Paul exhorts, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,' our safest presumption is that, in every controllable alliance, the principles of separation and conservatism should guide us. So great a blessing is predicated of this separation from the unclean thing, that it is a wonder any one should need to be exhorted to it. 'I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty'—(2 Cor. vi. 15–18). But this separation has its bounds and qualifications. The apostles sagaciously recognised these and provided for them. 'I wrote unto you,' says Paul in an epistle, 'not to company with fornicators; yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolators;' for then must ye needs go out of the world;' but with a brother of that character 'have no company—no not to eat.' This latitude is exceedingly homologous with the scope of a system which, scorning the ethnological and political distinctions of the wide world, holds more sacred the domestic and commercial relations of our own small sphere. 'In the new man there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. Yet let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called, be that bond or free, married or single, rich or poor.' But if the bond can be free, let him see to it; if the single desire to marry, he does not sin; if the poor can be rich, there is no offence—let them do it.

### Position of the Early Christians.

The best illustrative exposition of these canons is to be found in the history of the first Christians. While Jesus himself was a carpenter, Peter, Andrew, James, and John fishermen, Paul a tentmaker, Joseph of Arimathea was probably an attorney, Matthew was a gatherer of Roman tribute, Cornelius a captain in the Roman army, Lydia a seller of purple, and Philemon a slaveholder. Yet to one and all came the teachings of the Lord and his apostles, 'Ye are one in Christ;' 'In honour prefer one another;' 'Use hospitality one to another without grudging;' 'Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous;' &c. Nay, were not the friendships of former standing still maintained?—as is indicated by the hypothetical case of 'one that believeth not inviting the disciples to a feast, and they being dis-

posed to go,' and there being offered the flesh of heathen sacrifice to eat—(1 Cor. x. 27)—reserve of prejudice or even of judgment being admitted, to avoid offence to Jew or Gentile, as well as to the Church of God—(verse 32).

### The Business Relation.

Now it is a very nice question indeed, how far all these things are compatible. On the one hand, we are in danger of being too finical; on the other, of being too latutidinarian. Yet, except in a few cases, there seems to have been no difficulty on the part of the early disciples. The general aspect of Christian manliness, as indicated in the history and epistolary allusions of the New Testament, is the best clue to the whole matter—the simplest solution of the whole case. But while we may in this wide and comprehensive manner treat the whole question in its distant history, we feel the need of more exactness when it comes close enough to touch ourselves and affect our own behaviour. We are associated with the world from necessity and from choice. We must needs, as the early disciples did, transact business with the outer people, and may for this purpose be associated with them for the greater portion of our time; and yet in other matters, where there is a choice, may have no sympathy or association with them at all. The New Testament cases already cited show that the Christians of the first ages sought perfection of character without any great change of circumstances. If Lydia ministered to the vanity of the Orientals by selling purple, WILLIAM may not be out of his duty in making jewellery, even although he thinks the use of it wrong in any disciple. If Cornelius was a Roman soldier almost from choice, we need not shrug our shoulders at GEORGE winning his bread by printing Catholic missals, or binding Episcopal and Presbyterian Creeds, nor expect him to give up his situation because *The Age of Reason* and *Lieben Jesu* come through his hands. In these and similar matters we seldom have a choice; we therefore presume there is no sin in having to do with them. If we can avoid them, well and good; if not, let us thole the evil. There is a difference between discussing business with a fornicator or extortioner in the market place, and making an associate of him in our home; and the world knows and appreciates such a distinction. We are not polluted by the reception of honest gains, although the person who pays us our wages may have wrung them out

of the blood and sweat of the poor. If we can keep at a greater distance from oppression, or can at all moderate it by our influence, let us do it by all means.

### The Use of Leisure.

But perhaps the business relation has the least difficulty about it. In matters of choice, the case is very different. The business or profession has its own range of duties and responsibilities, but the proper use of our leisure or amateur time is even more important. It is properly speaking our life—it is the life we live, and are not driven to.

### Family Relationship.

But there is an intermediate condition induced by family relationship. It may or may not be such as we desire, yet its demands are imperative. When it lies only within the range of our own household, its duties are simple enough, and the apostles have well instructed us in them; but beyond that no man should hold himself in bondage—no, not for the friendship of his uncle or his cousin-german.

### The Marriage Relationship.

The marriage relationship is very much a matter of choice. With some it may not be; but with those who are enough aware in good time, it is entirely so. The teaching of the apostle Paul, we submit, is very plain on this point. The counsel, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,' &c., gives unequivocal intimation of the duty of being eclectic in arranging for a union for life. In fact, apart from this, the very common-sense or natural view of the case would suggest as much; for if we consult our own convenience, we shall be cautious in allying ourselves with those for whom we have no regard. Again, the incidental character of the allusion to marriage 'only in the Lord,' for the widow—(1 Cor. vii. 39)—rather gives strength to the exhortation regarding unequal yoking—as if it were a matter which no one would question—a settled principle with the saints.

### The Choice of Friends.

As the simplest way of arranging our other friendships, we should use the stranger as cordially as our relative by a second remove; and indeed we are at perfect liberty to

choose our associates from all the world. Each one, however, will bring his own blessing or curse with him: 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise;' but 'a companion of fools shall be destroyed.' If any one desires the utmost use of his liberty in Christ, let him be careful in the choice of his friends. It may sometimes be necessary for a believer to do the unpleasant duty of shaking off an improper companion: let it be done promptly, yet with kindness. It may be done with a few sentences, to the effect that 'I have now subjects and interests to engage my mind with which you have little sympathy; therefore I must decline the continuance of so much of your society as I have hitherto had; but I hope we will be friendly yet,' &c. Perhaps this might be qualified by the occasional refusal of an invitation, and still avoiding all discourtesy or dryness. In all such things, however, the case of the Corinthian dining out, already referred to—(1 Cor. x. 27)—would indicate the latitude of primitive Christianity. A man is known by the company he keeps: and in those instances where the friends can be selected, too much precaution can hardly be used in the choice.

#### Association with Persons of Similar Tastes.

We are led into such friendships and alliances most frequently through the interest awakened by questions of broad public excitement. Thus, a man has addicted himself to the study of political economy and the workings of diplomacy, and we do not wonder at him attending the meetings of the Anti-Corn-Law League; another has a taste for music, and he therefore associates with the Harmonic Union, to enjoy the choruses of Handel, as well as to hear them; a third finds congenial excitement in the exhibition of art; and so forth. In all such cases, the occasional association of persons of similar tastes leads to acquaintance which may ripen into friendship of a very intimate kind. This is where we require to be on our guard; and although we may find it difficult to blame one so permitting the absorption of his time and interest, he will nevertheless find the inconvenience of it himself.

#### Mixing in Politics.

Here the duties of the elector challenge attention. The simplest way to view these is to reckon that those who have sufficiently studied parliamentary and municipal

affairs, and are qualified by their position to register themselves as electors, should do so, and consider that the responsibility which they thus assume is one whose duties they are accountable to God for. Sufficient scope exists here for the manifestation of such Christian uprightness and uncorruptness of benevolence as may shame those truckling politicians who are more bent on the success of their party than the integrity of their own character.

Christianity need not shun the hustings or the polling booth; but it must despise the vices which too frequently characterise both. If the good always keep aloof from these, when will they be reformed? To those who know how to do right, we look for the right being done. Our non-professional time is not all spare time. There are duties which we cannot avoid, which claim our first attention: these are the duties of the church and of the family. If a man can find time after them for anything else, let him do it, and do it heartily. The excellent training and moral command which the reception of the truth and the association of Christians have together fostered, should signalise such a one as the best qualified for office and rule in any society; and if the society is one with a proper object, it is well to find its administration in the hands of the God-fearing. From the juvenile Band of Hope to the Houses of Parliament there should be no position of influence or usefulness shut against the disciples of the Lord Jesus; particularly in a country governed on such liberal principles as Great Britain. The magisterial office, indeed, is one of superlative fitness for those who are under training for the lordship of the whole earth—a lordship combining the sympathy of a priest with the lordship of a king.

### Friendly and Assurance Societies.

But it should never be lost sight of, that the divinely appointed society for the amelioration of human life and renovation of human character is the church. Having in another place * referred to its wide service in this respect, I may be saved any lengthened remarks upon that now. There is one point, however, on which I would fain be particular; that is, the connection with friendly and assurance societies. The men of the world have, in their wisdom, established societies on the basis of certain calcu-

* See *Gospel Witness*, No. 10, page 153.

lations, whereby are provided to the members and their friends benefits proportionate to the amount of their subscriptions, and contingent upon their sickness or death. By this arrangement the earnings of the whole time of health are taxed to provide for the anticipated sickness or other misfortune; and thus in every case the person is 'through the fear of death all his lifetime subject to bondage.' What a pity it is for any one made free by the liberty of Christ to entangle himself again with such a yoke! We do not presume too much upon faith in the promises of God when we trust Him with this span of mortal life after we have confided to Him the safety of the unbounded and eternal. 'If God has given the greater gift, shall He withhold the less?' 'He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?'—(Rom. viii. 32). Nay, has not this Son himself taught us that, as God clothes the flowers of the field, and feeds the birds of the air, He will also both clothe and feed us, who are of more account. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you'—(Matt. vi. 24–34). Our faith were nothing at all if only exercised on the far future, out of view and to some extent appreciable only by a high stretch of intellectuality. 'God is a very present help in the time of trouble.' The present is more fraught with evil to us than any future can be. Mark that the teachings of Jesus above quoted have to do with this life—verifying the saying of the apostle, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.' If the profit is not in the purveying of those things which the present existence demands, will any one be kind enough to tell us what it does consist in. Now, we hold that no man can serve two masters. God has given us His pledge—what need have we of the guarantee of Mammon?

### Have Faith in God.

When we hear any that believe not arguing upon this point, and citing instances, let us be careful of their logic, for they want the chief premiss—that is, the seeking of the Kingdom of God *first*. Their conclusions must therefore be false. The promise of God and the experience of His saints are above all such sophistry. 'I have been young,' said David, 'and now am old; yet have I not seen

the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread'—(Ps.xxxvii.) And the experience of David is not peculiar to the dispensation under which he lived. God is as careful of His folk now as in the days of old. If it is a tax upon our faith to separate ourselves from such associations, let us so tax it. It will stand a good strain if it is genuine; and if it is not, the sooner we quit our dependence upon it the better.

**We should be the Best Citizens.**

But there are other purposes for which men league themselves together. With all the perversity of the human race, there are some who now and again strike into a right way. On the bleak and cheerless moor of selfishness, benevolence does sometimes well forth and bless the whole of humanity with its delightsome ministrations. Should those who are taught to do good unto all men be the last to serve in such a noble mission? Surely not. Wherever there is a positive good to be done—wherever there is a positive evil to be removed, wherever the demands of the poor and needy are made, wherever ths cry of the unfortunate is heard—let the Christian be first to help, to sympathise, to cheer. We ought to show that, so far from our faith making us bad citizens, it makes us the very best, unfitting no man for the faithful doing of every good work and the discharge of every right duty.

**The Speciality in Doing Good.**

The only qualification of this wide benevolence which need be made is this: 'As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, *specially* to those who are of the household of faith.' Whenever we have exhausted this speciality, we may turn round and say to the whole world, 'At your service!'—at your service to bless you, to show you the example of God's character, doing good to the unthankful and averse, blessing our enemies, and praying for those who despitefully use us and persecute us. And if this service is most efficiently done by associating with others so disposed, although they are not of the faith, we shall give all the aid and all the heart we have to spare, as our contribution towards the alleviation of the evils of this state and the diffusion of the blessing of Him 'which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it;' who 'giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not.'

Blessed be God for the power to benefit one another!

### Complaint against the Younger Brethren.

In conducting the meetings, at a time when there was no president to call upon any one to do anything, and the whole of the service was purely voluntary, it was a frequent cause of complaint that the younger brethren, while ready enough with their services in other respects, never spoke in the meeting. Although repeatedly urged to contribute their share to the general enlightenment and edification, a feeling of shyness prevented them from doing their duty in this respect. At length, it was solemnly decreed that, at a social meeting, to be held on the evening of the Fast Day, Thursday, Oct. 22, 1857, the silent brethren should be taken to task, and called upon to give their reasons for refusing to teach or exhort in the meeting. This threatened to be a very trying ordeal to the parties concerned; but Grierson G. Mitchell, one of the young men implicated, gallantly came to the rescue of his fellow delinquents, and voluntarily undertook to be their spokesman on the occasion; and as he put their defence into one of his happiest and most characteristic effusions, they could not have had a better champion. It should be stated that the writer was not able to be present at the social meeting himself, having gone on a visit to Dundee at the time; but the apology was read by Alick Mowatt, another member of the silent fraternity.

### A Defence of the Silent Brethren.

The author by the rail has gone,
In the North land you may find him;
He sighed as he thought this night upon,
And left this tale behind him.

Dear Brethren and Sisters,
While you to-night sit socially, thus drinking of your tea,
Connected with that same event, this thought occurred to me:
Now here is opportunity for silent tongues to speak,
And vindicate their policy observed from week to week.
Suppose I write a paper in defence of caste and cause,
And give full explanation of our silence, and the cause
Which govern and control the same. 'Twas thus I reasoned,
And the thought grew big within me, till full matured and seasoned.
This now I do if you'll permit and further my intention;

### Appointment of Poet Laureate.

In this defence, it will be observed, special pleading, forcible reasoning, and strong brotherly feeling are most skilfully, and in some places quite comically blended, and the whole made to rhyme very nicely. It is needless to say that the apology was accepted as a complete and most satisfactory vindication of the brethren accused of the great offence of silence. Its reading provoked a hearty outburst of applause by the clapping of hands—the first occasion on which the brethren had given expression to their feelings in such a manner. Further, the production was considered so clever, and altogether so unique, that the author was rewarded on the spot, and in his absence, by being unanimously appointed poet laureate to the meeting.

### Why the Younger Brethren were Silent.

The reluctance on the part of certain brethren to open their mouths in the meeting did not by any means arise from indifference or want of interest in the meeting, but from sheer diffidence, and a belief that it would be presumption in those much younger and less able to express themselves, to take the place that was so much better filled by their seniors. That, at least, was my own feeling in the matter. It is a feeling that has been experienced, with more or less intensity, by every youthful brother of a nervous temperament, and which has been well described by the poet Cowper as follows :—

> Our sensibilities are so acute,
> The fear of being silent makes us mute.
> We sometimes think we could a speech produce,
> Much to the purpose, if our tongues were loose ;
> But being tried, it dies upon the lip,
> Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip ;
> Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,
> Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.

Writing at a much more recent date, and with the experience of many years to fall back upon, Grierson thus expressed himself in sober prose in a way that included both sides of the question :—

And many thanks, my brethren dear, for your kind condescension.
While thus engaged in friendly chat, and clink of cup and saucer,
Forbear with my crude doggerel, a long way after Chaucer;
As really, after thinking on't, I couldn't write a particle,
As first designed—my prose turned out a very prosy article,
And forced me to this latest shift—the shortness of the time
Combining also to produce this worse than Runic rhyme.

This prologue o'er, my subject now demands the first attention,
And probably—I'm not quite sure—some slight powers of invention;
So that my words should seem to mean exactly what they should,
And the argument of this discourse appear both staunch and good.
Firstly, I'd speak of quality. In spite of cares and pains,
Some will have better, some have worse, and some superior brains.
Now as to this, we would not say, nor have it said or told,
That our respective sconces were but of the meanest mould.
No!—no such thing; we know full well, and confidently state,
That fluency of speech does not depend on each man's pate
Being good or bad. We often see words plenty as the grass,
But worthless in their meaning as the braying of an ass.
Again, a man may be possessed of genius rich and rare,
And yet the power of utterance be sadly lacking there.
So, seeing that we're not of those described as 'apt to teach,'
We judge it best to sit and list than utter foolish speech.
Therefore we crave your leniency, ye men of oral fame;
Believe us not quite criminal, though somewhat we're to blame.
And for the future we shall try and mend our present ways.
We can't do more; we promise that; and many pleasant days,
We hope, will yet be spent with those who sat in silence here,
And humbly heard their brothers' words, from year even unto year.

All men are scholars, or have been in the world's great training-school:
None of us are exceptions to this universal rule.
Ye who are older, wiser men, help those who feebly climb,
And a blessing will return to you in some yet future time.

There is one thing—not much, 'tis true, but better to be known,
That the fluent feel, and that they've told; but not to them alone
Does it belong. Long as we've sat within this ancient hall,
'Tis just to-night we tell you—how well we love you all.

We can't say more: we do it for our common Saviour's sake;
And never may the day be born that sees those heart-bonds break.
The God of Israel bless us, bend o'er us from above,
And shield us from all evil in the bounty of His love.

And now I've done; my words are few, and little worth reciting;
But if one face approval smiles, I grudge not their inditing.

### Speakers and Hearers.

There were, and always will be, two classes in our meetings—the addressers and the addressed. Some will say a good deal, and some will say nothing, though they may think a deal. In our later days, I imagine the esteem of speech has increased; and, without expressing it, there is perhaps a feeling akin to placing the art or act amongst the higher virtues, and as if the very highest service in the church, and in the Christian life, was addressing. Be this so or not, I think we ought to accept the speech offerings of the brethren in the best spirit; and let them also remember, as our late brother Thomas Wilson used to say, that if speakers have their labour, listeners sometimes have their trials. It is a good state of matters when they can mutually appreciate each other.*

That it was not because he could not say something well worth listening to that the champion of the silent brethren never opened his lips in the meeting, will be seen from the following short paper by him in the manuscript *Messenger*. It is one of those touching and directly personal appeals that go straight to the heart, and that make one feel, in a way he never felt before, that 'all we are brethren.' It is entitled

### An Exhortation to Unity.

When ye have met together on the Sabbath morning, and looked round upon the small company of your brethren and sisters, did ever an unuttered thanksgiving ascend to God for them, and you felt the strong love of Christ constraining you to bless them one and all? Surely it has. With what earnestness you hope that no one shall be missing when we go up hand in hand to Zion! John, and James, and Andrew; you, and you, and you—must all be there; and remember yourself too. O to think of being at last a castaway! Brethren, keep very close together. Be one another's keepers; for in the great crowd and confusion of the world, there is much fear of being lost. We are not many, and we need each other's encouraging voice and helping presence. Throw off all indifference, all coldness and apathy. Look round, and

* G. G. Mitchell, in *Tyro*, January 1899.

with your strong arm and kind word aid some weaker brother or sister right cheerfully along. Have ye fallen out by the way? Does the strait path to the kingdom prove too narrow for you, and you walk sullenly and as far apart as possible? Come, now! See how much you can do and bear *for Christ's sake*. You forget yourselves. Every time you look into each other's faces, when your eyes meet, you should see Jesus there—his love, his meekness, his wondrous pity, his great heart—all within your embrace. Are you in trouble and heavy sorrow?—Then, while you pray for consolation, forget not to go there. Or are you rejoicing?—Then go there also, and the sympathy of the Lord will be doubly felt by your heart.

Our relationship is stronger and holier than that of flesh and blood. We are brothers of the heavenly conscription, and, without merit, have been by the grace of God mercifully taken out from among the heathen, that we might magnify His name and share His great glory. We have been consecrated to His service. How, then, do we fulfil the requirements of our most holy faith?—in deed or in words only? Are the expectations of the angels who rejoiced over our repentance still unrealised? Forbid that it should be so. Let us try to feel in our hearts the force of that new commandment, to love one another, even as God for Christ's sake loved us, and all will be well.

The special mention by name of 'John,' and 'James,' and 'Andrew,' in this exhortation, is a distinct touch of nature, and vividly recalls the personality of the several brethren thus referred to. A very pleasing pen-and-ink sketch, by the same writer, in imitation of the quaint and antique language in which the Scriptures are written, gives a graphic description of how the little company of believers looked and acted in that old-fashioned hall in which they were wont to assemble on the First Day of the week. Grierson has the knack of infusing a good deal of seemingly unconscious humour into his writings; and this particular production is no exception to the general rule. It was read at the sixth anniversary of the church, held on Sunday, March 27, 1859. With characteristic modesty, he could not muster sufficient courage to read it himself, and so got me to do it for him.

### A Chapter Describing the Present in the Language of the Past.

AND it came to pass, after many years, when the world had waxed old, and the wickedness of men had grown great in the earth, that the true worshippers of God were not many.

2 Faith did not increase among men, and the children of the kingdom were few in the land.

3 It was in the islands amid the northern seas; in the far country whose bulwarks were strong, and whose sons were mighty men of valour; whose children were the children of warriors.

4 Often went they forth to the battle in their strong ships, with their terrible engines of destruction. They smote their enemies with a strong hand, and victory went before their marching men. What people might stand before the armies of the isles of Britannia!

5 Nevertheless, though they delighted in war, and desired in their heart for the spoil of nations, there dwelt amongst them the knowledge of the Lord; and his fear filled many of the people. Verily, O Britannia, thou wert highly favoured of the Lord; thou wert smiled upon from the heavens.

6 But thou didst wax exceeding proud in thine heart: thou gavest little heed to the mercy shown thee, and esteemed lightly the leniency of God towards thee.

7 Thy cities were full of temples wherein ye worshipped, but ye lacked sincerity and truth.

8 Beware, O Britannia, lest thou be overtaken in thy forgetfulness, and the joy of thy people be turned to bitter lamentation.

9 ¶ It was in the chief city of the northern kingdom called Scotland, in the proud city of Edinburgh, that there was wont to assemble, on the First Day of the week, in an upper chamber of the street which might be called Strait, a small company of believers.

10 They were much privileged above their brethren who lived in the days of the apostles; for none vexed them, nor were they persecuted because of their faith.

11 Howbeit, although they were so greatly blessed, they did not esteem it as they ought, but oftentimes would dispute among themselves, and withstood one another to the face, because of words which were to small profit.

12 Yet did they dwell together like brethren, and loved one another with a perfect love.

13 They chose from among them four men of excellent report and unblamed life, whom they appointed to the work of ministering to the necessities of the poor saints, and to the oversight of the welfare of the church.

14 These were Father Robert; and James, who took charge of the money; and William; and George, whose surname was Dowie.

15 These brethren pleased the church mightily, because of their uprightness; and all the brethren did them honour in their hearts because of their faithfulness and love for the church.

16 On the First Day of the week, when they were met together, they sang with one voice hymns of thanksgiving and praise; and they prayed, and thanked their Father in heaven for his goodness and mercy unto them.

17 One or another had words of exhortation, or counsel, or comfort, which he spake aloud in their midst; and they all hearkened to his speech.

18 Then might they converse together; and whatsoever every one had in his heart, so did he speak.

19 So did they instruct and edify one another, provoking one another to love and to good works.

20 ¶ And George, whose surname was Dowie, sat, as was his wont, by the upper corner of the table.

21 And he was ever ready to serve. He was one of a willing heart.

22 He also searched continually the Scriptures, which he had known from his youth. So was he ever ready to communicate of their teaching to the profit of the brethren.

23 By his side sat Father Robert, whose speech was not frequent, but grave and kind, as became an elder in the house of God. And he was chosen to give the right hand of fellowship to those who sought the communion of the brethren.

24 Over against him sat Andrew, and James, whose surname was Watson.

25 Andrew was pleasant withal, and goodly to look upon. Albeit, he was shaven of his beard, as is the manner of the Gentiles.

26 In dispute, he was exceeding fervent; but the manner thereof was not always according to knowledge, but the rather because of his strong will. For whatsoever he determined to think, no man might move him therefrom.

27 Howbeit, he was tender of heart, and loved the brethren with a perfect love.

28 James, who sat on his left hand, was a man of self-will and sharp words.

29 It was his custom to open his mouth to contend more than to instruct.

30 But all the brethren knew that the manner of his speech did not savour of malice; neither was he always angry, though oftentimes he did of a truth wax somewhat wroth, and all because of nothing.

31 Nevertheless, the brethren gave no heed to his passion, seeing they knew it would soon pass away.

32 He had refused to be appointed for the service o the church; notwithstanding, he was willing to serve them when moved of himself so to do.

33 William, who was also called Ellis, sat in the midst nigh unto George.

34 He was slow of speech; but in his words there wa a sureness of truth, and in his thinkings there was savour of wisdom.

35 He came from the North country, from among th mountains of a pleasant land.

36 He was not slack to rebuke a brother, even in a austere manner.

37 Behind him, by the window, sat James, who w surnamed Cameron.

38 He excelled in the propriety of his speech and ac More silent than any of them, yet did he speak to pro by his very presence among the brethren.

39 By the left-hand corner of the table sat Willi Wilson, overflowing with zeal, and ardent of heart. Th was within him the fire of fervency.

40 Now and again he was led by it to speak too lor but the brethren bore with his infirmity, because th knew it proceeded forth from a heart full of love for the

41 Behind him sat William, also called Laing, stabl thought and circumspect in speech.

42 His words were according to knowledge.

43 He had learned in the school of the preachers; th fore spake he somewhat after their manner, when they wont to make a sermon. But the brethren minded it giving the more heed unto what he did say.

44 ¶ Now these were all they which were frequen the services of the church.

understanding and belief of this gospel must precede baptism, according to our Lord's own appointment. They pointed out to her the necessity, if she desired to be in a right position, to be baptised, now that she had come to understand the things of the kingdom and the name. They failed, however, to persuade her to yield compliance with the command of Christ; so that her suspension from fellowship was made permanent, and her name was erased from the church roll. She was informed of this, and that her admission into the church had been the result of a mutual misunderstanding. The record of the case in the annual church report is as follows :—

Margaret Sinclair was received upon her own representation of connection with a congregation in Glasgow (which we understood to be in fellowship with us, and with which she thought we were in fellowship). The cause of her removal was a mutual discovery that her faith and ours differed in some important points. The latest communication with her shows that the test to which all of us have submitted has not answered in her case, not having the faith of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God at the time of her immersion.

**The Mode of Dealing with Applicants.**

At the thirteenth anniversary of the Edinburgh Church, held on Sunday afternoon, March 25, 1866, a subject for general conversation was set down—'The Best Method of Dealing with Applicants for Baptism or for Fellowship.' The conversation was introduced by James Cameron, who submitted that the interview which took place with such applicants should be as devoid of formality as possible, and that it was the duty of any brother to whom such an application was made, to satisfy himself as to the fitness of the applicant, without being specially authorised by the church to do so. William Norrie said the fact that on several occasions persons, not properly qualified by faith and baptism, had been received into fellowship, showed that better supervision was required in this matter. The suggestion of James Cameron was endorsed by all who took part in the conversation.

45 But many more were they which did nothing, or which only spoke after much length of time.

46 Among these was William, called Norrie, whose occasional custom it was to read in the church.

47 He was an example, in his daily life, of the science which is called mathematics.

47 He neither turned to the right hand nor to the left from his determined purpose, though it would have much benefited him sometimes so to do.

48 He did good service to the brethren in putting them in mind of facts, and he also regarded with much tenderness the welfare of the sisterhood, which did redound to his credit.

50 There was also Grierson; but of him it would be better not to speak, seeing that he came often short of his duty.

51 James, called also Lawrie, sat by the wall.

52 The brethren knew his failing; and as it might not be mended in this life, they winked thereat.

53 The rest of the brethren, saving a few, who were newly added about the time this is written concerning the church, were silent when they met together.

54 Howbeit, it was better some of them were so, as they had no gift to speak, but did minister to the church as they had ability otherwise.

55 ¶ Among the sisters, Susan was the chief, being marked for her goodness and willingness to serve the brethren.

END OF CHAPTER I.

It is perhaps unnecessary to say that Chapter II. of this interesting narrative never was written.

### The Mutual Improvement Class.

George Dowie easily succeeded in carrying out his idea that the church, among other things, should be a choral society This, indeed, was the one scheme that was carried out to the fullest extent that was desirable. In the 'SOCIAL REMINISCENCES' I printed a few years ago, I gave a detailed account of our proceedings in this line, and need not repeat it here. The Mutual Improvement idea was also developed to a considerable extent, and with

profit to all who took part in it. In connection with it, George Dowie announced the class for the study of composition, and the 'curriculum' for it, as follows :—

When the present occupancy of the night meeting with the theory of music is at an end, I suggest that a portion of the evening be for a time devoted to improvement in the art of literary composition. Here follows the plan I propose :—In carrying it out, it may, at one time or another, be necessary to ask one brother to be dictator ; but perhaps in general cases this may not be required.

1. One hour of the meeting should be devoted to improvement in literary composition.

2. Each member should provide himself and herself—for the sisters need it too—with a slate.

3. Simple incidents, capable of expression in one sentence, or short phrases of thought, should be the first lessons in the class.

4. The different attempts at expressing these should be compared ; the best selected and analysed, and the worst have their faults pointed out.

5. After repeated essays at sentences, subjects requiring paragraphs should be next tried, and subjected to the same examination.

6. The use of punctuation should then be shown and illustrated.

7. The longer lessons which follow should be written at home and read in the class. The progressive difficulty might be diminished by observing this as the natural order of topics :—1. Description ; 2. Reflection ; 3. Reasoning ; 4. Imagination, Poetry, &c.

8. Instruction should then be given in the plan and treatment of subjects.

9. Elicitation and careful culture of the peculiarities of style, although never lost sight of, should now be more pointedly referred to.

10. Illustrations of figurative language, and exercise in the use of figures, would be the appropriate finish to what we could collectively do.

The devotion of our time and attention to these pursuits for a stated period would teach us lessons of greater value than the mere composition of sentences and expression of thought. I presume that habits of thinking and judging might thus be acquired and developed, which would be of inestimable value to all.

### A Rhyming Competition.

This course was pretty faithfully carried out; and when the 'poetry' stage had been reached, an amusing incident occurred. A poetical competition was suggested, and a list of words, arranged in couples that rhymed, was given, which the competitors were required to introduce at the ends of the lines, the poets being allowed to choose their own subjects, and to treat them in any way they pleased. A lively sister, who greatly enjoyed a good joke, entered heartily into the spirit of the thing, although not herself a member of the rhyming sisterhood, and having a bright new farthing in her possession, she laughingly offered it as a prize for the best poem that should be so produced. A week was given for the poets to 'set their brains asteep,' and do their very best to win the grand prize. There were three competitors—Grierson, Alick Mowatt, and my sister Jane; and when their 'poems' had been read over to the meeting for adjudication, there was much disappointment when Grierson solemnly and somewhat bluntly declared that 'not one of them was worth a farthing!' In a matter of this kind, it would have ill become me to have set up my opinion in opposition to the judgment of a poet laureate; and it might have been set down to a natural partiality in favour of my own sister, had I affirmed my belief that her production was decidedly the best of the three, and that the subject she had selected was preferable to the other two. I have no recollection now what the respective subjects were, or how they were treated, but simply remember that such were my impressions at the time.

### Social Tea Meetings.

Of these there was a constantly recurring series, and they were got up for all sorts of occasions—the departure of brethren and sisters for distant places, the return of others who had been absent for some time, visits of brethren from distant places, &c. We used to have a standing joke that, besides these, we had no fewer than six annual social meetings—namely, at the New Year; at

the church anniversary, in March; on the Queen's Birthday, in May; at the Annual Aggregate Meeting of the Brethren from all parts, latterly held in July; and upon the two half-yearly Presbyterian Fast Days, in April and October (now abolished). As the Queen's Birth-day and the two Fast Days were public holidays, the social meetings on these occasions were usually preceded, when the weather permitted, by a picnic to some suitable place in the neighbourhood. The social meetings were at times so numerous that some of the brethren found it irksome to attend them; and William Wilson had a habit of saying, in reference to this, that it was an article of his creed to attend all the social meetings of the church.

### Fireside Meetings.

Our sister Margaret M'Donald, who had to spend a great part of her time away from Edinburgh, both in her letters and her conversations, frequently spoke of the pleasant 'fireside meetings' which were a special feature of the Edinburgh brotherhood in its early days, and which had such a peculiar charm for her. These homely fireside meetings—

> When kindred hearts together meet,
> And feel the sympathetic heat,
> And bosoms thrill with glowing heat—

were of a very simple and unassuming character, and consisted for the most part of the ordinary week-night meetings of the church being held from house to house for the convenience of some of the brethren. Frequently, however, they were of a still less formal nature; and sometimes even in the old Tailors' Hall we would have a fireside meeting, in the winter time, sitting round the fire, instead of, as on Sundays, round the table. I remember one memorable occasion of this kind, when we had no need of gas-light, for we sat until past ten o'clock, talking and singing, with no other physical illumination than what came from the fire.

It was, I believe, the frequent social gatherings which were held in the dwelling of George Dowie, 'No. 12

Beaumont Place' (of which I intend to speak more particularly presently), that Margaret M'Donald had specially in her recollection when she used to speak and write in so rapturous terms of the joyful fireside meetings of long ago. Certain it is that we had many—very many—exceedingly happy reunions around the social hearth of George and Mrs. Dowie. Here it was that 'The Choir,' as we were termed, held our weekly practisings, under the direction of the master of the house. O how many pleasant meetings did we hold, both in parlour and kitchen! and what a hearty welcome did we always receive from both heads of the house! for did not the master himself give it in these hospitable words—

Brothers and sisters blithely meet;
We think upon you daily;
Love is the charm to make life sweet;
We bid you welcome gaily!—

which he also set to music and got us to sing?

**Means Towards an End.**

The eighth annual report (1861–62), after giving a detailed report of the various agencies which had been in operation during the year, closes with the following words :—

By the means, therefore, of meetings, writing, visiting, speaking, study, and worship, we endeavour to promote in ourselves and in one another a more thorough approximation to the character of God in Christ Jesus; looking and waiting for his glorious appearance to redeem our sleeping ones from the grave, and change us into the likeness of himself for an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of God—the which come soon!

James Cameron also, writing some time afterwards, in defence of the action of the brethren in some of these matters, said :

By these various means, the brethren endeavoured to make the most of their advantages, cultivating the social, intellectual, and moral capacities of the whole body to greater unity and more perfection.

# SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS.

### George Dowie as a Reformer.

In a religious community that had made so great an advance in Scriptural knowledge as is implied by the position they had taken up regarding the one faith, it was only to be expected that this would be followed by further advances, and in other directions. Suggestions with this view were not wanting from the very commencement of their history as a church of Baptised Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God; and many were the proposals which were from time to time made to help forward in the striving after 'perfection's sacred height.' A great many of these suggestions—indeed, much the greater number of them—came from George Dowie, who seemed to have set himself assiduously to find out where improvement could be made, and to devise the best means by which it might be effected. His proposals did not always meet with acceptance—far from it; but George was never disconcerted by this—at any rate, he never betrayed the least vexation.

I remember George once, in a Sunday forenoon address, related the advice that he had received, when a member of another meeting, from an esteemed teacher, who had been remarkably successful in carrying out measures which at first were distasteful to the other members; and he explained that the cause of his success was that, when he found there was serious opposition to anything he suggested, he did not press it so as to irritate any one; but just allowed it to drop for the time, keeping it still in mind, and biding his time, until a favourable opportunity occurred to renew his proposal. This might have to be done again and again, but eventually success was attained. I thought at the time George might have slightly altered the words of a celebrated personage, and added:

> This *also* is the witchcraft I have used;

for assuredly this was the policy he invariably pursued,

and usually with success. He had a pawky and sometimes a somewhat round-about way of suggesting an improvement, which to a great extent disarmed opposition, and enabled him to have his own way; and he seemed to be mindful of Pope's maxim—

> Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
> And truths proposed to them as things forgot.

A trifling incident, that occurred at one of our week-night meetings, showed how well this disposition to carry out his own ideas was understood by the brethren. We were practising one of our new pieces of music, and there was some difference of opinion among the members of the choir as to the particular style in which it should be executed, some being in favour of one way, and some of another. With the democratic feeling that was then so strong amongst us, every one was allowed to have his or her say in the matter. When this had gone on for some time, Francis Renwick, who had been silent during it all, suddenly put in his word.

'Just listen to them all, George,' he said, 'and then—take your own way.'

'That is just what he *will* do, Brother Renwick,' replied John Forman.

And the result showed that John Forman was right.

This getting so much of his own way did not altogether please some of the other brethren. I believe all his proposals were intended to promote, and for the most part really did promote, the best interests of the meeting. This gave him an undoubted influence in it, which some did not regard with approval. On one occasion, when 'grievances' were being ventilated, James Lawrie complained that George Dowie had a great influence in the meeting, and that that influence was increasing. In the way it was put, this looked a very dreadful indictment, and George seemed rather staggered at it; but after a moment's reflection, he quietly replied: 'Yes, and I hope my influence *will* increase!' And what could James say to that?

## DEALING WITH 'HALF-WAY' BRETHREN.

One of the matters to which George very early directed his attention was the unsatisfactory condition of some of the meetings at a distance, in consequence of certain members not having been up to the right standard of faith at their baptism. He dealt with this difficulty in an article in the manuscript *Messenger*, as follows :—

### Our Outposts.

We are familiar with the fact that the position we have arrived at has been reached by various stages—like the marches of an army now and then encamping by the way. Thus, in the path from Episcopacy, some have halted a while to be Wesleyans or Adventists ; and the route from Presbyterianism has landed others at the field of Independency or Scotch Baptistism ; to be again exchanged for a post nearer on the ground of a new Reformation. The various degrees of progress are familiar to most of us, and we find each stage to have had its interest and profit ; for here we acquired this lesson, and there that : the better preparing us to mount the heights of the Old Faith and take our place on the ramparts of Truth. And, although at this point we have concentred from all quarters, and although thus our faith seems to command every part of the field of truth, and to embrace a high view of the various routes and stages of that broad country, traversed by so many and so devious ways, we shall not yet presume with a very stiff presumption that we have arrived at the perfection of safety, or that our last march was ultimate. Nay ; we hold ourselves ready to strike our tents, if need be, and take other steps to make progress to the very perfection of God ; commanding all things, and seeing into the maze of every doubtful pass.

While this is the fact regarding ourselves, we should bethink that many more are only on the way—the way we have ourselves traversed ; and subject to the vicissitudes of fortune common to all such wayfarers ; nor forget that their further advance is affected very much by the aspect which our position bears. If across their path, and to annoy their camp with ceaseless battery, our artillery is mounted and pointed, frowning and fierce ; and the repose of their halt is vexed with useless sallies from our

well kept and well trained garrison, what heart have they to intrust themselves within the guard of our intrenchments and become allies to such warlike people? But if, on the other hand, secure in our strength, we cultivate around our works the beautiful evergreen and blooming flower, investing the stern and weather-beaten ramparts with the glories of spring and youth; and if our gates are open continually, that these weary wanderers may see within, and become familiar with the mien of a people dwelling safely—whose food is the bread of heaven, and whose drink the water of life—we shall more certainly secure the allegiance of some to our Lord and Governor. At the gate we hold parley, and all precaution of password and countersign is invariably taken; for what—are we to admit aliens within the camp of the faithful? Yet a kind and conciliatory policy towards those who linger on our outposts, and are fain to shelter themselves near the range of our defences, is the surest means to win them within the walls, and into the rights and duties, the privileges and amenities, of the fortress of Truth, in which we are so proudly ensconced.

This is our parable, and the application is easy.

We are aware of the existence of many individuals and a few congregations not far from the position in faith which we ourselves hold. Thus, in CUPAR-FIFE there has existed, contemporaneously with our little company of true hearts there, a society or church which has separated itself, by strong avowments and much speech, from the Campbellite or Reformation party: holding at this time a position most anomalous; for while they or their leaders are convinced of the faith themselves and remaining disobedient thereto, yet in repeated instances have insisted upon faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom on the part of those who seek to be united to them by baptism. The countenance which our brethren have given to such parties is characterised by great prudence—a friendly familiarity has long subsisted, and many conversations have taken place, yet there is no temporising with their sinister position. It is judged that, although the acquisition of some individuals is very desirable, yet the accession of the whole would be no blessing—there are so many of them who have no mind of their own on the necessary matters of faith.

Again, we learn that there is a Campellite church in

FRASERBURGH (Aberdeenshire), which, says Brother Gill, 'is almost one with us, only that they have not as yet seen it to be their duty to be immersed since belief of the kingdom.'

In DOUGLAS, a few miles south of Glasgow, is another church of the same description, with an open door for the admission of those who are disposed to speak to them and ears to hear what they have to say. They have been visited by brethren from Lanark, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, whose conversation has excited some interest in the things of our precious faith.

In GLASGOW and EDINBURGH, also, are individuals in different communities, who give some attention to the points of difference in the faith, and concerning whom some hope is entertained that they may ultimately cast their sentiments in a more abiding mould, and take part with those who are confirmed in the faith.

We have already had occasion to notice the frankness of character and readiness of converse on the part of another meeting of the above kind, in HUDDERSFIELD—a field which was whilom industriously cultivated by our Brother Roberts when he was able.

And last, we are told that there are many in BIRMINGHAM who are prepared for the reception of the truth and the obedience of faith, were there but a decided and permanent stand taken by those who know the truth and have been made free thereby.

These different individuals and societies we view as a sort of outposts, and should treat them with the same decision and prudence as we have found practised in Cupar. By no means let it be said that we have thrown a stumbling-block in the way of those who are feeling after the way of the Lord. A kind and conciliatory manner is best in all cases where men are not overt offenders; and the more credit for sincerity we give these half-way men, the easier shall we find it to argue them further into the path of truth and life. The devotedness of the apostles and the love of the early disciples were the qualities most patent to the strangers to whom they addressed themselves; and these would go far to induce interest and attention on the part of their opponents. Let us, without foregoing one iota of our integrity, be gentle and forbearing, 'in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.'

## MAKING KNOWN THE TRUTH.

Connected with this subject was the duty of the brethren to 'preach the Word,' on which there had come to be some difference of opinion among them. This was a matter on which James Cameron entertained strong convictions, and he also embodied these in an article in the manuscript *Messenger*, as follows :—

### GOSPEL-PREACHING.

[As various loose ideas have been from time expressed respecting the *obligation* which lies upon the church to send forth preachers of the gospel, and to support such persons and their families while so engaged, it has been thought advisable to endeavour to arrive at some satisfactory understanding of the exact position which the church occupies in relation to this matter. If this can be attained to, it is hoped that, having a clearer view of the real duty involved, the churches will be enabled to see their way to the adoption of measures for the doing of it, whether by co-operation or otherwise, as may seem best. The following paper is offered simply as a contribution towards this desirable end. Let it be received and treated as such].

#### John the Baptist.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberias Cæsar, Emperor of Rome, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judea, and Herod being Tetrarch of Galilee, the word of the Lord came to John, the son of Zecharias, in the desert. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, saying, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' John was thus commissioned by God for the work of preparing the way of the Lord by the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom. For this work he was fully prepared by his divine Master, as the angelic prediction to his father, before his birth, shows : 'He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb ;' and it is further testified that 'the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel.' Here was a work to do, a person to do it, and a course of preparation to qualify for its performance.

#### Jesus Christ.

This would seem to be the divine method in the prosecution of His purposes by human instrumentality, and is no less evident in the subsequent history of gospel-preaching. Jesus said to the Jews at Nazareth, using the words

of the prophet: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, *because* He hath anointed me to preach the gospel,' &c.; and it was only after having stood the severe trial to which he was subjected in the wilderness, &c., that he came forth to assume the onerous position of a gospel-preacher. 'I must preach the gospel,' said he, 'for therefore am I sent.'

**The Apostles.**

And when he would choose others to co-operate with himself in this work, he not only instructed them as to the message they were to deliver, but gave them power over unclean spirits, &c., and assured them that, in giving up their ordinary means of subsistence, in order to the prosecution of their mission, they should be in no danger of being in want. And when about to leave them and ascend to the heavens, he accompanied the commission with the comforting assurance, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.' 'And lo, I am with you alway to the end of the age.' And it is narrated that 'they went forth preaching everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word, with signs following.' The design of this preaching is stated by Jesus thus: 'Ye shall receive power from the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' And in reference to the time during which this testimony should be borne, he intimated, in his prophecy given on Mount Olivet, in these words, 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come.' The 'end' referred to is obviously the end of the age connected with the destruction of the Temple, respecting which the disciples had asked him. This is corroborated by his promise to be 'with them' to the end of the age—referring, as the history shows, to his being with them in confirming the word by signs following—(see also Heb. ii.) The apostle Paul confirms this by his testimony to the actual fact that the gospel had been preached in all the world at the time he wrote his letter to the Colossians, being about thirty-one years after the giving of the commission—(Col. i. 6, 23).

**Gospel-Preaching a Thing of History.**

But why, it may be asked, refer at such length to plain, matter-of-fact history concerning things so obvious that

he that runs may read? Simply for the sake of making one thing a little more patent to our ordinary apprehension than it usually is—namely, that the preaching of the gospel, properly so called, is a thing of history. 'God visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.' He provided agents through whom to do the work, and equipped them for its efficient performance; and in the days of the apostles the work was completed.

And well did these apostles estimate the amount of responsibility which such a mission laid upon them. Paul confessed himself, in this respect, debtor both to the Greeks and barbarians, and declared that necessity was laid upon him. Yea, says he, 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.'

### The Church did Not Send Out Gospel-Preachers.

Another fact worthy of note here is, that this work was accomplished by special agents, selected for the purpose, and not by the church. The church was the result, not the agent, of gospel-preaching. Of course the church embraced the apostles, prophets, and evangelists, as part of the body of Christ; but it is certain that the church did not send the apostles, and there is no evidence that they sent forth either prophets or evangelists as preachers of the gospel. The way seems rather to have been, as in the selection of Barnabas and Saul—(Acts xiii.)—'The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I have called* them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. . . . And when they were at Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.' Indeed, there were many other duties constantly pressing on the church, the proper discharge of which would leave but little room for this.

### 'Sounding Out' the Word.

There is one passage, however, which is supposed to favour the idea that the church largely shared in the propagation of the faith by sending forth her missionaries. After making the statement in the last paragraph, it would hardly be fair to ignore the view taken of the passage referred to. It is in 1 Thes. i. 6–9. It is supposed that the sounding out of the Word of the Lord from the Thessalonians in Macedonia and Achaia was the result of special missionary effort for the preaching of the

gospel. The history of the introduction of the gospel into Thessalonica, however, as recorded in the Acts of the apostles, points to another way in which the Word of the Lord was sounded out from them to the districts mentioned. The facts are these:—Paul and Silas had for three Sabbath Days been preaching in the Jewish synagogue at Thessalonica. A number of the Jews believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, with a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the chief women. The Jews who believed not, moved with envy, gathered a mob, and drew a number of the believers to the rulers of the city, crying, 'These, that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also. . . . And these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.' And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason and of the other, they let them go. Now, Thessalonica was one of the principal cities of Macedonia, and it is highly probable that the report of what took place would soon spread through the whole district, more especially among the Jewish synagogues; and thus in an indirect way the Word of the Lord would be 'sounded out' in Macedonia, and also in Achaia, the neighbouring province.

This view is strengthened by the fact that the brethren at Thessalonica had to send away Paul and Silas by night to Berea on account of the tumult that was raised. Berea was a city in the same province of Macedonia, where also there was a Jewish synagogue. The Thessalonian unbelievers even followed the preachers to Berea, and stirred up the people there against them, so that Paul had to be sent away from Berea also. Thus Thessalonica became directly a centre of agitation, their cry being, 'These [Jews] say there is another king, one Jesus;' while the explanations which would necessarily follow on the part of the apostles and others in communication with the synagogues, would make Thessalonica indirectly a centre of gospel intelligence, which to the Jews was reduced to the simple fact that Jesus was the Messiah.

A number of Gentiles seem also to have been discipled at Thessalonica, so that, although the preaching at the Jewish synagogue is alone mentioned, it is probable that there was in some way access to the Gentiles. There can hardly be supposed to be proselytes to the Jewish faith, as Paul refers to the Thessalonians as having 'turned

from dumb idols.' Indeed, this great Gentile ingathering of itself would seem to have excited general notice in the districts mentioned; for the apostle says: 'But also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad, so that we need not to speak anything [concerning you], for they themselves show us what manner of entering in we had with you, and how ye turned from idols,' &c.

### 'Holding Forth' the Word of Life.

It is also urged that Paul exhorts the Philippians to 'hold forth the word of life'—(Phil. ii. 16). In the first place, the verb rendered 'holding forth' is nowhere else so rendered in the New Testament, although several times used. The word is *epecho*, composed of *epi*, 'upon,' or 'on,' and *echo*, 'to hold,' and signifies literally, to hold on. This radical idea is preserved in all the instances of its occurrence in the New Testament, as rendered in the common version. Thus Paul 'sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him; but he himself *stayed* [or held on] in Asia for a season'—(Acts xix. 22). 'TAKE HEED [or hold on the mind] unto thyself'—(1 Tim. iv. 16). 'And he GAVE HEED unto them, expecting to receive something from them'—(Acts iii. 5). 'And he put forth a parable to those who were bidden, when he marked [or fixed his attention on] how they chose out the chief rooms'—(Luke xiv. 7). Besides, this is the rendering that best suits the connection in Phil. ii. 16. Paul says: 'Among whom shine ye as lights in the world, holding on—[the mind; that is, taking heed to, fixing the mind or attention on]—the word of life; that *I* may rejoice in the day of Christ, that *I* have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.' Paul's earnest desire was obviously in this case, as in others, that his own work might stand. He well knew that if any man's [preacher's] work abide which he built on the foundation, he should receive a reward; and that, being tried by the fire, if any man's work should be burned, he should suffer loss. Hence he exhorted the Philippians, in the immediately preceding context of the passage referred to, to 'work out their own salvation with fear and trembling;' and in chapter iv. 1 he returns to the same theme, in these words: 'Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so STAND FAST in the Lord, my dearly beloved.' To suppose that the Philippian church was exhorted to hold forth the word of life by sending forth their missionaries or evangelists,

and that the result of this would be any special cause for Paul rejoicing in the day of Christ, that he had not run or laboured in vain, is scarcely possible. But to understand that Paul desired the Philippians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and to shine as lights among a crooked and perverse nation, 'holding on' to that word of life which they had been taught by Paul himself, that he might rejoice in the day of Christ that he, in preaching the gospel to them, had not run or laboured in vain, is at once natural and easy.

### Contending for the One Faith.

Jude's exhortation to contend for the faith is also quoted as supporting the view under consideration; but the reason expressly given clearly shows the particular circumstances in which the advice was to be attended to. 'For there are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men,' &c. This was clearly a contention for the purity of the faith against persons in the church who had corrupted it.

### The Matter Summed up.

The sum of what has been advanced may be thus stated:—

*God appointed a work to be done—the proclamation of the gospel among the nations for the taking out a people for His name. He selected in His own way those who were to do this work, and thoroughly furnished them for its efficient performance. Those thus taken out had many and various duties to discharge, which are referred to with considerable fulness in the letters of the apostles. Among these duties, that of proclaiming the gospel does not by any means seem to occupy the position claimed for it by modern professors of Christianity.*

### Why the Church should Preach the Gospel.

It should readily be conceded that, as no special obligation rested on the church in early times to preach the gospel, so, in the present day, the church is under no special obligation to do so.

But while this is the case, it must not be supposed that the church is without a reason for endeavouring to diffuse a knowledge of the gospel. Benevolence—or, in Bible phrase, 'good-will towards men'—should and does prompt every right disciple to do what he can for the

salvation of his fellow-men by means of the gospel. But doing what one can in this or in any other benevolent work, must be subordinated to all those imperative duties which devolve upon the disciple and which primarily claim his attention. For example, the obligation of the injunction, 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together,' is altogether irrespective of the probability of getting persons to the meeting to hear the gospel. Again, to 'do good to all men as we have opportunity,' is highly recommendable; but 'the household of faith' have the prior claim, which must be satisfied, although the other, even in the way of making known the gospel, should be neglected.

**The Difference between Then and Now.**

Leaving this part of the question at this point, it may not be out of place to inquire as to the nature of the work of essaying, in the present day, to make known the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, and some of the qualifications requisite to its performance. There are several circumstances which render this attempt a different matter from what it was in the days of the apostles. Not only is there wanting the authority which the apostles derived from the commission with which they were charged, and the assurance which the consciousness of having that commission inspired, but there is the entire absence of the power to confirm the word preached by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

To an unbiassed and open mind, this want should not be felt, especially when the New Testament history of gospel-preaching is duly taken into account in connection with the promises made to the fathers, the predictions of the prophets, &c. But to a large mass of t' e religious world in our day, with minds pre-occupied from childhood with a perversion of every truth of Scripture, and hearts rejoicing in these as the very essence of Christianity itself, it is vain to expect, by any amount of pleading, a fair hearing and cordial reception of the truth, much less the rendering to it that obedience which God required.

**The Difference between Gospel-Preaching to Jew and to Gentile.**

To the Jew, in apostolic days, with all his prejudice against the claims of Jesus on account of his lowly life and ignominious death, there was nothing in the truth preached by the apostles, but what would form a natural

sequence to his former faith. He looked for the appearance of the Messiah: the message was, 'Jesus is he.' The fact of his crucifixion was more than neutralised by the fact of his resurrection; and this, moreover, being shown (as in Peter's address) to be in exact accordance with prophecy, and the veracity of Peter demonstrated by the gift of tongues, there was little difficulty in effecting the change of mind desiderated. And even as regards the intelligent and well-disposed Gentile, although the gospel would appear as altogether foreign to his former religious ideas, and would, if received, displace them entirely, it would not labour under the disadvantage of convicting him—as in the case of the modern Gentile—of totally misapprehending the meaning of a divine revelation, and holding the errors of an apostacy as the very truth of God. It would be easier to 'turn from idols to serve the living God' than to turn from a pseudo-Christian faith to primitive purity and simplicity.

### The Evil of a Professional Ministry.

Another obstacle to the gospel is the prevalent idea that a professionally educated ministry is necessary for the exposition of the Bible. This has given rise to a strong prejudice against every attempt by ordinarily educated persons to do so; and hence the truth, even when coherently presented by such agency to an intelligent mind, is prevented from exercising that influence in its own favour which it is so well fitted to do in the absence of the prejudice referred to.

### What is Needed in Gospel-Preaching.

The circumstances referred to have destroyed that independence of thought which is so essential in the attainment of correct views of Scripture truth. The gospel cannot practically be condensed into a simple proposition, as it could in the days of the apostles, when preached to the Jews. The whole history of God's dealings with *man* —His purpose to establish His own sovereignty over all the earth, as revealed in the promises to Abraham and David, and amplified in detail in the prophets, and all this in connection with the teaching of Jesus and the apostles —must be studied from a point of view at the furthest remove from modern orthodoxy before we can expect to understand the mind of God as set forth in the Scriptures.

### Duty of the Church in the Present Day.

To bring persons this length, and then to assist them in their study, appears to be the most that can be hoped for from the church in the present day. How to bring persons to this position, may be a question to which various answers might be given. As a general rule, the least obtrusive should succeed best, and that from due consideration of the circumstances stated already.

### Street-Preaching.

Broadcast sowing of the seed by street-preaching is probably about the worst method; for this reason, that, from the accidental and fluctuating character of the congregation, and the matter-of-course ideas that most persons attach to such displays, almost no amount of thought is given to the subject, and as little desire for continued study or additional information. This would be seen, were an intimation given at the close of street discourses, that those interested were requested to meet once a week for the mutual investigation of the Scriptures.

### A Suggestion.

Perhaps one of the very best means is for the church in any given locality to have a commodious place of meeting, of easy access, and in a central but quiet part of the town. With very little ado in the matter of invitation, persons would soon find their way to the meeting. The ordinary reference to the things of our faith, with an occasional but judicious and well-timed exposition of some important point, with the least possible degree of 'preaching at' the strangers present, would, in the course of time, lead to the thorough enlightenment of such as were willing to learn.

When meetings of a more special character are practicable and thought advisable, then a lecture—by a brother of intelligence and experience, and, if possible, of years beyond the dawn of manhood—should be given. After the lecture, a conference of those interested in the subject might, if practicable, be held, for the purpose of clearing up points of difficulty and otherwise supplementing the things advanced.

Yet more—he should be wise
To speak, or to forego;
His own ambition all despise,
That God's name greater grow.

For, if he only *speak* to men
Of patience and reward,
Nor patient be, 'twere better then
That he had said no word.

So it should be, as if his lips
Had spok'n a living lie;
And men shall come, and men shall go,
But pass God's glory by.

Not thus should the preacher preach;
Not so should he walk abroad;
His be the grand yet simple speech,
And his life the life of God.

## IMPROVEMENT OF THE CHURCH MEETINGS.

In working towards his high ideal of the Christian Church, George Dawe wrote some fancy sketches of how his purpose might be accomplished. These sketches at first appeared in the manuscript magazine, *The Investigator*, and subsequently in its successor, *Excelsior*. I give the first of these papers, which deals with the improvement of our ordinary Sunday meetings.

### UTOPIAN PENCILLINGS.—No. 1.

The occurrence of some irregular and unhappy things in our public meetings, a painful prevalence of want of energy on the part of the majority of the brethren in things about which they should be energetic—such as teaching, exhortation, and contributing service for the worship of God—are suggested as new reasons, above what I have before urged, for some steps being taken towards the organisation of what resources we possess, and the establishment of some principles or expedients of order in our ordinary assembly.

It is submitted that one or more brethren (elder brethren) be appointed to preside, and that the introduction to the brethren of matters out of the ordinary course should be announced, and, when introduced, be under the control of the elders.

Also, that all the brethren should hold themselves bound to serve one another as far as possible; being regulated in this service by the demands of their brethren rather than their own judgment and feeling.

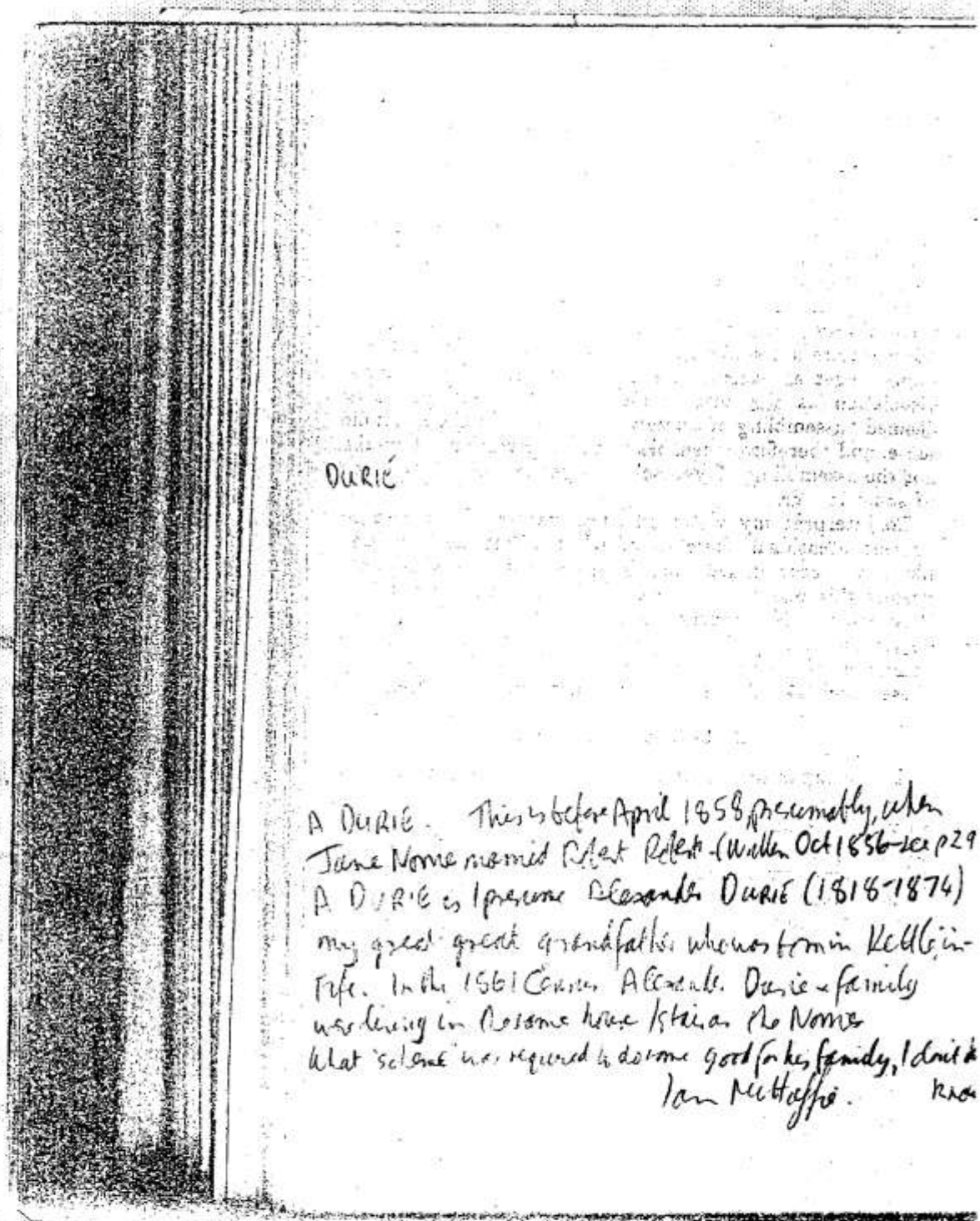
Further, that all who are found deficient in any matter use the means afforded by the church for the supply of that same; that improvement to perfection be the object sought after by all, and by all means.

Yet again, that it is the duty of all to attend to these these things; that if the meetings on the First Day of the week are not sufficient for such purposes, the brethren should meet at other times, in congregational or private association as the case requires; such meetings being deemed 'assembling of ourselves together' in the apostolic sense, and therefore amenable to the exhortation, 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is,' &c.

To interpret my views on such matters, I purpose to present occasional sketches of what might be supposed likely to occur under such improvements. I shall only premis this one thing more, before introducing my first illustration. No arrangement can supply the want of heartiness and brotherly spirit which should be a characteristic of Christian association. I hope to show by these fancy sketches how that spirit manifests itself.

### No. 1.—A Sunday Forenoon.

I accompanied Mentor to the Tailors' Hall. We entered and took our seats quietly. The bells for *morning* service were not well begun, and yet there was a goodly group on the floor in earnest conversation. Here a knot of listeners surrounded a bearded youth, who read a letter from Canada, and gave explanations as he proceeded. On the other side of the room, three were seated to talk over something of importance which interested them; now and then such phrases as 'That cannot be sufficient for him,' 'I'll see him to-morrow,' 'She's unwell too,' escaped the privacy of their confabulation, revealing the benevolent subject which engrossed their attention. 'Those three,' said Mentor—'Tait, Steele, and Wilson—have a scheme in their head for the behoof of a stranger residing in the outskirts of the city, who sometimes attended their meetings, but who is a member of another community. These young men and women, so much interested in Dowie's



DURIÉ

A DURIE. This is before April 1858 presumably, when Jane Norrie married Robert Robertson (Will Oct 1858 see p29
A DURIE is I presume Alexander DURIE (1818-1874)
my great great grandfather who was born in Kelloe in Fife. In the 1861 Census Alexander Durie's family was living in Broome House Station No Norrie
What science was required to do some good for his family, I don't know
Ian McHaffie.

letter, are all as eager, you see, to hear of the well-being of Oakely, their companion, who left them for the West.

The door opened, and Mitchell entered. He stepped into the circle, and saluted two of his most intimate friends with a quiet kiss, not to interrupt the reading nor disturb the benevolent junto on the form beyond. Anon the narrative of the letter got so animated, that they burst out in a hearty laugh. Lawrie, however, soon retired from the circle, and opening the cupboard door, took therefrom a number of books, and scattered them on the table; a bunch of music-books he laid at regular intervals round its edges, and in the midst of all a small box for collections. In this work he was assisted by Jane Norrie, who had also by this time separated from the group. By and bye her brother stole into a quiet corner, and proceeded to con a diminutive book of manuscript. Mark, Cameron and his wife, Oliver, and Durie entered together, and distributed themselves through the hall, some to speak, some to ruminate, but all affectionately saluted their brethren and sisters as they entered. The knot of listeners modified, till only two stood, to concoct some other epistle. These, however—Forman and Duncan—were not long in settling their business.

Then came a whole flock of young and old. Old Norrie passed among them all like a father; his kind inquiries eliciting as genial responses from every one; and he seated himself in a chair at the upper end of the room. It was quite cheery to see, when he had thus sat down, how cozily and heartily Agnes Arcus came and stood beside him, with her hand in his, and her arm along the back of his chair, almost about his neck. Mrs Tait, on the other hand, stood a long time with A. Durie, to console him and scheme some good for his family. There remained but a few to gather, and they soon came in. The buzz of conversation gradually subsided; the young woman gave the old man a kiss and sought her seat; and just as the distant bell had given its last stroke, one voice was heard to say, 'Very well,' and all was silent.

The father aforesaid stood to his feet, and in a few sentences set forth the dignity of God, and pointed out the tokens of His goodness which surrounded them. He read a few sentences from the 145th Psalm, verse 15 to the end—'The eyes of all wait upon Thee. . . . Let all flesh bless His holy name for ever and ever.' And the whole company stood to their feet and sang the anthem

of Whittier's to which they are adapted. The concluding phrase was expressed with great heartiness, and the 'for ever and ever' hung in the air, as if it would not leave their lips. This done, they reseated themselves. The elder called to remembrance the case of the Ellises, who had had so much distress of late, but who were recovering their wonted health. One or two expressed their concurrence of sympathy for them and a few others. James Cameron then rose and said, 'Let us so pray;' and the assembly joined in heart with the words of fervid utterance, adding 'Amen!' with great distinctness.

The company resumed their seats; and after a short pause, in which there was a little talk between two in a back seat, and a slight rustling of paper, G. Mitchell stood to his feet to say, 'The Scriptures to be read to-day are those in which the providential interference of God is set forth—the rescue of Lot (Genesis xix.); the faithfulness of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (Daniel iii.); and the release of Peter (Acts xii.)—to be read by Brethren Laing, Oliver, and Gilmour. It is recommended that the consequent remarks be as brief as possible, as William Norrie stands ready to read some observations on the means by which disciples are to become the salt of the earth.'

I looked to Mentor for an explanation of the interference of this youth in the rule of the church; and he answered in a quiet voice, 'These matters of arrangement which Mitchell introduces are the points of previous deliberate suggestion, handed to the secretary for announcement. The president is not necessarily a man to control the sequence and allocation of service; but he whose judgment and gravity effect the smooth co-operation of these men. You shall see.'

The Scriptures were read with deliberation and care, and a few observations tendered by the readers themselves as they closed their respective narratives. A general conversation ensued. This was summed up in half a dozen sentences by the elder Naismith, and all was quiet again. Then came the singing of Addison's 'Traveller's Hymn,' and the offering up of fervent prayer on behalf of the distressed in other lands, and for the peace of Jerusalem, spoken by John Forman.

While the box circulated to gather the contributions of the brethren, a few words were exchanged by the younger and elder Norrie. So the former stood to his feet to read

his essay. Brief and pointed it was; and it elicited frequent smiles and nods of approval from various of the company. It was no more than finished when Thomas Wilson rose to read another short paper on 'The Duty of Christian Citizens as shown in the Example of Paul and Others.' Although a little less sprightly in treatment than the former, this paper came home with great effect to all.

A pause ensued, and the conversation opened upon the subjects introduced by Henry Wilson asking a few questions regarding his own experience of certain workshop maxims. Another and another joined in the talk. David Swanson proved hardest to convince of the views of T. Wilson, but ultimately expressed his satisfaction. James Watson urged particularly the duty of submission to human institutions, when this submission did not involve opposition to the law of Christ, as a means of gaining and maintaining due influence over others by our conduct; citing the unruliness of the Anabaptists of Germany, and the consequent suspicion with which the Hamburg authorities have since viewed Jahann Oncken and the modern Baptists there—a consideration which George Dowie, George Cowan, and James Steele endorsed with great heartiness. At length the conversation got more animated, and a few of the younger branches of the family spoke with haste. This was tolerated for a sentence or two, but the interference of the elder Norrie set it to quietness by a few grave words.

The bustle of talk was suddenly interrupted by Andrew Tait announcing a psalm to be sung. Ere he could get to his feet, however, the elder Naismith checked him with this sentence, 'We shall soon finish off this subject in an orderly manner.' While he thus prepared for the conclusion, Mentor whispered, 'These men, you perceive, are old and almost hard favoured. This sternness, however, is not detectible in their demeanour. You see how, when these youths in the corner speak hurriedly, the elder Norrie lays his hand quietly on one of their shoulders, and looks into his face with a "Be patient, now!" which, while it does not cowe, yet controls them all. The finish of those stray observations and loose conversation is handed over to some clear head for summing up.'

Soon the request was made, 'Will Brother James Cameron bring these things to a close by winding up and stating results.' In a few minutes' address he responded.

A nod from one of the elders set A. Tait on his feet again. The first Psalm was sung with great glee and pathos. The whole were then reminded by one of the old men that there was one duty which should not be neglected in the way of helping us to carry out the lessons already given. 'It is,' said he, 'thus expressed by Paul—"I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men." Will Brother James Lawrie present our petition to God *on this behalf?*' It was done; and before the company reseated themselves they broke out, as with one voice—

> Now unto the King, eternal, immortal,
> Invisible—the only wise God,
> Be all honour and glory, for ever and ever!

When this was done, Mentor and I retired, but left them all behind in free conversation with each other.

### Service of the Breaking of Bread.

It will be observed that no mention is made of the breaking of bread in this fancy sketch of a Sunday forenoon meeting. The reason is that, at the time when this paper was written (Oct. 1856), the breaking of bread took place at the evening meeting, this being the arrangement that existed for several years after the formation of the Edinburgh Church. George Dowie, however, turned his attention to the improvement of the manner in which the breaking of bread might be observed, and drew up a 'Service of the Breaking of Bread' with this view. I am not aware that he ever actually introduced it into the Edinburgh Church, as there were no presidents in it, and a president was required to have it properly carried out. After his removal to Dundee, however, where he was one of the presidents, George told me himself that he introduced this service one Sunday forenoon, when he presided, and it had been favourably received by the brethren there. I afterwards printed a few copies of it for private use, and have a copy before me as I write these lines. It is not a thing to be used every Sunday, but might be useful in the occasional breaking of bread in private houses, under the circumstances which have already been mentioned.

to lapse. Thus, I find that, at the afternoon meeting on Sunday, June 5, 1859, it was proposed by Andrew Tait, and unanimously agreed to, that the anthem, 'Our Father who art in Heaven,' as containing the special petition, 'Thy Kingdom Come,' should be sung at the meeting every Sunnay forenoon—say, after the breaking of bread. This was done for a short time afterwards, but soon came to be discontinued. The fact was that, at that time there being no president to see that understood arrangements were carried out, what was everybody's duty came to be nobody's; and as every brother was at liberty to give out any psalm or anthem he thought fit, it is not surprising that the regular singing of this anthem came to be omitted.

### Christian Salutation.

It will have been observed, in the fancy sketch by George Dowie which has just been quoted, that he represents 'kissing,' as a mode of salutation, as being practised in a small way in the church. This was evidently thrown out as a 'feeler;' and in the criticism to which the article as a whole was subjected, the circumstances in which Grierson Mitchell and Agnes Arcus are mentioned received their full attention. This was just what George wanted and expected; and he allowed the talk to go on—intermittently, it is true—for a whole year. Thinking, no doubt, that the matter was then ripe, he took advantage of the social meeting on the evening of the Fast Day, Oct. 22, 1857, and, as was his wont when desiring to introduce any of his many projected improvements, gave an address upon the subject of Christian salutation, in the course of which he gravely proposed, as a substitute for the ordinary custom of hand-shaking, that of kissing, as being more Scriptural. The proposal was discussed at some length, but, as might be supposed, many of the remarks made were of a humorous rather than a serious character. I still remember the rather severe, though quite good-natured, rap over the knuckles I received from George when, as 'a young man void of understanding' in

such matters, I joined in the protest that was being made against his proposal. It is enough to say that on this occasion George found himself in a minority of one, and his suggestion had to be set aside for a time. He was not the man, however, to be daunted by any amount of opposition. He just let the matter quietly rest for nearly another year; and then, on Sunday, August 29, 1858—without having in the meantime made any formal renewal of his proposal, or, indeed, said anything about it to any one—he quite startled the small company who formed the early arrivals when he entered the Tailors' Hall, by saluting each in turn with 'an holy kiss.' It was very evident that some of the recipients of this well-meant salute did not altogether relish it; and I think George himself was a little disappointed at the result of what I may call his bold *coup*. It did not take, however, and the practice was not persevered in, except in special cases, and in the more domestic gatherings of the brethren. This is the manner in which George recorded his proceedings in the sixth annual church report (1858–9):—

> The only other topic which is worthy of notice as having engaged attention is that of 'Christian Salutation.' This has been two or three times under consideration, particularly in reference to the advisability of re-introducing the apostolic usage of 'saluting one another with an holy kiss.' It has been received variously, but has nevertheless got into some use in private association and friendly meetings; and the only reason for its non-introduction in the ordinary church meeting is respect for the prejudices of a few of the brethren against it.

George should have said 'the prejudices of a few of the brethren *and sisters* against it;' for certain members of the sisterhood thought they ought to have a still small voice in such a matter, and they had a private confabulation of their own respecting it, the result of which went to show that they fully shared the masculine antipathy to the proposed innovation.

### The Philosophy of Courtship.

Commenting upon the baptism and reception into the church of a young brother, the editor of the *Messenger of the Churches* (Dec. 1868) said :

We can conceive of no better school for a young man than the Church of God in Edinburgh—where the ripe intelligence of men of probity and sense takes the lead, and the ardent activity of the juniors follows suit in the pursuit of divine studies.

It was not George Dowie's fault if this school was not more comprehensive in its teaching. Not only were the young men given valuable assistance in the attainment of further knowledge in spiritual things, but also in some of the most important and delicate matters pertaining to the life that now is. As an instance, I may mention that George, for the benefit of the young people of both sexes in the meeting, furnished an article of so much importance and human interest as 'The Philosophy of Courtship.' He gave it to me in response to an application for a contribution to the manuscript magazine, *The Assistant*, of which I was editor. In handing it to me, he suggested that it should appear anonymously, and I quite approved of this, and transcribed it in my own handwriting. It was introduced by the following suggestive but rather misleading paragraph :—

The following essay is the production of a youth in the midst of the experience to which he alludes. If its expectations are too high, or its colouring too brilliant, it must be laid to the account of that vividness of fancy so apt to characterise persons in the circumstances referred to. But it is certainly worthy of attention as an effort towards the improvement of a very important era in human life. It is submitted to the readers of *The Assistant* with some diffidence ; but behind his incognito he may perhaps be thus bold.

The article, as was claimed for it, well deserved all the consideration it got, containing, as it did, excellent advices upon an important and delicate subject.

# LETTER-WRITING.

In the infancy of the Edinburgh Church, there was a good deal of letter-writing, both in an individual and a collective capacity. In the collective capacity, this correspondence principally took the form of communications to the churches or interested individuals in other places. Some of these letters have been preserved; and, so far as churches in Great Britain are concerned, they will be more appropriately introduced in connection with the history of the particular churches to which they were addressed, in a subsequent volume of this work. One or two specimens of letter-writing, in both the individual and the collective capacity, is all for which room can be found in these pages. The first I shall give is a letter written by the direction of the church to a woman who lived about a dozen miles from Edinburgh, who had recently been baptised and admitted into fellowship, and returned to her distant home in the country. It is introduced by a few general remarks on the subject of letter-writing, by George Dowie, and was given to the brotherhood in the first number of the manuscript *Messenger*, as follows :—

### LETTER WRITING.

It appears only reasonable and proper that the postal facilities of the present day should be used by the brethren as aids to the fellowship of those who are unavoidably apart. The friendly letter is always received with warm relish and a glow of gratitude, as conveying the heartiest wishes and most unaffected utterance of wisdom and experience from one to another.

The presentation of an occasional example of principles which should characterise such communications, will render more intelligible any suggestions which can be made. We submit the following copy of a real letter—one which was sent some time ago to a sister residing at some distance in the country, whose attendance at the meetings had been in consequence very rare. As alluded to in the letter, her husband is not a disciple, and they have a large family. This premised, we need do no more than present the letter.

### Letter to a Sister, whose Husband is Not in the Faith.

Mrs S——,—Dear Sister,—Though absent in person, we still feel an interest in you and your welfare—an interest heightened much to many of us from the circumstance of you having appeared among us so abruptly and unexpectedly from the quiet of your rural home. The knowledge of the existence of any disciples in remote districts, where it was little to be expected the truth had reached, is very cheering; and upon you, therefore, we look with the more pleasure, not alone as a fellow-heir of the glorious kingdom, but as a light shining in the wild—a Christian wife and an exemplary mother, where else all might have been sensuality and worldliness.

It is a maxim of heavenly wisdom as old as the days of Solomon, 'A virtuous wife is a crown to her husband.' And, indeed, in the experience of all ages recorded in holy writ, this uniform lesson is still brought forward and insisted upon: 'Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised.' To us, of course, who look for the approval of God rather than of man, it is a light matter to be disesteemed by the one, if the other honours us. But yet to every sensible person it is more than gratifying to know that he does not live in vain even now. He makes his light shine before men in the workshop or the market—she in her home. And truly, if the teaching of our Lord were to no better intent, yet it is to much, if it has hallowed even the common-place occupations and relations of ordinary life; casting around even the humblest the charm of elegance and nobility, and eliciting from the very rudest business some element of true education.

We refer you to the teaching of the apostles regarding the duties of wives, and the legitimate sphere of their influence, as the very best guide you could have, to encourage you in what you well do, and to instruct you in what may yet be deficient; that perfection—the perfection of the daughters of God Almighty—may characterise your carriage and conversation. That your value may be enhanced even to a price above rubies, we trust that you will give good heed to such teaching as that of Paul in Ephes. v. 22–24; Titus ii. 3–5; and that of Peter, in 1 Pet. iii. 1–6. There is a portion of the latter teaching so peculiar and explicit, that we do not forbear to enlarge upon it. 'Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that *if any obey not the word*, they also may without the word be won by the behaviour of the wives, while they behold your chaste deportment coupled with fear.' It would certainly be much better in all respects that your husband were at one with you on those matters which we deem so important; but while this is not so, it is surely by the example and influence of a still better and nobler life that any desire can be most efficient towards winning him to embrace the good tidings of God, bringing the purest happiness now and the very grandest honour in the age to come. With such in his heart, he might go a-field, as a prince rather than a peasant; for

> His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
> And the resplendent rivers; his to enjoy,
> With a propriety that none can feel
> But who, with filial confidence inspired,
> Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
> And smiling say, 'My Father made them all.'

The duties which devolve upon you as a mother are neither few nor unimportant; and we trust that the same excellence and the same integrity shall characterise you in this relation; that God may the more

esteem you, and that your children may arise and call you blessed; remembering not alone your excellent advice and counsel, your parental care and correction, but that genial atmosphere of kindness and good works which always pervades your household, through the consecration of a mother's character to godly life and heaven-taught speech.

Do not, however, expect that all will go so smoothly and agreeably as we could well wish; but rather be prepared for the day of adversity and even the season of persecution—petty persecution indeed, in a land where God has given us liberty, yet annoying enough. Beyond this, therefore, we see, by the eye of faith, the full fruition of our hope, the true dignity of our being. For although 'now we are the children of God, and it doth not quite appear what it shall be, yet we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Having this hope in us, let us purify ourselves as he is pure, cheered by the assurance that the pure in heart are blessed, for they shall see God.

Dear sister, farewell. We are your affectionate brethren, &c.

### Correspondence with William Oakley.

In the fancy sketch of a Sunday forenoon meeting by George Dowie, reference is made to a letter from William Oakley, in Canada, which some of the young brethren and sisters are represented as hearing read. This is not altogether a creation of George's vivid imagination, but is founded upon actual fact. William Oakley was a young brother, who had come from Nottingham, and was for some months a member of the Edinburgh Church. He then left for America, being joined at Liverpool by a sister from Nottingham, to whom he was married, and with whom he sailed to Canada. After some time, a letter was received from him, giving an account of his experiences in the New World. This letter was read to the church, and by their appointment Grierson Mitchell and I wrote him one in return, containing words of sympathy and encouragement, and telling what had been doing since he had left. I do not think any copy of that letter has been preserved; but it appears to have been highly thought of by our brethren across the water; for, in a subsequent letter that was received from William Oakley, a copy of which I have in my possession, he mentioned that it had been read at conferences of the American brethren at three different places, and had been listened to with much interest, as giving an epitome of the then state of the brotherhood in Britain.

### Letters of James Cameron.

James Cameron was a voluminous letter-writer, and, perhaps more than those of any of the brethren, his epistles were largely written either in elucidation or vindication of matters bearing on the faith and hope. In these pages have been given a correspondence he had with the editor of *The Christian News* in 1852 (pp. 148–153), in which he endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to get in a word on behalf of the Gospel of the Kingdom; and also a similar correspondence with the Chief Rabbi in London (pp. 191–194), in which he endeavoured to show from the Scriptures, but equally without success, that Jesus of Nazareth was 'born King of the Jews.'

Among other epistolary efforts by our brother, I may mention a correspondence he had with the late Mr Richard Robertson, of London, then the agent in Britain for Dr Thomas's *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come* and other works. This correspondence originated in some remarks that Mr Robertson made upon the subject of the resurrection, in acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the tract, 'What is the Gospel?' (pp. 87–92), taken from Dr Thomas's writings. Mr Robertson held views that were rather 'curious' respecting the resurrection, so that James gave the correspondence in *The Assistant*.

In the year 1867, he again tried to get a door of utterance for the truth in the columns of *The Christian News*, and, a change having seemingly come over the spirit of the editorial dream during the intervening years, he was this time successful. A lengthy correspondence was the result, in which James Cameron found himself in the unique position of having to carry on a sort of triangular discussion, having for his opponents an Evangelical Union minister and a Sabbath School teacher of the same denomination. In this way, several important points relating to the Gospel of the Kingdom, which were formerly excluded from the newspaper, were freely ventilated in it —a proceeding that caused a great deal of surprise in certain quarters.

Another memorable production by James Cameron was a 'Letter Addressed to a Baptist Minister' (given in the *Messenger* for March 1864). Having met the late Rev. Francis Johnston on the street one day, he was taken to task by the clergyman for his alleged practice of 'second baptising,' as he called it. James followed up the conversation by writing a lengthy letter, combating Mr Johnston's supposition that 'second dipping was practised in cases where further knowledge regarding certain things is attained, which things were known in their rudimentary form at the first immersion.' James Cameron contended 'that second immersion is justifiable only when there has existed at the first immersion a radical defect in the faith of the individual;' and he showed the necessity for it in such a case.

Another minister who called forth a spirited letter from James Cameron was Dr Horatius Bonar, a well known author and minister of the Free Church. He had been lecturing upon prophetic subjects in Edinburgh, and James having heard one of these lectures, which was on 'The Testimony of Jesus,'—(Rev. xix. 10)—was so strongly impressed with what was omitted in this lecture —namely, 'that testimony concerning himself which he bore when he stood before the judgment-seat of the High Priest and Pontius Pilate'—James was prompted to supply the omission, which he did in a letter that is given in the *Messenger* for March 1868.

In addition to these, our indefatigable brother had at various times letters of similar purport in *The Truth Promoter*, *The Rainbow*, and other publications. He seemed, indeed, to be like a watchman posted on the walls, always on the alert to discover some opening by which a missile, or 'missive,' charged with the truth, might be shot into the camp of the enemy, if, peradventure, some might have their eyes opened and their minds enlightened thereby. Only 'the day' will declare what has been the result of these various epistolary efforts.

## LETTER-WRITING

### Letter by John Forman.

John Forman was one of those who could write a very kind and brotherly letter, both in the way of friendly correspondence and also when special circumstances called for it. One such, written at a time when there was some misunderstanding respecting the Saturday Night Meeting, was as follows :—

19th January 1855.

My Dear Brethren and Sisters,—Having heard that you intended intimating your meeting openly, and hearing in connection with the same report that I particularly objected to your order, I was led to infer that our resolution had been arrived at influenced by the reflections cast from others. Brother Norrie personally assured me this is not applicable to him ; for the others I cannot say.

In the prosecution of any purpose, persons should never be considered : rightness, justice, propriety, and consistency alone should mark the path. Those who imagine I would veto any meeting on personal grounds have a flattering opinion of my humble self. I do, dear brethren, after such reports, have a great feeling of delicacy in being present at your meeting. If I were not received in any company with hearty welcome, not only propriety, but my own comfort would proscribe further intrusion.

Anything I may have said has arisen from my impression of what a church of Christ should be—

One Lord, faith, and hope ;

One heart, soul, and sympathy ;

One mutual desire for the strong to help the weak ; the learned to instruct the ignorant ; the aged, as father and mother, to impart their acquired experience to the young, to hold in check youthful tendency—the young, in return, beaming forth joy and gladness, and adding freshness and vigour to the body. Let the brethren all be regarded as brothers indeed ; the sisters as sisters with all purity, gracing our assemblies with their hallowed, refining, and cheering presence and influence. In short, the idea of a family spiritualised, and not moved by the flesh—happy in each other's happiness, and sad in each other's sorrow, 'without partiality, and without hypocrisy.'

To attain this have I acted, and spoken, and laboured. I never questioned the propriety of your motives, nor the commendability of your aim. If at any time fire was in my tongue, when speaking of you, love was ever in my heart. If any one has been offended, I can only apologetically respond, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend.' The excitability of my nature I cannot hope much to mend. I should not like altogether to want it ; and I hope to turn a quantum into its legitimate use at Dundee next First Day.

I pray the Lord to direct you all, that you may be 'strong to overcome the wicked one.' May you have such discipline in life as shall root out the carnal, that God may implant the spiritual. So shall you each be blessed and be blessings to others.

Finally, brethren and sisters, I have good hope 'that our young men may all be as plants grown up in their youth, and our maidens be polished after the similitude of a palace.'

With all affection, your faithful brother, John Forman.

To the brethren and sisters meeting on Saturday evening.

**Letter by Francis Renwick.**

On one occasion Francis Renwick was moved to write a letter to 'Our Young Men,' which he addressed to them through the medium of the pages of *The Assistant*. As it was so characteristic of the writer, both in thought and expression, it is worth reproducing here:—

In our small world, the difference of a few years has drawn a line so deep as to enter into the moral being, and has materially changed the process of intellectual culture. This difference is nowhere so great as in the spiritual sphere; yet I see no line of demarcation between you and me that is impassable. What exists is a consequence of time and action; the concomitant of these, called experience, forms the subtle medium by which you and I find ourselves classed differently, but most essentially united in all life's noblest commerce of sentiment, of earnest desire for truth, and of manhood. What we are in years can never make you blush, or cause me to be ashamed. It matters not what the distinctive features may be: holding fast to our integrity before God and men makes us equal; and to worthy unegotistic minds, the dissimilarity only serves to bind us more perfectly together.

The recognition of this life mystery gives vitality and power to the elder; while to the young, it is an ordination of God, by which every human capability is matured, and the unknown discovered. The denial of this principle is found in the elder when he dares to speak by assumed authority, or uses a lapse of years as the only guarantee that his words are those of wisdom. 'Grey hairs do not always mean experience;' 'old men are not always wise.' Considering the liabilities to err regarding this principle, the dangers are more on the side of the old than the young. Human conceit is rife; give it the semblance of authority, and the necessary conditions for its execution are forgotten. This principle, like every other in which man is actor, is subject to investigation and contradiction. The opposition of the young may degenerate into self-will, pride, and ignorant repudiation; but the shade is as dark, and befits worse the elder, when he leaves reason and expostulation for threatening arrogance and reprobation. The misery resulting from the abuse of this principle is mischievous to all. It tears asunder with the rudest hand the rarest elements of the social system, and produces that obscuring haze suspicion, which distorts the goodness and truth of our common nature, and renders abortive every attempt to ameliorate the barrenness of our spiritual condition.

If you are chargeable with anything amiss, it is that in which the old have set you so good an example—'to do that which is right in your own eyes.' Were you well weary, weary of words, it would be a soothing conviction to me, and not to be wondered at, as it is far sadder to think, if you have been deluded by Babel clatter, and swallowed words as the staff of life. Still I will say, when I estimate myself in a humanly way, in regard to doing or saying—I am not ashamed; and when I compare myself with you, I am proud of both.

What communication can there be between you and me?—if your ears were anything else than the channel to your hearts; if I had not the conviction that your wisdom is equal to your knowledge, and that you held the full fruition of all learning, only attained when it budded forth in action, and goes on maturing with your life unto perfection. If I had not

this satisfaction, I might content myself with the fallacy that good advice was what you needed. Advice to you is nothing compared to the wholesome conviction, well-grounded, as to the ways and means by which to surmount to the spiritual altitude of 'being furnished to every good work.' It is around this common aim that we become one; and in our equality and dissimilarity find that mutual sympathy so provocative of all that is noble and generous in our being. Advice to you as young men is only worth when it is the elaboration of a life—the whole process, spiritual, moral, and intellectual; which cannot be contained in a precept or moral axiom: nothing short of 'the red realities of flesh' will suffice. It is around our common aim we find the obscure become palpable; and the oneness of desire and disposition is the only means by which the way is paved for the full demonstration of the hidden workings of abstract truth upon the individual character. There can be no worthy or needful speaking to you without the action; for without example, all precepts are incoherent. If affectation and conceit were less, 'the good advice' would be still-born; and the caw-cawing of 'You should do this' would appear as it is—a stolen feather, good for nothing but to tickle a diseased fancy; or otherwise, if you do not take care, it may go to stultify an honest mind.

In speaking to you, I stand related in the same manner, and subject t the same liabilities to human weakness and of error: I, on the one hand, to be incoherent in life and words; and you, to be destitute of appreciation and the power of execution. Many more as tangible reasons might be adduced; but I hope those already given may be sufficient for the purpose of addressing you; that the necessary consequence may follow of addressing the old, which must be, or all speaking and hearing is vain. All we say is subject to the invariable law of investigation and contradiction, without which no one can speak, far less hear; to cultivate every generous desire; to encourage every noble sentiment; to demonstrate, in every possible manner, that love we already feel in its working upon our untoward dispositions; mutually to unfold to germs of truth, of beauty, and of strength, in the character of one another; to minister patiently to spiritual necessities; and to stamp upon every heart, deep into its very core, that we love it for worth's sake, for virtue's sake—for Christ's sake.

FRANCIS RENWICK.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES IN AMERICA.

In addition to numerous letters to various churches in both Scotland and England, a correspondence was opened at an early date with one or two churches in America, of whose existence the Edinburgh Church became aware from communications respecting them that appeared in Dr Thomas's *Herald*. The first church to be written to in this manner was naturally that at New York, of which Dr Thomas was a member. The holding of an annual aggregate meeting of the brethren in this country suggested the writing of a fraternal letter to this church; and the following correspondence, which Dr Thomas published in the *Herald* for January 1857, ensued :—

## Epistle from 'The Called' in Edinburgh to their Brethren in New York City.

The following letter, with the 'General Report' referred to, was received about the latter end of June or beginning of July. We should have laid it sooner before the friends of the great truth we advocate identified with the *Herald*, together with our abstract of the report, and the reply of the brethren in this city, so happily expressed by Brother James Beadman, their amanuensis, but that our time has been so much occupied in travelling and disseminating the Gospel of the Kingdom in Kentucky, Canada, Illinois, Virginia, and elsewhere. We are now in winter quarters, and, among other things, shall endeavour to prepare from the report a condensed view of the kingdom's prospects and present fortunes in Britain, for the information and encouragement of all who are interested in the preparation of the Bride for the marriage supper of the Lamb. In the meantime, by way of instalment, we lay before our readers the following epistle and reply.

Dec. 15, 1856. EDITOR.

*To Dr John Thomas, for the Brethren with him in New York, U. S.*

DEAR BROTHER,—Through the favour of our sister Jessie Lindsay, from Dundee, *en route* for Wisconsin, we send you a copy of the Report of the position of matters as they are—(or they were, rather, for this was gathered at New Year time)—in Britain, so far as we can ascertain. The document in question will sufficiently explain itself; and we trust that the perusal of it will be interesting to all the brethren in New York. Perhaps also the friends in other places may see from it how things fare on this side of the Atlantic.

It is very natural and very proper, too, that we should feel some interest in those of the same faith who are scattered throughout the United States and Canada. We hope, therefore, that ereloug we shall be furnished with as copious information on this head as you can procure. We doubt not that you, yourself, will have a sufficient clue to such places and persons as shall be likely to furnish you with the necessary material, and that there are plenty of energetic men in the church in New York to undertake the necessary correspondence. It has also been suggested that you, Brother Thomas, will be the likeliest person to know whether there are any brethren on the Continent of Europe—in Germany or France—with whom we could communicate. If you know of any such, we would feel obliged by your informing us of them.

Apart from the mere statistic value of our inter-British correspondence, we expect that an occasional epistle will help to enhance our advantageousness and increase our enjoyment of Christian fellowship. As yet there has been very little done in that way; probably from the predominance of that most common element in our character, individual and associate, indifference to others. By saying this indifference is reprehensible, we

condemn ourselves, it may be. Let us amend our ways, and, on as large a scale as we conveniently can, consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works.

It is gratifying to find that the question of the Lord's coming is exciting some interest in various quarters among religious men; but it tends to so little good, is so barren of result, that it is a question whether any great end is served toward the dissemination and reception of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God; and therefore a question whether the general mind is at all prepared for that complete submission to God's Christ, so much desiderated in all disciples. Of many preachers of this doctrine, it may be said, their words show a comprehension of things 'not far from the Kingdom of God;' but the hearers are only tantalised with the echo of future greatness, deriving no further good than the bulk of the community who never hear of these things. Truly there is no hope for men until they cease from following the clergy, and take to the reading of the Bible.

We are happy to inform the brethren, through you, that we are generally in good health. Of those personally known to you all—Brother F Renwick and Sister Agnes Arcus—we have to say they are well; the former has recovered his health so much as to be able, to some extent, to resume work. Brethren J. Forman, William Wilson, J. Cameron, A. Tait, James Lawrie, &c., are in ordinary health. We live together happily and to some profit, and increase our number by occasional addition. Thus, to-day we receive amongst us Mr Robert Norrie, known to some of your number.

We all—even those who are not personally known to any of you—feel a considerable interest in the church in New York, and are somewhat acquainted with Brother J. Thomas, through his writings. May we indulge the hope that we shall by-and-by receive a letter from you, to inform us of your welfare, to stimulate our faith and hope, to increase our joy? Farewell!

May the blessing of the God of Abraham, through our Lord Jesus the Christ, be on you all.

GEORGE DOWIE.

Edinburgh, June 1, 1856.

### Reply to the Brethren in Edinburgh.

*The Church of Jesus Christ in New York to those in Edinburgh who have obtained like precious faith with us, favour and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

BELOVED BRETHREN,—Your interesting letter, and the report sent by Sister Lindsay, have been received and read to us by Brother Thomas, and we send you many thanks for your Christian courtesy in affording us so much pleasure. We were indeed pleased and surprised at the number of churches and the number of brethren, but especially at the tolerable uniformity in their practice. Complete agreement could hardly be expected. It would be strange if so many, employed so long under the builders of modern Babel, were all found speaking the same language, especially the language of Canaan; but we are persuaded that all who have really repented, believed and obeyed the gospel, will by-and-by rectify what is wrong, and become fused into that Unit so earnestly prayed for by our dear Saviour previous to his suffering. For if we have repented, that will have brought us into unison with God's way of thinking; if we have 'the Faith,' we shall purify ourselves; if we are obedient children, we shall do whatsoever He has commanded us; and by

these means succeed more or less in attaining the character of our dear Redeemer—his dignity and humility, his gentleness and firmness, his justice and benevolence, his hatred of sin and amazing compassion for the erring.

In your letter you express the hope to be furnished with like information, respecting the Church of Christ on this side of the Atlantic, to which we beg to reply, that no concentrated effort has been made by us of that kind, owing, we hope, not altogether to an excess of selfishness, but partly to that and other influences inseparable from the singular position in which we stand, both to our past lives and to the religious world. You know the scales have not long fallen from our eyes; we have hardly done wondering at our past credulity and the amazing darkness in which we have been stumbling; our vision is not yet nicely adjusted to the new light poured on it from the fountain of day; the glorious things revealed still astonish us; we yet reel with the weight of glory; to keep anything like steady, demands most of our time; and, after all, as with the magnates in the Satanic kingdom, we cannot always maintain the balance of power. We shall, it is hoped, in a little while act more as if, in the beautiful words of Harris, 'we wished all the saints in Christ Jesus to constitute one family, clothed in a robe of happiness, with charity for a girdle, and hailing the addition of every new-born saint as the advent of an angel—an addition to the common fund of enjoyment, and finding greater blessedness than that of passively receiving happiness in the God-like prerogative of imparting it.' And, beloved brethren, we again thank you for taking the first step in this direction. From what has been said, we would not convey the idea that our church is quite isolated and neutral amidst the cry of 'What shall we eat and drink, and with what shall we be clothed!' and 'How fast can we make money?' constantly ascending from the insane crowds around us. No, brethren, we have often brought us, on the wings of the winds and lightning, notes of cheer from various and distant regions—from the north and the glowing south, from the prairies and the regions of gold; and we believe it is the intention of our beloved brother Thomas to collect information on these subjects, to collate your interesting report, and publish them in his excellent paper.

Further on you remark 'that the coming of the Lord is exciting some attention among the sects, but there is no hope for the people until they forsake the clergy and begin to study the Bible.' This fearful fact is too true; and from what we see and hear, we feel certain that there is no well founded hope for the people. Respecting the gospel, they seem willingly ignorant; of the nature of repentance towards God—God's way of gifting immortality to man, and the destiny of the world in the golden ages now rapidly approaching—they have little more knowledge than if God had not spoken on these subjects; they are 'intoxicated with the wine of the mother of harlots,' and, like most people in that condition, they imagine themselves extra sober and sensible. In this state it is quite easy for the priests who blithely officiate in the temples to flatter excited self-esteem, and by an artful mixture of mythology, false reasoning, and perverted Scripture, to persuade the deceived people that they have found a smooth highway to heaven, and that they are leisurely walking in their silken slippers to the starry abodes of angels and of God. Now, for people so circumstanced to stand still and consider the simple truths of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and bend to its humiliating conditions, seems impossible. They have deposed reason; they have given up her clear and satisfying conclusions for mere sensuous pleasures; their delirium is too agreeable; the enchantment thrown around them is too delightful; they cannot be undeceived till the sentence is pronounced, 'He that is filthy, let him be

filthy still.' Not but that the gospel is still 'the power of God to all who believe,' but they are mostly outside and beyond its saving influence. Indeed, we see an awful parallel between this generation and that contemporary with the ministrations of the Redeemer. The world is full of religion, but nearly empty of Christianity. There is a good deal of sacrifice, but precious little of obedience; and hundreds of opposing sects claim the possession of the Spirit of the Holy One, while the victory of the world over the churches, and the masses of corrupting material of which they are composed, demonstrate that the insulted Spirit has long since left them to their vain imaginations.

But it is time to leave this painful subject, that we may offer a few suggestions respecting a difficulty or two noticed in your reports, as having troubled some of the brethren.

The first which we shall mention is teetotalism. We think the Spirit nowhere teaches teetotalism. The Redeemer does not insist upon, or even recommend it, nor do any of his apostles; therefore, as Christians, we have nothing to do with teetotalism; and for Christians to insist upon it, is like glorifying moonshine, and neglecting the great source of all its light—it is acting like that portion of the doctoring community, who ply all their chemistry, drugs, and nonsense to the palliation or removal of the symptoms of disease, and pay no attention to the laws of health and life. Christianity is the only remedy for the diseases of man: it can cure them—teetotalism never. Temperance in all things is the great law for Christians; and we would recommend that teetotalism, as a piece of useless lumber, be thrown, with a stone round its neck, into the depths of the sea.

Again, as to whether it is proper to send the sacramental bread and wine to absentees, a few words will suffice. The Lord's Supper is simply a family feast commemorative of a wonderful event—an event on which hangs the redemption of the world. It is to be eaten by the church in its associate capacity, and not sent to the sick-room, except that church agrees to keep the feast in the sick-room, in consideration of the disabled brother. It ought not to be sent to the careless loiterers at home, or Sunday visitors abroad: they don't care for it. The command to them is, 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.' There is no transubstantiation, no salvable virtue, in the bread and wine: they are symbols only of the body and blood of the dear Saviour; and the effects, when they are produced on us by partaking of them, are the result of ideality in combination with that peculiar moral condition into which repentance, faith, and the Holy Spirit have brought every true son of Abraham. The proper place for the Lord's Supper is on the Lord's Table; and the proper place for every Christian, on the First Day of the week, is at that table, refreshing his memory, strengthening his faith, intensifying love, and edifying his brethren.

Again, the Lanark difficulty respecting the death of Christ being the gospel, its being the result of the love of God, &c., although a more sober difficulty, is not very hard of solution. The death of Christ certainly is not the gospel. It is, indeed, a wonderful and tragic event; but the gospel is glad tidings. The death of Christ is not, strictly speaking, the result of the love of God: it is rather the result of a law of God—namely, that 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission;' that is, the sentence of death, which has passed on all men, could not be remitted except blood or life had been given for the lives to be ransomed: the life, blood, or death of Christ was the great price paid for man. Now, none of us love to pay a great price for anything: it is the object to be purchased

that we love, and therefore pay the price demanded. God gave His beloved for His otherwise lost children on earth; the Jews, of their own free will, crucified him through envy. These two statements are perfectly reconcileable; it is only to the mere metaphysician that such passages present any difficulty. We Christians are willing to take such facts as we find them. We may not alter them or explain them away. The Bible is not a book of metaphysics—it is a book of induction, from which earnest men, by careful study, may learn the nature of that God with whom he has to do, secure immortality, and obtain suggestive glimpses of a bright destiny, a long way into the future eternity. If we would be approved sons of God, we must drop metaphysics, and become earnest believers and lovers of the Bible.

We would, in conclusion, venture a remark on the subject of the Holy Spirit; but it is so vast, that we fear to place our foot on its threshold. In its comprehension, it is infinite; yet, in its relation to man, it is one of the simplest in the records of light. It is difficult of apprehension, principally with the lovers of the wonderful, who are apt to remain unsatisfied with common blessings, and are always reaching after special gifts and powers. There is 'One Spirit.' When God began to create the worlds, the influences of the Spirit diffused themselves in mighty waves proceeding through the universe, to return again to the throne of the Eternal, laden with gladness and praise from millions of beings in many worlds, mingled with the lofty songs of the seraphim, and the humble and fervent thanks of forgiven man. All men are subject to, and enjoy, these influences of the Spirit. Nor can we shun them any more than we can flee from the influence of the sun, between which and the influence of the Spirit we think there is a beautiful parallel. When man was created a being, who had to develop his character and happiness out of supplied materials, but chiefly from a humble imitation of his Creator's perfections, God at proper times diffused abroad other influences of His Spirit—influences illumined with light, warmed with love, vivified with power, and dark with vengeance; and men were found with affinities (to use a chemical phrase) for those new spiritual influences, and transmitted them to future generations. Hence Moses legislated, David sang, Solomon moralised, Isaiah and all the prophets withdrew the veil from futurity, and revealed the glories of an eternal kingdom. Christ taught a divine morality, suffered, and bled. Apostles preached it to the world, and wielded the attribute of Deity to prove their ambassadorship, and to produce faith in them who heard; and we, in these last days, may enjoy the combined effects of those spiritual influences and efforts until we are transformed into the image of the Christ, and reign in the approaching kingdom. With these we may well be satisfied and thankful, without craving the gifts or powers; or, if we greatly desire them, let us bring ourselves up to the standard of faith; and then, if the gifts are not imparted, it will be because our Father deems them unsuitable for this day and generation.

Hoping this epistle will be received in the same spirit which dictated it, with love to all the holy brethren, we remain,

Yours, in the one hope of our calling,

In behalf of the Church,

JAMES BEADMAN.

New York, Sept. 10, 1856.

The report which accompanied the Edinburgh letter never appeared in the *Herald*.

## Letter to the Church in New York.

*The Church of God in Edinburgh to their Brethren and Fellows in New York and America generally.*

Edinburgh, Jan. 2, 1859.

Beloved Brethren,—It has never been forgotten that a correspondence was opened between us in 1856. We cannot very well account for its suspension for so long a period; probably the occupation with the interest of our British selves has shut out of thought those who were more out of view. But you have not been forgotten, and we have not quite lost the sense of our responsibility to you and to God for the continuance of such a correspondence. With the help of God, therefore, we desire in this New Year season to resume what we found so agreeable, and place ourselves *en rapport* with those of the same family who are in America, particularly with those in New York of whom we know something.

There has been forwarded to you a report of our last year's general meeting, held at Edinburgh in July 1858, which will so far render unnecessary any detail of church numbers and usages throughout Britain. Since that meeting, matters have gone on very favourably in many quarters. In particular, there has been called into existence a church in Dunkeld, Perthshire, small as yet, but hopeful. A small meeting in Berwick-on-Tweed is also in a very hopeful condition. Strong in itself, although despised of the religious public, we have no fear for the ultimate success of the truth in that border—success in the establishment of character rather than numbers. In various other places there have been additions to the numbers of churches of longer standing.

In Edinburgh the increase has been at least as satisfactory. During the past year we have added 13, the most of them being young persons. This we receive as a healthful indication, perceiving that the persons who have united themselves to us have been more influenced by the general conduct and general speech of the church, than by any special means directed to them for their conversion to God. In the past year, we have been visited by the power of death, having committed to the grave, in the hope of a good resurrection, no less than three persons in the prime of life—Mrs William Wilson, Jun., John Forman, and Francis Renwick. The latter had left our assembly about two years before his death, but he was not a stranger to us, and his faith in the promises of God through Jesus Christ was known to all. Brother John Forman was a man much respected by all his brethren, as an upright and earnest disciple, who had at heart the welfare of the church, and who ceased not, as long as he had ability, to labour for its edification in love. His memory is had in sweet respect by all his friends, and his example is yet before us in grateful remembrance. Sister Wilson, as a wife and a mother, will not be forgotten soon. We were all able to appreciate her character and worth; around her untimely and unfortunate end are gathered the very fondest regrets—chastened, however, by the recollection of a most fervent faith and most brilliant hopes, which she cherished with the soul of a poet and the heart of a Christian. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.' Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory over death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The meeting in Edinburgh, as it presently stands, has several features which we view not only as agreeable, but good. By far the larger number of this assembly are young persons, in whom the fervour of youth is happily blended with that stern logical cast of character for which the

Scottish people are so remarkable. These qualities, directed and stimulated by the fear of God, have flourished into a most charming unity and beauty—the beauty of holiness. We think it is easy to trace, during the six years of our existence as a church, a steady growth into the idea and likeness of a family, in which we in very deed call one another and esteem one another as brother. Towards this there has ministered a very happy quality of our association to which we presume you are utter strangers—namely, the steady residence of the individual members in the town or vicinity. During the period above noted, very few indeed have had to remove to other places, so that our intimacy has had room and opportunity to grow. We are thankful to God for this blessing.

As indicated in the report to which we referred you, the social feeling manifests itself readily in frequent meetings and cordial greetings; and it is from one of such extra meetings, as we often have, that this letter is dated to-day—our New Year's gathering. We have present with us brethren and sisters from Lanark, Dunkeld, and Cupar Fife, who cordially unite with us in wishing all love, joy, peace, and other moral adornments to characterise the saints in New York, and that their faith and hope may increase abundantly.

During the past year we have started a manuscript magazine to circulate among the churches—designing by it to gather up and discuss matters of congregational interest likely to be overlooked by more pretentious periodicals. Six numbers have already been put in circulation, and the following are some of the subjects which have engaged the attention of the brethren in the pages of the manuscript *Messenger of the Churches*:—'The Congregational Uses of Music,' 'Letter-Writing,' 'Simple Maps and Illustrations,' 'Christian Rites,' 'Christian Usages in Salutation,' 'A New Hymn Book,' 'Caution against the Pretensions of the Irvingites,' 'The Preservation and Restoration of Health,' and a great many topics of doctrinal as well as practical interest—with as full intelligence as could be had regarding the churches and scattered individuals. This *Messenger* must of necessity be only a British institution, fitted to the limited circulation of these islands, but we commend to your attention another form of the same, which has obtained among us a much longer period—namely, a manuscript magazine circulating in Edinburgh only. For about three years have we been able to sustain that which has now become almost a necessity in our existence—a vehicle of kindly feeling and permanent receptacle of thought for instruction. Without in the least depreciating the value of printed matter in magazines and *Heralds*, we submit to you, as an excellent means towards the promotion of Christian intercourse, such a journal. We furnish ourselves with paper of a uniform size, and write what we have to say, which at the end of every month is, under the guardianship of an editor, gathered together, and bound, thenceforth to circulate after the order of the list of names on its cover. We do not think that the ranges of the Empire City are too wide for such an experiment, and being practical men in these and some other matters, we say, try it.

A goodly number of the brethren are resident in towns in the vicinity of Edinburgh—Leith, Portobello, and Musselburgh, respectively at two, three, and six miles' distance—who, from their love to the brotherhood and intense relish for their society, make it convenient to be present at most of the meetings of the church on the First Day of the week. Of those so situated there are no less than 18. These places we expect, by-and-by, to be centres of extended influence, and these brethren to be nuclei of new churches. We think we are sensible of the heavy responsibility which lies upon us to show forth, with an excellent lustre and more

equivocal tone, the truth which we have received and in which we stand. God has qualified us by endowments of a superior order for a leading position among the churches in Britain; and with all sense of our imperfect condition in many things, we take to ourselves the onus, that its presence may incite us to greater diligence and more marked example. At our instance the annual meetings of the brethren have been convened, and we hold ourselves bound to serve the brotherhood in every way we can. If the statement of these things regarding ourselves be taken as too egotistical, we hope they will be found no more than true. We are happy in calling to remembrance our advantages, for they remind us of our duties, and out of the abundance of the heart the pen has recorded our love and peace.

We have left to others to communicate with you on matters of general interest, which, we perceive by the pages of the *Herald*, is occasionally done, and we shall content ourselves with thus affording you a glimpse of the disposition and doings of the Church in Edinburgh. And you are not to imagine we have told all, or at all indicated the very interesting Bible readings and studies which engage our attention in our church meetings. With a heart for truth and a mind bent on research, we apply ourselves statedly and interestedly to those noble productions and most glorious records which the Bible contains, strengthening our faith and encouraging our hope by the words and deeds of prophets and apostles, charmed above all by the character and teaching of that One whom we desire to set above all might and authority in things moral and intellectual —Jesus, the Son of God, our Master, our example, our brother. 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'

Farewell. The Lord grant you all a fulfilment of the glorious things promised. This is the wish and prayer of your brethren in the one hope in the Church in Edinburgh.

GEORGE DOWIE, *Sec.*

### Letter to the Brethren in Milwaukee, U. S. A.

*To the Believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, in Congregations assembled or as Scattered Individuals, in Milwaukee and the Adjacent Parts of Wisconsin, U. S. A.*

Edinburgh, 13th Oct., 1861.

BELOVED BRETHREN,—We have become aware of your existence by hearsay of your friend, William Harper, lately visiting Edinburgh, as well as by other notes and reports; and knowing how much we ourselves prize communications from afar, we infer that you also will feel a like interest in a letter from us. For although very few of us have seen one another in the flesh, yet, by that spirit of fellowship which a like faith and hope begets, we are constrained to seek more communication with and better understanding of you.

We have been united in the bonds of Christian church fellowship for about eight years and a half. And, as at the time of organisation, so also ever since, we have been careful to ensure a pure communion by insisting upon, in every case, a correct understanding of the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus the Christ, as set forth by prophets and apostles, as well as by the Lord Jesus himself, previous to an immersion into the name of the Lord: namely, that the broken and scattered people of God's election—Israel—will be gathered again in greater power and glory than they have ever enjoyed, and that their resurrection into a

Kingdom of God is to be in connection with the assumption and exercise of his rightful power and authority by the appointed One—the Man of God's right hand, whom He hath strengthened for Himself—Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ; who has already appeared on earth in a humble and humbled character, being put to death in the flesh that he might give his life a ransom for many; and being quickened by the Spirit and raised to heaven, presenting before his Father's throne the blood of the New Covenant—his own blood. That in due time, and speedily, he shall come to establish that covenant with the families of Israel and with the house of Judah, reigning over the house of Jacob for ever, and, with his saints redeemed from the earth, spreading his sway over all nations and peoples then existent.

We have made it our study as far as possible to increase our knowledge of God's Word, both as relates to the history of divine dealings and the prophecies of divine purposes; also, and with much interest, to study those sublime principles of character which the Word of God sets forth specially in the teaching of the Lord and his apostles: which knowledge has naturally and consequently aroused us to diligence to make our calling and election sure; that by adding to our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, we may become fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and secure for ourselves an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom.

We have found our pursuit of this knowledge and character best secured by setting a right value on the assembling of ourselves together at stated times, for the observance of Christian appointments and institutions—as the breaking of bread, the worship of God, and the exhortation of one another; and at other times have been blessed with each other's fellowship in social reunions and incidental meetings for improvement in all matters intellectual, social, and moral. And truly we have found much happiness in this mode of life, awakening, as it has done, our liveliest interest in each other and in the great foundation truths on which we have been built, and in which we seek to edify ourselves. We seek to honour the Lord by a thankful reception of all His bounties. He has fed us and clothed us; He has preserved us from death, and raised us from sickness; has filled the earth with beauty for our pleasure and instruction, and has made even the untoward and complicated events of national and personal history instructive to us by His Word. He has endowed us with faculties by which knowledge, reason, structure, relation, and beauty give us enjoyment. He has given us the power to produce music, and with its luxury we have solaced ourselves, and raised songs to the God of our salvation. Praise the Lord, O every one, with all soul; bless His holy name; for He hath filled the life of the meek with goodness, and hath scorned the pride of the rich, sending them empty away.

Still, we feel ourselves in a world in which evil abounds. We see and experience ill apportioned and unequal distribution of work and recompense; we see oppression and injustice, slavery, war, pestilence, disease, and death; and from amongst ourselves have been snatched, by the ruthless hand of the destroyer, many a one dear and well beloved, whom we have laid in the grave with these words, however: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord;' 'They who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him from the dust of death.' Sad issue of mortality, and dread conquest of thine, O Sin! Therefore, although well cherished and appointed, and thus furnished and blessed, we wait and watch for the coming of the Lord. He is at hand, and we look with joy for his appearing, for then he will give all grace and glory. Then he will redeem the souls of his servants from all deceit and violence, and secure for them the highest honours in the

Kingdom of God; will endow with eternal life those who have fallen the prey of the insatiate grave, or been cursed with the evils of mortality to the day of his appearing.

How fares it with you, brethren beloved for the Lord's sake? Have you found a like enjoyment from the same faith and hope, knowledge, fellowship, and blessings? We would be much pleased to learn. Why should we restrict our fellowship and intercommunication to those who are only within hail of each other in the same city or on the same country side? By the facilities of communication which these times afford us, the far may be brought near, and the distant made neighbours to one another. Rapid transit and postal facilities suggest the cultivation of a friendly intercourse with the ends of the earth, and the binding of all those who hold the one faith into one brotherhood, with sympathies awake and vivid though far-stretched. This sensitiveness in Christ Jesus is a telegraph bond which the waters of the broad Atlantic or the sweep of the trackless prairie cannot neutralise by its intervention. Brethren, we are one. Let us cultivate a more perfect friendliness.

We are needful of all stimulus, all encouragement and help, and therefore we ought to use all right means to evoke this from one another. Be assured, brethren, of the most sincere affection on our part. As of our Lord, so of you—having not seen, we love, and for his sake. Let us be faithful unto death, that we may have the honour of the crown of life. Let us, having the hope of seeing the glorious Lord, purify ourselves as he is pure. Let us follow the faith and consider the end of the conversation of all the noble ones whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' To him be all honour and glory, and thanksgiving and might, throughout all ages. Amen.

Your brethren in the faith and hope of the gospel, waiting for the coming of the Lord from the heavens.

GEORGE DOWIE, *Sec.*

### The Letters of Margaret M'Donald.

Before passing from the subject of letter-writing, some mention should be made of the letters of Margaret M'Donald, a sister of some note in the early days of the Edinburgh Church. She was unfortunate enough for a number of years to have to live at a distance from Edinburgh, and far from any persons of like precious faith. She was therefore greatly indebted to correspondence for keeping up an interest in the like-minded ones whom she had left behind. She herself had a peculiar gift as a letter-writer; and her letters, at the time they were received, formed a sort of common property among her half-dozen correspondents; and it was no uncommon thing thing for them, or extracts from them, to be read at our fireside gatherings.

# THE TRIO.

### Warning to the Reader.

O wha this tale o' truth may read,
Ilk man and mother's son tak' heed.

ROBERT BURNS.

It may be necessary here to explain that I propose in this and the succeeding section to depart a little from the grave tone which some readers may suppose ought to characterise a work with such a title as this bears. Its sub-title, however, includes 'social reminiscences of persons, places, and events' having some relation to what is undoubtedly the main purpose of the work. I intend, therefore, now to introduce a few of these social reminiscences, which call for treatment in a somewhat lighter mood than has hitherto been necessary, and show the attempts that were made to achieve success in what George Dowie used to call 'the art of living together.' I do not think there is any inconsistency or impropriety in this; but if the reader thinks otherwise, he or she is respectfully requested to omit this and the following section, so that I may be able to tell my story in my own way, without offending the susceptibilities of any one.

### The Trio Introduced.

Our lot has been the common fate
Of others in this mortal state.
We've known the days of wild delight
Of boyhood in their rapid flight.
We've known the pleasures—hap the pains!
Of youth when love in triumph reigns;
The days of manhood we have known,
When life girds all its armour on.

G. R.

Well, then, most courteous reader, having thus anticipated and, I trust, propitiated any little sense of impropriety you may entertain towards what I am about to say, permit me to introduce to you these three very important personages in their way—'The Trio'—whom I am going to cause to figure rather prominently in the next page or two. Be it known, therefore, to all readers who have not skipped this page, that The Trio are—Grierson Gordon Mitchell, James Lawrie, and the writer of these lines.

The name was originally given to us by William Wilson when we were all little better than boys together in the High Street Hall meeting. Being all much about the same age, and naturally being a good deal in each other's company, I suppose, caused our worthy brother to call us by this name, and induced others to do the same. The title stuck to us. 'The Trio' we were in the High Street meeting, and 'The Trio' we continued to be in the Potter Row meeting; and for some years afterwards we were a sort of 'power' in it, which had at times to be reckoned with rather seriously. Our special sphere at first lay in the purveying for the numerous social meetings, in which we did all the necessary work, assisted and directed by Susan Mark, who was always the mistress of the ceremonies on such occasions.

**Battling for the Truth.**

In the sunny years of youth,
When we battled for the truth,
Daring danger, toil, and wrath,
Hope was flashing o'er our path.

When our eager youth at last
Into manhood's prime had passed,
Still we dreamed that we were strong
To loose the world from sin and wrong.

Now the evening shadows play
On our strength's declining day;
Hope is dead, and well know we,
What has been must ever be.

A. H. S.

With the exception of the last two lines, the above may be said to express what has been the experience of The Trio. At least I can speak for myself in this matter. In 'our eager youth' we were very ardent, and intensely interested in the development of the truth that was taking place in our minds during the closing months of our connection with the High Street meeting.

After the meeting in the Tailors' Hall was formed, on the basis of a belief in the Gospel of the Kingdom, and baptism proceeding upon that belief, we were all very enthusiastic about it, believing it was a step in the right direction, and that it was the proper attitude to assume in relation to the truth. James Lawrie, in particular, was

very courageous in 'battling for the truth,' and used to entertain us with long accounts of animated discussions he had with W. K. Rose (one of the old High Street members) and others, in defence of the position we had taken up, and in which Mr Rose stood up for the 'open communion' principle from which we had now withdrawn; and I used to think, from the glowing narration James gave us, that he always had much the best of the argument on these occasions.

**'We've Had our Day.**

Still this, at least, I well might say,
We've not been idle in the fray;
And, 'hap what hap,' and come what might,
We've fearless battled for the right;
Nor was it ours to count the cost
Of fortune or of favour lost.
But all has passed away—away!
Well, well, my friends, we've had our day.

G. R.

At that time we were all three members of a small club who subscribed together as readers of Dr Thomas's *Herald*, at the end of the year the twelve numbers being allocated among the members of the small limited liability company. I find that I have the numbers for March and May 1853 apportioned in this manner. Grierson was the manager of the co-partnery, and he encased each number in an extra cover of strong brown paper, to which he furnished a handsome title-page, executed in that particularly neat and bold style of caligraphy for which he is so well known. He embellished each number with a short and appropriate Scripture text, the two numbers I have bearing respectively the mottoes, 'Thy Kingdom Come' and 'My Kingdom is not of this Age.'

James Lawrie and I used to go at our dinner hour to a retired spot on the Calton Hill, where we ate our dinner together, and occasionally Grierson joined us there. When a new number of the *Herald* arrived, it was brought to this place of resort, and some tit-bits from it were read as a sort of digester to our *al fresco* meal. We greatly relished the doctor's terse and vigorous style of writing. [illegible] we enjoyed his hard hits at the clergy, and why he

'walloped' Alexander Campbell, and how we actually revelled in his ridicule of 'Sky-Kingdomia,' 'Immortal-Soulism,' and other popular religious errors! Grierson, looking back quite recently upon the exuberant feeling of those early years, and contrasting it with his subsequent experiences, thus speaks of the mental change which he has undergone :—

I well remember that time, and blush a little at its remembrance, because I shared the theological cock-a-doodle-do-ism of the time. Of course there were exceptions; but these were the days, when otherwise decent men threw second-hand Greek and Hebrew brick-bats at all and sundry who did not agree with them. We were very zealous—we gave no quarter, and never knew when we were defeated. We appear to know that the angels can weep. I see nothing incongruous myself in the supposition that they may even be forced to smile also at times.*

**Mutual Improvement Class.**

Take the spade of Perseverance;
Dig the field of Progress wide;
Every bar to true instruction
Carry out and cast aside:
Every stubborn weed of error,
Every seed that hurts the soil,
Tares, whose very growth is terror—
Dig them out, whate'er the toil.

CHARLES SWAIN.

Shortly after the meeting in the Tailors' Hall was formed, it was agreed to commence a sort of mutual improvement class, principally for the improvement of the brethren in the art of public speaking. This class was held on Saturday evening, in the house of James Bannerman, in Greenside Row, and at first the subject of study was confined to elocution. Afterwards the writing of short papers on various subjects was included. On the first night, some six or seven brethren attended; on the second night, only four; and on the third night, only The Trio. Not cast down at being thus deserted by their seniors, The Trio resolved to continue the class. They found it mutually profitable; and for a period of fully six

* G. G. Mitchell, in *Tyro*, March 1902.

months they met regularly every Saturday night in the same place, Mrs Bannerman kindly giving them the necessary accommodation. The amount of eloquence that was wasted on the desert air of Mrs Bannerman's parlour during that memorable period, no man shall ever know.

**The Signs of the Times.**

How long, O Lord, our Saviour,
Wilt thou remain away?
Our hearts are growing weary
At thy so long delay.

I find that I have preserved one of the papers I wrote for this class, an extract from which I shall give here. It is a 'Retrospect of the Year 1853,' and is of very little value, and only interesting because of the time and the circumstances under which it was written.

The recurrence of this season gives rise to a number of very solemn reflections. One cannot but be struck with the New Year's salutation customary among the Jews in Palestine. In a work published last year by Dr Ayton, who had travelled through the Holy Land, we are told that in the year 1851, the salutation which every Jew gave to his neighbour was, 'The Messiah shall come this year, and the land will be ours;' but the year 1851 passed away, and the Messiah came not, and still the land was not theirs. In the year 1852, however, it was observed that their New Year's salutation was, '*May* the Messiah come this year, and the land shall be ours.' This exhibits the ardent longing which the poor descendant of Abraham has for the appearance of the promised Messiah, and the confident expectation he has that he will come and deliver his land from the power of the oppressor, and restore it to him and his brethren. Such a salutation might be very appropriate for us, who look for the same Messiah; but we know, from the study of the prophetic Word, and from observing the signs of the times, that the Messiah will *not* come this year, as is most ardently desired by the poor Hebrew. The time is not yet come for the advent of Him who shall come and restore again the kingdom to Israel, and when the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom under the whole heaven, and possess it for ever —though present events are fast hastening this consummation, and the signs of the time indicate that it is not far distant.

This paper is noteworthy, because I find in it these very remarkable words: 'We know, from the study of the prophetic Word, and from observing the signs of the times, that the Messiah will *not* come this year.' I need scarcely say that I would not write thus now; but the fact that I wrote so then, and gave it also as the expression of the belief of my companions, is an indication of how firmly we then believed in the date which Dr Thomas had fixed for the second coming of Christ.

### Madcap Schemes.

> And we believed the world held nought of pain,
> And cherished wishes time has long proved vain.
> J. B. Rogerson.

'Madcap schemes,' I think, is a fitting designation for some of the truly Utopian projects which were at that time entertained by The Trio in all seriousness, but which, even to ourselves, must seem ridiculous at this distance of time. These schemes were all suggested in the utmost good faith, and with a sincere desire to benefit either ourselves individually or the meeting collectively, in which we all took a very great interest.

Most of the schemes to which I refer were originally suggested by James Lawrie. Thus, it was his suggestion that we three, along with Susan Mark, should take up house together in a fashion that will make most readers smile. James's idea was that, Susan having already a furnished house, it could easily be arranged to take a house which would accommodate us all; and, in explaining his proposal, he gave a graphic description of how pleasant it would be, of an evening, were we all living together in this way, for us each to engage in our own respective occupations, and when we were wearied of our studies, we could just blend our voices in a song; and so the time would pass right merrily. James drew such a charming picture of the ideal life we should live under this arrangement, that I was quite taken with it, and a doubt as to its perfect propriety or feasibility did not seem to enter any of our minds. I took an early opportunity of telling my sister Jane of the proposal, describing it in glowing

language, and improving, I think, even upon James's beau ideal. She listened to it all very attentively, and then burst into hearty laughter. I am sorry to have to confess that that laughter virtually settled the fate of our pet project—it dashed all our fond hopes completely to the ground. What seemed to amuse Jane so much was, that we expected so large an amount of service from Susan—even supposing she were willing to attempt to give it; for it was part of our project that she should continue at her occupation of map-colouring, while she was to 'do,' as the English people term it, for The Trio as well; and it had never occurred to any of us that this was expecting a great deal more from Susan than she could possibly give. We saw that the whole scheme was visionary, and therefore, though very reluctantly, it had to be abandoned.

'The Art of Visitation.'

Now falls the snow—with stilly silence falls,
And Nature has her virgin robe put on.

No sound is heard, save of the sweeping blast,
And deepest darkness veils the face of heaven.

Although thus foiled in what we considered a laudable attempt to practically carry out George Dowie's theory in 'the art of living together,' we turned from it to another of the 'arts' which our indefatigable brother was at great pains to have us cultivate, and on which he sometimes lectured us—'the art of visitation.'. Giving good heed to the wise counsels we received from our elder and more experienced brother, we formed ourselves (unofficially) into a visiting committee, and commenced a systematic course of visitation of the brethren at their homes, devoting an evening each week to the purpose. This we kept up until we had gone over nearly all, if not quite all, the members of the church.

One of these visits was a rather eventful one to us. It was to Agnes Robertson, an elderly sister of great worth, who resided at Brachead, some four or five miles west from Edinburgh. 'Nancy' Robertson and my mother had been close companions from their girlhood, and, step by step, had progressed through the various stages of the

United Secession and the 'Morisonian' Churches, until at length they came to understand and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom, and rendered the obedience of faith which it demands. Nancy was greatly interested in everything pertaining to the truth, an ardent admirer of Dr Thomas, and an eager reader of the *Herald*. Being at such a distance from the town, and somewhat up in years, she was not able to attend the meetings so frequently as she could wish, and visitors of like precious faith were always welcomed and hospitably entertained by her. On the occasion of the visit of The Trio, we were accompanied by my sister Jane, and we spent a very pleasant and profitable time at Braehead. The eventfulness of the visit to us, to which I have referred, consisted in the return journey. It was in the winter time; and as the hour when we set out to return home was comparatively early, we agreed to prolong and vary our walk by going round by Corstorphine Hill. Unfortunately for us, however, darkness, a snow-storm, and a high wind all set in together and overtook us as we were making our way across the hill. The snow soon obliterated all track of the footpath, and we found ourselves wandering in a field, not able to see a yard before us, and having lost all idea of the direction in which we should go. We all linked together, arm-in-arm, so as not to get separated in the blinding snow and darkness. In this fashion we crept along for some time, until recognisable points were made out, and we managed to regain the highway. As it was, our return journey occupied about four hours, and we reached our respective homes thoroughly fatigued with our exertions.

**Our Festive Gatherings.**

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round;
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

WILLIAM COWPER.

Although The Trio thus sought to turn their intercourse to profitable purpose, we had also our festive gatherings, particularly at the New Year season, when we enjoyed

ourselves in our own fashion—and a very charming fashion it seems to me, looking back through the mists of fifty years. These New Year social gatherings commenced before the meeting in the Tailors' Hall, and were kept up yearly with more or less spirit, being generally held in Grierson's lodgings. The company was usually very select, and consisted exclusively of persons of the male persuasion, although there was nothing in the proceedings that would have been inconsistent with the presence of a few representatives of the softer sex.

At our festival on the 31st of Dec. 1855, we so far departed from our previous use and wont as to have a married man in our company—namely, John Forman. In the course of the evening, and until the New Year was ushered in, songs were sung, recitations given, and speeches made upon subjects which had been balloted for, as follows:—Francis Renwick—'Knowledge is All-powerful under Certain Circumstances;' Grierson—'Never Despair;' William Norrie—'May you Live for Ever;' James Lawrie—'Health to the Young, Joy to the Old, and a Brave Heart to Meet the Coming Year;' and John Forman—'The Human Mind.'

The New Year of 1858 was ushered in in quite a unique manner. For several years it had been the custom of The Choir, of which The Trio were members, to take part in an annual soiree in connection with the school in Leith, where William Ellis was then a teacher. The soiree was usually held at the New Year time, there being a magic lantern exhibition, songs, recitations, and some speechifying—the children being most boisterous and unruly in their deportment all through. At the entertainment on the evening of Thursday, Dec. 31, 1857, Alick Mowatt and R. Roberts, among others, were with us. The proceedings were of the usual noisy character, and it was quite a relief when they were over. The hour being pretty late, we walked leisurely up to Edinburgh by the Easter Road, so as to put off the time until the advent of the New Year. It was a fine, clear, and mild night, and the walk was very pleasant. I walked most of the way with

Robert Roberts, who had not been long ordained at this time; and I remember he was perfectly charmed with George Dowie, spoke of him as 'a jewel of a man,' and said his familiar intercourse with us that evening reminded him of the delightful talks that our Lord would have with his disciples in their walks about Jesusalem. A short time before midnight, we ascended to that part of the Calton Hill which overlooks Princes Street, with its long and straight row of gas-lit lamps. Here we formed ourselves into a circle; and just as the hour of twelve was chimed by some of the city clocks, we broke out with 'Hail! Smiling Morn.' Having sung this piece, we heartily wished each other 'A Happy New Year,' after which we descended to Waterloo Place, and then separated to our several homes.

The New Year's social reunion of The Trio this year was held on the evening of Saturday, Jan. 9, Alick Mowatt being our host. On this occasion the company was much larger than usual, and included several sisters. This may be said to have been the last of the dispensation.

### Miscellaneous Doings of The Trio.

In God's great field of labour,
All work is not the same;
He hath a service for each one
Who loves His holy name.
FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

There were various other projects entertained by The Trio, only two of which I will mention here. One was the commencement of a manuscript magazine, yclept *The Church-Mouse*, to which we three were the only contributors. I reserve particulars respecting it until I come to treat of 'Manuscript Magazines.' The other was the establishment of 'The Saturday Night Meeting,' as it was called, the history of which I have already given in print. It was held with a view to promoting mutual improvement and social intercourse among the younger brethren and sisters; and it was a decided success while it lasted. The young people from Glasgow were so favourably impressed with it, after a visit to Edinburgh, that they also instituted a similar organisation.

# No. 12 BEAUMONT PLACE.

O, the home of long ago!
The warm, true friends of long ago!
The undoubting eyes, the kindling hopes, the liberal hearts of long ago!

O, the years of long ago!
The sad, sad years of long ago!
That friends might fail, and roses die, and joys be lost with long ago!
HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

What a host of pleasant memories are associated with No. 12 Beaumont Place—for many years the happy home of George and Mrs Dowie! This sacred spot may be said to have been the very cradle of the Edinburgh Church; for it was in the 'large upper room' here that the original members held their first meeting as a church, and for the first time broke bread together on the evening of that memorable Sunday, the 27th of March 1853. Here also were held many pleasant gatherings, both formal and informal, when Bible study or the practice of music engaged our attention. It was on the same 'stair-head,' also, that my sister Isabella first took up house-keeping upon her marriage to Gilbert Oliver; and, later still, William and Mrs Laing, for a short time, commencing at Whitsunday 1864, were dwellers in the flat below, and William used just to come up stairs to the Thursday night meeting bareheaded, in his slippers, and with his big Bible in his hand. Ay, truly happy were many of those gatherings

In life's gay morn, when sprightly youth
With vital ardour glows,
And shines in all the fairest charms
Which beauty can disclose.

**Mrs Dowie.**

Nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
JOHN MILTON.

Mrs Dowie was in every respect a most estimable woman. Careful and prudent, thoughtful and circumspect, kindly and helpful, modest and unassuming, patient and tender-hearted, to my mind she came nearer to the ideal of 'a virtuous *woman*,' as portrayed by Solomon—(Prov. xxxi. 10-31) than any daughter of Sarah whom it has

ever been my privilege to know. For upwards of six years after the meeting was formed, Mrs Dowie did not associate herself with her husband in this respect, but continued a member of the South Bridge Hall Church. It was frequently remarked by us, however, taking into consideration how many of our meetings were held in her house, that Mrs Dowie could not have received us all more cordially even if she had been then a member of our meeting. She not only invariably welcomed us most kindly, but, at our singing practices, was always ready to give her assistance in either of the female parts that happened to be weak—a most valuable help indeed, as we frequently found. What caused her to be so long in uniting with us was, I believe, the difficulty she had in the matter of re-immersion, and it took her some time to see the necessity of this after coming to an understanding of the true gospel. It was a source of much gratification to us all when she did ultimately see her way to become one with us in the divinely appointed fashion. It may be supposed, however, that to no one was this a matter of so much satisfaction as it was to her own husband; and I may perhaps be excused for quoting a few lines from a letter by George Dowie to me, a few months after I had gone to live at Dewsbury, in which he communicated the pleasing intelligence to me:

Edinburgh, 13th Dec., 1855.

My Dear Brother,—At last I take the pen to write you. I have hardly dealt fairly with you, William, but perhaps you will forgive me. I clear my conscience of neglect by remembering that I have had little time to write other than *business* letters, and this shall be one too; so it's all right, William.

But first of all let me speak what is uppermost. Last night—long to be remembered!—my dear wife became obedient to the faith, was immersed into the name of the Lord, and intends to cast in her lot with us. May God grant us wisdom and strength for our duty, that we may honour Him by all means. As I will not have time to write to Huddersfield this week, will you, if you are in way of seeing or writing them—[Robert and Mrs Roberts]—tell how the Lord has blessed my house? Same time, present our kind love to them, saying we are happy to hear that Robert is so much better, and that Jane is improving too. Ah! William, we may prize health; for what is our life without it?—the page of our deeds soiled and ragged. Blessed be God for health!

Your brother in faith, hope, and charity,

George Dowie.

### A Mysterious Gift.

Wha can the lassie be? and what was't she said?
I wad like jist a sicht o' the kind-hearted maid.

An amusing incident at one of our gatherings in Beaumont Place occurs to me, which I will here relate. It is the evening of Monday, April 24, 1865, and while we are in the parlour engaged in the practice of music, a knock is heard at the door. Mrs Dowie quietly rises and goes outside. If you listen attentively, as I am doing, you will hear that a few words are exchanged with some one at the door, after which it is shut, and Mrs Dowie goes into the kitchen. Here she remains for a minute or two, and then, at an interval in the singing, she re-enters the parlour with a paper parcel in her hand and an expression of great wonderment on her honest face. 'Do you see that, George?' she asks, holding out the parcel to him, which is seen to contain a pair of beautifully sewed slippers. Accompanying them is a slip of paper on which is written: 'These slippers are respectfully offered for the acceptance of George Dowie, with the kind regards and best wishes of the young lady who worked them.' Only that and nothing more!

Of course, every one held his or her breath for a minute. Here was a little mystery, and no mistake! The written paper was handed round from one to another, critically inspected, and various surmises, both expressed and unexpressed, as to the identity of the sender were entertained. The slippers were indeed a very pretty specimen of that 'cunning craftiwork,' as Andrew Tait used to term it, in which the fairer portion of creation so greatly excel.

Presently George Dowie took off his slippers and donned the new arrival. Then, standing up before us all, he drew himself up to his full height, and in such a way as to 'show his pretty feet,' which we all viewed with great admiration. While we were doing so, Grierson—who is always equal to such an occasion—suddenly exclaimed, 'Oh, George Dowie, I am surprised to see you treading the young lady's gift under your feet like that!'—at which witty sally, of course, there was much laughter.

I do not know whether anybody suspected that I knew anything about this mysterious gift. I know I tried very hard to look as innocent and as ignorant as everybody else, and I think in this I succeeded. I know more about it, however, than I am at liberty to state; but at this distance of time I think I may confess that I was the young lady's accomplice, 'before the act,' to the extent, that I dictated the inscription which accompanied the slippers, that I got a young friend of mine to write it, and that I arranged with him to deliver the parcel at the precise hour he did, when we were assembled, so that we might have a little fun out of the matter—all which happened exactly as had been planned.

Ah! well, this occurred nearly forty years ago. I suppose that, long ere now, those pretty slippers have gone the way of all slippers; and it is now many years since the nimble fingers that worked them were laid in the cold grave. It was the desire of the donor that the name of the giver should not be known. I complied with her request during her lifetime, and I shall still respect her wish now that she is no more.

### Another Gift.

Kindly deeds frae ony hand,
Gi'en to yin an' a' sae free,
Weel may a' oor thanks command;
'Tis the least that we can gi'e.

J. Smith.

George Dowie was the recipient of another gift, respecting which there was not so much mystery as the foregoing. When George and Mrs Dowie removed from Beaumont Place, it was suggested by some of the younger brethren and sisters who had been in the habit of attending the meetings in their house that their carpet must be a good deal the worse for the wear, owing to so many feet having trodden it so frequently; and that it would be a graceful recognition of their kindness were we to put them in the way of getting another, or of making any other addition to their household belongings that they might prefer. The project was warmly received, and the sum of £6 subscribed with very little effort. I was deputed

to transmit the gift, which I did, accompanied by a note, as follows :—

21st July 1866.

Dear George,—In the name of a few of the brethren and sisters who have been in the habit of attending the Monday and Thursday night meetings, I have to say a few words in explanation of the enclosed. We have been long sensible of our indebtedness to both Mrs Dowie and yourself for the willingness with which you have at all times placed your house at our disposal for our requirements in holding our meetings, and also for the cheerful service which you have both rendered us on all occasions. The numerous and long continued favours we have received from you, and whose value has been greatly enhanced by the heartiness with which they have at all times been offered, have placed us under obligations to you which we fear we never could repay. We have, however, felt prompted to make some acknowledgment of our indebtedness to you, and have therefore subscribed a small sum of money, which you will find enclosed, and which we hope you will be pleased to accept, not by any means as an equivalent for value received, but as a slight recognition of benefits spontaneously conferred, without, we feel assured, any expectation or desire for reward from us. I may mention, that various purposes were proposed to which the subscribers considered the money should be applied for your benefit; but it was resolved to leave the manner of its appropriation to be determined by yourselves, as we thought you could suggest a use for it which would gratify you more than any selection we could make. Hoping, therefore, that you will have no hesitation in accepting of this free-will offering in the spirit in which it is presented, and praying that you may be spared to labour amongst us in the same faithful and acceptable manner, with continued energy, even until the return of our Lord and Master, for whom we look, we are, with much attachment,

Yours in that blessed hope, in name of the subscribers,

William Norrie.

I received the following note in acknowledgment :—

Edinburgh, July 22nd, 1866.

My Dear Brother,—We have been much astonished at the unexpected gift which you left here yesterday, and accept it exactly as you have given it—not as a recompense for any service we have been privileged to render to the brethren, but as an expression of brotherly interest and gratitude.

Will you please accept, then, for yourself and your fellow-donors, our thanks for so grand a present, which we would not have dreamed of, though we had even put ourselves to inconvenience to serve them. With us, however, it has been looked upon as a privilege, and counted an honour, to have a house at the service of the brotherhood. What, indeed, is the use of rooms, if not to be used? Who has a better claim upon their use than the same family? And who are the members of our family but those who claim kin with us through Jesus the Christ and his Father, the Almighty God?

When we have leisurely considered, we shall determine the appropriation of your gift, in such a way as shall be, we trust, as honourable to you as it is pleasant to us.

Meanwhile, you will please communicate to the subscribers our sense of gratitude for so brotherly a feeling as *this* has given expression to, and tell them it will ever give us pleasure to meet them on our carpet for the joyous service of song and devout study of the Word, as well as for those inter-

changes of friendly feeling and social benefit which we rejoice to see in so thriving condition amongst us at the present time.

Your brother in Christ,

GEORGE DOWIE.

The money was afterwards applied to the purchase of a harmonium.

**The Graves of a Household.**

They grew in beauty side by side;
They filled our house with glee;
Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mountain, stream, and sea.

MRS HEMANS.

These beautiful lines of Felicia Hemans are forcibly recalled upon a contemplation of the subsequent history of the happy family that used to have their home in No. 12 Beaumont Place. It is many years since that home was broken up, and three of its members have succumbed to the last enemy, their graves being separated as far apart as Edinburgh, Dundee, and Londonderry.

I well remember the first break that occurred in the family circle, and how, through a mistake on the part of a correspondent, I was seriously misled by it. Whilst I was residing in Lewes, I received a letter which informed me that George Dowie had just died, after a short illness. I was much shocked at the intimation, and was about to sit down to write a letter of condolence to Mrs Dowie on the loss of her husband, when another letter arrived which put the matter right, and considerably modified my feelings, by telling me that 'wee Georgie Dowie' had just died from scarlet fever!

It was not till over thirty-five years afterwards that I had to write to Mrs Dowie in the terms of condolence I had then supposed necessary, when her husband, who had been an invalid for about a year, fell asleep in the good hope, and was laid to his rest at Dundee. Mrs Dowie was not very long in following, and found her resting-place at Londonderry, whither she had gone to reside with a married daughter. And thus, far apart from each other, they slumber peacefully till the time appointed, when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead, small and great, shall live again.

# MISCELLANEOUS.

### A Hard Case.

Very early in its history, the Edinburgh Church had to deal with a rather peculiar case. It appeared that, a good many years previously, a man named Archibald Miller had been a soldier in the 93d Highlanders; but, like many others, becoming tired of military life, while the regiment was stationed in Edinburgh Castle, he deserted, and made his way to America. There he got on well, married, became obedient to the truth, and, with his wife, joined the church in New York. There was, however, one very serious drawback to their happiness. They had a number of children, but, in succession, as they attained a certain age, they drooped and died. With a view to save the children that remained, they were advised to return to the mother country, the air of which was likely to be more favourable for them. Mr Miller, however, being a military deserter, could not show himself in this country without the risk of being apprehended, flogged, and required to finish the term of his enlistment. Their anxiety on behalf of their children was so great, however, that they decided to run the risk, and came over to Edinburgh. When John Forman was made acquainted with the facts, he wrote to Lord Macaulay, then one of the Parliamentary representatives of the city of Edinburgh, detailing the circumstances (of course not mentioning name or regiment), and stating that the applicant was willing to pay for his discharge, if it would be accepted. In reply, a letter was received from his Lordship, saying that a discharge could not be granted, as the regulations of the service required the deserter to give himself up unconditionally, and submit to the judgment of the court-martial that would be held. As the Russian war was then in progress, and men much needed for the army, no exception could be made in his case. Mr and Mrs Miller, with their family, accordingly, reluctantly returned to America.

### A Militiaman as a Brother.

Another rather unusual case of military service by a brother may here be recalled. It was that of a young man named William Bain, who first met with the Edinburgh brethren on Sunday, June 10, 1865. He came from Dundee, and it was stated that he had formerly been connected with the meeting at Galashiels, and at the time when he became obedient to the truth he was a private in the militia, and a portion of his term of service had still to expire. At the time of his coming to Edinburgh, he was stationed at Dalkeith, where his regiment had been called up for the statutory period of training. This accounted for the uncommon spectacle which was presented for several Sundays of a man in militia uniform breaking bread with the brethren. William Bain afterwards returned to the neighbourhood of Dundee, and was a member of the church in that town, he having been discharged from the militia.

### Increase in the Membership.

The following figures, taken from the annual reports submitted in March of each year, show the periodical increase or decrease in numbers during the first twelve years of the existence of the church. Under the heading 'Removals' are included diminutions in the membership of the church from all causes.

| Year. | Additions. | Removals. | Increase. | Decrease. | Totals. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1853 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 24 |
| 1854 | 13 | 1 | 12 | ... | 36 |
| 1855 | 6 | 8 | ... | 2 | 34 |
| 1856 | 15 | 1 | 14 | ... | 48 |
| 1857 | 8 | 9 | ... | 1 | 47 |
| 1858 | 5 | 4 | 1 | ... | 48 |
| 1859 | 19 | 5 | 14 | ... | 62 |
| 1860 | 16 | 8 | 8 | ... | 70 |
| 1861 | 21 | 6 | 15 | ... | 85 |
| 1862 | 16 | 4 | 12 | ... | 97 |
| 1863 | 6 | 44 | ... | 38 | 59 |
| 1864 | 5 | 8 | ... | 3 | 56 |
| 1865 | 10 | 3 | 7 | ... | 63 |

### An Erring Sister.

The case of Joanna Collins had in it some features of a very sad and painful kind, such as, fortunately, have not been frequent in our church history. This sister, who was slightly lame, was baptised on April 5, 1854, and received into fellowship on the following Sunday. In May, 1856, she removed to a situation in Glasgow, and subsequently went to Rothesay. In May 1857, the brethren read with great surprise the following paragraph in the newspapers respecting her :—

EXTENSIVE PLUNDER OF AN EMPLOYER AT ROTHESAY BY A YOUNG WOMAN.—About three months ago, Mr Walter Alexander, boot and shoemaker, Rothesay, took into his service, as a shopwoman, a young woman belonging to Edinburgh, named Joanna Collins, who brought with her high testimonials of character from her last employers, with whom she had been for a long period. She resided in Mr Alexander's family, and all went smoothly, till, of late, her master noticed sufficient to awaken his suspicions of her honesty. Money was marked and disappeared, sales were made and were not recorded, and of course the money for these was not forthcoming. At last Mr Alexander resolved on testing her honesty, so as to set all dubiety on the subject at rest; and accordingly, about ten days ago, he made an arrangement with two different gentlemen, by which they were severally to make purchases at the shop in his absence. They did so, and neither of the transactions was recorded, nor the money forthcoming. On being immediately afterwards questioned as to these, she at first stoutly denied that they had taken place, but at length admitted having made the sales, but said she had merely forgot to record them, and insinuated that her employer must have carried off the money from the till for the purpose of criminating her! Her master feeling very reluctant to hand her over to the criminal authorities, offered her the alternative of at once leaving his service or abide the consequences of an inquiry. She seized on the first of these conditions, and immediately quitted the house, carrying off her trunk and other baggage. No sooner had she done so than she summoned Mr Alexander before the Sheriff at the Small Debt Court for a half year's wages and board, on the ground that she had

been discharged on insufficient reasons. The case was heard before Sheriff Dick at Rothesay on Friday last, when, the facts being expiscated, the claim was dismissed. On the same afternoon, Miss Collins left by the steamer Eagle for Glasgow. On the way up the river, Captain Buchanan, who had heard something of the case, and knew the suspected party, observed on board a large parcel, containing what appeared to him to be boots and shoes. On arriving at Glasgow, finding Miss Collins claimed the parcel, he gave the hint to the officers of the Clyde Police, who took her and her luggage into custody. The parcel referred to contained nearly 30 pairs of boots, 17 pairs of these being of one description. Mr Alexander was communicated with, and on Saturday proceeded to Glasgow, where he identified the boots as his property, and also identified a lot of other articles found in her trunk, and some of the money which had previously been marked, but had disappeared and not since been discovered. The woman has since made a full confession of the thefts, and will be remitted to Bute, there to be dealt with as the law directs.

On Sunday, May 31, the case was considered by the church, and, among other things, it was agreed that Mr Richard Alexander,* draper, Lawnmarket, should be refunded the sum of £2 5s. he had paid on her account. On Sunday, June 21, a letter was read from the Governor of Rothesay Jail, in reply to one of inquiry which had been sent. It stated that Joanna Collins was a prisoner in Rothesay Jail, upon a simple charge of theft; that she denied the offence; that the evidence against her was very slight; and that a letter or a visitor would find ready access to her. Upon this being made known, it was agreed to send James and Mrs Cameron to visit her in

* Richard Alexander was for some time a member of the High Street Hall meeting, but had left it before the Tailors' Hall meeting was formed. He was a man of sterling principle, and the following incident may be mentioned as showing how he was prepared to suffer for conscience sake:—Some goods having been stolen from his shop, the thief was apprehended, and Richard had to appear at the Police Court to give evidence. This was before the passing of the Affirmation Act, which permits making an affirmation instead of taking an oath, in courts of justice. Richard Alexander had conscientious objections to taking an oath, in consequence of the injunction of our Lord upon the subject; and upon taking his place in the witness-box, as he firmly declined to be sworn, he was sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment, which imprisonment he duly underwent. In addition, Richard lost his goods, and the thief was liberated. Richard died in July 1898.

prison, that, if guilty of the charge against her, and penitent, they might counsel, sympathise with, and endeavour to restore her; and, if really innocent, that they might take such steps as should cause her innocence to be established at her trial.

In pursuance of this resolution, James and Mrs Cameron proceeded to Rothesay on the following Tuesday, and had an interview with Joanna. She received them coldly, and protested her innocence of the offence imputed to her, although her demeanour strongly indicated guilt. As, from the facts submitted to the two visitors, it was pretty evident that she was guilty, they found great difficulty in dealing with her.

At the trial, her guilt was very clearly proved; and it being an offence of a very serious kind, she was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. On Thursday, Aug. 20, my sister Jane and I, during a brief sojourn we happened to make in Rothesay, visited her in prison. Our visit did not last longer than about a quarter of an hour, and all three of us remained standing during the painful interview. She did not appear to be at all humbled from the degraded position in which she was placed, but rather attempted to defend her conduct. She gave us a letter to the church, in which she expressed her intention to withdraw from the fellowship of her 'friends' in the Tailors' Hall.

Upon her liberation, she returned to Edinburgh, and called upon several of the brethren and sisters, to whom her conduct was altogether inexplicable. She exhibited no penitence for her fault, and in some cases even repelled the well-meant endeavours for her benefit. Ultimately she disappeared, and I never knew what became of her.

# POETRY OF THE ONE FAITH.

### What Religious Poetry Can Do.

The late George Gilfillan, of Dundee, who was himself a well known writer of poetry, as well as a rather caustic poetical critic, and who for a number of years was a firm believer in the millennial reign of Christ upon the earth, has thus expressed his views as to what poetry may be made to do in relation to a proper comprehension of the divine purposes in the future :—

> We cannot rise to the sun or stars, nor by our telescopes make them any larger, in reality, than they are; but we can increase their clearness and their size, in the aspect they bear to us; and this is precisely what is effected by religious poetry. It interposes a new and fine medium between us and the great objects of religious faith. Take, for example, the ideas of heaven and a future life. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,' fully, of what God hath prepared in that unseen world. But let a poetic imagination be directed with reverent daring to this field, and it will do a great deal to clear it from darkness, and to give us some approximately adequate notion of that future life.*

I do not think that 'religious poetry,' apart from the inspired Word, will do much to enlighten any one in the Gospel of the Kingdom. It may do something to confirm the popular 'ideas of heaven and of a future life,' for these 'ideas' are largely the product of the imagination—or, in Scripture language, 'the thinking of the flesh.' Still, poetry has had its own uses in comforting the believer and in establishing him in the faith, as I shall now proceed to show.

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* George Gilfillan, in an article, 'On the Use of Religion in Poetry,' in *Hogg's Instructor*, vol. iv. (1855), p. 49.

### Edinburgh's Poetical Wealth.

The poetic faculty is generally recognised as being a divine gift, which is not bestowed indiscriminately upon the human race, but is found, at least in its higher and more striking forms, in a comparatively small number of persons. In any given community, a certain number of individuals will be found to have been thus favoured; and in such a community as the Edinburgh Church was in its earlier years, the number of those who could give expression to their sentiments in fairly good poetry, or in passable and sensible verse, was, I believe, considerable. In fact, it seems to me that the Edinburgh Church was specially gifted in this respect, and can show a wealth and profusion of poetical utterance which few communities of similar numbers could excel or even equal.

### Pure Religion and Poetry.

A well-known writer upon the subject (J. A. St John) has very pertinently remarked: 'The best of poetry is ever in alliance with real uncorrupted Christianity; and with the degeneracy of the one always comes the decline of the other; for it is to Christianity that we owe the fullest inspirations of the celestial spirit of poetry.' Accepting this statement as correct, may it not be the case that the return to the true faith and practice which was the impelling motive in the formation of the Edinburgh Church, had something to do with the very marked outburst of poetic feeling which characterised its earlier years? I am inclined to think so, and that the novelty of the new departure in our religious experience which was then inaugurated, stirred up the poetical gift that was in the various versifiers, and imparted a peculiar brightness and vividness to their imaginations.

In looking over a great number of fugitive pieces that I have collected, I find that by far the greater portion of the writings of our early poets are devoted to matters pertaining to our faith and hope. I am indeed surprised at the numerous phases of 'that blessed hope' which have

been dealt with, and with what varying powers of versifying; while all speak in one unvarying strain of earnestly looking, ardently longing, and patiently waiting for the glorious consummation to which all our thoughts are directed.

### A Fanciful Conceit.

An inspired apostle has said: 'Show me thy faith by thy works.' It is a fanciful conceit, but it has sometimes occurred to me, that if some uninspired critic should prefer the rather singular request, 'Show me thy faith by thy poetry,' the Edinburgh Church would be able to give a good account of itself. Let us see what it could produce in answer to such a challenge.

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In dwelling upon the exceeding great and precious promises which constitute our hope, we naturally look forward to the time when these shall be realised; and here is the way in which Grierson deals with the vexed question of the time when faith shall give place to sight:—

### The Good Time.

And is it a myth, that household word,
  About the coming time;
A fable from the dreamy haze
And dusky depths of the olden days,
Floating adown in lyric lays,
  Or some quaint ballad rhyme?

Was't but a wish that the hopeful spoke
  When ill was all around them;
A word of cheer ere brave hearts broke
  By the heavy fate that bound them?

It cannot—nay, it must not—be
  An empty, idle tale:
It seems too like the voice of God,
Speaking, O earth, to thee:
  Hope on once more; it cannot fail,
That coming jubilee.

Our fathers and their children
  Have trod a blood-stained earth,
But there's an ancient promise
  Of a better era's birth;
When heart to heart responsive,
  And claspèd hand in hand,
The longed-for brotherhood of man
  Shall stretch through every land.

Despite the charge of bayonet,
  The blood and din of war,
The weary world shall see it yet:
  It may be near or far.
But roar, ye thunder-throated dogs;
  'Tis hastened by your roar.

From his dastard throne the despot
  Shall be smitten by God's frown,
And his own deep curse upon his head
  Be heavy hurled down.

It waits not on a Senate's will,
  Nor on a Tribune's word,
Though presaged by a heraldry
  Of wasting flame and sword.

It comes when Heaven's own time has come;
  Then only is it due;
No chaos of the many,
  Nor the fierce lust of the few;
But the best, most glorious kingdom
  That the poor world ever knew.

---

The question of locality naturally brings before us 'the city of the great King;' and it is not surprising, therefore, that its past history and future glory should have engaged the attention of our budding poets. This sublime theme suggested one of the earliest poetical effusions of Grierson—one written, if I remember rightly, in our High Street Hall days, when our youthful imaginations were being dazzled with the glorious things that were written concerning the holy city. Having been written so long ago, it has not the high poetical merit of some of his subsequent pieces. This is the rapt way in which he apostrophises the 'loved city of the Lord:'—

## Jerusalem.

'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,' &c.—DAVID.

Jerusalem, O Jerusalem,
  Loved city of the Lord;
Desolate and trodden down,
Yet prostrate lies thy fallen crown;
  Thou art not yet restored.

Yet o'er thee, loved Jerusalem,
  The Moslem holds his sway;
Thee under foot the Gentiles tread;
Thou art forgotten, as if dead:
  Yet does thy glory stay.

But, ah! thy day, Jerusalem,
  Soon back shall come again;
And Gentile times shall no more be;
No longer shall they rule o'er thee,
  But bow submission then.

Then, glorious Jerusalem,
  With thy King upon thy throne,
Who in righteousness will reign,
And will break the tyrant's chain:
  No captives then shall groan.

We long that time, Jerusalem;
  'The kingdom come!' we pray;
When strife and war shall cease,
And the nations live in peace,
  When comes thy ransom day.

And thou shalt be, Jerusalem,
  The praise of all the earth;
Thou city of the mighty King,
All nations shall thee tribute bring
  With gladness and with mirth.

We live in hope, Jerusalem,
  That thy glory we shall share,
When Christ returns again,
Among his saints to reign:
  Our heart and home are there.

We pilgrims are, Jerusalem,
  And we seek a better land;
A city whose foundations sure
God hath made ever to endure;
  His own hand it hath planned.

Thou forgotten art, Jerusalem,
  Yet God remembers thee ;
The law shall yet from Zion go,
The word from thee shall nations know ;
  Thou shalt exalted be.

And now our home, Jerusalem,
  We with patience wait for thee ;
And for Him—outcast of men,
But who wears the diadem :
  With joy his face we'll see.

---

George Gilfillan, in the days when he believed in the coming and kingdom of Christ upon the earth, wrote :

In the pre-millennial advent there lie materials for a grander epic than any that has yet appeared ; a diviner Iliad, were the Homer but arrived ; a far more complete and ineffably sublimer Paradise Regained, were its Milton born. It is mortifying to think what painting has done for religion in comparison with poetry.*

We have not been without our Homers and our Miltons, who have been inspired in their own way by this sublime theme ; and, singularly enough, this is where a number of the poetical sisterhood have found a fitting subject for their poetical muse. My sister Jane, who at that time used to write under the *nom de plume* of ' Lydia,' treated it in this jubilant spirit :—

**' Behold ! the Bridegroom Cometh ! '**

Hark ! a cry is made ; what means that sound I hear ?
Quickly again 'tis echoed upon my listening ear :
' The Bridegroom comes ! ' O, joyful ! is he come at last ?
Is the morning truly dawning ?—is the night for ever past ?

Shall we now for ever be with him ?—shall he bear us to his home ?
Shall he change these mortal bodies ?—make them like unto his own ?
Shall we see his glorious presence ?—hear his greatly longed-for voice ?
O quickly spread the tidings, let all his saints rejoice.

Yes, the groanings of his people he hath heard from ev'ry land,
And now he comes to free them from the cruel tyrant's hand.

---

* George Gilfillan, in an article, 'On the Use of Religion in Poetry,' in *Hogg's Instructor*, vol. iv. (1855), p. 56.

They that with him have borne his cross shall share with him his crown,
For now he'll reign whose right it is—usurpers he'll thrust down.

The Bridegroom near approaches—he's even at the door;
Haste! let your glad hosannahs the God of heaven adore.
The time long promised has arrived, when earth again shall bloom,
Again shall yield her richest fruits in everlasting noon.

Lo! art thou he we long have loved, though ne'er till now have seen?
Thy love to us most wonderful the source of ours has been.
How gloriously fair thou art—in majesty divine!
Can it be so, that such as we made like to thee shall shine?

Sure, had we known but half thy worth, but half thy beauty seen,
The treasures of thy love and power had oftener been our theme.
Thou say'st, while in the wilderness, that we have borne for thee;
'Tis thou hast suffered all for us, even death upon the tree.

We sojourned long as strangers within a foreign land;
The world around disowned us, for by thee we took our stand.
They knew not thee, they knew not us—there we'd no abiding-place;
But we knew thou soon wouldst come, and we'd see thee face to face.

Oft in the darkness of the night we longed to hear thee say,
'This is the thing I'd have thee do—I'd have thee go this way;'
And often, in perplexities, we sighed for morning light;
For we knew when thou appearedst faith would give place to sight.

And now that thou art come, how greatly we rejoice!
Because, like one of old, we hear the Bridegroom's voice.
Throughout the ransomed world the joyful shout shall thrill,
'Glory to God!' for peace on earth, and to mankind good-will.

Now the kingdoms of this world are the Kingdom of our Lord;
Now the ploughshare and the pruning-hook replace the glittering sword;
Now peace and plenty fill the earth, and a righteous King doth reign;
And never more shall sighs and tears bedim our world again.

---

Mrs Winter is another sister who has the power of expressing her ideas in verse; and the following are lines by her in which she endeavours to portray some of the glories to be revealed when the once crucified Redeemer shall take unto himself his great power and reign, and when death shall be swallowed up of life:—

## Everlasting Joy.

'And the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away.'—ISAIAH XXXV. 10.

What mind can image joy like this?
What heart conceive its depth of bliss?
Joy, gladness, everlasting song,
No blight of sin, no taint of wrong.

No traitor-spirit, mean, unblest,
To rob the trusting heart of rest;
No fruitless sigh or burning tears,
O'er blighted hopes and darkened years.

No fevered bed or couch of pain,
No aching heart or weary brain,
No toiling hands or careworn breast,
But deep, unbroken, endless rest.

No vacant chair or home-hearth lone;
No yearnings for the lost and gone:
No farewell sighed on ebbing breath;
Ah, no—there shall be no more death.

No sin, no curse, and no more sea.
Where tempests wild rave angrily.
No murmuring wave shall ever more
Break on that calm and peaceful shore.

Eternal summer, endless noon;
No need of sun or yet of moon;
No twilight dim or darker night,
For God Himself shall give them light.

His gracious hand shall dry each tear,
His loving voice lull every fear;
He'll gently lead o'er steep and hill,
By pastures green and waters still.

O, blissful morn, when wilt thou break?
When, blessed Jesus, wilt thou take
Thy children home? Oh, come and reign;
Bring scattered Israel back again.

Our Father, hear us as we pray,
Oh, speed the coming of that day;
We're weary watching, tired, and worn!
Oh, usher in the restful morn!

What may be termed 'the land question' was dealt with by Margaret M'Donald in the following manner:—

**The Promised Land.**

What desolation do I see
In this once favoured land?
The glorious Temple is laid waste
By rude oppressor's hand.

O'er thee the ploughshare now has passed,
And strangers tread thy plains;
Thy glory hath departed fast;
'Thy children weep in chains.'

Thou art the Lord's beloved land;
There fixed He His abode;
And there His people long did dwell,
And worship Him, their God.

Now Judah's weeping daughters,
A weary, lonely band,
Do see the Gentiles' feet tread down
Their own, their promised land.

But days of happiness shall come
On Zion's holy hill;
Judah shall safely dwell in peace,
And joy the land shall fill.

When thou art called Beulah,
And all thy gates are praise,
Thy King—thy long rejected King—
Again thy throne shall raise.

And then thy weary, wandering ones
A resting place shall seek;
And by the Spirit of their God
His statutes they shall keep.

O spread thy banner, mighty Lord;
Make nations all Thine own;
When kings and princes of the earth
Shall bow before Thy throne.

---

Yet another youthful poetess employed her pen in declaring her faith in the coming of 'the Kingdom of our Lord,' and the blessing she hoped to realise in it. My sister Isabella wrote some stanzas which bear the stamp

of juvenility; but though poor enough, perhaps, judged by a poetical standard, they are yet rich in faith, and show clearly enough what she connected with Christ's coming. Here they are :—

**Meditation.**

I often think, when left alone,
In quiet meditation,
How many blessings I enjoy,
Though in a humble station.

I have a Bible, where I read,
When free from occupation,
That Christ shall reign o'er all the world,
And bless the whole creation.

The Kingdom of our God will come—
The day of restoration;
When they shall have who trusted for
A joyful resurrection.

O may I with those numbered be,
Who, through much tribulation,
Have conquered, and remaining firm,
Shall with him rule the nations.

---

John Forman was one who took a great interest in the young people connected with the meeting. He had a kindly, 'couthie' manner, by which he gained their confidence, and was thus enabled to help them to an understanding of the truth. Our dear 'Tibbie,' as we used to call her, was one of those whom he kindly assisted in this way; and the following is the artless, girlish fashion in which she acknowledged her indebtedness to him for the service thus rendered :—

**To My Brother John.**

Brother John, my kind instructor,
Ever willing me to help;
In every care I may consult you,
For who can counsel like yourself?

Though oft my memory may let slip
The lessons you have given;
Or through my negligence, perhaps,
They from my mind be driven,

Yet still you with unwearied care
The lesson will repeat,
And tell me of that kingdom blest,
Where every joy's complete.

For all your care on me bestowed,
May God your mind make richer
With heavenly grace and wisdom, is
The prayer of your youngest sister.

---

Our faith and hope are something not merely for days of health and strength, but for that trying time which must arrive for us all, should our Lord delay his coming, when we shall have to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Even in the immediate prospect of facing 'the last enemy,' a clear and confident expression of faith in God, and in the Christ as the great giver of life, has been made with no uncertain sound. John Forman was one of those who, in the early days of the church, spoke constantly and fervently of those things which cause the heart to burn.

While we linger, memory gathers
From the mists of bygone years
Kindly deeds and loving counsels,
Mingled joys with hopes and fears.
Those who in life's chequered journey
Long [illegible] travelled by his side,
Now do miss the words of wisdom
Ever by his lips supplied.

Almost the last 'words of wisdom' that he uttered were very remarkable. A few days before the close of the long and depressing illness which preceded his death, he wrote what he termed his own 'funeral dirge,' which may be regarded as a faithful description of his feelings and anticipations at the dark prospect then before him. The first four stanzas, indited under the feeling of protracted bodily weakness and pain, seem but an expansion of Paul's exclamation, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'—(Rom. vii. 24); the last three are a touching paraphrase of the same apostle's comforting declaration: 'Our light affliction,

which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory'—(2 Cor. iv. 17). The funeral dirge shaped itself as follows:—

### Musings.

My life goes round in empty dreaming,
Never being, always seeming,
Neither day nor night redeeming—
O weary, weary life!

Double in my dreams I'm feeling;
Brain with brain confusion reeling;
Now well, now ill sensations stealing
Across my weakened frame.

Golden Sol's rich rays are telling
Morning joy to many a dwelling;
Here no darkness o'er dispelling—
O weary, weary morn!

O ease me of my weary load;
Lay me beneath the soft green sod;
Ashes to ashes, the life to God,
And let me rest in peace.

Hush! saith the still small voice, repining;
He purifies, all good designing;
'Each dark cloud has its silver lining,'
To cheer us in the gloom.

Soon He comes, all ills redressing;
Bearing healing, bearing blessing;
Sufferings cease, and hearts' distressing—
Thou great Physician, come!

Past the long, long night of weeping,
Life its harvest now is reaping,
Earth its jubilee is keeping
In universal song.

---

'Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh;' and, as an illustration of the felicitous and Scriptural style in which good wishes for another's welfare were expressed by one in whose heart 'the word of the kingdom' was deeply impressed, I here present, although with a little diffidence, some birthday verses with which my sister Jane presented me:—

### To my Brother on his Birthday.

On this, thy natal day, my brother dear,
  Fond recollections crowd upon my mind
Of youthful days, through many a happy year—
  Bright visions of the past they leave behind.

The time in our remembrance holds no place—
  For such there never was—when we loved not.
Our path through life bears many a happy trace
  Of mutual joys, which may not be forgot.

A sister's love might prompt me to request
  That from the cares of life thou may'st be free;
That on thy path no cloud may ever rest;
  No cross be borne, or sorrow ever known by thee.

But such as these for thee I will not ask;
  For they to thee true blessings would not prove;
Then for thy faith and patience were no task,
  If all were calm below and bright above.

But may God grant thee length of useful days,
  To serve Him with a faithful, loving heart;
Wisdom, to guide aright in all thy ways;
  Courage, to act through life a noble part.

Our blessed Master's name even now you bear;
  With that alone attained, be not content.
God's purpose is, that you His image bear;
  This be your aim—that will with yours be blent.

And while the course allotted still you run,
  Rejoice, should tribulation mark thy lot.
He who us bought, the world has overcome,
  And we through him shall conquer—fear thou not!

Then, forward! ever bravely bear the cross,
  Unsnared by pleasure or the world's renown;
Accounting all things else to be but dross,
  To gain at last the prize and wear the crown.

And at our Master's coming, may his voice
  Address the gladsome words to you, 'Well done!'
Among his chosen ones may you rejoice,
  And raise the gladsome song, 'The Lord is come!'

9th April 1855.

In a different style, as dealing with the momentous subject of mortal life, as compared with spiritual, we have Charles Smith setting forth in blank verse the special characteristics of each, as under :—

### Mortal Life and Spiritual Life.

#### Mortal Life.

What is Mortal Life?—a flower
Of early grass; first a morning dream,
Full of sweet visions; future yet, and never realised;
Visions of life and happiness, seen in the far distance,
As the heavenward vapours of a rose-pink morn.

And as that morn expands to day,
The tinted clouds assume prosaic gray.
That morning dream—where is it now?—
Youth's smiling face and cloudless brow?

The young man stands in pride erect:
Bitter sorrow has he felt, and found the dream of life
A phantom ever flying as pursued.
Despair would seize him for her own, but Hope
Stands with uplifted hand still pointing forward.

Meridian's past; the setting sun descending,
'Mid darkening clouds, thick gathering in the west;
The old man on his dying couch reclining,
With pain and weakness sorely pressed.

Where now the dreams of early youth?
Where now the young man's pride and hope?
Following shadows these long years, he still must follow.
The mind's received a cast he cannot alter now;
And therefore, in his second childhood,
He lives the first again, until that weak,
That mortal spark expires; and he
To earth returns, as withered autumn grass in rain.

#### Spiritual Life.

What is Spiritual life?—A perennial spring of living water.
First, the clear conception of the promise given,
Seen afar off, yet sure, made sure, and ratified;
Ratified by blood—the precious blood of His own loved one.
The reception of that promise—like the first rays of light
That part the clouds at early dawn,
Dividing light and darkness, arraying
Field and wood in softest shade of loveliness—
The mind illumines of the humble and the contrite one.

And as the truth its power maintains,
The humble heart, responding, gains
The answer of a conscience good,
By washing in a watery flood.

Now Faith and Hope take each a hand
To lead him forth; but first array him all in armour bright.
Faith hands the shield, Hope puts the helmet on;
Faith girds his loins, and Hope his feet in sandals puts.
Faith bids him take the sword, while Hope thus whispers:
'Fear no shame, for Faith and I are ever near.'
'Tis now he feels he has a power, a strength,
In that rich light of truth he wields.
He feels that in himself there's nought,
And, therefore, to the Giver of all good
Pours forth his soul in gushing gratitude.

Age brings to him no lamentation;
For Faith and Hope, still standing near,
Point forward to the glad salvation,
Which shall with Christ his Lord appear.

His early faith is now matured, for he
In riper years has followed on to know the Lord.
The vision of the glorious land is now
More clearly seen, and nearly viewed.
Death, and the grim tyrant's prison, he fears not.
His name in heaven is written; whose sun shall soon arise
With healing beams, to loose his chains and set him free,
As eagles live—an everlasting youth.
He dies, but is not lost; his record lives;
His life is hid—laid up with Christ, in God.

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### The Psalms of George Dowie.

Yes, our versatile brother George wrote his psalms, as well as did the sweet singer of Israel. A collection of the former, if not so numerous as the latter, are yet highly interesting, as they had a strong claim upon the sympathies of those more immediately concerned. They were composed upon all sorts of occasions, and could be got up on very short notice. They were usually written in blank verse, and sometimes had choruses interspersed, which were sung by the choir. A favourite theme for these psalms was the annual New Year festival, of which the following is a specimen:—

New Year's Psalm—January 1st, 1860.

CHORUS.

Praise the Lord; O praise His holy name,
With heart of faith and music's art uniting:
In joyful song His worthy deeds proclaim;
His kindly father-care all hearts delighting.
Praise the Lord! O praise the Lord.

All hail, New Year, new month, new week. This day,
A day of blessing long to be remembered:
Full of rich promise, full of hope and peace.
The past, with all its brightness, is away;
Long shadows stretch along our forward path;
The sun is set which ushered in that time
Whose history we write, whose deeds we've done.
Yet we are not in darkness. See!—
See the fresh dawn of hope illumes the hazy future.
Soon the bold presence of the glorious year
Shall stand and glow with living lustre
On our heads, irradiant with the light of heaven.
Scorn not the past—a blessed past it has been.
With thankful heart we trace its excellence,
Recall its sunny scenes with joy. Ev'n o'er those tracks
Wet with our bitter tears, retrace those steps
Delighting in the memory of sadness. Yes;
It is a hallowed sadness—not regret,
Not self-reproach, not hopeless grief
Becloud our backward glance. While from that shade
Emerging—ah! how bright! how beautiful!
Delightful episodes abound. The past—our past—
Is happy, bright, and good.

True; in that past we learned to know,
And knowing, learned to love each other.
The distant and unknown, scattered and inchoate,
Have sought their likings, by divine attraction brought
To closest unity. The mighty power of God
Which thunders in the firmament, and otherwise,
When milder blown through all the earth,
With mellow flush extends in peace, and
Has by the word of truth and power of love
Brought us together. We are now
One in all purposes, all life, all hope;
One faith, one brotherhood, one man.

And that we are so knit, the mere is due
That fealty to ourselves, which duty—

Duty by God imposed, by God instructed—
Now requires. We shall be true to one another;
We shall rejoice in that which giveth joy
To any one. The humblest and the weakest
Have our sympathy most perfect; while the strong,
Bowed down and broken by the strokes of fate,
Command our tears—glad tears;
Tears which we joy to shed, because they heal.
What are our lives in this waste wilderness,
If we forget our brotherhood?

CHORUS.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
Like fragrant breath of summer showers,
Their words, their thoughts are peace.

The year that's gone—charming and busy year—
Has brought us knowledge of ourselves, and taught
That, in our mutual needs, wisdom divine
Has hid so much of service, that our woe
Becomes our good; teaching our better souls
To sympathise, our better hearts to minister.

And be it remembered, in that year,
Love's lessons, seeking other scope, have found
Fresh hearts to throb, fresh eyes to brighten,
And new tongues to speak. The range of life
Extending, has embraced new friendships and new homes.
Fair England, with her heart of hearts, has come more near;
Soft Southern speech has blessed our ears;
And smiling Saxon faces have, from time to time,
Lit up our stern and darkened hall with gleams
Of love and truth and hope, not different from our own;
But, like new blood infused, and morning air,
Exhilarant, charming our sense, and o'er our heads
Shedding its gracious benison.

CHORUS.

Praise the Lord; O praise His holy name,
With heart of faith and music's art uniting:
In joyful song His worthy deeds proclaim;
His kindly father-care all hearts delighting.
Praise the Lord! O praise the Lord.

The pain of parting—parting from our dearest friends—
Has been the experience of the year. O know ye not,
That of those youthful hearts which erst had throbbed
With ours—whose kindly glance and warm salute
Lent cheerful lustre to our hearth—have gone
Five—five of the best!

'Tis well remembered. One whose service,
Unobtrusive and unasked, came certain.
Behind the curtain of our public life,
And out of sight of show, that youth, full of young hope,
Laboured at petty service, and with ceaseless care,
Watched the most trifling needs of all the family.
WILLIAM, the brother, has departed. Yes;
Yet we repine not: he has but removed
The sphere of his activity; and now his Scottish heart
Has learned to beat with larger pulse
Among the genial-hearted Yorkshiremen.

His sister, too—a bride—full of all marriage joys,
Sailed southward, like a noble craft, full fraught
With all choice womanliness: her noble person
Held a noble heart. And we had learned her so,
That when our lips pronounce her name, our hearts
Record their sense of JEANIE'S value. JEANIE!—
Gone too! We will not say, 'Alas!' We know
How that fair woman, charming and genial,
When the flush of sunshine had sunk down to sorrow,
And the sad visitations of disease had cursed
Her home of early love, she with an anxious heart,
And tireless hands, had ministered—ah! ministered so well—
That all her husband's heart, grown soft and softer
With her love, betrothed itself to her a second time
With such a warmth of love, that her own pains—
Pains which the strongest sympathy of kindliness
Had drawn from the distressed—were all forgot.

Another—yet another, the loved, the loved of all—
Has gone another journey. 'Tis no wedding jaunt,
With flying colours, sunshine, youth, and joyous hope,
But in the stark severity of death, down—
Down to the narrow home, to slumber there
Till that another day of joy with newest growth
Shall bid her bloom again. SUSAN—
The warm and tender-hearted SUSAN—is no more.
Enough; our wound is yet too green to bear another gape.
Sleep on, sister of all; we too are waiting.

That sire and matron, who o'er broad Atlantic deeps,
Have gone with all their youthful train,
We shall remember too, and joy to hear
How in Columbia's land they prosper.
They have borne some impress of our character
To freshen the dry heat of cold Columbia.
God bless them all.

To fill their places, and to bless us still
With generous service and with gracious presence,
Others have come, dear ones and good,
To many a man with double blessing.
One day has given him a new sister
And a dearer wife. Patience! this faith
And Christian love absorbent, shall embrace
The whole of all our group of friends,
Converting them to members of our glad fraternity;
The ties of flesh and blood, the civil bond,
The commonest relations all grown o'er
With overgrowth of faith and hope and charity.
We wait, we work for such a blessed end.
The Lord shall hasten it.

CHORUS.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts!
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.
Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high!
Glory be to Thee, O Lord!
Holy, holy, holy Lord!

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At the third annual social meeting of the church, held in March 1856, George Dowie incidentally mentioned, as something which would be interesting to the brethren, as it was gratifying to himself, that he had quite recently obtained an important promotion in the work where he was then employed. The welcome intimation was received with great satisfaction by all, and two of our poets were inspired to celebrate the event in rhyme. 'Lydia' thus expressed her feelings regarding it;

**Lines to George Dowie.**

This world, oft like a dreary waste,
Lacks not its wells of pleasure:
But only truly sweet they taste
When drank within due measure.

When seated on some grassy spot,
We tell our joy or sorrow;
If troubles press, we murmur not,
But hope a brighter morrow.

We sing of one whom we esteem
As father and as brother;

Whose upright path in life we deem
A pattern for another.

His toils among us for our good
Are self-imposed and varied;
That life's great end be understood,
His labours are unwearied.

Our God, with an approving voice,
Has crowned his head with honour;
In song with him we would rejoice,
Acknowledging the donor.

And ever blessed be His name,
Who in this manner giveth;
We'll persevere and earn the same—
Our Father ever liveth.

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The other composition was by our poet laureate, who produced his under the title of 'The Song of the Sojourners;' and George Dowie was so pleased with it, that he set the words to music; but, with his characteristic modesty, he deleted the two verses which were intended to be complimentary to himself—thus giving the song a general instead of a special character. The song, as thus abbreviated, was a welcome addition to the repertory of the choir. It is as follows:—

### Song of the Sojourners.

Amid the great world's din,
Amid its toil and smoke,
We are a little Christian band
Of God's far scattered folk.
And what to one joy giveth
Bids all our hearts be glad;
What moveth one to sorrowing
Will make each bosom sad.

Our hearts, Lord, Thou hast lightened,
And filled our souls with song,
Each pilgrim cheering as he goes
Life's rude highway along.
We labour, Lord, we labour;
Our hands are hands of toil;
But sweet the hard-won bread we eat
On this free English soil.

### The Hymns of Grierson Mitchell.

A notice of the Poetry of the One Faith, as emanating from Edinburgh, would be incomplete without some mention of the sacred pieces by Grierson, which have since been incorporated in the hymn-book originally issued from Dundee. No fewer than five of the hymns in that collection—Nos. 2, 34, 43, 84, and 87—are by him, while he had a hand in remodelling several others. Two of these hymns are special favourites with a wide circle among the brethren and sisters. The one beginning,

O dear and only Master,

is quite a lyric gem in its way, expressing, as it does, in language 'so pitiful, so tender,' the love of the great Shepherd for his sheep, his watchful solicitude over them, and the ardent desire of the longing heart for his speedy coming again. In both this hymn and that commencing,

Thou fainting heart, cease fearing,

there is something specially adapted to soothe and cheer the troubled mind, to comfort the mourner, and to bring sunshine and gladness into the heart oppressed with present care and sorrow. To my mind, there are not two finer hymns in the whole collection than these, or which administer spiritual consolation in a more acceptable and Scriptural form.

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Brotherly love towards those of like precious faith naturally found expression among our poets; and the duty of 'mutual help,' to which we were so often exhorted by George Dowie, was thus poetically urged upon us by Alick Mowatt:—

### Let Us Help Each Other.

In the journey of life we all have our share
Of the ills we are heir to—each trouble and care;
With a burden of grief every trav'ller is pressed,
There's a deep load of sorrow on every one's breast;
There's a trouble which causes our spirits to groan,
Which to none but ourselves we would dare to make known;

There's a grief from the heart which so sacredly flows,
It were sacrilege almost were we to disclose.
But 'mid all our afflictions, or light or severe,
There are times when 'tis ours the lonely to cheer;
When the soft words of comfort may soothe the distressed,
And raise up the mind which before was depressed.
There are times, too, when holy, regen'rating talk
May induce even the guilty in truth's way to walk.
Nor is this yet the whole, though great it may be—
We can help one another from danger to flee;
And even in performing the duties most plain,
Most simple and common, how many a pain
Which gnaws the weak heart, can we not allay!
How often our love can we not display!
Human we're all; and the strongest of us
May possibly not live the longest of us.
And though higher powers some may seem to possess,
There is no one so perfect, so free from distress,
As to be independent—so must he confess—
Of the sympathies, even, of those favoured less.

Let us, then, aid and assist one another,
Till affection—the feeling of brother to brother—
Spring up and grow in the hearts of mankind,
And envy and pride to the grave be consigned.

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I have not anything like exhausted the stock of the Poetry of the One Faith, but sufficient has been quoted to establish the claim put forward on behalf of the Edinburgh Church, and I find that more space has been thus occupied than was intended. I shall therefore give only one more selection—an effusion by William Wood, which he read at the last social meeting of the church, held in the Tailors' Hall, before removing to a more commodious meeting-place. With this extract the present volume may fittingly be brought to a close.

**Farewell to Tailors' Hall.**

Farewell, old hall, we feel from thee to part;
For deeply thou'rt engraven on each heart.
We do not willingly desert thy walls;
It is because our health and comfort calls.
Unfortunate it is that thou'rt so placed,
In midst of smoke and dirt thou art encased.

Could we but lift thee from thy present station,
And place thee in a better situation,
We would that do, and all of us rejoice
That we could put thee where we had a choice.
We also have so much increased in number,
That, unless we from each other part asunder,
We cannot find enough of space in thee
Us to accommodate and comfortable be.
We cannot split and part from one another;
No, that would never do, for we are brothers.
By cords of love we're bound together fast,
And pray that this strong cord may ever last.
But still, old friend, we lay no blame on thee;
For it is not thy fault, we plainly see.
Unto thy makers, as they on did go,
Thou couldst not say, 'Why have you made me so?'
We'll not forget thee in our future dwelling;
In future times we strangers will be telling
How much we love thee, and why we love thee so.
We'll think of thee wherever we may go.
Poor, modest, plain, and unpretentious thou!
No costly ornaments to deck thy brow.
Unlike some sisters, glittering and bright,
Thou canst not then the rich and great invite.
But still the rich and great have in thee met;
Both kings and priests beneath thy *roof* have sat.
And angel-visitants to thee have come
From God the Father and His honoured Son.
The light is small that through thy windows shines;
But thou hast light—no other light like thine.
Its dazzling brightness does eclipse the sun;
It shows men how to glory they may run.
Before its beams the dark night shadows fly,
And makes the glory of the future lie
Stretched out before the holy and the pure—
A *light* which sinful eyes cannot endure.
The Morning Star has lighted up the gloom
Of sin's dark night, and lands beyond the tomb
Of light and love; the bright immortal shore
Is seen by those who wish to sin no more.
Thy door is awkward? yes, that we must own;
But within thee another door we've known.
Though it is strait, an entrance we did gain;
In passing through, new creatures we became.
No work about thee worthy of the name
Of beauty, that would *spread an artist's fame.*
But yet the matchless artist has been here;
His works of beauty round thy walls appear.

The carnal man looks round, but can't behold
Thy living pictures, framed in purest gold.
He sees no beauty, for upon his sight
Ne'er shone the rays of truth's celestial light.
In thee fond hearts and happy, love-lit faces,
Possessors of the Christian name and graces,
Have often met and talked with one another
About the Christ, who is their elder brother.
Thou often hast by them been vocal made,
As they did sing of what the Lord had said
That He would do for those who overcame
The world, and loved Messiah's precious name.
And thou hast seen some cheerful voices hushed.
No more they sing—they're silent in the dust.
And when, in spirit, we wish to see their face,
The Tailors' Hall shall be our meeting-place.

And now, old friend, since we must parted be,
We say adieu; but still our heart's with thee;
And in our memory thou shalt ever dwell,
Where'er we meet in future time—farewell!



END OF VOLUME I.