

**JOINING THE CHURCH, OR,
MATERIALS FOR
CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN A
MINISTER AND INTENDING
COMMUNICANTS**

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Joining the Church, Or, Materials for Conversations Between a Minister and Intending Communicants by Alexander Balloch Grosart

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ALEXANDER BALLOCH GROSART

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Joining the Church.

Joining the Church ;

OR,

MATERIALS FOR CONVERSATIONS

BETWEEN A

Minister and Entending Communicants.

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER BALLOCH GROSART,

AUTHOR OF 'SMALL MEN;' 'JESUS, MIGHTY TO SAVE;'
'THE LAMBS ALL SAFE,' ETC. ETC.

'THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.'

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The Gift
of
The Author.

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'When therefore men come so rudely and unprepared to the receiving of these holy rites, as ordinarily they do, it is a sign they never think of that high and sacred *authority* that hath ordained them; but only conceive and esteem of them as of certain formalities which custom and long continuance hath made a fashion.'—WILLIAM BRADSHAW (1636).

TO
The Rev. Andrew G. Bonar,
GLASGOW,

THE BIOGRAPHER OF M'URRYNE

AND

MY 'BROTHER BELOVED,'

I INSCRIBE THIS LITTLE BOOK,
AS A SLIGHT MEMORIAL OF A VALUED FRIENDSHIP.

A. B. G.

In Christ's death all Christianity is briefly summed; for in it we may observe the justice of God satisfied, the power of Satan vanquished, the liberty of man from the slavery of sin and death purchased, all figures of the Old Testament verified, all promises of the New ratified, all prophecies fulfilled, all debts discharged, all things requisite for the redemption of mankind and the world's restoration accomplished. Therein we have a pattern of obedience to the last breath, of humility descending as low as hell, of meekness putting up insufferable wrongs, of patience enduring merciless torments, compassion weeping and praying for bloody persecutors, constancy holding out to the end; to which virtues of His person, if ye lay the benefits of His passion rebounding to His Church, which He hath comforted by His agony, quit by His taking, justified by His condemnation, healed by His stripes, cleansed by His blood, quickened by His death, and crowned by His cross;—if ye take a full sight of all the virtues wherewith His cross is beset as with so many jewels, I make no doubt but that you will resolve with the apostle (1 Cor. ii. 2), to 'know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.'—DANIEL FRATLEY, D.D., *Clavis Mystica*, 1636, folio, pp. 862-3.

Prefatory Note.

IN the present little volume I have written out the substance of what I have been used to say to intending *Communicants* for the first time who have applied to be received into my own Congregation. Finding that what I have said has often been wished by *Communicants* in a permanent form, and being also desirous to be able to put something easily understandable into the hands of Applicants, I the more readily consented to print my words. If, besides my own using of it, these 'materials' in any way aid my beloved fellow-servants, I shall rejoice, I shall be grateful. As matter of course, it is intended simply as a Manual, as heads or hints for successive conversations, not at all as a Treatise on The Lord's Supper. Of larger books thereon—some above all price—there are happily many, elder and later. But I am not aware that there is anything that preoccupies the place sought to be humbly occupied by these 'materials,' for ministers on the one hand, and intending *Communicants* on the other.

With reference to the reception of Appli-

cants, perhaps a caution will be accepted by my brethren, viz. :—There may be knowledge, love, grace, and at the same time incapacity to express either. In my own experience I have found myself about to keep back a true child of God (as afterwards seen), in the idea that there was extreme ignorance, and have been startled to discover that agitation and awe parched the tongue and confused the memory ; and that after a few kind words kindly spoken, and assurance to the Applicant that he or she was there not to be puzzled and cross-questioned, but to converse with a Friend willing and wishful to advise and guide, there were given unmistakeable evidences of a deep and true spiritual life. In confirmation of this, it is recorded of the Rev. Adam Gib of Edinburgh, that having once or twice dissuaded a young woman from thinking of joining the Church, as deeming her ill-informed and unable to answer elementary questions, he was overcome to tears by these words on another refusal, ‘ Weel, weel, sir, sae he it. I mayna, an’ I dinna ken sae muckle as mony ; but whan ye preach a sermon aboot my Lord and Saviour, I fin’ my heart gaain oot to Him, *like lint seed oot o’ a pock.*’ Whoever has observed the pro-