

HECTOR
AMONG THE DOCTORS;
OR,
A Search for the True Church.
A VOLUME OF THOUGHTS FOR THINKERS.



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INTRODUCTORY.

The reader's attention is hereby invited to another now book, though its contents are not altogether new. Nearly all the interviews which this book reports were several years ago printed in a certain religious journal. The interest with which these interviews were then read, and the remarks which have since been made concerning them have suggested the propriety of presenting them to the public in a more permanent form.

The style of this book is justified by that which the Savior of mankind adopted in speaking parables. For instance, he said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls." On the same principle it may be justly said, *A well read, honest man seeking for the true church among sectarian preachers is like the hero of this book.*

With the foregoing explanations submitted the reader is invited to examine the contents of this book, remembering that we shall all finally appear before the judgment seat of Christ. THE AUTHOR.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., February 20, 1896.

HECTOR AMONG THE DOCTORS.

CHAPTER I.

The hero of the following story was a young Scotchman named Hector. His full name was Hector Home Munro. It was our privilege to form his acquaintance after he had reached mature life. He was short in stature, rotund in build, active in motion, and jovial in manner. In speech he was remarkably distinct, retaining, in its richest sounds, the Scotch accent. Of his general intelligence, and his special clearness in the Scriptures we shall permit the reader to judge as he follows him through the interviews in which we represent him as having engaged. Hector Home Munro is no mythical character. We knew him intimately for years in his maturer life. He was an excellent school teacher and a splendid specimen of physical and mental manhood. Information reached us several years ago that he had died in Washington D. C., in consequence of a sunstroke.

The first interview was occasioned by our friend, Hector, receiving a note from a Presiding Elder of the M. E. Church. In that note the request was made for Hector to have the younger pupils of his school dismissed on a certain Friday two hours earlier than usual in order that they might attend a children's meeting that was to be held that afternoon in the church house of that particular denomination. Hector did not see fit to comply with that

request, and the next morning called on the Doctor to explain. He rings the bell and the Doctor opens the door.

"Good morning, Doctor."

"Good morning, Mr. Munro. I am glad to see you. Walk in, sir. Let me take your hat. Be seated."

"I received your note and did not comply with your request. Thinking that you might misunderstand me I came to explain."

"That is very thoughtful, sir. I know not why the children were not permitted to attend our meeting. I'm sure we had a blessed time, and it would have done their young souls good to have been present."

"I doubt not, Doctor, that what you say about your meeting seems true from your point of view. But I am the teacher, or, rather, the superintendent of the school at this place. I am employed by the school board to manage this school under the regulations of the school laws of the State. Those laws do not authorize me to do what your note requested."

"I presume that there is no special law authorizing you to do as I requested. But the law is interested in the good of the children, and our meeting was for their good. Therefore I think you should have complied with my request."

"What you say may seem true from your point of view, Doctor. But you should bear in mind that your church is not the only one represented in our school at this place. Other churches are established here. Some of them regard a part of your religious views as rank heresy. Hence dismissing their children to attend your meetings is unfair and liable to offend them. Besides, though the school law is interested in the welfare of the children, yet it does not authorize me to dismiss them from school to attend any religious meeting. What is worse, I could not have dismissed them according to your request without

violating that part of the law which regulates the hours of each session of the school."

"I am astonished, Mr. Munro, at what you say about some persons in this town regarding a part of our church's teaching as rank heresy. Will you be so kind as to tell me what part of our teaching is so regarded?"

"I am no theologian, and even if I were it seems to me that we should settle this other question before discussing the subject of heresy. Please tell me, Doctor, do you not admit that I have no authority given me by the school law of the State to comply with such a request as that contained in your note of yesterday?"

"Well, yes, I must say that you have no special or direct authority for so doing. But, then, you know that our church is the strongest in this town, and we send more children to the school than any other church. Moreover, I doubt not that we pay more money for the support of the school than any other church, and I think you should have complied with my request."

"I regret, Doctor, to hear you talk thus. Preachers ought to be exemplars in abiding by the civil statutes under which they live. But in the speech you have just made I detect the mischievous doctrine which says, 'Might makes right.' You seem to think that because your people are in the majority, or excel in numbers any other individual congregation, that therefore you are at liberty to request me to do what the law does not authorize, and what would be contrary to the wish of other churches."

"Oh no, my dear sir, I would not have you think that I am not a law-abiding citizen. On the contrary the rules of our church require each member to abide by the civil law under which he may live wherein that law does not interfere with religion. Yet you know very well that there is a difference between the letter and the spirit of

the law. The letter of the law may not authorize you to do as I requested, but I think that the spirit of the law would have justified you."

"Tell me, Doctor, do the spirit and letter of the law contradict each other? Can the spirit of the law justify what the letter condemns? Where is the law requiring any school teacher or superintendent of public instruction at any place to favor one denomination more than another?"

"Well, no, the letter and the spirit of the law do not exactly contradict each other, but the spirit of the law often modifies the letter."

"For the spirit of the law to modify the letter of the law is one thing, Doctor, and for the size and strength of a particular church to be used as an argument for setting aside or even modifying the law is quite a different thing. Thus far you have not appealed to the law as a modifier of the law, but you have appealed to the size and strength of your church as a modifier."

"While you were speaking, Mr. Munro, I was just thinking of the different districts over which I have traveled as presiding elder, and I am sure that in a majority of them the custom has been for the schools to dismiss the younger pupils that they might attend the children's meetings. I am informed that it has been the custom here."

"Custom in harmony with law is all right, Doctor, but custom that is contrary to law is all wrong. What your church requests me to do every other church in this town might request. Confusion would result. Your people would not wish their children to attend certain meetings of certain other churches, and you may justly infer that some of them might not wish their children to attend certain meetings of your church."

"I see you are determined, Mr. Munro, to have your

own way in this matter, and I think it rather presumptuous in you, as a young man, to undertake to change the custom of this community."

"Now, Doctor, don't get angry. I said a while ago that preachers should be exemplars in obeying the civil law, and I now say that preachers should be exemplars in controlling their tempers. As superintendent of this school I am not to have my way nor should I be governed by your request. My business is to manage this school under the directions of the school laws of the State. In this town it may seem presumptuous to abide by the law, either as a school teacher or in any other position; yet that does not justify me in violating or ignoring the law. Besides, it may seem presumptuous in this community to go contrary to a custom among the people. Yet I have never permitted custom to exercise any authority over me. I wish to know what is right, and by that I am determined to abide."

"Of course it is always right to do right, but there are different views of what is right. The law ought to be regarded as authority, but there are times and circumstances under which we all feel more or less at liberty to vary a little from the law. But if I cannot convince you on the point that we have been discussing, yet I would like to have another interview with you to convince you that our doctrine has no heresies in it. What time will suit you best?"

"Now, Doctor, you know I told you that I am no theologian, and I may add that I am not the champion of any religious party. True, I am a Bible reader, but I have not been a student of human theology. Yet I would have no objection to hearing what you may wish to say."

"Well, what time will suit you best?" inquired the Doctor.

"Saturday is my day of leisure, and if you wish I shall

call one week from this morning," answered Hector.

"All right. Call next Saturday morning and I shall be glad to have an interview."

"Then, as the saying is, 'If I live and nothing happens,' you may expect me at the time mentioned. Good-by, Doctor."

"Good-by, Mr. Munro. Come as early as you can, for I may have much to say."

"All right, sir. I shall be glad to hear."

After our young friend had gone Doctor Davidson seated himself before his open grate, and as he watched the fire burn he began to talk to himself as follows: "I did not wish to yield squarely to that young fellow; for it might make him conceited. Yet I must admit that his defense was reasonable. All the different churches have as much right to have a special meeting for the children as we have, and they have as much right to request that the children be dismissed at an earlier hour in order to attend meeting. Then I am sure that we would not wish our children to go to the meetings of some of our religious neighbors. For instance, those narrow, close-communion Baptists and those water-salvation Campbellite hold views that we don't wish our children to hear. Never. But, then, it is only fair to suppose that they may feel about us even as we do about them. If so, I suppose that Munro is right. Moreover, it would place him in an awkward position to yield even in one instance; for others might make of him a similar request to the one contained in my note. Yet I am glad that I have had an interview with this young man, as it will open the way for a talk on the question of religion which may result in his conversion."

After reaching the sidewalk our young friend began to think concerning his interview. "How one thing leads to another," he said to himself. "That unfortunate remark

of mine about some folks regarding certain features of Dr. Davidson's doctrine as 'rank heresy' has made him anxious to talk to me about religion. I suppose he knows that I am not a member of any church and he may think that I am a hopeful case. Be this as it may I shall have to hear him. He is a learned man and, I suppose, quite a theologian. Between now and the time we shall meet, I think that I shall post myself a little. The best way to do that will be to attend his meetings. Yes, I'll attend the protracted meeting now going on, and then compare what he and his people say and do with the Bible. That will be the safe plan. If their sayings and doings agree with the Bible, all right: if not then I don't have to accept them."

CHAPTER II.

When Saturday morning again came, Hector Home Munro went to the residence of Doctor Davidson. After the usual courtesies and commonplace remarks the Doctor began on the subject concerning which he wished to inform the young Scotchman, with a view to his conversion.

"Mr. Munro, I invited you to come back to my house in order to disabuse your mind of the idea that the church with which I am connected teaches anything that may be justly called 'heresy.'"

"I did not say that I regarded your church as a teacher of heresy, Doctor, but I simply stated that some of the religious people of this town regard some features of your teaching as 'rank heresy.'"

"I am aware what your language was, but from your manner I feared that you shared somewhat in the opinion you had heard."

"Be that as it may, Doctor, I assure you that I am not

settled in my religious convictions, except that I believe the Bible to be true and read it with some care. I know but little of the systems of theology now being advocated in the religious world. God made the Bible; man has made systems of theology. Thus far in my life I have regarded it as safe to confine myself in religion to what God made, and for the time to pass over what has been arranged by man on the great question of religion."

"Your remarks, sir, are striking, but I think they need modifying. It is true that God made or gave the Bible, and it is also true that men—great and good men—have arranged the different systems of theology. Yet those systems have been taken from the Bible, and thus they are founded on the Bible. For these reasons I think that you should not speak lightly of them, nor regard them as unworthy of confidence."

"I am not disposed to speak lightly of those systems, but I know that they differ from each other and thus must differ from the Bible. If they were like the Bible they could not differ. You know I am a school teacher, and thus have to deal with the science of mathematics. In that science I learn that any two things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other."

"I did not say that the various systems of theology are like the Bible, but that they were by great and good men taken from the Bible and founded on the Bible, so that they ought not to be regarded as unworthy of confidence."

"Doctor, do you believe them all?"

"Oh, no, not altogether. That would be impossible, as some of them differ so widely."

"Please tell me, Doctor, do they differ because of what they contain that is divine, or because of what they contain that is human?"

"Well, the truth is, they differ because—well, I don't

know that I exactly understand the import of your question."

"Then I will explain. The systems of theology that exist in the religious world you admit are not just like the Bible. You also admit that some of them differ so widely that you cannot believe them all. Now, as the Bible does not differ from itself, and as the systems of theology are not like the Bible, and are not like each other, I wish to know whether they differ from each other because of what is divine in them, or because of what is human in them?"

"Well, I don't like to say that they differ because of what is human in them, but rather because of the different inferences which great and good men have drawn from the Bible. You doubtless know that we are all differently constituted, and have different castes of mind, so that we cannot all see alike. Therefore when we read the Bible we draw different inferences."

"Doctor, I am astonished. "Why, sir, if I entertained such views concerning the Bible as you have just expressed I could not be anything else than a rank infidel. Indeed it seems to me that you do not distinguish between the testimony that produces faith and the inference that begets opinion. You speak as if the best that any of us could have concerning the Bible is a bundle of inferences and opinions. If this be true, then all the Bible says about faith or belief is a mistake."

"No, Mr. Munro, you misunderstand me. On all the essential features of religion the testimony is clear, and on those features we can have faith. But there are many points in the Bible that are not so clear and concerning these we are all liable to draw inferences, and thus differ from each other."

"Then, if I do not misunderstand you, Doctor, your idea is this: On all points where the divine testimony is

clear we can have faith and be united; but where the testimony is not clear we can only have inferences and so are liable to differ."

"Yes, sir, that is the idea."

"Then, doctor, as these inferences are humanly drawn, or are inferences of human beings, and the systems of theology differ because of the differences in the human inferences therein found, I come back to the former question, and ask whether the different systems of theology do not differ because of what is found in them that is human?"

"Yes, sir, I suppose that it must be admitted that they differ because of the different inferences found in them."

"Then, Doctor, it is evident that Protestantism is divided concerning opinions based on different inferences, and not concerning faith or belief that is produced by the divine testimony. Is not this the state of the case, or the condition of things?"

"So it seems. But I had never looked at the matter exactly in that light before."

"Then, am I not correct in saying that God gave the Bible and men have made systems of theology?" *

"Yes, I suppose your statement to that effect may be admitted."

"Then, if we are united thus far in the conclusions reached I would like to ask you, Doctor, what you meant a while ago by saying that we cannot all see alike."

"I meant that because of our different mental temperaments we are constantly liable to differ about many matters, and so we are liable to differ about religion. I presume that you readily admit that we cannot all see alike in everything, don't you?" replied the Doctor.

"I readily admit that we do not all see alike in everything, but to admit that we cannot all see alike is another question. But what has this to do with religion?"

"It has much to do with religion, my dear sir. For because of our differences we cannot all see alike, and so we differ in our religious views."

"Doctor, you surprise me. I was just reading this morning in 2 Corinthians, 5th chapter, that Paul says, 'We walk by faith, not by sight.'"

"I referred to mental sight or mental vision, and not to physical sight. You seem disposed to play on words."

"I beg pardon, Doctor. But you know I am a school teacher, and measuring words is a part of my business. For instance, a while ago when you were speaking of drawing inferences *from the Bible* I immediately thought—yes, I suppose they are *from the Bible*. In view of the differences of many of those inferences from each other I thought it likely that they were drawn a long distance *from the Bible*. So when you spoke of not seeing alike I very naturally thought of Paul's statement to Christians that they walk by faith and not by sight."

"I clearly perceive Mr. Munro, that the years you have spent in the school room have had their effect on your methods of thought and expression. I fear that you have become too critical to be very religious. You will have to guard yourself on this point."

"Thanks, Doctor, I may need a little precaution. But I have for many years been striving for clearness and accuracy. My acquaintance with Sir William Hamilton's works on Metaphysics and Logic have assisted me in this direction."

"All! indeed, have you been a student of Sir William Hamilton?"

"Yes, sir, I am about as well acquainted with his writings as I am with an ordinary English grammar. You know that Sir William was a fellow countryman of mine."

"Then you may congratulate yourself, my young friend, on your attainments."

"But, Doctor, there was another thought that flashed through my mind a while ago that I now recall. In the school here we use Smith's grammar and Webster's dictionary as our standards in language. These books we all see alike both physically and mentally, regardless of our different castes of mind. Now, the question arises with me, Why can we not all see the Bible alike both physically and mentally?"

"Of course, as a school teacher, such a question may seem appropriate to you. But after all that may be said about measuring by the same standard, yet it must be admitted that there are different understandings of many things in this world."

"I beg your pardon, Doctor, but it seems to me that you make a mistake when you speak of 'different understandings.' To understand anything is to know it or comprehend it. Whoever understands anything knows it, or has the correct view of it. Hence, all who really understand any given something have the same view of it. There may be different misunderstandings, but there cannot be different understandings of anything."

"That is a very nice discrimination, Mr. Munro. I see that you have learned the value of language. But my purpose was to say that we may honestly differ about many things. By reason of our differences in temperaments and education we view many things from different points of view and with different motives, so that it is very difficult to find two men who exactly agree in every particular."

"Doctor, are you willing to admit that truth has a definite existence independent of our views or notions?"

"Yes, sir, I presume that it must be admitted that the existence of truth does not depend on our views or notions."

"Then, Doctor, please tell me if all those who really

understand a truth are not necessarily united. I hold that they not only do not, but they cannot differ about a truth which they really understand. Am I right or wrong in this conclusion?"

"I am not prepared either to deny or admit your statement, Mr. Munro, without further reflection."

"Just here it occurs to me, Doctor, that I shall have to beg you to excuse me, as I have an engagement yet this forenoon which I must meet. Shall I call on you next Saturday?"

"By all means, call again."

"Very well, Doctor. Good-day, sir."

"Good-by. Mr. Munro."

CHAPTER III.

When Saturday morning again came it found our young friend, Hector, more of a theologian than two weeks previous. In course of the time that had elapsed since he first met Doctor Davidson he had regularly attended the protracted meeting that was being held, and had taken a deeper interest in the methods of procedure he had witnessed than ever before. Besides, he had diligently read the New Testament in connection therewith, and with his excellent discriminating powers he compared and contrasted what he had seen with what he had read. Likewise, he had taken a few glances into the M. E. Discipline. Hence he felt a secret wish to have an interview with Doctor Davidson with reference thereto. In this wish he was soon to be gratified, as the following will show. For the Doctor had come to the conclusion that it would be well to dismiss all else and endeavor to impress the subject of religion on his young friend's mind. Hence, as soon as Hector was again seated in his library, and the

usual courtesies had passed between them, he began.

"Mr. Munro, I have noticed that you have for the past two weeks attended our protracted meeting quite regularly."

"Yes, Doctor, I have no religious prepossessions nor prejudices that would prevent me from attending any religious meeting."

"That is right, sir, that is right. We should all be as free from prejudice as possible."

"I agree with you, Doctor. The word 'prejudice,' as you are aware comes to us from two Latin words which together mean prejudgement or judging before hearing the evidence. Hence prejudice is an evil in all departments, whether we refer to religion, mental philosophy, physical science, law, or ordinary life."

"That's correct, sir, that's correct. Hence, I am glad that you can pronounce yourself so free from religious prejudice that you can come to our meetings. Moreover it is a very good example to set before the school over which you preside, and before the community in general."

"Not only your meetings, Doctor, but any others."

"Well, yes, I so understood you. But, of course, I am specially interested that you should become acquainted with what I am accustomed to call 'our holy religion.'"

"Are you entirely satisfied with your religion?"

"Why, yes. But what has led you to ask such a question?"

"Simply what I have seen in your meetings."

"And what have you seen in our meetings that has led you thus to inquire?"

"Several items, Doctor."

"Will you be so kind as to enumerate them?"

"I can do so, if you will promise me that you will not be offended."

"I think that you need not entertain fears on that ques-

tion; for I doubt not that you will be courteous."

"Then I shall venture to mention three items. 1st, The doctrine that conversion and sanctification are produced or accomplished instantaneously or at once; 2d, The doctrine that conversion and sanctification are accomplished by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit; 3d, The doctrine that feeling is the proper evidence of pardon and of sanctification. From what I have gathered at your meetings and have seen in your literature, I find that these doctrines are a prominent part of your theology, and I would like to know if you are satisfied with them."

"My dear sir, I did not think when I invited you to call on me a second or a third time that I might talk with you on the subject of religion that I would be called on for a theological discussion. But I hoped that our interviews might prove of special value to you spiritually. But it seems as if my hope is not to be realized, for you seem to have attended our meetings as a critic rather than as a seeker of religion. I would advise you, Mr. Munro, to be very careful or your critical caste of mind will lead you into infidelity."

"I am much obliged to you, Doctor, for your advice. It may be that I need a precaution on that subject, though I am sure that I am critical simply because of my desire never to accept an error or a falsehood if I can avoid it. With this explanation before you, I trust that you will not think that I am of a censorious or fault-finding disposition. But as a student and as a school teacher, I am bound to accept only what I can clearly understand to be altogether correct."

"Your critical method of procedure, Mr. Munro, is very appropriate for you to adopt as a school teacher and as a student of things that are purely human. But when we come to the subject of religion it will never do to insist upon understanding everything, because religion is a rev-

elation and must be accepted by faith."

"I agree *with* you, Doctor, in regard to religion—that is, religion as taught in the Bible, being a revelation, and that it must be accepted by faith. Indeed, I am glad that you have made this admission, since it may prove of value in our future interviews, should we have any. If I have not misread my Bible certainly faith is the underlying principle of all religious service that is acceptable to God."

"You are doubtless right, sir. I am glad to find that your views are so clear on this subject, for I perceive that you are not a Rationalist. From some of your utterances I feared that you might be disposed to bring everything to the test of your reason as a standard of measuring. Such a procedure is Rationalism and is very dangerous."

"I did not suppose, Doctor, that anything I said could impress you that I leaned toward Rationalism. I have read my Bible too much for anything of that kind to lurk within me. But while I am not a Rationalist, Doctor, I trust you will also bear in mind that I am not a Mystic. Rationalism brings everything to human reason as a final standard, while Mysticism brings everything in religion to the internal feelings or inward emotions as the final test. I discard both human reason and human feelings as a reliable standard of measuring in religion."

"Then where do you stand in religion, Mr. Munro?"

"I don't know, sir, except that I try to stand with the Bible, on the Bible, and for the Bible."

"Have you been reading the Bible many years?"

"I have read it ever since I can recollect."

"What led you to begin so early?"

"My mother was a member of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and she was a great Bible reader. Before I could read she would read the Bible to me, and would entertain me often by simply relating Bible stories. By this pro-

cedure she caused me to be interested in the Bible and I have been reading it ever since I learned to read."

"Is your mother still living?"

"No, sir. She died before I left Scotland."

"You were very fortunate in having a mother who taught you to read the Bible so young, and you deserve great credit for having read it so diligently as you grew older. So many young people who have been taught right neglect the right way after they grow older."

"That depends, Doctor, on what you mean by the expression 'taught right.' For my part I am confident that the modern method of treating the Bible in the family and in the Sunday school, and, in many instances, in the pulpit, if you will pardon my boldness, is very defective."

"You seem to be full of criticisms, Mr. Munro," said the Doctor, smiling. "But tell me, what do you regard as the chief defect in what you term 'the modern method of treating the Bible?'"

"I notice that you seem disposed to twit me about my critical disposition, Doctor. But when I tell you to what I refer I think you will agree with me. First, (to use a common expression) I object to scrapping the Scriptures; or reading them in a hap-hazard, or hop, skip, and jump method. Second, I am sure that the historical facts and parables or illustrations of the Bible should by parents and Sunday school teachers be repeated to the children as soon as their attention can be gained by relating a story in the simplest way."

"You are right, you are right, sir. I could wish with all my heart that the people only knew this much. The Bible is a wonderful book. It is so full of incidents and illustrations that if the people would only read it as they should they would learn to love it I am sure."

"But, Doctor, if you admit this, why do you not try to correct the existing order of things? I have heard you

preach a number of times, yet I have never heard you urge upon your people to read the Bible chapter after chapter from the beginning to the end of the volume."

"Oh, I do sometimes preach on the subject. But in going around over my large district I have so many other matters to look after that I do not get as much time as I would like to have for talking to the people about reading the Bible. Did you ever look into our Book of Discipline and notice what a great variety of duties devolve upon the Presiding Elder?"

"I have been lately reading the Discipline, and some day I may tell you what I think of it. But for the present I would like to ask you this question: Are you satisfied with the lesson-leaf as found in the Sunday school?"

"Not altogether; but it is gotten up by great and good men, and it would seem almost presumptuous in me to criticize their work."

"The framers of the lesson-leaf may be great and good men, Doctor, but I am sure that they have made a blunder in the very idea of getting up a lesson-leaf, especially while the New Testament is so cheap."

"Wherein consists the blunder, as you call it?"

"Why, the very idea of taking the hands and eyes of the children away from the text of the Bible is a blunder, unless the purpose be to wean the mind away from that which is Divine, and unto that which is human."

"Do you not believe in commentaries, nor in any method of placing before the mind printed explanations of the Sacred Text?"

"As a school teacher I do not. A commentary and a lesson-leaf are too much in regard to the Bible as a key is to an arithmetic, or a pony in translating one language into another. In course of time that which was intended as a help becomes the most important something. What would you think of me as principal of the school in this

town if I should have the teachers to proceed in regard to any text book as you consent for your Sunday school teachers to proceed in regard to the Bible?"

"I—well, I had not looked at the matter that way. I suppose you mean to ask me what I would think of you if you should have a short sketch or synopsis of each lesson with questions and answers all written out, and have the pupils all read the answers. Well, candidly, I would regard you as a simpleton."

"In other words, you would no doubt regard me as unfit for my position, would you not, Doctor?"

"I certainly would."

"But is it more sensible to have a key for a Bible lesson that will avoid the necessity of study than to have a key to an arithmetic lesson that will avoid the necessity of study?"

"No, not by any means. It is even less sensible because of the greater importance of the subject of religion."

"Then, Doctor, why do you not act on the right principle and teach your people to use the Bible instead of the lesson-leaf?"

"That is an easy question to ask, my dear sir, but difficult to answer, and more difficult to carry out the answer that should be given. Custom has tremendous influence, and it takes a long time to change a wrong custom."

"I am aware of that, yet it seems to me that a wrong custom in regard to religious matters is more dangerous than in any other department, and for that reason should be more diligently opposed. Just think of this, Doctor: The people would impeach any school teacher who would pursue the same course in regard to ordinary education that the Sunday school teacher pursues in regard to religion."¹

"Very true, sir—very true. The lesson-leaf often re-

suits in making our teachers feel that they can teach without studying the lesson to be taught, and in making the scholars feel that they can answer questions without studying the lesson they are to recite. To that extent the lesson-leaf is doubtless an evil, and should be discarded."

"I am glad that you acknowledge this, Doctor. But now I notice that another engagement calls me from this interview. Then next Saturday forenoon our County Institute meets in our school building, and I shall be engaged there. Doctor, can you not be present on the occasion? Certainly I would be glad to have you with us."

"If all things be as favorable as they now are I shall try and attend."

"Yes, Doctor, by all means come. We are to have a speech from the County Superintendent on abolishing the spelling book from our schools, and I would like for you to hear it. Come if you can."

"I shall try to be present."

"All right, sir. I shall hope to see you there. Good-by, Doctor."

"Good-day, Mr. Munro. Call again."

CHAPTER IV.

When Saturday morning again dawned on the town of W_____, Hector Home Munro had everything in readiness

to give the teachers of the county a favorable reception. The chapel hall had been cleansed from all dust by the floor being scrubbed, and the wood-work well washed. Even the walls of the room were washed.

The meeting of the Institute had been well announced, and as early as nine o'clock people began to come. Some

of the teachers arrived the evening before. When the clock indicated 9:30 the bell was rung, and when it indicated 9:55 it was rung a second time. Precisely at ten o'clock our friend Hector arose and stated that the time had come for opening the exercises, and that as many who were present, including a goodly number of teachers, were religious people he presumed that it would be in harmony with their wishes to begin by thanksgiving and prayer. Turning to his friend Dr. Davidson, he requested him to lead in prayer, which he did in a fervent manner. When the prayer was ended our young friend addressed the audience somewhat as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: According to your custom I am to preside over this institute by reason of the position I occupy in the school at this place. In so doing allow me to say that I am glad that all things seem so favorable for a profitable interview to-day. I am informed that all the teachers of the county are present except two, and one of them is liable to make his appearance any minute. The other absent one, Miss Johnson, is not present by reason of sickness, and so we cannot have one pleasure that we would otherwise experience on this occasion. But as there are several interesting and profitable themes to be discussed to-day we certainly have not much time for preliminary remarks, and thus I proceed at once to call on the chief speaker of the occasion—Mr. George Simpkinson, our worthy Superintendent of Public Instruction in this county. Mr Simpkinson will please take the stand."

The Superintendent then took the stand and read a very interesting paper concerning the excellency of the Public School system in Germany, and the fact that in that country the spelling book had been discarded as unnecessary; and then he advocated that it should be discarded from our schools.

The next paper was read, by a lady teacher, Miss Watkins, who taught in the second, room of the graded school in one of the towns of the county. Her subject was, "Correct English."

The third paper was read by a gentleman named Martin, who endeavored to set forth the best collateral studies for a teacher; that is, the best studies besides his text books.

Next came an essay by a lady named Grey on "How to Manage a School."

These essays with remarks following each and intervening songs occupied an hour and a half. Then some one moved that Mr. Munro should occupy the remaining half hour of their forenoon session in a speech reviewing the exercises or in any other manner that he might deem best. This motion was seconded and when put before the audience was carried by such a hearty acclamation that our young friend was impressed that for some reason, unknown to him, there was a general curiosity to hear him speak. Thus without delay he called the secretary to the chair and without an apology began. "We regret that his rich Scotch accent cannot be reproduced on paper. As stated in our first description of Hector he retained the richest roll of the letter "r." Besides, his excellent enunciation and emphasis made his speech in conversation delightful to the cultured ear. But here is his speech as nearly as we have been able to report it.

"Mr. President: As the ladies and gentlemen of this audience have requested me to address them I shall endeavor to comply, and as they have given me the privilege of reviewing the addresses to which you have listened I shall exercise that privilege. In so doing I shall first express my appreciation of what has been presented. The documents to which we have listened were both well written and well read, so far as I am capable of judging.

"But I have something more than compliments to offer.

[Here several glances were exchanged.] Not only have I something more, but I have something better than mere compliments to offer. That is to say, I have a few criticisms. [This last statement was made with a merry twinkle of the eye, and a smile passed over the entire audience.] Some may think strange that I should speak of criticisms as being better than compliments. But thus they have been to me. My mistakes, when corrected, have always branded themselves on my memory so as to be retained, and they have generally impressed the wholesomeness of diligence and care. I was so strongly convinced of this some years ago that I remarked to a fellow student that I learned more by making mistakes than by avoiding them. He adroitly asked, 'Why don't you make them all the time, then?' [Laughter.] But I told him that I was speaking of mistakes that were made through carelessness, and not through perverseness.

"Now let us consider the addresses that have on this occasion been read in our hearing. Let us all do this as students, and, as nearly as possible, as philosophic students, or as students who love wisdom. The chief advantage of an occasion like this consists in the assistance we give each other by our mutual intercourse. For it is true as a certain writer has said:

'By mutual intercourse and mutual aid, Great deeds are done and great discoveries made; The wise new wisdom on the wise bestow, While the lone thinker's thoughts come slight and slow.'" Presuming that your minds are now prepared for a few criticisms, I shall begin with the first speech to which you listened. Our worthy Superintendent suggested the propriety of discarding our spelling book from the common school, following the example of the Germans. I would like to ask Mr. Simpkinson whether he is acquaint-

ed with the German language. ['No, sir, I never studied that language,' was the reply.] Then I can understand why he has supposed that we should follow the example of the Germans in regard to the spelling book. Now, I claim a reasonable acquaintance with that language, having studied it several years. And, though not aware, previous to hearing the address this morning, that the Germans had discarded their speller, yet I can readily understand why such a course should be appropriate for them, but not for us. The German language has this peculiarity: It has no silent letters; but the pronunciation of each word at once determines the letters to be use in spelling it.

"Now, then, ladies and gentlemen, you can all understand why the Germans may discard their speller, and why we should not discard our speller. Their language has no silent letters, while our language abounds with such letters, and has many other peculiarities which make our speller a very important book in our common school education. [At this juncture, the County Superintendent of Public Instruction felt the blood mounting to his temples and about his ears.]

"Of course it would be more pleasant to me, ladies and gentlemen, to whisper my criticisms privately to those who appeared before you as teachers on this occasion, but a speech when made before the public is public property, and if erroneous in a single particular is subject to public correction. This, I presume, needs only to be stated in order to be understood and admitted by all who are present.

"The next speech that I shall consider is the one read by Mr. Martin. I agree with him entirely in all that he recommended except in a single particular. [Mr. Martin shrugged his shoulders, as many eyes were turned in the direction where he was sitting.] I regret that he even

suggested that we study a work on Higher Criticism as of advantage in enlarging one's views. The only worthy work on the so-called 'Higher Criticism' of this generation is a work that exposes the exalted conceit of the entire "business. I have found by careful examination that those who arrogate to themselves that they are capable of sifting the Bible and deciding what is certainly divine,, and what is a human interpolation—I have found that they are a company of nationalists. In other words, they regard the record found in the Bible as an admixture of divine inspiration and human imagination, and that it is their business to separate the human part from that which is divine. When their criticisms are logically followed, or pressed to their logical conclusions, it becomes evident that the so-called 'Higher Critics' are skeptics concerning that leading proposition of the Sacred Volume, namely, the divinity of Christ. Of course, they may not all be aware of their skepticism because they are not logicians.

"One thought more I wish to present on this subject. The expression 'higher criticism' according to Sir "William Hamilton, was formerly applied to criticism on the authenticity of a work or document as a whole, while the expression 'lower criticism' was applied to criticism concerning the integrity of a work or document in the details of its text. But now we find that both kinds of criticism are called 'higher,' though in fact they are both, in most instances, the outgrowth of conceit and they generally lead to skepticism. Many people try to be skeptical concerning the Bible as a whole or concerning some of its parts simply because they have not studied it carefully, or do not wish to live in harmony with its teachings.

"Next I come to the essay on 'Correct English.' It began with this expression: 'If I be not mistaken.' That form of speech is frequently used by good writers, yet it is not correct when used in the active voice. We might as

well use the words, 'If I be not forsaken' in the active voice, The truth is, the words 'mistaken' and 'forsaken' are both passive. If I be mistaken, then I am by mistake taken for some body else, and thus some one else makes the mistake. Hence when we refer to ourselves making a mistake we should say, If I mistake not, or, If I make no mistake. Of course, Miss Watkins may say that Webster sanctions the form of expression that she used. Yet I am sure that upon reflection it will become evident to you all that to use the word 'mistaken' in an active sense is as clearly wrong as to use the word 'forsaken' in an active sense.

"In the same essay was a criticism on the use of the word 'illy' as not being authorized by Webster. It was very discreet in Miss Watkins simply to say that Noah Webster gave no authority for using that word, for the copy of Worcester that I have defines it and admits that it is sometimes used by good writers. Hence its use is defensible by Worcester. Better still, it is *sensible*.

"As for the essay by Miss Grey, it was defective in only one particular as far as I could judge, namely, it failed to mention the importance of teachers visiting the homes of all the children and impressing the parents or guardians with their deep interest in the children's welfare. By doing this it is possible for teachers to gather much valuable information concerning each family of children, and perhaps concerning each child that attends their school. Besides, to become acquainted with parents will aid much in forming just judgments concerning the children.

"Now in conclusion I must in justice say concerning all the essays that in regard to literary finish, it seems to me, that they are very excellent, and clearly indicate that their authors are genuine students who need only to persevere in order to reach the highest degree of literary excellence."

When our friend, Hector, finished his speech it was a

quarter to twelve o'clock, and after the announcements were made for the afternoon the deeply interested audience was dismissed. Among those present none had listened to Hector's speech with deeper interest than Doctor Davidson. That the unpretentious, round-faced young Scotchman should at such an early age be so well informed on so many subjects was to him a marvel. Indeed, he began to feel that he was receiving more instruction from Mr. Munro than he was imparting to him in their interviews. But his time for reflection was short because of the necessity of taking the train that afternoon for an appointment forty miles distant.

The people generally were astonished at the young Scotchman's capability as a critic and as a speech-maker. The essayists whose speeches he had criticised gathered about him, and in genuine good humor told him how much they hoped for the opportunity to "pay him back" in his own coin.

CHAPTER V.

In course of the week following the meeting of the County Institute our friend Hector received the following note: Mr. H. H. Munro.

My Dear Sir,—As my engagements will permit me to be home Friday, I write to state that I shall be glad to see you at my place Saturday morning for a continuance of our interviews. Respectfully, W. N. DAVIDSON.

This note caused Hector to feel easy in regard to calling again on the Doctor. Accordingly when the following Saturday morning arrived he went to the Doctor's residence. Finding him in his library, as usual, the conversation soon began.

"Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Munro, on your

speech last Saturday at the Institute. You certainly acted the part of a regulator on that occasion."

"Thanks, Doctor, but I assure you that I spoke with some fear that my criticisms might prove offensive, especially to our Superintendent, though he seemed afterwards as if he had received kindly what I said. Do you think that I could have said less without doing injustice to the occasion, and to those present?"

"Certainly not. But it was a delicate task. I am truly glad, however, that you had the frankness to act the part that you did."

"Frankness is a part of my nature, Doctor, and it has been sometimes misunderstood. I have found people who misjudged me when I offered strictures on their position. Indeed, I am not sure that you did not yourself draw a wrong inference concerning me in our last interview."

"Possibly I did, but I have no recollection of so doing. Certainly I had no intention to do you injustice. Please tell me on what point of our interview you thought I misjudged you."

"Point? there were several points. I asked if you were satisfied with the doctrines of your church in regard to instantaneous conversion and sanctification, also in regard to the agency and evidence of pardon and sanctification. But instead of responding you began to admonish me against being critical. Don't you recollect?"

"Yes, I now recall the impression your statement made on my mind. I thought from the systematic manner in which you expressed yourself that you were disposed to have a theological discussion."

"That is just wherein you misjudged me. I had attended your meetings and had observed three leading ideas get forth in your preaching and practice. These were, first, that pardon and sanctification were accomplished instantaneously or at once, or 'quick as lightning,' as one

man expressed it in relating his experience; second, that these great results were accomplished by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit; third, that the inward or inner feeling is the proper evidence of pardon and sanctification. This is what I gathered from the preaching and practice at your meetings. I inquired of you whether you were satisfied with these doctrines, and I now repeat the inquiry."

"Yes, I think I may safely say that I am satisfied with them. If I were not I would not preach them. You don't question my sincerity, do you?"

"By no means, Doctor. But I wish to ask whether you regard them as Scripture or Bible doctrines."

"Certainly I regard them as Scriptural doctrines. Do you doubt my sincerity? I would not preach those doctrines if I did not regard them Scriptural or Biblical doctrines."

"Allow me to assure you once for all, Doctor, that I do not question your sincerity. But I am a Bible student, also a student of mental philosophy, and I have studied the use of language. Therefore, I may appear to you somewhat critical, but I can assure you that I have nothing of the carping spirit. Now permit me to say that you misunderstood my last question, and thus answered what I did not ask."

"Please tell me wherein I misunderstood you. I thought I was listening attentively."

"You failed, it seems, to catch my meaning, Doctor, in this particular: I inquired whether you regarded the doctrines of which we were speaking as Scripture or Bible doctrines, and you replied that you certainly regarded them as Scriptural or Biblical. Now I did not use those words—'Scriptural' and 'Biblical'—in my inquiry. But I used the words 'Scripture' and 'Bible' when I spoke about certain doctrines. Now to my mind there is a great dif-

ference between 'Scripture' and 'Scriptural,' 'Bible' and 'Biblical.'

"Well, well, Mr. Munro, I do think that you excel as a critic. Of course there is a difference between those words, but I would like to hear your exposition of them,"

"They are not difficult to explain, I assure you, yet their importance is very great. By looking over the honest differences among religious denominations I am sure that they may all be traced to a failure to appreciate the differences between the words 'Bible and 'Biblical,' 'Scripture' and 'Scriptural.' Do you believe this?"

"Go on, Mr. Munro. I wish to hear all you have to say about those words."

"Whatever is Bible or Scripture doctrine can be stated in the exact language of the Inspired Volume, and concerning this there can be no controversy. Whatever is really Bible or Scripture doctrine must therefore be admitted by all who believe the Bible. Here *is* unity or oneness. Honest differences are impossible with those who believe the Sacred Text. But this is not true when we come to what are called Biblical or Scriptural doctrines. These may be as various as the various casts of minds of different people, and the various circumstances that may influence the minds of different people. This is *so* because each man can claim that any doctrine is Scriptural in favor of which he can find a passage of scripture on which he can reason, or by reasoning on which he can make it look somewhat like his doctrine. In other words, the doctrines that are claimed as Scriptural generally consist, in part, of contributions from the human mind, and as the contributions from different people are different in kind and degree, you see that these so-called Biblical and Scriptural doctrines differ. But the doctrine that is truly Bible or Scripture doctrine admits of no human contributions, or contributions from the hu-

man mind. That is to say, Doctor, what are commonly called Scriptural or Biblical doctrines are frequently an admixture of divine truth and human notions; whereas a doctrine that is truly Bible or Scripture consists wholly of divine truth. The former doctrines are numerous and widely different, while the latter is one, and is always the same."

While our young friend was engaged in making this speech, Doctor Davidson watched him very closely and was evidently trying to detect some defect in the discrimination made. When Hector paused he regarded himself as prepared and began thus:

"I fear, Mr. Munro, that we are destined to differ here more widely than on any point heretofore considered by us. The casts of mind among mankind are so different that I believe it impossible for us to view it alike. Hence, I don't believe that it is possible for all to be united on the Bible. You see the great question of controversy is concerning the meaning of the Sacred Text, and here we may honestly differ."

"Can we be united on what the Sacred Text says?"

"Yes, I can readily admit that we can be united on what the Sacred Text says, but I deny that we can always be united on what the Sacred Text means."

"Now, Doctor, permit me to show you that you have admitted what I previously stated. You recollect I said that what is Bible or Scripture is one and is always the same, and concerning this we may all be united if we believe the Bible; and now you admit that we can be united on what the Sacred Text says. Thus far we are certainly together. Then I also said that concerning what is called Biblical or Scriptural, people differ because of their reasonings on or concerning the Sacred Text. This you also admit when you say that we cannot all be united on the meaning of the Sacred Text. So we are together."

"Well, if we cannot be always united on the meaning of the Sacred Text, then our honest differences are certainly excusable; are they not?"

"That depends."

"Well, if it 'depends,' then it must depend on something. What do you think is that something?"

"That something, is this: Does God mean what he says, and say what he means?"

Here the door bell was rung. Doctor Davidson asked to be excused and opened the door. Two gentlemen, who were preachers in the Doctor's district, had called to see him. When they were seated one of them stated that he had called to see him on important business. Thereupon Hector arose and stated that he would leave the Doctor with his friends. To this consent was given and a request made for a continuance of the interview a week hence. This was assented to, and so Hector withdrew from the company.

CHAPTER VI.

Two weeks elapsed before our young friend and Doctor Davidson again met. The Doctor's duties as Presiding Elder so occupied him that he could not have been at home on Saturday morning of any week had he not been centrally located.

In the meantime of this interval there was considerable curiosity in the community concerning Hector's visits to the Presiding Elder's house. Some thought it was religion; some said that educational matters occasioned the interviews; while a few suspected that Hector was thinking kindly of the Doctor's daughter—a young woman of twenty-two. But the time that the interviews were held cast a reflection on this last suspicion. The truth is Hec-

tor was, at that time, in danger of becoming a bachelor. He was a close observer of mankind and drew his own conclusions. His recollections of his mother were that she seemed always most happy when he treated her with special considerateness and petted her. Besides he had boarded in a few families that permitted him to have an insight into their domestic life. As a result he had reached the conclusion that woman was a being that must be petted in order to be kept happy. He was accustomed to say, "Before any man marries he should deliberately decide whether his time and disposition will permit him to make a pet of his wife."

Thus Hector Home Munro was not a ladies' man, though he certainly did not object to their company when it did not make too great a draft on his time. He was married to his profession as a teacher and seemed to think that he could not afford the time for any other marriage, especially as he regarded woman as a being that needed to be petted in order to be made happy.

After these explanatory remarks we come again to the report we wish to give of the interviews between Hector Munro and Doctor Davidson. When Saturday morning dawned two weeks later, and Hector awoke, he soon began to refresh his mind concerning his last interview with the Doctor, which had been interrupted by certain preachers. In course of the early part of the morning he thought much on the subject, and wondered to what the interviews would lead. However, when the time came he repaired to the Doctor's residence. After the usual commonplace remarks Hector said:

"Doctor I have been wondering about the results of our interviews."

"So have I. But I am willing to permit the developments to be what they may. Our last interview was interrupted at a very interesting juncture."

"That was at the point of my question whether the Lord means what he says and says what he means. Have you thought over that question since I saw you last?"

"I must confess, Mr. Munro, that your question embraces a great principle."

"Do you admit that it contains or embraces a principle of right? In other words, Is it not right for us to conclude that God means what he says and says what he means?"

"Yes, I presume we must admit that such a conclusion is right; for if God did not deal candidly and honestly with mankind, then our confidence in the Bible is broken down. Yet I am sure that we may honestly differ about the meaning of the Sacred Text."

"Doctor, please tell me whether the different denominations are not quite generally united on what the Bible says?"

"Yes, but you see there are different constructions which may be honestly placed on a text concerning the exact language of which we are all agreed."

"In other words you wish to state that the Bible may say one thing and mean something else."

"No, that is not the idea, but it is this: there is a possibility of our failing to gather the idea which our Lord intended to convey, and thus we may gather some other idea which the Lord did not intend to convey."

"I now understand you, Doctor. You mean to say that we are liable to misunderstand the bearings, the relations or applications of the divine language."

"That is my idea exactly."

"Then we are together again. We both admit that God means what he says, and says what he means, but mankind are liable to misunderstand God's meaning because while admitting God's language they are liable to differ about its bearings, its relations and application, and thus

are liable to misinterpret God's language."

"Precisely so, Mr. Munro, precisely so. You have done well in stating the position, and I am glad that we are united," responded the Doctor, with evident satisfaction in his intonations.

"Well, Doctor, the conclusion we have just reached and admitted affords a good basis for a few questions. One of them is, Does this liability to misunderstand result from obscurity of the Scriptures or from the perverseness of mankind?"

"I would answer both, and likewise the weakness of the human intellect. That is to say, our liability to misunderstand God's meaning results from obscurity of the Scriptures, and the perverseness, and likewise the weakness, of mankind."

"Doctor, what you have just stated does not harmonize with a discourse I heard from you some time ago. You took your text, on the occasion to which I refer, in Isaiah 35th chapter where the prophet speaks of the 'highway' which is called 'the way of holiness' and you spoke of it as being so plain that 'wayfaring men though fools shall not err therein?' Do you recollect that discourse, Doctor?"

"I recollect it very well."

"Well, as memory serves me, you referred that to the gospel age and spoke of the plainness of our duty."

"That was all right, Mr. Munro. I still hold that all essentials are plain; and concerning essentials in religion, I think that Protestants are quite generally united."

"Do they differ only about non-essentials, Doctor?"

"They differ chiefly about non-essentials, is my idea."

"Doctor, I am prepared to show that there is but one item of faith and practice concerning which Protestants do not differ. You may think strange of the statement, but I make it after the most careful survey of Protestant doctrines and practices."

"Mr. Munro, please state wherein Protestants differ. I would like to know how you regard their differences."

"My survey of Protestantism has been the result of my desire to learn where the true Church is. In taking my survey, I have found that many who claim to be Protestants deny that Christ is divine, and that he made an atonement for mankind by his sufferings and death. I find also that Protestants differ concerning the time, the necessity and the character of repentance and confession. I likewise find that Protestants differ about sprinkling and pouring for baptism. They also differ about infant baptism and the importance of baptism; likewise about the time and place of the communion or Lord's Supper. Neither are you united about the names which those who profess to be Christians should wear."

"Well, well, you have presented a sad state of affairs surely."

"Yes. And, Doctor, had it not been for the fact that my mother impressed me with the importance of reading the Bible I fear that I would have become skeptical."

"That may be, Mr. Munro, but I would like to know what item of faith or practice you mean that Protestants are united on. As I recollect you said that they were united on one item."

"They are united on this item: Immersion in water of a proper subject is scripture baptism."

"Why Mr. Munro, you talk like a Campbellite."

"A Campbellite? What's that? Who are Campbellite?"

"They are a people who put a great deal of stress on water baptism. But as there are not many of them it is hardly worth while to talk about them."

"But, I wish to ask you" Doctor, Is there a single denomination among Protestants that denies the statement

that immersion in water of a proper subject is scripture "baptism?"

"No, there is not, unless we should except the Quakers, who do not practice water baptism in any mode."

"I have examined their position, and have found that though they do not baptize with water, yet they admit that the primitive practice was immersion."

"I think you are right, Mr. Munro. It occurs to me that I have seen in some publication that such is their admission concerning immersion."

"Now Doctor, I do not wish to be obtrusive, yet I wish to ask this question: Are not Protestants divided concerning the divinity of Christ and the subject of his atonement? In other words, do not Unitarians deny the divinity of Christ? and do not Calvinists deny that Christ's death atoned for all mankind?"

"They certainly do," the Doctor admitted, holding his chin in his hand and looking like a man walking up to a precipice.

"Then allow me to ask further, Do not Protestants also differ concerning faith, repentance, confession, sprinkling and pouring for baptism, the Lord's supper, church government, the names which Christians should or may wear, and concerning sanctification?"

"I am sorry to say, that Protestants are not united on these matters that you mention as they should be."

"Are their differences the result of human weakness or human perverseness? You declared in your discourse on the subject of duty that all matters of duty are plain, and you said a while ago that the Scriptures are plain concerning all essentials to salvation. Yet you confess that Protestants are divided on nearly everything pertaining to religion. Now, I would like to know whether these divisions which are framed and urged by the most learned of the clergy result from their weakness (of intellect or

their perverseness of mind and heart?"

"To admit either one or the other of your alternatives, Mr. Munro, would seem very uncharitable."

"Yet it must be admitted that the divisions among Protestants certainly result either from weakness or perverseness, or from both. My own conviction is that it is chiefly a matter of perverseness resulting from pride—pride of denomination, pride of ability to defend their position, pride of consistency in their religious position. I judge this from what I know of human nature, from what I have read of theological discussions, and from what I have seen and heard from clergymen. Allow me to congratulate you, Doctor, on being the first clergyman that I have ever met on either side of the Atlantic who has seemed capable of controlling either his temper or his reason when his religious position was called in question, or whom I could ever induce to make a candid admission. My profession as a school teacher has brought me in frequent contact with preachers, and I regret to say that I have generally found them irritable and unreasonable when their religious position was questioned. In Scotland I found them worse than in this country."

"In view of your observation and experience among preachers, Mr. Munro, your remarks are very complimentary to myself. Though I don't think I am more candid than every man should be. The truth is, candor is a part of honesty. Moreover, I hold myself ready to learn even from those younger than myself, and from those not numbered with clergymen."

"Allow me to say in conclusion of this interview (I notice it is time to close), that your candor and condescension (if you will allow me to use that word) have done much to save me from settling in the conviction that preachers are all narrow-minded, conceited and ill-tempered when their theology is called in question."

"I am glad that our interviews have benefitted you that much. Call again when your time permits." "I shall be glad to do so. Good-day, Doctor."
"Good-by, Mr. Munro."

CHAPTER VII.

The following Saturday Doctor Davidson was sick and Hector was confined to his room with a sprained ankle. Thus the two friends (as they had really become) did not meet as they desired. But when another week had passed the people who lived in the vicinity of the Doctor's residence saw the young Scotch school teacher walking in that direction. He found the Doctor awaiting him, and as usual glad to see him. After Hector was seated the conversation naturally began concerning the sickness of the one and the sprained ankle of the other. After their ailments had been duly discussed Doctor Davidson said:

"Mr. Munro, don't you think that your charge of perverseness on the part of preachers is rather too sweeping?"

"I will allow you to judge, after I relate to you a few instances of my interviews with clergymen both in Scotland and America."

"All right. And will you abide my decision? That is to say, will you acknowledge that you have been too severe in your judgment concerning them if I so decide?"

"Yes, I agree to say at least that I may have been too severe; that is, if you will hear patiently the cases that I shall present."

"All right," said the Doctor, wondering what manner of experience the young Scotchman could have had with preachers.

"Well, I shall begin with a clergyman of a certain de-

nomination with whom I had an interview when I was about eighteen years of age in the village in which I lived, about fifty miles from Glasgow, in Scotland. He was a man of learning and was about forty years of age. I heard him preach on the subject of faith. He took as his text the former part of the ninth verse of the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians, which speaks of faith being given by the Spirit as a special gift. But instead of permitting the context to speak and show that the special gift of faith was the miracle-working faith, he declared that the faith by which the sinner is saved is a special gift, and that therefore the sinner should pray for faith. As a proof-text he referred to Eph. 2:8, which reads thus: 'For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' Having read that sentence he declared that the word 'faith' was the antecedent of the word 'that,' and thus he declared faith to be that of which Paul spoke as 'the gift of God.'

"I was not satisfied with that preacher's argument regarding faith as a special gift instead of a voluntary act, because of the results and because of the number of plain passages of the Sacred Text that it seemed to ignore. So when I went to my home I examined the Greek of Eph. 2:8, and to my astonishment I found the word *touto* (translated by the word 'that') could not have the word *pistis* (translated by the word 'faith') as its antecedent since *touto* is in the neuter gender while *pistis* is feminine.

"The next day I called on the parson to ask him about this argument which he had presented the evening before. Of course I approached him as politely as I knew how, and with as much deference as possible I told him that I was puzzled over the matter. He listened with some degree of patience until I told him that in reading John's biography of Christ I had always thought that he explained in twentieth chapter, and in the last verses of that

chapter, just how that faith is produced by which we are to be saved. When he heard this his eyes flashed, and I saw he was displeased. But when I told him that I had referred to the Greek of Eph 2:8, his self-control departed. He jumped from his seat, called me an 'up-start,' a 'snarler,' a 'bundle of conceit,' said I charged him with 'lying to the audience,' and in fact I thought acted the part of an insane man.

"Now, Doctor, that was my first experience in a private interview with a clergyman, and for a time I thought it should be my last. But after several months had elapsed I decided that I would test the question as to whether they were all alike, or whether the one whose displeasure I had incurred was an exception to the rule.

"Accordingly I went to hear another preacher of the same church. His theme was grace. He took as his text Eph. 2:8. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' Of course I began to think that that particular passage certainly was a convenient text. Yet I listened as impartially as possible. The preacher insisted that the word 'grace' was the antecedent of the word 'that;' hence he contended that 'grace' was the gift of God. Then as a proof-text he referred to Rom. 12:6, which speaks of the special gifted ones having gifts differing 'according to the grace' that was given to them.

"I decided at once that he was wrong in the use he made of his text, and likewise of his proof-text. Therefore when I went home I again examined the Greek of Eph. 2:8, and in so doing I found that *charis* (translated by the word 'grace') was in the feminine gender, while *touto* (translated by the word 'that') was neuter, and hence they could not belong together. Then I examined the proof-text in Romans twelfth chapter and found that Paul was speaking of God's special grace or favor toward

those on whom he bestowed, special gifts, and not concerning that manifestation of grace or favor by which salvation is offered to mankind generally. Therefore, wishing to test the sincerity of preachers I proceeded the next morning to call on the gentleman whom I had heard the previous evening. He was not at home. So I had to call a second time before I found him. Soon after I had introduced myself I gradually made mine errand known. He first drew the inference that I was going to inquire the way of salvation and seemed pleased. But when he found that I questioned the correctness of his discourse you should have seen him. He ran his fingers through his hair on each side from his ears upward and made his hairs stand outright and upright. This increased the fierceness of his looks. He stamped his foot at me, clenched his hands, gesticulated wildly, said that he was insulted and that I was the most impudent beardless boy that he ever saw. He even reflected on my mother, declaring that I had not been properly raised. When he subsided, I arose, begged his pardon and left, thinking that I had considerable evidence that clergymen are a perverse and dishonest company."

"Those were at least very unreasonable specimens, Mr. Munro. Do you think there are any such in this country? But before you answer that please tell me how you account for the pronoun *touto* in the neuter gender which prevents it from agreeing with either the Greek word for 'grace' or the word for 'faith.'"

"That is explained by the rule of the Greek language which says that a pronoun is sometimes used in the neuter gender referring to an idea understood. In this instance it doubtless refers to salvation which is the leading idea in the sentence."

"Yes, yes, I recollect very well."

"But now I wish to tell you about another case in Old

Scotland before I reply to your question about whether such unreasonable preachers are found in America. It was while I was attending school at Glasgow that I went to hear a learned Doctor of Divinity preach a strictly Calvinistic sermon. He took as his text the latter part of the forty-eighth verse of Acts thirteenth chapter, which says, 'As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.' On the strength of this language, he urged that God had foreordained certain persons to be saved, and these were they who became believers, while all others were passed over to the praise of his glorious grace. He specially dwelt on the helpless condition of all mankind in sin until God touched the hearts of those for whom Christ had died. Thus I saw that he advocated the doctrine of a special atonement, or atonement for the elect only, and the doctrine of special election, also the doctrine of total helplessness of even the elect until they were specially called. In course of his remarks, he read and dwelt on Rom. 9:21-23 in which the question of the potter's power over the clay is mentioned. On the strength of this passage, he declared that each individual was as helpless in the hands of the Almighty and in regard to his destiny as til* } clay is helpless in the potter's hands."

"That was surely a strong Calvinistic sermon, Mr. Munro."

"Yes, sir, just as Calvinistic as any that was ever authorized by the document known as the 'Westminster Confession of Faith.'

"Well, to make the story as short as possible, I went to see that Doctor of Divinity. I told him that I had heard his discourse and wished to ask him a few questions with reference to his text, proof-text, and conclusions therefrom, in order that I might more fully understand the doctrine he had set forth. He treated me courteously, and called for my questions. I asked him first if the

Common Version of the Sacred Text gave a fair translation of the Greek in the latter part of Acts 13:48, which he used as his text. He said that he presumed so, but had never examined it. I requested him please to do so and inform me whether the word translated 'ordained' in the Greek came before the word translated 'believed.' He said he had no doubt on that subject, yet when he looked at the Greek text I saw his countenance change. I had examined it and knew that the word translated 'believed' came first in the Greek text. So I watched his countenance closely. He compressed his lips, shook his head, arose and took down another copy of the Greek text. He found no relief, and I saw him turn pale. Even his lips became white. Finally he spoke and said, 'The word *episteusan* translated 'believed' comes before the word *tetagmenoi* which is translated 'ordained.' Then he turned to me and asked, 'But what of it?' I kindly asked him if such a text was a solid foundation for such a sermon as the one he had preached thereon. You ought to have seen him as he asked me, 'Is that what you came here for?' I tried to calm him, but he became abusive and spoke of me as a 'stripling who had a brazen face.' When I saw that he was too angry to be reasonable, I arose as if to leave, and looked him squarely in the face. He halted in his speech. I pointed my finger at him and said: 'Doctor, from your proof text in Romans ninth chapter, I turned to Jeremiah eighteenth chapter where God told Jeremiah to go down to the potter's house. I there found that the clay was first tried for one vessel, and when it would not serve to make that vessel it was made into another vessel as it pleased the potter. So the clay was tried for a better vessel before it was condemned for an inferior vessel. But according to your application in your sermon that clay should have been condemned before it was dug out of the bank or before it was made in

the bank, because you taught that a proportion of mankind, were condemned before they were born, and even before the foundation of the world.'

"At this juncture he sprang to his feet, but my respect for the clergy had decreased somewhat and I continued to speak. 'Thus God has dealt with the Jews and with all other nations, and likewise with all individuals. He has always tried them and given them a chance to do good before he condemned them for wrong doing. Moreover, when you say that Christ died and atoned only for the elect few, and not for the entire world of mankind you contradict as plain passages of the Sacred Volume as can be found.'

"At this juncture he ordered me to leave his presence. Of course I obeyed, and as I did so you may rest assured that my estimate of clergymen was not very exalted."

"But I don't think you will find them so unreasonable in this country."

"Possibly you will change your mind when you hear an account of my experience among them. But that I cannot give you until another occasion, as the time has come for our interview to close."

As Hector arose to leave Doctor Davidson asked him this question: "How do you account for the translators from whom we have the Common Version giving us those words transposed in Acts 13:48?"

"I know not, except on the ground that they were Calvinistic, and so they endeavored to give every passage they could a twist in the direction of fatalism. See how they treated the last statement in Acts second chapter.

The participial form of the verb translated 'saved' has, also the force of the noun, and thus the translation should be, And the Lord added to the church daily the saved, or 'the saved ones.' But King James' translators rendered it,

'such as should be saved.' But I must go. Good-by, Doctor."

"Good-day, Mr. Munro. Come again next Saturday morning, and give me your experience among clergymen in America."

"All right, sir."

CHAPTER VIII.

As Doctor Davidson reflected over Hector's experience among clergymen in Scotland he began to feel uneasy concerning the verdict he would be called on to render, probably at the close of the next interview.. He felt that he dare not question the young Scotchman's statements. Hector was so clear, so candid, and so honorable that the Doctor felt compelled to accept his testimony at full value. The charge of perverseness had been made against preachers generally and the evidence was being presented on which he was to render a verdict. As far as the case had gone it looked gloomy for the preachers. But there was one ray of light, for Hector had said that in Scotland the clergymen were worse than in America. Hence Doctor Davidson hoped that he might be able to render a modified decision,* which would exempt the preachers generally of this country from being perverse or dishonest. Such had been the Doctor's reflections when the following Saturday morning came. As the time drew near for Hector to come, Doctor Davidson went out on his portico and seated himself in a rustic chair. The weather was delightful, as the middle of the month of May had come with the usual accompaniments of warmth and beauty. The Doctor was not alone in looking for Hector, as his regular visits to the Presiding Elder's house had been observed and were regarded as likely to increase in

number as regularly as Saturday morning came. But this time he disappointed them in one respect. While they were looking for him to come up from toward the south he came on them from the north. When the Doctor saw him he was within speaking distance and with his usual accent, rolling the letter "r," he said:

"Good morning, Doctor, I trust that I see you well."

"Very well, but you come from the wrong direction."

"Oh, no, I went northward this morning—it was so warm."

After a few remarks had been exchanged concerning ordinary affairs, and the perspiration that seemed bursting from every pore of Hector's body when he first came had subsided he referred to the previous interview and then asked:

"Doctor, are you ready for the remainder of that testimony?"

"I presume so."

"Then I shall first tell you respecting an interview I had with a clergyman of the Unitarian Church. As you are aware the Unitarians do not believe in the divinity of Christ. Soon after I came to this country, I was in Boston, Mass., and on a certain Sunday morning, I went to hear one of their leading ministers. It was a magnificent church house, which gave every evidence of wealth and pride. I presume you know that the Unitarians are a very wealthy people. Well, I heard the discourse with interest. It was a polished oration concerning Jesus of Nazareth as a man, and thus as the son of David. The next day I fell in with that clergyman on the city passenger railway, and as only a few were in the coach, I thought it would not be out of place to tell him that I had heard his discourse the previous day. He expressed himself as gratified, and said he trusted that I had enjoyed the discourse. I told him that I did enjoy his de-

scription of Jesus in regard to his humanity, and would be glad to hear him discourse on Christ's divinity. He said that he would do so on the following Sunday if I would promise to be present. I made the promise, went and heard him. To be brief I will state that his discourse consisted of a polite denial of Christ's divinity, as commonly taught, but he seemed specially disposed to combat certain statements found in the creeds and confessions of faith, which declare that Christ is the very and eternal God.

"When the discourse was ended, I tarried a minute or two and the preacher came to me. After shaking hands very cordially, he inquired if the sermon was satisfactory. I gave him a negative answer. He handed me his card requesting that I would call on him. I did so and found him in his study. The conversation soon turned on his discourse. I asked him if he regarded Christ as having a definite beginning both physically and spiritually with the conception and birth of him as the babe of Bethlehem. He said that was a difficult question to answer. I told him it was not difficult for me, and it would not be difficult for him if he would accept what is found in the first chapter of John's account of the gospel, for there it is stated that 'the Word' who was in the beginning with God, and by whom all things were made was himself made in the likeness of men, or as Paul informs us in Heb. 2:16, he took on him the nature of the offspring of Abraham. While I was referring to these statements of the Sacred Text, I noticed that for some reason he watched me very closely. When I had finished I asked him again if Christ were simply a man, or if he did not consist of 'the Word' clothed in flesh, or clothed in the form of a man. Then I paused for a reply.

"After some delay he answered that he could admit that Christ consisted of 'the Word' dwelling in human

form without admitting his divinity as commonly taught, for some of the creeds called him 'very and eternal God.'

"I told him that I was not trying to defend what some of the creeds said about Christ, but I would like to know how he could admit that Christ, as manifested on earth, consisted of 'the Word' dwelling in flesh, and yet deny his divinity.

"In reply to this he referred me to Col. 1:15, which says of Christ that he is 'the first born of every creature,' and to Rev. 3:14, which speaks of him as 'the beginning of the creation of God.' He then said to me that these statements declare that Christ was a creature, and not a creator.

"From his countenance I saw that he regarded himself safe behind those utterances of the Sacred Text. But you should have seen his countenance change when I admitted that in order for Christ to be the Son of God it was necessary for him to have come forth from God, and thus admitted that before God created any body else or anything else he evolved from himself that Being who was called 'the Word,' and by whom all else was brought into existence as in John 1:1-3, and in Heb. 1:1, 2, is so clearly declared. But then I asked him this question: When that Being called 'the Word' was brought into existence before any other creature was he ranked with the Creator himself or with the creatures which he afterwards brought into existence?"

Here Doctor Davidson laughed and inquired: "What was his answer, Mr. Munro?"

"He looked about as you can imagine those people looked of whom Christ inquired whether the baptism of John was from heaven or of men, as recorded in Matthew twenty-first chapter, and he answered about as they did. You recollect that they thought if they would say that it came from heaven, Christ would ask them why they did not be-

lieve John, and if they would say it came from men they feared that the people would stone them, for they regarded John as a prophet. So it seemed to be with that Unitarian preacher. He seemed to think that if he would say that Christ was numbered simply with *creatures* I would press him with the Sacred Text which contradicts such a notion; then if he confessed that Christ was classed with the *Creator himself*, I would ask why he did not admit his divinity. So he said: 'That is a difficult question young man, and I am not prepared to answer it.' Then he began to admonish me against dealing with such abstract and abstruse questions, saying that it was dangerous for one of my age. I told him that it was simply a question of testimony and belief, and that if he were willing to take all that the Sacred Text declared concerning Jesus Christ he would preach his divinity as well as his humanity.

"At this juncture I arose to leave, and that preacher arose, and politely told me that I was too young a man to act the part of his censor, and he would advise me to be more modest and less obtrusive. I told him in reply that I had been reared with the highest respect for preachers generally, and during a part of my early life I had regarded them with reverence, but as I had become older and had tested them by asking a few questions concerning their theology my reverence had vanished and my respect for them had declined. With these words I left him."

Then Hector turned to Doctor Davidson and asked: "What do you think of that case? Was he honest or dishonest?"

"Not very honest, but I have my doubts about those Unitarian preachers generally."

"You mean, Doctor, that you doubt whether any of them are honest?"

"That's what I mean, Mr. Munro."

"Doctor, are you not slightly uncharitable towards them?" Hector asked with a curious smile.

"Well, it may seem so, but I suppose you know, Mr. Munro, that they are not generally regarded as orthodox."

"I know that, but you should bear in mind that they may think the same concerning all those who do not agree with them. Solomon said: 'All the ways of a man are right in his own eyes,' and this is true generally among religious denominations. The old saying is: 'Orthodoxy is my doxy, and heterodoxy is your doxy.' So it is among preachers generally in regard to their human creeds—each one thinks his own the best."

"There's something in that."

Then Hector, after looking at his watch, asked: "What do you think of the Universalists, Doctor?"

"They are not orthodox either," said Doctor Davidson, smiling as he thought of what Hector's response would be.

"And I am sure that they do not regard you as orthodox, for I heard one of them, not long since, call you a 'hell-fire preacher,' and said that you obtained your conceptions of hell more from 'Milton's Paradise Lost' than from the Bible," said Hector laughing.

"Who was he, Mr. Munro?"

"I will tell you some day, if you will allow me to give you an account of my interview with one of their clergymen."

"All right—proceed," said the Doctor, curious to know how the young Scotchman had handled that heresy. He had himself once engaged in a discussion with a preacher of that body and was never fully satisfied that he had confuted him very successfully. So he was desirous of learning, and thus encouraged Mr. Munro to proceed with his account.

"The interview occurred on board of a vessel on the Hudson river. As I was walking the deck for exercise, I

overheard two gentlemen talking. As I passed them, the older of the two, looking at the other over his gold-framed spectacles, said with emphasis: 'That word *aionion* does not always mean "endless" or "everlasting," but sometimes refers to that which is "endable," and I have no doubt that it means "endable" when applied to punishment.' As I again came to the place where they were sitting, I paused and asked, 'Gentlemen, may I listen to your theological discussion?' They consented, and so I took a chair and drew near. Just then one of them proposed that as it was rather breezy that we should go into one of the parlors. Accordingly we went in and soon the interview was resumed. The talk about the Greek word *aionion* continued. The younger of the two seemed to be nothing more than a listener, and soon the interview became so one sided that I requested the privilege of asking a question. The privilege was readily granted, and so I inquired of the gentleman that seemed so familiar with the Greek, whether he did not believe in eternal punishment. He said, 'No, sir, and such an expression is not found in the Bible.'

"Then said I to him: 'My dear sir, in the last verse in Matthew twenty-fifth chapter we have the words *kolasin aionion* translated "everlasting punishment," and the words *zoen aionion* translated "life eternal." Now, sir, will you please tell me by what rule of the Greek language you limit *aionion* in the one case and insist that it refers to something "endable," while in the other case you admit that it means "everlasting?"'

"Said he: 'There is no sense in everlasting punishment, and a just God would not be guilty of anything so cruel.'

"Then you know of no rule in Greek whereby you limit the word *aionion* when applied to punishment?'

"None but the common sense rule,' said he sharply. 'I believe every man will suffer the full punishment for all

his transgressions either in this life, or immediately after this life is over.'

"Then I remarked: 'You do not deny future punishment altogether then?'

"He answered: 'No, sir, I am not of that school. I believe that if a man don't suffer the full punishment for all his sins before death he will suffer for them immediately after death. And I further believe that when a man has made full satisfaction for his sins, then he will be saved. I believe that God is too good to punish a man eternally for a *few* sins that he may commit in this life.'

"That was sufficient for me. He had confessed that he believed in a man making satisfaction, and thus atoning for his own sins, which discarded the necessity for Christ's atonement, and he had stated that God was too good to punish a man eternally, and yet he claimed to believe that every man will suffer the full punishment for all his transgressions. This was a sufficient groundwork for several questions. So I asked him whether he believed in Christ's atonement for the sins of the world. He hesitated and then said he did not believe in Christ's atonement as commonly taught. I then said to him: "If every man is to suffer full punishment and thus make satisfaction for all his sins, where is the place for the doctrine of Christ's atonement? He said that he did not believe in the doctrine of the atonement as taught by the hell-fire preachers. I then pressed him to state his belief in Christ's atonement. In reply he asked me if I believed in everlasting torment in hell-fire and brimstone. I told him that my belief was not on trial, but as I had learned that he was a preacher of the Universalian doctrine I wished to test it. He replied that I was obtrusive and had no business interfering with his interview with the gentleman to whom he was talking. I responded that if his doctrine was defensible he would not charge me with

being obtrusive. The other gentleman then said to me that he gladly gave me his place, and for me to continue,

"Then I said: 'Mr. Universalist (for I don't know your name) you said that God is too good to punish a man eternally, and yet you said that every man must suffer the full punishment for all his sins. Now, sir, in view of this please tell me wherein is God's goodness manifested, and whether you believe in the forgiveness of sins? That is to say, if every man must atone for all his sins, does God forgive sins?'

"He seemed confounded and simply said: 'I've been bored by you long enough, and I think that you are a very impudent young man.'

"A considerable company had heard our earnest talk and had gathered about us. This added to the preacher's discomfort. I saw that he would not stand my questions much longer, and so I told him that if my talk was unpleasant to him I would leave him to his own reflections. But before leaving I told him that I plainly saw that he did not believe in the doctrine of Christ's atonement, and did not believe in the doctrine of forgiveness of sins, for he held that every man must atone for his own sins. I also told him that if he would take Christ's atonement and the doctrine of forgiveness from the Scriptures he might as well throw the remainder of the old Volume to the moles and the bats."

Here Hector arose and said: "But, Doctor, I must leave you, or you may feel as that Universalist did, and regard me as being obtrusive."

"Not by any means, sir, I have been deeply interested. Besides, you are giving testimony on which you are expecting to receive a verdict from me at no distant date. Is your testimony all in?"

"No, sir, I have two other cases which I shall present

when we meet again. Shall I call next Saturday morning?"

"Yes, so far as I can now see, all will then be favorable."

Here the friends parted in their usual manner.

CHAPTER IX.

"When another week had elapsed Hector Home Munro turned his face toward Doctor Davidson's residence for the purpose of having another interview. But on his way he met the Doctor. After their usual salutations the Doctor asked:

"Are you a good diver, Mr. Munro?"

"I used to be, but am out of practice now. What's the matter?"

"Nothing serious, only my watch is in the cistern down at my house. As you have probably noticed I wore no chain nor guard of any kind to my watch, and this morning while I was arranging some boards over the cistern I stooped over and my watch slipped out of my pocket and tumbled into the cistern."

"And you are hunting a diver to go after it, are you?"

"Yes, sir," said Doctor Davidson smiling. "Would you like the contract? I calculate to pay the one who gets it."

"I never did go bathing in a cistern," said Hector with a laugh, "and you will have to hunt for another diver, if that be the only way to get your watch."

"I can't think of any other way, can you?"

"It seems to me that a long handled garden hoe or rake would answer the purpose. Suppose we make a trial of that kind, instead of spoiling your drinking water by having some one diving in it."

So the two friends went to a hardware store and borrowed the tools needed. In the course of about thirty minutes the watch was again in the Doctor's hands, whereupon Hector responded, "Now, sir, you are a wiser man, and I trust that hereafter you will not try to rebuke the vanity of your flock by a species of carelessness."

This remark opened up a short interview on the subject of wearing jewelry. In course of that interview the Doctor said:

"Our Book of Discipline speaks directly against wearing jewelry, and I have endeavored to impress what our discipline says by my own example."

"That is very good, and I presume that what your Discipline says is based on the language of Paul to Timothy on that subject."

"Just so, yet I have found that it is a difficult something to regulate in this age of wealth and fashion."

"Yes, and it occurs to me, that you never can regulate it by external rules or prohibitions in your Book of Discipline."

"What plan would you suggest?"

"All well, I am not a preacher, and my convictions might not seem to you of any value."

"Really Mr. Munro, I would be glad to have your convictions on this very difficult subject."

"Would you? Well, then, I shall begin giving them to you by relating a Scotch story, which runs thus: A good many years ago there was a pious old Scotchman who had a son that had become a confirmed novel reader. The father exhausted argument and moral persuasion on the boy and unfortunately he was too big to be persuaded by the rod, as Solomon the Wise directs. So the old man endeavored to devise a scheme whereby he might make an impression on the boy's mind. Accordingly he told him one day to go out and bring in a basket of chips. The

boy laid down his novel and brought in the chips. Then his father said, 'Now fill the basket full with apples.' 'Do you mean for me to put the chips out?' asked the boy. 'No, leave the chips in and fill it up with apples,' responded the father. 'But,' said the boy, it is already full of chips and there is no room for apples unless I put the chips out—what do you mean, father?' 'I mean this, my son,' the father answered, 'if you continue to fill your brain with novels you will have no room for that which is useful.'

"This story illustrates in some measure the thought that I have in mind in regard to wearing jewelry. "When the minds and hearts of people are filled with chips there is no room for apples. Therefore the chips must be put out before anything can be done in the way of a better filling, or filling with a better commodity. But this is a delicate matter, for mankind are very sensitive. If you make a direct attack on the wearing of jewelry, even with Paul's language in 1 Timothy 2nd chapter to sustain you, yet you are liable to offend many persons as seriously as if you would by violence tear it from their persons. Hence the only safe way to proceed is to fill the people so full of admiration for the humble Nazarene, who went about in lowliness and meekness, that they will of their own accord lay off their ornaments. Such at least is my conviction in view of what I know of the Bible and human nature. As that which is good is shut out of the mind when it is filled with thoughts that are bad, so in order to exclude the bad we must fill the mind with that which is good."

"I am very glad to get your views of this matter, Mr. Munro. The age in which we live is a period of general extravagance and show. Very many who have the moral, social and intellectual acquirements to exert great influence for good are so tinged with worldliness that their in-

fluence is really against the church and in favor of the world."

"That is one reason why I have thus far remained, outside of the membership of all churches. I have found churches, as such, crooked either in doctrine or practice, or in both."

"It seems to me, Mr. Munro, that one who is as capable as you are of clear thinking should be able to attribute what is wrong in any church to the weaknesses among religious people, and thus it seems that you should not permit anything of that character to prevent you from doing your personal duty."

"Doctor, we are not yet ready for a discussion of the questions now opening up before us. There is another subject which, as you recollect, we have not finished. But it is too late to attempt to finish it to-day. Losing your watch this morning in the cistern opened before us another line of thought. Do you recollect the theme on which we were talking in our last interview?"

"Yes, I recollect it very well and shall hope to hear you further with reference thereto. I trust also that I shall likewise have the privilege of talking with you on the subject of your own personal interests in regard to religion."

Here Hector's eyes were cast to the floor and he gravely responded: 'I doubt not that I have appeared to you a strange specimen on the subject of religion, and perhaps I am. But, Doctor, I am looking for what Christ called 'My Church.' Thus far I have not found a church even pretending to be simply and strictly the Church of Christ, or Christ's Church. Thus far the perverseness of the clergy and the ungodliness of church members taken together have so impressed me, that had I not at an early age become well established in my conviction that the Bible is true I would no doubt have become a confirmed skeptic.

But I am not a skeptic concerning the Bible, though I am concerning the sincerity of a majority of religious people both in the different churches and outside of them. Moreover, I abhor infidelity concerning the Bible, yet I say to you candidly that I have some admiration for the language of my countryman, Robert Burns, on this subject. He said:

'I know I'm not the thing I should be,
Nor am I even the thing I could be,
But twenty times I rather would be,
An Atheist clean,
Than under gospel colors hid be,
Just for a screen."

This was all said with sad emphasis. At the conclusion of his quotation from the Poet Burns, Hector arose to leave. The Doctor requested him to remain longer but he declined to do so. After the agreement had been made to meet the following Saturday morning Hector bade the Doctor good-day and left. As he did so Doctor Davidson's eyes followed him till he turned a street corner and was out of sight. Both men were filled with solemnity.

CHAPTER X.

Three week passed before the two friends again met for an interview. The Doctor's appointments caused him to be absent from home that length of time, and so Hector had to wait for his return. But when circumstances favored them they met as mutual friends and greeted each other cordially. For a brief period their interview consisted of a kind of experience meeting, in which they both freely spoke of certain facts and reflections connected with their different departments of work. But Hector soon changed the subject by calling attention to the ques-

tion on which he desired Dr. Davidson's decision.

"Doctor, I fear that before you hear the conclusion of my testimony on the question of the *perverseness of preachers* you will have forgotten what I have already presented."

"No danger. I feel sure that I have in mind all the cases you have thus far presented. Have you any others?"

"Two others that I would like for you to hear, and then I shall await your decision."

"All right, Mr. Munro, I shall listen with interest to the remainder of your experience with perverse preachers," said the Presiding Elder, wondering in himself what that experience was.

Hector put his hands on his knees and sat so erectly that the back on his chair was dismissed from service, and began to relate the following interesting account:

"The case of which I shall first speak is that of a Sanctificationist on the east side of the Alleghenies. I had attended meetings where he was the chief manager, and had heard him in relating his experience declare that he had not sinned for ten years. I became interested in the doctrine of entire sanctification, and gave some attention thereto. A book on 'Perfect Love' by J. A. Wood, I secured and read. Having given it what I regarded as a fair examination, I endeavored to have an interview with the preacher of whom I now speak. Circumstances were against me, and for a time I feared that he would leave the community before I would have the privilege of forming his acquaintance. So, indeed, he did, but it so happened that I was permitted to be with him for a considerable distance when he left. It was in an old-fashioned stage coach that we traveled. He was going to his next appointment, and I was going to see a friend.

"I soon opened an interview by speaking of the recent meeting which he had held.

"Yes, we had a glorious time. I am glad you were present. Bless the Lord!"

"I told him that I was present one day when he related his experience and was specially interested in his statement that he had not sinned for a period of ten years. He answered me by saying, 'Yes, yes, and a blessed experience I have had for the last ten years. Praise the Lord!'"

Just here Doctor Davidson interrupted Hector by saying: "I think, Mr. Munro, that the man with whom you had that interview was one of those fanatical specimens whom we sometimes meet, and was not a fair representative of that doctrine."

"He may have been fanatical, Doctor, but your people in that part of the country seemed to think that he was all right. But allow me to tell you of our interview."

"All right. I beg pardon for interrupting you."

"Then I shall proceed to tell what further transpired in that old stage coach. It was to me a very interesting occasion. I asked that preacher how he disposed of the language of John in which he stated to Christians that 'if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' He replied that there was no such passage of scripture—that it did not read thus. I inquired of him how it did read. He answered that he could not quote it exactly, but he knew that John did not contradict himself, and in another place the Apostle John declared that 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.' Now this is very strong language, and in another place it is said, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.'"

"I asked him if he really thought that such language teaches that it is possible to live without sinning.

"He answered that he did. I then inquired of him how

many definitions the Bible contained of sin. He answered that sin was 'the transgression of the law.' I pressed him to know if there were any other definitions of sin. He said that he 'did not know of any others.' I thought that it was about time to read a little of the Sacred Text, and so I drew from my pocket a copy of the New Testament, and read in John's first letter, first chapter, and eighth verse as follows: 'If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,' and told him that such was the reading of the passage that he had previously disputed, and added that it clearly taught that the man who says that he is without sin deceives himself.

"I next acknowledged that the definition he had given of sin was correct, and then called his attention to 1 John 5:17, which says, 'All unrighteousness is sin.' Finally I turned to James fourth chapter and last verse which says: 'To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.' Then I told him that the Sacred Text plainly taught that people could be guilty of sin without committing sin by transgressing, transcending, or going beyond the law of Christ, for the Apostle James plainly says we can be guilty of sin by *omitting to do what we know to be good.*

"Having presented the exact language of the Sacred Text on the subject, and then having made a statement thereof I asked him whether he still contended that he had not sinned for ten years.

"He turned upon me with some exhibition of temper in his voice and asked: 'Do you doubt my sincerity when I related my experience?' I told him that I did not, but I questioned whether he really understood what the Sacred Text said about sin, for he seemed to think that nothing was a sin except a positive transgression of the moral law. I asked him if he had never omitted a duty even for an hour in the course of ten years.

"Instead of calmly answering me he caught up the language of John which says: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God.'

"I then asked him if he really thought that he could not commit sin. He said that he supposed he could if he would try, but he had no disposition to try—he had been entirely purged from the love of sin, and so he had not sinned for ten years. Then he added: 'Praise the Lord!'

"I saw that he did not understand the context, and so I went back to John's definition of sin where he says: "'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.'" Then I showed that John was speaking of sin in that place as a positive transgression, transcending, or going beyond the limits of the law of Christ, and thus he was speaking of the sin of commission and not the sin of omission. Next I informed him that the present tense of the verb was used throughout the teaching on that subject, and that it was well understood by scholars that the present tense, especially in the Greek language in which John wrote, had the force of continuance or practice. Hence the meaning of John's language was, that whosoever is born of God does not commit sin as a practice. Finally, I called his attention to the fifth verse of that chapter in which it is said of Christ that 'in him is no sin.' Having done this, I referred to the sixth verse which says: 'Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not,' and endeavored to show him that the word 'abideth' was full of meaning, since to abide in Christ is to continue in his word, and while people continue in the word of Christ they do not sin and can not sin. In other words, I said to him, While a man abides in a house he does not and can not go out, but the rule is that he sometimes goes out. So it is true that

while a man continues or abides in Christ's teaching he abides in Christ, in whom is no sin, but the rule is that he forgets himself sometimes and steps out or steps aside from Christ's teaching, and thus he sins. Knowing this John said in his first chapter: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'

At this juncture Hector paused and Doctor Davidson remarked, "Mr. Munro, you ought to join church and enter the ministry. You have the clearest exposition of that passage that I have ever heard."

"Well Doctor, I am glad that you think better of my exposition than did that Sanctificationist. For when I had finished my explanation he said it was all bosh, that I had never been sanctified myself, and so I knew nothing of the matter. He said that I was in darkness for the scales had not fallen from my eyes yet. Then he clapped his right hand on the left side of his chest and said, 'Praise the Lord! I have the witness here.' Then he began to sing some song that had a great deal of hallelujah in it. He continued singing till we reached the next village, and there I left the stage. As I did so you may rest assured that my opinion of the clergy had not been elevated by our interview. Doctor, do you blame me?"

"Not much, Mr. Munro. But I regret that you had the misfortune to meet such specimens of the clergy. I am sure that they are not all equally perverse."

"I fear that the exceptions are few in number. But I had one more case to bring before you, Doctor, in order to complete my experience among preachers. But as this last case was that of a Spiritualist I presume that you would scarcely regard him as among the respectable clergy."

"By no means, for I regard Spiritualists as dupes and impostors, the tendency of whose doctrine is always evil."

"I judged that such would be your opinion of them,

hence I mentioned them with doubt."

"However I would like to hear how you disposed of their position," said the Doctor, who had learned that it was profitable to listen to the young Scotchman.

"The story is short. When the Spiritualist of whom I speak had laid before me an account of his sights, and sounds, rappings and revelations, I did not pretend to deny what he said but remarked that if what he said was correct I had read about his practices in the Bible. So saying I turned to Deuteronomy eighteenth chapter and read on the subject, pointing out that all who engaged in that kind of business are an abomination to the Lord. Then I turned to Isaiah eighth chapter and read the nineteenth and twentieth verses. These statements of the Sacred Text enraged him. He said that it was an insult to class Spiritualists with heathen magicians and wizards. I told him that the only difference between them was that modern Spiritualists had not learned their business very well, and needed to take a few lessons of those ancient performers in the curious arts. But if they wished to be Christians they would bring their books together and burn them, even as those did who are spoken of in Acts nineteenth chapter."

Here the Doctor interrupted by saying, "You gave him a tolerably severe handling, Mr. Munro. But it was certainly deserved. I regard Spiritualism of the devil."

"Well, Doctor, my testimony is about all in against the clergy. Tell me, do you regard the specimens with whom I have had interviews as honest men?"

"No, I regret to say that those men did not give very excellent evidence of honesty. I must say, on the contrary, that they gave evidence of perverseness. But I will add that I don't think that they were fair specimens. You were unfortunate in falling in with those who were exceptions to the rule."

"Doctor," said Hector as he arose to leave, "those men may have been exceptions. I would be glad so to regard them. But I am in doubt. Yet you can convince me."

"By what means?"

"Do you think, Doctor Davidson, that you could, with good grace, bear an examination of your religious position in the light of the Sacred Text? If you can, and on examination we find that your religious position will stand a comparison with the Sacred Text, then my days outside of church relationship will be ended. Think over this proposition. If you decide that you can stand, with good grace, an examination of the doctrines and practices of your church let me know. Good-by."

"All right, Mr. Munro, I shall think over the matter and let you know my decision."

Thus the two friends parted.

CHAPTER XI.

The week following the interview reported in chapter ten was one of most serious thought with Doctor W. N. Davidson. When he first began his interviews with the young Scotchman, he regarded him simply as a young man who had learned sufficient to be the principal of a graded school. But in the course of nine personal interviews, and one session at the Institute, he had learned that he had met one who was capable of something more than conducting a school. Hector Munro now stood before his mind as a manly young man, who was the most clear and most correct in both information and utterance of any whom he had ever met. Though under thirty years of age, yet the Doctor regarded him as mature in thought beyond his years.

Yet for some reason Doctor Davidson felt uncomfort-

able about Hector's last proposition. There was nothing in the young man's position that he could assail. In one of his early interviews he had declared himself to be "with the Bible, on the Bible, and for the Bible." To that no one could object without objecting to the Bible. Besides, he had stated in a certain interview that he was looking for what Christ called "my church," and, last of all, had said that his life outside of all churches would end if he should find on examination that the Doctor's religious position was in harmony with the Sacred Text. This was all fair, but the question was, Could he be led to accept the doctrines and practices of the Methodist Episcopal Church as in harmony with the Sacred Text? The Doctor well knew that he had in preparing his sermons on doctrinal questions often drawn inferences with which he was not altogether satisfied himself, but none had ventured to question them seriously, so far as he had learned, except the "Campbellite," as he commonly called a people then known in current literature as "Disciples of Christ." But he did not regard them as worthy of much notice since only a few of them were in his district.

But now he was differently situated. A young man, not claiming church membership with any denomination, had virtually proposed to accept his position, religiously, if it would stand a scriptural test. That young man he was compelled to regard as an equal with himself, and thus could not hope to have him accept even one item on the strength of personal or educational superiority. Moreover, he had learned that his young friend well understood logic and would not admit in any conclusion what was not certainly found in the premises. Therefore Doctor Davidson well knew that he had before him the most important task of his life. If he would decline to accept Hector's proposition it would show cowardice and he prided himself on his courage. Yet for some reason

he felt a reluctance to accept the young man's proposition. So he deferred a week, ten days, two weeks without decision. In the meantime Hector's spiritual interests came up before him. He admired and even loved the young man. Besides, if he could be converted, then he might be a bright and shining light in the church with which the Doctor was connected. So there was much to consider. The young man's spiritual welfare and the advantage that his conversion might be to the Methodist Episcopal Church—these were weighty matters. On ordinary occasions, and perhaps in any other case, they would have been of sufficient weight. But now, for some reason the Doctor hesitated. When two weeks had elapsed he became more uneasy lest the young man should regard him as a coward. True, he had much else to occupy his time without a discussion of the articles of religion which he believed so sincerely and had preached so long. This he might offer as a reason for not accepting the young Scotchman's proposition. But, then, the question arose in his mind whether this would really be a reason or simply an excuse. He had often in his preaching exposed the differences between reasons and excuses, and now, as an honest man, the question was whether he should try to exalt a mere excuse to the dignity of a sufficient reason for not consenting to a private interview with a certain young man concerning "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church." This question bore on his mind heavily.

It also occurred to the Doctor's mind that he might say to Hector that he was willing to discuss the merits of his religious position publicly with any man of equal rank with himself. Yet he knew that this would not be altogether fair, but would be what is commonly called "bluff." Hence from this he was disposed to shrink.

The attention which his interviews concerning the Dis-

cipline might attract occurred to him as a reason that he might offer for declining to accept the School Teacher's proposition. But was this a sufficient reason? Besides, he might bind the young man up in a promise of secrecy, and then no one outside would learn the results of their examination of the position he occupied.

This thought relieved the Doctor's mind. He decided that if the young man would refuse a promise of strict secrecy, then he could justly refuse to continue the interviews because of the unnecessary talk it would make in the town. Besides, he felt satisfied that if he did not succeed in converting the young Scotchman yet, one thing was certain, namely, the young Scotchman could not shake him in his faith.

A few days later Doctor Davidson met Hector on the sidewalk. He turned and walked in the same direction that the young man was going, not thinking concerning the impression which such conduct might make on persons who knew them both. As they walked together he spoke as follows:

"I have delayed giving a response to what you proposed in our last interview, Mr. Munro, because I have tried to consider what might be the results of such interviews on the community. You know, I presume, how much some people are disposed to talk, and it has occurred to me that such interviews as you have proposed will cause much talk and misconception among uninformed or curious people."

"What you say is correct, Doctor, and thus it occurs to me that our interviews might be so arranged as to be kept strictly private and all that occurs between us might be kept in strict confidence between ourselves."

"That is the very proposition that I proposed to make to you," said the Doctor with an eagerness of speech that was rather beneath his usual calmness and dignity.

"All right, you may depend on me with reference to secrecy even better than you can depend on yourself."

"Why so?"

"Because, Doctor, I have neither a wife nor any other confident, and so I am the safer man of the two so far as secrets are concerned," said Hector with his rich roll of the letter "r" and a round laugh in which the Doctor united.

"But our interviews must be deferred till after I get through with the concluding exercises of our school."

"Very good. But why do you not call them commencement exercises, after the usual manner of speech?"

"Because, I have never been able to find any just reason, either human or divine, why the conclusion of a session of school or college should be called the commencement. It seems to me just as sensible to call the commencement or beginning of a school year or a collegiate year the conclusion as to call the conclusion the commencement."

"What you say is altogether just, but it requires considerable individuality to detect, expose, and oppose all the errors that are found in current speech both spoken and written."

"That is true, my dear sir. But all force of character is found in that one word—INDIVIDUALITY. Herein multitudes are sadly lacking, and as a result they are mere ciphers. A great majority of mankind simply fill a place in which they happen to be positioned by the force of circumstances. As Schiller the German poet said:

'Out of the common is man's nature formed,

And custom is the nurse to whom he cleaves.'"

Here the two friends paused in their speech and in their walk. Changing the conversation, Hector pressingly invited the Doctor to be present and make the speech that would be expected by the audience on the occasion of the closing exercises of the school, addressing such remarks

to the graduates as he might deem appropriate. To this the Doctor consented and the friends separated.

CHAPTER XII.

Hector was crowded with work necessary for the concluding exercises of his school from the time of the last interview with Doctor Davidson. Every teacher knows that there is generally much extra work connected with the conclusion of a term of school. Hector Munro as principal of the school at W_____, was no exception to the rule. But on the occasion of which a report is now given he was destined to have imposed on him a duty that he thought was safely transferred to another. For the day before the concluding exercises he received the following note: Mr. H. H. Munro.

My Dear Sir.—I regret to inform you that I cannot be present at the time appointed for the closing of your school, as I am this day called in another direction with an urgency that I cannot justly disregard. My regret is intensified by the thought that my absence may cause you some annoyance in view of my promise to deliver an address. Yet I have the consolation, dear sir, that you will be equal to the occasion. Very respectfully yours,

W. N. DAVIDSON.

On receiving this note Hector at once proceeded to call on all the preachers of the town to assist him by consenting to deliver an address on the occasion. But each declined, pleading that the shortness of the time would not permit Mm to make proper preparation. This left Hector to depend on himself alone.

When the clock struck ten that night Hector had every arrangement made for the next day, except the

speech which would be expected from him in view of Doctor Davidson's absence. Most men under his circumstances would have then commenced to prepare a speech. But Hector knew better. He said to himself: "This is my usual time for retiring, and if I go beyond without sleep I shall feel unnatural to-morrow. Hence I shall sleep from ten to five as usual. Then I shall have two hours before breakfast for my speech and that must suffice. Whatever preparation cannot be made in that length of time must be left unmade."

With these wise reflections, Hector retired at his usual time and slept nearly seven hours without waking, and probably without the movement of a muscle. Being free from tobacco and all other narcotics, and possessing perfect health, he could secure the rest of unbroken sleep.

When Hector awoke on the morning of the great day of the first year of his school at W_____, he at once began to think of his speech. Within five minutes he had washed and dressed. Then he seated himself to make a few notes which would embrace the outlines of what he should say. They were made within an hour and then Hector, after glancing over them several times, started on his usual walk, taking his notes with him. When he returned, a few minutes before seven, he had the outlines and many of the details of his address firmly fixed in his memory. For years he had been accustomed to vigorous thinking and memorizing while engaged in walking. Hence, a pressure of mental labor did not require that he should confine himself to his room, and thus deprive himself of his usual exercise. Therefore when breakfast was over on the morning of that busy day, Hector felt perfectly natural, and thus entirely prepared for all that awaited him. These items are mentioned for the benefit of all students who may read this report. They should all know that when great drafts are to be made on them

they should be careful to take their usual rest, exercise, and food. By so doing they will be enabled to accomplish the most satisfactory results.

The program for the day was very much like those generally arranged for such occasions excepting it was headed, "Concluding Exercises," instead of "Commencement Exercises." This called forth a few private comments, but many did not notice the change from programs of preceding years. Hector presided with his usual ease, and perfect freedom from affectation and pomposity.

When the time came for the address which Doctor Davidson was to deliver, Hector spoke to the audience as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I regret to inform you that you are now destined to be disappointed. Doctor W. N. Davidson, whom many of you well know, had consented to deliver an address on this occasion. But I received a note from him yesterday stating that he was urgently called in another direction. Being unable to find a clergyman of the town who would consent to take the Doctor's place it devolves on me to make a few remarks. As the exercises have been lengthy, I shall occupy no time in talking to the audience in general, but shall endeavor to make a few practical statements to the graduating class, which, as many of you are aware, consists of five young gentlemen and ten young ladies."

Then turning to the company of fifteen seated near one end of the platform he spoke as follows:

"Young Ladies and Young Gentlemen,—I hold in my hand documents which certify that you have taken the full course of instruction given at the school located in this village, and have satisfactorily passed the final examinations imposed in this school. I congratulate you

that you have all done *so* well and acquitted yourself so creditably.

"But before delivering these documents into your hands, I wish to make several statements and give several suggestions.

"In the first place, I trust you will bear in mind that these certificates of graduation, commonly called diplomas, declare your present attainments and proficiency. But if you should cease to be students, and cease to review these departments so as to keep your minds bright with reference to them, it is evident that these certificates will no longer indicate your capabilities. In other words, if you should become careless in regard to what you have learned and forget or disregard the very principles which have entitled you to these certificates you can readily see that the declarations made therein would no longer indicate your attainments. Hence I trust that you will continue to be students, so as always to be worthy of the certificates which you are this day to receive, and that you may even make such progress in study as to be worthy of higher certificates than any that the school in this village can confer.

"In the second place, I trust that you will always bear in mind that there is sufficient common sense in every community to judge you correctly and estimate aright your true worth. Therefore never pretend to be anything else than what you really are, and never pretend to know more than you really do. I entreat you not to permit the fact that you have successfully passed through the full course of study in the school of this village to cause you to feel in any wise vain of your attainments. Suppress every thought and emotion of self-gratulation. Never volunteer to speak of your attainments nor capabilities. Do your full duty in all departments of life and permit others to judge of your worth. Self-reliance you must

have if you would succeed, but endeavor to prevent self-conceit from finding a lodgment in your minds. Self-reliance results from carefully measuring yourselves, and learning what you can do and what you cannot do. Self-conceit results from ignorance of our weaknesses, and is shown by the disposition to talk about our attainments and capabilities. Those who are truly wise know enough to be ashamed of their ignorance, while those who are sufficiently unwise to be conceited often boast of what they know.

"Closely related to conceit in regard to attainments is personal pride. Indeed conceit with reference to what we know is pride in regard to learning. Thus, while some persons pride themselves on their ancestry or noble birth, or on their wealth, others pride themselves on their mental attainments or personal appearance. Against all this I forewarn you, young ladies and young gentlemen, for I am intensely interested in your future welfare. Pride is an indication of weakness wherever found. Those who are truly wise and good are never proud. Moreover, pride is an abomination to the God who made us, as his Sacred Volume declares.

"But perhaps you have been informed that there is a commendable pride which all should have. That is a mistake. A just sense of propriety or respectability is often mistaken for pride, but there is a wide difference between them. What we do for our comfort or by reason of conviction of duty toward ourselves is not justly called pride. But whatever people do simply to be seen or admired by others—that is pride.

"Let us not forget that Solomon the Wise says that seven things are an abomination to the Lord, and that the first he mentions is a 'proud look.' Let us also bear in mind that Alexander Pope justly wrote:

'Of all the causes that conspire to blind, Man's erring judgment, and mislead the mind; What the weak head most easy rules— That never failing vice of fools Is pride.'

"Therefore I enjoin upon you and entreat you, young gentlefolks, carefully guard yourselves against all manner of pride. Be willing to confess that you are formed of common clay with other mortals, but do your best to mold the clay of which you are composed into vessels of honor. Remember that the highest office that we can hold is that in which we serve most the best interests of our fellow mortals. Mankind are the highest of earth's inhabitants, yet mankind are weak, and need help. If we help them we thereby show that we are stronger than they. The Sacred Volume informs us that those who are strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. Let this never be forgotten. Moreover, we really show our strength in proportion as we bear the infirmities of the weak. Therefore it may be justly stated that strength, whether physical or mental, is not something of which the possessors thereof should boast, but they should use it freely to assist the weak. Herein lies the true glory of strength.

"With these admonitions and suggestions to you, young gentlefolks, I proceed to transfer to you these documents which speak of your attainments in book education."

After delivering the diplomas, Hector added: "Young friends, my associations with you have been altogether pleasant, and rest assured that I shall always be pleased to learn of all the good that may befall you. I trust that you may be granted long life with abundant health, unceasing usefulness, and the happiness which results from doing good."

These last words were spoken in such deep tones that

none in the audience questioned the genuine emotion which prompted them.

Having finished his speech to the graduates he turned to the audience, expressed his thanks for the patience and good order maintained, and then requested one of the clergymen present to dismiss with the benediction. When the "amen" of the benediction was pronounced, people, especially those of mature life, turned to each other and commended the good common sense that was expressed in Hector's speech, and praised the entire absence of that bombast which is so common on such occasions.

CHAPTER XIII.

When the concluding exercises of the school in W_____ were over, Hector rejoiced in the thought of liberty—liberty to walk and think, and read and think, without obligations imposed by special contract. Having been a student from his boyhood, he had learned how to live so as to endure mental labor without wearing out his physical energies. He was a capital walker and seldom permitted a day to pass without walking two or three miles. "When his period of school was ended, he increased his walking to double the usual distance. Morning and evening he could be found two or three miles from W_____, seldom moving slower than at the rate of three miles an hour. Sometimes he would even walk four miles in an hour, as he did not believe in strolling. He knew the value of good health, and well understood that it could not be long maintained by him if he did not exercise the physical man daily and vigorously. He was accustomed to call his walks "health expeditions." Such they were to him, and it would be well if all teachers, students, and all who live what is termed a "sedentary life" would fol-

low his example. Multitudes die each year because they do not take "health expeditions" by vigorous walking. If the weather be unfavorable the needed exercise can be taken in almost any house by walking up and down stairs a few times, after the stairway has been well ventilated. This plan was recommended by the philosopher, Benjamin Franklin.

One morning as Hector was on his "health expedition" he was addressed by a farmer not far distant from the town of W_____, whereupon the following interview took place.

"Mr. Munro, I have been requested to ask you to deliver a speech for us on the Fourth of July."

"That request surprises me, especially as I am not an orator, nor am I a native of this country."

"In regard to that, after hearing you talk to the graduates the other day many of the citizens have concluded that you can talk common sense even if you be not an orator. Then in regard to your foreign birth, we feel satisfied that you are now a good American citizen, which is sufficient."

"You would better tell the people who wish me to speak on that occasion that they would better find an orator and secure his services."

"We have already had too much oratory in this part of the country, Mr. Munro, and now we wish a common sense speech."

"Have you no common-sense men in your community?"

"Yes, but on the Fourth of July, they generally make the mistake of laying aside their common sense and resorting to oratory. What we wish this year is a common-sense speech, and we think you can make it."

"That is a common weakness with public speakers. Many of them resort to gushy oratory and discard common sense. So I will think of your request. Good-by,"

For several days Hector was approached concerning a speech on the coining Fourth of July. Without taking time and space to relate the details of those approaches we simply report that Hector yielded and began to prepare his common-sense speech. But before so doing, he inquired diligently to know if the exercises of the day would be conducted in an orderly manner, as he was not inclined to be mixed up with anything resembling a "Calithumpian parade."

When the "great and glorious Fourth" (as many term that day) came, all was favorable, and all seemed to feel comfortable excepting Hector. He felt uneasy. In preparing his speech he had thought of some principles that he hesitated to mention lest they should prove to be more than the people could bear. He wished that he had positively refused to make a speech on the occasion. Then he might have been among the listeners and might have felt comfortable. But now nothing was left for him but to appear, when his name would be called by the master of ceremonies on the occasion, and deliver his address.

The audience assembled in a grove, where seats had been arranged for the listeners and a platform for the speakers. There were several speeches delivered, and Hector's address, by his request, was reserved for the last. When the time came, his name was called and he stepped forward. Here is a brief report of his speech, which was spoken in a conversational tone:

"My Fellow Citizens,—Many of you are aware that I am of foreign birth, and am thus an American citizen by choice. In my early life I was a subject of Queen Victoria, of England, who is the sovereign of my native country. But after reaching this country, I renounced my allegiance to all foreign authorities, and especially to Queen Victoria, whose subject I then was, and took the oath of allegiance imposed by the United States of America.

This is the highest compliment that I could possibly pass on this country, [Applause.]

"When I reached this country, I only had to remain here five years in order to be privileged to take the oath of allegiance to tills government, and thus become a voter. This was not objectionable to me, but I regard it as dangerous for this country. Probably not more than one in a thousand of those who come to this country from foreign shores are sufficiently Americanized to be good American citizens within five years after landing here. Probably nine hundred and ninety-nine of every thousand who take the oath of allegiance in our Probate Courts are not sufficiently acquainted with the laws of this country, nor sufficiently in love with this country to be safely entrusted with the ballot. Therefore the Constitution of the United States should be so amended as to require a much longer period for all foreigners to remain in this country before being granted the privilege of voting and holding office. It requires twenty-one years to make voters of children born in America, while those who have been born and reared in foreign countries may become voters in five years, or a shorter period as the different states may decide. This is a serious defect in the Constitution of this government, and constantly tends to fill many official positions with those who are not fully in sympathy with this country. In many cities probably nine-tenths of the police force are often foreigners who are not fully Americanized. Here is something which those who are truly American citizens should consider. [Applause.]

"But this is not the only suggestion which I wish to offer concerning the laws regulating this grand country. In regard to religion, I have a few remarks to make. It is well understood that in the United States of America the largest liberty is granted in regard to religious

doctrines and practices. This is right with a single exception, namely, that no church should be permitted to have an institution that is locked against government officials. In other words, ladies and gentlemen, there should be no institution permitted in these United States which turns the key against government officials to keep them from entering and inspecting at any time. Neither should any religious institution be permitted to exist in this country that will turn the key against its inmates and keep them contrary to their convictions or desires. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution forbids involuntary servitude except in punishment for crime. This amendment, if properly enforced, would throw open the doors of every convent in the United States and permit the inmates to leave if they wish. If people are to have religious liberty, they should be at liberty to change their religion when they may so desire, and in so doing they should be protected by law. Therefore I suggest that to the Constitution of these United States there should be an amendment requiring the doors of every religious institution to be thrown open to the inspection of government officials at all times, and that the officials who enter shall give all the inmates thereof the privilege of leaving, assuring them of legal protection against persecution.

"Nor is this the last change that I could suggest. This grand country is being largely ruled, and, in the same proportion, ruined by strong drink. How to deal with the liquor traffic is regarded as a difficult problem. But that is only the case by reason of the influence exerted by the liquor traffickers. I suggest two methods which may be adopted by the general government or by each state.

"1. Let a law be passed forbidding the manufacture and sale of all poisons except for medicinal and mechanical purposes. Such a law made and enforced would ruin the liquor traffic, for it would prohibit the making and selling

of all alcoholic drinks as beverages.

"2. Let a law be passed holding each maker and seller of alcoholic beverages responsible for all damages to life, limb, and property resulting from his business. Railroad companies and other corporations are held to such responsibility, and why should not the traffickers in strong drink be thus held? Then license would be granted to no man who is not financially responsible, and those who are financially responsible would not go into a business so dangerous as making and selling strong drink would then become. These are my solutions of the liquor traffic, and this problem must be solved or the country will be ruined.

"But my fellow citizens, I now touch another question. Monopolies are fast gaining ground in this country, and soon it will come to pass, even in free America, that the rich will rule over the poor as they do in many of the countries in Europe. In other words, monopolies are increasing, and in the same proportion the liberties of the people are being endangered. What shall be done? The government cannot prevent the people from making money. How then shall the ambition for monopolies be checked? It is all summed up in this one sentence—Let there be an increase of taxation with an increase of wealth. That is to say, ladies and gentlemen, I would suggest that as men increase in wealth they should be more heavily taxed. This is the remedy which each state can adopt for its own protection from bondage to the money power.

"Finally, I have another suggestion to make. In certain circles there is much said against oath-bound societies, and it is even stated that in some of these societies the members are bound to protect each other and assist each other under all circumstances except in cases of treason and murder. I don't know that this is true. Indeed, I shall presume that it is not true. I shall even presume

that there are no oath-bound societies, or, if there be any, I shall presume that the members thereof are only bound to help each other on the principle of the golden rule which says, 'All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them.' Yet I have this to say:

"There should be an amendment to the constitution making it a penal offense for any one to administer an oath except a civil officer, and forbidding all persons in the United States from making any other oath than what is approved by the civil law. Such an amendment will prove a safeguard to this government till the close of time.

"And now, my fellow citizens, I submit these few common-sense remarks for your consideration. Though they may be of interest to you, and may be altogether correct, yet I have no idea that they will be adopted, nor that they will, at an early date, have any influence on American politics. Nevertheless, if I be not altogether in error concerning the safety of a Republican government like this, certainly the Constitution of the United States of America, and the Constitution of each individual State should be amended as I have suggested. Trusting that none of you will censure me for candidly expressing my convictions concerning what pertains to the welfare of this good government and thanking you all for your very excellent attention I leave this matter with you."

The master of ceremonies on the occasion announced the name of the closing song which was sung by the "glee club" and the audience retired. But a number of prominent citizens came forward and congratulated Hector on the revolutionary statements that he had made. Among them was an elderly man who was a member of a certain secret society. He said: "Mr. Munro, you trod on my corns to-day, sir, but I will cheerfully give up all I hold

contrary to what you said, in order to have what I endorse of your speech fully adopted."

CHAPTER XIV.

When Hector Munro again went to the house of Doctor Davidson, he took with him a pocket edition of the Bible and a copy of the M. E. Discipline. For many years, he had endeavored to become familiar with his Bible, and for a few weeks he had studied the Discipline. Thus on his way to the Presiding Elder's house, he felt that he was tolerably well acquainted with both documents. When he reached the house where Doctor Davidson lived, he found that gentleman awaiting his arrival. The door was open, and as Hector stepped on the porch, he heard a voice from within saying, "Come in, Mr. Munro."

Hector entered the library where the Doctor arose to meet him, and the two friends exchanged their mutual congratulations concerning health and other matters pertaining to their ordinary welfare. But only a few minutes were thus occupied. Both men were students and knew the importance of time. Hence, the Doctor, with a slight uneasiness apparent in his manner, said:

"Mr. Munro, as my memory serves me, you agreed in our last interview to hear what I may be able to say concerning my religious position, with the understanding that if you would find my position in harmony with the Scriptures, then you would accept it. Am I correct in my statement?"

"Yes, sir, substantially correct."

"Well, then, to begin at the proper place, allow me to speak to you of that great and good man, John Wesley, who under God was raised up for the purpose of calling together a peculiar people who have, since an early date in their history, been called Methodists."

"I had not thought that you would begin with Mr. Wesley, yet I am glad that you have done so, for there are some questions that I would like to ask concerning that great man."

"Your questions would be in place now, Mr. Munro." "Well," said Hector, taking his copy of the Discipline from his pocket, "I notice on the first page of the 'Episcopal Address' the following statement:

"In 1729 two young men in England, reading the Bible, saw they could not be saved without holiness; followed after it; and incited others so to do. In 1737 they saw, likewise, that men are justified before they are sanctified: but still holiness was their object. God then thrust them out to raise up a holy people.'

"Now, Doctor, I find that these statements which I have just read are given as the words of John and Charles Wesley."

"That is correct, Mr. Munro, but what do you find in those statements concerning which you wish to ask questions?"

While the Doctor was speaking he noticed that Hector's eye was running over the books on the shelves near him. Soon he arose and took down a copy of the life of Wesley. Doctor Davidson waited and watched the young Scotchman as he rapidly turned over the pages, wondering for what he was looking. He did not have to wait long, for Hector was used to books. Soon he paused and said: "On page 132 of this copy of Mr. Wesley's life, I find the following statement, copied from his own journal:

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that

he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.'

"Now, Doctor, this was in the evening of May 24, 1738, as I see by what precedes this passage from Mr. Wesley's journal, which was about eleven years after that great man began his public ministry. Yet I find that this date (May 24, 1738), Mr. Wesley regarded as the time of his conversion or salvation from sin, which was about eleven years after he began his public ministry. Now, please tell me, Doctor, did Mr. Wesley labor eleven years as a preacher or teacher in an unsaved state? or was he saved and didn't know it?"

"Your question, Mr. Munro, is difficult to answer, and may never in this world be answered correctly. Please let me have the work from which you read."

Hector handed over the book and as the Doctor glanced at the page from which Hector had read he saw a reference to a foot-note. Then with some satisfaction in his tone of voice the Doctor said: "I notice a foot-note here which gives the following explanation:

"Mr. Wesley acknowledged, many years after this, that some of his expressions concerning his state under the law, were too strong; that he was then in a state of salvation as a servant, but not as a child, of God, and that he had a measure of faith, but not the proper Christian faith.'

"This explanation seems to me to give the idea that Mr. Wesley really misjudged his own spiritual condition, and spoke too strongly of his sinfulness even after his conversion to Christ which occurred before he began his public ministry."

"To my mind, that foot-note only throws the entire history of Mr. Wesley's life more into confusion, and would tend to make me an infidel if I had not read my Bible with care."

"I regret to hear you speak thus, Mr. Munro," respond-

ed Doctor Davidson gravely. "I fail to see anything in the history of Mr. Wesley which would tend to lead a man to infidelity. Please explain."

"Doctor," said the young Scotchman as he arose to his feet, crossed his hands behind him, and began to walk the floor, "Doctor, the case of Mr. John Wesley stands before my mind thus: He became earnestly religious while a young man at college, and soon his public ministry began, in the year 1729. In 1735 he sailed from England to the Colony of Georgia in America to preach to the Indians. After an unfortunate experience of about three years in America he returned to England and still regarded himself as in an unsaved state. Then while hearing a Moravian preacher read Luther's Preface to the Book of Romans and offer explanations concerning the change which God works in the heart through faith he felt his heart strangely warmed and felt that he really trusted in Christ and was saved from his sins. Finally in his maturer life he concluded that he had made a mistake about his case, for he had supposed himself in an unsaved state when he was really saved, but was saved as a servant under the law, and not as a child under the gospel. Now, Doctor, is the religion of the New Testament no clearer than the religious flounderings of Mr. John Wesley indicate?"

"Mr. Munro, your extremely critical cast of mind has given me uneasiness from the first of our interviews, and I now see that nothing which I can present will satisfy you. Ton endeavor to bring everything down to mathematical accuracy."

"I trust, my dear sir, that you will not be discouraged with me. As far as I have read the Bible I am satisfied therewith, and I am looking for a church that conforms to the gospel of Christ. Do you think that I can find it?"

"I fear not, that is, to your satisfaction. Your cast of mind will cause you to look for perfect conformity in

all things; and that I fear cannot be found."

"Doctor, I shall endeavor to be satisfied with a moderate or reasonable conformity. Can that be found?"

"I think it can, and I think it is found in the church of which I am a member."

"That may be, Doctor. I trust it is. If it be so, I shall be glad to become acquainted therewith. We may

find it when we come to examine the Discipline. But, tell me candidly, do you regard John Wesley as ever having been scripturally converted?"

"Certainly I do. Perhaps no man was ever more devoted than was he."

"I do not question his devotion, nor his sincerity. But was he not always in confusion on the subject of conversion?"

"I think not. If he had been, certainly he could not have accomplished such a glorious work; and you know the Bible says, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'"

"That sounds very well, but let us not go so fast. It was about nine o'clock in the night of May 24, 1738 that John Wesley was listening to one uninspired man read the Preface which another uninspired man wrote to the Book of Romans, and when this uninspired reader described the change wrought in the heart by faith, Mr. John Wesley felt his heart strangely warmed, as his own language declares, and from that moment he dated his salvation from sin and his becoming a child of God, and his being made free from the law of sin and death which was the Jewish law. Does this seem like a scriptural conversion?"

"No, I confess that it does not so seem as you state it." But recollect what that foot note said of Mr. Wesley's maturer views."

"Yes, I recollect, and that only makes the matter worse. Mr. Wesley was thirty-five years old when he

heard the Moravian read Luther's Preface to the Roman Letter, and was old enough to be mature, and to know what he was doing and saying. But suppose that we regard that age as immature and take his after explanation. Then what do we learn? Simply this: He was really in a saved state as a servant under the Jewish law before his heart was so strangely warmed on the night of May 24th, 1738, but not till that strange warming of his heart was he in a saved state as a child of God. Before that he had a measure of faith, but not the proper Christian faith. This is what the foot note declares, and it only serves to throw confusion over his whole life."

"Please explain wherein it thus serves."

"I shall do so," said Hector, taking his Bible from his coat pocket. Then he continued, "I read Romans tenth chapter and fourth verse, 'For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' This shows that salvation for us under the gospel age is through Christ and not through the Jewish law. Christ is the end of the law. Then in Romans sixth chapter and fourteenth verse I read thus: 'For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.' This shows that Mr. Wesley was in confusion when he spoke of being in a saved state as a servant under the law. Paul, as a Jew, was once under that law, but Mr Wesley never was. In Rom. 8:2, Paul wrote concerning himself thus: 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.' By the law of the Spirit, Paul referred to the gospel and by the law of sin and death he referred to the Jewish law, which revealed sin and condemned sinners to die. Now it is evident that Mr. Wesley in his mature life regarded himself as having been in a saved state as a servant under the Jewish law, when the truth is that the law to which he referred was abolished nearly seventeen

hundred years before Mr. Wesley was born."

"Mr. Munro, Is not that word 'abolished' too strong a term?"

"I think not. We have it in the Common Version of the Sacred Text, and I have never heard the translation of the passage in which it is found called in question. Here is the passage to which I referred: 'For he is our peace, who hath made both one [both Jews and Gentiles,] and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain [of the two peoples—Jews and Gentiles] one new man so making peace.' Then in Col. 2:14, we read, 'Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us.... nailing it to his cross.' Such language shows that the Jewish law was blotted out, or abolished or ended by the Lord Jesus Christ. Than this nothing is more clearly taught in the New Testament. But this is something which Mr. Wesley never understood, and so his religious life was confusion."

"I think you are too hard on him. You ought to be more charitable than to use such cold logic."

"I am looking for a church that conforms, at least moderately, to the New Testament. In so doing I must use my common sense in the light of an open Bible. Mr. John Wesley was a great and good man. There are many features of his life that are admirable. The influence of his teaching has generally been morally good. But I do not believe that he ever understood the gospel plan of salvation or was ever scripturally converted."

"You should bear in mind that he lived in a darker period than this, Mr. Munro, and so even if he did not understand the gospel perfectly, yet that is no reason why we should not."

"I admit that cheerfully, and if you wish we shall not regard him as a model, but can examine the Discipline independent of him. But I must leave."

"All right—all right, call again next Saturday morning." Thus the friends separated.

CHAPTER XV.

The following Saturday morning Hector again went to the Presiding Elder's house. After he had entered and been seated a few minutes that gentleman began to speak on the subject before them in the following language:

"Our Doctrines and Discipline, Mr. Munro, have been carefully arranged in the light of the Holy Scriptures, and I am persuaded that you will find that they are more nearly founded upon the word of God than any other creed in Christendom."

"I shall be glad thus to conclude. But there is one difficulty that confronts me, and concerning which I shall need some explanation."

"I shall be pleased to explain anything that I can. Please state your difficulty."

"It is found in a paragraph which reads thus:

"We esteem it our duty and privilege most earnestly to recommend to you, as members of our church, our FORM OF DISCIPLINE, which has been founded on the experience of a long series of years, as also on the observations and remarks we have made on ancient and modern churches."

"Now Doctor, this paragraph, as you are aware, is found in the 'Episcopal Address' which is given as an introductory to the body of the work. Does this read as if the bishops who first wrote, and those who have every four years given their unqualified endorsement—I ask, does

this look as if they regarded the Discipline as founded on the Bible?"

"No, I must confess that no mention is made in that paragraph of the Scriptures as a foundation of our form of Discipline. But that does not affect our Doctrines I claim that our Doctrines are certainly founded on the Scriptures, even though our Discipline may not be."

"Doctor, your former statement was that you were persuaded that I would find both the Doctrines and Discipline of your church more nearly founded on the word of God than any other creed in Christendom. This statement caused me to think of the paragraph that I have read from the 'Episcopal Address.'"

"I admit that I made that statement, but it was not as discriminating as it should have been. I make a stronger claim for the Doctrines of our church than I do for the form of Discipline."

"Do you admit, that the bishops of your church have made a just statement in the paragraph I have just read concerning the form of Discipline of your church?"

"Well, yes, I judge that they have made a correct statement."

"Then you admit that your form of Discipline is founded on human experience, observations and remarks."

"That is what our bishops have declared. And as our bishops have always been among the most pious and best men on earth I have not been disposed to question their declaration."

"Then we understand each other as far as we have gone. The Doctrines of your church are found stated in the Articles of Religion which your people have adopted, while your Discipline is specially intended for the ruling and regulation of your people as a body. Besides, the Doctrines you claim are founded on the Scriptures, though the Discipline as such is founded on human experience,

observations, and remarks, as your bishops have declared."

"Looking at the matter from the standpoint of cold logic, I presume that your statements may be admitted as correct. But I dislike very much to see you so critical. I think you would make a good lawyer, sir."

"That had not previously occurred to me," said Hector with a smile. "I do not try to be specially critical, but I have studied clearness. From my earliest recollection, I have been annoyed at the confusion both in the actualities of life and in the thoughts of the mind."

"That is the very cast of mind, sir, that enables one to become a successful lawyer. But the profession of an attorney at law is one which I have regarded as very dangerous to a man's spiritual welfare. The lawyer is under many and peculiar temptations."

"I have no thought of ever becoming an attorney at law. Yet I do not regard that as the most dangerous profession. To my mind nothing seems so dangerous as the profession of a preacher."

"I do not understand why you should thus think. Will you please explain?"

"Perhaps you did not notice that I emphasized the word 'profession' when I used it in connection with the word 'preacher.' But my reason for so doing is that the work of preaching the gospel is something into which men should enter as a matter of solemn conviction and not as they do a profession for a livelihood."

"Very true, your idea is correct, sir, but don't you suppose that preachers generally were actuated by conviction when they entered upon their holy work?"

"That is a delicate subject for me to discuss with a clergyman, and perhaps we would better not proceed any farther at this time."

"I would like to have your ideas on the subject, sir."

"But they would not be complimentary, Doctor, and you might regard me as under-estimating the clergy."

"Not very much after what you said in some of our earlier interviews concerning the perverseness of preachers," answered the Doctor, smiling.

"Oh!" said Hector laughing, "I had for the time forgotten that. Well, then in view of what you have heard from me without being offended, I presume that you are capable of hearing my opinion. It is simply this: A large majority of the preachers are professionals, who follow preaching as physicians and lawyers follow their callings."

"Do you mean that they have no interest in the spiritual welfare of the people, but simply follow their profession for a livelihood?"

"By no means, Doctor, I have not judged them that harshly. You are doubtless aware that lawyers often become deeply interested in their clients, and physicians become deeply interested in their patients. On the same principle I doubt not that a majority of preachers are deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of the people."

"Well, I am glad to learn that. I am relieved to think that you do not regard them generally as a company of hypocrites."

"But," said Hector, as if he had not heard the last speech, "if the special stipulation or salary for the support of preachers should be cut off, and each one would have to depend for material support on the free-will offerings of the people—then you would be able to understand how much real conviction there is among preachers, and how many of them are preaching with pure motives."

"I doubt not that there are mercenary preachers among many of the denominations, but I feel sure that we have a smaller per cent, of them in the Methodist Episcopal Church than you will probably find anywhere else."

"Doctor, you ought to refer to the past rather than to the present. There was a time when the circuit rider of the Methodist Episcopal Church was a humble, hardworking man, whose salary was so small that it was no temptation to the worldly-minded. The same is true in many cases now. Yet I fear that a majority of them belong to what I have sometimes called a 'Bread and Butter Brigade,' that would quit preaching and seek some other profession if their special stipulation or salary should cease, and they should be required to live on the free-will offerings of the people. In other words, Doctor, it is my conviction that a large majority of clergymen preach with mingled motives. They are not without interest in the spiritual welfare of the people, but the interest they have would not be sufficient to cause them to be preachers were it not for the salary and the honor they receive by reason of their profession."

"I doubt not that much unfortunate truth is found in your statement. In our Conferences I have seen an unfortunate amount of maneuvering done by preachers in order to secure the positions and to be sent to the places that give the highest salaries."

"I was aware of that, Doctor, for I have been permitted to see behind the curtain in regard to your conferences, yet I did not suppose that you would be so candid in your admissions."

"I spoke while reflecting, and said more than I am accustomed to say to any outside of our own fraternity. Yet I presume that what I have said will remain with yourself. The people outside, I presume, seldom learn anything concerning the difficulties with which the higher officials of our church have to contend. But, Mr. Munro, in regard to supporting preachers by salaries I would like to know how you explain Paul's language in 2 Cor. 11:8, where he says that he robbed other churches, tak-

ing wages of them to do service to the Corinthians?"

"Let us see what the Greek *says* on the subject." So taking the Greek text of the New Testament from the Doctor's table he soon found the word used in 2 Cor. 11:8, and quickly turned to the lexicon and said: "I notice, Doctor that the word here used is *opsonion* and the meaning is as follows: '1. What is bought to be eaten with bread, a stipend or pay of soldiers which was at first paid in grain, meat, and fruit. 2. Reward of any kind, recompense, that is, fruit, consequence, as in Rom, 6:23.' There we are told that the 'wages of sin is death.' So then, Doctor, you see that there is no necessity for concluding from this word that a set salary should be received by preachers. Besides, in the last chapter of Philippians we find Paul's statement concerning his support to be as follows: 'Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only: For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.' So then he spoke of his support as having been accomplished by giving and receiving. This certainly does not mean bargaining and paying."

"I judge that your position is tenable, Mr. Munro. And I doubt not that it would be far better for the church if all preachers and churches would follow the primitive pattern."

"I am glad to hear you admit this much, Doctor, but the time has come for our interview again to close. Shall I have the pleasure of renewing our talk concerning the Discipline next Saturday morning?"

"Yes, sir, call again."

"All right, Doctor, but I wish you would examine the parable of the householder and vineyard in Matthew twentieth chapter in connection with Peter's question,

about what he should receive as that question is found in the nineteenth chapter of Matthew. When we meet again I would like to know your conclusion. Good-by." "Good-by, Mr. Munro. I shall do as you suggest."

CHAPTER XVI.

After Hector had left, Doctor W. N. Davidson took a seat and sat nearly motionless for an hour. He had graduated at a respectable college when he was a young man, and had been a student from the days of his early boyhood. Among his own people, he was regarded as considerably above the average, for he had been chosen as Presiding Elder. Indeed, he had always been treated as though he was superior to a majority of those around him, except when he was with the bishops who were over him in the church. Yet here was a young man under thirty years of age with whom he had to exercise the utmost care or be convicted of an improper use of words or a lack of discrimination in some particular. Besides, though not a church-member, yet he had been such a Bible student that he seemed as clear as a sunbeam on every subject in the Sacred Volume.

Such were some of the Doctor's reflections as he sat so nearly motionless after Hector had left him. But duty called him and he had to arouse himself from his meditations.

Soon another week had elapsed, and another Saturday morning had come. As the Doctor began to think of Hector's probable arrival at the usual time of his coming, he began to think of the request for him to examine the parable of the house-holder as recorded in the twentieth chapter of Matthew. Of course he felt sure that he knew what that parable means, yet Hector had requested him

to examine that parable in the light of Peter's question about what he should receive because he had left all and followed Christ. But he had learned that it became him to weigh well whatever Hector suggested or requested. Hence, the Doctor read the latter part of Matthew nineteenth chapter in connection with the former part of Matthew twentieth chapter quite carefully. Next he went back and considered Peter's question and Christ's answer thereto. Then for the first time he saw that the parable of the householder was a part of Christ's answer to Peter's question. While he was revolving this new idea, Hector came.

"Good morning, Doctor," said Hector, as he walked on the porch, and saw the Doctor sitting near the open door.

"Good morning, Mr. Munro," said the Doctor as he arose and took the young man by the hand. "I trust that I see you well."

"Very, well, only a little warm. I am just in from a three-mile walk, and I feel the heat more than usual as the morning is sultry."

"You seem to enjoy walking."

"I do, but when pressed for time I would frequently neglect my daily walk were it not that I fear the consequences. If I do not walk several miles each day, I am in danger of becoming stagnant, and then this world will lose its beauty and brightness to me. I think that multitudes suffer much both physically and mentally for want of exercise, but never suspect the cause."

"Very true. A great many people seem not to understand that the brain is a part of the physical man, and when the health of the body becomes in any wise impaired then the brain suffers with it, and as a result the mind cannot work well through the brain."

"That's the idea exactly, and as we can be so easily united on things outside of religion it seems to me that

we should have no difficulty in understanding the subject of religion, and thus being united thereon. To change the subject a little more, I shall venture to inquire whether you examined that part of the Sacred Text which I requested you to examine when I left you last Saturday morning."

"Yes, I examined it just before you came this morning."

"Well, please tell me with what results."

"I suppose that you refer to the results in regard to the salary question, do you?"

"Precisely so," said Hector, eyeing the Doctor with scrutiny.

"My conclusion," said the Doctor, "is that the first lesson of the parable is different from what I had supposed. It had never before occurred to me that anything is found in that parable against preachers receiving a set salary."

"Well, I am glad that you have learned what is in that parable, and that you are sufficiently candid to admit what you have learned even though it be opposed to an established practice. Nothing is more evident when we pause to reflect than that Peter asked in Matthew nineteenth chapter what he should have for leaving all and following the Savior. Then it is further evident that the remainder of that chapter and the former part of the next gave him the answer to his question. By a further examination, we learn that the house-holder employed five companies of laborers. The first company he agreed to pay a special price, but to all the others he simply said, 'Whatsoever is right I will give.' Then when the evening came those who did not work for a special price, but trusted the master of the vineyard, were rewarded first, while the special salary folks were rewarded last, and because they received nothing more than their salary they were not satisfied. By such a parable, Christ evidently intended to teach Peter that the kingdom of heaven

should not be served for money or on a special salary."

"That is all clear," said the Doctor in tones that betrayed his emotion, "but no commentator that I have ever examined has brought forward or exposed this idea."

"Be that as it may, yet the lesson clearly taught is in opposition to the special salary for a preacher; and this is in harmony with all that we find on the subject in after portions of the Sacred Text. Now, Doctor, please tell me" how this affects the church with which you are connected?"

"We are all salaried preachers," said the Doctor with his eyes on the floor.

"Then you are not in harmony with the New Testament in this particular."

"I confess that we are not. I could wish that we were in harmony with what was evidently the apostolic practice. Then there would be less merchandise and more exercise of faith and prayer."

"I could wish with all my heart that all preachers were as candid as you are, Doctor."

"But to see the truth and admit it candidly is one thing, while adopting the truth is something else."

"I know that. But as we have this matter in hand, let us examine it a little farther. Doctor, what was the origin of the hireling system?"

"I can trace it from the Methodist Church back to the Church of England, now called in this country the Protestant Episcopal Church. Then from the Church of England we can trace it back to the Church of Rome, or to the Roman Catholic Church. But we cannot trace it back to the apostolic or primitive church."

"Then the hireling system must have originated with the Church of Rome, and from Rome it has been borrowed by Protestants."

"That is the unavoidable conclusion, but woe to the

Protestant who announces and advocates that conclusion!"

"Why so, Doctor? Is it dangerous to announce and advocate what is unquestionably true?"

"Yes, even in this free country it is sometimes dangerous to a man's popularity, reputation, and his usefulness to announce and advocate truth which is opposed to established customs and opinions."

"Thus, I presume that for you to declare publicly what you have admitted to me concerning the Methodist Episcopal Church originating with the Church of England, which sprang from the Romish Church—this would be rather dangerous to your standing among your people, especially if you would connect therewith the statement that the practice of supporting the preachers by a set salary also originated with the departure from the primitive faith."

"It certainly would unless I could make what they would regard as a respectable defense of such an order of things."

"Doctor," said Hector, wishing to sound the Presiding Elder on another question, "please let me hear your best defense of the name which your church wears."

"The name 'Methodists' was given to Mr. John Wesley and thirteen of his associates while he was connected with the college at Oxford, England, because of the regularity or method of their religious behavior. They cut off all unnecessary expenses in their living in order to relieve the poor, they visited the sick in different parts of the town, and even visited the prisoners in the castle. By reason of this kind of life, a young man of the Church of England said, 'Here is a new sect of Methodists sprung up!' alluding to a sect of ancient physicians who were called Methodists, because they reduced the whole healing art to a few common principles, and brought it into some

method or order. Such was the beginning of the application of the name 'Methodists' to John Wesley and his followers. As for the name 'Episcopal,' it is derived from the Greek word *episcopos* which means a 'bishop,' or from *episcope* which means the 'office' or 'charge' of a bishop. Thus the Methodist Episcopal Church has its name. The method of life adopted by Mr. Wesley and his friends occasioned the first part of the name, and the fact that the church adopted the Episcopal form of government occasioned the second part of the name."

"Your statements are in harmony with what I have gathered in history. But I would like to ask whether you regard such a name as authorized by the Sacred Text."

"The name 'Methodist,' I confess, is not in the Scriptures, and it was not at first chosen as a name by Mr. Wesley and his friends. But it was given them by an enemy, and soon came into general use. This could not have been avoided either by Mr. Wesley or his friends. Yet I can see no harm in the name, and it serves a good purpose in distinguishing the people who wear it from others."

"Of course, what you say, Doctor, about Mr. Wesley and his friends not being responsible for being called Methodists is correct. But I am sure, Doctor, that there was no need for them or any of their followers to adopt the name given by an enemy. When, a people who claim to be Christians give themselves a name, or adopt a name given them by others, which Christ never authorized, it occurs to me as a serious matter."

"You don't think that there is any salvation in the name of a church, do you, Mr. Munro?"

"Well, I confess there is not in a human name. But in Acts fourth chapter, we find it stated of the name of Christ, that there is no salvation in any other name, and

there is none other given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved. This implies that there is salvation in the name of Christ."

"What you say, Mr. Munro, must be admitted. But the thought before my mind was that we may be Christians and yet wear the name Methodists."

"Doctor," said Hector, rising to leave, "nothing is clearer to my mind than that those who are truly Christians should wear the names which are found in the Sacred Text, and should be satisfied therewith. Please think over this until we meet again."

Here the two friends, in their usual manner, separated.

CHAPTER XVII.

Two weeks elapsed before the two friends, whose interviews we are reporting, again met. The Doctor was engaged with his duties as Presiding Elder, and Hector spent much of his time reading the Book of Proverbs, which he had largely committed to memory in early life. The Scotch, as a race, are very much devoted to that department of the Bible. It has been said of them that they are reared on oat-meal and the proverbs of Solomon. Hence, when Hector again reached the Presiding Elder's house, many of Solomon's wise sayings were floating through his active brain. As he took the Doctor by the hand, he said, "I am glad to see you; and as I look on your face, I am reminded of the language of Solomon: 'As iron sharpeneth iron so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.'"

To this Doctor Davidson playfully responded, "You may sharpen my countenance, but I have no hope of sharpening a face that is as round as yours."

"Oh, well, Doctor," said Hector, with a round laugh,

"you know that some mathematical figures are angular while others are spherical. You belong to the former kind while I belong to the latter."

"That is all correct; for it is evident that we were not both cast in the same mold."

"True, but our physical differences do not prevent us from coming to the same conclusion when we give a subject proper investigation."

"We have certainly come nearer together than I thought we would come in regard to certain subjects."

"Are we together on the question of the religious names which Christians should wear? You recollect, I presume, that we were discussing the names which Christians should individually and collectively acknowledge."

"Yes, it was while on that subject that our last interview ended."

"Well, what have been your reflections on that subject since we last met?"

"I can see no harm in Christians wearing such an innocent name as Methodist."

"Doctor, in the thirtieth chapter of Proverbs we have this precaution: 'Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar.' Now, tell me plainly, can you have the name 'Methodist' as the name for your church, or 'Methodist Episcopal,' as we have it here in the Discipline without adding to God's words?"

"Certainly we can. We make no addition to the Bible, but take it just as given to us by the inspired writers."

"I know that you do not make an actual addition to the Sacred Text. But can you have the name that your church wears without showing that you are unsatisfied with the Sacred Text?"

"I think we can. We certainly don't mean to add to the Word of God."

"You may not mean to do so, and you may not mean to

do anything wrong. Yet the fact that you wear a name not mentioned in the Sacred Text, and even glory in that name, as you show by placing it on your meeting houses, on your hymn books, and on your book of discipline— this all shows that you have something that is not authorized by the Bible, whether you mean anything by it or not."

The Doctor showed uneasiness, for Hector spoke in such tones and with such logical precision that there was no escape from his words. Hence, he simply replied,

"I presume that if my people had it to do over again they would not choose the name they did for the church they founded."

"Now, Doctor," said Hector, having observed the Presiding Elder's discomfort and his modulated tones, "I trust that you will not suppose that I press the criticisms I offer in order to secure victory. I am so constituted, and I have so trained myself that I will not make contributions from my own mind, and I cannot consent to receive contributions from the mind of another to balance' up an equation in religion any more than I would in mathematics. "We cannot stretch nor contract figures; neither should we try to stretch nor contract language. If you and your people constitute what Christ called 'my church' in Matthew sixteenth chapter, then you and your people should wear the names given to that church in the New Testament."

"What you say is certainly reasonable, Mr. Munro. But you must bear in mind that this world is sadly astray both morally and religiously, and that we must take things as we find them."

"True enough, Doctor, true enough, and it will remain sadly astray if those who occupy the position of leaders of the people are not more diligent in searching the Sacred Text and following what it declares."

"Yes, there is tremendous responsibility resting on preachers—on preachers and editors especially. I can think of nothing more weighty than the responsibility which all such should feel. I know that I am sometimes almost overwhelmed with the responsibility that is resting on me."

"Such is life to those who appreciate its value even in a small degree. I cannot believe that our passage through this world is a brief transit from nothingness behind to nothingness before. Therefore I am interested—deeply and intensely interested—in finding the true church or the Church of Christ. In my investigations I must not, and I dare not, be indifferent. Whatever clearness of intellect I possess must be exercised as I inquire into the subject of religion."

Then turning to the Presiding Elder, Hector said, "Tell me, Doctor, should not all those who are truly Christians be satisfied with the names which Christ has given to Christians?"

After some delay the Doctor replied, "What you say, Mr. Munro, is correct. I see this matter as I never did before. Indeed, it was never before seriously presented to my mind. I simply accepted the existing order of things as I had found it, without serious inquiry. Yet since our interviews on this subject began, I see more clearly than ever before that many things are seriously wrong in the religious world. However, it seems to me that such errors are certainly not fatal, and that we shall not be finally condemned because of what we have unintentionally received and taught that may not be exactly in harmony with the Scriptures."

"Doctor, in Proverbs fourteenth chapter and likewise in the sixteenth chapter we learn that the wise monarch said, 'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.' This shows that

it may seem to us that we are in a way that is right, or that, at least, will answer the purpose so that we shall be saved; yet at the same time we may be pursuing a course that is the way of death."

"What you say is logically correct. But you see that there is nothing immoral in these errors of which we speak, and so I think that they are not fatal."

Here Hector reached for a copy of the Scriptures and without saying a word opened at Rev. 2:1 and began to read: "'Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them who are evil; and thou hast tried them who say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent.'

"Now, Doctor, don't you see that a church don't have to be guilty of immorality in order to be in danger? The church at Ephesus had a splendid record. There were ten or twelve prominent particulars in which, that church was probably all right, yet Christ said: 'I have somewhat against thee,' and that somewhat, though not an immorality was sufficient to cause the Savior to say: 'Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.' But this is not the only case, Doctor. There are two other churches mentioned in the same chapter unto which Christ gave similar forewarning. Does this

look as if our record in Heaven's sight is a matter of balancing accounts or of compromise?"

"I confess not, Mr. Munro. Strictly speaking we must be right all around."

"Yes, and all through."

"But how can that be done in the midst of the present state of affairs? This is the question that troubles me."

"I am aware that revolutions are not easily wrought, and I know that a majority of mankind become offended, or, at least, feel aggrieved when their errors are exposed. Solomon said in Proverbs fifteenth chapter: 'Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way.'"

"Mr. Munro, you seem fluent with Solomon's wise sayings," said the Doctor wishing to close the interview.

"Yes, there is something about his sayings that stick to my mind, and I have lately refreshed my memory by again reading his writings. Indeed, I regard Solomon as among my special friends."

"You are not following his example in regard to the marriage relation," said the Doctor with a smile.

"No, and you are not doing much better than I am in that respect. I have no wife, and you have but one wife, while Solomon had seven hundred. So there is not much difference between us in that particular, only that I have the advantage over you, and you have the advantage over Solomon. But as we are clear away from our subject, and the time has about come for our interview to close, I shall not annoy you longer." Thus saying, Hector arose and bade the Doctor good-by, after arranging to meet him one week from that date.

CHAPTER XVIII.

One week after the interview reported in the preceding chapter, Hector called at the house of Doctor Davidson

at the usual hour. He found the Doctor awaiting him. When they had exchanged their mutual congratulations concerning good health and other temporal matters, Hector took up the subject for consideration in the following manner:

"Doctor, we have thus far been dealing with preliminaries, and the articles of religion in which I am specially interested have not been examined. If it be in harmony with your good pleasure, I would like to read several of these articles and ask a few questions."

"All right, let me hear how those articles have impressed your mind, and thus learn what advantage it would have been to those who framed them to have had you present when they were framed."

"I see, Doctor, that you are disposed to twit me concerning my disposition to criticize. But I can assure you that I could wish with all my heart that religious reformers had been more careful in their statements."

"Yes, and so could I wish. But we must take things as we find them."

"True, but shall we never try to correct what is wrong?"

"Yes, but a revolution cannot be wrought in a day."

"No, nor in a century if no effort be made. For instance, it has been about one hundred years that the bishops of your church have been meeting every four years and endorsing without question the first article of religion of the twenty-five found in your Book of Discipline. I read it:

"'There is one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

"Now, Doctor, do you believe all that this article declares?"

"I have never seen any reason to question it,"

"Well, I am ready to believe it myself if proper testimony can be produced. Now you are the teacher and I am the pupil. Please tell me on what declarations of the Sacred Text is such an article of religion based?"

"I presume that you are aware that this article of religion and nearly all the others which are here found were copied from the articles found in the Prayer Book of the Church of England."

"Yes, I am aware of that. In the Prayer Book are thirty-nine articles, while you have adopted twenty-five."

"Well, I confess that I know not what special passages of Scripture the original framers of this article had before them when they wrote it down in its present form. Yet I can tell you by reason of what passages I think that such an article is justified."

"All right, let me hear what you think. I have more confidence in your judgment than in uninspired men whom I never knew."

"Then I will lay down first of all the statement found in John fourth chapter that 'God is a Spirit.' Next I mention that in the last chapter of Luke we find the statement, 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones.' Now, we are first told that God is a Spirit, and we are next told that a spirit hath not flesh and bones. From these scriptural premises I conclude that God who is a Spirit is without body or parts."

"Doctor, there is one capital defect in your reasoning, namely, it implies that there is no kind of body and can be no kind of body except one of flesh and bones, and thus as a spirit has not flesh and bones therefore a spirit can have no body whatever, and that whatever has no body has no parts. Now, Doctor, let me read 1 Cor. 15:

40, 'There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.' Then in the forty-fourth Verse of the same chapter we read of a natural body; also of a spiritual body. Now tell me, whether because a spirit has not flesh and bones is it logical to conclude that therefore a spirit has no body, and can have no body, and thus no parts?"

"You have made quite a speech, Mr. Munro. And it *is* of the kind that confirms me in my original fear, namely, that our interviews would not result in convincing you of the correctness of my religious position."

"Well, Doctor, must a man lay aside his common sense, and the established principles of reasoning when he comes to religion?" Hector asked with some degree of earnestness.

"No, I think that would be requiring too much," was the reply. "Yet as I said to you on a former occasion, we cannot find mathematical precision in religion. It is not established on mathematics."

"Yet we ought to find, that a religion claiming to be scriptural should be established on the Scriptures. Moreover, it should not contain anything that is not found in the Sacred Text. But here is an article of religion that was formulated several hundred years ago, and seems to have been accepted by multitudes of theologians without controversy, yet it makes a declaration concerning God which implies that he is a shapeless being, and which is contrary to the Scriptures from beginning to end."

"That is a strong statement, Mr. Munro, and I think you would find it difficult to substantiate a statement that embraces so much."

"No, I think not. You are well aware that in Genesis first chapter it is said that God proposed to make man in his own image."

"That was spiritually. God proposed to make man in his own image spiritually."

"Suppose Doctor, that I should ask you for the proof of such a statement, where would you find it?"

"How would this do? 'Let us make man in our image.' What is God? 'God is a Spirit.'"

"That would do very well, if there were no difference between the question, 'What is God?' and the question, 'What is the image of God?' The statement which says, 'God is a Spirit,' answers the question, 'What is God?' But it does not answer the question, 'What is the image of God?'"

"Do you believe that man is physically formed in the image of God?"

"I do," Hector answered with emphasis. "A doubt on this subject has never found a lodgment in my brain."

"Please give me your reasons for so believing," said the Doctor, feeling that even a Presiding Elder might learn something concerning the Bible, from one who did not claim to be a theologian but who had certainly studied the Scriptures.

"That will not be difficult to do. Neither will it take long, as I am talking to one who needs not to have everything expressed to him in detail. As previously mentioned, God said in Genesis first chapter that he would make man in his image. In Genesis second chapter, we learn that the man that he made in his image he formed from the dust of the ground. Then in Hebrews first chapter, we learn that Christ was the express image of the Father's person, as well as the brightness of the Father's glory. Now, inasmuch as we learn in the Sacred Text that Christ was in the image of man it becomes very evident that man is in the image of God. For if Christ was the express image of the Father's person, and yet was in the likeness of man it is impossible to conclude

otherwise than that man is in the image of God, even as God said that he would make him in the beginning. Herein lies the peculiar dignity and sacredness of the human form, and on this is based capital punishment for murder. I presume that you are acquainted with the passage in Genesis ninth chapter which says, 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man.' Now, in addition to all this, I need only to remind you that in Genesis thirty-second chapter and in other places the 'face' of God is spoken of, and in 2 Chronicles sixteenth chapter the 'eyes' of the Lord are mentioned, and in 2 Samuel twenty-second chapter, as well as other places, the 'nostrils' of the Lord are mentioned, then in Numbers twenty-second and other places the 'mouth' of the Lord is spoken of, then in other places we learn that his 'shoulders,' his 'hand,' his 'fingers,' his 'back,' and his 'feet' are spoken of. Finally, he is spoken of as having a 'voice,' and speaking. Now, in the light of all this testimony, Doctor, does it not seem strange that men should have taken the pains to say that God is without body or parts?"

"I must confess, Mr. Munro, that whether the statement made concerning God being without body or parts be true or false, it is not easily defended. But, is there anything else in this article of religion to which you object?"

"I do not wish to object to any part of it, but would rather accept it all if the Sacred Text would permit. Yet I notice another statement which I do not regard as defensible. It is this: 'And in the unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'"

"I did not suppose you would object to that. What appears wrong with it?"

"Simply this: God, the Father, is spoken of in the Scriptures as the Supreme Ruler while Christ and the

Holy Spirit are spoken of as having been sent by the Father. On the other hand, we do not find that the Father is ever spoken of as being sent by the Son or by the Holy Spirit. Moreover Christ said in John fifth chapter that he could of himself do nothing, while in the last of John twelfth chapter he declared that the Father had given him the commandments which he spoke. Finally, in John sixteenth chapter, he spoke of the Holy Spirit not speaking of himself, but that he would speak whatever he would hear. In the light of such testimony, Doctor, it does seem to be exceedingly strange that learned men ventured to declare solemnly in an article of religion that the Son and the Holy Spirit are of one power with the Father. The simple truth is, that the power both of the Son and of the Holy Spirit has been bestowed or delegated by the Eternal Jehovah who is called the Father."

"Mr. Munro," said the Doctor, with a twinkle in his eye, "it is to be regretted that you did not live in the sixteenth century, for you might have saved theologians from many mistakes."

"Doctor, if theologians were not more willing in the sixteenth century to be taught by one not wearing their cloth, than they are in this century, I fear that my existence among them would not have been of much value. Besides, if they would not hearken to the words of God and shape their religion thereby, why do *you* suppose that they would listen to the voice of a Scotch school teacher?" Then rising to his feet Hector said: "Doctor Davidson, you may be an exception to the rule, but I am sure that preachers generally are not a teachable company."

"You are not going to leave so soon, are you?"

"Yes sir, my time for my Saturday morning's interview is about spent. Besides, I do not wish to annoy you too long at a time."

"Then come back again next Saturday at the usual

time, and let us see if our articles of religion are all unsound in your estimation."

"No, there are several of them that I endorse. But those of them that are strictly true or according to the Sacred Text there was no use in framing, while those that are not true there was no good in framing. Good-by, Doctor."

"Good-by, Mr. Munro, Call again."

After Hector had gone Doctor Davidson sat in profound thought for a considerable period. It occurred to him in course of his reflections that he could not hope to convince that clear-headed young Scotchman, yet there would be an advantage in hearing his objections. The Doctor thought that he could at least learn something by watching the workings of a well-trained and well-informed intellect that seemed entirely free from religious bias or prepossessions except those produced by the Bible.

CHAPTER XIX.

When Saturday morning again dawned on the earth, Hector Munro took up his copy of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church and read the second article of religion therein found. As he did so, the expression "to reconcile his Father to us," struck his mind forcibly, and led him to examine a few declarations of the Sacred Text. Then after breakfast was over and he had taken his usual walk, he turned his face toward the house of Doctor Davidson. The Doctor was awaiting him, and spoke to him as soon as he stepped on the porch. After their usual greetings and remarks concerning ordinary matters, the Doctor said:

"Mr. Munro, I have been wondering what sort of ob-

jection you could, urge to the second article of religion in our Discipline."

"Please read it."

The Doctor then read as follows:

"The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin; BO that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood were joined together in one person, never to be divided; whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.'

"Now that looks to me like a clear statement in harmony with the Scriptures."

"It is a very good statement with a few exceptions."

"Let us have them," replied the Doctor, evidently anxious to learn what manner of objections could be urged to the second article of his religious position.

"In the first place, I am sure that the word 'very' should not be preserved in speaking of God and Christ. Some other word could be chosen that would be better understood."

"I admit that. But that, I presume, is not your chief objection."

"No, for another objection is against the use of the word 'nature' in speaking of the Godhead. The word 'nature,' as you are aware, comes to us from the Latin *natus* which refers to birth, which is in opposition to the word eternal. If the Godhead be eternal it is a mistake to speak of the nature of the Godhead, for that is as if we speak of the birth of the Godhead. Yet this article speaks of 'two whole natures,' 'the Godhead and Manhood' being united in Christ. This I regard as an error. "We may justly speak of the character of God, of Christ, and

of the Holy Spirit, but we should, not speak of the nature of either person of the Godhead, except when we speak of the manhood or humanity of Christ. It is true that in Peter's second letter Christians are spoken of as being permitted to become partakers of the divine nature. But the word there translated 'nature' means 'essence, native condition, birth.' Thus instead of 'divine nature' we may read it DIVINE BIRTH, which refers to the new birth which takes place when sinners become Christians."

When Hector had finished this speech Doctor Davidson seemed lost in thought, and for a few seconds did not break the silence. At length he spoke, and in tones that indicated that his mind was occupied he asked:

"What next, Mr. Munro?"

"I have a question to ask."

"Weil, let us have it."

"My question is this: When Christ died did not his Spirit, or the Word which constituted his divinity, leave his body which constituted his humanity, and did not his Spirit remain separated or divided from his body till the time came for his resurrection?"

"I have no doubt on that subject."

"Then tell me, Doctor, if this second article of your religion be correct in stating that 'the Godhead and Manhood were joined together in one person never to be divided,' as is here declared?"

"Of course, the framers and endorsers of this article had before their minds the ascension and glorification of Christ's body."

"That may be. Yet was not the Word, which constituted Christ's divinity for a time divided or separated from his body?"

"Yes, but since I come to think there is a difference between Christ's manhood and his body."

"That is true, and it must be confessed that the word

'manhood' is not a proper term to be used in that connection, though I did not intend to criticize it. 'Divinity' and 'humanity' are the terms that should have been used to express the truth clearly. Strictly speaking, the statement which says, 'Two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided' is unsound first, middle and last. As we have previously seen the word 'natures' is erroneous when applied to Christ's divinity, and the expression 'never to be divided' is erroneous, and now I point out that the 'whole and perfect' Godhead was not united in Christ, since the whole and perfect Godhead consists not simply of the Son, but consists of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

"Mr. Munro," said Doctor Davidson, with something of a smile on his face, but with irritation in his tone, "it is a great misfortune for the world that you were not present among the reformers of the sixteenth century, as you might have saved them from many blunders in the use of language."

"That is the second time, that you have made that remark to me, Doctor. On the former occasion I think that I stated in reply thereto, that if the clergymen of the sixteenth century were not more ready to be taught than some that I have found in this century then my presence among them would have been of little or no value. Solomon said, 'All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes,' and of no class of men is this more true than of the clergy. Many of them seem to think that if what they say and do be not really right, yet it ought to pass as right."

"I know that you have not much confidence in clergymen. Yet they have done a great deal of good, and there is no way to estimate what kind of a world this would have been if it had not been for the clergy."

"Doctor, I don't wish to leave the leading subject which we have before us, yet I venture to say that the Protestant clergy was largely modeled after the Sourish clergy, and the Romish clergy was an outgrowth of the apostasy from the apostolic order of things. As a result, Protestant clergymen to-day more closely resemble the Romish clergy than they do the apostles. Indeed, the word *clerus* in Latin seems to come from *kleros* in Greek, which in 1 Pet. 5:3 is found in the plural form and is there translated 'heritage,' referring to the body of believers or the church generally. But that word is not in the Sacred Text once applied separately to preachers. Hence to speak of preachers as clergymen is to speak in an accommodative manner, and not with scriptural accuracy."

"Mr. Munro, I would like to know when you studied these religious matters. You never attended a theological seminary, did you?"

"No, sir. My pious mother would have been glad if I would have accepted the Presbyterian creed and become a preacher in that denomination. But I did not; and in regard to your question I will simply say that I have studied religious matters in private, or, as I sometimes say, I studied these matters at a 'home college' where the student is free to learn the truth."

"You have certainly done well, Mr. Munro. I congratulate you on the progress you have made. Very few, even among preachers, know that the Greek term from which the word 'clergy' is most probably derived is in the New Testament applied to the body of believers and not to the preachers as a separate class."

"Doctor, that is because they are not students, and thus use words without examining their meanings. Your Unabridged Dictionary states nearly all I have said concerning the word *kleros*. But the unfortunate truth is that neither colleges nor theological seminaries really teach

the so-called students who pass through them what the true student really is and does."

"I regret that I am unable to deny what you say. A large majority who pass through colleges and seminaries, and even many who pass through universities seem to be satisfied with good recitations."

"I see, Doctor, that whenever we get away from the question of religion that we can soon agree. Now let us turn back to this second article of your religion and examine the statement which says that Christ died and was buried 'to reconcile the Father to us.' Do you accept that as in harmony with the Sacred Text?"

"No, I do not, and I could wish that our bishops would change that form of expression. I am aware that the word translated 'reconcile' in the Scriptures is only applicable to those acting the part of enemies. And as God never was our enemy, therefore we should not speak of God as being reconciled to mankind, but rather of mankind being reconciled to God."

"I am glad to hear your candid admission. But I wish to ask, Does not the exact language of the Sacred Text as well as the meaning of the Greek word *katallage* indicate that we should not speak of God being reconciled to mankind, but that mankind should be spoken of as being reconciled to God?"

"Yes, I think so. A passage in Romans fifth chapter occurs to mind which says: 'For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.' Besides, I think that there are other passages to the same effect."

"Yes, and I have them here. They are found in the latter part of the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians and read thus: 'And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the

ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation: now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.' Here, Doctor, is the same word used five times, and in each instance it speaks of mankind being reconciled to God."

"Thus that word is used throughout the New Testament, I believe, Mr. Munro. And as I told you before, I could wish that our bishops would change the language of that article of religion."

"Yes, Doctor, and considerable of your literature will need revising. I recollect that in one of your hymns the following words occur:

'My God is reconciled,
His pard'ning voice I hear.'

That language is doubtless based on the idea found in the Discipline which speaks of the Father being reconciled to us."

"Yes, I can see how that sentiment has likely crept into much of our literature, and I doubt not will there remain till the close of time."

"Can nothing be done," inquired Hector, "to make a change? It seems to me from what I have seen in your meetings, Doctor, that a great part of your procedure in protracted meetings is an outgrowth of this mistake about God being at enmity with mankind, and the consequent need for a reconciliation. Indeed, though this article of religion which we are considering declares that Christ died and was buried to reconcile the Father to mankind, yet it seems from your procedure that you don't believe that Christ's death accomplished the end which it is erroneously supposed to have had in view."

"I don't understand to what you refer, when you speak

of our procedure in protracted meetings."

"I refer," said Hector, "simply to this: In your meetings when praying for penitent ones at the altar, you call on God and pray for him to have mercy on sinners as though he were angry with them, and needed to have his anger turned away by your prayers."

"Well, I am sure that the Bible says that God is angry with the wicked every day."

"Yes, dear Doctor, but that language is in the seventh Psalm of David, and that was written before Christ had died for the wicked. But since Christ died in behalf of mankind the way has been opened up for believing ones to return to God. When they return aright, God is as willing to receive them as the earthly father mentioned in Luke fifteenth chapter was to receive his prodigal son. But your people teach that God is ready and willing to receive the sinner until the sinner becomes ready to be received, and then you act as if the Father suddenly became unwilling to receive them and needed to be entreated long and loud to be merciful, and bless the believing penitents who are waiting for his pardoning voice and love."

"You misunderstand us, Mr. Munro. We believe that God will readily pardon all penitent sinners just as soon as they make a complete surrender of themselves."

"Then, Doctor, why do you not bend all your energies in the direction of persuading sinners to make a complete surrender of themselves, without calling on God to be reconciled to the sinners?"

"I see that you have a question"—

Here the interview was interrupted by two preachers of Doctor Davidson's district calling to see him. Hector, therefore took leave of the Doctor in his usual manner.

CHAPTER XX.

Another week passed away rapidly, and the two friends, whose interviews are now being reported, again, met. The morning was warm and rainy, just the kind to cause most persons on ordinary occasions to feel relaxed and oppressed. But the two friends of whom a record is here given, were men of health and energy. Besides they were students, and when they turned attention on a subject all lassitude was banished. Blessed are all those who have similar acquirements!

Soon after Hector was seated in Doctor Davidson's library, and had wiped the perspiration from his face, he spoke thus:

"Doctor, I have this morning glanced at the third, fourth, and fifth articles of religion in your Discipline."

"Do you find them sound, or unsound?" the Doctor kindly inquired.

"I shall leave you to decide after I ask a few questions."

"All right, Mr. Munro, let me hear your questions."

"Then I will first call attention to Deut. 12:23, where Moses said, 'The blood is the life.' Now tell me, Doctor, do you believe that the blood of man, which is the life of man, is necessary to the perfection of man's nature?"

"Certainly I do; and I see why you ask that question. It is because of the statement here in this third article of religion which says that Christ, in the resurrection, 'took again his body, with all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature.' Am I correct in my inference?"

"Yes, sir, but you did not go far enough. This article of religion, as you are aware, reads thus:

"'Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.'

"Now, Doctor, please tell me whether you really believe

that Christ took his blood to heaven,"

"No, I cannot so believe," replied Doctor Davidson thoughtfully. "There are too many utterances of scripture that crowd upon my recollection which forbid."

"What do you think, Doctor, of the statement which says that Christ took 'all things pertaining to the perfection of man's nature' (which certainly implies or embraces the blood of his flesh) with him when *he* ascended to heaven?"

"To say the least, the statement is unfortunate. It was shaped by the bishops of the Church of England, but should not have been retained, or borrowed when our Discipline was formed. That 'flesh and blood' shall not inherit the 'kingdom of God' is a plain statement in 1 Corinthians fifteenth chapter, and that Christ's 'glorious body' does not now receive its life from blood must be evident to all who read with care."

"I thank you for your candor, Doctor."

"But, Mr. Munro, I do not regard such a mistake as this of which we are speaking by any means fatal to our holy religion."

"Can a religion be holy without being true?" asked Hector pointedly.

"No, of course not."

"Well, is not error fatal to truth? and is not an error in a statement fatal to the truth of that statement?" inquired the Scotchman with a pointedness that always tends to bring an opponent to candor.

"I perceive that you are again reasoning like a mathematician."

"Mathematical principles had not occurred to my mind; yet I must confess that I always am disposed to object to any contribution being made by the thinking mind toward a conclusion. In other words, I have no sympathy

with the common practice of calling on the imagination for facts."

"That is where your difficulty is found, Mr. Munro. And on this account, I fear that you will find no creed in Christendom that will suit you. Let me read the fourth article of our religion:

"The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.'

"Now, what is there wrong with this?"

"The word 'Ghost' is from the Saxon *Gast* or German *Geist* and really means a disembodied spirit or apparition, and by reason of its association with superstition it should never be used in speaking of the Holy Spirit. Besides, the Greek word *pneuma* when used to designate the Holy Spirit should always be translated by the word 'Spirit.' It would be as correct to say 'Holy Specter' as to say 'Holy Ghost.' So, at least, it seems to me."

"Can we not safely use the language of the Bible?"

"Yes, sir, but you must admit that there is a considerable difference between the Sacred Text and an incorrect translation of the Sacred Text."

"Is there anything else in this article of religion to which you object?"

"I don't think that any statement should be accepted which declares, either directly or indirectly, that the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and Son in majesty and glory. For the Spirit is spoken of as having been sent by the Father, but we never read of the Father being sent by the Spirit. The Jehovah, or Father, is supreme in majesty and glory. Moreover, I object to the statement that the Holy Spirit is 'very and eternal God.' Though the Holy Spirit is spoken of as God, yet that is because he is the agent or messenger of God."

"Perhaps you forget that in Matthew twelfth chapter

it is said that all manner of blasphemy shall be forgiven except against the Holy Spirit. It is even said that speaking against the Son is pardonable, but not speaking against the Holy Spirit. Why was this, Mr. Munro?"

"I have no explanation to offer except this: The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father to testify of Christ, and thus the Holy Spirit was not responsible for going, bearing testimony, and working miracles."

"That is reasonable, but we can never know that it is certainly correct."

"And would you reject it on that account?" asked Hector, with an interest that the Doctor did not understand.

"Yes," responded the Doctor, with some hesitation in his tone. "I think that would be right in religion."

"Then the entire creed business should be rejected. It can never, in this life, be known with certainty whether Heaven will approve any man-made creed that was ever framed."

"That is a weighty question, Mr. Munro, and we would better not undertake to discuss it now. Did you ever examine our fifth article of religion which speaks of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for salvation?"

"Yes, Doctor, I glanced at it this morning, and I decided that though it is not altogether free from objection, yet it is sufficiently correct to be suicidal to your entire Discipline with all its articles of religion."

"In objections, my dear sir," said Doctor Davidson, with some warmth in his manner, "you excel any person whom I ever met. I have heard of people who were born in the objective mood; and while I would not like to say that of yourself, yet I confess that your objections to this fifth article of religion caused me to think of that saying concerning the objective mood. Indeed, I thought that this

article would certainly be acceptable to you as a student of the Bible."

"Well, Doctor, objections are in place when urged against what is erroneous, and I endeavor to be careful never to urge an objection against what is true. The only expression to which I object in this fifth article of religion in your Discipline is that which says, 'nor may be proved thereby.' To the statement which says, 'The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation so that whatsoever is not read therein is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation'—to this much I have no objection. It is certainly correct. But this is not all of the article. It says, 'so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby.' It is this idea of proving a doctrine by the Scriptures that I regard as erroneous. There is no intimation in the Sacred Text that a single item thereof was ever intended to subserve as a proof for any doctrine that man. might shape. The Holy Scriptures were given as doctrine and for doctrine, but not as proof for doctrine."

"I am sure that every scriptural doctrine may be safely said to be proved by Scripture."

"Be careful, Doctor," said Hector, as he leaned forward in his accustomed manner when he intended to do close thinking. "If my memory serve me correctly, it was quite early in our interviews that I drew the discrimination between the words 'scripture' and 'scriptural.' A doctrine that is 'strictly scripture' admits of no contribution from the human mind in order to establish it as in harmony with the Sacred Text, for that which is 'strictly

(scripture' is a part of the Sacred Text. But a doctrine that is called 'scriptural' is not necessarily a part of the Sacred Text, but is generally regarded as sustained by human reasoning on or concerning the Sacred Text. Just

at this juncture, we find, by examining human theology, that nearly all kinds of men have advocated nearly all kinds of doctrines and have called them 'scriptural.'"

"That is a very close criticism, Mr. Munro. I never heard it from anyone except yourself."

"I would rather call it a clear discrimination, than a close criticism."

"Call it by what name you see fit. I can readily see that its observance would work a great change in religious doctrine. Whatever is not or cannot be stated in the exact language of scripture would be discarded as doubtful. This would work a revolution."

"Well, Doctor, would not that be altogether safe? Besides, would it not be in perfect harmony with what Paul said in his second letter to Timothy? Permit me to read what is stated in the third chapter of that letter. 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' In this language, Doctor, it is very evident that the Inspired Scripture was given for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, and thus it was not given as something by which to prove such doctrine. Indeed, there is no evidence that the Lord ever intended that any part of his word should be made to subserve the purpose of proving or substantiating doctrines which have been shaped by human minds and hands."

"Just here, Mr. Munro, it occurs to me that I should ask you what you meant when you spoke of this article of religion being suicidal to our entire Discipline. I have always thought that these articles are all in harmony with each other, and have sometimes felt like boasting of the beauty and symmetry of our holy religion."

"The suicidal feature, is found in this: If the Holy

Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and they do not contain the articles of religion found in your Discipline, then it is evident that the Scriptures are sufficient without the aid of your articles of religion."

"But you seem to forget," replied the Doctor with some agitation in his tone, "that our bishops are not children. They have among them some of the brightest minds. Besides, they are honest men. As a result we ought not to conclude that they have recklessly endorsed articles of religion that are unsound. True, there may be verbal defects in the statement of some of these articles, yet taking them as a whole I doubt not that they will be found to be more nearly in harmony with the Scriptures than any others that can be found."

"Doctor, do you regard your bishops as inspired so as to be infallible?"

"No, of course, I do not think that they rank with the apostles."

"Then," said the Scotchman with a positiveness that showed his convictions, "Then it is evident that the endorsement which those bishops have given these articles of religion will not elevate them in the estimation of any man who thinks. These articles of religion were conceived and brought forth by fallible men, they were borrowed by fallible men, and they have been endorsed by fallible men. Hence it is my privilege as a fallible man to examine these articles of religion in the light of the Infallible Word."

"I saw from the first that you were disposed to have your own way in regard to these matters, Mr. Munro. And it has been a matter of constant regret with me to find that a man of your intelligence would insist on having everything conform exactly to his standard."

"I thank you, Doctor, for your compliment—not concerning my intelligence, but concerning what you call my

standard. You are aware that I have from the first made constant appeal to the exact language of the Sacred Text. But as this interview has continued somewhat longer than usual, and as it is probably becoming irksome to you, I bid you good-day." So saying, Hector moved toward the door. The Doctor bade him "good-by," but did not invite him back.

CHAPTER XXI.

Over three weeks elapsed before Hector Munro and Doctor Davidson again met, and then it was not at the Doctor's house. Hector had decided from a few of the Doctor's final words that the interviews had become unpleasant to the Presiding Elder, and thus he decided not to visit his house again without a special invitation. Hence for three weeks he remained absent from the Elder's house. In course of the fourth week he met the Doctor walking over the school ground. After speaking in their usual manner the Doctor said:

"Mr. Munro, the people who live near me, as well as I, have been somewhat disappointed for several weeks on Saturday morning."

"That may be, but I do not wish to be obtrusive; and at the close of our last interview I decided that you felt annoyed by reason of what you termed my 'critical cast of mind,' and thus I decided to give you what the boys call a 'rest,' at least until I could ascertain whether you would be willing to go farther in examining the Discipline."

"I confess that I did feel somewhat annoyed at the thought that scarcely anything which our bishops had so long endorsed could pass your scrutiny without criticism which I acknowledge could not be gainsaid, except by

perverseness which I am not disposed to manifest, and which, if manifested in your presence would be immediately detected and exposed."

This last remark was made with a smile on the Doctor's face, but it was unnoticed by Hector as he had made a step backward and bent his gaze downward as if in deep thought. Yet when the Doctor paused in his speech Hector spoke as follows:

"I thank you, Doctor Davidson, for your candor. When I first proposed to examine the Discipline by which the Methodist Episcopal Church is governed, and the Articles of Religion which are found in every Methodist Discipline, I did not think that it was really so defective in regard to the language therein used and the statements of doctrine therein made."

"I confess, that I had never before supposed that so much could be reasonably said against those articles. My conviction is that our bishops could now arrange articles of religion that would be less objectionable. But these that are found in our Discipline have so long been received that even their errors seem sacred to many, and it is probable that no changes will ever be made."

"Doctor, what do you suppose that your bishops would say if they knew that you had admitted that there are errors in the Book of Discipline which they and their predecessors in office have so long endorsed?"

"I don't know. Probably some of them would censure me for making the admission, yet I cannot think that any of them are wholly innocent concerning some of the errors that you have exposed."

"What do you think that the Presiding Elders and preachers generally in your church would think if they knew that you had made such admissions?"

"I doubt not that many of them would censure me for not making a more vigorous defense. Some of them

would not be slow to say that they could do better than I have done. But I think that I may safely say that I know every argument whereby our Discipline is supposed to be defended. Besides, there was a period in my life when I would have offered many of them, but that period has passed. It is unfair to present unsound arguments to the minds of those who are incapable of detecting their unsoundness, and to do so is likewise unjust to one's own conscience. Moreover, it is exceedingly humiliating to present an argument and have it immediately overthrown."

"I am almost surprised at your candor. It is so unlike what I have seen in clergymen. To me they have generally appeared as if they felt bound to defend their position even at the risk of truth and honor. Such conduct on their part caused me to have an unfortunate estimate of preachers. But the course you have pursued has led me to believe that there are exceptions to the rule."

Here the Doctor looked at his watch and remarked,

"Mr. Munro, my engagements advise me to beg you to excuse me from prolonging our interview at present. But will *you* not come around to my house and permit me at least to hear what your objections are to the other articles of religion found in the Discipline of our church? They may be of advantage to me at some date in the future. Thus far I have noted your objections to those over which we have already passed."

"I shall be pleased to do so on one condition."

"What is that?"

"Simply this: That you will let me hear what are the so-called arguments by which your preachers generally endeavor to defend the Discipline, whether you endorse them or not. They may be of advantage to me in the future."

"Well, I can do that," replied the Doctor. "Can you

come on Saturday next?"

"Yes, sir, and at the usual hour, so that the residents in your vicinity will not be disappointed."

"All right."

The two friends then parted intending to meet at the time appointed.

CHAPTER XXII.

Having received what seemed to be a cheerful invitation to continue his visits to Doctor Davidson's house for the purpose of further examining the Discipline of the M. E. Church, Hector Munro again went thither. He found the Doctor glad to receive him, for notwithstanding the discomfort which Hector's criticisms had given, yet that Presiding Elder was too honest a man not to have admiration for one who was clean and clear in all that he said. Besides, Hector's request, at the close of their interview on the school ground, that he should present all the reasonings that he knew were sometimes urged in favor of the Discipline regardless of his own endorsement of those reasonings—this request had greatly relieved him, as he would not thereafter feel that his own personal honor was involved in what he might say. Therefore, the Doctor not only seemed more cheerful than usual when he again received Hector in his library, but he really felt more cheerful than on former occasions.

In view of the change of method, on the Doctor's part, in the investigation a change in the method of report is deemed advisable. As the changes from one speaker to the other will be more frequent than in former interviews those changes will generally be indicated rather than formally expressed.

"With these explanations submitted, the reader will be

able to follow the two friends in their investigations. When remarks concerning common-place matters were ended, the Doctor asked this question:

"Mr. Munro, what objection have you against the seventh article of my religion?"

"None except that Bible truth is not improved by being stated in words that men have chosen and placed in a book that heaven has never authorized as a rule of faith and practice."

"Then you object to all humanly arranged doctrines, even though they be correct, do you?"

"Yes, on the same principle that the old Quaker objected to a preacher of unconditional salvation making a second appointment at a certain school house."

"What was that principle?" the Doctor inquired.

"When a certain Universalist preacher who had been setting forth his views in a certain school house, inquired whether he should leave another appointment, an old Quaker arose and said: 'If thy doctrine be true, we don't need thee; and if it be not true, we don't wish thee.' So if an article of religion be true, we don't need it in this form, nor in any humanly arranged creed; but if it be not true then we should not desire it in any such form."

"But you will no doubt admit, that there is an advantage in having a brief statement or compendium of Bible truth clearly made for the use of those who cannot, or, at least, do not read the Bible."

"Yes, there is an advantage in such a statement if correctly made and offered without claims of authority."

"Then it is to assumptions of authority that you specially object, do you?"

"That is one objection, but not the only one that may be justly urged against such an arrangement."

"What other have you?"

"Simply this: What is first intended as a help, soon comes to be used as the principal something."

"But our bishops distinctly say in their Episcopal Address that they wish the Discipline to be next to the Bible and not in place of the Bible."

"Do they really say that Doctor? If so, please read."

"My statement, Mr. Munro, was a little too strong," said the Doctor, looking at the address to which he had referred. "It says, 'next to the Holy Scriptures,' but does not add as I did that the Discipline should not be used in place of the Scriptures."

"Yet when you measure your preachers in regard to doctrine you do not appeal to the Scriptures, but to your Discipline."

"Are you sure of that, Mr. Munro? On what authority do you say that?"

"On the authority of your discipline, sir."

"Where is it so recorded?"

"Here," said Hector, taking up the Discipline, "here, under the heading 'Trial of a Preacher' we find the following: 'When a Minister or Preacher disseminates, publicly or privately, doctrines which are contrary to our Articles of Religion or established Standards of Doctrine,' etc., then he is to be tried by the same process as if guilty of immorality."

"True, but may not the expression 'established standards of doctrine' mean the Bible?"

"No, sir, the Bible could not have been meant by that expression, especially as it is used in the plural. The Bible does not consist of 'standards' but it ought to be regarded as the only infallible *standard* by which to measure all thought in religion and morality. But you measure your preachers by your humanly framed articles of religion, and other human standards of doctrine."

"Do you regard that as certainly wrong, Mr. Munro?"

"Without doubt, since it tends to constrain, and, in a certain sense, compel men to accept standards of measurement in religion which heaven never ordained."

"But we need these articles of religion in order to show what we believe, and thus to show wherein we differ from others."

"Why did you not add that you need them to show wherein you differ from the Bible?" Hector inquired with a smile.

"Because that would be fatal. We do not like to acknowledge that we differ from the Bible, for that is the foundation of our hope. We may differ from it, but that is not our intention."

"But all the differences from the Bible which may be expressed in the language of human creeds—all these differences I say are thereby stereotyped, and in proportion as they become standards by which to measure preachers and others they even interfere with all investigation by which men may advance in their knowledge of the Scriptures. It is at every Methodist preacher's peril that he ventures to proclaim anything that is contrary to your articles of religion or other standards of doctrine."

"Mr. Munro, you may reason as you see fit, but it is certainly necessary to have something by which to measure men. If we had no standard of any kind, we would soon have all sorts of men preaching all sorts of doctrines."

"Would not the Bible as such make a tolerable good standard by which to measure?"

"Whenever a man does or says anything wrong, Mr. Munro, we cannot go over the whole Bible to find out where the special passage of Scripture is that bears on his case."

"Nor will you need to do so, Doctor, provided you have studied the Sacred Text. Any one who is acquainted

with the New Testament knows that the disciplinary teachings thereof are chiefly found in the twenty-one letters or epistles, as they are commonly called."

"I admit that there is much in what you say. But our Book of Discipline was arranged with a view to regulating our societies and I don't see how we could regulate them without some such book."

"I presume you need some such book to regulate your societies, but the churches of Christ which were established by the apostles had no need thereof. Hence, if your societies were churches of Christ, you would not need any other book than the book of Christ for their regulation."

"Mr. Munro, you are a shrewd disputant."

"No, Doctor, it is not my shrewdness, but your unscripturalness that gives the trouble. Any man who is acquainted with this subject can say what I have presented. But as we have fairly considered the Discipline as a whole, let us next examine the seventh article of religion therein found."

The Doctor read as follows:

"Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil and that continually."

"Now, Doctor," said the School Teacher, leaning forward in his usual manner when becoming intensely in earnest, "here is an article of religion which speaks of something called 'original sin.' Are you aware that the expression 'original sin' is not found in the Bible?"

"I am aware of that, yet I certainly think it is justifiable. You don't mean to say that we should use no expressions in setting forth doctrines that are not found in the Bible, do you?"

"It is well understood by many that words are the signs of ideas, and I think it needs only to be stated in order to be understood and admitted that in making a statement of doctrine it is best to use the language of the Bible. When we have an idea which cannot be set forth in the language of the Bible, then we should be in doubt whether that idea is found in the Bible. Now take this expression 'original sin' and where do you find anything in the Bible which justifies its use?"

"As explained in this seventh article of religion it is declared to consist in the corruption of every man's nature, so that he is inclined to evil and that continually. Now, in justification of this, I read Gen. 6:5, 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil and that continually.' Now here we have the exact language which is given in this seventh article of religion in explanation of original sin."

"Doctor, please tell me whether that disposition to evil in mankind before the flood was natural or habitual? In other words, was it transmitted to them from their sinful parents or was it a matter of their own choice by reason of their associations?"

"I doubt not that they were unfavorably surrounded, yet if they had not had such a disposition naturally they would not have fallen in with their surroundings."

"Then why did not Noah and his family fall in with their surroundings?"

"I presume that the grace of God sustained them."

"As God is no respecter of persons why did not his grace sustain all the others, Doctor?"

"I presume they did not seek God nor ask him for his grace."

"Then their sinfulness was their own fault. They could have done better if they had only tried."

"But there is language in the Bible which speaks of man being inclined unto evil as the sparks are to fly upward."

"Where do you find that?"

"I think it is in the Book of Job, though I cannot tell in what chapter."

"Please take your concordance, Doctor, and see where it is."

Here the Doctor examined his concordance while Hector watched his countenance. He did not have to watch long before a change came.

"Here is the passage to which I referred, Mr. Munro. But it does not read as I thought it did in every particular. It is found in Job 5:7, and reads thus: 'Yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.' This may embrace what I said, but it does not so declare."

"Doctor, even if it declared what you said yet it would do you no good."

"Why so?"

"Because it is the language of an uninspired man named Eliphaz. He was one of Job's would-be comforters and philosophized concerning Job's afflictions. Job philosophized in reply. But when God finally spoke to Job we find that he caused him to confess that he was vile and had said things that he understood not. This confession of Job you will find in the early part of the fortieth and forty-second chapters of the book bearing his name. That Job's interviews with his friends were recorded by inspiration I have no doubt, but that all that Job and his pretended friends said was authorized by inspiration no one can believe."

"But David, who was certainly inspired, said in Psalms 51: '5, 'Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' How do you get around that?"

"You cause me to smile, Doctor, by asking how I 'get

around that,' as though I were engaged in getting around the language of the Sacred Text."

"Well, you know what I meant. That is a common expression. I should have asked you how you explain that language of David."

"I don't think it needs any explanation if we do not enter any wrong suppositions. The question is whether the expression 'shapen in iniquity' refers to physical form or spiritual character, and thus whether it refers to nature or to habit."

"I had never thought of that."

"Well, is it not worth considering?"

"Certainly, as it might have some bearing on the subject."

"The context shows us, Doctor, that David was confessing some great sin which he had committed, and in apologizing for himself he pleaded that he was shapen in iniquity and in sin did his mother conceive him, or warm him, as the marginal reading declares. In thus expressing himself David laid complaint against his parents. Now if we turn to Ezekiel eighteenth chapter we find that the Jews had a proverb among them to this effect: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.' By that proverb the Jews apologized for themselves. But what did God say on that subject? Here is the language: 'As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel: Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth it shall die.' Then the Lord proceeded to show that each one should be responsible only for his own personal transgressions, saying in the twentieth verse: 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, and the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son: The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness

of the wicked shall be upon him.' Indeed, the entire eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel seems to have been specialty intended to settle that erroneous sentiment or notion concerning the transmission of sin or of a sinful disposition, from parent to child. But this notion was revived when the primitive church fell away from the simplicity of the gospel, and became the foundation for what has for about sixteen hundred years been called 'infant baptism.' Borne holds that doctrine, and it is the foundation of her dogma of baptismal regeneration. But those who are Protestants ought to know better. The Church of England borrowed that doctrine from the Romish Church, and the Methodist Church has borrowed it from the Church of England. But the Bible contains neither the expression 'original sin' nor the idea therein contained."

"That is quite a speech that you have made Mr. Munro. And without attempting any reply thereto I wish to ask whether you do not believe that mankind have naturally a disposition to do evil rather than good."

"I do not; but I believe that infants are as pure and free from evil when born into this world as our first parents were when they came from the hand of God."

"I feel sure Mr. Munro that the' notion you have just expressed cannot be defended, for our first parents were doubtless altogether pure when they came from the hand of the great and good Creator, but many children show their depravity at a very early age."

"Please, Doctor, don't use that word 'depravity,' for it is as widely separated from the revelation of God as is the expression 'original sin.' Many theologians charge man's habitual wrong doing to a supposed natural depravity, yet they will all acknowledge that our first parents were not depraved when they came from the hand of their Maker. But we all are aware that, according to the record, they sinned the first chance they had, and I would

like to know who has done any worse than that since their day."

"That is a new idea. It had never before occurred to me that the case of our first parents, who were not depraved, was an argument against the doctrine of inherent depravity."

"Yet it is clear, is it not, Doctor?" "I am not prepared to dispute it, Mr. Munro." "Doctor, the time has come for our interview to close this morning, and so I shall simply endeavor to set before you my convictions on this subject and leave them with you for your consideration. Our mother Eve sinned because of deception, and our father Adam sinned because of association, and under these headings, or on these principles their descendants have been sinning ever since. Every sin that mankind have ever committed may be justly charged either to deception or to association or to both. Besides, when we are first born into this world our appetites, and a few other earthly inclinations are in a state of rapid development. But the reason and moral sentiments are by no means a ruling principle. Thus it continues for several years. In some children it continues eight or ten years, or even longer, before reason and the moral sentiments begin to assume control. Thus our earthly inclinations get the advantage of the mind of the spirit. Then by reason of evil associations, we learn to do evil and seem more inclined thereto than we are to what is good.

"Mr. Munro, I confess that you have given the most reasonable explanation of the severe conflict that goes on between the flesh and the spirit. It is because the flesh gets so many years the start or advantage of the reason and moral sentiments."

"Precisely so, and I thank you for your candor. Good-day, sir."

"Good-by, Mr. Munro. Call again at the usual time." Thus the friends parted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The following Saturday morning brought the two friends together again. Both were in their usual health, and both seemed ready to continue their investigation of the document which they had undertaken to examine. The Doctor had lost hope of convincing Hector that the "Discipline" and its "Articles of Religion" were in harmony with the Scriptures, yet he felt that he could not violate his promise to examine the entire book of Discipline with Hector Munro in the light of the Scriptures. Besides, he was satisfied that in course of each interview he learned something by observing the Scotch School Teacher's clear reasoning. Hence, with mingled motives, the Doctor continued to consent that Hector should visit his house and offer his criticisms on the book that he had formerly regarded as the most unobjectionable of human documents. Doctor Davidson well knew that a large majority of those occupying his position would have soon fallen back on their dignity and acted so impatiently under criticism that the School Teacher would have become offended and retired. Indeed, he had time and again been tempted to make some excuse for discontinuing the interview. But the Doctor well knew that he had no just reason for so doing, and Hector would readily detect the fallacy of any pretext. Besides, Hector had clearly indicated in his earlier interviews that his estimate of preachers was not very high, for he had been led to regard them as constituting a perverse company, unwilling to investigate in order that they might learn something beyond the theological opinions imposed on them by their creeds.

Finally, the Doctor regarded Hector as a superior young man, for whose salvation every right effort should be made. For these reasons, the interviews were continued, and when the two friends met on the occasion mentioned in the first statement of this chapter, the eighth article of religion in the Discipline was before them for examination. The Doctor was requested to read it and did so. It is concerning "Free "Will," and reads thus:

"The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will."

Having read this article, the Doctor turned to Hector and called for his objections thereto. In reply Hector inquired:

"Are you satisfied with the wording of that article, Doctor?"

"No, not altogether: this word 'preventing' does not convey the idea intended."

"Does it not convey the very opposite meaning from what was intended?"

"I think it does. The word 'prevent' comes to us, as you are aware, from two Latin words which together mean 'to come' or 'go before,' and that was the original idea of 'prevent.' But now it has lost that meaning and is confined chiefly, if not solely, to the idea of 'hindering.' As the article here stands it implies to the common mind the very opposite of what is here intended to be conveyed, and I wonder that our bishops have so long retained a word with an obsolete meaning."

"Your exposition is altogether correct, Doctor, and allow me to say that while you were speaking it occurred to my mind that the fact that your bishops have for over

a hundred years been endorsing the language of this article of religion, though for a great many years they have been aware that such language does not convey to the common mind what they wish to say—this fact is in my mind a strong argument against human creeds in general. I am here reminded of lines written by the German poet, Schiller. He said:

'There is a consecrating power in time, And what is gray with years to man is godlike.'

"Hence here *is* a word, the original meaning of which is changed to an opposite meaning, yet in its obsolete meaning it is retained generation after generation by the learned."

"But aside from that word," inquired the Doctor, "what do you think of this article of religion, Mr. Munro?"

"I think it is quite Calvinistic, Doctor."

"Oh, I judge not."

"Well, what is the difference? The Calvinist teaches that man cannot turn without supernatural power assisting him, and this article of religion says that man cannot turn without the grace of God by Christ going before him that he may have a good will, and working with him when he has that good will."

"I know that there is some similarity in the language, yet our Discipline is far from being a Calvinistic document."

"Not very far, Doctor. It has been stated of the Church of England that she had 'a Popish Liturgy, a Calvinistic Creed, and an Arminian Clergy.' Such a statement contains an unfortunate amount of truth."

"Do you believe, Mr. Munro, that a fallen man can by his own natural strength turn and prepare himself to faith and calling upon God, without any help from God?"

"I believe, dear Doctor, just what the Sacred Text declares."

"To what part of the Sacred Text do you refer?"

"Christ said in John sixth chapter: 'No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him.'"

"Well, that is the very idea which we have here set forth, namely, that the grace of God, by Christ, must go before and thus lead or draw him to Christ."

"But the remainder of Christ's statement in John sixth chapter, is this: 'It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.' Now, Doctor, is this what you mean? In other words, was this article of religion intended to convey the idea that a man cannot, without being taught of God by the Holy Scriptures, turn to God? Or was it intended to convey the idea that God in some mysterious way, separate from the Scriptures, leads mankind to obey Him? What do you say, Doctor?"

"I am sure that the Methodist Church holds to both ideas, whatever may have been the intention of this article of religion by those who framed it."

"Then you are not sure concerning the intention of this article of religion?"

"No, I cannot say that I am altogether sure."

"Do you think that those men were sure of its meaning who framed it, or that any have been sure of its meaning who have since endorsed it? To my mind, Doctor, it is a cumbrous statement altogether unworthy of an origin among learned men, or of being endorsed by them. The word 'grace' means favor, and, of course, every blessing which mankind are permitted to enjoy is a matter of Divine favor. How indefinite then it is to speak of the favor of God going before a man to help him to turn and prepare himself to faith and calling on God?"

"I well understand your critical ability, Mr. Munro, and don't presume that any of these articles of religion

will really please you. Yet I would like to ask you this question: Do you or do you not believe that God does anything to lead people to Christ except by and through his written Word?"

"He may do much through or by means of his providence to lead people into such a position in life, or into such a frame of mind that they will favorably consider what the Sacred Text requires at their hands. Of this, we have several instances in the New Testament. But beyond this I can have no faith or belief because I have no testimony. In other words, I do not believe that God leads any one by a direct and mysterious power to be disposed to do the Divine will."

"Then here is a point where we differ and shall probably never see alike," said the Doctor.

"You seem to have forgotten that Paul says in 2 Corinthians fifth chapter that we walk by faith and not by sight."

"I meant *mental* vision, Mr. Munro, and not physical vision."

"Doctor, if we confine ourselves to the testimony of the Sacred Text we shall soon find ourselves united, but if you insist upon regarding something as evidence which is not in the Sacred Text we may continue to differ."

"Mr. Munro, I have heard too many testimonies concerning conversion to question that the grace of God does in a mysterious way lead many people to become Christians."

"Doctor, do you believe the statement found in Romans second chapter which says, 'God is no respecter of persons?'"

"I certainly do; but why do you ask that question?"

"I ask it, because of the bearing its answer would have on this discussion. Your answer is satisfactory. You say you believe that there is no respect of persons with

God. Now, then, please tell me why it is that what you call 'the grace of God' has led some people to become Christians, while multitudes who are equally good by nature and education are never so led?"

"Your question is difficult to answer, Mr. Munro, yet even if it be never answered satisfactorily still I cannot think that all the clear testimonies which I have heard were a delusion."

"Doctor, what do you think of the claim which honest Calvinists everywhere make to the effect that the Lord specially and supernaturally called them? Many of them testify as if the Lord had overwhelmingly called them. Are they all deluded? If not, then the Calvinistic theory of special atonement and special election may be right, and your Arminian theory may be wrong. But if the clear testimony of Calvinists be a delusion, then may not the clear testimony of your people be at least a mistake?"

"You seem to have a genius for presenting difficulties," said the Doctor.

Here Hector arose saying: "Doctor, please do yourself the justice to read Jeremiah twenty-third chapter and Ezekiel thirteenth chapter between now and the time we shall meet again. Good-by, sir."

"Good-by, Mr. Munro. Call again, sir."

"I shall try and do so," said Hector, and he walked from the porch to the pavement.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It came to pass one week after the interview mentioned in the previous chapter, that the Scotch School Teacher and the Methodist Presiding Elder again met according to their usual arrangement. Both seemed desirous to settle down to the business before them. Hence no time was

lost in preliminaries. The ninth article in the Discipline was the one on which both of the friends had their minds fixed. Hector opened the investigation as follows:

"Doctor, with your permission, I shall read your article of religion on the justification of man."

"All right. Bead on, sir."

Then Hector read:

"We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort."

"Now, Mr. Munro, you have just read the article which sets forth one of the vital principles of Protestantism, and I trust that you will be disposed to accept it."

"Do you accept it, Doctor, without modification?"

"I always have done so, and think I shall till the close of life."

"Possibly I do not understand what it is intended to set forth."

"That may be, and if I can assist you I shall be glad so to do."

"Then please tell me what is here meant by the expression 'our own works or deservings?' Does this language refer to the works of the Jewish law, obedience to the commands of the gospel, or works that mankind may choose to do that are not mentioned in either the law or the gospel?"

"That expression means that we are justified by the merit of Christ without any works that we can do of any kind whatever," replied the Presiding Elder with emphasis.

"But I notice the expression 'by faith.' Please tell me what that means."

"It means the belief, trust or confidence that we have in Christ as our Savior. The moment that we believe in

Christ with our whole heart and trust in him for our salvation, taking him as our personal Savior, that moment we are justified of all our past sins, and become children of God, and heirs of eternal life."

"Doctor, please tell me, is this faith by which you say people are justified purely and strictly confined to the mind and heart, or does it make some manifestations or have some outworkings in order to prove its existence?"

"Good works, Mr. Munro, are the 'fruits of faith,' as our next article of religion declares."

"But, Doctor, those good works there spoken of are said to 'follow after justification.' But I wish to know whether the faith by which we are here said to be justified is strictly alone in the minds and hearts of those who have it as an internal something? or does it manifest itself in any way outwardly?"

"Oh, I see now to what you refer. Of course, the sinner's faith manifests itself by confession of sins, repentance, confession of faith, and in prayer."

"If a sinner would refuse to acknowledge himself a sinner, would refuse to repent, would refuse to confess his faith in Christ, and would refuse to pray, do you think he could be justified by faith?"

"Of course not. Indeed, there would be a serious question concerning his being a true believer."

"Then, Doctor, what is meant by the statement that 'we are justified by faith only?'"

"Well—why—I don't know that I exactly catch your idea."

"My idea is this: If the faith, trust, or confidence of the sinner must show itself in confession of sins, repentance, confession of faith, and in prayer, how can this article of religion justly declare that the sinner is justified by faith only?"

"Why, my dear sir, all these acts that you mention are

inseparably connected with faith, and, indeed, are a part of faith, and they show that the sinner has faith."

"Then, Doctor, I would conclude that this ninth article of religion means to declare that we are justified by faith and whatever is necessary to show our faith, or whatever is necessarily connected with faith. Is that the idea, Doctor?"

"Yes, sir, I think you now have it correctly stated."

"Then, Doctor, does this ninth article give a clear statement of what is thereby meant?"

"I cannot say that it does explain itself very well, Mr. Munro. I can now readily see why some people have charged us with believing in nothing else for justification than faith. Some have even said that we believe in being justified by faith only without repentance or prayer, though our practice has always been to the contrary."

"Doctor, I must say that the language of this article I regard as misleading, since it does not correspond with your practice, as I have beheld it in your protracted meetings. Indeed, I know of no people who work more earnestly and persistently than Methodists do in order to secure justification of sinners. I think you call it 'laboring with the mourners.' Then I have noted that you teach the mourners to labor for themselves. And thus, indeed, they do. I have known a few to labor until they were utterly exhausted. Such facts I do not regard in harmony with the idea of being justified by faith only."

"I confess that this article is not worded in the best manner."

"But, Doctor, I regret to say that the wording of this article of religion is sadly out of harmony with the language of the Sacred Text."

"Eh? "What now, Mr. Munro? Does your critical eye detect something else wrong?"

"You know, Doctor, what the apostle James says on the subject of justification."

"You mean in the second chapter of his letter?"

"Yes sir. Permit me to read. The twenty-fourth verse of that chapter says, 'Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only.' Then the twenty-sixth verse says, 'For as the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.' Now, it seems strange to me that those who framed this article of religion would choose language in direct opposition to statements found in the Sacred Text. It is even more strange that for a century or more the bishops of the M. E. Church have endorsed such language, it seems, without a criticism."

"But this language in James refers to the Christian, and not to the sinner. Therefore it was not supposed to be in any wise against the language of this ninth article of religion in our Discipline."

"Doctor, does God justify the sinner more readily, and on easier terms than he does the saint?"

"Well that is a hard question. The truth is, God is Supreme, and he can justify people according to the pleasure of his own will."

"Doctor, please tell me whether you believe that there is a case of justification by faith only without obedience recorded anywhere in the entire Sacred Text."

"Oh, yes. There is the case of Abraham. In Romans fourth chapter Paul said: 'For if Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory; but not before God: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.' This is one of our strongholds in our

plea for justification by faith alone, or faith without works."

"Doctor, you admitted a while ago that faith must not be alone, but must show itself by confession of sins, repentance, confession of faith, and prayer. Therefore I have concluded that you do not believe in justification by faith only or faith alone. Moreover, you have admitted that the wording of your article of religion is on this point unfortunate. Now, I trust that you will not lead me to suppose that you really believe in the doctrine of justification by faith only, or faith without obedience."

"Mr. Munro," said the Doctor, with some agitation in his tones, "you claim to be a Bible man. Now, please tell me what Paul could have meant when he spoke of Abraham being justified by faith or by believing, but not by works."

"Doctor, you surely are not puzzled over a matter so simple."

"No, I don't profess to be puzzled, and I have preached many times on the subject. Yet I would like to hear your exposition thereof."

"Then, I shall gladly do so. But in the first place, I shall simply state that Paul could not have meant that Abraham was justified by faith without obedience to what God commanded him to do—I say Paul could not have meant this for two reasons: 1. Such a meaning would contradict the facts concerning Abraham in the book of Genesis. 2. Such a meaning would contradict the language of the Holy Spirit through the Apostle James in the second chapter of his letter. For by examining the first part of Genesis twelfth chapter, we find that when Abraham, was told to leave his country and kindred he obeyed; and by examining Genesis fifteenth chapter, we find that God commanded Abram to prepare five different kinds of animals in sacrifice, and he obeyed;

then by examining Genesis seventeenth chapter, we learn that when the sign of circumcision was given to Abraham he attended thereto exactly as God had enjoined; finally by looking at Genesis twenty-second chapter, we find that Abram obeyed the Lord as far as he was permitted to go in offering his son Isaac. To this last fact, James referred when he said: 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son on the altar?' So, then, Doctor, you clearly see that faith without obedience or faith alone is not found in the life of Abraham."

"Yes, I see the point you make."

"Is it not justly made?" Hector asked with an earnestness that demanded a reply.

"I am not disposed to dispute it, but you are not yet through with your exposition of Romans fourth chapter."

"No, sir, but having shown what Paul could not have meant, I now propose to show what he must have meant. All careful readers of the New Testament are aware that one reason why a great many Jews did not accept Christ, as the Messiah, was because of their devotion to the Jewish law, and even those who were converted to Christ were strongly disposed to hold to the law. Not only so, but they had many traditions to which they were disposed to hold with much earnestness. But after the gospel of Christ was perfected and began to be preached in its fulness, then the ceremonies of the law and the traditions of the Jews were all out of place and had become non-essential, to say the least of them. This led Paul to refer in Romans fourth chapter to the case of Abraham who was the father of the Jewish nation and yet who was justified by faith without the works of the law, for he lived and died before the law was given. In other words, the Apostle Paul in trying to convince the Jews that the works of the law were not necessary in order to justification took up the case of Abraham being justified by faith without

obeying the law, which was not given till long after Abraham's death."

"Your idea, then, is that Paul was referring entirely to the Jewish law and not to any obedience that God required of Abraham, nor to any obedience that he may require of us."

"That is the idea, Doctor, and I think that upon examination, you will find it to be correct. For in Romans tenth chapter, we find that Paul wrote concerning the Jews thus: 'For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.'"

"To what do you suppose that Paul referred, Mr. Munro, when he used the expression 'righteousness of God' in the statement that you have just quoted?"

"In. Romans first chapter, we have the answer to your inquiry, Doctor. Paul there said that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ which is God's power unto salvation, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed."

"You don't think, then, that when Paul spoke of Abraham being justified by faith without works that he had reference to faith without obedience to God's commands, but rather that he referred to faith and the obedience of faith without regard to the Jewish law which in Abraham's day had not been given."

"That is the very idea which Paul sets forth, Doctor. No man ever obeyed God more carefully than did Abraham, even though he did not understand God's reasons for giving him certain commands. Hence, though he was justified by faith, without obedience to the Jewish law, yet he was not justified by faith without obedience to what God required at his hands. The same is true with all those of us who are the children of Abraham by faith. We are justified by faith and the obedience which faith

renders to the commandments of the gospel, but the doctrine of justification by faith only or faith alone is a mistake."

Here Hector arose and in his usual manner retired, leaving Doctor W. N. Davidson to reflections which held him an hour or more almost entirely unconscious to all around him.

CHAPTER XXV.

Another week soon passed, and at the appointed time Hector waited upon Doctor Davidson's porch. The Doctor met him in his usual manner, which indicated that he was possessed of sufficient good sense and humility not to feel offended at the young man who had compelled him to make so many acknowledgments unfavorable to the Discipline. Indeed, Doctor Davidson was one of those men who grew too large both physically and mentally to be a genuine sectarian. Besides, like multitudes of the church represented by him, he had more confidence in the Bible than in any human standard of religion. Therefore he would not reason against his common sense and conscience in order to defend the Discipline of the M. E. Church. This accounts for his willingness to admit the truth whenever it was made evident beyond reasonable question. With these explanatory remarks before the minds of our readers we now proceed to report the interview.

"Doctor, allow me to congratulate you on the patience you have manifested in hearing my objections to your religious position. Solomon said in Proverbs fifteenth chapter, 'Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way.' But I judge that such a statement is only applicable to the perverse ones."

"I infer that you have been reading Proverbs again, Mr. Munro."

"Yes, sir, I read Proverbs now for recreation, but in earlier life I committed that entire book to memory. I would advise all others, especially all young people, to do the same."

"Yes, Solomon's writings are invaluable in point of wisdom. For many years I have thought much of what the results would be if all mankind would heed the admonition found in the fourth chapter of his writings in which he said, 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men: avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away.' This is certainly wholesome advice."

"What you say is true, Doctor, of all that Solomon wrote. In all my reading after that wise man I have never been able to detect even a single mistake; that is, so far as I am capable of judging. But how about the Discipline?"

"That remains the same, and the tenth article is the next that demands our attention. It is concerning good works and reads thus:

"Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit."

"Now, Mr. Munro, I am wondering what your objections can be to this article of religion."

"I am glad to say that I have none, and if all your articles of religion were as correct as this one I would be pleased to make a confession to that effect."

"Well, I am rejoiced to learn that you can approve what you think is right as candidly as you object to what you

think is wrong. Shall we go to the next article?"

"Yes, sir, but before so doing I wish to ask this question: If good works be the fruits of faith and a lively faith is known by good works after justification, how can the sinner's faith be known before his justification?"

"Mr. Munro, that takes us back to the former article which speaks of justification. We discussed that in our last interview."

"I am aware of that Doctor, and I am satisfied with the discussion. Yet I have ventured to ask a question with reference thereto in order to bring out this thought: The framers and endorsers of these articles of religion acknowledge that obedience to Christ in doing good works after justification shows faith; that is, faith is known by obedience. Now, I would like to ask: Is not the sinner's faith likewise known by his obedience to whatever Christ requires a sinner to do?"

"Certainly. I think that much was in substance admitted in course of our former interview."

"Now, Doctor, I would like for you to read the next article of religion. As memory serves me it is concerning works."

"Yes, sir, 'works of supererogation,' which are enjoined by the Church of Rome. This article reads thus:

"Voluntary works—besides, over and above God's commandments—which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for His sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, when ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.'

"Now, Mr. Munro, what do you think of this article?"

"Doctor, I endorse it heartily without a criticism."

"I am glad to hear you say that, sir. It had occurred to me that your criticisms on other articles of religion re-

vealed a disposition, to criticize, but I am now persuaded that you were not, as I once thought, 'born in the objective case,' and this admission I gladly make."

"Doctor, did I ever offer a criticism on the Discipline which was unsound?"

"I would not like to affirm that you did, as it might require too much time to prove it. Shall we proceed to consider the twelfth article?"

"Not just yet, if you please, Doctor. You say that the Church of Rome or Roman Catholic Church enjoins works of supererogation."

"Yes, sir, and these are forbidden in the Scriptures. You probably are aware that in Colossians second chapter Paul speaks against 'voluntary humility' and 'will worship' in plain terms."

"Yes, Doctor I recollect the passage. And what will you think if I tell you that the Methodist Church is not free from 'voluntary humility' and 'will worship' in her teaching and practice?"

"I should call for the proof."

"And I would promptly give it, sir."

"You mean to say that the Methodist Church teaches and practices 'voluntary humility' and 'will worship,' and is therefore guilty of doing what she condemns in the Roman Catholic Church?"

"That is exactly what I mean to say, Doctor, and I trust that you will maintain your best composure while I prove it. This eleventh article of religion in your discipline is strictly correct, but in being correct it condemns everything that is peculiar to Methodism."

"That is a very grave charge, Mr. Munro. Are you sure that you can sustain it?"

"Quite sure, Doctor. Do you think you can bear the testimony? It will require much self-control."

"I judge that you need not be uneasy about the self-

control, Mr. Munro. Though not by nature the most amiable man in the world, yet I have learned something in the school of experience."

"Then, Doctor, by way of beginning I mention that the mourners' bench requires a 'voluntary humility,' and since introduced by the will of man. and not by the word of God it is doubtless an item of 'will worship.' Therefore it conflicts with the language of Paul in Colossians second chapter which forbids 'voluntary humility' and 'will worship.' Moreover, all the struggling done at the mourners' bench, both by the mourners and those engaged in helping them, certainly belongs to works that are over, above, or beyond the divine commandments. Hence the entire mourners' bench arrangement may be as justly called a work of supererogation as anything found in the teaching and practice of the Roman Catholic Church."

"Mr. Munro, do you suppose that there is no more good done at the mourners' bench than is accomplished by the Romanist counting his beads and repeating his *Ave Marias* or wearing beans in his boots as a penance?"

"Doctor Davidson, we are not engaged in the business of comparing religious humanisms. What is not given by divine authority is doubtless a humanism. Whatever is a humanism in religion is over and above God's commandments, and is thus a work of supererogation, which your Discipline says cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety."

"I never thought that such language could be made to bear against the mourners' bench, Mr. Munro. It was aimed at the errors of the Romish Church, and I don't think can be justly urged against the mourners' bench."

"But you see, Doctor, this language of the Discipline is like the two-edged sword—it cuts both ways. Besides, I suppose you have seen the poetic lines which say:

"Many a shaft at random sent,
Hits mark the sender never meant;

As when gun that's aimed at duck or plover
Flies back and knocks the owner over.'

"Thus it is with this article of religion."

"I beg your pardon, sir, but this language was not sent at random."

"Yet you must confess that it hits a mark the sender never meant; for I say to you that the mourners' bench is as much a voluntary arrangement, and is as much a matter of will worship as anything in the entire catalogue of Rome's errors,"

"And I say to you that there is no comparison between the mourners' bench and Rome's errors."

"In reply, I simply remark that I can show as much Bible authority for any of Rome's errors as you can show for the mourners' bench."

"That is a bold assertion, Mr. Munro. Are you prepared to sustain it?"

"Try me, Doctor, and you will find that whenever you find the authority in the Sacred Text for the mourners' bench, then I will show authority in the Sacred Text for doing penance or anything else that Rome teaches."

"Did not the Savior say in the early part of his sermon on the mount: 'Blessed are they that mourn?'" the Doctor ventured to ask.

"Yes sir, and the Apostle James says in the fifth chapter of his letter: 'Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl.' Now, Doctor, if the passage you quoted gives authority for a mourners' bench then certainly the passage that I have quoted gives authority for a howlers' bench. You see the trouble is that your logic has but one premise. Your reasoning is this: Christ said, 'Blessed are they that mourn;' therefore we should have a mourners' bench. You might as well say that because Christ said, 'Blessed are the peace-makers;' therefore we should have a peace-makers' bench. Such reasoning, Doc-

tor, you know is illogical and thus erroneous."

"I did not suppose that my reference to the passage in Matthew fifth chapter would escape criticism at your hands," said the Doctor in modulated tones. "Yet I regret to find that you entertain the thought that the mourners' bench or anything else found in Protestantism is on a level with Rome's mischievous traditions. For my part, I cannot regard them as being equally sinful."

"Doctor Davidson, I am not comparing humanisms. What is authorized of Christ in religion is a matter of divine authority. What is not authorized of Christ in religion is not of divine authority, and therefore is a human appendage to that which is divine. All human appendages in religion are humanisms, and all humanisms in religion are condemned by the Sacred Text, whether they be introduced by Jew or Gentile, Greek or Barbarian, Bond or Free, Romanist or Protestant."

"Mr. Munro, it occurs to me that you will have to start a church of your own. Your way of looking at the Bible and at religious doctrines will prevent you from finding any church in existence to suit you."

"Doctor, that is a sad confession which you have just made. As Presiding Elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church you are certainly capable of making the best defense that can be made of the doctrines of your church. In examining those doctrines I am not acting the part of a captious critic, but I proceed in a plain and logical manner. Thus proceeding I inquire for the divine authority for the mourners' bench. But you do not give it, and I take it for granted that you cannot give it, for the simple reason that there is none. Then I point out that the mourners' bench is a humanism for which there is no more authority than there is for counting beads and doing penance. In reply you tell me that I will have to start a church of my own. Why, Doctor, the world is

now largely filled with churches that men have started, and is there need for an addition to the number?"

"Well, it occurred to me that you would find none to suit you."

"Doctor, please don't speak after that manner. I am not hunting for a church to suit me, but I am inquiring for one that is certainly based on the right foundation, and is conforming to the right standard."

Here Hector arose and said: "Doctor, if you entertain the idea that the mourners' bench is defensible, please do yourself the justice to arrange your best arguments in its behalf before our next meeting. But before we separate let me relate an incident concerning the penance of the Romish Church. It runs thus: Two Irish Catholics had been on a drunk or had been guilty of some other offense. When they confessed their misdemeanor to the priest he ordered each to put beans in his boots and walk on them through an entire day. It so happened that the next day, as they were journeying along together going to a town not far distant, that one of them complained much of the beans hurting his feet, while the other walked along without a murmur. Finally the one who was complaining said to his comrade:

"'Jamie, don't the banes hurt you feet?'

"'Niver a bit,' said Jamie.

"'Och,' said Patrick, 'and what koind of a foot have ye got?'

"'Much loike your own,' said Jamie.

"'Then how is it that the banes don't hurt you, Jamie?' asked Pat with impatience.

"'Och, me boy, I boilt them before I started,' said Jamie."

The Doctor laughed heartily, and while he was laughing Hector left.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In course of the week that elapsed between the preceding interview and the one now about to be reported, the Presiding Elder taxed his mental powers for arguments that would justify the mourners' bench. His efforts were not without results as the sequel will show. One line of thought had occurred to him which he felt could not be easily overthrown. Hence, when Hector appeared at the usual time, the Doctor walked to the edge of his porch and took his hand like a man who is glad to see his friend. Mutual inquiries and congratulations concerning health were soon ended, and then the Doctor said:

"Mr. Munro, you requested me, near the close of our former interview, to arrange my best arguments in favor of the mourners' bench. I have been thinking somewhat on the subject since you were here before, and it occurs to me that I am willing to hinge its defense on the one thought of the good which is done by means thereof. On the scriptural principle that the tree is known by its fruit, which I presume you will readily admit, certainly the mourners' bench is justifiable by reason of the amount of good that is done in consequence of people bowing down thereat, and repenting and praying until they secure the forgiveness of their sins.'

Having listened to this speech, Hector said: "Doctor, please tell me what good has been accomplished at the mourners' bench, and by means of the mourners' bench which could not have been accomplished without it."

"Well, the truth is, it occurs to me that your question is a very difficult one to answer. No one can estimate what might have been done without it." "Did the apostles use it, Doctor?" "'No, I would not like to affirm that they did.'" "But did not they get along very well in their endeav-

ors to assist people in securing remission of sins?"

"Yes, no one who believes that the apostles were inspired, and who believes what the book called Acts of Apostles declares could reasonably question that the apostles made a success."

"Then if they made a success without the mourner's bench, could not all preachers now make a success without such an arrangement?"

"I don't know. They were inspired, and thus they had advantages that we have not."

"But:, Doctor, their inspiration was in order that they might set forth the truth correctly, and confirm it. According to the record we have of their preaching they appealed to the understanding of the people by facts and truths, and never tried to throw the people into confusion, in order to convert them. But the entire tendency of the entire mourners' bench procedure is to excite people and throw them into confusion."

"I think you have misjudged this matter, Mr. Munro. At the mourners' bench, those who direct the seekers give them a great deal of scriptural instruction. I am certainly better acquainted with that matter than you are, as I presume you will admit."

"Yes, Doctor, I suppose you know more about it than I do, yet I assure you that I have not been an indifferent spectator on occasions when I have seen people seeking salvation at the mourners' bench. On the contrary, I have sometimes been sufficiently close to hear the instruction given."

"Well, what did you ever hear that was not in harmony with the Bible."

"A great deal, Doctor. More than you would like to hear. But first let me tell you what I have heard that *is* all right. Those directing the seekers generally ask them whether they do not believe in Christ as their Sa-

rior. This is in harmony with the New Testament, and thus far I do not censure. But when the believing, praying penitent makes confession, of faith in Christ, then the mourners' bench director generally says, 'Now you must repent and pray till you feel happy, and then you will know that your sins are forgiven.' Now, Doctor Davidson, I say to you candidly that such a doctrine is not found in the Sacred Text either Old Testament or New."

"Do you object to the sinner praying?"

"No, sir, I do not. Saul of Tarsus as a sinner prayed and Christ heard him. But the doctrine which calls on the alien sinner to repent and pray till he feels happy and tells him that then he will know that his sins are forgiven—this doctrine is as unauthorized of heaven as Rome's traditions."

"But there are many thousands of witnesses to the effect that such a doctrine is true, and do you mean to set yourself against them all and say that they have been deluded?"

"Doctor, this matter must be settled by divine authority and not by a human majority. Elijah at Mt. Carmel had King Ahab, the prophets of Baal, and nearly all Israel against him, yet he was right."

"Well, Mr. Munro, what is your explanation of the results accomplished at the mourners' bench. Possibly you have some novel explanation thereof."

"Doctor, there never was a greater mistake palmed off on Protestantism than the doctrine that the emotions or feelings of the heart constitute a standard by which people may correctly measure their spiritual condition, or their acceptance with God."

"You seem to have forgotten what the Apostle John said in the third chapter of his letter about our heart not condemning us. Allow me to bring the exact language of 1 John 3:21 before you. 'Beloved if our heart con.

demn us not, then have we confidence toward God.' It seems to me that here is a very clear utterance of the word of God in favor of appealing to the heart as a standard of measurement."

"Doctor, the Apostle John was writing to Christians, and not to alien sinners, Besides, John does not say, 'If our heart condemn us not then are we sure that our sins are forgiven.' But please read the previous verse."

The Doctor read: "'For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.' What is there in this, that you wish to consider?"

"Please permit me to take your Bible for a minute. I begin to read with the seventeenth verse of this chapter. 'But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby know we that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.'

"Now, Doctor, such language shows beyond all controversy that the Apostle John was enjoining upon the disciples that they should love 'in deed and in truth,' and they would thereby assure their hearts before him. Such language shows us what he meant when he said, 'If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.'

"Now, Doctor, nothing is more evident than that here the Apostle was speaking to Christians concerning their relations to each other. They were required to love each other in 'deeds' and not simply in 'words.' When they would love in deeds they would thereby do what the Lord required, and by their 'deeds' they would know for themselves that they loved their brethren acceptably to the Lord, and thus their hearts would not condemn them. To this John referred when he said, 'If our heart condemn us

not then have we confidence toward. God.' To sum up this matter I refer to the fifth chapter and second verse of this same letter. It reads thus: 'By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments.' Here we find that the love which God's children are to have for each other is brought to the practical bearing of 'doing' the divine commandments. Thus while it is true that if the Christian's heart does not condemn him, then he has confidence toward God, yet in order for his heart not to condemn him he must love in 'deeds' and not merely in 'works' or 'feelings.'"

"I am aware that you have a genius for giving everything a practical twist, bringing everything to a practical bearing. But I believe that when a man's conscience does not condemn him, but he feels happy in his religion, then he has evidence of his acceptance with God."

"Doctor, where in the Sacred Text do you find such a doctrine?"

"I don't need to find it there. I only need to be careful that I hold no doctrine that is contrary to the Sacred Text."

"Then you will have to give up the idea that conscience is a criterion by which mankind can measure their acceptance with God."

"Why do you say so?" Doctor Davidson inquired.

"Because the case of Saul of Tarsus is against you. He was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious man, who persecuted the disciples of Christ even unto death before his conversion. Yet according to Acts twenty-third chapter, he declared after he was converted that he had lived in all good conscience before God until that day. Now, if he could live in good conscience while he was a bad man, why cannot any one else do the same? Besides, you are doubtless willing to admit that the heathen, the Mahometan, the Roman Catholic, and many

others who are in error are happy in their religion, but you certainly will not claim that their happiness makes them right."

"Mr. Munro, you have some of the most peculiar ideas of any man that I ever met. Please tell me what you regard as the office of conscience if it be not a guide, nor a standard of measuring."

"I shall gladly comply with your request, Doctor. If I have not misjudged the office of conscience, it is similar to the office of a ratchet in machinery. I presume that you are sufficiently acquainted with machinery to know that a ratchet is an arrangement that catches in a cog and holds what is gained. This is the office of conscience in relation to the machinery of the human understanding. The understanding receives impressions and matures convictions, which may be correct or incorrect. Then the conscience holds a man to his convictions whether they be right or wrong. The conscience always approves when people do what they are convinced is right, and condemns when they do what they are convinced is wrong, regardless of whether that which they do be in reality right or wrong. Conscience has no eyes to see nor ears to hear anything beyond the convictions, or beyond the thoughts entertained by the mind. Thus the Jew has a Jewish conscience, the follower of Mahomet has a Mahometan's conscience, the devotee of the Church of Borne has a Roman Catholic's conscience, the Protestant has a Protestant's conscience, and a Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church has a Presiding Elder's conscience."

"I supposed you must have some original notion on that subject, and now I am sure of it."

"Is not this 'notion,' as you call it, Doctor, altogether correct?"

"I am not prepared to dispute it."

"Then, Doctor, please listen while I set before you the results of my investigation of the mourners' bench procedure. From what I have seen among Methodists they seem to think that it is necessary to confuse people in order to convert them. Indeed, I think that confusion is necessary in order to conversion to the Methodist doctrine, but not in order to conversion unto Christ."

"Mr. Munro," interpolated the Doctor, "I regret that you have such a poor opinion of Methodism. Had I known this before our interviews commenced I would certainly not have consented to examine our Discipline with you. It is useless to reason with a man who is so strongly prejudiced."

"Doctor," replied the School Teacher with earnestness, "please don't charge me with being prejudiced. That term can only be used justly concerning those who *prejudge* or judge before they have examined the evidence. I am ready to show you that I have not prejudged Methodism."

"Well, let me hear what you have to say," was the Doctor's reply in tones that sounded as if he were about to take unpleasant medicine.

"Then please listen, and be patient to the utmost. I was going to tell you what I have seen and heard in your meetings.

"In the first place, the preacher declares to the people that conversion is an instantaneous work, accomplished by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of which is a strange, peculiar, or happy feeling.

"In the second place, the preacher tells his own experience, and the experience of others in order to confirm the doctrine that he has set forth, declaring how unspeakably happy the converted ones are, and how the sun, moon, and stars appear brighter than ever before, and how the faces of their friends shine as never before, and how they love

all mankind as never before. Thus the preacher proceeds until he convinces many who have not read the gospel with care that there is some truth in his doctrine.

"Then in the next place, the preacher invites all who desire salvation to come forward and bow down to the mourners' bench, and there repent and pray, and be prayed for, until the Lord sends his Spirit into their hearts and converts them or speaks peace to their souls. At this juncture confusion is fully introduced. The most exciting songs are sung, the most exciting prayers are offered, and the most exciting exhorting is done. Every possible effort is made by those directing the mourners to talk, to sing, and to pray the strange, peculiar, or happy feeling into the mourners. In many instances they succeed, and when the end in view is accomplished, and the mourners are overpowered, then the preacher declares that the work has been accomplished by the Holy Spirit, when the truth is the preacher and the people have done the work themselves by their exciting and confusing procedure. As an evidence of the correctness of my statement, I mention that when the excitement is over many of your converts are gone never to return, perhaps, until the next revival."

"But what have you to say concerning those who remain faithful?"

"My answer is simply this: Many of them have too much honor to go back to the world after having made a profession of religion. They are like soldiers who have through excitement been led to enlist in a cause that they do not understand, yet are too honorable to desert. Moreover, I think that this should also be admitted: Even in the midst of excitement and confusion many of them do make a complete surrender of themselves to do the will of Christ."

"Well, I am glad that you do not hold that all that is accomplished at the mourners' bench is a delusion and a

fraud. It seems to me that the good accomplished at it will justify its use."

"But, Doctor, here recurs my former question, namely, What good is accomplished by means thereof which could not be accomplished by using the gospel as did the apostles? Moreover, you ought not to forget the evil that is done by the mourners' bench procedure. There are many persons whom you can never lead to profess religion at the mourners' bench. In a majority of instances these are among the most sober-minded and excellent people in the community where they are found. Some of these relapse into despair concerning themselves and perhaps go to the insane asylum, or they conclude that the preacher has deceived them and they go into infidelity. Besides, some of those whom you excite are never able to control themselves afterwards, and a few of them become insane. But there is another statement which should be made. Excitable people ought not to be excited, but should rather be kept quiet and taught. Thus your mourners' bench procedure is an injury to those who can be excited thereby, and it is an injury to those whom you try to excite thereby but fail to do so."

"Mr. Munro, I regard your case as hopeless, and it is useless to continue our interviews."

"Just as you may decide, Doctor. Early in our conversations, I told you that I regarded preachers generally as a perverse company. You thought my decision too severe. I was willing to regard you as an exception to the rule, but because of the position you occupy I may yet be led to conclude that you are no exception. The wise Monarch of Israel justly said: 'Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way.' Good-by, Doctor."

"Mr. Munro, I am not willing that you should leave with such impressions concerning myself. So I kindly invite you to return again."

"Doctor, I don't wish to annoy you." "But I wish you to return again."
"All right, sir. Good-by." The friends shook hands and parted.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Time passes rapidly, especially to those whose minds are pressingly engaged. Thus another week had soon been numbered with the eternal past, and the two friends whose interviews we are reporting again met at the appointed time and place. After the usual introductory remarks were ended, Hector said:

"Doctor, I have good news for you."

"All! In what direction?"

"Simply this: I have looked over the remaining fourteen articles of religion in your Discipline, and I find nothing in any of them that I could not with a little explanation endorse except the seventeenth. The Discipline is near you; please read that article."

The Doctor read as follows:

"Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized, but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church."

"Now, what is wrong with this?"

"Every thing is wrong with it."

"I don't see it that way. Please explain yourself."

"Doctor, in what sense is baptism a sign and a mark?"

"Well—the truth is—baptism is a sign and a mark because it distinguishes those who have been baptized from those who have not been."

"But how does it distinguish them? To me they all look alike, and many of them act alike. According to

your ideas of baptism, every infant should be baptized, and by reason of your ideas prevailing in many minds great multitudes of infants are subjected to what you call baptism. Very many of these grow up in the paths of sin and never become Christians. Yet they have, according to your notion, been baptized. Now, tell me please, if baptism is a sign to all these who are not Christians, yet have been subjected to what you call infant baptism?"

"No, of course it is no sign nor mark to them."

"But is it not as much of a sign or mark to them as it is to any others?"

"By no means, for they do not honor their baptism."

"So then, the matter stands in this shape: Infants are subjected to what is called baptism. If they grow up and become Christians it is a sign and a mark to them. But if they grow up and do not become Christians, then their so-called baptism is no sign nor mark to them until they become Christians, but as soon as they become Christians then their so-called baptism at once becomes a sign and a mark. Is that your idea, Doctor?"

"You may state it that way if you like."

"I have no liking about the matter, but I wish to know if I understand you?"

"Well what objection have you to the case as you have stated it?"

"Simply this: A sign or mark is certainly something that can be seen just in proportion as it is a sign or mark. But here is a so-called sign and mark which cannot be seen either in the sinner or the saint. After the water has dried from the infant's face there is no sign nor mark left. Circumcision was both a mark and a sign, but baptism is neither."

"I had never considered it in that light before, Mr. Munro; and I can see that the language of this article of religion is exposed to objection. But what else have you to say of this article?"

"I object to the statement that baptism 'is a sign of regeneration, or the new birth.' If your ceremony in connection, with what you call baptism be correct then John 3:5 refers to baptism. The Savior said in John 3:5, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Now, Doctor, according to this language of the Savior it is evident that baptism is not a sign of regeneration or the new birth, but it is a part of the new birth."

"You don't mean to say that a man cannot be born again without baptism, do you?"

"I simply say this: In your ceremony concerning water baptism you refer to John 3:5, and quote the language of that utterance of the Savior. Then when we come to examine that language we find that it says in so many words, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' For this reason I simply state that water baptism is a part of the new birth and not a sign of the new birth."

"Then according to that conclusion water baptism would be essential to salvation."

"Well, dear Doctor, what objection have you to such a doctrine?"

"I have several very serious objections to it."

"Name them, Doctor."

"In the first place, it would in all cases make the salvation of the sinner to depend on the presence of a third party to baptize him. In the second place, it suspends salvation on an act of our own. In the third place, it is contrary to the case of the thief on the cross—he was saved without baptism. Besides these I have other objections which are equally strong."

"Why didn't you say equally weak, Doctor? That would have been more appropriate. But in reply to your first objection, allow me to state that I will acknowledge

that it is somewhat serious if you will refer me to a single case of conversion recorded in Acts of Apostles under the preaching of the apostles without the presence of a third party."

"Why do you limit me to the book called Acts of Apostles?"

"For the simple reason that the book wearing that name unquestionably sets forth the beginning of the reign of Christ as King, and we are now under his reign."

"What do you do with my second objection, namely, that to regard baptism as essential to salvation would suspend salvation on an act of our own"

"Doctor, you are not a Calvinist, are you?"

"No, sir, far from it."

"You are not a Universalist, are you?"

"No, sir, I am neither a Universalist nor a Calvinist. But why do you ask such questions?"

"Simply because you spoke as if salvation could not be suspended or conditioned on an act of our own, and that is the doctrine of both Calvinism and Universalism."

"I did not properly explain myself, Mr. Munro. I should have said mere formal act of our own."

"Doctor, what apostle ever called baptism a mere formal act of our own?"

"I don't think any of them ever used that exact language."

"Did any of them ever speak to that effect in any language that they ever used?"

"I do not recall such language, yet I say to you that the ease of the thief is directly opposed to water baptism being necessary to salvation. He was saved without being baptized."

"How do you know that he was not one of John's disciples, who had fallen away? It is said in Matthew

third chapter that there went out to John the people from Jerusalem, and all Judea, and from all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But we only learn of a few of these afterwards. Besides, the fact that the thief of whom we speak recognized Christ and called him 'Lord,' declaring that Christ had done nothing amiss, and praying to him—all this indicates that the thief whose case we are considering was very likely one of John's disciples who had fallen away."

"I have never so regarded it. The case of the thief has always appeared to me as a clear case of salvation without water baptism, and thus as an evidence that water baptism is not necessary to the salvation or justification of the alien sinner."

"Doctor, let me give you my analysis of the case of that thief. In the first place, I can make a stronger argument in favor of his baptism by John than any one can make against it, but to shorten the controversy I will admit, formally, that he was saved without baptism. But in the second place, even if he was never baptized, yet in urging his case in favor of the idea that baptism is a non-essential you ignore the following facts: The promise made to him of entering paradise was made before Christ had died, and thus before he was buried, before he was raised, before he gave the world-wide commission, before he ascended to heaven, before he sent the Holy Spirit down, and before the preaching of the gospel by the Spirit through the apostles on the day of Pentecost mentioned in the second chapter of Acts. But we are now living after all these grand events. That is to say, Christ promised the thief a place with him in paradise while the Jewish law was still in force, and thus on the other side of the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning Christ's death, burial and resurrection, while we are living on

this side of the fulfillment of those prophecies, and on this side of the beginning of the fulness of the gospel."

"Mr. Munro, you ought to become a preacher."

"I might have been a preacher, Doctor, if it had not been for the perverseness of the clergy," was Hector's pointed, yet solemn reply. Then without lifting his eyes he continued by saying: "The state of affairs in the religious world looks very dark to me. Rome is corrupt and abominable, so that I cannot go to the Romish Church. But when I turn my eyes to the doctrines of the Protestant denominations I find perversions of the Sacred Text and illogical reasoning to such an extent that it seems to me as if all is confusion." Then turning to the Doctor he said: "Here is even a Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church who urges the case of the thief who lived and died under the Jewish dispensation as an offset to a command which sinners are evidently required to obey under the gospel dispensation."

"Mr. Munro, why don't you start a church of your own?"

"Doctor, you asked me that question once before, as memory serves me, and my answer was that there are already too many churches that were started by men. That is the secret of the confusion in Protestantism. So many men have started churches of their own instead of trying to re-establish the Church of Christ in its purity."

"Mr. Munro, do you think that baptism is essential or necessary to salvation?"

In reply to this question Hector took his pencil and wrote on a blank piece of paper the following:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—*Jesus Christ.*

"He that believeth and is" *not* "baptized shall be saved." —*H. H. Munro.*

Then turning to the Doctor he said: "Read and tell

me which statement of these two you will take."

The Doctor read, and as he did so the color left his cheek. A minute passed before he spoke. Then he slowly said:

"In the sentence bearing your signature is a contradiction of Christ's language."

"Yes, Doctor, and yet in that sentence is a brief but correct statement of the position of all who say as you do that baptism is a non-essential to the salvation of the alien sinner."

"I believe that baptism is essential to the salvation of the alien sinner, but not water baptism."

"What baptism do you mean? Spirit baptism?"

"Yes, sir, I believe that, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians twelfth chapter, 'By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.' Some strong theologians take the ground that wherever water is not mentioned it means Spirit baptism."

Here two of the local preachers belonging to one of the congregations over which Doctor Davidson presided called to see the Doctor, and so the interview between Hector and the Presiding Elder was for the time ended, as they did not wish to continue their talk in the presence of others. Hence, Hector left Doctor Davidson's residence with the promise to return.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Three weeks elapsed before the Doctor and Hector again met for an interview. The Presiding Elder was from home engaged in his official duties, and in the meantime Hector's fall term of school began. So when they again met the two friends spent several minutes in talking about what had taken place in the interval that had elapsed since their former interview. But as soon as

commonplace remarks and congratulations could be ended, Hector said:

"Doctor, our last interview ended with some remarks from yourself concerning 1 Cor. 12:13, and as memory serves me, just at the juncture when we were interrupted you were saying that certain prominent theologians had taken the ground that where the word 'water' does not occur in connection with the word 'baptism' that it means Holy Spirit baptism."

"Yes, I recollect that it was with that remark our interview virtually closed by reason of the advent of two local preachers that came to see me."

"Well, Doctor, what I wish to know is, whether you take that position."

"Not exactly; but I presume that you recollect at one time giving me the privilege of urging any argument or objection that I was acquainted with, whether I endorsed it or not," said the Doctor, smiling.

"Yes, that was our agreement, and regarding your last objection as something that you have thrown in to fill up, or, if possible, to balance up an equation, I shall deal with it at once. Of course, Doctor, you know the difference between a promise and a command. Well, when we examine the New Testament we find that Holy Spirit baptism was a promise to be received by those for whom it was intended, while water baptism was a command to be obeyed by all believers who desire to become Christians. Hence wherever it is evident that baptism was either commanded or obeyed there is no question concerning the reference being to water baptism, since no one was ever commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

"That is a very fine discrimination, Mr. Munro. Do you think it will stand the test of criticism?"

"You may try your critical ability thereon, Doctor, and

when you find a defect therein, then let me hear from you."

"All right sir, but what will you do with the statement here in 1 Cor. 12:13 which says, 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.' Certainly this teaches that all Christians are baptized by the Holy Spirit."

"Doctor, I have examined the Greek particle translated 'by' in this sentence and have found that it is the preposition *en* in Greek, and in this connection it must mean 'by' in the sense of 'means' or 'efficient cause.' Take down your Greek New Testament and see if I am correct."

The Doctor examined the Greek. After reflecting awhile he asked: "Why not take the primary meaning of this preposition and say 'in one Spirit' are we all baptized into one body?"

"Because the primary meaning 'in' refers to 'place,' or 'state,' or 'condition,' and in this case is not admissible. It is not 'into' a place, state or condition, but 'into' a body or institution that those persons were baptized."

"That is correct. But I don't exactly see what you can gain by using the word 'by' in the sense of 'means' or 'efficient cause.'"

"Simply this: The Holy Spirit is the means or instrumentality by which God has generally made his revelation to man, and certainly the Spirit is the means or efficient cause of the divine revelation being recorded. So then by means of the Spirit through the gospel which is revealed by the Spirit those Corinthians were all baptized into the one body which consists of the Church."

"I supposed that you would give the passage some peculiar twist so as to suit your ideas."

"Doctor, my exposition of this passage only takes the twist out of other expositions which are mysterious."

That is all. Moreover, you cannot give any other exposition than the one I have given that will make sense without doing violence to the Greek preposition *en* which is found in the passage."

"Do you believe, Mr. Munro, that there is any merit in water baptism?"

"No, sir. There is no merit in baptism nor in anything else that mankind can do. Paul says in Ephesians second chapter, 'By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast.' There is no merit in anything that mankind are required to *do*. Yet if I have read the Sacred Text correctly mankind are called on to obey Christ in every point where obedience is required in order to test their loyalty. Christ's obedience and sufferings merited our salvation, but he only intends to bestow salvation on those who obey him. John said in the second chapter of his first letter that Christ is the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only (referring to Christians) but for the sins of the whole world. Yet according to Heb. 5:9 Christ has become the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. So then, though Christ has provided salvation for all, yet he intends only to bestow salvation on those who obey him. Thus I have read the Sacred Text If I have read it incorrectly, Doctor, please point out wherein."

"I am glad to learn that you do not regard water baptism as a meritorious act. But before we leave the subject I would like to have your views concerning Holy Spirit baptism. I have no opinion that we shall agree, yet I would like to know what you think on the subject."

"I can easily state, Doctor, what I have read with reference thereto in the Sacred Text. As for opinion I have none on the subject, and if I had it might not be worth expressing. But I now state what I have learned.

"1. The general idea of all the shades of meaning given to the Greek word *baptidzo* is the idea of 'overwhelming.'

"2. In view of this meaning of the word there are but two cases of complete baptism of the Holy Spirit recorded in the New Testament. Of these we read in Acts second, tenth, and eleventh chapters, and they consist of the overwhelming of the apostles on the day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts second chapter, and of the overwhelming of Cornelius and the company he had assembled to hear Peter in Caesarea.

"3. Besides these complete overwhelmings by the Spirit, in which it seems that the persons baptized were completely possessed by the Spirit—I say that besides these there seem to have been many instances in which special gifts were bestowed on Christians so that their own natural gifts were overshadowed or overwhelmed by the superior power of the Holy Spirit. All such may be called instances of partial baptism of the Spirit.

"4. As for the idea that people are now baptized and thus are overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit it is a mistake first, middle, and last. I have been a close observer on several occasions when persons claimed that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and I plainly saw that they were simply overwhelmed with excitement which the preachers and others had deliberately planned and intentionally worked up. Doctor, I have seen and heard shocking exhibitions by persons who claimed to have been baptized with the Spirit. Think of a man at a camp-meeting crazy with excitement trying to climb a tree declaring that he saw his little curly-headed Jesus up in the tree! Is not this shocking? Finally, I have observed that those who make the loudest pretensions to Spirit baptism are generally those who care least about the Spirit's words in the Sacred Text, especially wherever those words do not harmonize with their views."

At this juncture Hector paused and the Doctor spoke as follows:

"You have made quite a speech, Mr. Munro—quite a speech, indeed, sir. And I must say that you have presented to me some new and original views—views which I am not prepared to dispute, neither am I willing to admit that they are correct. Yet to me it seems highly improbable that so many great and good men have lived and died in delusion on this subject, and that it remained for you to discover wherein they were wrong."

"Doctor, have there not been many great and good men who have held the old fatalistic doctrine of Calvinism, which doctrine you reject?"

"I am well aware of your adroitness in reasoning, Mr. Munro. Yet it seems strange to me that no one ever discovered what you regard as the truth on these questions."

"Why do you speak thus Doctor? What avails it for a man to discover a religious truth that is unpopular if the clergy will not accept it, but will decry the truth discovered and cast out the discoverer? If you were convinced of all that I have presented for your consideration you would not dare to preach it among your people, unless you would be willing to answer to the charge of heresy and be excluded as a heretic. In your defense you might vainly urge that the Bible teaches what you had declared, yet if what you had declared were opposed to the Doctrines of your church you well know what the results would be."

"Did you ever know of a case of that kind?" asked the Doctor.

"No, sir, but I know what the Discipline says," was the prompt reply. "It declares that if a Bishop, Presiding Elder, or any other preacher disseminates doctrines either publicly or privately which are contrary to your articles of religion or established standards of doctrine the same

process shall be adopted against him as in case of immorality. Hence, Doctor, you and all other Methodist preachers are bound up to preach Methodism, and that only, regardless of what you may find in the Sacred Text. Thus it is with other denominations, and herein lies the curse of human creeds and confessions of faith. The creed-makers presumed that they had learned all the truth that was necessary, and they proposed to inflict a penalty on any preacher of their denomination who would venture to learn something that they did not know and be so bold as to advocate it."

"I am aware that the language of our Discipline concerning the trial of preachers is susceptible of that interpretation. Yet we all have some liberty in searching for truth and advocating it."

"Doctor, do you think that you could preach exactly what the Apostle Peter preached on the first Pentecost after Christ ascended to heaven without being charged with heresy and brought to trial?" Hector asked curiously.

"I would not blame my people for charging me with heresy if I should preach such views as you hold on the subject of baptism," the Doctor responded. Then he added, "The doctrine that no one can be saved without water baptism all Protestants ought to reject."

"Doctor, you surprise me. Who has advocated such a doctrine?"

"Thus I understand you Mr. Munro."

"You mean that thus you misunderstand me."

"Well, possibly I have misunderstood you. Do you believe that any can be saved without water baptism?"

"Certainly I do. Infants and idiots have nothing to do with water baptism."

"But do you believe that any adults can be saved without water baptism?"

"Not if they have the privilege of learning what the

gospel requires, and yet will not obey it."

"Then you regard that in the gospel water baptism is a condition of salvation, do you?"

"Yes, sir, but not more emphatically than your Discipline declares, and not quite as emphatically as Mr. John Wesley, the founder of your church, declared."

"My dear sir, you make more bold assertions than any man I ever saw or heard."

"But I am willing to test these assertions, if you will consent so to do in our next interview."

"All right, Mr. Munro, only I must request that you come over earlier in the week. The season of the year has come when each quarterly meeting is in my district made the beginning of a protracted meeting at most of my appointments, and so I cannot command Saturday morning as formerly."

"All right. Name the evening which will suit you best and I shall endeavor to be on hand at the appointed time. But, of course, it will not take us much longer to finish our investigations."

"Will Tuesday evening suit you? I shall be at home more frequently on Tuesday evening than any other, though you may often find me absent even on that evening."

"All right, Doctor," said Hector cheerfully. "I shall call around to see you on Tuesday of each week till we conclude our investigations. When I find you home I shall be glad, and when I don't find you I shall not get mad."

"When you don't find me you may return to your room and read the Proverbs of Solomon," the Doctor replied as Hector arose to leave.

"All right, I think I can follow your suggestion with pleasure. I can take Proverbs at night and oatmeal in the morning. Good-by Doctor."

The friends then shook hands and separated.

CHAPTER XXIX.

On Tuesday evening following the interview mentioned in the preceding chapter the Scotch School Teacher again went to the Presiding Elder's house. He found him at home, and soon the following interview began.

"Doctor, near the close of our former talk you expressed yourself in opposition to the idea of water baptism being a condition of salvation, and I stated to you in reply that while I regarded it as a condition of salvation, yet not more so than your Discipline and John Wesley have taught. This you seemed to regard as a bold assertion, and I professed myself willing to test the correctness thereof. Do you recollect?"

"Yes, I recollect that such was the substance of the close of our talk on the subject."

"Well, while I don't presume that you are unacquainted with the text of your Discipline, yet I feel quite sure that you have not considered its text in all its bearings and relations."

"No, I confess that I have always presumed that our Discipline is correct, and thus I have never examined it critically. Moreover I have always been willing to regard it as correct, and thus have had no disposition to look at any part thereof with a critic's eye. Indeed the probability of serious defects therein had not occurred because it had been so long accepted by so many men whom I have had reason to regard as my superiors."

"Doctor, don't you think that this disposition to take for granted that which we have been taught is correct has had much to do with the perpetuation or continuance of errors in religion?"

"Yes, sir. And in all other departments as well as in religion. But please tell me wherein you think that the Discipline teaches that baptism is a condition of salvation."

"Doctor, is it necessary to be in the kingdom of God in order to be saved?"

"I don't see the bearing of your question, Mr. Munro."

"What I mean," said Hector as though he had not heard the Doctor, "is this: There is something spoken of in the New Testament called 'the Kingdom of God,' and in one place 'the Kingdom of God's dear Son.' That something is mentioned as having been established in the days of the apostles, and no doubt was commenced in the course of Christ's personal ministry. Moreover, it is said that persons under the teaching of the apostles entered that kingdom. Now, please tell me whether you believe that it is now necessary for persons to become citizens of that kingdom in order to be saved."

"Yes. Your question calls for an affirmative answer. I would not like to say that it is not necessary to be a citizen in the kingdom of God in order to be an heir of salvation."

"Well, presuming that I understand you, permit me to read in your hearing a few statements from what your Discipline says about baptism. In the first paragraph of your ritual concerning water baptism for infants this document quotes John 3:5 which says: 'Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' Then in the first paragraph of what your ritual says about the baptism of those who are of riper years, I find that John 3:5 is again quoted, which declares that a man can not enter into the kingdom of God without being born of water. Then in the third paragraph of the ritual concerning baptism of others than infants we find that John 3:1-8 is required to be read, which further declares that no man can enter the kingdom of God except he be born of water and thus be baptized, for reference is made to John 3:5 because it is believed to refer to baptism. Now then as you admitted

that it is necessary to be a citizen of the kingdom of God in order to be an heir of salvation and as the Discipline makes frequent reference to John 3:5 in speaking of baptism, it becomes very evident that the Discipline teaches that baptism is necessary to salvation."

"Mr. Munro," said the Doctor, with some agitation in his tone, "you certainly misunderstand. We do not regard any others than infants and little children as proper subjects for baptism until they have first received remission of sins. We believe in conversion to Christ first, and then baptism afterwards."

"Doctor, please tell me what you regard as the difference between conversion to Christ and what you call regeneration?"

"There is no difference between thorough conversion and regeneration or the new birth, except in language. I know that some theologians endeavor to show a discrimination between them, but I have always regarded what they have said to that effect as an effort at discrimination without any real difference. All who are truly converted to Christ are unquestionably regenerated or born again."

"Well, Doctor, I admire your candor much more than I do your theology. You claim that conversion can and should take place before baptism, and you admit that all who are thoroughly converted are regenerated or born again; yet at the same time your Discipline and the Sacred Text together speak of being born of water (which is baptism) as a part of the new birth. How is this, Doctor?"

"How is this? Why it is plain enough to all who are willing to be taught, but of course it is all wrong to one who has a genius for manufacturing difficulties."

"Doctor, please say 'finding' difficulties instead of 'manufacturing' them. I have manufactured nothing, but

have simply pointed out inconsistencies which are already in existence."

"Well, probably the word 'manufacturing' is too strong. Yet I say to you, my dear sir, that you will never find a church to please you. There is none that cannot be criticised, and none that occupies a religious position that is altogether consistent or faultless. I have looked over all the branch churches of Protestantism and I find none of them free from objection. There is the Episcopal Church, the Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Church, and many others that I could criticize as freely and as effectually as you criticize the Methodist Church."

"Doctor, what have you to say of the Church of Christ as established by the apostles? Was not its doctrinal position all right? Could you criticize the doctrine of that church with any degree of justness?"

"No, the Church as established by Christ and the apostles was all right in doctrine. That cannot be denied. But then that Church don't exist on earth now as it did then, though all Protestant denominations are branches of that Church. Christ said in John fifteenth chapter, 'I am the vine and ye are the branches.' So you see we are not very far away from the apostolic Church."

"Doctor, I am surprised at you. Certainly you don't suppose that Christ referred to branch churches when he spoke the words recorded in John fifteenth chapter."

"Why not, Mr. Munro? To what else did or could the Savior refer?"

"He was talking to his disciples, Doctor, as is evident from the words, 'If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch.' Moreover, even the Church of Christ was not established when Christ spoke the words recorded in John fifteenth chapter. As for branch churches, they are unknown to the New Testament, but they originated with

the great apostasy or falling away from the primitive or apostolic Church. Finally, I mention to you, Doctor, that which history most clearly shows, namely, that all Protestant churches wearing names and having creeds that are humanly given and thus unauthorized of heaven—all such are branches of the Church of Rome or Roman Catholic Church."

"Your speech is full of grave assertions which I don't wish to take time to refute. Of course if we were in debate before the public I would notice each item of what you say in order to avoid wrong inferences. But under existing circumstances, I don't feel under obligation to do so."

"Doctor, did not your church spring from the Church of England, called Episcopal Church in this country, and did not the Episcopal Church spring from the Catholic Church?"

"I know your ideas on this subject, and I don't wish to argue the question, especially as it does not belong to our legitimate work of examining the Discipline. What was it that you said at the close of our former interview about Mr. John Wesley's views on the subject of baptism?" the Doctor asked, seemingly desirous of getting away from the question in hand concerning branch churches.

"I said that I did not hold that baptism was essential to salvation more emphatically than did the Discipline or Mr. John Wesley. We have already seen what the Discipline says, and now with your permission I shall read what Mr. Wesley said on the subject. I notice that you have his 'Doctrinal Tracts,' and the edition published in 1832 by order of the General Conference of the M. E. Church held at No. 14 Crosby street, New York. I begin to read on page 248 as follows:

"By baptism we who were "by nature children of wrath" are made the children of God. And this regener-

ation which our church in so many places ascribes to baptism is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith; being grafted into the body of Christ's church we are made the children of God by adoption and grace. This is grounded on the plain words of our Lord, "Except a man be born again of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." John 3:5. By water, then, as a means, the water of baptism we are regenerated or born again, whence it is called by the Apostle, "the washing of regeneration." '

"Now, Doctor, I submit that Mr. John Wesley, the admitted founder of your church not only held that baptism is a condition of salvation and thus is essential to the salvation of the alien sinner, but he even held the Romish doctrine of baptismal regeneration, for he says plainly that by the water of baptism as a means we are regenerated."

"I think you strain Mr. Wesley's language at that point. Besides, I think you will find an explanatory note referring to this very matter."

"Yes, here is a note on the next page. Shall I read it?"

"Yes, sir, I think that the note relieves the case. Please read it."

Hector read as follows:

"That Mr. Wesley, as a clergyman of the Church of England, was originally a high-churchman in the fullest sense, is well known. When he wrote this treatise in the year 1756 he seems to still have used some expressions in relation to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration which we at this day should not prefer. Some such, in the judgment of the reader, may be found under this second head. This last sentence, however, contains a guarded corrective. It explains also the sense in which we believe Mr. Wesley intended much of what goes before to be understood.'

"That is what the note says, and when we look for what this one reader who made the note, calls the 'second head'

we find that under that head Mr. Wesley speaks of infant baptism, and clearly declares that children are 'liable to eternal damnation' because of what he calls 'original sin,' and that this is 'washed away by baptism.' So then the founder of your church was an advocate of baptismal regeneration, and no foot-note that can be appended to his writings can show to the contrary."

"Mr. Munro, you seem to have made the most deliberate preparation on this subject, just as though you were going to have a regular debate."

"I am ashamed of ignorance, Doctor, where ignorance can be avoided. Do you blame me?"

"No, sir, I have great admiration for a careful student wherever I find him. I could wish for more careful students in our pulpit."

"Doctor, if your wish were gratified your theology would suffer. But I shall not annoy you any longer at this time. Yet there is one point more on which I would like to hear your defense, and that is infant baptism."

"All right, come over next Tuesday evening. Our Bishop will likely be with me then, and I shall be glad for you to meet him."

"I would be glad to meet your Bishop, for I suppose that he is a great man. So you may judge that something is wrong with me if I do not come around next Tuesday evening. Good-by, Doctor."

"Good-day, Mr. Munro."

CHAPTER XXX.

Several weeks came and passed after the interview reported in the previous chapter before the Scotch School Teacher and the Presiding Elder were again permitted to meet. This was not, so far as we ever learned, because

either of the two friends evaded the other. But Doctor Davidson was kept from home by his official duties. As a result, Hector went to his house several times without finding him at home. However, the time came when he returned so that he could have an interview with Hector on a certain Tuesday evening. When explanations of absence had been made by the Presiding Elder and received by the Scotchman, the following interview took place:

"Doctor, there is nothing else in your articles of religion concerning which I care to trouble you except what is said in the closing sentence of your seventeenth article. It reads thus: 'The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.' Will you please to tell me why that word 'retained' was used?"

"I am unable to tell, unless it was because Mr. Wesley was a member of the Church of England, and as the baptism of young children was in that church, and he believed in it, therefore he retained it."

"Have you a copy of the Prayer Book of the Church of England in your library?"

"Yes, I think I have one," replied the Doctor, looking over the smaller books of his library. "Here it is," said he, handing down a shelf-worn copy of that document.

Hector took the book in hand and turning to the article on baptism, he said:

"Doctor, the language of this article on baptism is almost verbatim as it is in your Discipline. In other words, this is one of the articles that your Discipline retains from the Prayer Book of the Protestant Episcopal Church. But if the Methodist Church 'retained' infant baptism from the Church of England, then whence did the Church of England retain it?"

"I see what you are after, Mr. Munro," said the Doctor with a smile on his face.

"Well, Doctor, don't you think I shall find what I am

after?" asked Hector, as he looked mischievously at the Presiding Elder.

"I suppose so. At least you will think so, and I would not like to undertake the contract of convincing you to the contrary."

"Doctor, if some one else should hear you say that, he might think that you regarded me as hard-headed."

"Don't you know, Mr. Munro, that your countrymen have the reputation of being hard-headed? I heard of one who in his prayer was accustomed to say, 'Guide us right, Lord—guide us right, for if we once get set in the wrong direction, ye will have hard work to turn us.'"

Here the two friends enjoyed a hearty laugh. Then Hector said:

"Doctor, you look as if you might be Scotch yourself."

"No, sir, I am an admixture of English and German."

"All, well, that opens the way for an incident. Some years ago an old German was in a discussion in which he felt worsted, and when all his attempts at argument had failed him, he broke out thus:

"I won't be "conwinned"" until I am "conwinned" by mine own "conwincion." This, Doctor, is about your case."

Here the laughter was renewed. Then Hector said:

"Well, Doctor, I judge that we are square in regard to the stubbornness of our nationality, and now let us get back to this subject. Of course, as the Methodist Episcopal Church sprang from the Protestant Episcopal Church, and that church sprang from the Roman Catholic Church, it is very evident that if your church 'retained' infant baptism from the English Church, then the English Church 'retained' it from the Romish Church."

"I know that thus it appears, but our church holds that the Scriptures sanction the practice. Moreover, it can be

traced back beyond the establishment of the Church of Rome."

"Doctor, can you trace it beyond the corruptions of the gospel back to the apostles?"

"No, not that far. Yet we can trace it back to the middle of the third century."

"You mean that you can trace it back to the early days of speculation concerning the gospel when men adopted the old and false notion of transmitted guilt commonly called 'original sin.'"

"Well, you may have it that way."

"But is not that the way it stands in history? Was not the idea of original sin the foundation of infant baptism, and does not your Discipline so acknowledge even now?"

"Yes, I judge that you are correct. I know that the first statement of our ritual for infant baptism says, 'Forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin,' etc."

"Doctor, did not we examine that subject of original sin or transmitted guilt in one of our earlier interviews, and find it to be a speculation contrary to the word of God?"

"I am not so sure that we both found it that way though I am persuaded that you thought you saw it that way."

"All well, Doctor, it was not easy for you to make a frank confession of error on the subject, and I did not crowd you. But I well recollect that when the eighteenth chapter of Ezekiel was consulted and God's decision against the Jewish proverb which stated that the fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge—I say when God's decision against that proverb was brought forth I well recollect that you did not have much more to say on that subject."

"I shall not try to convince you that you are wrong,

Mr. Munro. It would take me too long, and life is too short."

"Yes, Doctor, eternity would not be long enough to convince me without scripture that the infantile spirit when it comes fresh from the Great Father of spirits is stained with sin, and is in danger of eternal condemnation unless a few drops of water are sprinkled on the head or face of its infantile body. Why, Doctor Davidson, I am almost astonished that a man of your intelligence could hold such a doctrine without one fragment of the Sacred Text that really supports it."

"You misunderstand this matter," replied the Doctor with earnestness. "Our church does not hold that infants will be lost that are not baptized. True, we regard it as the duty of parents to dedicate their children to the Lord in infancy, yet if they fail to do this we don't hold that their infants will on that account be lost. Hence, I trust that you will not charge the Methodist Episcopal Church with holding the doctrine of infant damnation."

"Yet, Doctor, you must admit that Mr. John Wesley, the founder of your church, held that doctrine, for he said in plain terms that infants cannot be saved from the guilt of original sin in any other way than by baptism. If you question that I can read it to you in that copy of his 'Doctrinal Tracts' which we previously examined."

"You need not trouble yourself," replied the Presiding Elder, about reading from Mr. Wesley. I am aware that he held the extreme views of the Church of England on the subject. But our church does not now endorse those views, and thus we should not be held responsible for them, nor be charged with holding them when we do not."

"I don't wish to charge anything on your church of which it is not guilty. Yet this is true: What you call infant baptism either has or has not some bearing on the child's salvation. If the infant is in no danger, then

there is no need of baptism nor of anything else, except to teach the infant as age comes on."

"You misunderstand this matter, my dear sir. We baptize infants not for their 'present,' but for their 'future' welfare."

"Doctor," said Hector, with a peculiar expression on his countenance, "I weigh a hundred and seventy-five pounds. Would it be wrong to baptize a human being as large as I am who is destitute of faith?"

"Certainly; but why do you ask?"

"Would it be wrong to baptize one who weighs only a hundred pounds that is destitute of faith?"

"Of course it would be wrong, but I don't understand the bearing of your question."

"Doctor, would it be wrong to baptize a 'ten-pounder' who has no faith?"

"All! now I understand. But you must bear in mind that the Jews were required to be circumcised regardless of size."

"Yes, and they were forbidden to eat swine flesh."

"What has that to do with this case?"

"Simply this: The command concerning circumcision, and the prohibition concerning swine flesh were both given to Jews only, and they have no bearing upon Gentiles."

"But baptism came in the room of circumcision."

"You make an assertion without proof, Doctor Davidson."

"I do not think it necessary to go over the whole ground with you, Mr. Munro. But I am sure that there is abundant proof of the proposition that baptism came in the room of circumcision."

"Doctor, I have examined the whole ground, and I say to you that the Bible furnishes not one fragment of direct proof to that effect. The most that you can claim

is 'inference.' But I am prepared to show that in this instance the so-called 'inference' consists of a contribution from the human mind, and is not suggested by anything found in the Sacred Text. Doctor, if you will sit down with your copy of the Bible, with a piece of blank paper and a pencil, and will read the Bible through holding your pencil ready to mark down every passage of the Sacred Text that connects circumcision with baptism, how many passages do you think will have been noted when you reach the last 'amen' of John's Vision?"

"Well, I don't know, I never tried that. I have no idea. But I am sure that all who have claimed that baptism comes in the room of circumcision have not been deluded."

"I am acquainted with the reasoning that shields itself behind great men, Doctor, but it is of no value in religion while we are compelled to admit that the great men of whom we speak were not inspired. But if I should take the Bible, paper and pencil, with the intention of noting down every passage that connects circumcision with baptism I think that I would find one passage."

"What is that?" asked the Doctor in a tone of voice which indicated that he was off his guard.

"That passage is in Galatians fifth chapter, and reads thus:

"Behold I Paul say unto you that if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. . . Christ is become of no effect unto you whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace.'

"This passage shows us, Doctor, that circumcision is so foreign and so different from the gospel of Christ that all Christians converted from among Gentiles who went back to circumcision by so doing fell from grace, and Christ became of no effect unto them. Now tell me, please, how baptism, which is one of the requirements of the gospel,

could have come in the place of an institution that is so different from the gospel that for Gentile Christians to practice it would unchristianize them?"

"I cannot tell—I cannot explain, but I do not think that the greatest men that have lived for many centuries would have believed that baptism came in the room of circumcision if it were not so."

"You mean that they have thought so, or held that idea, or had opinions to that effect—not that they believed it. We hold opinions on inference, and we believe on testimony. Where there is no positive testimony there can be no belief or faith, though there may be opinions.'

"That is a very fine discrimination, Mr. Munro, It seems to me that you said something to that effect earlier in our interviews."

"Yes, sir, I did, as my memory serves me. But] must leave you, and so far as I can judge our interviews might as well end at this juncture. In closing them, allow me to thank you, Doctor, for the patience you have exercised while I have told you how I regard this question of religion."

To this the Doctor responded in terms which indicated that he appreciated his acquaintance with Hector and expressed his wish to meet him again. The two friends then parted. The Presiding Elder was thus left to reflect on his Discipline as a defective, vulnerable document, and the Scotch School Teacher returned to his boarding place confirmed in the conviction that the creeds in Christendom were not in harmony with the Bible. This was their last interview concerning religion. The Elder had heard a sufficient number of objections urged to his Discipline to make him inexcusable in the last great day. Hector Munro, on the other hand, had failed to find in Methodism what Christ called "my Church."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Hector's next religious interview was with a Presbyterian Doctor of Divinity, named Johnson. Before the interview now to be reported, Doctor Johnson had been informed by the Methodist Presiding Elder, Doctor Davidson, of Hector's capability in handling the Scriptures. But as he had spent four years at college, and three years at a theological seminary by way of preparation for the ministry, and then had spent thirty years in the ministry—in view of all this it is not marvelous that Doctor Johnson was anxious to meet the Scotch School Teacher. He was not permitted to remain anxious very long. Doctor W. N. Davidson planned for them to meet. Yet their first meeting was seemingly accidental. The two Doctors were taking a walk, and met Hector, who was out on what he called one of his "health expeditions." After Doctor Johnson and Hector had been introduced, the Doctor playfully said:

"Mr. Munro, my friend, Doctor Davidson, has informed me that you are quite a theological disputant."

Thereupon Hector quickly turned on Doctor Davidson and said in tones of assumed seriousness:

"My dear sir, I had not previously supposed that you were a leaky vessel."

"I am not," said Doctor Davidson, "but I did inform this gentleman that you and I have had quite a number of interesting interviews."

"Well," replied the Scotchman, "I don't wish to secure for myself the reputation of being a 'theological disputant.' All my interviews with Doctor Davidson concerning religion were in consequence of my wish to find what Christ called 'my Church,' but thus far I have made a failure. My last interview with Doctor Davidson was largely occupied concerning what is called 'infant baptism.' To that institution my mother subjected me when

I was an infant, and I find no trace thereof in the New Testament."

"Don't you believe that your mother was a good woman, Mr. Munro?" asked Doctor Johnson.

"Yes, sir, but good people have made mistakes, and goodness on the part of my mother or anyone else never sanctified a falsehood so as to make it a truth."

"Don't you believe that water baptism came in the room of circumcision?"

"I don't believe that water baptism came in the room of circumcision nor anything else," replied Hector, and then turning upon Doctor Johnson, he said: "Please tell me, sir, what authority you have for speaking of 'the room of circumcision?' Has circumcision been divinely abolished?"

"Certainly it has. There is, perhaps, no subject concerning which the learned are better agreed than that Jewish circumcision has been abolished."

"Your response does not touch the question, Doctor. You have told us that the learned are agreed that Jewish circumcision has been abolished. Now tell me whether those learned ones of whom you speak really agree with the Sacred Text on this subject."

"I think they do, Mr. Munro. Christ said in Matthew fifth chapter that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil, and Paul said in Romans tenth chapter that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Besides, in Galatians fifth chapter, we learn that those who would go back to circumcision would thereby make Christ of no effect to them, and they would in consequence thereof be numbered with those who had fallen from grace. If all this, when taken together, does not show that circumcision has been fulfilled and has been abolished I don't know what would or could make a showing to that effect."

"Doctor, was circumcision a part of the Jewish law given on Mt. Sinai in Arabia or was it given hundreds of years before the law?"

"Well—of course—the truth is, it was given before the law. But what of that?"

"Just this: When Christ said that he came to fulfil the law and the prophets he had no reference to circumcision, for that was not a part of the law then given, though that law acknowledged it and enforced it. On the same principle, Paul did not refer to that which existed before the law was given when he said that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believes."

"But, Mr. Munro, what have you to say concerning the language in the fifth chapter of Galatians?"

"Simply this: Paul was writing to Christians who had been converted from among the Gentiles, and thus was writing to those upon whom circumcision was never enjoined. Therefore for those Galatian Christians to permit Judaizing teachers to cause them to adopt Jewish circumcision would be for them to regard the gospel as insufficient for their salvation, and this would place them among those who had fallen from grace."

"That is a new idea which you present, sir. I have always thought that circumcision was ended when Christ came, or, at the farthest, when he died."

"Do you believe that the Apostle Paul would have practiced circumcision after he became an apostle had it not been right for Jews to circumcise after Christ had died?"

"No, sir, but why do you ask that question, Mr Munro? Did Paul ever circumcise any one?"

"Yes, sir. In Acts of Apostles sixteenth chapter, we learn that Paul circumcised Timothy who was only a half Jew."

"That was for policy—to make him acceptable to Jews —was it not?"

"There may have been a thought of policy in Paul's mind, but had it been wrong, you are well aware that Paul would not have performed such an act."

"I confess that the case has something in it worth considering."

"Yes, Doctor, and the more you consider it the clearer it will become that circumcision was given to the father of the Jewish nation as a mark of separation. In Rom. 4:11, it is stated that Abraham 'received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had' while he was yet uncircumcised. At the same time it was intended for all Jews and all who could be lawfully numbered with them as a fleshly mark of national separation. Therefore, in regard to the Jew, the institution of circumcision was based on flesh and not on character. Its purpose was to keep Jews separated from all other nations, and it is a type of the separation of Christians or spiritual Israel from all other people."

"You have made quite a speech, sir, and along a new line of thought. But I can see how the language in Galatians fifth chapter may have been pressed by certain commentators beyond its meaning," said Doctor Johnson, as though in deep thought.

"I have no doubt that it has been unduly pressed. Doctor, and the idea that circumcision is now wrong for Jews is doubtless a mistake."

"Suppose a Jew becomes a Christian, do you think that he ought to practice circumcision?"

"I have no doubt on this subject. The fact that Paul, circumcised Timothy after he had become a disciple of Christ clearly indicates this. Besides, as Jewish circumcision is not based upon character but on flesh and blood, there is no indication that Jews should not attend to that

institution regardless of other circumstances."

"What do you think is God's purpose in preserving the Jews as a separate people?"

"First, God intends to fulfil his promise made to the Jews in Jeremiah thirtieth chapter that though he should make a full end of all nations among which the Jews should be scattered, yet he would not make a full end of the Jews. Second, no doubt God has a great purpose yet to accomplish through the Jews."

"Do you believe that the Jews will be finally converted?"

"I have no doubt on that question. Paul says in Romans eleventh chapter that 'all Israel shall be saved.'"

"It has occurred to me that the word 'Israel' in that statement refers to spiritual Israel."

"Why should the word 'Israel' be thus used in the passage under consideration," asked Hector, "when it is not thus used in any other passage in either the tenth or eleventh chapters of the letter to the Romans? Yes, you may go back to the ninth chapter, and take it in connection with the tenth and eleventh chapters thereof, and you will see that the name 'Israel' is probably used a dozen times or more as referring to the Jews, and probably not once does it certainly refer to the Church of Christ. Besides, in Rom. 11:26, the words 'Israel' and 'Jacob' are used interchangeably. Paul argued that 'all Israel shall be saved' because it is written that there shall come forth out of Zion the Deliverer who will 'turn away ungodliness from Jacob.' Does the word 'Jacob' in that prophecy mean the Church of Christ that needs to have ungodliness separated from it? If not, then the word 'Israel' in that prophecy don't mean the Church of Christ."

"Then, if I understand your position, Mr Munro, you think that the Jews as a people will be kept separated from all other nations, and will finally be converted and return to their own land?"

"That is my conviction, Doctor, by reading the Sacred Text."

"Do you think that they will be converted before they return, or after they return?"

"I am undecided on that question. As it is not an important matter, the testimony is not clear thereon. But that which I wish you not to forget, Doctor Johnson, is, that baptism did not come in the room of circumcision, for circumcision is yet in its own room—its own divinely appointed room."

"That is a new idea to me," replied Doctor Johnson, "If it be correct, it is certainly revolutionary."

"Yes, and you may depend that it is correct," said Hector. Then with a twinkle in his eyes that indicated mischief, he added, "Even if YOUR idea were correct that also would be revolutionary."

"How so? What do you mean?" inquired the Doctor, in tones that indicated his puzzled frame of mind.

"Simply because only male children were or could be circumcised. Females, or girl babies, had no part therein. If baptism came in the room of circumcision, then only those of the masculine gender have a right to baptism. Moreover, every male child born of Jewish parents who was not circumcised was to be cut off from God's ancient people. Thus circumcision was essential to membership in the Jewish Israel. If baptism came in the room of circumcision, then baptism is essential to membership in Christian Israel. This would make baptism essential to salvation."

"Well, the orthodox denominations generally regard it in that light. Mr. Munro, you seem not to be informed on this subject."

"Do the orthodox Quakers so regard water baptism?"

"No, sir. They are an exception to the rule."

"Do you regard water baptism as necessary to becoming a Christian?"

"No, WE do not, though there are several minor denominations who do."

"So it is not regarded as necessary to becoming a Christian and reaching heaven, yet is necessary to church membership. Such an idea indicates that it is more difficult to have membership with you than it is to get to heaven," said Hector.

At this juncture of thought, Doctor Johnson turned to Presiding Elder Davidson and remarked, "I don't think, Doctor Davidson, that my time will permit me to continue this interview, especially as it don't seem to be profitable." So saying both Doctors turned to leave,

"Hold! gentlemen," said Hector. "Permit me to say to you that whether this interview be profitable to you or not, yet it is certainly of great advantage to me."

"In what respect can such an interview be of advantage to you, my dear sir," inquired Doctor Johnson.

"In this respect, gentlemen, I am advantaged. All such interviews impress me that the secret of the differences among religious denominations is not found WITHIN the Bible, but is found OUTSIDE of the Bible," answered Hector.

"May I inquire, Mr. Munro, what you mean by such a statement?"

"I mean simply this, gentlemen: While admitting all that you can justly claim in favor of your learning, yet you have in your theological educations been led to accept assumption for evidence, appearance for reality and resemblance for identity."

"Will you give us an illustration of what you mean by such a statement?" Doctor Johnson requested, with the manner of one who regarded himself in the hands of a superior.

"I know of no instance in which assumption is more certainly accepted for evidence than in the statement that water baptism came in the room of circumcision. With all due respect to you, gentlemen, and with assurance that I esteem you as highly as I do any preachers whom I have ever met, yet I say to you candidly that there is not one fragment of either reason or revelation in favor of the statement that water baptism came in the room of Jewish circumcision. It is the boldest and barest assumption, such as would be ruled out of any court in the land should it be urged in the trial of any case."

"You are quite a controversialist, Mr. Munro," said Doctor Johnson; and with that remark, he turned to go away.

Hector then said: "Gentlemen, I don't wish to be obtrusive, yet I would like to walk with you a short distance. As your time seems limited, and I would like to make an explanation, I wish to walk with you."

Both Doctors consented readily and Hector started with them. As he did so, he said: "My explanation which I wish to make, Doctor Johnson, has, in some measure, been previously made to Doctor Davidson along the pathway of our interviews. Briefly stated, it is this: My mother was a Scotch Presbyterian of the strictest type, and she required me to learn the longer and shorter catechisms of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Before I reached the years of manhood, I studied that Confession of Faith quite closely and found therein contrary statements concerning baptism, and I found infant condemnation clearly implied. Moreover, among Church Censures, I found that the elders of the Presbyterian Church were declared to have power to remit and retain sins. Finally, I learned that every passage of scripture quoted as a proof text for the articles of the Confession was perverted from its divinely intended purpose. Such conclusions prevented me

from joining the Presbyterian Church. In course of time it occurred to me that I would join no church unless I could find what Christ called 'my church' in Matthew sixteenth chapter. As a result, I am yet outside of all churches, yet a Bible reader and a Bible believer."

"I am disposed to dispute what you say, Mr. Munro, concerning our Confession of Faith. That document was prepared by men of such clearness and consistency that I don't think that you could detect such gross blunders in it as you have alleged. If my time permitted, I would appoint an hour to hear what you could say on the subject."

"Well, Doctor Johnson, you may rest assured that I would be glad to submit for your consideration my reasons for concluding as I have concerning the Westminster Confession." Then turning to Doctor Davidson, Hector said: "Elder, can't you detain this gentleman long enough for us to have an interview?"

"I would be glad to do so," said Doctor Davidson.

"No, friends, unless there be some change in my engagements, I cannot remain," replied Doctor Johnson. Then he added, "Should any change take place, we can let you know, and arrange for an interview."

"All right, gentlemen. Good-bye."

After shaking hands with the two preachers, Hector left them to finish his walk which, by meeting them, had been interrupted.

When Hector was beyond hearing, Doctor Davidson, who had been a deeply interested listener from the first of the interview just concluded, turned to his Presbyterian friend and inquired, "Well, Doctor, what do you think of him?"

"I don't know what to think. He puzzles me. What conclusion have you reached with reference to his case?"

"I regard him as strictly honest, well informed, and

the clearest logician I ever met. Though you may be disposed, to reject his conclusions, yet you will do well not to attempt it in his presence."

"Let us go to the post-office," said Doctor Johnson.

Accordingly, these two preachers walked along together. At the office, Doctor Johnson received information that scarlet fever had made its appearance in the town where his next appointment to lecture was, and he was requested to defer it until some future date. When Elder Davidson was made aware thereof, he said at once, "Doctor, that will give you an opportunity to hear that young Scotchman again."

As the reader does not care for details of an arrangement for an interview, we simply state that the time was set for 9 o'clock the next morning at Doctor Davidson's house.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Hector was informed the evening after he had left the two preachers that he could have an interview with Doctor Johnson the next morning beginning at 9 o'clock. On receiving this information, he dismissed everything else and decided to read the Westminster Confession of Faith through, if possible, before the time set for the interview. This decision was rendered as a precaution. He had been a school teacher long enough to know the importance of preparing against probabilities and even possibilities whenever he could. He knew not what might come up in his talk with Doctor Johnson, and so he decided to refresh his memory even concerning the catechisms found in the book that was arranged at Westminster in the sixteenth century.

When his watch indicated 10 o'clock, he was but half

through his task. Yet he did not continue to read, but retired at his usual time and slept till 5 o'clock in the morning. Then he arose and within fifteen minutes again had the Confession of Faith in hand. He read till called for breakfast and after breakfast took it with him as he went for his usual walk. When he returned his task was finished, except reading the references to scripture given in the Confession, and he was ready for the interview.

Five minutes before 9 o'clock, Hector was at Doctor Davidson's gate. He left his room just in time to reach the Doctor's at 9 o'clock, he thought, but his mind was working rapidly and thus he walked faster than usual. When he was seated in the library and the commonplace remarks concerning health and weather were over, Hector spoke thus:

"Dr. Johnson, I was informed last evening by our mutual friend, Doctor Davidson, that your time would permit you to have an interview with me and confute my charges against the Presbyterian Confession of Faith."

"No, Mr. Munro," exclaimed Doctor Davidson, "that wasn't what I wrote you. Produce that note, and let it speak for itself."

"Never mind about that note, Doctor. The note is all right. I know that you did not say all that I charged upon you, yet I drew an inference which I think is correct." Then turning to Doctor Johnson, Hector said: "Doctor, you have no idea how much satisfaction it will give Doctor Davidson if you can only throw me into confusion this morning, Thus for *his* sake, I wish you to do your best."

In reply, Doctor Johnson said that he feared the interview would not result very satisfactorily as he had no copy of the Confession with him, and Doctor Davidson's could not be found.

"Don't be uneasy, Doctor, I have one," said Hector, as he drew that document with his left hand from his coat pocket, and passed it to Doctor Johnson. With his right hand, he drew out his small edition of the Bible.

"Mr. Munro," said Doctor Johnson, with a seriousness somewhat peculiar to Presbyterians, "the most serious charge that you made against the Confession of Faith of the church with which I am connected, was the charge that every passage of scripture quoted or referred to in the Confession was perverted. This was a very grave charge and should not be lightly made. Our Confession of Faith and the Catechisms connected therewith were all drawn up by men who were among the most learned and most pious of the century in which they lived. Besides, this Confession as a book has been ratified by quite a number of general assemblies since it was first adopted, and in each instance the General Assembly consisted of men who were equal, to say the least, to any men of their day and generation. Therefore, I certainly regard it as presumptuous in one of your age to make such a sweeping charge against this Confession."

"Doctor, do you endorse everything found in the Episcopalian Prayer Book?"

"We are not here to discuss the Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church, Mr. Munro. One question at a time, sir," said Doctor Johnson pointedly as he nervously ran his fingers through his side whiskers on both sides of his face.

"Dr. Johnson," said Hector as he lifted the finger of his right hand and pointed it straight at the Doctor's face, "if we should have but one question at a time why did you not permit your Confession of Faith to stand on its own merits?"

"I did, sir. I do, sir. That is my purpose. This Con-

fession has stood, does stand, and it will stand on its own merits."

"Then why did you in your speech a few minutes ago make special mention of the learning and piety of the men who made it, and of those who have from time to time endorsed or ratified it? Don't you see that in your first speech you introduced the subject of learning and piety? Why did you do this if you wish to discuss only one subject at a time? Please answer me this question."

"I was merely giving the history of the Confession, and did not intend to base an argument specially on the learning and piety that originally framed and afterwards ratified it."

"Then why did you close your speech by saying that you certainly regarded it as presumptuous in one of my age to make such a sweeping charge as I had made against the Confession?"

"I did not—did I? Dr. Davidson, did you hear me make such a declaration?" asked the Presbyterian gentleman, evidently in confusion.

"You certainly did, Doctor," replied Doctor Davidson. "I was specially struck with the language, and I felt sure that the critical ear of Mr. Munro would catch it likewise, and it occurred to me that you would hear from it again."

"Well, it was not my purpose to make a special plea in behalf of the Confession by reason of the piety and learning with which it originated or has been endorsed. I suppose that I used such language as you gentlemen say, yet I did not mean it just that way."

"We are comparatively strangers," said Hector, "and the only way I can judge what you MEAN is by what you SAT. Because of what you said about piety and learning I inquired whether you endorsed everything found in the Episcopal Prayer Book. If you had said *no*, then I in-

tended to ask you if it did not originate, and if it was not accompanied with considerable learning and piety. From that I intended to take you to the learning and piety of the Roman Catholic, and the Greek Catholic, Church. From the position of all those churches you seriously differ. Thus I proposed to prove by your own opposition to those churches and their creeds that learning and piety are not a guarantee against error. By that method I proposed to break down the force of your would-be argument in favor of your Confession of Faith which was based on the learning and piety with which it originated, and by which it has since been endorsed. But if you will waive the questions of learning and piety and my seeming youthfulness we can now give attention to the original subject."

"I waive those questions, sir, and call on you to give your reasons for saying that every passage of scripture quoted or referred to in the Confession has been perverted," replied Doctor Johnson.

"You did not quote fully my statement. I did not stop with the word 'perverted,' but said that in the Confession all the passages quoted or referred to were perverted from their 'divinely intended purpose.' This was my statement."

The Doctor seemed to hesitate about making the admission that he had failed to quote the School Teacher's language fully, yet he seemed afraid to make either a denial or affirmation on the subject. So he simply said, "Admitting what you say I call for the evidence to substantiate your statement against the Confession."

Here Hector turned to Doctor Davidson and requested him to read 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. Doctor Davidson read the language: "'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of

God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

"I don't see how that will help you in your task," said Doctor Johnson.

"You will see presently," was Hector's response. To this he added: "Paul here says that the inspired scripture is profitable 'for doctrine.' But the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church has used inspired scripture as PROOF of DOCTRINE which is stated partly or wholly in human language. Now tell me, Dr. Johnson, do you really believe that inspired scripture was given for the purpose of PROVING humanly stated doctrines to be correct?"

"I am not on the witness stand, sir. You must make out your own case."

"Then if you will not answer my question I simply deny that inspired scripture was divinely intended to prove humanly framed and humanly stated doctrines. I likewise affirm that every inspired scripture which is quoted or referred to in the Confession of Faith as proof of the different items of that Confession is PERVERTED FROM ITS DIVINELY INTENDED PURPOSE."

"And is that the method by which you intend to prove your sweeping assertion against the Confession?"

"Yes, sir. And by thus answering your question, I treat you more candidly and courteously than you treated me a few minutes ago when I asked you a question."

"Well, sir. That is no proof at all. Your denial, and your assertion constitute no proof whatever."

"Suppose that I am in your employ as a servant, and you furnish me a team of horses to plow in your field, and that instead of thus using them, I hitch them to a wagon and go to a mill for another man, am I not perverting your team and your servant to another purpose than that which you intended?"

"I don't see the application of your illustration, sir."

"Then suppose you furnish me with money to buy a team of horses, and I go and use that money to buy a team of mules, do I not thereby pervert the money that you placed in my hands?"

"Your illustration is altogether irrelevant, sir."

"On the same principle it may be safely stated that as God has given inspired scripture for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, if that scripture be taken and used as PROOF-TEXTS to substantiate statements of doctrine shaped by uninspired men, then that scripture is PERVERTED FROM ITS DIVINELY INTENDED PURPOSE."

"Your reasoning is altogether illogical, Mr. Munro."

"But that is not all," Hector continued as though he had not heard the Doctor's last response. "That is not all. The leader of those men who framed this Confession of Faith was a wicked persecutor, who caused a certain man who was charged with heresy to be burned at the stake."

"You refer to Servetus? I deny it, sir. I deny that John Calvin caused him to be burned," replied the Doctor indignantly.

Hector drew from his pocket a pencil and note book and wrote these words: "As a man of truth and honor I deny that John Calvin caused, occasioned, authorized, or sanctioned the burning of Servetus at the stake for heresy." Having written these words Hector handed them to Doctor Johnson, and asked him if he would sign his name to them.

He answered, "No, sir. I am under no obligation to sign any such statement. Yet I deny it."

"Will you risk your reputation on the denial of that statement?" asked the Scotchman.

"I risk nothing. Yet I deny that John Calvin was re-

sponsible for the burning of Servetus or that he ever endorsed it," replied the Doctor as he again felt for his Presbyterian whiskers.

Here Hector arose and looked over Doctor Davidson's library. His eye soon rested on Chambers' Encyclopedia Vol. VII. Taking it from the shelf he turned to the 182d page and read the following concerning Michael Servetus, and a certain book that he published, and his death.

"After its publication Servetus wished to go to Italy, by way of Switzerland, but in passing through Geneva, was arrested and imprisoned at the instigation of Calvin. After a long and complicated judicial procedure, Servetus was condemned to be burned, and the sentence was carried into execution Oct. 27, 1553. The fate of Servetus, after all palliations are weighed, remains a dark stain on the memory of Calvin."

Then Hector said, "Besides this I say to you that John Calvin in one or more of his sermons explicitly endorsed the burning of Servetus."

When Hector had presented the foregoing testimony concerning John Calvin's connection with the burning of Servetus he saw that Doctor Johnson was crest-fallen, and thus Hector, in a gentler voice than he had formerly spoken, addressed the Doctor after this manner:

"Now, my dear sir, the testimony makes it evident that the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and thus the Presbyterian Church, originated chiefly with a man who was sufficiently a Roman Catholic to cause one to be burned at the stake whom he regarded as a heretic. Your denial of this could not stand because it was in direct opposition to the recorded facts. The same is true of your repeated denials that all the utterances of the Sacred Text are perverted which are quoted or referred to in the Confession of Faith, or rather in the entire book called 'The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.' You know as well as I do that to

make statements of doctrine, partly or wholly in human language, and then select and conscript utterances of the word of God to prove those statements correct is not the use for which the word of God was given. Inspired scripture was given for *divine doctrine itself* and not as something by which to *prove humanly stated doctrine*. But in your 'Constitution,' which embraces your Confession and Catechisms, you have the humanly shaped and humanly stated doctrine in the upper half of the page and the scripture in the lower half, thereby showing that you put your statements above the scripture used, and that your best use of the scripture is to have it subserve the purpose of propping or supporting your humanly conceived and humanly arranged notions concerning religion."

When Hector had finished the foregoing remarks he paused. Doctor Johnson made no response and so he proceeded. In so doing he took up the copy of the Confession that he had brought with him and spoke thus:

"Doctor Johnson, if I should ask you what is the highest and most influential document in the United States you would at once answer that it is The Constitution of the United States, and in so answering you would speak the truth. Then, on the other hand, if you should ask me what is the highest and most influential document in the Presbyterian Church I would answer—"The Constitution of that Church.' In thus answering I would likewise tell the truth."

"Mr. Munro, the Confession distinctly declares that the Scriptures are the infallible rule of interpretation."

"I am aware of that, Doctor. When you were ordained as pastor, presbyter or evangelist you were required to confess your faith in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

"Yes, sir. I well recollect when I answered that question affirmatively. And what is wrong with that question?"

"Nothing whatever. But the next question that you answered affirmatively was this: 'Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?' When you gave an affirmative answer to this second question you virtually promised that you would accept the Confession of Faith as the standard by which to measure and interpret the Scriptures. Your position then was like the case of a man who is asked whether the snow is perfectly white, and then is required to put on a pair of green spectacles through which to look at the snow."

"I deny it, sir. That is only your opinion of it, sir," said the Doctor with something of his former emphasis.

"You made several denials a while ago, Doctor, that did not stand the test, and you ought to be careful about positive denials. You well know that even if you should discover that the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church is unscriptural in certain particulars you would not venture to denounce it. At least you would imperil your standing by so doing."

"I think," said Doctor Johnson rising to his feet, "that our interview might as well close. I am too well established in the position that I occupy to be moved by anything that you might say, and I feel satisfied that you are set in your notions. You are a Scotchman, and the Scotch have the reputation of making but few changes. So I judge that our interview might as well close."

This brought Hector to his feet, and facing Doctor Johnson he spoke after this manner:

"I presume, Dr. Johnson, that you have stated the truth. You are a clergyman in a church not mentioned

in the Bible, and you pledged yourself when you were ordained that you would accept the creed of that church. In the position that you then placed yourself you have long remained, and I doubt not that in such position you will continue till the day of your death. The same is probably true of Doctor Davidson, our mutual friend, who has witnessed our interview. Gentlemen, you are both, established in the creeds of churches, neither of which is mentioned in the Bible. I had many interviews with Doctor Davidson testing whether he could show me where the Church is that holds the faith and practice recorded in the New Testament. I have now had two interviews with Doctor Johnson, and I find that my method of speech and what I present are becoming irksome to him. As I do not wish to be regarded as obtrusive I consent to leave you."

Having thus spoken Hector took up his Bible and copy of the "The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church" and his hat. He bade both preachers good-by shaking hands with each. As he reached the door he turned to them and in solemnity of voice, which probably both men remembered and possibly were haunted with till the day of their death, he added: "Gentlemen, you and I shall meet in the judgment. If I fail in this life to find the Church of Christ as established by the apostles I shall regard you as largely responsible."

Neither of the preachers answered a word, and thus without further remark Hector left their presence.

Several minutes elapsed after Hector's departure before silence was broken by either of these "Doctors of Divinity." Then Doctor Davidson spoke as though talking to himself and said: "I think Mr. Munro would be pleased if he should ever fall in with the Disciples whom we sometimes call Campbellite. Once or twice I have been tempted to tell him of them. But I felt in hopes that he

might be induced to join one of the orthodox churches. Now I have given up that idea. Yet I dislike the thought of a man so clear and conscientious being united with such a people as the Campbellite."

"My opinion concerning him is," said Doctor Johnson feeling his Presbyterian whiskers, "that he is perversely critical."

"You don't know him as well as I do," said Doctor Davidson. "I have never met one whose intelligence and honesty impressed me more favorably. He is an ADMIRABLE young man. But he will accept nothing in religion except that for which divine authority can be given. Thus neither you nor I, Doctor Johnson, can satisfy his mind."

"The trouble is that he knows too much about religion without having become religious. Besides, he has no reverence for preachers. He will dispute with them as readily as he will with any others."

"That's true," said Doctor Davidson. "In several of the early interviews I had with him he gave me an account of how he lost his reverence for preachers, and I can assure you that it was highly interesting."

Thus these two clergymen talked about Hector as their prejudices suggested until the subject happened to be changed to an expression of opinions concerning the intelligence and sturdiness of the Scotch people.

In the meantime Hector had his reflections. One of the first was that his recent reading of the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms was in vain so far as that interview was concerned. Then he thought: "No, not altogether, for I had the satisfaction that I was prepared for any turn that the controversy might take."

After reaching his room Hector took up the Confession and read aloud the fourth item on the sixty-sixth page. "As there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation;

so there is no sin so great that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent."

Then he turned to the 122d page and read the fifth item. "Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance [referring to baptism], yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized, are undoubtedly regenerated."

Then he soliloquized thus: "Here we find that every sin even the smallest deserves condemnation, and to contemn or neglect baptism is a great sin, yet grace and salvation are not necessarily connected with baptism so that no one can be saved without it. Now then as the Greek word for sprinkling when anglicized is not baptism but RANTISM, as every Presbyterian preacher knows, certainly this language in the Confession will bear heavily against them in the judgment."

Then Hector turned to the 129th page of the Confession and under the heading "Of Church Censures" he read the following:

"The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, and to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the gospel, and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require."

Upon this Hector remarked, talking to himself: "Rome scarcely claims more. The idea that the Presbyterian elders have in hand the keys of the kingdom of heaven to retain and remit sins is both PRESUMPTUOUS and AUDACIOUS." Thus saying he threw the book from him as an unclean thing and began walking the floor. After a few minutes he seemed calmer and taking his seat at a table

he opened his Bible and read the twenty-seventh division of the Book of Psalms. Reader, go thou and do likewise whenever agitated over the wrong doings of others.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Six months or more elapsed before Hector had another interview on the subject of religion which it is our privilege to report. In other words, though he occasionally spoke on the subject in the social circle among the parents of his pupils, yet it was six months or more before he met another Doctor of Divinity. The occasion of his meeting another was the funeral of one of his pupils. It was in an Episcopalian family that a girl of fifteen summers had died, and on the occasion of her burial an Episcopalian parson was employed to officiate. There was no church of that order in the town of W., and so it was necessary to send a distance of fifty miles to secure a preacher. After the funeral services were over the Episcopal parson took a train for the purpose of reaching his home in time for his duties the next day. As it was Saturday Hector was at leisure, and so he took the same train, partly to pay a visit twenty miles on the same road, and partly to have an interview with an Episcopalian clergyman. The passenger coach was well filled and Hector took a seat beside the clergyman.

"Doctor White, how long have you been preaching?" inquired Hector.

"I have served my present parish for thirteen years, and previously I served four years as an assistant of an aged Rector in another place. So I may justly say that I have been engaged in the ministry seventeen years."

"Do the Episcopal ministers all wear a surplice when engaged in their public duties in the congregation?"

"That is a rule with our ministers."

"May I ask whence it originated?"

"In the sixteenth century, I presume, when certain bishops under Henry VIII. of England revolted against the Roman Catholic Church."

"Do not the Romish Priests wear a similar garb when engaged in their public official duties?" inquired the School Teacher.

"Yes, I believe they do."

"Have you any evidence that the apostles of Christ instituted anything of that kind?"

"I can think of no evidence on the subject."

"Then did not such a custom really originate with the Romish Priests, or with the apostasy from primitive simplicity?"

"Very likely it did. When I said previously that it originated in the sixteenth century I meant so far as the Church of England is concerned, which is represented in America by the Protestant Episcopal Church."

"Do you acknowledge that the Church of England originated in the sixteenth century?"

"Certainly. Why do you ask?"

"Because some of your historians endeavor to trace Episcopalianism back to the apostolic age."

"That can be done by going into Roman Catholicism, and through that institution back to the first century. The Romish Church is an episcopalian institution. The Greek word *episcopos* is translated by the word 'bishop' in the Common Version of the Scriptures, and you are aware that the Roman Catholic Church has bishops and archbishops. The Church of England followed the Catholic Church that far, and so the Episcopal Church is largely under the control of her bishops and arch-bishops."

"Rome's cardinal and pope you reject," said Hector meditatively. Then he asked, "Did the Church as estab-

lished by the apostles have diocesan bishops and archbishops?"

"No, it did not need them. Only as the churches of Christ increased in numbers did they need to be arranged in the diocesan order."

"That is to say, parson, you mean that before the primitive Church had greatly increased the congregational government was all right, but when the churches became very numerous it became expedient to arrange them into the diocesan form of government."

"That is my idea exactly." ,

"Please inform me," Hector then requested, "why a thousand churches could not be controlled by the law of Christ in the congregational government as well as a hundred?"

"I suppose they could if they would. But you see that when churches became very numerous they were more liable to vary from each other in doctrine and practice. So in order that the oneness of faith and practice might be maintained it was deemed expedient to unite them in the diocesan form of government, and thus bring many churches under one bishop or one board of bishops."

Then Hector inquired, "Did such an expedient preserve the oneness of the faith?"

"Not altogether," answered the parson with reluctance in his tone.

Then came this inquiry: "Did not the diocesan form of government prepare the way for the metropolitan, and did not that form prepare the way for the patriarchal, and did not that form prepare the way for the papal, which is now known as the Roman Catholic?"

"This seems to be a slow train on which we are traveling, Mr. Munro," said the parson looking out of the car window.

"Rather slow," said Hector, "when we are in a hurry."

But we are both passing through life with due speed. Now let me inquire, parson, whether the different successive governments that were adopted between the congregational in the first century and the papal in the seventh century of the Christian Era were not all the outgrowth of a desire to centralize power and place the government of the entire Church into the hands of a few ambitious men?"

"What time have you? It seems that we are making very slow progress."

"It is just a quarter after five, parson, according to my time piece. But was not the establishment of the pope the last act of centralizing power?"

"Yes, the papacy was the consummation. The Greek portion of the Church never went that far in centralizing power. When the patriarchal government was established then the Greek Church ceased to centralize. That is, it went no farther in the direction of centralizing than the patriarchal government."

"I perceive," said Hector, "that you have acquainted yourself with the history of that period. Now tell me, parson, did not the centralization of power tend to divide rather than unite those who professed to be Christians?"

"I must confess that the history of speculations on the part of leading men in course of that period so indicates. But that could not have been understood beforehand. I shall presume that at least a majority of those who engaged in centralizing power after apostolic days did it for the best. Yet developments prove to us that what they did finally resulted in a complete overthrow of the primitive or apostolic simplicity, and at the same time the primitive purity of faith and practice was almost entirely lost."

"Parson, in view of your candor I am disposed to ask you another question," said the School Teacher.

"Well, sir, if I can answer it I shall do so."

"My question is this: Do you really claim that there is any scripture authorizing infant baptism?"

"No, sir. I consulted our bishop on that subject some time ago and he said that it is not safe to affirm that the Scriptures authorize infant baptism."

"Why then do you practice it?"

"Because it does not contravene any part of the Sacred Writings, and because it was retained from the Roman Catholic Church when our articles of religion were framed. The Methodist Church which sprang from the Church of England, retained the practice from us."

"Parson," said Hector, "permit me to congratulate you on your candor. I have talked with preachers on former occasions and have found them endeavoring to defend infant baptism by the Sacred Text. In some instances I have found them evasive, or disposed to become offended when questioned concerning the divine authority for certain of their practices. After thus assuring you that I appreciate your candor permit me to ask, what you meant by saying that infant baptism does not contravene any part of the Sacred Writings."

"Just this: There is no utterance of scripture condemning the practice. In other words, there is nothing in the Bible against it, and therefore we are not violating any portion of scripture when we practice infant baptism."

"Parson, do you rest the case on this position?" inquired Hector.

"Chiefly on this idea, that we are violating no portion of the word of God when we practice it," was the reply.

"Looking at such a position from a logical point of view, your idea is that anything that is not expressly condemned in the exact words of the Sacred Text is lawful. Are you willing to affirm that much?"

"No, sir. Such a statement might embrace too much."

"Yet your chief justification for infant baptism is that it is not expressly nor explicitly condemned by the Sacred Text. Such a position implies the proposition that anything which is not condemned by the exact language of scripture may be regarded as lawful. As logicians would say, That is your SUPPRESSED PREMISE.

"I think this is the slowest train on which I ever traveled," said the parson.

"Permit me to inform you," said Hector not regarding what had been said about the slow train, "that the position you occupy will compel you to admit many things that you regard as rank heresy."

"I don't see it that way, sir."

"Where is the language of scripture that condemns the Romish monastic life, the priesthood, the confessional, or even the purgatory of the Romish Church? You cannot place your finger on a single passage of the Sacred Text which condemns such doctrines."

"Yes, but they are condemned indirectly—by other institutions and features of doctrine that are taught in the Scriptures."

"So is infant baptism. The baptism of believers is taught in the New Testament, and that clearly implies that those incapable of belief have nothing to do with baptism. The truth is there *is* nothing more said about infant baptism in the New Testament than there is about idiot baptism, insane baptism, the baptism of people while they are asleep, or when dead, or the baptism of horses. Moreover, the fact that the New Testament teaches only the baptism of believers makes it evident that the baptism of all other classes than believers is condemned."

Here Hector's station was called and after bidding the parson good-by he left the train.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The result of Hector's visit mentioned in the preceding chapter was that he received a call to another town as principal of an Academy at an advanced salary, and the privilege of using the Academy building for a class during each vacation while he might remain. Besides, there were other advantages which he valued. Hence he accepted the call and notified the Board of Directors in the town of W____ concerning his decision. The Board protested and offered him the same salary that he calculated to receive where he had promised to go. But he simply replied that he always made his promises with caution and kept them with care. Thus as he had promised to superintend the school at N____ the next year he felt bound to comply. Thus he continued his duties until the ending of the session in which he was then engaged. The closing exercises were conducted very much as they were the preceding year. The diplomas or certificates of graduation were delivered to those who had passed the final examination (thirteen in number) with a few appropriate remarks, and then Hector made a speech, the tenor of which was as follows:

"Gentlemen and Ladies,—Before we separate to-day it becomes me to make a few remarks. Most of you are doubtless aware that with the exercises of this hour my relationship with this school ends, and that my purpose is to serve as principal of the Academy in the town of N____ for the next school year. But I must say that had I been aware of your estimate of my services in your midst before I promised to take charge of another school I would have been more reluctant than I was to make such a promise. It is an old saying that it is better to maintain friendships that we know to be good than to discard them for those that are unknown. On this principle it would have been safer for me to have remained

among those with whom I have spent two years of profitable work than to have left you for an unknown place of labor. Yet a promise is a sacred something, which should be made with caution and kept with care.

"Just here it occurs to mind, my hearers, that as this is probably my last speech before you I could do nothing better than to dwell on this important thought. The more I see of life the more I am impressed that it is dangerous to make definite promises. But when it is necessary to make them they should be carefully regarded and sacredly kept. My plan is to avoid definite promises whenever I can do so without injustice to others. Then when the force of circumstances have demanded a definite promise from me, and that promise has been definitely made, then I endeavor to bend every circumstance and every energy in the direction of its fulfillment. This is the only course that is safe with reference to the affairs of this life. Young folks, this subject is now fairly before our minds, and I earnestly request your best attention while I make a further statement and illustration thereof in your hearing.

"Several years ago I heard a young man charged with lying by one of his best friends. The secret of this charge was that the young man to whom I refer had promised over and over again to visit his friend and several times had named the date when he would fulfil his promise, but in each instance had failed. In reply to such a grave charge the mentioned young man playfully remarked that out of the abundance of his good nature he often made promises which he found it impossible to fulfil.

"My hearers, I would advise you all, from the oldest to the youngest, and from the greatest to the least, against the cultivation of such a disposition. There are already too many easy talkers and liberal promisers in the world. They do not consider the sacredness of truth and the dis-

grace of being regarded as untruthful. Out of the abundance of their good nature, or, rather, out of the abundance of their carelessness they say what they don't mean and make promises which they never try to fulfil. If the word 'unreliable' were written across their foreheads, so that every one would know them it would be fortunate for those with whom they associate and transact business.

"But there is another method of violating truth which deserves attention, and against which I wish to forewarn you while I am talking on this subject. In the social circle there is much untruthful talking done for the sake of courtesy. Indeed, certain books on decorum indirectly encourage falsifying for the sake of politeness. All such books are condemnable. Permit me to give you an illustration of what I mean, and then you will understand.

"In a certain family there was a girl about seventeen and a little boy about seven years of age. One day that girl and her mother discovered that this little boy whom I shall call Johnny had told a lie. Thereupon they lectured him and shamed him until he cried and felt as if he was so mean that he was scarcely fit to live. To sum up their punishment for his offense they sent him up into the garret to remain a whole hour by himself. Not long after he had gone to that objectionable place he overheard the following interview:

"Mama, there comes old Mrs. J. up the sidewalk, and I wouldn't be surprised if she intends to make us a call.'

"Well, I hope not,' said the mother. 'I was annoyed with her senseless talk the other day and I have no time now to be bothered with her.'

"But, mama, she's coming in the gate. Isn't that *too* bad? We have already been put back with our work, and we intended to go out driving this afternoon.'

"Mrs. J. rapped and Johnny's mama opened the door. As she did so she said: 'How do you do, Mrs. J.? I am

glad to see you. Come in.' Then Johnny's sister came rushing up and said: 'Good morning, Mrs. J. I'm *real* glad to see you. Mama and I were just wishing that somebody would come, as we were feeling lonesome.' [Laughter.]

"All this time little Johnny was up in the garret listening and wondering within himself why it should be so bad for him to tell a lie while his mother and older sister could tell as many lies as they might see fit in order to appear nice and polite. [Laughter.]

"Such behavior on the part of that mother and sister was sinful in the sight of heaven, and it was sinning against the child whom they wished to correct. Of course, I shall presume that none of the mothers and sisters here to-day have ever been guilty of such misconduct as that just delineated. Yet should you ever become acquainted with any who are guilty thereof you will please think of little Johnny in the garret suffering punishment for lying and listening to his mother and sister rattling off lies as rapidly as their tongues could pronounce them.

"Permit me to detain you while I relate another instance bearing in the same direction. Several years ago I knew a boy seven or eight years old who was living with his uncle Henry. One day I heard that uncle threaten to give his little nephew a switching in these words: 'You Millard, if you don't mind me I will make your shirt hurt your back.' Millard answered in a drawling way, 'Ya'as, you said you were goin' to whip me yisterday, but you *didn't do* it.' [Laughter.]

"Do not all my hearers understand that the impression made on that boy's mind was very unfortunate? It broke down his confidence in his uncle, and perhaps in mankind generally, as well as encouraged him in perverseness.

"Another incident crowds on my recollection which I wish to relate. In a family where I was boarding for a

time several years ago there was a little boy of about four or five summers. His father was a carpenter and when he left home in the morning for his work he generally remained all day. One day after the father had gone away the little fellow was not on his best behavior, and his grandmother who had a German accent said: 'Valter, you must behafe, or I vil tell your papa ven he comes home after a vile und he vil vip you.' 'Is papa tomin' home after a wile?' asked the little fellow. His grandmother said: 'Yes, didn't I tell you dot he vil come home?' But Walter didn't seem satisfied. So he asked again: 'Is papa tomin' home after a wile?' A lady who was boarding there and heard the interview said to the boy: 'Why do you ask? Did not your grandma say so?' 'Yes, but ganma tells *lies* sometimes,' answered the little fellow. [Laughter.]

"Now, ladies and gentleman, permit me to inquire what you think of such treatment of children? Certain clergymen tell us that mankind are totally depraved, and for that reason children are naturally disposed to do wrong. But is it a matter of astonishment that children go wrong when their home training is such as I have delineated? Some of you may disclaim ever having trained your children after the manner just described, and you may ask me to explain why your children have gone astray? My answer is that probably your children have been associated with other children who were taught to tell lies by the example of their parents from infancy. Thus the company that your children have been keeping at school and elsewhere may be sufficient to account for all their waywardness without any speculations about total hereditary depravity.

"As you are interested in this subject, my hearers, permit me to relate one more incident to illustrate further the importance of truthfulness on the part of parents.

"Several years ago there was a preacher of considerable ability that went to a certain place on Saturday for the purpose of being in position to fill an appointment on the first day of the week. The place assigned him to remain over night was at a house from which the husband and father was absent at his work, and which was for the time being occupied by the wife and mother with her children. Those children were two boys about the ages of eight and ten. Not long after the preacher had been seated and the mother had asked to be excused while she continued her work those boys came in and took a survey of the stranger. (It was in the summer season and the boys were barefooted.) Well, as I was going on to say, they took a survey of the stranger, and I may add with mischief in their looks. After a few moments one of them broke the silence by asking: 'Mister may we jump off your shoulders?' Curious to know what such a question meant the preacher gave his consent. One of them then came up to him and asked him to lean over a little. He leaned forward, and no sooner had he done so than one of them mounted his shoulders and jumped from them with a laugh. [Laughter.] The other followed his example in high glee. [Continued Laughter.] Then the mother came up from the cellar kitchen where she had been working and said: 'You BOYS! Ain't you ashamed of yourselves! If you don't stop that this minute I'll get a switch and give you a good whipping—BOTH of you!'

"But the boys didn't look frightened, and no sooner had the mother gone back to her work than they were again jumping off the preacher's shoulders.

"'You BOYS! Didn't I tell you to stop that? If you don't stop that noise right away I'll whip both of you GOOD! Mind that now!'

"The mother lowered her head, went back to the cellar kitchen, and the boys went on with their jumping. The

mother threatened them over and over again, but they did not quit their rudeness till the father came home from his work. But the preacher began to reflect on the condition of things in that household. He watched that mother and before the time came for leaving on Monday he heard her threaten those boys probably twenty times or more, and not once did she carry her threat into effect. Such behavior on her part that preacher regarded as unbecoming in any mother, or any one else having children in hand, and he further regarded it as exceedingly damaging to the children. So he decided that before leaving he would give that mother a rebuke that she would recollect. Accordingly just before taking his departure he said: 'Sister, what makes you tell so many *lies*?' 'What do you mean, Bro. B? Is it your purpose to insult me before leaving my house this morning?' 'Oh no, sister, I didn't wish to insult you by that question.' 'Well, Bro. B., what do you mean?' 'Only this, my sister,' the preacher said, 'since I came to your house I have heard you threaten to whip your boys twenty times or more, and you have never whipped them yet so far as I have learned. Now, that is what I call *lying*. I don't mean to insult you. Good-by.'

"The woman was confused, and she felt angry. As the preacher went out of her sight she felt like wishing that she might never see him again. But that preacher felt that he had done his duty, and so he was not much concerned about how favorably he might be regarded.

"But time passed on, and a year or more after the facts just mentioned had transpired that same preacher visited that same church and lodged with that same family. The wife and mother received him kindly. Soon thereafter those boys came in, walked up, shook hands with the preacher, and then sat down. After talking awhile the mother asked to be excused and left the preacher and the boys together. And what do you suppose they did?

Jumped off his shoulders again? No, But they behaved like young gentlemen, entertaining the preacher by showing him pictures, books, and other things which they seemed to regard of interest to him. Thus they continued to behave while the preacher was with them.

"The next Monday just before the preacher left that home the mother of those boys said: 'Bro. B., do you recollect what you said to me when you were about to leave here that other time?' 'I recollect it very well, sister,' remarked the preacher 'Well,' said she, 'I thought at that time that you were certainly one of the bluntest and rudest men I had ever entertained, and I felt when you had left that I never wished to see you again. You had charged me with lying, and I thought your language really cruel. But after you had been gone awhile I began to think that there was some truth in your charge, and I determined that no one should ever have reason to lay such a charge against me again. So I made no more threats against my boys without carrying them out; and have you noticed the change in the conduct of my boys?' 'Yes, sister, I have noticed the change,' said the preacher. To this he added: 'Allow me to congratulate you on your good sense in receiving my severe rebuke. I would not have been so severe, but desperate cases require desperate remedies.'

"Now, gentlemen and ladies, you all understand what I meant by the remarks made in the early part of this address about the sacredness of truth. You likewise understand that in my estimation children are often what their parents and guardians have made them. Of course, natural temperaments differ, and the numerous liars and otherwise perverse ones which good children often find among their associates have much effect. Yet parents, and especially mothers, have the first and best opportunity to train the childish mind and heart in the right direction.

I trust that you will all bear In mind at least the outlines of what I have said, and retain the impressions I have endeavored to make. Please accept my thanks for your attention."

Having concluded his speech, Hector was about to call on one of the preachers present to pronounce the benediction, and thus dismiss the audience in the usual way, when he was interrupted by one of the school board who arose and first called for a vote of thanks for the speech to which they had all listened with so much profit. This was heartily and unanimously carried, and was followed by a resolution of regret that the "earnest and effective principal" of their school was going to leave them. This was likewise adopted with enthusiasm. The truth was that the people were impressed that Hector was capable of teaching adults as well as children.

As he was about to arise to have the audience dismissed, a farmer in the audience said: "Mr. Munro, could you not speak for us again on the Fourth? You made us a good speech last year and we would like to hear another from you."

Hector arose and said that he did not claim to be a public speaker, yet promised that if he found it convenient to be present he would do so, and if there were any time to be occupied after the other speakers were through he would make a few remarks. After thanking the audience for expressions of appreciation of what he had said and done, he requested the oldest preacher present to dismiss the assembly.

CHAPTER XXXV.

When the Fourth of July came, the prospect was not for a "glorious Fourth" so far as the weather was con-

cerned. Hector did not enjoy seeing other people disappointed, yet he did enjoy seeing the rain fall. Besides, he enjoyed the thought that he would not be required to speak. But before eight o'clock, the clouds seemed to have emptied themselves on the thirsty earth. They became lighter and had the appearance of being higher. Soon the sun began to shine, the mists cleared away, and every prospect seemed favorable. The dust was settled, the people were glad by reason of the rain, and the indications were that in the park a large audience would that day be gathered. The smaller boys had already commenced their celebration of the Fourth by fire crackers, while the larger boys were placing anvils on each other with charges of powder between them. In their zeal to excel each other in loud reports, several of them broke window panes in business fronts for which they would be required to pay, and by reason of which that Fourth would cost them heavily.

When it became evident to Hector's mind that he would be called on to speak, he began to collect the thoughts that he had previously considered. The speech that day he concluded would probably be the last that he would ever make in that locality, and he decided that it ought to be a speech that would be remembered. Accordingly, he began to think of what the speakers who were announced to precede him would probably say. His conclusion was that they would enter upon high praises of this country, its constitution, its laws, its brave men, pretty women, and sweet babies. Yes, he had heard enough of oratorical gush on such occasions to know what the average Fourth-of-July orators would probably say. Therefore, he decided that he would keep clear of their lines of speech, except, perhaps, to offer a few criticisms. But another thought then occurred to his mind. It was that one year before he had made a speech at that same place.

Yet he soon felt comfortable in the reflection that the people who were then present would not recollect what he had then said.

"When all had been considered that pertained to the probable circumstances of the occasion, Hector had only about one hour for arranging what should be the burden of his speech should he be called on to address the people.

When the time came for him to go to the park, a carriage stopped in front of his boarding house to take him over to the speakers' stand—a distance of not more than two hundred yards. He declined to enter it, stating that he was not a politician and could not enjoy such honors. So the carriage rolled away without him, and he proceeded to the park on foot. As he did so, he said with some degree of severity: "This exhibition of American enthusiasm touches a principle which will result in the ruin of America. Nothing was more widely separated from my thoughts than that I should be sent for, because I made a conditional promise that I would speak on this occasion." But just then several of his acquaintances overtook him in their hurry to get over to the park and his time for private reflections was ended.

For an hour or more the band had been playing, but Hector could not enjoy the music. The writer heard him say once in his maturer life: "I have no more music in me than there is in that stick"—referring to the cane with which he was walking. He could not tell one tune from another, and thus "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Yankee Doodle" were all the same to him.

"When the time for the speaking to begin had arrived a young lady of good elocutionary powers read "The Declaration of Independence." It was a very creditable performance. She was highly congratulated, and when the performance was all over she came to Hector and said: "Mr. Munro, I am led to believe that I have made a suc-

cess in reading to-day, and I wish to thank you for it." Hector told her that he did not understand her, as she had not been under his instruction, having graduated the year before he came. "All!" said she, "but I have visited your school a few times, and your clear enunciation so charmed me that I determined to cultivate myself in that direction." Hector simply had time to say in the language of Solomon: "Knowledge is easy to him that hath understanding," and both he and the young lady were interrupted by the congratulators.

Returning from this digression we come back to report public events of the occasion.

After the reading of the Declaration was ended, and the band had played, a third rate lawyer who was a candidate for prosecuting attorney in that district was called to deliver an oration. He did so in spread-eagle style, endeavoring to show historical knowledge. He referred to Alexander the Great at the river Granicus, Julius Caesar at the Rubicon, and Napoleon Bonaparte crossing the Alps. Hector followed him with endorsement until he remarked that Napoleon was the first man who ever attempted to cross the Alps with an army. At this juncture Hector drew an envelope from his side pocket and made a note. He then followed the speaker until the remark was made that while our nation's capital is now at Washington, yet there are two other cities that can claim the honor of having been the capital of the country, as congress assembled there. Those cities he said were Philadelphia and New York. At this juncture Hector reached for his note book, glanced at several pages, replaced it, and then on the envelope previously used he made another note. The speaker finally concluded with high encomiums on the country's dead and the country's living. He was loudly cheered. The band played, and the people generally expressed their approbation of what

they had heard. A few were wondering what the Scotchman meant by taking notes.

The next speaker was introduced. He was a preacher of about thirty-five years of age, and was an optimist of the highest type. After relating several stories about pretty women and babies and stating a few historical facts he spent his time eulogizing the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the different states, the grand public institutions, the school laws, the fertile soil, and finally closed with remarks about the glorious future of this country. The speech was well prepared and well delivered. The effect was satisfactory to the speaker, and when he closed there was considerable demonstration. The band played and as only a little over one hour had been spent by the two speakers Hector felt uncomfortable. He knew that his conditional promise would need to be fulfilled. He could not do justice to the occasion without offering several criticisms, and he knew that on such an occasion criticisms were specially liable to be misunderstood or misinterpreted. Thus while the band was playing he regretted that he had made a promise to speak and wished that he was absent from the place. But he knew that in a minute or two his name would be called and so he decided that he would meet the case in his usual honest manner.

The playing ceased and Hector was introduced and he spoke after the following manner:

"Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen and Ladies,—You notice that I address the two sides of the house in the order of creation. Man was made first, then woman was made as his help-meet, and I prefer to address them in that order. I make this explanation in order that I may not be misunderstood.

"Permit me to say that after listening to the speeches which you have this day heard, and noticing that they

were highly satisfactory to the audience generally, I seriously regretted that I had made a promise to speak on this occasion. ['But there are many who wish to hear you,' said a man in the audience.] I regretted it because if I be just to you and to myself I shall need to offer a few criticisms, and on an occasion like this they are very liable to be unpleasant and misinterpreted. ['Offer the criticisms,' said another, 'we kin bear 'em.']

"But before beginning to criticize, permit me to say that I endorse a great proportion of that which you have heard concerning the grandeur and excellence of this country. One of the best evidences that I could have given in this direction, I did give when I renounced my allegiance to all foreign authorities and took up my citizenship here as a matter of choice. Those of you who hear me this day are, perhaps, with very few or no exceptions, citizens of the United States of America because you could not avoid it, or by necessity. But I am a citizen here by choice after I reached the age of manhood. [Cheering.]

"Yet I must say that a part of what you heard to-day reminds me of what a countryman called soda water. Several years ago a man who was poor in money, but rich in domestic love was married. He regretted his poverty because he could not take his bride on a wedding tour as some of his friends had done. After thinking over the matter a while, he concluded that he would at least take his bride to a show. This was proposed by him and she readily consented. So they went to the show, as happy, I presume, as newly married folks generally are, but not more happy than they should be throughout life.

"But what I wish specially to mention is, that after the show was over, or this man and his wife had left the show, they went to a soda water stand. The husband proposed that they would take a glass of soda water.

When it was poured out the woman drank her glass at once. The husband began to watch the frothing and sparkling in his glass. It interested him so that he still held his glass until all the frothing and sparkling had ceased. Then he found a few table spoonfulls of some kind of liquid at the bottom of his glass. He drank it, and as he walked away said to his wife: 'Maria, do you know what most of that was in your tumbler?' 'No, John, what was it?' 'It was nothin' in the world but SWEETENED WIND.' [A roar of laughter.]

"The same is true, my hearers, of much that we hear on occasions like the present, though this one was largely an exception. Indeed this is generally supposed to be an occasion of enjoyment and self-gratulation, and when 'sweetened wind' seems somewhat appropriate. Yet as we claim to be men and women who wish to know the truth, and do not under any circumstances wish to be deceived it becomes us to be willing to learn. With these preliminary remarks I express a few thoughts for your consideration.

"1. In the year 217 B. c., Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general crossed the Alps, and thus Napoleon Bonaparte was not the first commander who had the courage to undertake such a daring and difficult enterprise.

"2. To this I wish to add that it is easy to say that Philadelphia, New York, and Washington are the three cities which had the honor of being at different times our nation's capital. But historic accuracy requires us to say that six other cities shared in that honor, namely, Baltimore, Md., Lancaster, Pa., York, Pa., Princeton, N. J., Annapolis, Md., and Trenton, N. J. The reason for this was that Congress felt the importance of keeping out of reach of the British, and thus felt the importance of moving from place to place while the revolutionary war continued. But this is a question which you can consider at your leisure.

"3. Now, my hearers, I wish to make a few remarks concerning the unfavorable conditions of things in this country as I behold them. You have heard two speeches full of self-gratulation, which I endorse with very few exceptions. Two of those exceptions I have already mentioned by offering certain corrections of mis-statements in regard to history. The remainder of those exceptions I now introduce by referring you to the fifteenth chapter of the first book of the Prophet Samuel. You will therein find that the God of Heaven sent King Saul, who was the first man to reign over the Jews as king, against a nation called Amalekites. God gave him a charge to destroy that nation utterly. Saul went and succeeded well. But instead of carrying out the command of Jehovah fully he saved the king of the Amalekites alive, and permitted his soldiers to save the fattest of the sheep and cattle to be used in sacrifice. When Saul had returned to his own land Samuel met him. Saul said to him: 'Blessed be thou of the Lord; for I have performed the commandment of the Lord.' In reply to this the Prophet Samuel asked: 'What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?'

"This incident, my hearers, introduces the form of expression on which I wish to dwell during the remainder of my address. That we have a grand country may be justly admitted. I thought so, or I would not have taken my citizenship here. But what does it mean to have our jails, work-houses, alm-houses, penitentiaries and insane asylums so full that in many places they must soon be enlarged? What does it mean to have more dram shops in this town than there are churches and schools taken together? What does it mean to have more saloon keepers in your town than you have preachers and school teachers combined? What does it mean to have double as many arrests for drunkenness in your town last year

as you have professed conversions to Christ? What does it mean to have three cases of murder in your county in one year, all of which are directly chargeable to strong drink?"

"Now you are talking right," said a man in the audience whose son was a drunkard.

Another of the audience who wished to break the force of what was being said asked this question: "If it were not for making whiskey what would we do in this country with all our grain?"

"Do you wish that question answered?" inquired Hector pointing directly at the man by whom it was propounded.

"Yes, sir," was his response.

"Then," said Hector, "I would say that you might raise more HOGS and CATTLE and less DEGRADATION and MISERY."

This answer was given in stentorian voice and with tremendous emphasis. From that moment till the close of his speech there was neither cheering nor questioning. Hector's hearers recognized that they were confronted by one who was a master of men as well as a master of children. In proceeding he spoke thus:

"Not long since I had a talk with the judge of your court, and he informed me that ninety per cent, of the cases brought before him are directly or indirectly chargeable to strong drink. Now then, while it is true that we have the grandest country in the world, yet what mean the people of this grand country that they will encourage a traffic which increases crime ninety per cent, each year, and thus adds ninety per cent, no doubt to your paupers and maniacs for whom you need to make extended preparations?"

"What does it mean for a man to awake from drunkenness and find himself in jail, and when told that he has been arrested for murder immediately thinks of his home

and asks if his wife knows anything about it, and is told that he has been arrested for the murder of his wife? What shall be said of giving encouragement to a drunkard-making traffic?

"Not long since I saw a letter from a man in jail convicted of murdering his sister-in-law. That letter was addressed to the governor of your State, and was probably read by some of my hearers. The letter consisted of a piteous appeal to the governor for pardon on the ground that while all the testimony indicated that he had been guilty of killing his sister-in-law, yet he certainly had not the slightest recollection of when it was done, for he had been drinking heavily for several days.

"But I have said sufficient. You all understand that if a man is afflicted with cancer that disease must be cured or it will kill the man. The same is true of pulmonary consumption and many other diseases. On the same principle it may be justly remarked that if this grand country is not delivered from the disease of drunkenness it will be ruined. For years I have thought that the most effective remedy would "be to pass a law making the saloon keepers, the wholesale dealers, and the distillers of strong drink responsible for all crimes and casualties that are chargeable to their business. Railroad companies, physicians, and druggists are held responsible for any damage that they may do to life or property by their business. "Why should not saloon keepers and others engaged in the whiskey traffic be held responsible for all the damage done to life or property by their business? No just reason can be given. THEN LET SUCH A LAW BE PASSED."

Hector then bowed to the audience and sat down. The band began to play and the people began to disperse. The Scotch School Teacher remained but a short time. Yet in that time he had the interview previously mentioned with the young lady who read the Declaration of In-

dependence, and received a few hearty congratulations. As soon as consistent with ordinary respect for the people he left them. Such an occasion was not enjoyable to him, and in the afternoon he was conspicuous by his absence.

APPENDIX.

Reader, the time has come for us to take our leave of Hector Munro as a representative of many who have stood outside of all denominational churches, viewing such churches in the light of the Bible and common sense. We shall take our leave of him, not because we are tired of his company nor because he had no other religious interviews which we might report, but rather because sufficient has been reported to set forth the unfortunate condition of things existing in the religious world. Those who study the Sacred Text until they understand it too well to become sectarians are frequently left to live and die outside of all churches. From this there is no relief, and to this there is no exception, except in those communities where the Church as established by the apostles has recovered itself from the Romish Church and younger sects. But even in those communities the Church, otherwise called the "Church of Christ" or "Church of God" is so seriously misrepresented that a stranger might be led to suppose that those who constitute that church are perhaps no better than the Catholics. Such is the meanness of religious sectarianism, or of sectarian religions. In Acts seventeenth chapter the reader may learn that the heathen at Athens had the honesty to take the apostle Paul to the highest court in their city and address him thus: "May we know what this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean." Then after they had heard him and he

had mentioned the resurrection of the dead, though certain ones mocked, yet others had the honesty to say, "We will hear thee again of this matter." Certainly this was much fairer treatment than the true preacher of Christ now receives at the hands of sectarian leaders. As a rule they will neither hear the true preacher, nor will they permit him to be heard by others, if they can hinder him from having an audience. But Christ will be their judge, and he will know how to reward them for their dishonesty in the last great day.

When the writer became acquainted with Hector Home Munro he was probably forty-five years of age. The hair had almost entirely slipped from his scalp and he wore a brownish wig to prevent his baldness from appearing hideous to those with whom he associated. He was continuing his favorite work—teaching school. Having become tired of town and city life he taught a district school in the country not far from a place now called Mitchellville in Prince George county of Maryland. It was while he was teaching at that place that the writer became acquainted with him, and learned to admire him as the clearest and best of teachers. His entire bearing indicated that he was a manly man both constitutionally and educationally. He and the writer had many interviews, some of which will remain with me while memory holds. Even after the stern necessity of being hired out to work on a farm took me from his school, yet we occasionally met and walked and talked. He was accustomed to give his pupils names that were suggested to him by their peculiarities of temperament, their attainments, what he regarded as their future prospects, or, perhaps, by reason of some association which their names, manners, or capabilities suggested to his mind. He invariably called the writer "Senator" when speaking to me or of me in the presence of others.

A few incidents which are still vivid in the writer's mind may assist the reader in judging of Hector's excellencies as a teacher. The facts connected with the first incident that recurs to mind are as follows:

There were three brothers that attended the school of which mention is now being made whose name was Ducat —pronounced *Duckat*, but Hector invariably pronounced it as if written *Du-catt*. Those three boys were named Jerry, Robert, and Walter. They were children of an overseer on a plantation not far distant, and were well behaved boys. But Robert, the second of the brothers, seemed to think that he knew more than his class-mates and informed his mother to that effect. She told him to study and recite alone, and thus be in a class by himself. Acting upon her directions the next day Robert Ducat did not go forward with his class to recite. Hector Munro inquired for the reason. He answered that his mother had told him to study and recite by himself. Every one in the room turned eyes on the Scotchman and listened for his reply. Silence reigned, except that Hector walked across the floor once or twice and then turning his face toward the boy who was obeying his mother's orders he said with emphasis and deliberation: "Robert, you tell you mother, in the first place, that I am a teacher; and you tell your mother, in the second place, that I came here to teach and not to be taught; and then, in the third place, you tell your mother that I conduct my school in the way that I think proper. Now, sir, you take your place in your class." Robert obeyed, and there was no more trouble on that question.

Another incident recurs to the writer's mind which will serve as an illustration of Hector Munro's judgment as a teacher. Among his pupils was a boy of considerable brightness named Daniel Boone. One day Daniel said that he could not stand up to read, and as memory serves

he was excused. The next day he made the same excuse. He was commanded to stand up, but showed signs of extreme nervousness. He was excused again, and Hector inquired into the boy's physical condition. After a day or two he reported to the school that Daniel Boone had used tobacco to such excess that he had no longer sufficient nerve power to stand on the floor and read.

In course of time Hector's capabilities attracted the attention of a rich man named Charles Hill, who offered him a considerable salary to teach his own children and those of a few of his neighbors in a private seminary. Mr. Hill thought that a man of learning like Mr. Munro should ride rather than walk when he wished to go somewhere, and so he furnished him with a horse, saddle and bridle. Hector accepted, and for a time went on horseback. But he soon concluded that he was getting too fat, and so one day he stepped on the scales and found that he weighed a hundred and ninety-eight, or, perhaps, ninety-nine pounds. Some time thereafter the writer heard him telling several persons that he thought it would not do to carry so much flesh. Accordingly he left his horse at home and walked long distances when he was not in school. He would sometimes walk ten, fifteen, or twenty miles without stopping. After a few weeks he felt so light that he thought he had lost ten or fifteen pounds. In order to ascertain how much he had lost he went back to the same place and stepped on the same scales. To his astonishment he tipped them at something over two hundred pounds. He thought something must have been wrong with the scales, but found they were correct. He then took off his coat, hat, and shoes, and yet could not bring himself entirely down to his former weight. He gave this account of his success in lessening his weight in a jocular way that was much enjoyed by the company listening thereto.

But time passed and changes came. The writer left Prince George county of Maryland when nearly sixteen years of age, and moved to Harford county of that same state. As a result I lost sight of Hector Munro for several years. But after entering Bethany College in the year 1869, and probably after remaining there near or about one collegiate year, I received a letter from Hector Munro which I had the misfortune to lose. But its leading features and in some measure its exact statements, are yet impressed on my mind. It ran thus:

"BLADENSBURG, Md., _____, 1870.

My Dear Sommer,— Our mutual friend, James Mitchell, has informed me that you have entered Bethany College of West Virginia for the purpose of securing an education. Permit me to assure you that I regard this as an excellent purpose, and one which you will never regret. Moreover, it confirms me in the estimate I formed of your sincerity when you were with me in school. I shall be glad to learn that you contemplate entering the ministry. Though I have not always entertained a favorable opinion of preachers, yet I am not without hope that you may do better than many of them have done.

"I have been teaching Latin and German in the Academy at this place for two years, but at the close of the present session I shall leave.

"Allow me to assure you that I have a pleasant recollection of my acquaintance with you, and that I shall always be glad to learn of your welfare.

Truly your friend, H. H. MUNRO."

But alas! My reply to this letter was never received by Hector, or having been received was never acknowledged. Some time thereafter I received information that Hector Home Munro had died in Washington, D. C., from the effect of a sunstroke.

Thus closed the earthly career of the most learned, wit-

ty, jovial, vigorous, and sensible man whose acquaintance I was privileged to form in early life. How much of my success in after years may be justly attributed to the impressions received from him cannot be correctly estimated. I simply know that his clean and emphatic utterance of words and sentences has been like music in my ears thus far through life, and will no doubt continue thus while memory holds.

Whether he ever found the Church of Christ, or whether he was ever buried with Christ in baptism the writer never learned. In my letter to him I gave an account of my religious position, and thus informed him that I had found the Church of Christ as established by the inspired apostles. Therefore I am not altogether without hope that if he received what I wrote he made further inquiry on the subject, found the true Church and yielded full obedience to Christ. But if he did not, and thus died outside of the Church and Kingdom of Christ, the responsibility thereof will largely rest with the preachers who pervert the Sacred Text to support the creeds and confessions of churches not mentioned in the Bible.

But let not the reader suppose from such statements that the Church of Christ as established by the apostles of Christ does not now exist on the earth. The apostolic order of teaching and worship now exists in nearly every State of the Union, and in many of the States that order exists in a majority of the counties. Therefore those who are now endeavoring to find the Church of Christ as established by the apostles may become acquainted therewith in many localities. In order that the reader may be assisted in distinguishing that church from all other institutions its prominent features shall be mentioned.

1. The individuals who compose that church insist on being called disciples of Christ or Christians, because they read in Acts 11:26 that the disciples were called

Christians. Some people endeavor to think that the disciples at Antioch were called "Christians" by way of derision. But a derisive name is seldom or never correct, and it must be admitted that it was altogether correct for the primitive followers of Christ to be called after their Leader. Besides, it is absurd to suppose that Christ would adopt that name for his people which his enemies had given them in derision. Finally, Paul spoke of Christ in Eph. 3:14 and then said, "Of whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named." This settles the question beyond all controversy, and shows that Christ named his people. Thus we read in Acts 11:26, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." In Acts 26:28, we read, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Then in 1 Peter 4:16, we find the following: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

2. Those who are truly disciples of Christ or Christians, in the collective capacity, or as a church, insist upon being called "the Church," or "the Church of Christ." They also acknowledge that "Church of God" is a Bible name for the true followers of Christ. But the name "Church of God" has been so unfortunately misapplied in modern times by certain denominations which have a mixed doctrine and practice that the name "Church of Christ" seems to be the only name left that has not been perverted. Therefore, those who claim to be disciples of Christ or Christians according to the New Testament insist on being recognized by the name "Church of Christ" or simply "the Church." As evidence in behalf of such designations they refer to Acts of Apostles and Rom. 16:16. A congregation of disciples in any locality was in primitive times called "the Church" or "the Church of Christ" and several of them when mentioned together were called

"churches of Christ." Sometimes a speaker or writer says that there is "nothing in a name," yet if you call that one by the name "Beelzebub" or "Judas Iscariot" it would be regarded as an insult. Moreover, the statement that there is nothing in a name is untrue in every particular. Though the name does not make the man, yet in all business relations it is found that each man and his name belong together. Besides, it is also well understood that all names which describe character are only right when they justly apply to those who wear them. Thus if a man be honest it is wrong to call him a thief, and if a man be a Christian it is wrong to call him by a religious name unauthorized of heaven.

3. The Church of Christ is known by its conditions of fellowship. Wholehearted faith in Christ as the Son of God, wholehearted repentance of all past sins, wholehearted confession of faith in Christ as God's Son, and a wholehearted baptism of the whole body in water in obedience to Christ—all these are required by the Church of Christ as conditions of entering its fellowship.

4. The conditions of continuing in the fellowship of the Church of Christ consist in living a moral life, paying all honest debts, meeting every first day of the week for teaching and admonishing each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, attending to the apostles' doctrine or teaching by reading, explaining, and enforcing some portion of what the apostles have written, also attending to the fellowship or contribution, breaking bread or attending to the Lord's Supper, and praying. In other words, the conditions of continuing in the fellowship of the Church of Christ consist in denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Churches that do not insist upon such conditions of fellowship may claim to be of Christ, but their character does not so indicate. Moreover, when

churches cease to insist on the members keeping themselves unspotted from the world they will soon become corrupted in "both doctrine and practice.

5. The Church of Christ wherever found is an institution separate from all other societies and organizations. At the same time it embraces all that is truly good. The Church of Christ is Christ's missionary society, endeavor society, Bible society, mutual aid society, Sunday-school or society for teaching the young, benevolent society, and everything else that is good without having any other organization except that of the local congregation.

6. The Church of Christ when fully set in order has a plurality of elders who are chosen as overseers, otherwise called bishops, and a plurality of deacons. The church likewise makes use of preachers, who are sometimes called evangelists, to proclaim the gospel at home and abroad.

7. The Church of Christ, through its overseers or bishops, exercises discipline, and thus instructs its members in regard to that which is right and wrong. Then all those who will not do what is right are duly admonished, exhorted and entreated to turn from their wrong doing. If they refuse then the fellowship of the church is withdrawn from them, and thus their membership is taken from them.

8. The Church of Christ exalts the Bible in all meetings both public and private. The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible is regarded as the creed-book of the Church of Christ, and the gospel as contained in the New Testament is regarded as the divine rule of faith and practice.

The eight characteristics or distinguishing features of the Church of Christ just mentioned will enable any one who considers them carefully to find that Church in every community where it exists. Therefore those who wish to become members of that church should not despair. The

other churches which exist may all be very good in various particulars, but as they are unmentioned in the Bible they are all unsafe. Whether they will be finally acknowledged by the Judge of all the earth as being any part of his Church no one can tell. That many good people are found in the churches not mentioned in the Bible is readily admitted. But it must also be admitted that people may be good without being Christians. For instance, the man named Cornelius, whose conversion is recorded in Acts 10th and 11th chapters, was very good, yet he needed to send for an apostle to tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved. Therefore mere goodness toward mankind and even piety toward God should not be mistaken for that which is expressed by the terms "Christian" and "Church of Christ." Of course those who are Christians in practice as well as profession are good toward mankind and pious toward God. But this is not all that may be said of them. The distinguishing feature is that they are both good and pious *according to the gospel of Christ*. Cornelius was both good toward his fellow men and pious toward God according to the Jewish law, but that was not sufficient. He needed to hear the gospel, become a believer in Christ, and be baptized into Christ. Though he had seen an angel and through him had received assurance that his prayers and alms had been noticed in heaven, yet he needed to hear and believe the gospel. After hearing the gospel the Holy Spirit came upon him in a miraculous manner as it does not now come upon any one, yet he still needed water baptism.

These statements concerning the Church are submitted for the reader's guidance in finding that Church. It may be safely said that all who are truly Christians will be satisfied with being called Christians without any humanly given name to distinguish them from others.