

THE

# Free Presbyterian Magazine

*And MONTHLY RECORD.*

---

VOL. III.

JANUARY, 1899.

No. 9.

## "Saved by Hope."

AT the beginning of a new year, we take the liberty of expressing our hearty good wishes for the future well-being and happiness of our readers. May this year upon which we are entering prove a year of the Lord's right hand to many souls! The signs of the times are dark and foreboding. But we would do well to be encouraged by the promise that the Lord will not cast off His own inheritance; He will continue to fulfil in their experience the words, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." There is also Scripture warrant to pray for and expect the conversion of the sheep who are still outside the fold. The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear, and while our iniquities testify against us, it has been His gracious way to remember His covenant, and save poor sinners from going down into the pit.

The subject of our remarks on this occasion, we think, is highly suitable to the present time. If we judge of things by the sight of our eyes, and the hearing of our ears, we shall, without fail, become discouraged, and allow our hands to hang down in despair. But such ought not to be the frame of mind of the people of God in the darkest days. They must seek, by divine grace, to look above the floods and behold the King eternal sitting there, one who is mightier than the noise of many waters and great sea billows.

"Saved by hope." This seemed the motto of the Apostle Paul amid the sufferings of the time in which he lived. Hope was to him "the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast" throughout all the storms and tempests of his earthly course. It has been the same to the people of God in every age.

First, let us look at hope in a natural sense. What is it that enables many to struggle on in spite of all the disappointments of life? It is hope: the expectation based upon natural grounds of better things to come. Hope saves the young man from folding his arms in heartless inactivity. Hope stimulates him to put forth all his energies in the business in which he is engaged.

Hope leads him on through mighty obstacles to eventual victory. If it were not that there was something of this spirit of hope in the heart of mankind, the world would be a morass of stagnation and a hell of despair and misery. Hope then, in the natural sense, performs a useful function in society.

This, however, is at best but a temporal hope; it has no spiritual value, it does not stretch into eternity. Men do often mistake it for a spiritual thing, and imagine it will carry them safely through the swellings of Jordan to the better land. But this is a sad delusion that will cost many poor souls an eternity of woe. Natural hope flows merely from a natural faith common to unregenerate men, a faith that is concerned solely with the things of sense and sight, a faith, which, if it happens to touch the things of eternity, only drags them down to the low level of carnal objects. The hope, therefore, that has this parent never rises for satisfaction and blessedness into the sublime and spiritual heights of eternity.

What, then, is the real character of the hope of which the Apostle speaks? It is a spiritual hope. It is born not of the flesh, but of the Spirit of God. The Spirit teaches the sinner that he lost all hope of life in the first Adam by sin, and that he is "without hope and without God in the world." The sinner is led to see that he is utterly hopeless as far as the help of man is concerned, and that he must perish in this hopeless condition unless some way of salvation is opened up by his offended God. It is then the Spirit reveals to him Jesus Christ as the Hope of Israel and the Saviour thereof, and leads the poor hopeless soul to cast anchor upon Christ for time and eternity. He now begins to "fight the good fight of faith" and "lay hold of eternal life." Hope—the hope of eternal life—sustains him in this conflict, and enables him to come off more than conqueror. The Scriptures compare the Christian course to a wilderness journey, a passage across the ocean, the running of a race, and the fighting of a battle. In all these views of the life of faith, hope is necessary to the soul's final success. Let us further observe that this is no vain hope based upon groundless imaginations and visionary fancies; it rests by faith upon God in Christ Jesus. It draws its life and sustenance from the character, the word, and the promises of God. It is therefore able to triumph over all obstacles whatsoever. The powers of darkness may marshal their hosts against it, the world and the flesh may unite to crush and destroy it, but all that these combined enemies can do is to make hope's victory all the more glorious. Hope looks not to itself or any created object, but leans upon the arm of a faithful omnipotent God, and fixes its eye with triumphant expectation on the Forerunner within the veil, even Jesus, who ascended up on high, having overcome principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly in His cross. Thus the people of God may expect that one day through the grace that is in Christ Jesus they

shall, poor and destitute though they be, share in the rest and glory of their exalted Redeemer. Thus, also, they may say even now, "We are saved by hope."

Lastly, we notice the function of hope in one's survey of the times in which we live. These times are dark and perilous indeed, more so, we believe, than any since the beginning of the Christian era, and according to the testimony of prophecy they will, for years to come, as far as the world at large is concerned, get worse and worse. But are the people of God on this account to hang down their hands in despair? Are they to speak and act as if the cause of God were a failure in the earth, and as if His purposes were being frustrated by the designs of men? Verily, not. The Lord Jesus said on one occasion to the Jews, "Ye have seen Me, and believe not;" but did He leave them to think that on that account His work was a failure? No; far from it. He said, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me, I will in nowise cast out." Every soul that God has chosen from eternity shall be saved, and not one of them shall be lost. Christ shall lose nothing of all that the Father gave Him. Here we must rest with acquiescence and satisfaction. Not but we weep over a world perishing in their sins, and stretch out our hands in warning and entreaty towards them, beseeching them to turn and live. At the same time, let not the wide-spread rejection of the Gospel, by any subtle device of the devil, prove a snare to the believer in the pew or the true preacher in the pulpit; let it not weaken their hands in active efforts for the advance of Christ's kingdom, or lessen their rejoicing in God their Saviour. There are two extremes into which erring creatures are ready to fall. On the one hand, we are liable to contemplate the low state of the times in a frame of mind that would seem to convey the impression that the Lord had wholly forsaken the earth. On the other, we are apt to misunderstand the depth and malignity of prevailing declensions, and to take a superficial and confident view of their speedy rectification. Both extremes are dangerous. The latter is the more common, and the more dangerous. We would do well also to beware of the former. The only way we can be delivered from it is by getting through the teaching of the Holy Ghost a spiritual grasp of the words, "We are saved by hope" (Romans viii. 24).

---

SAUL would not let the people taste food until after they had avenged themselves on their enemies, so if it were not for this cursed "Saul" that is in even believers, that will not let them taste the refreshing honey of the promise, they would make greater slaughter of their spiritual foes than they often do.—*Alex. Gair, "Ministers and Men in the Far North."*

## A Sermon.

BY REV. NEIL CAMERON, ST. JUDE'S, GLASGOW.

~~~~~

"After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed : and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir ; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them : and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord : and he counted it to him for righteousness."—GENESIS xv. 1-6.

~~~~~

**B**IOGRAPHIES of godly men have been held of great value by thoughtful men among all nations. The Word of God records infallibly events, trials, and experiences through which some of the saints had to pass on their way to the rest that remains for the people of God. While the church is passing through the valley of Baca, walking by faith and not by sight, they will often have to ask the question, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon ; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" The Lord's answer will always abide the same, "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids besides the shepherd's tents."—Song i. 7, 8. Where can she find the footsteps of the flock? In the Word of God. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Therefore, it should be helpful and to the comforting of the Lord's poor people that, in humble dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we should endeavour to search out the footsteps of Abraham, and his experiences revealed in this portion of the Word of God. In order to this we shall direct your attention to three things. And

I.—We shall consider Abraham's fears.

II.—We shall consider his complaints.

III.—We shall consider his victory by faith.

I.—Abraham's fears. Our text begins, "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision saying, Fear not Abram."

1. The context supplies us with a brief account of the things after which the Lord appeared to him in this vision. We read that the Lord had said unto him, in Ur of the Chaldees, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy

father's house unto a land that I will show thee ; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great ; and thou shalt be a blessing ; and I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curseth thee : and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him." This gives us a most complete description of the effectual and heavenly calling of Abraham. His father, Terah, accompanied him out of Ur of the Chaldees unto Haran where Abraham had to delay his journey for about two years until his aged father died. From this incident we may learn that Abraham did not think that, the Lord's command to him to leave Chaldea and all that was in it, and go to another country, exempted him from the fifth commandment—"Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." After his father's death he continued his journey to the land of Canaan. The Lord appeared to him there again, and promised, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." There was a sore famine in the land, and he went down to Egypt where he sojourned about two years. On his return from Egypt, Lot, his nephew, who had been with him since he left Chaldea, and he, had to separate from one another, owing to disagreement among their shepherds, and on account of their enormous wealth in cattle. Lot chose the plains of Jordan, and pitched his tent at Sodom. Abraham journeyed to Hebron, built an altar to the Lord, and dwelt there. In about five years thereafter Chedorlaomer and other three kings with him came to fight with the five kings of the plains of Jordan whom they overcame, carried away everything belonging to them, also Lot with all his goods. When Abraham heard this, he armed his trained servants, pursued them to Dan, vanquished them there, and brought back all the spoil of the plain, and Lot with all his goods. He came to the valley of Shaveh, near Jerusalem. Melchizedek came forth to meet him, brought bread and wine, and blessed Abraham in the name of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth. Abraham gave him tithes of all the spoil. Next came the king of Sodom who said to Abraham, "Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself." And Abraham said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up my hand to the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I shall not take from a thread to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich." These were some of the things "after which the Lord appeared in a vision to Abram." We think the last two things are particularly to be understood, *i.e.*, his victory over the enemies, and his professing the name of the Lord.

2. Let us now consider what Abraham's fears were at this time. We may gather what they were from the promises by which the Lord sought to allay them. (1) "I am thy shield." This shows that his fears were his felt need of defence from his enemies.

Satan harassed his mind with fears that the enemies whom he had vanquished and spoiled would gather a stronger force, come back, and destroy him from off the face of the earth. The Lord does not lay a plaster upon a whole skin. A shield is what one needs to protect one in battle. Abraham in his doubts and fears could see no protection; and, therefore, the Lord comes with the comforting assurance, "I am thy shield." What a protection! Might he not have slept soundly that night! "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord he is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in whom I will trust." Who of Abraham's spiritual children are strangers to such fears as these? You child of God may lay it to your account that, should you gain, by faith, a victory over the devil, the world, or the flesh, you shall be harassed with such fears. The Lord gave David many victories over Saul, and left him often at his mercy; but you will find him exclaiming in one of such temptations, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." Did David perish by the hand of Saul? No. Where is the safety of every child of grace? In God's promises. "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Where lay Abraham's safety? In this, "I am thy shield." Where is thy safety? In this, "I am thy shield." "I am Jehovah, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." How often were you afraid that you had no power to resist the least sin, and if that sent you to show the Lord your fears, how often did you find honey in the carcase of that dead lion? But let us consider the other cause. (2) We may gather from this promise that Abraham was afraid he should be without reward, "I am thy exceeding great reward." Does this mean a reward for the good deed in that he vanquished Chedorlaomer? No; for he declared, by the vow he made with uplifted hand to the Most High God, that he did not desire any such reward. What then could it be? We mentioned before the profession he made of the name of the Lord in the valley of Shaveh, and we think the enemy is now tempting him with doubts and fears; suggesting that though he made such a brave profession, he should be without a reward in eternity. It is quite manifest from the promise that the reward was a purely spiritual one, about which his fears were so great; for says the Lord, "I am thy exceeding great reward." If your profession does any harm to the kingdom of darkness you shall be often tempted to conclude that there shall not be a greater fool at the judgment seat than you, and you shall often be tempted to conclude that it were better had you never made a public profession at all. The poor people of the Lord are not ignorant of Satan's devices. How often did you say, when the Lord delivered you, "I will not believe Satan again,"

but to your shame you did, and still do believe him! Elijah stood alone, a prophet of the Lord, on Mount Carmel, and witnessed before all Israel that Jehovah is God and that they should follow Him. He ordered four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal to be taken and slain, and next day fled from one ungodly worm through fear. Why? Because of unbelief and the temptations of the adversary. Abraham witnessed before the whole people of the plain that he worshipped the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, probably the day before he was harassed with these fears. Why did both Melchizedek and Abraham bear this testimony, the one acknowledging God as the author of Abraham's victory over his enemies, and the other holding Him up as the object of real religious worship? We think the reason was that the most glaring sin of that people and of that day, was that men forgot God, and buried themselves in sensuality. Our reason for coming to this conclusion is that the true Church of God, in every generation, endeavoured to bear testimony for the truths that were most directly denied or forgotten in their day. We cannot doubt the faithfulness of these two godly men; and, therefore, we conclude, and that not without direct Scriptural proof, that real Atheism lay at the root of the sins of Sodom then, as it will continue to do till the end of this world. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own heart, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up to vile affections." Such is the dark picture the Holy Ghost sketches of the sins of such men. It will be observed how exactly it fits into the narrative given in the Word of God of the sins of Sodom.) These godly men, whose righteous souls were grieved from day to day by the ungodly conversation of the wicked, took this advantage to bear witness for God and His prerogatives.

(3) Abraham had now two strong pillars for his faith. When tempted with fears, from without and from within, about his own weakness, and defencelessness, he could point to God's promise, "I am thy shield." When tormented with fears about the uselessness of his profession, and that it would be like the house built upon the sand; he could appeal to the promise, "I am thy exceeding great reward," and thereby, through faith in it, confound the adversary. But Satan is not so easily non-plussed as not to look out for another place of attack, which seems weak to the eye of sense. He would retort, "If things be so on the Lord's side,

look to your own very unpromising condition. Is it likely that thou art ever to have that seed which God promised thee?" This causes Abraham to complain of his lot. This brings us to the second head of our text; therefore

II.—We shall consider Abraham's complaint. As there were two things making up his fears, so there are two things in this complaint.

1. "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless." When he left Ur of the Chaldees he was about seventy-three years of age. He sojourned in Haran for the space of two years, until his father died. The promise, "And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," seems to have been given him when he left Haran. This would show that he was about seventy-five years when the Lord promised him a seed. According to the generally received computation, he would be about eighty-three years of age at the time he made this complaint. His immediate reasons are evident, lying upon the surface of the words of our text, but they were of a deeper concern to Abraham than may strike the mind of the reader without paying attention to their relation unto his spiritual and eternal concerns.

(1) It is very hard for flesh and blood to walk by faith, and not by sight. The question had daily to be faced, "Where is the promised seed?" Abraham could not point at Isaac with his finger and say, "There he is." No, but quite the reverse—"Seeing I go childless." Should he look to Sarah and to himself, things were getting less hopeful every day. (For whatever he may have thought of the promise ten years before this time, his hope now begins to get cloudy. You will readily grant that it needed strong faith to see Isaac, in the casket of the promise, seventeen years before he was born.)

(2) He felt that he was going the way of all the earth, and that he should soon be in eternity—"Seeing I go childless." His own salvation, and that of the whole church of God, from among his own natural offspring and from among the other nations of the earth, depended upon the fulfilment of this one promise. Speaking with all reverence, if there should be no Isaac, the seed, which is Christ, could not be. Notice the tenor of the promise, "And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Again, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The Holy Spirit revealed it so to the apostle, and we have scripture for it that so Abraham understood it. "Abraham saw my day and was glad." Again, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." To possess, in his seed, the land of Canaan was to his faith a type of the eternal inheritance. Were it possible that the one could be lost, through the failing of the fulfilment of the promise, the other should be lost also.

(3) Now, let us briefly ponder over this deep mystery. Abraham



lived at the time when God, in His infinite wisdom, taught the church by types and shadows of good things to come. He was so fully convinced that he could have no hand in his own salvation and that of his seed, nor in bringing Christ one step nearer to his or their souls, that he made this the first part of his complaint to the Lord. Instead of his finding that he could do anything towards the accomplishing of the promise, he found that his own deadness stood most directly of all against its being fulfilled. At the same time he was certain that all was lost, both for time and eternity, should the promise fail. And that unless the Lord put His hand to the work, to call the things that are not as though they were, there was no other power that could avail to the least degree to relieve him. Are you not, poor soul, fully persuaded that, if Christ be not in you the hope of glory, your hope shall be put to shame, and you shall have no inheritance among them that are sanctified? You may be afraid that, though you are by public profession like Abraham in the land of promise, if you are without Christ in your soul you are a hypocrite, and shall never come to the rest that remains for the people of God. You may have been called out of the world, and from its idolatry ten, twenty, or forty years ago. You thought the day the first promise of the truth of God dawned upon your soul that there was nothing which possibly could retard its accomplishment. How is it with you now? To lay the whole weight of your guilty soul upon the Saviour freely offered in the Gospel was an easy matter that day. You thought that Christ was revealed to you by the light which the Lord sent forth along with His truth into your heart, and that you rejoiced to see His day. You thought that there was to be no more darkness, or fears, or complaints. Why should there be such darkness and unbelief now? Ah, you will say, "My folly makes it so. I never thought that day that I should have to pass through such a howling wilderness." You don't find that great change in yourself which the truth of God and your own conscience demand. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Like Abraham, you find that you were far more like having some life in yourself ten, twenty, or forty years ago than you are to-day. When you look within you see no child of promise there; when you look to yourself, you set your seal to God's truth that you are dead; and when you look toward His throne of mercy, all you can say is, "Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?" You are painfully conscious that all things have not become new in your soul. Abraham's experience was typical of all that and much more at the very time he made this complaint.

(4) But you will say, to describe my poverty brings me no relief. No. But it was his poverty, emptiness, and inability that sent Abraham to Him who supplies all the needs of His people

according to His own riches in glory by Jesus Christ. The delusion has got a very strong hold upon all the human race, that something good must be in the creature, or that he shall be rejected by the Saviour of sinners. This, like the limpet to the rock, sticks to man's nature to the last. The Word of God describes man as full of iniquity, but empty of all that is good. When the Holy Spirit teaches man, He enables him to learn this lesson, "In me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." This man finds nothing good in his flesh, but on the contrary, "I am carnal, sold under sin." Many have nothing against this in theory, but they cannot tolerate to be told that this is actually true of themselves. Now the cause of the emptiness, or hunger and thirst, of the Lord's people, is that light and life have entered into their souls, giving them a painful experience of their want of that fulness which man's earthen vessel was created to hold—the inhabitation of God through the Spirit—and of the fulness that is in the soul of all kinds of iniquity. Where He begins the good work He will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ. He begins the good work by convincing of sin and misery, and while sin remains He convinces of it, and causes the sinner taught of Him to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Such is the experience of the creature "that thanks God through the Lord Jesus Christ." We are fully aware that this is a painful experience; but such is the nature of the malady, that the Most High does not give a dose of chloroform to the soul whom He cures. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," is the voice of God speaking in His Word to them who are dead in trespasses and sins. You find that you can do nothing but sin; that you were more like a child of God twenty years ago than you are to-day; and that you cannot extricate yourself out of that painful state. Go, spread thy complaints and poverty before the Lord. Poor Hannah had two causes to weep. "Then said Elkanah, her husband, to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? Am I not better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. . . . And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child." You will notice that she had an adversary to harass her on the one hand, and barrenness on the other. She took a most effective way to get rid of both by going to the Lord. Go thou also, and say, "Give me Christ, or I die." To the barren soul, Christ says, "From me is thy fruit found." But let us proceed to consider the second cause of his complaint.

2. "And Abram said Lord God, what hast thou given me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is Eliezer of

Damascus? And Abraham said, Behold to me thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir." Instead of a son he complains that his servant was his heir. This complaint was not literally made against Eliezer as a servant, but as an heir. It is beyond every doubt established as a Scripture truth that Eliezer was a godly man, and a most faithful servant. Why did Abraham bring this matter up at all as a part of his complaint? In order to enter a little into this matter, by the good guidance of the Spirit of truth, we shall consider a few things:—(1) The promise was not given to Abraham with respect to a servant, but in respect of his own seed. Therefore, he could not come into possession of the promise, with all its entailed blessings, except through a son or heir. (2) Abraham saw Christ in the promise, as we have stated above, and that through his own seed He was to come. Then there were two reasons which caused him to complain—(a) If Eliezer were to be the heir of his house his faith would be rendered void as regarding Christ, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed; and (b) he should have nothing real in the promise at all; for, if his servant were to be his heir, he could not possess the promise, through him, even to the extent of the land of Canaan. (3) This shows that he could have nothing at all should God's promise fail in this matter. Therefore, he went to the Giver of the promise to extricate him out of this perplexing difficulty.

These things are left on record in order that we should endeavour, by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, to understand them and be encouraged, enlightened, and comforted in this valley of Baca. "Now all these things happened unto them for our ensamples (types): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come." Therefore let us endeavour to search a little into the nature of this complaint, as it is left on record for our "ensample and admonition."

(1) Abraham is declared to be the father of the faithful, and the children always bear some of the lineaments of their father. The servant naturally works with an eye to his wages; but not so the son. Every one of Adam's posterity naturally look for salvation through the covenant of works. Though that covenant has been broken, still man, while unregenerated, clings to it, and expects that he will come somehow to happiness by the works of the law. In everything man does about religious services, during the days of his ignorance, he does it with a view to save himself thereby. From this state of ignorance Abraham was effectually called by the Most High, and had to pass through these painful experiences to be our type, or to have in carnal things what his spiritual children will have in a spiritual sense. He was afraid of being put off with a servant instead of a son. Are you afraid that you are still looking for salvation through the covenant of works? That in all you do, the servant that looks for his wages as his due is with you? That you have never been broken off from

the covenant of works, and that you have no real interest in, or claim upon the covenant of promise? That when you go to worship in private, or in public, you are laying some weight upon your own duties, as having something in them, for which the Lord should reward you? Faith and works, as foundations, are entirely contrary. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." No; for this was the cause of his complaint, "the steward of my house is my heir." Is this your complaint? That that which is born of the flesh, and is flesh, is your heir? If so, you cannot be without a complaint, seeing it is written, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Faith looks to Christ in the promise, and sees in Him all the fulness of the Godhead. It lays hold of Him in the free offer of the gospel. But this is the work of God, and not the work of man. "The Jews said, 'What shall we do that we might work the work of God?' Jesus answered and said unto them, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'" It is that which is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit, that believes on Christ. In other words, Christ in the soul is the hope of glory. When you cannot find the heir of promise in the house of your own soul you complain most bitterly.

(2) You cannot but pray, read the Word of God, attend the ordinances of His house (while you can get ordinances maintained in accordance with the truth of God), and still you may be afraid, because of the legal spirit you find within you, that you are only going about to establish a righteousness of your own. It requires the light of heaven to enable a poor soul to see the spirit of a son in such a habitation of dragons as the heart of man is. There must be works, for "Faith without works is dead, being alone." So, you see, there must be works where there is faith; but Abraham had to go through the ordeal of offering Isaac to find out the difference between the works of the flesh and the works of faith. The works which proceed from faith are called in scripture, "Sowing to the spirit, walking in the spirit," &c. Faith hungers and thirsts after the blessings of the covenant of grace; but man's corrupt nature can perceive no beauty in Christ. These two, dwelling together under the same roof, will be like Abraham and his servant. He did not complain of his servant for his good works, but because he was to be his heir on account of these works. Neither do you find fault with yourself for any works that are good in themselves, but for the motive you find lurking in you to draw all the credit of your salvation to your own goodness. That you have some imperfect works, duties, &c., you can always see, but that Christ is formed in you the hope of glory you cannot discern, except in the light of the Sun of Righteousness. But do you feel that the fear of your going Christless is the deepest cause of your complaint? and that the fear of leaning to the covenant of works for salvation comes next? Abraham had these complaints (typically), and they are left on record to point out to the

bewildered traveller in this valley of the shadow of death that this is the true way to Zion.

(3) If you look to your own state, spiritually, you may have to exclaim, "Oh, that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of the Lord was upon my tabernacle." Little did you know then the depth of iniquity that was in your own heart! It requires much disclosing of the sea of corruption within, to make the sinner understand how evil and bitter a thing it is that we have inherited a sinful nature from our first parents. It is by giving some knowledge of original sin the Holy Spirit causes the sinner to have no confidence in the flesh. Abraham might have some confidence in the flesh the day he left Haran, and even the day he made this complaint, but until he "against hope believed in hope," he did not get possession of the promise. Should he look to himself and to Sarah there was no hope there—the one being a hundred and the other ninety years old; but when he looked to the power, faithfulness, and truthfulness of the God who gave the promise, he concluded that death or life was all one to Him. But we must proceed to consider Abraham's mysterious relief out of this trial.

(1) "And behold the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." We have here the promise renewed and made more clear in its terms. It was made certain to Abraham now that his own son was to be his heir. This he had from the mouth of the God who cannot lie. The mouth of Satan should be closed now, seeing it was put beyond every possibility of a doubt that the Lord would fulfil all that He had promised. But the Lord knew how strong the storms were to be which would blow from hell in poor Abraham's face before Isaac should be born. How often had you to conclude, in the light of God's truth, that you had grace, and that you would never doubt the Spirit's work in your soul again; and before you were aware, your light was gone, your mind was filled with doubts, and you concluded that you never had grace? Because man's instability is such, the Lord gave Abraham a visible seal to confirm his faith in the promise.

(2) "And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them: and he said to him, So shall thy seed be." There was not a single word of the Scriptures written in Abraham's days. What it pleased the Lord to communicate to man of His word, from the first promise in the garden of Eden till the days of Moses, four hundred and thirty years after this time, had to be conveyed from father to son traditionally. We have no doubt that the Lord took care that one iota of His word should not fall to the ground at that time, but we desire to note the difference of our privileges

from those of these godly men. Therefore we will notice the Lord dealing with His servants after a very condescending manner. When He made a covenant with Noah, about four hundred and forty years before this time, He gave him a visible seal, *i.e.*, the rainbow in the cloud. So, till this day, the rainbow is the seal of the covenant God made with Noah and with all flesh in whom there is the breath of life, that He would not again destroy the whole earth with a flood for the wickedness of man. It bears testimony, before our eyes, to the faithfulness of the Lord to all His promises. This also is a sign of His mercy. It is related in ancient history that when soldiers, in their passage through a country, held their bows unstrung with both ends to the earth, it indicated to the inhabitants that they intended peace; but when they came with their bows strung, holding them in the inverse order, it meant war. So our gracious God shows, every time the rainbow appears, that He is for peace; but when He will come on the last day, He will reverse His bow against His enemies, and who can describe the anguish that will bring to the ungodly?

He gave Abraham the stars of heaven for the seal of His covenant. Some one may say, "I don't see how that could help his faith? The Lord gave him the promise three times now, and should that not suffice." Let me give you an illustration, though it comes infinitely short of the real thing. Suppose that a man gave you a promise, by the word of his mouth, that he would do a certain thing for you, and that upon that one thing your very life depended. If you had every reason to believe that the man was truthful, faithful, and honest, would you be quite satisfied with his bare word? I think there might be room for much doubting. But suppose that this man wrote down his promise, adhibited his signature to the same, and handed it to you, would that not make a great difference? So the Lord did for you and for me. He wrote down in His own Word all that we are to believe concerning Him, and the duties He requires of us; and set the broad seal of heaven upon this Word; adding the most terrible denunciations against those who should add to His written Word, or take from it. We were told of a certain young man, who in great distress of mind, sprang into the bedroom of a godly man about three o'clock in the morning, and said, "You need not speak one word to me now, or try to prevail against the conclusion I have come to; for I am certain I must be lost." The man rose out of his bed, lighted the candle, and asked him how he was so certain that there was no hope for him. "The Lord," said he, "has closed out my prayer; so that I must perish." Upon hearing this the man opened the Bible, and read, "Also when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayers."—Lam. iii. 8. "Who said that?" the young man said, "Jeremiah, a man that has been certainly saved," said the man. "Where are the words till I see them?" "Look here they are." "Put my finger upon them."

"Yes, there." The poor young man read the words, left the room, and went to his own bedroom. To put his finger upon God's written word was more than poor Abraham could do. Therefore, the Lord made the visible stars serve the same purpose. It meant that sooner would all the stars of heaven go back to the womb of nothing, than one iota of the promise should fall to the ground. Every time he looked at the visible heavens, he was reminded of the promise, and felt the certainty of God's purpose. The stars were his seal, and they held forth to his faith how numerous his seed were to be. Do you, when you look at the stars, remember that God promised that Abraham should have a spiritual seed, innumerable, like the stars? Though they may be very few in number to-day upon the earth, when the glory of the latter days will come the tables will be turned upon Satan's kingdom.

(3) What had Abraham now that he had not before? When he looked at his own fireside there was no change there. Isaac was not there, and Eliezer of Damascus was the steward of his house. To the eye of sense he gained nothing, but to the eye of faith his gain was exceedingly great. He had the promise of God renewed, one jot of which could not fall to the ground. Had he not that promise before that memorable night? Yes. But remember Gideon's fleece. "And Gideon said unto God, if thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand as thou hast said. And it was so; for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once; let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night; for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground." The same things appears in many places of the Scriptures. Let us consider one more, and then we must proceed. When godly Hezekiah, king of Judah, was sick, and Isaiah came and told that he was to set his house in order, because he was to die of his trouble. He prayed and wept sore before the Lord. The Lord said to Isaiah, "Turn and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. . . . And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken; shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is

a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees : nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord : and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz." The Lord knows that an heart of unbelief, a powerful and crafty adversary, and great ignorance of God keep the consolations of the covenant of grace out of the mouth of faith, and starve the child of God even under the shadow of the tree of life, unless God come to the rescue. It is so natural for us to live by sight, and to doubt the love of God on account of the natural depravity of our mind and heart, that strong proofs are necessary to enable faith to overcome our unbelief and corruption. Elijah had to walk forty days in the strength of the one diet the angel gave him ; but poor Abraham had to walk seventeen years in the strength of the Lord's promise after it was thus renewed. He had only, as it were, a taper in his hand walking through abounding darkness, made up of idolatry, sensuality, atheism, and deep ignorance of God, and he bravely overcame by faith. We have the noon day of the gospel, with all its promises, threatenings, injunctions, and invitations, and where can a saint of Abraham's stature in Christ be pointed out? But

III.—We shall consider his victory by faith. "And Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness."

(1) The veracity of God is held forth in the truth, as an object of faith, in such passages as these :—"God is not a man that he should lie : neither the son of man that he should repent." Again, "The Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent." Again, "Let God be true and every man a liar." And again, "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar." This is the sin of which every one is guilty who believes not all that God hath revealed in His word. Abraham was as certain, by faith, that God could not be the author of a lie, as he was of his own being. He also believed that He was able to fulfil that which He promised ; because nothing could stand between Omnipotence and the accomplishing of His desires. All His promises to Abraham were of grace, freely given.

(2) Christ in the promise was the proper object of Abraham's faith. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, In thee shall all the nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Faith in Christ comes by the hearing of the Word of God. The Spirit of God shines into the heart of the sinner, giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. The soul is made both able and willing to embrace Christ, and to rest upon Him alone for salvation. The whole person of Christ as the Mediator is the



object of faith, and as such is embraced by true saving faith. But Christ in the office of His priesthood is more directly the object of faith when sin is wounding the conscience. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Christ becomes precious to the soul in His three offices, and is the object of the adoration of the soul. But let us note particularly that as Christ was in the promise to Abraham's faith—"seeing his day and rejoicing"—that so He is held forth to our faith both as He who came, and finished the work the Father gave Him to do, and He that is to come again at the last day.

(3) Faith views the everlasting love of God the Father as the fountain of all life, love, and compassion. Reads, that God loved the world so as to give His only begotten Son; that Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for her; that the Spirit, in His infinite love, applies to guilty sinners in their effectual calling the fruits of the love of the Father and of the Son, and the soul says, "Here is my rest, here still I'll stay; for I do like it well." But space will not allow us to say more.

2. "And he counted it to him for righteousness." Was it his own faith that the Lord counted to him for righteousness? No, but Christ embraced by faith as held forth in the promise. He laid hold, by faith, upon things which, to sense, were impossibilities. "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." May all the praise be to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

---

### Obituary Notice.

FRIENDS will be sorry to learn that on the 8th day of December, Donald Cameron, elder, Camuschoirk, Strontian, went to his everlasting home at the ripe age of 83 years. As we intend (D.V.) to write a brief note of this faithful witness in a future number of the *Magazine*, we refrain from saying more at present.

N. C.

## Things New and Old.

REV. JOHN MACNEILL AND THE PSALMS.

WE observe from the columns of a northern newspaper that Rev. John Macneill, during his recent campaign in Stornoway, has been indulging in characteristically strong language regarding a reference to him in a recent issue of the *Magazine*. Mr. Macneill is quite entitled to reply to any criticisms that may be passed upon his preaching or his evangelistic methods in general; but he is not entitled, for the sake of the effect produced, to distort the critic's language, and attribute to him words and charges which he never penned. He charges him, in the present case, with saying that "John Macneill depends entirely on his own preaching, on something in himself, to excite and charm the people." Now, we have our own ideas as to what Mr. Macneill depends on "to excite and charm the people;" but we ask anyone to examine for himself the paragraph to which reference is made, and see whether by any fair and valid method of interpretation the words used can be made to bear the construction put upon them. The critic's strictures were based upon a description given in *The British Weekly* by one of John Macneill's own friends, who was doing a bit of special pleading for his style of preaching, and who would hardly be expected to do him injustice. In that description it was admitted that the work of the Spirit was kept in the background, and on this fact the comment was founded which, in spite of John Macneill's indignant protest, we here take the liberty of repeating. "For lack of this element (the sovereign power of the Spirit), Mr. Macneill's evangelistic labours, however eloquent and forcible otherwise, must be pronounced dangerous and misleading." The whole matter shows that although Mr. Macneill professes, to use his own language, to be "so much accustomed to praise" that he takes criticism "like mustard with beef," he is thinking less, when smarting under the sting of the truth, of the beef than of the mustard.

During the course of his mission, as reported in this same newspaper, Mr. Macneill takes us into his confidence a little. He gives us an inkling of what constitutes at least one end of his present tour through the Highlands. "I want," he said, "to get in the thin end of the wedge to destroy this virtual idolatry." It was about the exclusive use of the Psalms in public worship he was speaking when he made this reference to idolatry. Highlanders are idolising God's word, says John Macneill, and although he adds that they would hunt their own minister into the harbour for suggesting it, he is not afraid to set the truth before them, and to show up their idols. We wonder how many Psalms does John Macneill sing in public worship during the year, when he doesn't happen to be touring through the Highlands. We

question if he ever sings one ; and the difference between him and his Stornoway hearers, in this matter of professed idolatry, is that while they idolise the Word of God, John Macneill idolises the word of man. But does not this avowed intention of driving in the thin end of the wedge cast a rather lurid light on the attentions that have recently been lavished on the Highlands by Free Church Evangelists of all kinds? Is it not fruitful of suggestions as to multifarious endeavours to divorce our deluded countrymen from their idolatry? Might not the convention held at Inverness "for the deepening of spiritual life" be an attempt at suppressing idolatry too, and is it not a fair inference that Dr. Whyte's coquetting with northern congregations during the past few months had the same iconoclastic ends in view? May we whisper it that even the big collection for the Highlands and Islands, made in Free St. George's a week or two ago, is perhaps a thicker part of the wedge whose thin end is being so valiantly inserted by John Macneill? And what more likely than that the ultimate end of all this campaign against idolatry is to bring about a peaceful and harmonious union between our Highland congregations thus liberated, and others who have cast their idols to the moles and the bats long ago? *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*, said the Roman poet of yore: I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts with them.

---

But how does Mr. Macneill proceed to demolish our idols? He asserts that in our exclusive adherence to the Psalms we "have not a leg to stand upon;" and he proceeds to state his reasons why we should in the matter of public praise extend our affections to hymns. These reasons are doubtless meant for arguments; and John Macneill evidently thought they were cogent arguments too: for he wound up one of them with a triumphant "Now for you!" as if to say, "What think ye of your dagon now, when you see him shivered there on the floor in a thousand atoms? That's demolition for you!" But were we not convinced that in this Highland crusade we see a deliberate attempt to win over our northern friends to those lax and dangerous views regarding doctrine and worship which they have hitherto resisted with comparative success, we should consider John Macneill's views on the question of praise too weak for serious comment. They are simply childish, but they are just the sort of thing that is used for argument by the advocates of uninspired hymns, and flourished before the eyes of those whom they deride as narrow minded and bigoted with a "Now for you!" which is meant to be an end of all controversy. "As well might you say that in prayer and preaching God will accept nothing but his own inspired Word." This is the first argument. We have heard it long ago. Many a day since it first saw the light, and many a day since it has been so effectively demolished that we thought it would never be resurrected again. Does John

Macneill seriously mean to say that the cases are parallel? Does he see no difference in this respect between prayer and praise? Is there no difference in the nature of them? John Macneill can, in the nature of things, compose his new prayer, but can he compose his new song? Let him try; and if his singing is to be as free as his praying, we think there will be a somewhat effective stop put to this present campaign of his through the Highlands. Does he not know that there is Scripture warrant for free prayer; but can he show us one example in the Word of God of a congregation singing anything but the words of inspiration? Does he not know that the Spirit is promised specifically as a Spirit of prayer to assist us in the free expression of our wants, but where is there mention of the Spirit as a Spirit of song? Christ has indeed promised to sing praise in the midst of the congregation; but we ask will the words used by the Son of God be human words or divine? Will they be words that He has given to us, or will they be words that we must give to Him?

"And the first line of the very first Psalm is wrong"—this is the second argument. It is not new either. We have heard it, too, long ago, and each time we have heard it our wonder has increased that any reflecting mind could ever repeat such childish rubbish. "The first line of the first Psalm is wrong," says John Macneill, "because no man in the world hath perfect blessedness." But stop a little. Does the Psalm say that any man in the world hath perfect blessedness, does it? Or does it say that the man who walketh not astray and fulfils all the conditions which it goes on to enumerate is perfectly blessed—which? Would it not be worth John Macneill's while to look at our metrical version again, and see whether it is such an utterly weak thing as he thinks it? The Psalm, we need not point out to anyone who seriously looks at it, describes an ideal condition, and does not say that that ideal is ever actually attained in practice. It speaks of perfect blessedness, but it is a perfect blessedness which is suspended upon the fulfilment of certain conditions; and if John Macneill will show us the man who perfectly fulfils these conditions we shall undertake to show him a man who is perfectly blessed. Is it to the translation of our Psalms in metre that he takes objection in this first line? Perhaps it is. "David," he goes on to say, "never said that at all. David said—Blessed is the man who walketh not and sitteth not," &c. But, as a matter of fact, David said neither the one nor the other. David penned the Hebrew words of which these two renderings are slightly different translations, and the question is which of the two approaches nearer the spirit of the original. The words literally translated are, "O, the blessedness of the man!" and there are greater authorities than either John Macneill or we who affirm that this use of the plural, combined with the fact that it is used in an exclamation, points to the complete or perfect blessedness of the man described.

Since we are on the question of the Psalms we may quote this paragraph, written some thirty years ago, by one who knew, as few knew it, the sweetness of singing the praises of the Triune Jehovah in the words inspired by Himself for that end. It lifts us into a somewhat loftier reign than that in which we were when considering the words of John Macneill. "The Psalms are unshackled from time altogether. They are the Holy Spirit's expression for mental action and spiritual emotion transpiring in a realm above all outward dispensation—the realm of immediate fellowship with God through that Messiah who instructed the two travellers to Emmaus in the things contained in the Psalms concerning Himself. The first Psalm celebrates eternal moral distinctions, and might have been sung by Abraham and Isaac and Jacob long ere the Old Testament dispensation began. The second psalm presents the permanent relations of men and of kingdoms and their kings to God's Anointed One, whom we see inaugurated on His Holy Hill of Zion, and endowed with a universal dominion over all powers that be. And what the first two Psalms thus present to us; on the one hand, the everlasting moral distinctions considered in themselves and utterly invariable under all dispensation whatever; and on the other hand, the introduction of God's grace and God's Christ into God's government, and the bearings thereof on the same moral distinctions in the suppression of moral evil and the securing of the triumph of moral good; what the first two Psalms thus present to us of materials and considerations unshackled from time and temporal dispensation, and rising above and comprehending all time and all circumstances, the entire Book of Psalms presents only more abundantly and more variously. They do indeed sometimes present *history* to us, in its bearings on devotion and ascription of praise to God; but even that is done to unshackle church history from time altogether, to make it in fact live for ever, the present and everlasting heritage of the Church. "They passed through the flood on foot; there did *we* rejoice in him."—(*Hugh Martin, D.D.*)

A. S.

### "He Feedeth among the Lilies."

FROM the din of ecclesiastical controversy it may not be out of place for us to turn aside for a little, and contemplate some of the ways in which the Good Shepherd leads His sheep and His lambs through the green pastures and beside the still waters. He gathers the lambs with His arm and carries them in His bosom. It is to a page in the history of one of those lambs that I would invite the attention of the readers of the *Magazine* in the following short sketch. She was only a child. Her little life reached its close on the 6th of September last, and then she had just completed her tenth year. But few as were her years,

she was not too young to be lost, and not too young to be saved. She had been lost and was found. Of those ten years we have good reason to believe that three were years that were given to Christ; and she died in the full assurance of faith, and rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God.

Bella Mary Murchison lived in Oban, where her parents still reside. She had always been a somewhat reserved child, of a quiet and contemplative cast of mind. At the age of seven she was seized with typhoid fever, and although she got well enough to be able to attend school during the warm days of summer, she never really recovered. Consumption laid its hand upon her, and she gradually sank till the end came. It was at this time that she had her first permanent impressions of divine things. She was attending the Sabbath School, and one day her teacher quoted a text which arrested Bella Mary's attention. What that text was we have now no means of knowing. She was on the point of mentioning it one day shortly before she died when relating her previous history; but a spasm of pain seized her, and when it had passed away the matter of the text was forgotten. But be it what it might, she could not get it away from her. She became anxious about her soul, and began to pray. "I thought," she afterwards said, when speaking of this period, "that there wasn't anything in this, but I see now that there was."

All this, however, was transpiring in the secrecy of her own soul. With the usual shyness of a child in matters of religion she feared to communicate her thoughts to any one, and it was only by an occasional question, or the propounding of a difficulty that troubled her, that one could gather any conception of what was going on in her mind. In May of this year she was exercised with the question of how she could love the Lord Jesus with her whole heart, and trust Him wholly for everything. One of our ministers happened to call shortly afterwards, and Bella Mary's difficulty was mentioned to him. He told her the story of the Highland kitchenmaid, and the two prayers taught her by Macphail of Resolis, first "Show me myself," and then "Show me Thyself." This brief but pregnant way of putting the matter impressed her greatly. She never forgot the story, and would often refer to it in after days.

It was on a Sabbath morning, two days before her death, that she first spoke out her mind freely and without reserve. The pent-up feelings found free vent; the shyness and timidity were all gone. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," were almost her literal words. "I thought," she said to those who were gathered round her bedside, "I could tell you all this last night, but I was afraid; but I could tell the whole world to-day." "At one time I was much troubled," she went on, addressing her mother, "because I couldn't love Christ better than you; but, ah, it's not so now. I love you too, but I love Christ far better. I long to be away and

be with Christ." Her medical attendant came in during this conversation. "Oh, Doctor," she said, turning to him, "I don't need you any longer. You've been very good to me, but I've got a better doctor than you; I've got Christ." It was a touching scene, and accustomed as the doctor must have been to sights of suffering and to death, he was overcome with feeling, and left the room without a word.

One of the most remarkable features in her case—remarkable, indeed, in one so young—was her deep consciousness of sin, and her correspondingly clear views of the way of salvation by free grace. She was continually praying during those last days, and some of her petitions were rather the strong cryings of a sin-stricken soul than the feeble lisplings of a little child. "O Lord," she was often heard ejaculating, "Take away this hard and stony heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Wash me in the fountain filled with blood. Come into my heart and be thou king there." Her mother spoke to her one day about the grounds on which her faith rested, and the possibility of her losing hold of her hope. "Don't you think," was the reply, "that when Christ has got a hold of me He will lose His grip: no, never!" On this same Sabbath one or two ladies who were staying in the house at the time came in to her room and sitting down at her bedside began to sing some hymns to her. An expression of discontent gathered on Bella's face, and after letting them proceed for a little she broke out almost impatiently with—"Sing a Psalm *for me*." They did so, and selected the 23rd. She joined in herself with broken trembling voice, and the last words she was heard to sing on earth were—

"Within the paths of righteousness,  
E'en for his own name's sake."

She is singing still the praises of that same righteousness and that same Name: but her singing is no longer broken nor her voice weak.

During the day she sent for one of the elders of the congregation to whom she was much attached. He came to her in the evening, and Bella's faith was put to a somewhat severe test. Her visitor tried her in those points where a child's armour might naturally be expected to be most weak. Her first greeting, as the little hands were stretched out in welcome, and the thin face was lit up with joy, was—"O, I'm wearying to get away. I wish He would take me to be with Himself." "But, Bella," was the reply, "how can you expect to be with Himself, seeing you are a sinner?" "Ah, yes," she said, "I'm a sinner; *but there's forgiveness with Him*." "But," continued her interrogator, "would you not be sorry leaving your father and mother and sisters and all the rest?" "Yes," she replied, "I should be sorry: but I would rather be with Him."

On the morning of the following Tuesday she breathed her last. Her life was short. It might hardly, indeed, be said to

have begun, seeing that her sun went down while it was yet morning; but her composure and resignation during much bodily suffering, her simple reliance on the merits of the blood in the midst of a deep consciousness of personal unworthiness, her readiness to quit the world with all its natural attractiveness for a child's heart, and the triumph of her faith over the last enemy with all his terrors, might well put to shame the attainments of many who have been longer travelling by the same way.

A. S.

## Speech of the late Alexander Macdonald, Catechist, Dingwall.

BRITAIN AND ROME.

AT a meeting of Dingwall Free Presbytery Mr. Mackenzie, Maryburgh, moved the following:—"That the Presbytery protests, with the most solemn earnestness—(1) Against any acknowledgment of Popery by the Sovereign of this realm implied in the recent visit of the Duke of Norfolk to the Pope; and (2) Against any proposal to reopen diplomatic relations between Her Majesty's Government and the Vatican, proceedings that cannot fail to endanger the temporal and spiritual liberties of the country." In a few remarks supporting the protest, Mr. Mackenzie said he scarcely thought that the Queen acted as above on her own accord.

Alexander Macdonald said—I second the overture by Mr. Mackenzie, and thank him for his suitable speech; but with sorrow I should speak concerning our Queen's dealings with the great enemy of our civil and religious privileges. There are many reasons given to us in Scripture and history, for protesting against our Queen's intercourse with the Pope of Rome, through her envoy—the Duke of Norfolk. The first reason is that we, as Protestant Presbyterians, believing that, the Man of Sin, even he whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, is that anti-Christian usurper, officially, and by false doctrine and practice—the Pope of Rome. The second reason of grave importance is that we, as office-bearers and members of the Free Church of Scotland, having owned the Confession of Faith, and the authorised Standards of our Church, are bound, *in the legitimate use of them*, to adhere to the same. I think a suitable extract from the *National Covenant* may be read. It is as follows: "And therefore we abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine; but chiefly all kind of Papistry in general and particular heads, even as they are now condemned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland. But in special, we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman anti-Christ upon the Scriptures of God,



upon the kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men; all his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things against our Christian liberty; his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written Word; the perfection of the law; the office of Christ, and His blessed evangel." After a description given of the false doctrine and impostures of Popery there follows: "And finally, we detest all his vain allegories, rites, signs, and traditions brought into the kirk without or against the Word of God and doctrine of this true reformed kirk, to the which we join ourselves willingly in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments as lively members of the same in Christ our Head; promising and swearing, by the great name of the Lord our God, that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this kirk, and shall defend the same according to our vocation and power all the days of our lives," &c. The dying testimony of the Rev. James Guthrie, one of the faithful martyrs for Christ's crown and the Covenants yet speaketh as follows: "I do bear my witness to the National Covenant of Scotland, and Solemn League and Covenant betwixt the three kingdoms." These sacred solemn public oaths of God, I believe, can be loosed or dispensed with by no person or party or power upon earth, but are still binding upon these kingdoms, and will be so for ever hereafter, and are ratified and sealed by the conversion of many thousand souls, since our entering thereinto. When on the scaffold, he lifted the napkin off his face just before he was turned over, and cried—"The Covenants, the Covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving." And so they were through the wondrous interposition of God at the Revolution of 1688, when a Popish tyrant was driven from the throne, and 28 years of persecution was brought to an end. And we hope the Covenants shall continue to be so, and testifying against the designs and practice of degenerate Presbyterians in our day. It is remarkable that, in the year 1688, the Romish Hierarchy was triumphantly defeated in Great Britain; and that, in the year 1888, the same Romish Mystery of Iniquity is perilously near the British Throne, an event which reproves the unfaithfulness of our Church in covenant with God, and proves that the advancement of the secular education and science of the present age is not a sufficient bulwark against the machinations and tyranny of the Man of Sin, because all mankind are by nature under the reign of sin and death, of which the Romish Man of Sin is a woeful representation. The word and testimony of God proves that a chief cause of His wrath is the breach of Covenant with God. And, in consequence of covenant-breaking, there is in both Houses of Parliament a host of Roman Catholic members doing work in opposition to the principles of Protestantism and of the law of God. And if God will not save our nation from deserved wrath, *without repentance*, what are we to expect? "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the

adversaries" (Heb. x. 26-31). With reference to the Confession of Faith, and to the members of this Presbytery, and the people who know and acknowledge its importance, I presume to say it would be for the prosperity of our Church that the youth in connection with it would be well acquainted with our Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechism, and with the other authoritative documents included, and thereby furnished with suitable and Scriptural armour in order to resist and overcome the false doctrine, impostures, and strong delusions of Popery. May God, by His grace, enable us to pray and use all lawful means for the deliverance and preservation of our Queen and nation from our great enemies—namely, the Romish Hierarchy. And for this end I may recite a moving quotation from church history, as follows: "As loyal subjects of the Sovereign of Great Britain, and as liege subjects of the King of kings, we never can consent that this Italian potentate shall possess authority in this realm. We feel that the experience of this nation, and the history of the world have proved that he exercises his authority to minister to his own ambition and to the degradation of mankind, and that the ecclesiastical system of Rome is a mighty confederacy against the civil liberties and religious privileges of man. We likewise feel that the emissaries of this system have never been very scrupulous as to the means of accomplishing their ends. It may be the darkening of a nation's glory, as in the time of King John of England. It may be the sundering of all the civil ties of man, as in the history of the German Emperor. It may be the massacre of thousands, as in France, on the day of St. Bartholomew. It may be the tortures of an Inquisition, as in the atmosphere of Spain. It may be the most terrible persecution, as in the reign of Mary of England. Any and all means are alike welcome to accomplish the objects of that Church, and is at all times an ample agency in the bishops and priests—in the monks and friars of Rome. By such agency, and such means, the most potent monarchs of Europe have been humbled, the most noble princes of Christendom have been ruined; emperors have been dethroned, and kings trampled under foot; nations have flowed with blood, and kingdoms have been broken into dust, all to satiate the ambition of an Italian priest, who, while professing to be meek and lowly, compelled Imperial potentates to kiss his feet, and accept their crowns and kingdoms at his hands. When we contemplate this system, though shorn of much of its power and splendour, concentrating its energies in connection with all the peculiar doctrines and discipline of the Church of Rome, and endeavouring with all its power to re-establish her influence in this country, it is high time for every lover of religious liberty, and every friend of civil freedom, to make those efforts which seem best calculated to prevent so terrible a calamity. The Church of Rome has never abandoned her claim to this country, and from the age of the Reformation to the present time she has repeated

her efforts to reassert that claim with an untiring perseverance" (by the Rev. M. Herbert Seymour, M.A.) "With reference to Scripture and history," I suppose I may answer the following questions:—What is our duty to Roman Catholics; and our defence against the aspersion of our opponents? I answer—The doctrine and commandments of Christ are the ground for our reasons and warrant for protesting against Popery; and for our praying to God for the conversion of our poor Roman Catholic fellow sinners. "We pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened" (Matt. v. 44, 45).

## A Time to Dance.

THE following tract was recently put into our hands, and should be read carefully by any of our readers who may desire light on the subject of dancing:—

A ball having occurred in the parish of a worthy minister, at a season of peculiar seriousness among the youth of his pastoral charge, and many of them, from conscientious motives, having declined to attend, their absence was attributed, erroneously, to the influence and interference of their pastor, who, in consequence, received the following anonymous note:—

"Sir,—Obey the voice of Holy Scripture. Take the following for your text, and contradict it. Show in what consists the evil of that innocent amusement of dancing. Eccles. iii. 4, 'A time to weep, and a time to laugh: a time to mourn, and a time to dance.' A TRUE CHRISTIAN, BUT NO HYPOCRITE."

The minister immediately wrote the following reply, thinking it might meet the eye and correct the opinions of the writer of the note and others:—

"My dear Sir,—Your request that I would preach from Eccles. iii. 4, I cannot comply with at present, since there are some Christian duties more important than dancing, which a part of my people seem disposed to neglect. Whenever I perceive, however, that the duty of dancing is too much neglected, I shall not fail to raise a warning voice against so dangerous an omission. In the meantime, there are certain difficulties in the text which you commend to my notice, the solution of which I should receive with gratitude from 'a true Christian.'

My first difficulty respects the *time* for dancing; for, although the text declares that there is a time to dance, yet when that time is, it does not determine. Now, this point I wish to ascertain exactly, before I preach upon the subject; for it would be as criminal, I conclude, to dance at the wrong time, as to neglect to dance at the right time. I have been able to satisfy myself, in some particulars, when it is *not* 'a time to dance.' We shall agree, I presume, that on the Sabbath day, or at a funeral, or during the prevalence of a pestilence, or in the rocking of an

earthquake, or the roaring of a thunderstorm, it would be no time to dance. If we were condemned to die, and were waiting in prison the day of execution, this would be no time for dancing; and if our feet stood on a slippery place beside a precipice, we should not dare to dance.

But suppose the very day to be ascertained: is the whole day, or only a part, to be devoted to this amusement? And if a part of the day only, then which part is 'the time to dance?' From the notoriously pernicious effects of '*night meetings*' in all ages past, both upon morals and health, no one will pretend that the *evening* is the 'time to dance;' and perhaps it may not be immaterial which portion of the daylight is devoted to that innocent amusement. But allowing the *time* to be ascertained, there is still an obscurity in the text. Is it a *command* to dance, or only a *permission*? Or is it merely a declaration of the fact that, as men are constituted, there is a time when all the events alluded to in the text do, in the providence of God, come to pass? If the text be a command, is it of universal obligation? and must 'old men and maidens, young men and children,' dance obedience? If a permission, does it imply a permission also to refrain from dancing, if any are disposed? Or, if the text be merely a declaration that there is a time when men do dance, as there is a time when they die, then I might as well be requested to take the first eight verses of the chapter, and show in what consists the evils of those innocent practices of hating, and making war, and killing men, for which, it seems from the text, there is 'a time' as well as for dancing.

There is still another difficulty in the text, which just now occurs to me. What *kind* of dancing does the text intend? for it is certainly a matter of no small consequence to 'a true Christian' to dance in a scriptural manner, as well as at the scriptural time.

Now, to avoid mistakes on a point of such importance, I have consulted the passages in the Bible which speak of dancing; the most important of which permit me to submit to your inspection.

Exod. xv. 20: 'And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances.' This was on account of the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Judges xi. 34: The daughter of Jephthah 'came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances.' This was also on account of a victory over the enemies of Israel.

Judges xxi. 21: The yearly feast in Shiloh was a feast unto the Lord, in which the daughters of Shiloh went forth in dances. This was done as an act of religious worship.

2 Sam. vi. 14 and 20: 'And David danced before the Lord with all his might.' But the irreligious Michal 'came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!' Dancing, it seems, was a sacred rite, and was usually

performed by women. At that day, it was perverted from its sacred use by none but 'vain fellows,' destitute of shame. David vindicates himself from her irony, by saying, 'It was before the Lord;' admitting that had this *not* been the case, her rebuke would have been merited. And *David skipped*. [The Hebrew word cometh from *ar*, signifying a lamb which, in going outward, skippeth and leapeth.] Understand this not carnally or according to the manner of the children of this world; but out of mere holy spiritual joy or gladness, which the Holy Ghost kindled in his heart at the feeling of the pure worship of God and the divine (or godly) types and tokens of the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. (From the Dutch annotations).

1 Sam. xviii. 6: On account of the victory of Saul and David over the Philistines, 'the women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing.'

Psalm clxix. 3: 'Let them praise His name in the dance.' Psalm xxx. 11: 'Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing.' The deliverance here spoken of was a recovery from sickness, and the dancing an expression of religious gratitude and joy.

Exod. xxxii. 19: 'As soon as he came nigh unto the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing.' From this it appears that dancing was a part also of idol worship.

Jer. xxxi. 4: 'Oh, virgin of Israel, thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and go forth in the dances of them that make merry.' This passage predicts the return from captivity, and the restoration of the Divine favour, with the consequent expression of religious joy.

Matt. xi. 17: 'We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.' That is, neither the judgments nor the mercies of God produced any effect upon the incorrigible generation. They neither mourn when called to mourning by His providence, nor rejoice with the usual tokens of religious joy, when His mercies demand their gratitude.

Luke xv. 25: 'Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came, and drew nigh unto the house, he heard music and dancing.' The return of the prodigal was a joyful event, for which the grateful father, according to the usages of the Jewish church and the exhortation of the Psalmist, 'praised the lord in the dance.'

Eccles. iii. 4: 'A time to mourn, and a time to dance.' Since the Jewish church knew nothing of dancing, except as a religious ceremony, or as an expression of gratitude and praise, the text is a declaration that the providence of God sometimes demands mourning, and sometimes gladness and gratitude.

Matt. xiv. 6: 'But when Herod's birth-day was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.' In this case dancing was perverted from its original object, to purposes of vanity and ostentation.

Job xxi. 7: 'Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?' Verses 11, 13-15: 'They send forth their

little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto Him?' Their wealth and dancing are assigned as the reason of their saying unto God, 'Depart from us,' and of their not desiring the knowledge of His ways, and not delighting to serve Him, or pray to Him.

From the preceding quotations, it will sufficiently appear :

1. That dancing was a religious act, both of the true and also of idol worship.

2. That it was practised exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals or great victories.

3. That it was performed by maidens only.

4. That it was performed usually in the daytime, in the open-air, in highways, fields, or groves.

5. That men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement, were deemed infamous.

6. That no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible, in which the two sexes united in the exercise, either as an act of worship or amusement.

7. That there is no instance upon record of social dancing for amusement, except that of the 'vain fellows,' devoid of shame; of the irreligious families, described by Job, which produced increased impiety, and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod, and the murder of John the Baptist."

## The Coronation Oath.

THE following are the Oath and Declaration made by Queen Victoria on her ascent to the throne :—

"Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion Established by Law?"

Queen Victoria : "All this I promise to do."

After this the Queen, laying her hand upon the Holy Gospel, said—

"The things which I have before promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God."

Her Majesty the Queen's Declaration against Ritualism and Romanism :—

"I, Victoria, do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, and testify, and declare that I do believe that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper there is not any Transubstantiation of the Elements of Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, at or after the consecration thereof by any person whatsoever, and that the Invocation or Adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other Saint, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous. . . ."

# An Geamhradh Roimh 'n Fhoghar':

## No an T-anam a' Fas ann an Gras.

SEARMOIN LE J. C. PHILPOT, MINISTEIR A DH' FHAG EAGLAIS  
STEIDHICHTE SHASUINN.\*

(Continued from page 317.)

"Oir roimh an fhaogharadh, 'n uair a bhitheas am blàth iomlan, agus a bhitheas am fion-dhearc an-abuich a' tilgeadh a bhlàtha; gearraidh e dheth na meoir le corraibh-sgathaidh, agus na genga bheir e air falbh, agus gearraidh e sìos. Fàgar iad le chèile gu eunlaith nam beann, agus gu beathaichibh na talmhuinn; agus cuiridh an eunlaith thairis an samhradh orra, agus cuiridh gach uile bheathach na talmhuinn thairis an geamhradh orra."—ISAIAH xviii. 5, 6.

ACH ciod an t-atharrachadh cumhachdach a tha 'gabhail àite anns an anam, an uair a tha blàth an dòchais a' briseadh a mach gu bàrr-guc! An uair a bha am blàth 'am folach leis na duilleagan uaine 'bha 'g iadhadh mu thimchioll bha e gle dhùlth air a bhi air a chòmhdach le an-earbsa; ach tha e 'briseadh a suas á an-earbsa, agus tha na duilleagan uaine a' sgaoileadh o chèile. Bha dorchadas, cionta, uamhas, tùirse, grauaim, mulad, caismeachd bàis agus breitheanais an crochadh os cionn an anama, coltach ris ha h-eoin neo-ghlan a bha thairis air lobairt Abraham. Ach tha dòchas, mar a bha Abraham o shean, ga'm fuadach air falbh. 'Nis tha dòchas a' sealltuinn 'suas ri Dia. Cha 'n 'eil ni aig dòchas r'a dheanamh ris an talamh, ach fàgaidh e 'n fhèidil, agus an fhéin, agus an saoghal (na seirbhisich agus na h-asail) aig bonn an t-sléibhe, Gen. xxii. 5, agus theid e féin a chum 's gu'm bi co-chomunn aige ri Iehobhah Ireh. Mar so tha dòchas a' beathachadh air na nithibh neo-fhaicsinneach air an d' fhuair creidimh dearbh-chinnt. Tha creidimh agus dòchas ag oibreachadh 's na h-aon nithibh, ach cha 'n ann 's an aon rathad. Tha creidimh a' creidsinn 's tha dòchas a' glacadh, tha creidimh a' creidsinn brìgh an ni agus tha dòchas ga mhealtuinn, 's e creidimh an làmh a tha 'gabhail an toraidh agus 'se dòchas am béul a tha 'beathachadh air. Mar so thugadh gealladh do Abraham gu'm faigheadh e mac o Shàrah. Bha 'n so foillseachadh air comas na diadhachd ann an neo-chomas na daonnachd, Marc x. 27, air cumhachd os cionn cumhachd nàduir ann an laigse a chréutair, Rom. iv. 19-22, 's e 'bhi creidsinn an ni 'tha foillsichte brìgh a chreidimh spioradail. Le creidimh chreid Abraham cinnteachd a' gheallaidh; agus le dòchas mheal se e. Bha e 'na ni neo-fhaicsinneach, 'na ni nach robh gu tachairt gu ceann chuig bliadhna fichead 'na dhéigh sin, ach thug creidimh an gealladh a làthair agus bheathaich a dhòchas air. 'N uair a fhuair Abraham a mhac Isaac 'na uchd, cha d'fhuair e ach a mhàin làn shealbh air an ni do'n do roimh bhlaie e. Mheal e nis le cinnteachd, da rìreadh, agus ann an seilbh, an ni a

\* Air a h-eadar-theangachadh gu Gaelic le Iain MacGillies, Tobarmhoire.

bha aige roimhe ann an dùil agus ann an roimh ghlacadh. Mar so tha am fìor dhòchas a' beathachadh air nithibh a ta 'làthair, ach air nithibh a ta 'làthair a mhàin mar roimh bhlas air nithibh a ta ri teachd. Tha e 'beathachadh air Criosd, neach a's e an tì céud-na an dé, an diugh, agus gu sìorruidh, agus cha 'n 'eil e 'g amharc air aghaidh ri aon slàinte eile seach an t-slàinte a tha e nis a' mealtuinn, agus a' roimh bhlasad. Na h-uile dòchas eile seach so cha 'n eil anna ach bréug. Gach dòchas nach d' fhuair roimh bhlas air Dia, nach d' fhuair foillseachadh air slàinte, nach d' fhuair roimh bhlas air tròcair, nach d' fhuair comharran air sonas sìorruidh, agus nach d' fhuair earlais 's an taobh a stigh cha 'n 'eil ann ach mealladh agus an-dànadas. Cha 'n 'eil anns an togail, an uair is e aineolas a tha 'cladhach na stéidhe, 's féin uail a' togail a' bhalla, 's cealgaireachd ga còmhach thairis le criadh gun oibreachadh ach dèidin bréige a sguabas a' chlach mheallain air falbh, agus air an d' thig an t-uisge thairis.

Mar so tha dòchas a' cur a mach a bhlàth agus a' fosgladh a' bhàrr-guc nèamhaidh a tha 'mhàin a' fàs ann an gleann Achoir—gleann nan trioblaidean—Hosea ii. 15; Iosuah vii. 26, aimsir nach bi gu bràth air a dì-chuimhneachadh. 'S maith is cuimhne leam an t-àite—gàrdh beag folaichte le togalaichean, agus a' cur thairis le drisean, far an d' fhosgail am blàth so air tùs ann am anam. Ach cha b' urrainn na togalaichean fholach, no an eidgeann sgàil a chur air, no an fhuarrachd a chumail dùinte. Ach dh' fhosgail am blàth agus bhris am bàrr-guc a mach, agus aig an dearbh mhionaid sin sheall an t-sùil suas, agus thuir am béul, "Co th' agam anns na neamhan shuas ach thusa, agus cha 'n 'eil aon air thalamh air a bheil mo dhéigh ach thusa."

Nan ceadaicheadh ùine dh' fhaodainn a chur an céill cionnas a tha blàth na h-uile gràs ga sgaoileadh féin a mach ann an earrach an anama anns an rathad chéudna. 'S gann a tha do neart ann an gràdh 's a' bhlàth na dhìonas a bheatha o naimhdeas na h-inntinn fheòlmhor a tha air a bhrosnachadh suas le teachd a steach an lagha. Coltach ri faillean maoth, tha e 'g amharc mar gu'm biodh e dol a shearg air falbh agus a bhàsachadh; ach tha gràdh anns a' bhàrr-guc tréun agus làidir. Cha 'n 'eil an gràdh anns a' bhlàth r'a fhaicinn, no follaiseach mar ghràdh; agus cha 'n urrinn neach maise a' bhàrr-guc a thuigsinn o'n bhlàth gus am bris e 'mach. Ach bidh gràdh anns a' bhàrr-guc air ball air aithneachadh mar ghràdh. Coltach r'a Ughdar Diadhaidh, cha 'n urrainn e 'bhi air a chumail am folach, Marc vii. 24, ach bidh e follaiseach agus air a léughadh leis na h'uile dhaoineibh.

Mar so tha *doilgheas diadhaidh*, 'n uair nach 'eil e fathas ach anns a' bhlàth agus air fhilleadh suas ann an aithreachas laghail maille ris na doilgheasan a dh' oibricheas bàs, duilich fhaicinn. Tha e 'crùbadh fuidh 'n duilleach, 'am folach, agus an cleith. Ach tha a' ghrian ag amharc air, Dan. i. 6, agus tha esan an sin a' sealltuinn air-san a lot e, agus a' deanamh bròin air a shon mar bhròn air son céud-ghin.



Tha eagal diadhaidh a ris anns a' bhlàth air a dhorachadh agus air a chleith leis an eagal thràilleil a tha ga phianadh. Tha an t-eagal thràilleil cho làidir 's gu bheil e 'bacadh an eagal mhacail. Tha dorchadas agus aiteachd, neòil ghruamach agus iarmailt bhagarrach a' beathachadh a' chéud aoin, an uair a tha iad a' bacadh, agus a' fuarachadh an aoin eile. Ach do bhrìgh gur h-i beatha an dara aoin bàs an aoin eile, tha 'n t-eagal diadhaidh an uair a ta e 'briseadh a mach fo bharr-guc, gu luath a' dol os cionn an eagal thràilleil. 'N uair a rinn Abraham cuirm air son a mhic Isaac thionndaidh e Ismael a mach air a dhorus. An gràdh a tha tilgeadh a mach an eagal phiantail is e dearbh bheatha an eagal spioradail a tha 'na thobar beatha gu dol as o lontaibh a bhais.

'S i ùrnuigh aon eile do ghràsan an Spioraid a tha 'fosgladh a blàth ann an earrach so an anama. Chaidh an gràs so a steach do'n anam maille ris a' chéud sholus spioradail a shoillsich ann "Feuch tha e ri ùrnuigh," Gniomh. ix. 11, an céud chomharra a bha air ath-ghineamhuinn Shaul. Gus a so bha 'iompachadh a' co-sheasamh ann an ro bheagan eile ach éigheach agus osnaich. A bhi 'teachd 'am fagusg do Dhia 's a bhi 'mealtuinn a làthaireachd, mothachadh air a cho-chomunn, còmhraidh naomha, moladh agus beannachadh, agus mar an céudna faireachduinnean air dlùthas do Dhia, 's gann a b' aithne dha eadhoin a h-aon diubh. Roimhe sin bha 'ùrnuigh air a tarraing a mach le uamhas 's cha b' ann le gràdh. Bu choltaiche ùrnuigh roimhe so ri caoidh an fhir a bha fo bhinn bàis, ri éigheach an lobhair, ri osnaich an an-dòchasaich, ri ospagail bhrìste an fheadhain a bhios ga'm bàthadh no a' bàsachadh na ri sruth mìn, ciùin, sòileimte agus seimh dlùthais agus fagusgachd do Dhia. Tha dà sheòrs ùrnuigh spioradail ann—ùrnuigh fuidh chionta agus ùrnuigh fuidh thròcair; ùrnuigh a' chridhe air a chlaoidh agus ùrnuigh a' chridhe 'cur thairis: ùrnuigh fhad air falbh agus ùrnuigh 'am fagusg; ùrnuigh eir a bacadh le osnaidhean, le acainean 's le lasaichean do shamhchair, 's le eas-òrdugh muladach, coltach ri aimhnichean nam beann a' ruith am measg chreag 'us chlach agus ùrnuigh a tha sruthadh gu seimh 's gu ciùin a steach do uchd Dhé, mar a tha aimhnichean nan gleann a' sìoladh a steach do dhoimhneachd a' chuain.

'Nis fad na cuid mu dheireadh do earrach an anama, tha na h-uile nithe a bhuineas do chreidimh spioradail làn do mhillseachd. Tha focal Dé mar a' mhil agus mar a' chir-mheala, cuideachd cloinne Dhé ro iarratach leis, òrduighean a thighe air am miannachadh gu mòr, agus tha teachdaireachd a mhinistirean air a gabhail gu taitneach. Cha mhòr nach toir gach searmoin beannachd, gach ùrnuigh ùrachadh, agus gach caibdeal seòladh 'us comhfhurtachd. Mar so tha an t-anam a' fàs suas coltach ri laogh biadhtha. Bhlais e gu bheil an Tighearna gràsmhor, agus tha e 'beathachadh air bainne fìorghlan an fhocail agus a' fàs leis.—1 Pead. ii. 2, 3.

A nis anns a' mhisnich so tha an dara pairt do'n earrach a' teachd air aghaidh, eadhoin *samhradh* an anama. Tha a nis "am

blàth iomlan, agus tha am fion-dhearc anabuich ag abachadh anns a' bhàrr-guc;" cha 'n e gu bheil an toradh fathast abuich mar a bhios e anns an fhoghar', ach tha am blàth ag abachadh agus bidh am bàrr-guc làn abuich anns an t-samhradh. Tha "am blàth iomlan" an uair a tha e uile air sgaoileadh as a chéile. 'S e abachadh nam fion-dhearc anns a' bhàrr-guc abachadh a' bhàrr-guc a tha 'cumail nan dearcan, cha 'n e abachadh an toraidh an déigh do'n bhàrr-guc tuiteam; oir cha 'n urrainn an toradh a bhi tarbhach mar a bi am blàth iomlan, ach tuitidh e dheth maille ris a' bhàrr-guc, mar a thilgeas craobh-fhige a figean anabuich.—Taisb. vi. 13. Tha nis a shamhradh aig an anam, agus tha blàth an dòchais ga sgaoileadh féin a mach gu àirde, creidimh anns an fhailleann a' teachd foidh' làn bhlàth, gradh anns an duilleig uaine ag abachadh gu gràdh anns a' bhàrr-guc. Anns na làithibh briagha samhraidh so tha a' mhòr chuid do'n iarmalt soilleir, gun neòil. Tha sith Dhé a' gleidheadh a' chridhe agus na h-inntinn—an dara h-aon o iodhalaibh, 's an t-aon eile o throimhe chéile. Tha nèamh ag amharc aig làimh, agus slorruidheachd fagus, bàs fuidh na casaibh, agus ifrinn as an t-sealladh. Dhàsan a tha 'siubhal 'na leithid sud do shlighe shona tha toil-inntinnean agus cùram an t-saoghail, nithibh laghail tiom, na nithibh dìomhain air am bheil an duine feòlmhor 'an tòir, gnothaichean na bùth 's na machair, aidmheil fhalamh mhlitean, foirm agus iomairt creidimh feòlmhor, tha iad so uile 'na shealladh nì's eutruime na dìomhanas. Tha e air ath-nuadhachadh ann na inntinn, agus mar so, air dhà bhi, ann an tomhas anmhunn air a cho-chumadh ri iomhaidh Chrìosd, tha e 'faicinn nithibh ann an tomhas àraidh mar a tha an Tigheana e féin gam faicinn; oir "tha inntinn Chrìosd aige," 1 Cor. ii. 16, agus tha e a' "faicinn solus ann an solus Dhé."—Salm xxxvi. 9. Mar so tha am peacadh a' fàs fuathach leis, an inntinn fheòlmhor a' fàs 'na h-eallach dhà, an talamh 'na ionad-còmhnuidh truagh leis, agus tha 'anam a' glaochadh, "'S truagh nach robh agam sgiathan colmain! 'an sin thaichinn air falbh agus bhithinn aig fois."

Cò nis a shaoileadh nach 'eil an t-anam sona so dlùth do néamh, 'nuair a tha e 'g amharc mar gu'm biodh e air a dhearbhadh chriochna? Ach faodaidh e dol dlùth dha 's gun dol a steach ann; mar a bha clann Israel glé dhlùth do thir Chanaain dà fhichead bliadhna mu'n d' fhuair iad a steach innte. Bha iad dà fhichead bliadhna sgìth, seachranach anns an fhàsach, 'an déigh dhoibh campachadh ann an Cades (Aireomh xiii. 26) a bha ann an iomall Edoim, agus dlùth air fearann a gheallaidh.

Tha leasana 'an so ri'm fòghlum nach aithne do'n anam 'san àm a ta làthair ach ro bheag mu'n timchioll, ma's aithne dha nì sam bith. Tha cleachdadh a dh' fheumas e dol troimhe air nach do bhruadair e ach ro bheagan; slighe gu bhi 'coiseachd oirre air nach d' fhuair e fathast ach ro bheagan eòlais. Cha'n 'eil fòghar' ann an rìoghachd nan gràs a' leantuinne samhraidh mar ann an rìoghachd nàduir. "Roimh an fhogharadh" tha aimsir eile a' tighin. Tha eadhoin geamhradh fuar, dùltaidh, gruamach, a'

tighin eatorra, agus leis a' gheamhradh tha corran-sgathaidh an tuathanaich nèamhaidh a' teachd a ghlanadh na fionain "chum 's gu'n giùlain i tuilleadh toraidh." "Oir roimh an fhogharadh, an uair a bhitheas am blàth iomlan, agus a bhitheas am fion-dhearc an-abuich a' tilgeadh a bhlàtha; gearraidh e dheth na meòir le corranaibh-sgathaidh, agus na géugaibh bheir e air falbh, agus gearraidh e sìos."

Ach c'ar son a tha an aimsir gheamhraidh so feumail? Ciod am feum a tha air an leithidean sud do fhiosraichean géura agus cràit-each? C'ar son nach do ghabh an t-anam air aghaidh mar a thòisich e? C'ar son nach deachaidh e air adhart o neart gu neart, agus nach do mhèudaich a chreidimh agus a dhòchas agus a ghràdh, gus am biodh "a shith mar amhainn, agus fhireantachd mar thonnann na fairge?" Tha da rìreadh gu leòir do luchd-teagaisg aguinn a dh' innseas duinn, cha'n e idir gur ann mar sud bu chòir a' chùis a bhith, ach gur ann mar sud gun cheist a ta i. Cha 'n 'eil easbhuidh luchd-deilbh rathaidean-iaruinn oirnn a ghearras a mach slighe gu nèamh—far nach ruig sinn leas beinn àrd a dhìreadh, no dail ìosal a thearnadh, seadh gun an uchdach a's lugha. 'S cha mhò a tha easbhuidh dhealbhairean oirnn a thairgneas dealbh maiseach air aghaidh tire le nèamh féin aig a' chrìch, cho furasda 's a chuir *Martin* caochladh gach dath air a luchairtean dealrach Eiphiteach. Ach cha dean a leithid do luchd-turais 's a shuidheas ri taobh teine, no leithid do mharaichean 's a shuidheas ri oisein sìmealair, no clachairean a thogas caisteil anns na neòil, ciod air bith cho snasail 's a dh' inneas iad mu'n dara h-aon, no 'chuireas iad an céill mu mhaise luchairtean an aoin eile, an gnothach do'n fhìor fhear-turais. 'S e dh' fhéumas esan mar fhear-iùil aon a choisich an t-slighe e féin: agus esan a thogas air son sìorruidheachd, cha'n fhuileir leis clachair a's urrainn stéidh dhìongmhalta a leagail, agus a ris a chuireas gach clach 's an àite cheart. Fàgaidh sinn a nis an luchd-seallaidh so 'n am beachdan féin, agus 'an àite labhairt air nithibh mar bu chòir dhoibh a bhi, feuchaidh sinn ri labhairt mu nithibh mar a tha iad; oir a bhi 'sìor innse dhuinn cia mar bu ehòir dhuinn a bhi, cha 'n 'eil ann ach a bhi 'g iarraidh oirnn uisge a tharruing le bucaid a tha toll air a mäs; agus tha mise cinnteach nach càirich saor-thoil an toll gu bràth.

(*Ri leantuinn.*)

## Notes and Comments.

**Corrections.**—The report of Synod in last issue, in regard to Mr. Beaton's salary, should have read as follows:—The Synod agreed that Mr. Beaton should have £50 for the half-year—November to May—during his tutorial duties, and for the rest of the year the ordinary probationer's allowance. In regard to

Beaully and Dingwall, the report should have run—That the application was remitted to the Northern Presbytery for further consideration and conference.

**Free Presbyterian Services in London.**—The Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Gairloch, conducted a Gaelic service in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, Aldersgate Street, London, on Sabbath, the 27th November. The service was followed by an address in English on the 1st Psalm. There were about 200 present.

**A Recent Sample of Theology in the Free Church.**—On Sabbath evening, 20th November, Rev. J. B. Johnstone lectured in Falkirk Free Church, on the subject, "What Comes After Death?" While refusing to advocate Purgatory, he declared that he could not come to any other conclusion, after fourteen years' study, but that there was an intermediate state the soul entered at death. He also expressed the belief that there was a second chance for the heathen, and for all such as never heard the Gospel. There was a large audience who seemed to highly appreciate the lecture. Alas! Alas!

**Death of Dr. Gustavus Aird.**—Dr. Aird, the well-known Free Church minister, late of Creich, passed away on Tuesday, 20th December, at the manse, Sale, near Manchester, the residence of his nephew, the Rev. Mr. Sim. The deceased minister had reached the ripe age of 85. He was ordained in the year 1841, and was a highly esteemed preacher in the Highlands, but retired from the ministry two years ago. Our regret is that he continued to the end in connection with the Free Church, and in common with many others, failed to lift up a testimony for the truth at the critical time. It would be injustice, however, not to notice that many are alive to-day in our own body who are witnesses to the spiritual benefit derived under Dr. Aird's ministry. These persons, while steadfastly adhering to their testimony for the truth, cannot but feel a keen pang of sorrow at the departure of one from whose lips they frequently heard the word of life.

**A Decaying Nation.**—The number of births reported in France during last year (859,107) is virtually the smallest ever registered in that country. The population of surrounding nations is increasing, but upon France there is a blight. Yet it is neither war, famine, or pestilence that has done this; but a nation that has cast off virtue and the fear of God as this gay people have done, will thus be consumed from the face of the earth.

**Fraternity without Principle.**—The Rev. Alexander Soutar, M.A., late of Springburn, Glasgow, was recently inducted as minister of the First Free Church, Thurso. At the dinner which took place thereafter there were present, among others, Rev. Dr. Winter,

Dyke, a leader of the constitutional party in the Free Church; Rev. James Paterson of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; and Rev. Alexander Smellie of the Original Secession Church. Mr. Soutar is well known as in full sympathy with the doings of the down-grade majority in the Free Church. Where is Dr. Winter's testimony when he cordially recommends and supports a man of Mr. Soutar's ecclesiastical position? As for the conduct of Messrs. Paterson and Smellie, truly the times have changed! The day was when the R.P. and O.S. Churches disapproved of all fellowship with bodies who came short of their testimony, no matter how sound and scriptural the worship and preaching in those bodies were. Messrs. Paterson and Smellie can now join hands with the Free Church, a body which is sunk in the mire of the most poisonous doctrine known in modern times. Further, in the intervals between the speeches, at the above dinner, a choir sang uninspired hymns and anthems, which manner of worship the ministers referred to are under solemn vows and obligations to protest against. They seem, however, to treat these vows and obligations as of very little consequence. If their congregations can sit in silence and tolerate such unfaithfulness they are equally involved in the guilt of it.

A similar exhibition of lack of principle took place at Wick on the 11th and 12th of December. Services were there held in connection with the settlement of Rev. A. T. Hill as pastor of the Zion Congregational Church. This church was formerly known as Evangelical Union, and is still an upholder of Morisonian principles, which are, as our readers know, erroneous in character. Rev. D. R. Scott, Congregational Church, and Rev. John Elder, Baptist Church, preached on the 11th, and at a social meeting on the following evening, Rev. Mr. Shearer, U.P. Church, and Rev. Messrs. Robertson, Harper, and Traill, Free Church, delivered congratulatory addresses to pastor and people.

The ministers of the Free Church clearly show that they are in full sympathy with Arminianism of a pronounced type, and fully verify the statements that have been made in this *Magazine* and elsewhere in regard to the deep declension of the body to which they belong. We are especially surprised at the conduct of the Baptist minister. It is our decided impression that the constitution of the Wick Baptist Church is Calvinistic, and that the church adhered to the late Mr. Spurgeon's testimony against the Baptist Union. We would like to know how the action of Mr. Elder in this matter can be made to harmonise with this position.

**Mr. Kensit's Meetings.**—Mr. John Kensit, London, addressed a meeting in the City Hall, Glasgow, on the evening of the 12th December. There was a large audience. Mr. W. C. Maughan presided. The chairman made some eloquent remarks. But with one statement at least we could not agree, namely, that

we have nothing against the Episcopal Church as such. No sound Presbyterian can homologate that statement. We are opposed to Prelacy as well as Popery. Mr. Kensit then rose and had an enthusiastic reception. His address was very ably delivered, and contained incisive criticism and vigorous denunciation of the views and practices of the Ritualists in the Church of England. He also criticised a pamphlet by Dr. Cooper of the Established Church of Scotland. Rev. A. G. Townshend, a minister of an Episcopal Church in Glasgow, and a Protestant, moved a vote of thanks to Mr. Kensit, and in doing so he spoke with power and impressiveness. He said that the Church of Rome was undoubtedly a synagogue of Satan, and that the Ritualists were trying to bridge over by little and little the chasm that separated between the truth of God on the one hand, and the lie of the devil on the other. Rev. Dr. Kerr seconded the motion in a pointed speech. Our pleasure at this meeting was somewhat modified by what appeared to us an uncalled for innovation. The organ discoursed a series of selections for half an hour before the proceedings began, and also accompanied the singing of the opening Psalm. We think that the Scottish Protestant Alliance must be forgetting that this is a Presbyterian country, and that it is an insult to ask Presbyterians to listen to unscriptural performances of the above kind. We earnestly hope that such will not occur again at any similar meeting.

Mr. Kensit addressed two meetings in the Free Assembly Hall, Edinburgh, on the afternoon and evening of the 13th. Major-General Grant presided in the afternoon, and Samuel Smith, Esq., M.P., in the evening. There were large audiences. Mr. Smith delivered an excellent address, giving a large amount of information in regard to the exact extent of Ritualism in the Church of England. He said there were 6,000 ministers in that Church that belonged to the Ritualistic party. Mr. Kensit spoke on both occasions with marked power. He again criticised Dr. Cooper's pamphlet. He urged upon the people to put Protestantism first and politics second, a charge that cannot be too deeply impressed upon the people of our time. He also exhorted them to band together in thousands for the defence of our Protestant liberties. We think that a salutary impression was produced by these meetings. There is much need. The apathy in Scotland on the subject of Protestantism is fearful, and that especially among the clergy. A feature of all these meetings was the very sparse attendance of ministers belonging to all denominations. As for those who are considered the leaders of religious thought, not one of them was present. Drs. Rainy, Whyte, Ross Taylor of the Free Church were nowhere to be found, nor was any leading minister of the U.P. or Established Church. Such is the humiliating state of things in Protestant Scotland. Rev. Jacob Primmer, however, was present at all the meetings.

**Professor Dods.**—It was advertised on Saturday, 24th December, that Rev. Professor Marcus Dods, D.D., should preach the following forenoon in Holyrood Free Church, Edinburgh. The predecessor of the Rev. Peter Macdonald, the present pastor of this congregation, was Dr. William Balfour, the most faithful minister in the Constitutional party. Mr. Macdonald could cast no greater insult upon Dr. Balfour's memory than to invite Dr. Dods to his pulpit. The incident also gives another illustration of the degeneracy of the so-called Free Church.

**The Coronation Oath.**—This oath, a copy of which we give on another page, is imposed on every sovereign of England on his or her coronation day. Its use and virtue as a safeguard of our National Protestantism is self-evident. Our forefathers who formulated the oath, were wiser and more patriotic than we are, and their perception of Romanism as an enemy of God and our country was a just and proper one. We are less jealous and sensitive about the approaches of Rome, but our reputation for charity and liberal mindedness will probably be purchased at a dear rate. The designs of the hierarchy "to bend and subjugate an imperial race," are reaching their consummation while the world sleeps. The Coronation Oath, as we might expect, has always been an eyesore and a provocation to the papal officials. Father Fallon, the leading Romish preacher in Ottawa, Canada, declared in a recent sermon that the Catholics of the empire should do their best to have the Coronation Oath removed from the Coronation Service, on account of its containing portions stigmatizing the mass as superstitious and idolatrous. Why, asked the preacher, should Queen Victoria have insulted her Catholic subjects, than whom none were more loyal (?) by taking that oath, and should the Prince of Wales take such a pledge of the Crown? This speech shows that the Romanists will not suffer any more British Sovereigns to take this Protestant oath if they can help it.

**Parnell's Hatred of England.**—The life of this tragical man has lately been published, and from it we learn that hatred of England was the master motive of his career. "Parnell," says his biographer, "wanted not reparation alone, but vengeance as well." The rank ungodliness of the means and motives of Parnell and his party was patent to everyone. It is true, the Tipperary farmer had a real grievance against the system of rack-renting absentee landlordism which prevailed, but, in such situations, by hatred shall no man prevail. Agitators for redress have always a third party to reckon with, and of Him it is written that "His soul hates the wicked man, and him that violence loves." The Jews, doubtless, hated the Roman conqueror well, and made much riot and bloodshed in vain attempts to dethrone him, but it was their sin and misery not to discern that Cæsar had a commission from Heaven to afflict the chosen people, and the true patriotism and statesmanship had been first to repent of their

sin, and then seek redress by prayer and all lawful means. From such views and convictions Parnell and his fellows were utterly free. We see the contempt and confusion which the God of Heaven poured upon the party. Parnell overthrew Parnell. For to political violence he must needs add adultery, and when this threatened to come to light, he thought to cover the matter by lying. But all to no purpose. Judgment was pronounced against him, and the shock of his fall rent his party in fragments. Nevertheless Parnell did not despair.

"It will take you ten years to pull the country together," one said to him.

"No," he rejoined quietly; "I will do it in five years, that is what I calculate."

"Well," said the other, "Gladstone will be dead then. The whole question to me is, you and Gladstone. If you both go, Home Rule will go with you for this generation."

"But I will not go," he replied angrily; "I am a young man, and I will not go." And there was a fierce flash in his eyes which was not pleasant to look at.

"Alas!" says the reviewer, "for the confident hopes of the young man who would not go. That very year the Messenger, who will not be gainsaid, smote on the lintel of the house at Brighton, and Mr. Parnell went."

---

## Literary Notice.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY.  
London: Lucas Collins, 319 Oxford Street.

This is the title of a book (price 5/-), newly issued by the Rev. W. Lancelot Holland, late of the English Episcopal Church, Edinburgh. The author raises an able testimony on behalf of the inspiration and literal accuracy of the Holy Scriptures, and exposes and condemns the fearful errors held by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other representatives of modern Christianity in England. Scotland also receives deserved attention. Such men as Drs. Whyte, George Adam Smith, Bruce and Dods, are criticised in no milk and water fashion. The testimony of God's Word is brought to bear upon their erroneous ideas. Mr. Holland, as a faithful witness, has cleared himself of their blood, and the blood of all who support them. We intend giving extracts from this book in a future issue. In the meantime, we say, that none of our readers who can at all spare the price should fail in getting a copy of it. Without committing ourselves to some of the views expressed, we have no hesitation in saying that we have read hardly any work of recent times with greater satisfaction than this. The author's address is 117 Elgin Crescent, London, W.