

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

SOUL FREEDOM.

The heaven-born spirit may not always take
Earth's accents for the oracles of God;
And e'en for this—Oh dust, whose mask is power!
Reed, that would be a scourge, thy little hour!
Spark, whereon yet the mighty has not trod,
And therefore thou destroyest!—where were flown—
Our hopes, if man were left to man's decree alone.

Oh Liberty! thy heavenly smile brings rest;
Thy glorious radiance makes our spirits blest.
Thrice blessed heritage! thou art our own!
No puny arm may tear thee from thy throne.
Thou art our sun! bright liberty of soul!
What daring voice shall bid thee cease to roll?
What gloomy shadow shall eclipse thy light,
And wrap our spirits in the shades of night?
In these illuminated latter days,
Shall dark-browed Tyranny presume to raise
Her dreaded face, by artful masks concealed,
Yet the dire spirit fearfully revealed?
Beware, when'er ye see the warning cloud—
Like a man's hand—the light of Freedom shroud.
Beware, when man would seek your soul to chain,
And o'er free thought would absolutely reign.
Free thought! which bears the charter of the skies,
Which swifter than the arrow lightning flies,
Beyond the regions where the clouds are born;
Above the power of the electric storm;
Above the Alpine eagle's loftiest flight;
On, far beyond the glorious source of light;
Still onward! passing in her swift career,
Each circling, mystic, planetary sphere;
Crying 'Excelsior,' as she passeth by,
The burning wonders of the midnight sky;
All which the grandest telescope reveals;
The mightier mysteries viewless space conceals.
Thus on! through realms with worlds unnumbered
rown.

Furling her wings before the eternal throne,
The strong, untiring, chainless spirit flies,
Spanning all bounds that would forbid her rise.
Celestial spark! but yet there have been those—
Through every age, since Bethlehem's star arose—
Who strove to quench that vital rising flame,
And its free heavenward burning seek to tame.
Go! chain the vivid lightnings swift and free;
Stay the wild tumults of the surging sea!
Say to the billows "hither shalt thou go!"
The wailing winds, ay, tell them not to blow!
Bid the loud thunders o'er thee cease to roll!
But to thy will seek not to bind the soul.
Soul-Tyranny! on earth what hast thou done?
The thought might make thee hide thy beams, thou
Sun.

What hast thou looked on since thy glorious birth,
To cheer and warm and beautify the earth?
On crowded dungeons, thousands bound in chains;
Streams flowing crimson through Italian plains;
Round martyr forms the circling faggots fired;
The dread wheel rolling, white brave men expired.
Ay, thou hast seen in far Waldensia's vales,
Her children's ashes strew the wand'ring gales;
Hast seen them from their peaceful hamlets driven,
Without a home or shelter under heaven.
And thou hast seen the clustering vines of Spain
Grow dark with vintage shed from martyr veins;
Hast seen o'er earth a veil of darkness fall,
And Freedom shrouded by Oppression's pall.
Thousands for shelter, Oh, thou sun! have fled
Were not one ray of thine was ever shed;
To dark, damp fastnesses in mountains high,
Regions untravelled by thy piercing eye;
Where wild and shrill resounds the eagle's cry;
And solemn winds on sounding wing go by.
To the drear caverns where the dead repose,
Earth's worthies hasted from their spirit foes;
Like wild beasts slain, or hunted from the earth,
The land, the country, which had given them birth.
The rocks their heritage, the tombs their dower;
Their only haven from the Oppressor's power.
E'en when pale star-gleams lit the dewy sod,
Cheered by their beams, they might not worship
God.

Yet they were blest with liberty indeed!
Their only Master had pronounced them freed.
'Thanks to a Saviour's love! that fettered limb,
Or dark ravine, or rock, or dungeon dim,
Are nought, when glorious beams of light divine,
Illuminate the spirit-temple's inmost shrine.
Ay! the lone captive in his dismal cell,
Hath seen bright visions language may not tell;
Guided by dreams, 'midst chains and sorrows given,
Hath traced the Pilgrim's path from earth to heaven.
To such as these no spot was lone or drear;
The wilds primeval woke in them no fear!
More than a palace, where, beneath the skies,
Their heart's sweet incense, unrepressed, might rise.
The unstained conscience in those shades can rest,
Which woke dread terror in the guilty breast.
To such as these, the most delightful bowers,
The loveliest landscapes and the sweetest flowers,
The green vines creeping o'er the sun-lit plain,

Broad, singing rivers sweeping to the main,
Lost all their charms; if on the verdant sod,
They might not kneel and freely worship God.
With sacred reverence, we their footsteps trace,
Where'er they suffered is a holy place.
Arm us, oh God! with courage and with faith;
Like them may we be steadfast unto death.
Oh, Christ! soul-freedom is thy high behest,
Let each then clasp the treasure to his breast;
And if for this we should be sorely tried,
Cling to the truth for which our fathers died.

Onslow, Oct. 3rd.

Religious.

A Presbyterian Minister becoming a Baptist.

At a recent meeting of the Perth United Presbyterian Presbytery, the clerk read the following communication from the Rev. David Young, of Kinclaven:

"To the Moderator of the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Perth, appointed to meet in Perth on Tuesday, the 13th September, 1864.

"My dear Sir,—It is my painful duty to resign, as I hereby do, my charge of the United Presbyterian Congregation of Kinclaven. In thus dooming myself to severance from a people among whom I have laboured with unbroken peace for nearly a quarter of a century, and from brethren in the ministry with whom I have had so much delightful intercourse, I am tearing with anguish a heart that has been bleeding for months in the shades of a bereavement that have clouded the sunshine of my earthly life. But I must bow to the authority of conscience. In taking this painful step, I am not acting rashly; having calmly and prayerfully weighed, and that again and again, all that the Bible says on the subject of Baptism, reading at the same time some of the ablest writers on both sides of the question, I have at least arrived at the conclusion, that there is not a "Thus saith the Lord" for Infant Baptism. With this conviction, I have come to the determination to receive and hold what the Scriptures teach on that subject. Seeing the path of duty plainly marked out by my Saviour's footsteps, and the instructions of His word, I am bound to follow Him, and not, as self-interest would suggest, to administer the ordinance of baptism in opposition to the convictions of conscience, in order to retain my present position in the United Presbyterian Church: no one who, like Caleb and Joshua, follows the Lord fully, paying to His plain and endeared example the tribute of imitation, can think of this for a moment. Should baptism appear to be a heavy cross, I shall be supported, I am persuaded, by the conviction that I am walking in the footsteps of Him who went into and rose out of Jordan, to pass afterwards through a baptism of inconceivable sufferings for me. Having devoted my life to my Saviour's service and glory, I am looking up to His throne, saying, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' It is better to follow the precepts and examples of the dispensation under which we live, than to found our practice on circuitous, dissonant, and uncertain analogies.

"I am, most faithfully yours,

DAVID YOUNG.

United Presbyterian Manse, Kinclaven,
12th September, 1864."

The above letter appeared to take the members of Presbytery by surprise, and a silence of two or three minutes' duration ensued the reading of it, which was broken by the Moderator.

The Moderator: What steps do you intend to take in consequence of this letter?

Mr. Orr, of Dalroch, said the case was in one sense very clear, and in another sense very obscure. If it had been a case of ill health, or something similar, the Presbytery could delay procedure for some time, but considering that it was not merely a case of resignation, but a change of views with which this Presbytery did not sympathise, it was incumbent on the Presbytery that they take immediate action. It would be for the Presbytery to consider whether the pulpit at Kinclaven would be occupied again by Mr. Young. He could not see that the Presbytery had any other resource left but just the ordinary one of appointing a member of Presbytery to intimate

the resignation of Mr. Young to the congregation, and supply the pulpit.

Mr. J. Clark, Abernethy, considered that the most painful communication he had ever read before this Presbytery, coming as it did from a brother who had been so very much beloved and esteemed by all his brethren. It was very painful as regarded himself personally, and very painful when looked at as it affected his congregation. He was not prepared at all to advise the step which Mr. Orr had suggested. The first thing which the Presbytery had to do, in his opinion, was to appoint a committee to converse with Mr. Young or perhaps respectfully write him to meet the Presbytery and have a friendly conversation on the subject of baptism.

Mr. Lindsay, Perth, said, this communication of Mr. Young's had struck him very forcibly, as he had never heard of any change in his views. He was of the same opinion as Mr. Clark, provided that Mr. Young would undertake to preach at Kinclaven without introducing the subject of baptism into his discourses. In that case, the course suggested by Mr. Clark was, he thought, the best the Presbytery could adopt.

Mr. Orr explained, that, in expressing his opinion, he was taking into consideration simply the welfare of the congregation. Any other member of Presbytery who wished to show his sympathy with Mr. Young could make a motion to that effect—the one could not interfere with the other. He, however, considered it the duty of the Presbytery to look specially to the interests of the congregation, by taking some action, and that immediately, to provide sound pulpit ministrations at Kinclaven.

Mr. Alexander Young, Logiealmond, was of opinion, that the first step the Presbytery should take was to allow this paper to lie on the table, and appoint a committee to report to an early meeting of Presbytery. Then, and only then, the Presbytery could take action in the matter. He must allow that the communication sent by Mr. Young was to him a most painful and startling one; and as such a painful and astounding document came upon the Presbytery suddenly, and without the least warning, the only thing they could do was to let the letter lie on the table, and appoint a committee, of which Mr. Marshall ought to be a member, to converse with Mr. Young, and report to any early meeting of Presbytery. Then, if Mr. Young continues to hold his adopted views, the Presbytery will know what to do. He did not think there could be any objection to allow Mr. Young to preach at Kinclaven; the only difficulty would be in the case of a baptism—of course he could not be expected to dispense that ordinance. By the letter Mr. Young had sent, it did not appear he would object to preach as usual in his pulpit.

The Moderator thought these matters might be left to the committee.

Mr. M'Oran, Perth, concurred in this opinion; and if Mr. Young objected to preach, the committee could supply the pulpit in the usual manner.

Mr. Martin, Crieff, said he remembered a case of the same kind occurring. The minister preached for a few Sabbaths, and when a baptism occurred, he exchanged pulpits with a neighbouring clergyman.

It was then agreed to appoint a committee to request Mr. Young's presence at a conference on the subject of baptism, and to make the arrangements which they may consider necessary for the interim supply of the pulpit at Kinclaven, if Mr. Young himself refuses to do so.

The committee appointed was as follows:—Rev. Mr. Marshall, Coupar-Angus (Convener); Mr. A. Young, Logiealmond; Mr. J. Clark, Abernethy.

The Presbytery then agreed to meet on the first Tuesday after the first Sabbath in October.

We are informed that Mr. Young is a man highly respected in the district, and much beloved as a pastor. The step he has taken is no hasty one, but is the result of the inquiry and deliberation of years.—*London paper.*

Rev. DUNCAN DUNBAR, D. D.

The Rev. Dr. Dunbar, late pastor of the McDougal street church, New York, was for

thirty years an elected Director and a faithful friend of the American Tract Society, and died at his residence July 30, 1864, aged 73. He was born at Grantown, Scotland, 1791. When a young man, he was the subject of very deep convictions of sin and a gracious work of the Spirit, which led him to the ministry, in which he devoted all his power with singular fidelity and zeal to the cause of his Redeemer. He was ordained in the Presbyterian church, Scotland, and about 1818 was sent to the British Provinces with several young men whom he had in charge as missionaries to destitute fields. While in New Brunswick, having joined the Baptist connection, he labored in destitute places with great fidelity; then came to Maine, where, especially in Eastport, South Herwick, and Damariscotta, his preaching was highly blessed, and his labors in such demand that he often spent weeks away from his church and family, and hundreds were evidently converted to Christ. Then laboring for a time at Chester and Portsmouth, N. H., in which latter place he was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Stow, he was called to New York, where for thirty-five years he was the laborious, beloved, and successful pastor till he died, as he had expressed a wish to do, with his harness on, able to preach three times on the Sabbath, till by a sudden attack he was called to the heavenly rest. He delighted in, and everywhere inculcated, the great distinguishing doctrines of grace. His preaching was eminently "experimental, for aught, moving, and many converts were added to the church" throughout the whole period of his ministry.—*Am. Messenger.*

SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE.

The *Athenaeum* publishes correspondence between C. H. Berger, Esq., and Sir J. F. W. Herschel; and Professor Stenhouse and Sir John Bowring, respecting a declaration concerning the relation between Scripture and Science.

The following is the Declaration to which their signatures were solicited:

"We, the undersigned students of the natural sciences desire to express our sincere regret that researches into scientific truth are perverted by some in our own times into occasion for casting doubt upon the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scripture. We conceive that it is impossible for the Word of God, as written in the book of nature, and God's Word written in Holy Scripture, to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ. We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us only to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come in when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular. We cannot but deplore that natural science should be looked upon with suspicion by many who do not make a study of it, merely on account of the unadvised manner in which some are placing it in opposition to Holy Writ. We believe that it is the duty of every scientific student to investigate nature simply for the purpose of elucidating truth, and that if he finds that some of his results appear to be in contradiction to the written Word, or rather to his own interpretations of it, which may be erroneous, he should not presumptuously affirm that his own conclusions must be right, and the statements of Scripture wrong; rather leave the two side by side till it shall please God to allow us to see the manner in which they may be reconciled; and instead of insisting upon the seeming differences between science and the Scriptures, it would be as well to rest in faith upon the points in which they agree."

"Upwards of 210 names have already been received, including thirty F.R.S.'s, forty M.D.'s &c."

Sir John Herschel refuses to sign the declaration, and remarks:—

"I protest against my refusal to sign your 'Declaration' being construed into a profession of atheism or infidelity. My sentiments on the mutual relations of Scripture and science have long been before the world, and I see no reason to alter or add to them. But