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## Great Britain's Present Duty.

SINCE our last issue, the British arms in South Africa have suffered very severe reverses. The Boers have been able to maintain their position, and to inflict immense loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners on our forces, not certainly without some damage to themselves. General Buller, who was expected to relieve the whole situation, was driven back in his first effort at the Tugela River with greater loss than that sustained on any previous occasion. Many brave men have fallen, and many homes throughout the country are plunged into the deepest affliction. This is a sad New Year at many a fireside, where once cheerfulness prevailed.

The question arises: Is there in all this no voice to be heard louder than that of man's? Can we fail, as a nation, to recognise the voice of God in this hour of adversity? If we fail to do so, it will be plain that the insensibility of spiritual death holds complete sway over the national conscience. It is devoutly to be hoped, however, that the nation is not yet wholly given over to a reprobate mind, and that God in His infinite mercy may use the present season of affliction as a means of bringing us to a measure of repentance for our sins, and a measure of reformation in our practices. It is manifestly Great Britain's present duty to humble herself before God. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—(1 Peter v. 6.) "For everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—(Luke xviii. 14.)

We are quite aware that there are many in our nation who will regard the counsel to humiliation as so much religious cant and fanaticism. They see no need for any such thing. Britain's present duty in their eyes is simply to send more troops to South Africa. Others again may imagine that it savours of an unpatriotic spirit, a lack of love to one's country. This idea is also an

erroneous one. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." It is they who desire that the British people should part company with their pride and lie low before God, it is they who are the true lovers of their country. Other patriots, who pride themselves in their country's greatness and strength and forget the glory that is due unto God alone, are in reality their country's enemies. It is indeed matter of no little grief that patriots in the best and noblest sense have become so few among us at the end of the nineteenth century. We say it, however, without any hesitation that the patriot at the present crisis who refuses to bow under the hand of God is only a patriot in name, and is doing his best to incur further suffering and loss upon his country.

There are many reasons why we should humble ourselves as a nation before God. There are as many reasons as there are sins. First, the spirit in which our leading officers have gone out to battle is a highly culpable one. Luck seems to be the deity they worship. The God of heaven and earth, the covenant God of their forefathers, does not appear to be in all their thoughts. Their confidence is in their soldiers, their arms, their batteries. An atheistic spirit seems dominant among them. Do we then imagine that if we go forth to fight in the name of a false God, or no God, that we can expect a blessing upon our arms? If we do, we are greatly mistaken. A victory gained under these wicked auspices would be a curse and not a blessing. And we fear that a succession of British victories, as long as Britain continues in her present degenerate frame of mind, would only serve to bring about her downfall in the end of the day. Better to get a defeat, and humility and repentance with it, than a victory with pride and vain glory. There is much need that the Lord would open the eyes of our officers and soldiers to realise that their trust must be not in their own sword or bow, but in the arm of the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength. We have reason to humble ourselves on account of the forgetfulness of God, which characterises those who fight our battles.

Secondly, we ought to humble ourselves on account of our sins at home. We have frequently referred to these sins in the columns of this Magazine, and however tired people may be apt to get of hearing about them, it is one of our permanent duties to blow the trumpet of warning in regard to the things through which our beloved country is liable to be cast down to hell. The disregard of God and the Bible in our legislature, the admission of atheists, infidels, Jews, and Papists into our Parliament, and the general neglect of our authorities to care for the interests of religion, are evils to be mourned. The Romanism and Rationalism of the professing Churches, the vain forms of worship in practice, the lack of discipline, the admission to sacred ordinances of persons who evince no true religion, and light, frivolous, unscriptural teaching from the pulpits are another class of evils that call for repentance and reformation. The social sphere is also in a

lamentable state of degeneracy. The neglect of family worship, the absence of parental control, and the contempt of parents by the young, the indulgence in a multitude of vain and foolish amusements, the love of the theatre, the ball, and the concert; and the contempt of the Lord's day by all ranks and classes, by religious teachers, magistrates, and the common people, are still another class of evils which are crying to God against our country, and which are fitted to prostrate us in the dust of humiliation. If the Lord would deal with us according to our sins, He might justly sweep us out at any moment from among the nations of the world.

Thirdly, it would become us to humble ourselves on account of our private, individual sins. There is no living man that sinneth not. The holiest of the people of God have their sins, sins to be constantly confessed, and mourned over. Former confessions and repentances are not sufficient. The necessity constantly arises for new self-examinations, new confessions, and new repentances. We who profess Christ have to mourn our lack of prayer, our satisfaction with external duties without the power, our absence of humility and lowliness of mind, our luke-warmness in the cause of God, our want of zeal for the glory of Christ, our tendency to compromise with the world and its practices, our carnality of mind and conversation. There are other things which might be mentioned, but we leave them to the inward reflection of our serious readers. May the Lord enable each one for himself and herself to engage in the exercises of confession and repentance! No spiritual person will think that these exercises are to be performed in dependence on natural strength, but on the strength of grace, or with the idea that the favour and blessing of God are to be purchased thereby. The only meritorious channel through which God's favour descends is the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. That only is a true confession of sin that leads us to look to the work of Christ for acceptance, and that only is saving repentance that draws its life and virtue from the same work. Confession and repentance provide a suitable meetness of heart for the enjoyment of God's favour, and for the engagement in any duty that shall further the glory of God.

Fourthly, it is the duty of those who are still outside Christ to consider their ways, and to humble themselves before God. Do they imagine the Lord is not angry with them? He is angry with them every day. What a multitude of young people and old people there are in this professedly Christian country, who are manifestly still in their sins! They think their sins have nothing to do with the present reverses of our armies in South Africa, but they are mistaken. They are themselves a large proportion of the inhabitants of this country, and God is exhibiting His holy indignation against them at the present moment. They ought to consider that they have come to an end of another year, that another year's list of their iniquities has entered God's reckoning book, that except they repent they shall certainly perish,

and that now, not to-morrow, is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. What are they to do with the year they are entering upon? Is it also to be spent in the service of the world and the devil, and are they to make it surer than ever that they are to spend their eternity in the flames of never ending misery? Is salvation nothing to them, and can they lightly trample upon the blood of the Son of God as presented in the everlasting gospel? We ask every unconverted reader to seriously consider these questions. You may excuse yourselves with the doctrine of total spiritual helplessness, but that will afford you no valid excuse. Your helplessness is your sin, and your sin is your guilt. The proportion of your helplessness is the proportion of your guilt. Your helplessness, if you rightly believed it, would make you cry with all the greater vehemence for mercy and deliverance, and make you strive with all the greater diligence to enter in at the strait gate. The Lord promises the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. Let us seek to be diligent in every commanded duty, and let us look to the Lord alone for the manifestation of the almighty quickening power of His Spirit, who is able to put life into our souls and duties, and bring us nigh to God through the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious mediator of the new covenant. The cry of the humbled publican was—"God be merciful to me, a sinner," and if this cry were put in truth into the hearts of poor sinners, they would be speedily exalted in Christ's righteousness, and made instruments for showing forth His praise. It would be a blessed thing for many of our young people, not to begin the New Year with the devil and his amusements, but with diligent striving after an interest in Christ and His glorious salvation.

In view of all these things, we trust Her Majesty the Queen, and her counsellors, will proclaim a day of humiliation and prayer throughout the whole realm. This would be some outward acknowledgment at least of the rod of God's chastisements and of our national sins. May the Holy Spirit descend in rich measure upon our beloved country, so as to produce in the hearts of the people a spirit of repentance and reformation! For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Christ shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

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THE religion of a sinner stands on two pillars; namely, what Christ did for us in His flesh, and what He performs in us by the Spirit. Most errors arise from an attempt to separate these two.—*John Newton.*

God's word is certainly a restraint; but it is such a restraint as the irons which prevent children from getting into the fire.—*John Newton.*

God deals with us as we do with our children. He first speaks, then gives a gentle stroke, at last a blow.—*John Newton.*

## A Sermon.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER STEWART, OBAN.

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“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.”—HEBREWS ix. 27.

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THE commencement of a New Year is usually a season of joy and rejoicing; and perhaps this is not unnatural. But it is to be feared that too often on such occasions the merriment of men is marred with sinful and shameful excesses. Of those even who live in comparative restraint during the rest of the year many seem to think that at this time they have license to indulge in an annual carousal. The lapse of time, as marked by the succession of the years, the dying of the old and the birth of the new, ought, however, to foster solemn reflection. We are being carried forward, silently but surely, on our journey from time to eternity, and the swift flight of the years marks the rapidity of our progress. Very soon our race will have been run. We shall have entered on our last year, and sooner or later, before its close, we shall have to bid this world farewell. This is a truth of which we are prone to live in studied forgetfulness. It is well that we should pause and consider it. Let us pause and consider it now. God is speaking to us in His Word, and the declarations of His truth but verify the experience of our daily life. It is appointed, He says, unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Let us examine briefly the import of this solemn statement.

It is as an illustration that these words have been introduced by the Apostle. He is using them to show that there is some kind of parallel in the universal experience of men to the death and second Advent of Christ; but although their occurrence in this particular passage is subordinate to the main purpose in hand, and although in considering them separately we are isolating them from the context in which they have their setting, their significance is none the less real, and their claims to separate consideration none the less urgent. The Apostle has been contrasting the Old Testament dispensation with the New. He shows us how the types and shadows and ceremonial rites of Old Testament worship found their fulfilment in the work of Christ. He is showing us the superior glory of the good things which have come with Christ. The ceremonial observances of the Old Testament could not of themselves make those who engaged in them perfect. They could not deliver the conscience from the wrath of God. The service consisted in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. But Christ has appeared, an High Priest of good things to come, and the Old Testament dispensation has come to an end. It had a

glory, but it had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. The ordinances of Old Testament worship were not meant to be enduring. They were to last only until the time of reformation; but that which has taken their place is permanent. Christ is a High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec. He is alive after the power of an endless life. And the kingdom we have received is one that cannot be moved. The sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood were inferior. It was impossible that the blood of bulls or of goats should take away sin. There were countless thousands of them slain on Jewish altars, but they could not of themselves atone for the guilt of one sin. Lebanon was not sufficient to burn, nor all the beasts thereof for a burnt offering. But there has come One who offered Himself, through the eternal Spirit, without spot unto God, and put away sin for ever by the sacrifice of Himself. The Levitical priesthood had to offer sacrifices for themselves as well as for the people, for they were only sinful men. But here is One who was without spot—holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners—who came by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. They had to offer sacrifices continually, for the intrinsic insufficiency of the oblation called for its perpetual renewal. He, by one sacrifice, perfected for ever them that are sanctified, and needed not to offer up Himself continually. He appeared once, in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. This is what the Apostle is illustrating in the words before us. He is showing that Christ had not to be offering Himself, and suffering death continually from the beginning of the world. He appeared once, and, once for all, put away sin. He appeared once, in the end of the world, a sin bearer. He is going to appear again, a second time, without sin unto salvation. It is appointed unto men once to die, and only once; and when Christ appeared among men, as the surety and substitute of many, the Second Man, the Lord from heaven, Christ too must die; but in that He died, He died unto sin once: death hath no more dominion over Him. And as unto men there comes judgment after death, so there is something to correspond with this in the case of Christ. He is to appear again unto them that look for Him, without sin, unto salvation. This is the parallel.

We are called upon first to consider the solemn truth taught us here concerning the human race: it is appointed unto men once to die. This appointment is of God. He has a purpose, an eternal purpose, whereby for His own glory He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass. God knows the end from the beginning. He knew from eternity all things that ever were, or shall be; and each of these things had its place within His eternal decree. Nor has any event been determined in eternity isolated from the circumstances which occasioned it in time, and of which it forms a part. Nothing, indeed, in the universe stands alone. Each event had precursors which produced it; each produces others in

turn. So it is from the beginning to the conclusion, from God the Source unto God the End. The universe is a chain of circumstances which stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect; and the decree of God embraces all things that come to pass, in the order in which they occur in the plan of the universe, produced by causes, and determined by conditions. Now this appointment that men should die is embraced within God's decree; but it has its place in an order of events which are connected one with another as cause and effect. It is suspended in that order on a cause, and that cause is sin. Sin is embraced within the Divine decree. For, observe, the Divine decree does not interfere with the perfect freedom of moral agents. The good that is in man is from God; but man's sin is his own. For certain wise ends God permitted the entrance of sin. He permissively decreed that it should take place; and yet each act of sin is an act for which man alone is responsible. It is a great mystery this, how God decrees the free acts of men, and yet men are none the less responsible for their sins. The Jews were surely responsible for crucifying the Lord of Glory, and yet we read that He was delivered according to the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God.

Well, sin entered into the world, and death came by sin. It is appointed unto men once to die, because men have sinned. Ah, friend, sin is a terrible thing. It wrought a fearful ruin in the human family. You may think lightly of it. You indulge in it with a light heart, your feet are swift to run in its ways, you drink it up like water; but sin will give you an Eternity in hell unless you are saved from it in Time. Sin opened a wide door for misery. It brought upon us the curse of God. Within that curse are included all the miseries to which man is exposed in Time and Eternity. Death came in by sin. Spiritual death came instantaneously, temporal death will follow sooner or later according to God's sovereign appointment, and eternal death will be the portion of every soul that will not be washed from his sins in the blood of Christ. It is appointed unto men once to die. It is appointed unto each one of us: the valley of the shadow of death lies before us all. It is strange how men live in habitual forgetfulness of the fact that death is awaiting them. They are reminded of it every day. Seldom does a day pass over our head but we see or hear of someone that has been removed by death; and yet each one seems to live as if he had his portion in this world for ever. The very thought of death is distasteful to us. We shrink from contemplating it. Men banish such gloomy reflections from their minds, and set themselves to make the most of the passing hour. Let us eat and drink and be merry, say they, let not this disturber be allowed to spoil our enjoyment of life with all that it casts at our feet. But it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. Friend, it is a solemn consideration, and I beseech you, whoever you may be, to let this word of God speak to your reason and conscience. Dismiss it not from your thoughts;

let it sink into your heart ; and meditate over it and consider this question—are you prepared to die? It is appointed unto you to die. The hour of it has been fixed from eternity, and let it be near, or let it be far away, it is coming steadily, surely, coming. Are you prepared to die, friend? Ask the question of yourself—am I prepared to die? Am I prepared to meet God? Have I anything to lean on, anything to hope in, or trust, when the waters of Jordan are passing over my soul, or when I shall have to stand before the great white Throne of Judgment? And if your answer must be—I am not prepared ; I am a stranger to Christ ; my sins are unforgiven ; I am still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, then I pray you to consider the fearfulness of your state. As death finds you so will your condition be throughout eternity ; and, think, if death came to you now what eternity would be.

The *time* of each one's death is appointed by God. You know not when it will be ; no one knows when it will be but God. The future is hid from us. But the very moment at which it will take place has been determined by God from all eternity. That appointment cannot be altered. It is unchangeable. Let us do what we will to avoid it ; let us take what precautions we may ; let us hedge ourselves round with all the securities the world can afford, when the appointed time has run, then we shall have to go. Death knows no pity. You may now be in the enjoyment of perfect health, you may live in the full flush of physical and mental vigour, but if it is God's appointment that before the sunrise of another day death should claim you as its own—and for all that you or I know that may be the case—then you will have to obey the summons. No human power can keep you. No reluctance on your part to go, no desperate clinging to life, no frantic clutching at the things that are seen and temporal, will avail to avert the inevitable hour. The grim messenger of justice will accomplish his work whatever resistance may meet him. It is appointed unto men once to die, and death will not linger one moment behind the hour of that appointment.

The *manner* of it is appointed, has been appointed from all eternity. Death has many avenues of approach to the sons of men. He has many forms of attack. He is the last enemy, and he has many ways of waging combat. He may come suddenly as a thief in the night. He sends no herald to announce his advance. His victims are unsuspecting. They fancy themselves secure. But when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. In the morning they are strong and active in the full exercise of bodily and mental power ; at even they are cold and still in the embrace of death. The last enemy has come and their strength gave way before his resistless stroke. Or he may come gradually, and, as it were, perceptibly. He makes his way slowly, by means of disease. He attacks at some one point,



and through that avenue aims at the seat of life. And there may be a stout and prolonged resistance, and every inch of the ground may be stubbornly contested. You have seen this, have you not? You may have witnessed a grim conflict between life and death; life with its whole force resisting, and striving to beat off the attack, and death creeping on slowly inch by inch, ever gaining ground and weakening the defence, until at last the field is won, and the grave cries for its own. He may come with all the confused noise and terribleness at his command. He hides not the grim fearfulness of his face. He breaks in on his victims with all his terrors, so that their heart and flesh do faint and fail before him, and the horrors of the conflict freeze their very blood. He may come with pain and suffering. He may wrench every fibre of men's being, and tear and lacerate them in his iron grasp. He may stretch them many a weary night and day on beds of languishing and indescribable agony, so that there be nothing present to the consciousness but the bitterness of suffering. This, too, you may have seen. You may have stood by and witnessed it, the conflict, the agony, the low moan of anguish, the heaving breast, the white parched lips, the short, quick drawn breathing, until at last there is a final struggle, short but terrible, and then silence. Death has finished his work. God's appointment is accomplished. Or he may come quietly and gently, like a calm sleep or a soft breath of air. There is no pain, there is no struggle, there is no terribleness. Death can hide his terrors, and tread with a light step when that is the appointment of God. There is a calm on the waters, and the winds and the waves are still. Life fades imperceptibly like the evening light, and the touch of death is so soft and gentle that you can scarce hear the rustle of his goings. He can even veil his work with a peculiar kind of beauty, and leave behind him an expression of sweet and placid repose. But it is death all the same, and there too he has accomplished his mission. He may come in the sunset of life, when the day's work is finished, when man has attained to ripe old age, and the vital powers have ebbed away in natural decay. He may come during the strength of manhood, when the bodily functions are unimpaired, and the mind is in the full swing of its native vigour. Or he may come in the morning of life, when its possibilities are unfolding, and hope is high within the soul. He may break in on fair promises, and lay his ruthless touch on the bloom of youthful beauty; and long before the allotted span of life has run the silver cord may be loosed and the golden bowl be broken. But howsoever it comes, at whatever time, and in whatever manner, let it come terribly or let it come gently, let it come suddenly or let it come unexpectedly, let it come in the morning of life or at noon, or amid the shades of evening, this at least is certain—death *will* come; for it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.

Friend, it may be you are bound up in the things of this life.

You cling to it with a desperate tenacity. Your heart is in it. You shrink from the thought of departing from it. You love the things of the world. You love the ways of the world. You banish the thoughts of dissolution. You dismiss all gloomy reflections. The sweetness of your domestic life, the pleasures of your social environment, the interests of your life's work—these are things on which your heart is fixed, and round which its fibres are fondly entwined. You spend your strength on things that are seen and temporal. The world is prospering with you. Things are doing well. You are thinking of pulling down the old barns and putting up new ones. You are saying, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease; eat, drink, and be merry. Thou fool!—that is what God says to thee. Hast thou forgotten that it is appointed unto men once to die? To-night God may require thy soul of thee, and whose shall these things be that thou hast provided? Young man, whosoever you be that read those lines, listen to those words of God. You are rejoicing in your strength. You feel the pulsations of perfect health vibrating through your frame. Youth is on your side. The evil day is far distant. Life is long, and life is sweet. It is specially sweet to the strong and the active; and so long as that strength and activity last, you are going to dispense with God. But though thou rejoice in thy strength, and though thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and though thou walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. For thee also it is appointed once to die. Young woman, you are happy and light-hearted in the enjoyment of life. It possesses for your heart many attractions. When the glow of health is on the cheek, and the hope of youth is in the breast, and strength and vigour are in the frame, there is a keen enjoyment in living, and it is hard to think of leaving it all behind. It is hard to think of bidding farewell to the bright sunshine of life, and entering the dark valley of the shadow of death. Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun; and you say to yourself, I'll make the most of life—I'll cull all the sweetness out of it I can. And so you give your heart to the world, and you drink of its pleasures, and you put the thought of death far from you. But you, too, are embraced within the terms of this declaration—it is appointed unto men once to die. Your beauty will soon be consumed by the touch of decay; the corruption of the tomb will soon ravage your comeliness; that body of which you think so much, and on which you spend so much care and thought, will soon be mouldering in the dust whence it came. The world will do little for you when it comes to that hour. Your friends can do little for you. The things that attract and please you now will fail to sustain you then. When the damp of death is on your brow, and the pains of death are racking your frame, and the cold of death is chilling your blood, there is nothing that can sustain your soul but the

consolations of the grace of God. You who are proud and defiant, incline your ear, if but for a moment, and hearken to those words. It is appointed unto men once to die. You think you will defy death. You put a bold face on it. Let it come, you say; what about it? When it comes we shall meet it like men, and if we must go, then we must; but why brood over it, and let its shadow darken our path and spoil our present enjoyment? Ah, friend, that may do very well just now; it sounds very heroic, and the heroism may be real as well as apparent. But remember that God speaks not only of death. He says that after death there is judgment. Your easy carelessness may not forsake you up till the very hour of death: but death is not the extinction of being. There is an "after this," and be assured of it, in that "after this" there will be no carelessness, and no haughtiness of spirit, and no defiance of God. Your existence is not to terminate with this present life, for you have within you a never-dying soul. Death is not the annihilation of that soul; it is only the separation of the soul from its tenement of clay, and the consequent dissolution of the body. As your state will be when that separation takes place, so will be the judgment. And though you steel yourself to meet the last enemy with an undaunted heart, your fortitude will not sustain you at the throne of judgment. The proud will then be as stubble, and the strong as tow.

The limitations of space forbid more than a reference to the second part of the important truth under our consideration. We pass over the significant fact that it is only once that men die, that there will be no opportunity of living our life over again with a view to altering our eternal destiny. Nor can we here enter into a detailed consideration of the difference between the death of the righteous and the death of the wicked. A difference there certainly is, an infinite difference. The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection. The souls of the unbelieving will immediately pass into hell—that is the teaching of God's Word—and there they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. There is a particular judgment of each soul at death, when its condition for eternity will be determined by the relation it bears to Christ. There is the judgment of the great day, when God will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. I saw, says John, a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. Who is it

that sits on the throne? It is the Lamb of God. It is the Son of Man. He is seated as Judge. All authority, and power, and might, and dominion are in His hands. He has power to avenge Himself on His adversaries. He will take vengeance on them that know not God, and obeyed not the gospel of Jesus Christ. Who may abide the day of His coming? It will be the day of the wrath of the Lamb. Woe unto those who despised and rejected His overtures of peace and mercy in the gospel. Woe unto them that refused when He called, and hearkened not when He stretched out His hands to them. It is their turn now to cry, and His to be silent; theirs to stretch out their hands, and His to refuse to regard. They will cry unto the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. But the mountains and the rocks will refuse to answer them: hiding-place they can find none. The sea will give up its dead, and death and hell will deliver their dead, and great and small will stand before the Son of Man in judgment. The books will be opened, and each man will be judged according to the things that are written in them. The breakers of God's law will be judged according to their transgressions; the rejectors of the gospel will be judged according to the measure of their privileges, and the varied aggravations of their guilt. And they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power. They will meet Him whom they despised and rejected, and crucified afresh, and put to open shame. They will meet Him, no longer a gentle, willing, compassionate Saviour, inviting them in words of tender entreaty to come unto Him that they might have rest; but they will meet Him, and see Him, and hear Him in the awful majesty of that great white throne, surrounded by His mighty angels. They will meet Him in all the unbending sternness and inviolable majesty of eternal law and justice. The day of mercy will have passed; the day of wrath will have come. There will be no faltering in the voice that will pronounce their sentence; there will be no pity in the accents that will say, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

But what a different day it will be for the child of God. At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity. It will be a glorious day for them. It will be the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, the day of their open acknowledgment and acquittal before an assembled universe. It will be the day of the second appearing of the Son of Man unto them that look for Him. It will be without sin for Him; it will be unto salvation for them. He will appear in glory in order to glorify them. He will come to be glorified in the saints, and to be admired in them that believe. It will be a day of gladness of

heart, of joy unspeakable, and full of glory. There will be a joyous re-union of soul and body—their bodies fashioned like unto the body of Christ's glory, their souls purified from sin for ever, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. God will not be ashamed to be called their God, seeing He hath prepared for them a city. Into that city they will then have an abundant entrance. They will enter the New Jerusalem, the city of the great King, whereof it is written that the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. They shall go no more out. And His servants shall serve Him.

Let me, in conclusion, say a word regarding the first part of the parallel—the offering of Christ for the sins of many. It brings before us a door of hope. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. It is the good news of the kingdom. It is as rivers of waters in a dry place and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. This is the gospel—the only hope for a lost, guilty sinner—Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and the Christ that was once offered a sacrifice on the cross, is now offered a Saviour in the gospel. We have here the substitutionary work of the Son of God on behalf of sinful men. He died for guilty sinners. That is what is meant by saying that He was offered for their sins. Whom did Christ die for? We do not know who they are whom He died for, for God's word does not tell us; but we know this, He died for many. We know that He died for those who were given Him by the Father, and we know that those who were given Him by the Father were many, for he was predestinated to be the first-born among many brethren. We know that He gave His life a ransom for many, and that He will bring many sons unto glory, and that will be a divine many, many as the sands by the seashore, and as the stars of the sky innumerable. He bore the sins of many. He was appointed to bear the sins of many. He was appointed by God from eternity, and He undertook the work that was appointed Him; and in the fulness of time—that is, the time appointed by God—He appeared in the world. Sacrifice and offering thou would'st not, He said; but a body hast thou prepared for me. He took the body that was prepared for Him that He might have something to offer. For He appeared in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He appeared the Son of God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, the Eternal Word that was in the beginning with God, and that was God. He appeared as the sin-bearer. Every step He took in the world was a sinless step, but it was the step of a sin-bearer. Whose sins did he bear? He bare the sins of many. They were imputed to Him. The Lord laid them on Him by a sovereign judicial act; laid them on Him as surety and substitute, that He might bear them, that He might take them away and make an end of them for ever. And it was with those sins that He met

death, and that death met Him. Death is the king of terrors ; but it was never so terrible as when it met the Lord Jesus. It was armed with all its terrors. It was armed with its sting. And that sting was made strong by the law of God pronouncing its curse and condemnation on those sins that He bare. It was a terrible death that He met. It was as terrible as the enmity and hatred of earth and hell and the wrath of heaven could make it. The cup was charged with the bitterness of the curse of God. The death had the fierce wrath of Jehovah in it. And He met death. He met death as death was never met before, and as it never will be again. Death was strong, and its sting was strong ; but here was one who was stronger. He was offered. He offered Himself. That is a sacrificial term. It implies His priestly action. He met death armed with its sting and its terrors. He met death and closed with death, and the sting entered His soul. The floods of God's wrath burst on Him, and the gates of hell combined to overthrow Him, and men imbrued their hands in His blood ; but death never met such an one before. Death met one it could not conquer. It met one whose activities were neither overcome nor interrupted in its terrible throes. It met one who in the blackest hour of that awful darkness, in the deepest depths of that fearful agony, in the bitterest moment of that terrible conflict, maintained unimpaired the full exercise of His priestly powers. He had a work to do and He did it. He had to pour out His soul, and He accomplished it. He had a sacrifice to offer and He offered it, offered it in death, offered it through death ; and death was vanquished, and spoiled, and triumphed over with a song of victory. O death where is thy sting ? O grave where is thy victory ? He offered Himself through the Eternal Spirit without spot unto God. He offered Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God ; and the Lord is well-pleased for His righteousness' sake. This is the gospel. What more would you wish for ? What more do you need ? The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. It is the blood of a divine Person ; and can cleanse your soul from all its guilt and defilement, though your sins be as scarlet and though they be red like crimson. Christ as He is, to you as you are, these are the terms of God. Come to Him then, as you are, in guilt and corruption, in helplessness and misery, and find Him to be, as He is, a Saviour to the uttermost.

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CHRIST has taken our nature into heaven to represent us ; and has left us on earth with His nature, to represent Him.—*John Newton.*

WORLDLY men will be true to their principles ; if we were as true to ours, the visits between the two parties would be short and seldom.—*John Newton.*

## Interesting Letter from Australia.

THE following letter from the Rev. Walter Scott, Brushgrove, New South Wales, to a friend in Halkirk, Caithness, will be perused with much interest by our readers. Mr. Scott went out to Australia several years ago, and became a minister in the Free Presbyterian Church there. He takes a deep interest in the welfare of Zion in the home country, and has frequently expressed in private letters his warmest sympathy with the step of separation taken by our Church in 1893. This letter was written in 1898, but it has not lost its point and freshness.

THE MANSE,

BRUSHGROVE, CLARENCE RIVER, N.S.W., *15th June, 1898.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It was with pleasure that I received your kind communication of 31st January, acknowledging the small amount which I had gathered here for the friends in Halkirk. I was very sorry, indeed, that it was so little: there have been great reverses here financially, and my own congregation is struggling to maintain the pure worship and doctrine under very difficult circumstances—hence the smallness of the contribution. But I was happy to find from you that it was appreciated, whilst it shewed at least our sympathy and our willingness to assist you so far as possible. This is not a country like Scotland religiously, but, at the same time, the truth has its friends even here; and it is a precious thought that, go where one will, almost, the Lord has His hidden ones—those who (if only in secret) are sighing and crying for all the abominations done in the land. We are only a very small remnant here, but we are maintaining a banner because of the truth. We testify for the great doctrine of national religion, and in behalf also of Christ's sole Kingship in Zion, in the way of excluding all innovations—using only the Psalms, and no instrumental music in worship. It is the day of small things, but it is not for us to despise it: and weak and scattered as we are, yet we are enabled to pay our way without any of the human devices resorted to by all the bodies around us for raising money, such as bazaars, socials, concerts, pic-nics, dancings, &c., &c. It is ours to witness for God against defection, whether few or many, and it is truly wonderful how God maintains such a witness in dark places and in dark times, to make His truth known to the generation to come, and to torment those that dwell on the earth with the word of their testimony.

Although we are far apart, yet I hope and believe that our hearts beat in unison for the same glorious cause—a cause now despised and trampled upon it is true, but none the less sacred on that account to God or to those that fear Him and think upon His name: and is it not blessed to be able to think that God shall yet arise to plead it, even at the moment when the enemy is seeming to triumph—when it is at its lowest extremity—when

there is no help of man : that *then* God will come down to deliver, and that, when He does so, He will appear in His glory. O, that that morning of joy to the witnessing Church might be hastened ! O, that even now we might have earnestness of that rallying time !—the Lord bringing His sons from afar, and His daughters from the ends of the earth—yea, bringing many to say, We will go with you, enquiring the way to Zion. But let us wait for Him at the post of duty. He will surely come. And even if it be first by terrible things in righteousness—bringing His Church through fire and through water, yet it will be in the way of leading her to a wealthy place, and of making the little one a thousand, and the small one a strong nation. Let us wait then until we can say, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him.

I believe that when the deliverance comes Zion shall, in scripture language, be built upon her own heap : that it will be upon no other foundation than upon the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus being the chief corner stone, that the Church shall again be built up, and these doctrines as witnessed for at the Covenanted Reformation in our own Scotland in particular. Such was the faith of the martyrs—those men of God to whom was made known the secret of His Covenant, as when James Guthrie cried with his last breath—“The Covenants, the Covenants, shall yet be Scotland’s reviving.” We may indeed ask, Who is sufficient for these things ? But, is anything too hard for the Lord ? The zeal of the Lord of hosts, we are told, shall accomplish the glorious things spoken concerning Zion.

I cannot tell you the discouraging effect that the declension in the old country has with us out here. The name of the Free Church of Scotland is often quoted and used in Australia in favour of innovations in worship and doctrine. The change at home is so general, so widespread, that it is a question with many here whether it is worth while holding out. For my part, I was glad at the secession of the Free Presbyterians from the Free Church.

Stumbled as many are by the case of the Free Church, it remains that she has departed from the faith. And, thus changed in worship and doctrine, the Free Church is not what she once was : the mighty are fallen ! the weapons of war are perished ! Let us only be thankful if we also are not swept away with such a tide of defection. And in the midst of adverse circumstances, when our pleasant things are laid waste, and we ourselves are for signs and for wonders in the land, let us like David be found encouraging ourselves in the Lord our God.

I often wonder in my own mind how many who were held in such high esteem, whether amongst the ministers or people, can remain with a body that has been guilty of such a betrayal of Christ in His truth’s cause. God has permitted us to drink the wine of astonishment in such matters. There have, indeed, been remarkable instances of men having been forsaken of God for culpable silence and unfaithfulness, when the trumpet should have



given a certain sound. The Rev. M. M—— was foremost in the battle at one stage; now he is as a dog that cannot bark. This itself is ominous. And I see that Dr. Rainy is speaking patronisingly of him, and that he is helping on the union with the voluntaries. Evidently, having forsaken the narrow way, he is now left with no alternative but to go on the broad way with the overwhelming majority. But God says, If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. What would Dr. Begg or Dr. Kennedy have said or thought could they have foreseen such compromising with the enemy, on the part of Mr. M—— in the North, and Dr. J—— M—— in the South? The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. God has chosen the foolish things in men's esteem to confound the things that are mighty. If we would be employed in the interest of Zion's glorious King, we must be emptied of self and sanctified from all selfish interests or motives. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

I have the pleasure of hearing occasionally from one of your ministers. I should like to hear from Scotland more frequently, and to know more of your circumstances. I hope Rev. Mr. Macfarlane and Rev. Mr. Macdonald are keeping their health, and may be spared for carrying on still the great work devolving on them. Please accept of my sympathy and good wishes for yourself and the various friends in Halkirk and over Caithness. And wishing you farewell meantime, and commending you to God as able to do all things perfectly for you.—I am, Yours sincerely,

W. SCOTT.

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## **False and True Marks in Religious Experience.**

(“CHRIST IN BELIEVERS THE HOPE OF GLORY,” BY THE  
REV. JOHN BROWN, WAMPHRAY—p. 101-110.)

6. USE.—This truth exceedingly calls for a narrow trial, viz., if Christ be in us or not: and because it is a material business, we shall therefore speak the more to it. 1. We shall lay forth some false marks, by which many deceive themselves both on the one hand and on the other. 2. We will give you some true marks, where you may judge in this matter.

In speaking to the false marks, we must have our eye upon two sorts of persons, and so speak to the marks whereupon each go to work, and deceive themselves: some have Christ really dwelling in their soul, and yet nevertheless imagine that it is not so, upon such and such grounds that they perceive in themselves, which they judge cannot consist with Christ's living in them: others again have not Christ in them, notwithstanding imagine that He is in them, by reason of such and such things, which they judge

to be real marks of Christ being in them. And both the one and the other are deceived with false grounds.

As to the first, viz., such who have Christ really in them, and nevertheless will not be convinced thereof, they may mistake on these and the like grounds.

1. Because they are no wise like to these saints whereof the Scriptures make mention, in whom was the Spirit of Christ; neither like those who now live who have Christ in them: as if forsooth all were Christians of the same magnitude, age, strength, and liveliness; as if there were not in Christ's family, young children as well as old, young sentinels, as well as lively, strong, and great warriors, 1 Cor. iii. 1; 1 John ii. 13, 14. A child hath real life, and is a man, though not a strong and able man; yea the very child in the mother's womb hath real life; and so many children in Christ go to heaven, for "He carries the lambs in his bosom."—Isa. xl. 11.

2. Because they find not the operation of the Spirit in them. This is likewise no true mark; for He may be in the soul, and yet may be hid from the soul, the Lord judging it fittest it should be so, that He may hide pride from their eyes, and they, as was said, may be kept humble and sobbing all their days. The Spirit bloweth where He listeth, and after what manner He will.

3. Because they are daily full of fears and jealousies, that all is not right with them. Hence they conclude, that providing Christ were really in them, then all their questionings would be done away, and all their clouds scattered, and they would obtain a full assurance. But this is a mistake; Christ may be, and faith in Him may be, where this certainty is not, never was, and likely shall never be, until the soul come within the view of the land of glory: yea, the scripture is full of such like complaints of the saints, and of their often expressing their suspicions: it is the disease that follows the royal blood, incident to the most heavenly spirit; Moses, David, Heman, Asaph, Job, Jeremiah, the church, Psa. cxx.; Lam. i. ii. iii. and iv. And that under the church and saints of the New Testament, as well as the old, 1 Cor. x. 6. "Now these things were our examples," with verse 11. "We were pressed out of measure above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead," 2 Cor. i. 8, 9. "We were troubled on every side; without were fightings; within were fears," vii. 5; 1 Peter i. 6, 7. Yea, Christ may be there, where the soul through power of temptation peremptorily concludeth, that He is not in them: otherwise woe to not a few.

4. Because strangers to some sensible and comfortable manifestations, which some attain. They see not, neither find they, as with some, the rays and real glimpses of His smiling countenance: but this is no sure mark; Christ may be where these things are not, or otherwise woe to many poor souls. These are the free

out-lettings of His love, wherein the Lord deals as a sovereign ; allowing some to come near him, for so He thinketh fit, and others to stand farther off, and think it sufficient, if but admitted to stand within the portal of His palace : all subjects are not courtiers, nor all courtiers alike high. The mother will take the one child, and kiss and dandle it upon the knee, and not the other ; so Christ takes not all His children into His banqueting house, neither spreads He His banner of love over them in sensible manner ; each one is not stayed with flaggons and comforted with apples : every one hath not Christ's left hand under their head, and His right hand embracing them : some must be satisfied to want these manifestations, until they ascend into the higher house.

5. Because they know not what it is to have their hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord ; they know not what that joy in the Holy Ghost meaneth, nor what it is to cheer themselves with joy unspeakable and full of glory. O ! is this sufficient ground to conclude that Christ is not in them ? What a gross mistake is this ? Do all Christians attain to such high attainments ? Alas ! some must be well satisfied to creep to heaven, and never once get up their back, until they win within the ports of glory : some instead of rejoicing must carry the tear in their eye the whole way, and never get it washed away, until that Christ's soft hand once for all wash it off, and there they shall weep no more, being arrived there where no sorrowing or sighing shall be heard, for then sighing and sorrowing must flee away.

6. Because their graces shine not, nor have not that beauty and lustre which they hoped to have had, providing Christ were in them : where faith, hope, love, &c., is nothing to what it should or must be (think they) if Christ were in them. But they notice not that there are degrees of grace : all are not saints of the first magnitude ; each one's faith (even true faith) is not assurance ; Christ is where the least grain-weight of grace is, and sometimes grace will go in little room ; Christ is where there is but one smoking flax, but one broken reed.

7. Because they are not only without comfort and joy, but are also full of terrors, fears, and trembling, whereof they imagine they should be free, providing Christ were in them ; alas ! poor soul, why thinkest thou thus ? Were it so as ye imagine, what should have become of excellent Heman (Psalm lxxxviii. 15), who from his youth up was afflicted and ready to die, and was distracted with the terrors of God which he suffered ? What should ye then say of the good king Hezekiah who became to chatter like a crane or a swallow, and to mourn as a dove ? (Isaiah xxxviii. 14). And of others whom we could name ?

8. Because they see no grace growing in them, all seems to be going back with them. I grant it is most lamentable when it is so, and a case much to be condoled ; nevertheless it may readily appear to be so, when really it is not so ; Christ may be where this growth in grace is neither seen nor observed, yea, Christ may

be where there is a sinful decay for a time by reason of some winter blasts and storms, or by reason of some worm, or such like at the root; nevertheless the seed shall remain, and where the seed is there is Christ, so that this is but a false mark.

9. Because they observe so much hypocrisy in their actings. Undoubtedly, say they, if Christ were in us, it should not be so with us; but as to this we should remark, that, however, he who hath Christ in him, can be no hypocrite, for a hypocrite is such whose estate is without Christ; nevertheless he may have much hypocrisy in him, even as he hath more or less of other corruptions; every act of hypocrisy will not say that that man is a hypocrite—there is great difference between yellow brass and gold that hath scum mixed with it, the best of our metals have dross in them: the state of perfection is not here.

10. Because they cannot perform commanded duties without opposition and great fightings—whereas if Christ were in them (imagine they) their wheels would move more lightly; but this also is a mistake, and a perverted rule to judge by, for in the best that live there remains much of the old man, that never rests, but continually sets itself against every good motion and work that is in hand, so that the good that they would they cannot get done; but the evil that they would not that they are made do, the law of their members warring continually against the law of their minds, making them cry out, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death” (Rom. vii. 14, 15, 24).

11. Because corruption is not weakened, but, as they imagine, is on the growing hand, which could not be, providing Christ were in them. But herein is also a mistake; the one or other special corruption may, in respect of some temptation, grow more at one time than at another, and nevertheless grace under no decay, nor corruption growing in the whole body: the leaves will abundantly fall off the tree, yea, and three times more in the harvest than at another time, and yet be under no decay; corruption through temptation may be discovered, while, nevertheless, neither growing nor in strength; and at other times they may be less seen and feared when most strong and dangerous—an unseen and quiet devil may be more hazardous than a seen and roaring devil; corruptions grow not always most when they rage most.

12. Because sometimes they have gross outbreaks—this is sad I confess, and lamentable—but therefrom we cannot certainly conclude that we are without Christ, for Moses, David, Peter, &c., had their heavy falls, which occasioned the opening of the mouths of the ungodly.

13. Because that sometimes they are carried away with the tide and stream of their corruptions, that they see nothing but a constant course and a joint complotting of gross evils. This I acknowledge is a sad condition, and sadly to be lamented; notwithstanding there is no satisfying ground therefrom to conclude

positively that such a soul is certainly without Christ, for we find "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord," and yet what gross outbreaks find we in him (2 Chron. xvi.) He made Benhadad to break his league with Baasha, and further to engage him thereto he committed sacrilege, and spoiled and plundered the house of the Lord; and he trusted in the arm of flesh, and put the prophet in the prison house for faithfully reproving him, and besides at the time oppressed some of the people, and in his sickness he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians. O! we cannot tell beside how many corruptions Christ will dwell in the soul, even such as are excommunicated for gross scandals may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus: "Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5).

14. Because they are troubled with dreadful temptations and blasphemous injections. But neither can this be a sufficient ground to judge such a soul to be without Christ. We know with what temptations the devil set upon Christ himself, after he had tempted Him with the foulest idolatry—to wit, to worship the devil, then to a tempting of God and a questioning His own Godhead, and His right and interest in God as His Father—what will he not then attempt against the poor followers of Christ? And seeing he so assaulted the Prince of Salvation, in whom he could find nothing, and that for forty days together, and then but left Him for a time (Mark i. 13; Luke iv. 2-13), why should His followers think it strange when long troubled with such injections?

15. Because the Lord pursues them in His anger, and in His carriage to them shows His sore displeasure, and writes their sins on their judgments. This also is no sound mark so to conclude, for we know how He carried with David (Psalm vi. 38 and 51), and what He did with Job, who said, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (chap. vi. 4).

(To be continued.)

## Two Notable Conversions.

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them."—JER. xv. 16.

AUGUSTINE (BORN 354, DIED 430).

I WAS saying these things, and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when, lo! I heard the voice as of a boy or girl, I know not which, coming from a neighbouring house, chanting, and oft repeating, "Take up and read, take up and read." Immediately my countenance was changed, and I began most earnestly to consider whether it was usual for children in any kind

of game to say such words ; nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So, restraining the torrent of my tears, I rose up, interpreting it no other way than as a command to me from heaven to open the book, and to read the first chapter I should light upon. For I have heard of Antony that, accidentally coming in whilst the Gospel was being read, he received the admonition as if what was read were addressed to him, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven ; and come and follow me." And by such oracle was he forthwith converted unto Thee. So, quickly, I returned to the place where Alypius was sitting ; for there had I put down the volume of the Apostles when I rose thence. I grasped, opened, and in silence read that paragraph on which my eye first fell,—“Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying ; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” No further would I read, nor did I need ; for instantly, as the sentence ended—by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart—all the gloom of doubt vanished away. (*Confessions*, book viii., chap. xii).

THOMAS BILNEY (MARTYRED 1531).

I ALSO, miserable sinner, before I would come unto Christ, had spent all that I had upon ignorant physicians, that is to say, unlearned hearers of confession ; so that there was but small force of strength left in me (who of nature was but weak), small store of money, and very little wit or understanding ; for they appointed me fastings, watchings, buying of pardons and masses ; in all which things (as I now understand), they sought rather their own gain than the salvation of my sick and languishing soul. But at last I heard speak of Jesus, even then when the New Testament was first set forth by Erasmus (*this was the Greek-Latin edition of 1516*) ; which, when I understood to be eloquently done by him, being allured rather by the Latin than by the Word of God (for at that time I knew not what it meant), I bought it, even by the providence of God—as I do now well understand and perceive—and, at the first reading, as I well remember, I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul (Oh, most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul !) in 1 Tim. i.—“It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief and principal.” This one sentence, through God’s instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despair, that immediately I felt a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch that my bruised bones leaped for joy. (*Bilney’s letters to Tunstal. Foxe’s Acts and Monuments*, vol. iv., p. 635).

A WISE man looks upon men as he does upon horses ; and considers their caparisons of title, wealth and place, but as harness.  
—*John Newton.*

## Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

(V.)

STRATHERRICK, 18th February, 1871.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was longing very much to hear from you, and thought something must be the matter, although I could not tell what it was. I am sorry to know you have not been well, yet why should I be sorry for anything that the Lord in His wisdom is pleased to bring about in order to keep His people nearer to Himself, according to the blessed purpose, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten?" However, I sincerely wish that the 'tree' would be put into your waters of Marah; yea, He could make you such a scholar as to be able to say, "It was good for me that I have been afflicted." The late pious Dr. Payson said, "If one were to tell me that the Lord was to make me so wonderfully happy as I now am, and would tell me that the way He was to begin to do so was by crippling all my limbs, I could not believe him, yet, such is now the case." O! how difficult it is to say in truth when we meet with what crosses us, "Good is the will of the Lord," and should the soul desire to say so, there is such a damper put upon it by trouble from without, and by the carnal mind from within, that the Lord Himself must be the Author of our submission, and then the glory will be all His own. Jacob said when under trials, "All these things are against me." Methinks I hear the Lord saying to Jacob, "Wilt thou not let Me have My own way with thee, Jacob, and let Me do what I will with thee, and with all that is thine, and then thou shalt see in the end whether these things are against thee or no?" "O! but," says unbelief, "The Lord is not to bring any good out of *my* trouble; if I were such and such there might be hope, but I am so full of murmuring and rebellion, it cannot be." But what says the Lord? "Not for your sakes do I this, but for mine own sake; be ye ashamed and confounded for your own ways, but for mine own name's sake I will do it."

I need scarcely tell you how trying it is to the Lord's people here about, that dear Mr. Kennedy is not getting well over his illness. What a frowning Providence when those who have been made a blessing to the Church of Christ are laid aside, and many of those rising up in their room are like Pharaoh of old who knew not Joseph. But those that have by grace got within the Ark of the Covenant, they shall be safe should the waters of the deluge rise to their highest pitch. O! what a sweet sound it is to the poor soul that has some desire towards this ark of refuge to hear the invitation, "Arise and come, for the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, &c., &c." Before this gracious invitation could be given to any sinner, the dreadful winter of God's wrath and curse

had to pass over the Surety, He had to endure that storm. A second winter may have been experienced by the poor sinner when the Holy Spirit began to break up the fallow ground of his heart, and turn up the monsters that were under the surface. And many have known a third winter of backsliding and captivity into which they brought themselves. But the same gracious call—"Come"—when it is again heard with power, will bring a glimpse of summer—a belief that the Lord is a reconciled God. And when at length the winter of this world is past, then again shall the poor seeking soul hear the same gracious call—"Come"—"Arise and come to that better country where thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; where the glorious 'Sun of Righteousness' shall no more go down from thy view, neither shall the 'moon' of thy happy, though changing, frame withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." The least spark of hope of one day arriving at that blessed place, might make us content to go through this world up to the ears in trouble if that was the Lord's will. But though I say this, I am so choked by unbelief that I have reason to put my hand on my mouth, and my mouth in the dust.

Hoping to hear soon that you are feeling stronger.—Yours, &c.

D. DUFF.

(VI.)

STRATHERRICK, 30th August, 1871.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Although I have nothing to write worth your reading, yet, wishing to know how matters are with you, I make the attempt. It was a singular salutation that he gave who said, "I wish thou mayst prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." Well, prosperity of soul is the one thing needful. Of no other prosperity under the sun did Mary think when she sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word. And He commended her in this before all that were in the house, and indeed before all the world to the end of time. "One thing is needful," He said, "and Mary hath chosen it." "Oh, but other things are needful also," Martha will be saying. Well, let her say on, but, my soul, for thee to live let it be Christ.

That was a wonderful resolution of Paul's, "For me to live is Christ," and I was thinking of it in this way. You know that the Bible speaks of three classes of men; there are "men of Belial," openly ungodly, of whom it may be said, "For them to live is sin." And there are "men of the world," whose chief end is the pleasures and honours of the world, and of whom it may be said, "For them to live is the world." And there is a third class, men "professing godliness," attentive outwardly to moral and religious duties; but self esteem or self interest is the spring of all they do, and of them it may be said, "For me to live is self." Now, one that has passed through these three classes, and has left behind



in each of them the garment that he was in the habit of wearing when he was one of them, must come forth very stripped and naked indeed. Sin, the world, and self are his gods no longer, he must get the uncreated to be his God. And when he hears by the word of the Gospel that God is in Christ receiving and reconciling sinners to Himself, he attempts to say, "Let the Lord be my God, let me win Christ and be found in Him, counting all else as dross for the excellency of his knowledge; yea, the things that were gain to me I count loss for Christ, for me to live is Christ."

As to what you said in your last letter about the ordinance of the Supper, I scarcely can agree with you. You said, "Jonah's prison, if it would cure our hardness and impenitence, is a more likely place for us than the Lord's table." Well, if there is such a place at — for preparation, you must lead me there next time I come, but I assure you I have not found such a place in Inverness-shire. If I am a true disciple at all, I am commanded to go to the Lord's table, but I am not commanded to go to the whale's belly unless I am sent there, very likely against my will, and as a punishment for my transgressions. No doubt the frame of mind you describe is the most desirable one in which to go forward, but what would you say to one who neither in that, nor in any duty attains to the frame he would desire? Neither would I wish to go in the Pharisaical way you speak of, although, alas! the Lord's people often feel as if they had more of the Pharisee in them than of the publican. I think that the fittest guest for the table is the one most empty and most hungry—hungering for pardon, for repentance, for broken heartedness, for a sight of blessed Jesus as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. There are times too when they must go as she did, who ventured into the king's court with her life in her hand, if peradventure she might have the golden sceptre held out to her, and who came well off at last. But if we are spared to meet face to face, we will resume the argument, meantime, I remain, Yours, &c.

D. DUFF.

## **Brief Notes of a Sermon**

BY THE LATE REV. ARCHIBALD COOK, DAVIOT.

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"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."—  
ROMANS xiv. 8.  
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OUR time here is very short and uncertain. This is not our rest. We were created for eternity. Through an endless eternity we shall reap the fruit of our choice here. Moses having considered this chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people

of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." He saw there were two hells and two heavens. He saw a little heaven here and a great hell hereafter, and a little hell here and a great heaven hereafter, and he chose the little hell and the great heaven. He acted wisely for himself. He has been more than two thousand years in glory, and it is only commencing. A few years would have ended his happiness in Egypt. Some of us here this day have been professing to make surrender of ourselves, and it will be an infinite shame to that soul if he is found yet on the left hand of Christ. I will endeavour to show:—

I.—Something of the nature of living unto the Lord, and dying unto the Lord. Every gracious soul in this world desires to live and die so as eternally to live.

1. To live unto the Lord. (1) This implies a purpose of heart to live to Him. Naomi was putting a trial upon Ruth, but when she saw she was stedfast she ceased. Barnabas when he went down to Antioch exhorted them to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Where this purpose is in the soul, eternity must be in the view of the creature. There is something of counting the cost in it. (2) This resolution is created in the soul by the Spirit of God. Often on a sick bed when eternity is appearing, there are many vows and purposes, but the time is coming when it will be shown who was the author of these, the creature or God. In wet weather pools are filled, but in dry weather they are dried up. Why? Because they have no spring. So it is with many who make vows at certain seasons. But the soul of the believer has a principle of spiritual life that makes him live unto the Lord. It is called in another place a spirit born of the Spirit. The spirit that is from God must rise to God. It is weak at first. Perhaps the Spirit of God takes possession of the soul by a thought. Many a child of God may say, "I do not know whether I have peace or not, but I know that *my* peace is broken." This life is compared to a grain of mustard seed. How difficult it would be to find a grain of mustard seed in a cask of sand. But it is of a growing nature. It is like the light of the morning growing stronger and stronger, and it will continue to be of a growing nature till the soul is swallowed up in its original spring. It is within the soul that the people of God have their difficulties and sorrows.

One difficulty is to be felt from the old covenant in the soul. When any difficulty arises, runs the soul to the covenant of works. But the corruption is awakened, and when you say to the creature, "You are becoming religious," he says, "Oh, no, I am becoming a devil." Another difficulty arises from the difficulty of exercising faith in Christ in the hearing of the gospel. A third difficulty arises when they hear that there is a fountain of grace in Christ. It is one thing to hear of that fulness, and another thing to have the fulness opened by the Spirit.

(3) In living unto the Lord, there is implied that the mystery of the Godhead begins to be opened to the soul. There is an

infinite mystery in the Godhead, and nothing will bring the soul into it but the teaching of grace. When this mystery is opened, there is evidence of a living principle in the soul. The Lord puts obligations on the soul to live to Him. Sometimes the child of God enjoys more at his food than the carnal professor at the table of the Lord. It is very difficult for a Pharisee to get through the child of God; he gets a knock here and a knock there. A bleeding soul needs a broken Saviour and a merciful God.

2. To die unto the Lord. This implies dying in the faith of the Lord as a Saviour. How precious is it when one comes to grapple with death to have union to Christ. To die unto the Lord is to die in the promise. They die to His glory. It is the purpose of every child of God here below to live to Him. The devil cares nothing though you give your bodies to the Lord, if he get your hearts. The Lord says, "Son, give me thine heart." Jesus is offered to sinners the greatest. "Him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out." "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Eternity is long to reap, and His people shall see Him as He is and shall enjoy happiness in the being of God for ever.

## **Suim an Eolais Shlainteil.**

*Air a leantuin bhò thaobh-duilleig 315.*

V.—*Continued.*

*Am feum as coir a dheanamh d'on eolas shlainteil.*

**C**HUM ar misneach a thogail suas air an deadh bhunachar so, feudaidh na ceithir barantais shònruichte so gu creidsinn ann an Crìosd fòghnadh.

An tus, Cuireadh runach Dhe, air a chur sìos, ann an Isaiah lv. 1-5. "Ho! gach neach air am bheil tart, thigibh-se chum nan uisgeachan; agus esan aig nach 'eil airgiod, thigibh, ceannaichibh agus ithibh; seadh thigibh, ceannaichibh, gun airgiod agus gun luach, fìon agus bainne. C'arson a ta sibh a' caitheamh airgid air an nì nach aran? agus bhur saothrach air nì nach sàsuich? Eis-dibh le deadh aire rium-sa, agus ithibh an nì a ta maith: agus gabhadh 'ur n-anam toil-inntinn ann an cuilm shòghmhoir. Aomaibh 'ur cluas, agus thigibh do m' ionnsuidh-sa; éisdibh, agus mairidh 'ur n-anam beò; agus nì mi ruibh co-cheangal sìorruidh, eadhon tròcairean cinnteach Dhaibhidh. Feuch thug mi e mar fhianuis do na cinnich, 'n a cheannibh agus 'n a uachdaran do no slòigh," &c.

An so (an déigh do éiric luachmhor ar slàinte, le fulangas Chrìosd, agus na beannachdan saoi bhir a chaidh a chosnadh dhuinne leo sin, a bhi air an cur sìos anns an dà Chaibideil roimhe so), tha 'n Tighearn anns a' Chaibideil so.

1. A' toirt tairgse fhollaiseach do Chrìosd agus d' a ghràs le bhi gairm margaidh shaor agus ghràsmhor do dh' fhìreantachd agus do shlàinte, a ta r' am faotainn tre Chrìosd, do gach anam, gun chùl a chur ri aon neach a ta gu fìrinneach ag iarraidh bhi air a shaoradh o fheirg agus o pheacadh; Ho! gach neach air am bheil tart.

2. Tha e toirt cuiridh do gach uile pheacadh, a tha seasamh air ais o Dhia do thaobh aobhair 's am bith, teachd agus saobhbheas gràis a ghabhail a tha sruthadh mar amhuinn ann an Crìosd, a dh'ionnrad air falbh peacaidh, agus a chum fearg a chasgadh; oir a deir e Thigibh se chum nan uisgeacha.

3. Air eagal gu'n seasadh neach air bith air ais, le mothachadh d' a pheacadh agus d' a thruaillidheachd, agus air a neo-chomas gu maith 's am bith a dhéanamh, tha 'n Tighearn gu h-àraid a' gairm a leithid so do mhuinntir, ag ràdh, esan aig nach 'eil airgid thigeadh e.

4. Cha 'n 'eil e ag iarraidh air a' cheannaiche, ach a bhi toilichte leis na nithibh a ta air an tairgseachd, 's e sin gràs agus tuilleadh gràis; agus gu 'n aontaicheadh e leis o 'chridhe, agus gu 'n dlùthaicheadh e ri tairgse nan gràs, chum 's gu 'm biodh e 'n a ghnothuch dèanta, agus 'n a cho-cheangal ri Dia; Thigibh, ceannaichibh gun airgid (a deir e) thigibh, ithibh, 's e sin ri ràdh, Aontaichibh chum gu 'm bi agaibh, agus gabhaibh d' ur n-ionnsuidh gach uile ghràs slàinteil, dèanaibh còir dhuibh féin diubh, sealbhaichibh iad, agus déanaibh feum do na h-uile bheannachadh a tha ann an Crìosd; ge b' e ni air bith a ta feumail airson bhur beatha spioradail agus bhur comhfhurtachd, gnàthaichibh, agus mealaibh e gu saor, gun ni 's am bith a thoirt air a shon: (Oir a deir e) Thigibh, ceannaichibh gun airgid, agus gun luach, fion agus bainne.

5. A chionn gu bheil fios aig an Tighearna, cia mòr 's a tha sinn air ar n-aomadh chum fireantachd agus beatha iarraidh le 'r dèanadais agus ar dioladh féin, chum fireantachd agus beatha bhi againn mar gu b' ann le 'r n-oibribh féin; agus cia mòr 's a tha sinn an aghaidh gabhail ri Iosa Crìosd, rèir 's mar tha iad air an tairgseachd dhuinn: Uime sin tha 'n Tighearna 'g ar gairm gu càirdeil o 'n t-slighe fhiar agus mhi-shona so, le rabhadh caomh a thoirt dhuinn 'n a thrà, agus a' leigeil dhuinn a thuigsinn, nach dèan sinn ach ar saothair a chall ann ar slighe féin. C' arson a ta sibh a' caitheamh airgid (a deir e) air an ni nach aran? agus bhur saothrach air an ni nach sàsuich?

6. Tha 'n Tighearn a' gealltuinn dhuinn taitneas bunaiteach ann an gràsaibh Chrìosd a' ghabhail chugainn, eadhon fìor thoil-inntinn agus lànachd do shàimh spioradail, ag ràdh, Eisdibh le deadh aire riumsa, agus ithibh an ni a ta maith; agus gabhadh 'ur n-anam toil-inntinn ann an cuilm shòghmhoir.

7. Do bhrìgh gu bheil creidimh a' teachd le h-éisdeachd tha e a' gairm oirnn aire thabhairt do mhìneachadh na tairgse, chum gu 'n creideamaid anns an fhirinn, agus gu 'n éisdeamaid rithe, a ta

comasach air creidimh slàinteil a ghineamhuinn anns an anam, agus a tharruing a mach gu h-earbsa ann an Dia ; Aomaibh 'ur cluas, agus thigibh do m' ionnsuidh-sa : Chum na criche so, tha 'n Tighearn a' gealltuinn, ma ghabhar ris an tairgse so, gu 'm beothaich i am peacach marbh, agus gu 'n daighnich e co-cheangal nan gràs ris an duine dh'aontaicheas rithe, eadhon co-cheangal sìthe agus réite bhithbhuan nach gabh sgaoileadh ; Eisdibh, agus mairidh 'ur n-anam beò ; agus ni mi ribh co-cheangal sìorruidh, (deir e) eadhon tròcaire cinnteach Dhaibhidh : le tròcairibh cinnteach, tha e ciallachadh gràsa slàinteil mar tha fireantachd, sìth, agus aoibhneas anns an Spiorad Naomh. Uchd-mhacachd, naomhachadh, agus glòrachadh, agus gach ni a bhuineas do dhiadhachd agus do 'n bheatha mhaireannaich.

8. Chum ar dèanamh cinnteach, agus a chum fìor chòir a dhaighneachadh dhuinn air na tròcairibh slàinteil sin, agus a chum gu creideamaid dearbhachd a' cho-cheangail a ta eadar Dia agus an creidmheach anns an fhocal so ; thug an t-Athair seachad tiodhlac cheithir-fillte 'n a Mhac sìorruidh agus aonghin féin.

An tùs, thug se e, gu bhi air a dhèanamh 'n a fhèidil, agus gu bhi air a bhreth air ar son-ne, do shìol Dhaibhidh, a bha 'n a roimh-chomharadh air ; air an aobhar sin theirear ris ann an so, agus ann an Gnìomh xiii. 34. Daibhidh Rìgh fìor, agus sìorruidh Israeil. 'S i so tiodhlac mhòr Dhé do 'n duine, Eoin iv. 10, agus an so, Thug mi e gu bhi 'n a Dhaibhidh, no, air a bhreth o Dhaibhidh do 'n t-sluagh.

'S an dara àit, Thug e Criosd mar thiodhlac, gu bhi 'n a Fhianuis do 'n t-sluagh, araon air na sochairibh cinnteach agus slàinteil a bha air an tabhairt do na daoibh taght' ann an co-cheangal na saorsa, agus mar an ceudna 'n a fhianuis air toil agus rùn an Athar chum na sochaire sin a chur riu, agus chum an daighneachadh ann an co-cheangal na réite, a tha air a dhèanamh riu-san a ghabhas ris an tairgse : Thug mi e (deir an Tighearna) mar Fhianuis do na cinnich. Agus gu cinnteach is leòir an Fhianuis anns a' chùis so e, air iomadh dòigh ; (1.) A chionn gur aon e do 'n Trionaid bheannuichte agus gur neach àraid as ar leth ann an co-cheangal na saorsa e roimh thoiseach an t-saoghail. (2.) A chionn gur esan, 'n a dhreuchd mar Eadar-mheadhonair, Teachdair' a' cho-cheangail, agus fhuaire barantas g' a fhoillseachadh. (3.) Thoisich e air fhoillseachadh ann am Phàras, far an do gheall e, gu 'm bruthadh sìol na mnà ceann na nathrach. (4.) Dh'fhoillsich e a bhàs féin agus 'fhuilangais, agus na sochairean mòr' a thigeadh leis, anns na roimh-chomharaibh, na samhluidhibh, na h-jobairtibh agus na deas-ghnàthaibh a thugadh leis roimh a theachd. (5.) Thug e tuilleadh soluis mu 'n cho-cheangal so, a' labhairt le a Spiorad, o linn gu linn, anns na Fàidhibh naomha. (6.) Thàinig e féin ann an iomlanachd na h-aimsire, agus thug e fianuis air na h-uile nithibh a bhuineas do 'n cho-cheangal so, agus mu thoil Dhé chum nan creidmheach a ghabhail a steach ann ; rinn e so ann an cuid, leis gu 'n d' rinn e aon phearsa, ris an nàdur

dhiadhuidh; agus ann an searmonachadh naidheachd mhaith a' cho-cheangail le a bheul féin; agus ann an luach na saorsa iocadh air a' chranncheusaidh; agus ann am buntuinn do ghnàth ri a shluagh féin o thoiseach an t-saoghail, gus an là 'n diugh, a chum cumail na muinntir shaorta 's a' cho-cheangal so.

'S an treas àite, Kinn Dia tiodhlac do Chrìosd mar cheann-iùil do 'n t-slaugh, chum an tabhairt troimh gach éigin, gach trioblaid, agus gach buaireadh, gu beatha, leis a' cho-cheangal so: Agus is e féin agus cha 'n neach air bith eile, a tha treòrachadh a shluaigh dh'ionnsuidh a' cho-cheangail, agus anns a' cho-cheangal, agus fad na slighe uile, chum slàinte. 1. Le seòladh 'fhocail agus a Spioraid. 2. Le eiseimpleir a bheatha féin, ann an creidimh, agus ann an ùmhlachd, eadhon a chum bàis a' chroinn-cheusaidh. 3. Le bhi ag oibreachadh gu cumhachdach annta, agus a' giùlan a mhuinntir shaorta 'n a uchd, agus a' toirt orra an taic a leagadh air féin, am feadh a ta iad a' dol suas troimh 'n fhasaich so.

'S a' cheathramh àit, Rinn Dia tiodhlac do Chrìosd d' a shluagh, mar Cheann-feadhna; agus tha e a' cur an gnìomh na dreuchd so gu fìrinneach, le a lagh agus 'òrduighibh féin, agus le luchd-teagaisg agus uachdaranaibh, a thoirt d' a Eaglais, agus d' a shluagh, maille ris gach uile luchd-dreuchd a ta feumail; le bhi cumail chùirtean agus chomh-chruinnichidhean 'n am measg, a dh'fhaicinn gu 'm bi ùmhlachd air a toirt d' a lagh agus, gu 'n ceannsaicheadh e le 'fhocal, le a Spiorad, agus le smachd-eaglais, truailidheachd a shluaigh; agus le a ghliocas agus a chumhachd, 'g an dìon o 'n uile naimhdebh.

Uaith so, feudaidd esan a thug e féin suas do Dhia, a chreidimh a neartachadh, le reusonachadh air an dòigh so:—"Co air bith a ghabhas o 'chridhe ri tairgse saor ghràis, a ta air a dèanamh ann an so do pheacaichibh, air am bheil tart an déigh fireantachd agus slàinte; dha-san, buinidh Crìosd, am fìor Dhaibhidh, le co-cheangal sìorruidh, le 'uile thròcairibh cinnteach agus slàinteil.

"Ach tha mise (feudaidd an creidmheach lag a radh), o 'm uile chridhe, a' gabhail ri tairgse saor ghràis, air a tabhairt an so do pheacaichibh air am bheil tart an déigh fireantachd agus slàinte.

"Uime sin, buinidh Crìosd dhomhsa, le co-cheangal sìorruidh, maille r' a uile thròcairibh cinnteach agus slàinteil."

'S e 'n dara Barantas agus an t-aobhar àraid gu gabhail ri Crìosd, agus gu creidsinn ann, an Earail dhùrachdach a tha Dia a' toirt dhuinn a bhi réid ris féin ann an Crìosd, air a cur sìos 2 Cor. v. 19, 20, 21.

"Bha Dia ann an Crìosd a' dèanamh an t-saoghail réidh ris féin, gun bhi a' meas an cionta dhoibh; agus dh' earb e ruinne focal na réite. Uime sin, is teachdairean sinn air son Chrìosd, mar gu cuireadh Dia impidh leinne; tha sinn a' guidheadh oirbh as uchd Chrìosh, bithibh réidh ri Dia. Oir rinn se esan do nach b'aithne peacadh, 'n a iobairt pheacaidh air son-ne; chum gu bitheamaid-ne air ar dèanamh 'n ar fireantachd Dhé ann-san."

An so tha 'n t-Abstol a' teagasg dhuinn nan naoidh chinn-

theagaisg a leanas ; An tus, Gu bheil an saoghal taghta, no saoghal do anamaibh saorta, uile, do thaobh nàduir, ann an staid naimhdeis an aghaidh Dhé : Tha so air a chiallachadh leis an fhocal, Reidh ; oir cha 'n fheud réite, no ath-nuadhbachadh càirdeis bhi ach eatorra-san a bha roimhe sin 'n an naimhdibh.

'S an dara àit, Gu 'n robh Iosa Crìosd Mac sìorruidh Dhé, anns gach uil' àm a chaidh seachad o thuiteam Adhaimh, mar Eadar-mheadhonair ; agus an t-Athair annsan, a' dèanamh càirdeis (le 'fhocal agus le a Spiorad) eadar e féin agus na daoine taghta, oir (a deir e), BHA Dia ann an Crìosd a' dèanamh an t-saoghail réidh ris féin.

'S an treas àit, Gu 'm b' ionnan dòigh do 'n réite so anns na h-uile linn, do thaobh brìgh, eadhon, le maitheadh am peacaidh dhoibh-san a dh' aidicheadh am peacaidh agus an naimhdeas féin an aghaidh Dhé, agus a tha 'g iarraidh réite agus maitheanas peacaidh tre Chrìosd, oir a deir e, Bha Dia ann an Crìosd a' dèanamh an t-saoghail réidh ris féin, gun bhi a' meas an cionta dhoibh.

'S a' cheathramh àit, Gu bheil crìoch an t-soisgeil agus focail Dé uile, trì-fille ; 1. Gu bheil e a' toirt mothachaidh do dhaoineibh air am peacaidh féin, agus air an naimhdeas féin an aghaidh Dhé, agus air an cunnart féin mu sheasas iad a mach 'n a aghaidh, gun eagail roimh dhiomb Dhé. 2. Gu bheil focal Dé a' dèanamh dhaoine eòlach air an dòigh a dh' ullaich Dia, chum càirdeas a dhèanamh, tre Iosa Crìosd, eadhon, ma dh'aidicheas iad an naimhdeas féin, agus gu 'm bi iad toileach air dol ann an co-cheangal càirdeis ri Dia tre Chrìosd, an sin gu 'm bi Dia toileach a bhi réidh riutha gu saor. 3. Tha focal Dhé a' teagasg do dhaoineibh, cionnus a ghiùlaineas iad iad féin do thaobh Dhé mar chàirdibh, an déigh dhoibh bhi air an dèanamh réidh ris, eadhon, ann a bhi neo-toileach air peacachadh 'n a aghaidh, agus air strì a dhèanamh o' n cridhe ùmhlachd a thoirt d' a àitheantaibh : agus uime sin, a deirear ri focal Dé an so, Focal na réite ; a chionn gu bheil e a' teagasg dhuinn an fheum a ta againn air réite, agus cionnus a choimhdeas sinn an réite, no an càirdeas so, air dha bhi air a dhèanamh ri Dia tre Chrìosd.

'S a' chùigeamh àit, Ged bhuineas éisdeachd, creidsinn, agus ùmhlachd do 'n Fhocal so, o gach neach gus an tig an Soisgeul ; gidheadh cha bhuin dreuchd a shearmonachaidh do neach air bith, ach dhoibhsan a mhàin a ta air an gairm le Dia chum na ministreileachd, agus a chuir e a mach le barantas chum na h-oibre so ; tha 'n t-Abstol a' cumail so a mach anns na briathraibh so, rann 18. Thug e dhuinne ministreileachd na réite.

'S an t-sèathamh àit, Gu 'm bu chòir do mhinistreibh an t-Soisgeil iad féin a ghiùlan mar theachdairibh Chrìosd, agus bu chòir dhoibh am barantas a leantuinn gu teann, mar tha e air a chur sìos 's an fhocal, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. Agus an uair a ni iad so, gur còir do 'n t-sluagh gabhail riutha mar theachdairibh o Dhia ; oir an so tha 'n t-Abstol ag ràdh, 'n an ainm uile, Is Teachdairean sinn air son Chrìosd, mar gu cuireadh Dia impidh leinne.

'S an t-seachdamh àit, Gu 'm bu chòir do Mhinisteiribh bun-tuinn ris an t-sluagh leis gach uile dhùrachd caomh, chum am peacaidhean aideachadh, agus an naimhdeas do thaobh nàduir an aghaidh Dhé, le tuilleadh agus tuilleadh tréibhdhireachd; agus aontachadh le co-cheangal nan gràs agus teachdaireachd Chrìosd, le tuilleadh agus tuilleadh rùin cridhe, agus chum an réite dhearbhadh ni 's mò agus ni 's mò, le giùlan naomh an làthair Dhé, tha e cumail so a mach, 'n uair tha e ag ràdh, Tha sinn a' guidheadh oirbh, bithibh réidh ri Dia.

'S an ochdamh àit, Ann am buntúinn teò-chridheach Mhinistirean ri sluagh, gu 'm bu chòir do 'n t-sluagh a thuigsinn, gur ann ri Dia agus ri Chrìosd a tha an gnothuch, a tha guidheadh orra le a Mhinisteiribh féin bhi réidh ris: A nis cha 'n 'eil impidh 's am bith is dòcha cridhe cruaidh a' pheacaich a thaiseachadh, no Dia bhi guidheadh air a bhi réidh ris; oir, 'n uair a bhuineadh dhuinne, a rinn co iomadh eucoir air Dia, sinne bhi 'g iarraidh càirdeis air-san, gu bheil esan a dol romhainn, agus (O! Iongantas nan Iongantas!) ag asluchadh oirne bhi réidh ris féin; agus uime sin, tha 'n fhearg a 's uamhasaiche a' feitheamh orra-san a chuireas an t-iarthus so ann am beag suim, agus nach géill dha, 'n uair chluinneas iad a Mhinistirean ag ràdh, Is teachdairean sinne air son Chrìosd, mar gu cuireadh Dia impidh leinne; tha sinn a' guidheadh oirbh-se as uchd Chrìosd, bithibh réidh ri Dia.

'S an naothamh àit, Chum a dhèanamh soilleir, cionnus a tha e teachd gu crìch, gu bheil co-cheangal na réite co furasd air a dhèanamh suas eadar Dia agus peacach iriosal a ta teicheadh a dh' ionnsuidh Chrìosd, tha 'n t-Abstol a' nochdadh an aobhair dhuinn, mar tha a air a leigeadh ris ann an co-cheangal na saorsa, 's e so is sùim dha; "Tha e air a réiteachadh eadar Dia agus an t-Eadar-mheadhonair Iosa Chrìosd, Mac Dhé, agus Urras na muinntir shaorta, mar an dà neach àraid anns a' cho-cheangal, gu 'm bi peacaidhean na muinntir shaorta air an cur as leth, no air am meas do Chrìosd neo-chiontach, agus gu 'm bi esan araon air a dhìteadh, agus air a chur gu bàs air an son-sa; agus air a' cheart chumha so, ge b' e air bith a dh'aontaicheas ri co-cheangal na réite, mar a ta e air a thairgseadh tre Chrìosd, gu 'm bi e air 'fhìreanachadh agus air a mheas fireanta an làthair Dhé, le ùmh-lachd Chrìosd bhi air a meas da;" Oir rinn se esan do nach b' aithne peacadh, 'n a lobairt-pheacaidh air ar son-ne; (deir an t-Abstol) chum gu bitheamaid-ne air ar dèanamh 'n ar fireantachd Dhé ann-san.

## Tuìteam na h-Eaglaise ann an Alba.

(Air a leantuinne bho thaobh duilleig 319.)

THA firinn air a measgachadh le mòran de mhearachdan anns a chuid air am bheil sinn a dol a sgriobhadh beagan air a mhios so. Chi sibh fuidh' an litir (b) na briathran so:—"Gum bheil an Eaglais so mar an ceudna cumail gum bheil aig na h-uile



a chluinneas an soisgeul barrantas, agus gum bheil e air agradh uatha, gun creideadh iad a chum tearnaigh an anama.” Tha na h-uile a cur an lan aonta ris a phuine sin. Chan urrain briathran a dheanamh ni’s soilleirc na tha Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreideamh ‘ga dheanamh. Ach tha e na ni cunnartach bhi dheanamh a mach, a chionn gum bheil na h-uile a chluinneas an soisgeul fo fhiachan gabhail ri Criosd a tha air a thairgseadh ann, agus gu bheil barrantas aca bho fhocal Dhé gu sin a dheanamh, gum bheil iad dhiu fein comasach gu so a dheanamh. Tha na h-uile cunn-tachail gu ùmhlachd iomlan a thoirt do’n lagh naomh mar an ceudna, ach chan eil an duine comasach air so a dheanamh. Nam biodh an dream a rinn an t-Achd so fallainn ann am beachd air a phuinc so—eucomas an duine ann an staid naduir—cha bhiodh eucordadh air bith eadair ‘inn a thaobh barrantas focail Dhé, do na h-uile a chluinneas tairgse an t-soisgeil, gu dunadh ri Criosd ; oir tha tairgse an t-soisgeil a fagail na h-uile gun leithsgeul a dhiunnsuidh an d’ thig i. Tha e chearta cho fìor sin gu ‘m bheil Dia ag agradh air na h-uile peacach creidsinn ann an Criosd, agus gur e peacadh a mhichreidimh am peacadh as ùmhasaiche de na h-uile peacadh. Bha tairgse an t-soisgeil air a toirt do pheacaich anns an Eaglais shaoir le teachdairean Chriosd cho saor’s a fhuair iad i anns an fhirinn, “Ho! gach neach air am bheil tart, thigibhse chum nan uisgeachan ; agus esan aig nach eil airgiod, thigibh, ceannaichibh gun airgiod agus gun luach, fion agus bainne.”

(2) Is i an ath phuinc:—“Agus a thaobh cor a mheud ‘us nach creid ach a bhàsaicheas nam peacaidhean bidh na leanas do bhrìgh an diultaidh fein air gairm an t-soisgeil.” Chan eil moran againn ri radh an aghaidh so. Ach tha iad a ceangal truaighe na muinntir a bhios a fulang peanais shiorruidh a mhain ri peacadh diultaidh gairm an t-soisgeil. Tha na h-uile neach de shliochd Adhamh air am breth a stigh do’n t-saoghal so fo bhinn bàis shiorruidh, agus mar sin bidh truaighe agus peanas aig a chuid dhiu a dhionnsuidh nach d’thainig gairm an t-soisgeil, thaobh am peacaidh gin agus gnìomh, anns an t-saoghal ri teachd, ach tha e na ni cinnteach gur e diultadh teargse an t-soisgeil a ni peanas a luchd-eisdeachd na’s ann-tromaichte. Is e sin mar a tha sinn a tuisinn briathran Chriosd ris na bailtean anns an robh oibre cumhachdach air an deanamh, agus nach do ghabh aithreachas, “Tha mi ag radh ribh gum bi staid Thioruis agus Shidoin na’s so-ìomchaire ann an là a’ bhreitheanais na bhitheas bhur staid-se.” Tha an ni dorchas so a ruith troimh na h-uile pairt de’n Achd so. Chi sinn anns a phuinc a tha tighinn na’s soilleirc am beachd air staid an duine a thaobh naduir.

(3) “Chan eil an Eaglais so a teagasg, agus chan eil i meas gum bheil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a teagasg gum bheil daoine air an roimh-orduchadh gu bàs eadar-dhealaichte bho’m peacadh fein.” Tha iad ag aicheadh an so gu’m bheil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a teagasg gum bheil daoine air an roimh-orduchadh a chum bàis eadar-dhealaichte bho’m peacadh fein. Nis tha iad

a cur na h-eucorach as leth Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh anns a phuinc so. Is iad so briathran an leabhair sin; "Trid ordugh Dhé, chum foillseachadh a ghloire, tha cuid eigin do dhaoineibh, agus do ainglibh, air an roimh-orduchadh chum na beatha suthainn, agus cuid eile air an roimh-orduchadh chum a bhais shiorruidh." —(Caib. iii. 3.) Bhiodh iad firinneach na'n do stad iad an uair a thubhairt iad, "Chan eil an Eaglais so a teagasg" (oir chan eil iadsan ris), ach chi duine air bith a leubhas Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh gur ann le ceilg a tha iad a tabhairt a steach a bheachd ùr so do'n eaglais. Ach chan e mhain gum bheil am beachd ùr so an aghaidh creud na h-eaglaise, ach tha e calg-dhìreach an aghaidh focal Dhé. "Ciad ma's e, air bhi do Dhia toileach 'fhearg a nochdadh, agus a chumhachd a dheanamh aithnichte, gun d' fhuiling e le mòr fhad-fhulangas soithichean na feirge air an ullachadh chum sgrios." —(Ro. ix. 22.) Buinidh nithean diomhair do'n Tighearna, ach nithean foillsichte dhuine. Tha a phuinc ro-chudthromach so air a foillseachadh, agus air an aobhar sin buinidh i do chreud na h-eaglais. Tha i air aon de na puincean sin a bhuineas do chreidimh, ach a tha tuilleadh 'us domhain gu cnuidh an duslaich a dh'fhaotinn grund innte. Tha iad a nochdadh ann-danachd neo-chumanta ann a bhi cur cul ris an teagasg so.

(4) Ach tha ni eile aca anns an amharc. Tha iad ag radh nach eil "daoine air an roimh-orduchadh gu bàs eadar-dhealaichte bho'm peacadh fein." Ciod a tha iad a ciallachadh leis na briathran so? Tha iad gu soilleir a teagasg annta, nach eil peacadh gin a tabhairt a bhàis air an duine. A reir am briathran is e peacadh gnìomh a pheacaich a tha toirt a bhàis air. Tha a phuinc olc so aig steidh an Achd. Is ann a chionn gun robh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh cho ro-shoilleir air tuiteam a chinne-dhaoine ann an Adhamh a chaidh a chuid mhòr de'n Achd so a dheanamh, agus gu h-araidh a chuid so. Cha mhòr a gheibh sinn an duigh a tha creidsinn gu'm bheil cionta ceud pheacaidh Adhamh air a mheas da shliochd. Ach an dean am mi-chreidimh-san firinn Dhe gun eifeachd? Cha tuit lideadh dhe'n fhirinn a dhiunnsaidh an lair air a phuinc so ni's mò na air puincean eile. Tha iomadh earran sgriobhte a tha teagasg tuiteam a chinne-dhaoine uile ann an Adhamh ach chan ainmich sinn ach a h-aon, "Oir mar is ann tre dhuine a thainig am bàs. . . . Oir mar ann an Adhamh, a ta na h-uile a' faghail a' bhais." Ach do bhrìgh gu'n d'thig a phuinc so an aird ann an laimhseachadh earran eile de'n Achd so, cha'n abair sinn an còr aig an am so oirre.

Fo'n litir (c) tha iad ag radh, "Gur e dleasdanas na muinntir a tha creidsinn, agus aon chrìoch air son am bheil iad air an gairm le Dia, gun deanadh iad an soisgeul aithnichte do na h-uile dhaoine, anns na h-uile aite, chum ùmhlachd a chreidimh." Ma tha iad a ciallachadh leis a so, gur e dleasdanas na muinntir a tha creidsinn ann an Crìosd an soisgeul a chur a dhionnsuidh na'n

Cinneach a dhionnsuidh nach d'thainig e fathast, chan eil mì-chordadh eadar iad fein agus sinne air a phuinc sin; oir tha sinn a cur ar làn aonta ris a sin. Ach tha sinn ag radh a reir na firinn nach eil na h-uile air an gairm gu bhi nan luchd-teagaisg. Is e aon nì duine bhi air a ghairm gu h-eifeachdach, agus nì eile duine bhi air a ghairm gu bhi na theachdaire aig Crìosd gu bhi teagasg muinntir eile. Tha na h-uile creideach fo fhiachan an toiseach a bhi ag urnaigh air son craobh-sgaoileadh an t-soisgeil am measg nan uile, agus a ris bhi tabhairt da chuid a reir a chomais air son sin a bhi air a dheanamh aig an tigh agus ann an tirean céin. Tha an fhirinn a bacadh do mhnathan a bhi teagasg dhaoine anns an eaglais. “Ach chan eil mi a’ ceadachadh do mhnai teagasg a thoirt uaipe, no ceannas a ghlacadh air an fhear, ach i bhi na tosd.”—(1 Tim. ii. 12.) Feudaidh e bhith gu’n robh so aca anns an t-sealladh; oir tha iad a cur cul ris an fhirinn a dh’ainmich sinn; oir tha cuid de mhnathan nam measg a theid don chubaid a theagasg.

(2) Tha sinn a creidsinn mar an ceudna, agus a teagasg gur e dleasdanas nan creideach agus aon chrìoch air son am bheil iad air an gairm le Dia gun guilaineadh iad moran de thoradh na naomhachd anns an t-saoghal. Le so tha e sgriobhte gum bheil Dia air a ghlòrachadh. “Ann an so tha m’ Athair-sa air ghlòrachadh, gun toir sibhe mòr thoradh uaibh; agus bithibh sibh ’nur deisciobuill dhomhsa.”—(Eoin xv. 8.) Tha e soilleir gur i so aon de na doighean, a rùnaich an Tighearna, leis am biodh an soisgeul air a dheanamh aithnichte. Ach feumaidh na h-uile a tha an rùn Dia a ghlòrachadh air an doigh so gluasad a reir na firinn—“Agus na biodh comh-chomunn agaibh ri oibribh neo-tharbhach an dorchadais ach gu mar fearr leibh an cronachadh.”—(Eph. v. 11.) Nuair tha na daoine so a tabhairt chluichean, oran diomhain, agus aig amaibh dannsa a stigh do thighibh aoraidh Dhe, Cia mar a tha iad air an dealachadh ri oibribh neo-tharbhach an dorchadais? Cait’ am bheil diadhachd an duine a tha gabhail toil-inntinn ann an oibribh an dorchadais comhla ris an t-saoghal gun ghràs? Tha sinn a tuigsinn leis na briathran—“chum ùmhhlachd a chreidimh”—ùmhhlachd do dh’ fhocal Dhe; oir is iad briathran Dhe, a tha air an cur sìos ann an sgriobturaibh an t-Seann-Tiomnaidh agus an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh, a tha deanamh aithnichte dhuinne na h-uile nì as coir dhuinn a chreidsinn mi thiomchuill Dhe, agus an dleasdanas a tha Dia ag iarraidh air an duine. Chuir na daoine so cùl ris a chuid mhòir de’ na Sgriobturean, agus a nis feumaidh an luchd-leanmhuinn a chreud a bheir iad-san dhoibh a ghabhail, coltach ris na papanaich. Chan eil sinne a dèidh ann an neach air bith na h-uile nì a tha na chomas a dheanamh chum an soisgeul a chraobh sgaoileadh le uile neart—a reir mar tha an fhirinn a teagasg an t-soisgeil—ach tha sinn an aghaidh cealgaireachd annain fein no ann an daoine eil; agus tha sinn a faicinn moran dhi anns an Achd so. Ach feumaidh sinn dol air aghaidh.

(3) Tha iad a nis a tighinn a dhiunnsuidh am beachd air cia

mar a tha Breitheamh na'n uile a deiligeadh ri leanabaibh agus ri muinntir a tha an taobh-thall do mheonaibh na'n gràs. Ainmichidh sinn am briathran:—"Agus am feadh is e an soisgeul meodhainean suidhichte na slainte dhoibhsan da'm bheil e air a dheanamh aithnichte, gidheadh chan eil e leantuinn, ni mo tha Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh gu bhi air a thuigsinn mar a teagasg, gum bheil aon air bith a bhàsaicheas na'n leanabachd caillte, no nach feud Dia air sgath Chrìosd, agus le a Spiorad Naomha san, a throcair a shineadh a mach a dhionnsuidh na muinntir a tha 'n taobh thall do na meodhainean so, mar a dh'fheudas sin a bhi taitneach dha a reir saoihbheas a ghràis-san." Tha iad ag radh anns na briathran so nach eil Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh gu bhi air a thuigsinn mar an aghaidh am beachd-san. Ciod a tha an leabhar sin ag radh mu thearnadh leanabaibh? "Tha naoidheana taghta, a tha bàsachadh ann an aois na naoidheanachd, air an ath-ghineamhuinn agus air an tearnadh le Crìosd trid an Spioraid." Dh'fhag na h-athraichean diadhaidh a phuinc ro chudthromach so ann an doigh ro ghlic. Is ann aig Dia a mhaire a tha fios air co a thagh E. Tha iadsan ga fhagail ann a lamhan beannaichte-san; oir tha e ro shoilleir gu'm bi an taghadh uile air an tearnadh. Chan eil iad a gabhail orra fein de dhal-machd mhi-naomha na tha dol a stigh ann an run diomhair Dhe, mar a rinn a mhuinntir a chuir ri cheile an t-Achd so.

(4) Tha iad nan seasamh air aite gle shleamhuinn nuair a tha iad ag radh nach eil sin gu "Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a thuigsinn mar a teagasg nach feud Dia, air sgath Chrìosd, agus le a Spiorad Naomha-san, a throcair a shineadh a mach a dhionnsuidh na muinntir a tha'n taobh thall do na meodhainean so."

[1] Tha iad a cumail a mach leis a so gu'm bi na cinnich nach cuala riamh iomradh air Crìosd, no air focal Dhe air an tearnadh. Chaidh a phuinc so a thogail le cuid aig Ard-sheannad na h-eaglais nuair a bha an t-Achd truagh so air am beulabh, agus chathaich *Dr. Henderson*, agus a bhuidhean mhòr a bha air son an Achd, air taobh gum biodh iad air an tearnadh as eugmhais an t-soisgeil. Thug e air aghaidh firinn, a chlaon e, chum a dhearbhadh gun robh am beachd sgriobturail. Bi an fhirinn,—"Oir a mheud as a pheacaich gun an lagh, sgriosar iad gun an lagh."—(Ro. ii. 12.) Dh'atharaich e am focal "sgriosar" a chum an fhocail "ditear" agus dh'fheuch e ri dhearbhadh nach biodh iad air an sgrios. Bha e na ni gle narach do'n a bha de mhinistirean anns a chuir nach b'urrain dhoibh a shoillearachadh gun robh an fhirinn air a fiaradh leis. B'ann an ath-mhaduinn anns an *Scotsman* a sgriobh ministear nach robh na bhall de'n chuir, agus mar sin aig nach robh comas labhairt aig an am, a thoirt solus air nach gabhadh am focal anns a cheud chanain a bhi air eadar-theangachadh "ditear" ach gun robh e ciallachadh "sgriosar." Ach ciod iad briathran Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh air a chuis? "Ged fheud daoine eile nach eil taghta, bhi air an gairm le ministreal-achd an fhocail, agus cuid a dh'oibreachadh coitichionn an Spioraid

bhi aca, gidheadh cha'n eil iad a chaoidh a teachd gu fìor a dh'ionnsuidh Chrìosd, agus uime sin cha'n urrainn iad bhi air an tearnadh. Is lugha na sin a dh'fheudas daoine nach eil ag aideachadh a' chreidimh Chrìosduidh bhi air an savaladh ann an slighe air bith eile, air meud an dìchill am beatha a chaitheamh a reir soluis naduir, agus reachd a chreidimh sin a ta iad ag aidmheil. Agus a bhi ag radh agus a seasamh ris, gu feud iad bhi air an savaladh; is nì ro sgriosail agus gràineil e."—(x. 4.) Tha na h-uile puinc de na briathran so air an dearbhadh le focal Dhe, agus tha iad calg-dhireach an aghaidh briathran an Achd, agus a dearbhadh mi-onair na muinntir a chuir ri cheile e a thaobh gun dubhairt iad gun robh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh ri bhi air a thuigsinn mar ag aontachadh le am beachd mearachdach-san.

[2] Tha cuid de na daoine sin dhe'n bheachd gum faigh daoine cothrom bhi air an tearnadh taobh thall dhe'n bhàs. Chi sibh gum bheil na briathran a cheart cho freagarach air son a bheachd so, agus a tha iad airson a bheachd a bha sinn a mineachadh. Nuair a tha iad ag radh gum feud Dia "a throcair a shineadh a mach a dhiunnsuidh na muinntir a tha'n taobh thall do na meodhainean so." Choinnich sinn ri cuid aig am bheil am beachd eagalach so, a thubhairt gum faigh daoine fuasgladh fo pheanas taobh thall tim. Dh' fheoraich sinn dhuibh, c'ainm a theireadh iad ris an aite anns am biodh iad mu'm faigheadh iad saorsa, an abradh iad purgaidh ris? Thubhairt iad nach robh iad ullamh gu sin a radh. Feudaidd e bhi gu'm bheil moran fo'n Achd, eodhain de luchd-teagaisg aig nach eil am beachd so, ach chan eil neach air bith nì's fearr na tha a chreud. Duine s'am bith as urrainn cur suas le leithid sin de chreud feudaidd e dol do eaglais na Roimh là air bith. Ach feumaidh sinn tighinn gu comhdhunadh aig an am so. "Ge be neach a bhriseas an lagh, agus nach fan ann an teagasg Chrìosd, cha'n eil Dia aige; an ti a dh'fhanas ann an teagasg Chrìosd, tha araon an t-Athair agus am Mac aige."—(2 Eoin 9.) N. C.

## Reflections on the War in South Africa.

WAR is an awful calamity, and should not be entered upon until all honourable means to avert it had been exhausted. After it has been found impossible to maintain peace, the responsibility of this nation to act righteously towards God and our fellow creatures is still binding on us. It is very manifest that this war was thrust upon this nation by the Transvaal and Free State. It is proved that they have been gathering material for war for the last eighteen years, and that they desired to drive us out of our possessions in South Africa. It was they that broke off negotiations for peace, sent us an ultimatum which was most unreasonable, and immediately entered our territories and began to annex them to their own. This will, we think, suffice to show

that we are fighting for our own rights; but still we have had terrible reverses.

Therefore every man who seriously considers our awful loss in this war, and the unaccountable manner in which our brave soldiers have been led into untenable positions where they have been killed, wounded, and taken prisoners, is bound to search for the cause of such disasters. Some find fault with the prudence of our officers. One man pointed out that three of our most serious reverses happened by an endeavour to make night attacks. These three were Nicolson's Nek, Stormberg, and Magersfontein. This is quite true, and it ought to teach our officers their need of more vigilance, and carefulness in the future. But there is an all-important factor which has been quite ignored by the Press, and to which we desire to draw the attention of our readers. Sir George White, on the Sabbath night, sent out from Ladysmith the officers and men who were slain, wounded, and taken prisoners on Monday at Nicolson's Nek. General Gatacre marched his small force all Saturday night, fell into a trap on the Sabbath morning, and lost many dead, wounded, and prisoners. On that same Sabbath, General Methuen began the attack by artillery on Magersfontein, sent out the Highland Brigade that Sabbath night which came to such awful grief before day light on Monday morning. These facts speak for themselves to all God-fearing men.

It is certainly the duty of our army to fight on the defensive on the Sabbath day; but to take offensive steps unnecessary on that day is clearly a direct breach of the fourth commandment. Can we expect the Lord of Hosts to go forth with our armies, while we are publicly guilty of violating His laws? The Boers, so far as we have seen, observe the Sabbath day, and hold prayer meetings in their trenches. It has been reported that, at Magersfontein when Lord Methuen began the attack by artillery on the Sabbath day, the Boers were holding a religious service with our shells bursting among them. This does not mean that our artillerymen were seeing them, and that they deliberately fired on them knowing what the Boers were doing at the time; but our men ought to have been worshipping the Most High, instead of beginning to fight a battle on the Lord's day.

Another thing worthy our serious consideration is that we seem to ignore God entirely in this war. The Boers acknowledged the Most High and held a public fast before they began the war. They publicly, before the whole world, acknowledged that the Lord is the disposer of events, and that it was in dependence upon His almighty aid they expected success. Not a word has been heard from public men, nor from the Press of this country, that would go to indicate our dependence upon God in this terrible war. We have been admonished once and again to trust to our army and that all would end well. Should we not rather be advised to trust in the Lord? "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose

heart departeth from the Lord." This proud, foolish, and boastful spirit would be our ruin were we allowed to get on with it; but the Lord has given us some cause for humbling ourselves, and it is to be hoped that we will humble ourselves before Him. Are we fallen so low as to forget the great Author of our being? Unless we repent of our atheism and of our trampling upon the law of God, our days as a nation are certainly numbered. The sooner we come to our knees the better. The Most High can bring us down in judgment; may He give us grace in mercy to bring down our high looks. We hope that a day of public humiliation and confession of sins will be observed, but if not by the nation, we must observe it in all the congregations of our church.

It is related that the Duke of Wellington acknowledged publicly after his return from the hard and protracted struggles of the Peninsular War, that he realised on the field of battle the good effects of the fast days observed by this nation. We may be guilty of the blood of our dear fellow-countrymen by our ungodliness, in this matter, except we repent.

N. C.

## Notes and Comments.

**Opening of Church at Inverness.**—The new Church at Inverness will (D.V.) be opened on Friday, the 12th day of January. Two services will be held, Gaelic at 12 noon, and English at seven o'clock in the evening.

*A Correction.*—We are asked to correct an erroneous impression that has got abroad in some quarters in reference to an architectural feature of the new Church at Inverness. It has been said that the windows are of stained glass of Cathedral design. The description is not correct. The windows are quite plain, and of the usual material employed in Presbyterian Churches. The building is an excellent structure seated for over 700 persons. Its internal arrangements are comfortable and complete.

**Communion at Inverness.**—The Communion will (D.V.) be dispensed in the Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on the third Sabbath of January, the usual days of humiliation, preparation, and thanksgiving being held.

**Ministerial Calls.**—The congregation at Kames, Tighnabruich, has given a call to the Rev. John Macleod, M.A., Ullapool. The Inverness congregation has given a call to the Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Gairloch.

**A Printer's Error.**—**Romanism in the Transvaal.**—In our Notes and Comments of last month, under the heading "Irish Disloyalty" the phrase "Popish Discordances," should have read "Popish Incendiaries." But we now fear that in that paragraph we made a greater mistake than a printer's one. Whatever opinion, good or bad, we had concerning President Kruger and the Transvaal Republic, we gave them credit for being a staunch Protestant people. This favourable view seems to be erroneous, if we may judge from recent reports. Witness

the following extract from the *English Churchman* of 23rd November:—"Whatever opinions may have been entertained as to the Protestantism, or Puritanism, of President Kruger, and the Transvaal Executive, it would in reality appear to have been of a very accommodating character. It has been frequently said that some Irishmen of the Fenian type have been in the President's confidence, and now the *Irish Weekly*, a priestly organ, sets forth, evidently with the view of obtaining sympathy for him, what it calls 'the following facts,' which throw some light on the subject:—"Dr. Leyds, Catholic; Dr. Farrelly, Government Adviser on International Law, Irish Roman Catholic; Mr. Hogan, Secretary to the Commandant-General, Irish Roman Catholic; Chevalier O'Donoghue, Vice-Chairman, Johannesburg Corporation, Irish Roman Catholic. One fourth of the Transvaal Civil Service are Catholics. The Catholic Church and Convent in Pretoria are built on ground presented by the Transvaal Government to the Nuns.' Assuming the truth of all this, it is plain that the supposed Ultra-Protestantism of the Republic was only a myth and it is more than probable that the appointment of Romish officials, and the free grant of ground for a Romish temple of idolatry, and a house of bondage for nuns, may have been to the prejudice of the Boers, in taking up arms against the just rights of Englishmen. It is true that the British Government have been transgressors in a still greater degree, in placing Papists in power and patronising their corrupt and idolatrous religion, an offence against heaven, which well might call down Divine judgments. The maintenance of truth and freedom by righteous means is that which commends itself to the consciences of Christian people; and it is earnestly to be hoped that that will be the principle acted on by England in the troublous times before her, and in any settlement of the South African difficulty."—J. M'N.

## Obituary.

THE LATE REV. A. M. BANNATYNE.

WE regret to record this month the death of the Rev. A. M. Bannatyne, which took place at his house, Ardwell, Rothesay, on the 4th December. Mr. Bannatyne was at one time the minister of a Free Church Congregation in Aberdeen, but left the Free Church a number of years ago on account of her declensions from her original principles and practice. He contended strongly against the introduction of instrumental music into the Church, and wrote an able pamphlet on the subject. At Rothesay he conducted regular services until he was laid aside by illness. Mr. Bannatyne was much esteemed for his personal character. His death, at an advanced age, will be mourned by his hearers and other friends throughout the country. He leaves a widow, with whom much sympathy is felt in her bereavement.