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Precious Time.

THE present season of the year, as often as it recurs, is a reminder that the period of our earthly existence is at longest a limited one. We do not abide here for ever. Our final destination is beyond the veil of sense, in a sphere of never-ending existence—the world of eternity. There are two dwelling-places in that unseen world—one of happiness and another of misery; and, as our future abode in either is unchangeably settled in the present state, it may be useful to dwell for a little upon some of the characteristics of time.

Time is short. Viewed from the human stand-point and within its own boundaries, time in some of its periods appears to be very long. A century is vastly longer than a year, and a millenium than a century. But time in its utmost stretch is as nothing in comparison with eternity. Eternity has no end; when millions of ages have passed away, it is only beginning. If time as a whole is so little beside eternity, how unspeakably short appears the span of human life! Most of the race, we believe, die in early youth, and it is only a few who live to seventy, eighty, and a hundred years. Time then is very short, and seeing it is given us to prepare for eternity, how valuable its moments should appear in our eyes. Let us make haste to flee from the City of Destruction to the City of Salvation, which is Christ the Lord.

Time is fleeting. It flows on very swiftly. It may be that in the days of childhood we think it very slow in its progress. The months seem to pass very tardily, and the return of a new year is an event that appears indefinitely postponed. But as we grow older and are more deeply engrossed in the affairs of life, the days and weeks and months fly away with unexpected rapidity, and the years that once appeared so long and never-ending, now glide hastily, one after another, into the past. Our time will be at an end almost before we are aware of it. Certain it is that death will come to many before they awake to the importance of time.

They spend its precious moments in the petty concerns and empty vanities of the world, and have no thought about the great eternity which lies before them. Should this sentence meet the eye of such persons, whether they be young or old, may we not affectionately warn them of their folly. Time is fleeting. The present is the only portion of it they possess. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." To-morrow the messenger of death may arrive at their door and carry them away to a lost eternity.

Time is uncertain. We know not what a day or an hour may bring forth. Often the young and the vigorous are cut down at an unexpected moment. They were promising themselves long life and many days, and delighting themselves in the prospect of a serene old age, full of comforts and honours. But suddenly, by some unlooked for movement in providence, the cord of life is snapped, and they pass into eternity. How uncertain, indeed, is time in relation to all! Our times are in the Lord's hands, and He does not tell us what the immediate future has in store for us, or at what moment we may have to put off this mortality. The uncertainty of time ought to be a goad in our side urging us to the diligent consideration of eternal things. The apostle says, "Let us labour, whether present or absent, to be accepted of him." Our chief concern should be to be "found in Christ," "accepted in the beloved." Apart from a saving interest in Christ, we are poor, miserable creatures, grasping at shadows and feeding upon ashes, not knowing our highest good. Eternity is sure with all its solemn issues; and if our souls are now united to Christ, we may rejoice in the prospect of it, but if we are without God and without a good hope through grace, we may well tremble for fear.

Time is precious. The truth of this remark has already been made very apparent. Time is short, fleeting, and uncertain, but these features do not point it out as worthless, but as exceeding precious. The days and months and years are golden. Fools may throw them away, as if they were only fit to be trampled on like chaff. But the wise will prize them as their most valued treasures. Though time is but little beside eternity, yet a great deal has been accomplished and will still be accomplished in it. It was within the bounds of this limited existence that the Son of God wrought out the eternal redemption of His people. He who was the eternal Jehovah came into time as a babe born in Bethlehem's manger, and during the thirty-three years and a half of His earthly pilgrimage, obeyed, suffered, and died, that poor sinners might be saved from everlasting misery, fashioned into God's glorious image, and made heirs of eternal glory. Each moment of the time of His humiliation was a gem of infinite value; each moment was radiant with the glory of a Triune God and with the hope of eternal life for a company which no man can number. Time is precious also because it is within its bounds that every

elect soul is called effectually out of the realm of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The Holy Spirit now performs His marvellous operations upon the hearts of men; He raises up a new creation; He establishes a living union to Christ; He moulds and fashions the soul into conformity with the blessed image of Christ, and at last makes it holy even as God is holy. Time is precious, further, inasmuch as now the gospel of salvation is declared in our ears, and precious warnings and invitations are pressed upon our attention. God speaks from heaven in His word, and calls upon us to turn and live. Soon this voice of mercy will cease to speak, soon we shall hear the voice of judgment. Surely, if we have the least spark of wisdom, we will say, now in the day of our merciful visitation, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; I will welcome the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified but risen Saviour; I will cast myself as a poor, hell-deserving sinner at the feet of free and sovereign grace; I will wait upon the God of salvation; my hope is in His word." Time is exceeding precious, seeing that a boundless eternity of happiness or misery depends upon the use we make of it. If we spend it wholly in the business and vanities of the world, we as much as say that we are quite satisfied to make our bed in hell in eternity. What a fearful state of mind this displays! And yet this is the state of mind that characterises unregenerate men. Good it were for many persons had they never been born. On the other hand, there are those who have reason to praise the Lord for the day of their birth. In time they have been born again, and have obtained an interest in an eternal inheritance. The short while they are here ought to be spent in living for the glory of God and the good of His kingdom.

At the beginning of a new year, let the prayer of Moses, the man of God, be ours—"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. . . . O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Ps. xc. 12, 14).

"WHEN you see a dog following two men," says Mr. Ralph Erskine, in one of his sermons, "you know not to which of them he belongs while they walk together; but let them come to a parting road, and one go one way, and the other another way, then you will know which is the dog's master. So at times, religion and the world go hand in hand. While a man may have the world and a religious profession too, we cannot tell which is the man's master, God or the world; but stay till the man come to a parting road: God calls him this way, and the world calls him that way. Well, if God be his master, he follows religion, and lets the world go; but if the world be his master, then he follows the world and the lust thereof, and lets God, and conscience, and religion go."—*Whitecross*.

Notes of a Sermon

BY THE LATE REV. D. MACDONALD, SHIELDAIG.

PREACHED AT WICK, ON SATURDAY, 28TH APRIL, 1894.

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"Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live and not die."—GEN. xlii. 1-2.

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FAMINE is one of the chastisements with which God visits the people for their sins. Some years ago there was a famine in China, and it was computed that seven millions of the inhabitants died. It was confined to China. But we have a famine this day, not the want of bread and water, but the want of the real knowledge of God. This famine is general throughout the whole world. It is sad for those who are free from this famine to see so many perishing in it. There are millions perishing without the true knowledge of God, and had He not left us a small remnant we should be like Sodom and Gomorrah.

What would be the best remedy to remove this famine? Bread. What bread? The bread of life, Christ Jesus—"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Though you should have dishes of gold and silver on your table, if you want bread you cannot live. So if you have not Christ set before you in the gospel, you are in a spiritual famine still; nothing will do but Christ.

Jacob had good news to tell; but he must first rebuke his sons for looking at each other instead of going where the bread was. It is so with the children of God; they look too much at each other instead of going to God by Christ to get their spiritual needs supplied. As if Jacob had said, "In looking upon one another you are following the way of the world in their extremities." Why look ye upon one another to gratify the flesh? Why look at each other in your striving to accumulate wealth? Paul said, "I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ." Why are you looking at one another gratifying the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life? "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world; if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." Why do you look upon one another striving who will be the greatest? "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Why do you look upon one another instead of working out your own salvation with fear and trembling? Jacob was touched on account of the famishing

condition of his sons : so is God ; for He says :—" As I live saith the Lord God I have no delight in the death of the wicked." There is corn in Egypt, Why are you not bestirring yourselves? Corn in Egypt. This is glorious news to them who feel that they are perishing ; to those who feel that they are far off from God and saying to one another, " O that I knew where I might find him ! that I might come even to his seat ! " Those who are perishing without the knowledge of God are urgently in need of good news and this is good news, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, that He finished the work of redemption, and that He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father a prince and a saviour to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. There is plenty of corn in Egypt. The poor sons of Jacob were so needful of deliverance that the news gladdened their hearts. Immediately there was a great stir among them, some running for the asses, some for the harness, some for the sacks to go to Egypt. There was a commotion among the dry bones when the prophet spake as he was commanded, as there was here among Joseph's brethren. The Holy Spirit plants desires and motions after Christ the bread of life in the souls of men, and directs them to the cross of Christ for deliverance.

Joseph spoke roughly to his brethren. Christ wounds before he heals. He speaks roughly to his brethren through the law—He speaks roughly to them through an interpreter—through the law He shows them their sins, their guilt, and His wrath against sin. Then they feel and confess that they are sinners, and they reflect upon their past conduct. This pulls down their pride. The treatment they gave Christ before will now be very grievous to them, as it was here to Joseph's brethren. The sinner's Sabbath profanation, lying, drunkenness, &c., stings his conscience, and he begins to cry out :—" What shall I do to be saved ? " The interpreter will not give you what you need—the law cannot give life, peace with God, or peace of conscience—the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost alone can do this. The sinner will say :—" O that He would come and pour the oil of comfort into my wounds, for I am tired of being spoken to in the language of the Egyptians ! " But Christ is the Father's wisdom. Notwithstanding their sinful conduct in the past, the roughness with which they were spoken to now, and the guilt that lay heavily upon their conscience, they were not sent away empty. Joseph commanded the stores to be opened.

What are the keys that open the stores of heaven? Faith and poverty. " Without faith it is impossible to please God," and " Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." These keys—faith and poverty—will open all the stores of heaven and earth. They opened the Red Sea to Jacob's sons, and drowned the Egyptians. They opened heaven, and manna fell down in showers ; they opened the flinty rock, and waters gushed out ; they brought fire from heaven to consume the enemies of God ;

and they brought rain from heaven after the doors were locked three years and six months. These are a few of the things which these keys did.

The stores are opened. The first store opened is mercy, the next, forgiveness. "Lord, be merciful to me, the sinner." Oh, how precious forgiveness of sins is to them who feel their need of it! The next store opened is the blood of Christ. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The awakened conscience will say, "Oh that the blood were applied to me!" "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." I think I hear one say, "Oh that it were applied to my guilty soul!" The next store is the Holy Ghost—the blessed Comforter coming through the blood. Though you were as black as hell, He, by washing you in the blood, makes you whiter than one of the holy angels.

When Christ comes by His Spirit to the soul the doors fly open. What doors? Prayer, praise, and the Word of God. None can open them till He comes. He alone imparts consolation to the souls that are weary. "Oh," says one, "that He would send the Holy Spirit to me, to let me see Jesus." Another door (and you say, "Ah, how often it is shut against me!") is the door of the promise. How often the poor soul is bewildered trying to get one promise upon which to place its feet. At other times the promises are renewed and come one after another, as stars appear in the sky on a clear, frosty night.

Another store is opened—the store of wisdom and knowledge. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Spirit alone can open these precious treasures to your soul. If you get this it will spoil your own wisdom on you, and make you a fool in your own eyes. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not." Again—"To know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, is life eternal."

The next store opened is temporal mercies. A godly man observed once, "If ever I knew the Lord, I knew Him in providence, both in keeping my personal character and in keeping me from falling into debt." If He has made Himself wonderful in His grace, He has made Himself wonderful also in His providence. He is all riches. Child of God, all things are yours. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." If He keep you from possessing much of the riches of this world, it is in order that He may wean you from the world and draw you to Himself.

Joseph's brethren went away with their sacks full of what they got from Joseph. When they came to an inn, and opened their sacks, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack. Then they said:—"What is this that God hath done unto us?" They

ought to have said, what have we done to ourselves? You are not to buy Christ and His benefits. He cannot be bought; you must come to Him as beggars. Joseph could not be a type of Christ, if they could say to their father, we got plenty of corn for our money. Christ is not to be bought, but faith brings balm and healing power from Him. When Christ reveals Himself to you in the fulness of His grace you will feel a stinking smell off all your own works, tears, or alms-giving; you will be stripped of every human merit. Oh! build on the grace and merit of Christ Jesus—the Rock of ages—and not on the sandy foundation of your own possessions. But they soon spent all and became as needful as ever. What you got from Jesus to-day will not do for to-morrow's need. Christ's people, like Joseph's brethren, are a poor and needy people. They went back in their need to Joseph again, so do you to Jesus Christ. Go back and get a fresh supply for your famishing soul every day. It may be that, before you get consolation, you will be imprisoned and put to it very severely, like Joseph's brethren, but the sighs of the prisoner come up before Him. The Lord's people are often in darkness, but they are prisoners of hope. Are you in that prison? If so, you are tired of the darkness. You cannot say in it, what others say with boldness, "My Father."

Christ saw all the sorrows and trials of His people, and, like Joseph, sought a place to weep in. He could not weep as God, but He sought and found a place to weep in. He found it in the womb of the virgin. He became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. None ever saw Him laughing, but many saw Him weeping. They saw Him weeping over Jerusalem when He said:—"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things belonging unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." They saw Him weep at the grave of Lazarus—"Jesus wept." Christ wept in order that sinners might not weep in the depths of hell for ever. He found a place to weep when the load of the guilt of His people's sin was laid upon Him—in the garden of Gethsemane He was bathed in a sweat of blood. There He prayed with strong crying and tears. "The cup that my Father hath given me shall I not drink it?" He drank it in order that Satan's head should be bruised; and that death and hell might be robbed of their prey. Do you weep for your own sins? "You who have not wept tears of repentance on earth will yet bedew the floor of hell with your tears," says Dr. Love. You children of God should weep also for the sufferings of Christ. When the weeping is over, Christ, like Joseph, orders a feast for His brethren. When Christ brings you to enjoy a feast with Himself, He dislodges all strangers—the devils must be put out—the Egyptians were put out. The devil, the world, and unbelief must be put out. "Every natural man," says Dr. Love, "has a devil coiled in his breast." Oh! when that light burst in

upon their souls—"I am Joseph!" It was God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, that shined in our hearts, giving us the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Again:—"Believest thou on the Son of God? And he said, Lord who is he that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord I believe. And he worshipped him."

When you are at the feast with Jesus, two things will be moving in your soul—first the glory of Christ, and second the bad treatment you gave Him. No doubt these two things were uppermost in the minds of Joseph's brethren. The glory of Joseph burst upon their spirit. "I am Joseph, your brother." The Apostle says—"We are members of his body, and of his flesh and of his bones." Think of the relationship that exists between you and God through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ; and who can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord. Love is strong as death, and in the hottest persecution it increases more and more. The love that burst into your souls when Christ first revealed Himself to you will never fade away. What feeds love? Nothing but the glory of Christ revealed more and more to your souls. The soul will say—"If I am to boast at all it is in the glory of Christ as the Redeemer." The child of God can never forget what he saw of the glory of Christ when He first revealed Himself to him. "When I saw," says the believer, "a blink of the throne of grace, and the provision made in the covenant of grace, oh! how my soul was filled with holy joy!" For a guilty sinner to enjoy the favour of God, is more than any tongue can express. The relating of these things will be cold to you until He breathes by His Spirit through the word upon your soul; then your heart will burn again within you.

What is the table upon which the feast is set forth? The gospel. What is on the table? There is flesh there, there is milk there, there is honey there, and there is wine there. "My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed"—that is most substantial food. The sweetness of Jesus to your soul is the honey, after the harassing terrors of the law whether at first or after backsliding. "His mouth is sweet, yea He is altogether lovely." "Thy words are sweeter than honey to my mouth." Oh! to be able to say—"He took me from an horrible pit, and from the miry clay." He can do it in spite of your own unbelief and all the devils in hell. He can give you the grace of His Spirit so that you can make mention of His name both in public and in private. There is milk on this table for infants. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." There is wine on the table also. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of

fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." This wine makes glad the heart of man. It is the best wine; that of the covenant of grace. It is as old as eternity. At this table He makes Himself known to His people, and He gives each his own portion. He gives them Himself, and that is all they need. Each could say—"He is my brother." So can you, poor child of God, say—"Christ is my brother, husband, prophet, priest, and king." Then cast thy burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. The burdens are heavy, but He has a strong back to carry both yourself and your burdens. Many a heavy one He carried before yours.

To conclude, we see that there was a sweet meeting between Joseph and his brethren. At the end of the meeting he said to them—"Go ye, and tell my father all my glory in the land of Egypt." So go ye, and tell all the world the glory of Christ, and that He sitteth on the right hand of the Father. Go ye and tell that all power in heaven and on earth is put into His hand, and that, therefore, He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him. There was not a more glorious moment in heaven, than when Jesus Christ entered with His elect, blood bought people, engraven upon His breastplate. "Tell my father about my glory in Egypt." Are you dumb yet about the glory of Christ? If you have seen His glory, be you telling others, and you will be getting crumbs yourself. The telling and the hearing of it will be like oil to your wheels. "I will," said Jacob, "go down and see Joseph." I will go down to the valley of humiliation to see Christ; for God resisteth the proud; they shall go down to the chambers of death; but He giveth grace to the humble. Jacob came to the conclusion that he would never see Joseph again. You may have come to the conclusion that you will never see Christ's face in mercy; but if you have got but one spark of His love in your heart, you will certainly spend an endless eternity with Him. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

MR. FLAVEL, in the preface to his *Treatise on the Soul of Man*, speaking of his inattention to his spiritual interests, says, "I studied to know many other things, but I knew not myself. It was with me, as with a servant to whom the master committed two things; the child and the child's clothes; the servant is very careful of the clothes; brushes and washes, starches and irons them, and keeps them safe and clean, but the child is forgotten and lost. My body which is but the garment of my soul, I kept and nourished with excessive care; but my soul was long forgotten, and had been lost for ever, as others daily are, had not God roused it by the convictions of His Spirit, out of that deep oblivion and deadly slumber."—*Whitecross*.

Presbyterian Union in Australia.

THERE was consummated on the 24th July, 1901, an extensive union of Presbyterian bodies in Australia. The United Church there embraces the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, and the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania. The Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and Free Presbyterians in other parts of the colony were invited to enter the union, but as might be expected, they declined to accede to the invitation. We need hardly tell our readers that the larger bodies of Presbyterians in Australia are as degenerate in their views and practices as similar bodies in this country. There is little or no difference between them and the new United Free Church at home.

We purpose in this article to give a notice of some of the points that enter into their Basis of Union, but before doing so, we shall give the "Reasons for Declining Union" recorded by the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and published in the *Free Church Quarterly* for September:—

"The Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, whilst acknowledging the courteous tone of the communication received from the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria anent union (dated 4th February, 1901), are restrained from accepting the proposal contained in it by the following reasons, viz.:—

"1. The basis of union of the Federal Presbyterian Assembly represents 'purity of worship' as being quite compatible with the introduction of matter and practices connected with the worship of God which have no authority in the New Testament, and do not consist with the declaration of the Confession of Faith, viz., that 'God may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men . . . or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.'

"2. The Declaratory Act of the Federal Assembly so modifies the Confession as to accommodate those who do not accept the teaching of the said Confession regarding a considerable portion of the whole counsel of God revealed in His Word; to relax discipline; and to be not in accord with the inspired declaration—that 'ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.'

"3. In the basis of union provision is made for further alteration of the Church's creed by a stated majority, whilst a dissenting congregation may have to suffer the loss of their property as a penalty for their faithfulness to their principles. And

"4. The basis aforesaid condones and covers serious laxity and wide divergence, within the Church, in matters of faith and practice contrary to the purpose of true Presbyterianism, which viewed Scripturally and historically, is to promote and maintain uniformity in doctrine, worship, government, and discipline,

agreeably to the Word of God, the supreme and only infallible standard.

"The Synod, in sending this reply, appreciate the friendly spirit of the Assembly's communication, and very much regret that there should be such reasons as given above to preclude alliance with the Assembly under one Australian Presbyterian Assembly, whilst they prayerfully seek such an outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in all branches of the Church of Christ that they may yet 'see eye to eye,' as His people shall, when the Lord shall bring again Zion, that 'in all things he might have the pre-eminence.'"

We now proceed to criticise briefly some of the paragraphs in the Basis of Union :—

"I. The Supreme Standard of the United Church shall be the Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments."

This statement, if made once upon a time, might be considered as thoroughly orthodox and satisfactory, but when one is aware of modern theological ideas, it does not count for nearly so much as it seems. The reader will observe that, while it speaks of the Word as "the Supreme Standard" it says nothing of its infallibility, while further, the expression "the Word of God *contained in* the Scriptures" is construed by modern teachers as implying no more than that the Word is somewhere within the Scriptures, but not that the Scriptures from beginning to end are the Word of God. The Church, in Popish fashion, is set up as the final arbiter as to what within the Bible is to be taken as the Word of God, and as to what is to be considered a merely human and fallible element. This is one of the most subtle and dangerous errors of the present day, and an error that holds among religious leaders in Australia. There is nothing in this statement to contradict it, there is rather abundant scope provided for its maintenance.

"II. The Subordinate Standard of the United Church shall be the Westminster Confession of Faith, read in the light of the following Declaratory Statement :—

"1. That in regard to the doctrine of redemption as taught in the Subordinate Standard, and in consistency therewith, the love of God to all mankind, His gift of His Son to be the propitiation of the sins of the whole world, and the free offer of salvation to men without distinction on the ground of Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice, are regarded by this Church as vital to the Christian faith. And inasmuch as the Christian faith rests upon, and the Christian consciousness takes hold of, certain objective supernatural historic facts, especially the incarnation, the atoning life and death, and the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, and His bestowment of the Holy Spirit, this Church regards those whom it admits to the office of the Holy ministry as pledged to give a chief place in their teaching to these cardinal facts, and to the message of redemption and reconciliation implied and manifested in them."

The Subordinate Standard of the new Church is the Confession of Faith, but the Confession read in the light of a certain erroneous Declaratory Act, the first paragraph of which we have now given. The Confession in many of its most important statements is brushed aside. The above paragraph is marked by a witnessing tone, as if forsooth the Church was greatly concerned as to the soundness of its ministers. But what do we find in the same place but a proclamation of the Arminian scheme of theology which is nowise in consistency with the Confession? Universal love and universal atonement are views insisted upon as vital to the faith; while the historic facts concerning the person and work of Christ are set forth as if "the Christian faith rests upon, and the Christian consciousness takes hold of" these facts almost exclusively, other parts of divine revelation not possessing the same authority and certainty. No one that knows anything of current theological teaching will consider for a moment that we are mis-stating the case.

"2. That the doctrine of God's eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as defined in the Confession of Faith, chapter iii. section i., where it is expressly stated that according to this doctrine, 'neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established,' and further, that the said doctrine is held in connection and harmony with the truth—that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, that He has provided a salvation sufficient for all, and adapted to all, and offered to all in the Gospel, and that every hearer of the Gospel is responsible for his dealing with the free and unrestricted offer of eternal life."

In this paragraph the United Church declares its belief in the doctrine of election as stated in *one* section of the Confession's statement on the subject, but by direct implication it foregoes the other six or seven sections in which the doctrine is more fully unfolded. "The will of the creature" is evidently a matter of more than ordinary importance here, and the inference is that the unchangeable predestination of the elect to eternal life is not a part of the new system of belief. We certainly hold that there are gracious overtures of mercy extended in the Gospel to sinners of every degree, and that salvation is freely offered unto all, but the unguarded way in which these truths are set forth above is fitted, in our opinion, to obscure the sovereignty of God and man's total spiritual inability.

"3. That while none are saved except through the mediation of Christ, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who worketh when and where and how it pleaseth Him; while the duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen who are sunk in ignorance, sin, and misery is imperative; and while the outward and ordinary means of salvation for those capable of being called by the Word are the

ordinances of the Gospel ; in accepting the Subordinate Standard it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend His grace to any who are without the pale of ordinary means, as it may seem good in His sight."

It will be observed above that "the duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen" is affirmed to be "imperative," but it is not said to be necessary. It is entirely superfluous to declare that the duty is imperative ; every duty is so ; but it may be clearly seen from the context why the word necessary is not used ; the framers of this Act do not believe that the Gospel is absolutely necessary to salvation ; they hold that the heathen may be saved without it. Of course they express their opinion in cautious terms, not so much, we believe, because they have doubts as to the soundness of it, but in order to make the poison go down more easily with the ordinary reader. As to the salvation of infants, we think it is by far the wiser course to leave the matter where the Confession leaves it. The Confession simply says, "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit ;" it does not determine whether some or all infants dying in infancy are elect, but it describes the salvation of those who are saved, whether infants or adults, on sound Scriptural lines. There is a common but very erroneous idea that infants are without original sin ; an idea that is with many persons the basis of belief in their universal salvation.

"4. That in holding and teaching, according to the Confession of Faith, the corruption of man's nature as fallen, this Church also maintains that there remain tokens of man's greatness as created in the image of God, that he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty—that he is responsible for compliance with the moral law and the call of the gospel, and although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God unto salvation, he is yet capable of affections and actions which of themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy."

This section is almost word for word the same as the second section of the notorious Declaratory Act passed in 1892 in the Free Church at home. A full explanatory criticism of this and the other sections of that Act may be found in the first volume of this Magazine. Suffice it to say here that the above section represents fallen man as possessing by nature something spiritually good in him, yea, that he has considerable attainments such as a knowledge of God and duty, while the Bible and the Confession of Faith declare that he is dead in trespasses and sins, and knows not God. Moreover, we assert that he requires more than "the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God unto salvation ;" he requires His almighty quickening power for the implantation of a new spiritual life ; "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." As for virtuous affections and actions, they afford no proof of spiritual life, and multitudes that have them are still in a state of sin and misery and under God's wrath

and curse. There is at present a great effort being made at home and abroad to whitewash the sinner, and make him a Christian without the new birth, but the effort is a foolish and pernicious one, and will prove a disastrous failure at last.

"5. That liberty of opinion is allowed in matters in the Subordinate Standard not essential to the doctrine therein taught, the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace."

The meaning of this sentence is very plain. The Church affirms that there are non-essential matters in the Confession which their members and office-bearers may safely differ about, and liberty of opinion is allowed; the Church, of course, reserving the power to define the bounds of this liberty as it may see fit. It is jealous of "its unity and peace"—not *purity* and peace. Once upon a time purity and peace were always conjoined; it is now unity and peace. How significant the change! Unity is esteemed more than purity. If a vast outward harmony can be secured, purity of doctrine and practice may be easily dispensed with. This is one of the characteristic features of the so-called Church of Rome, and the power here assumed by the United Church to cut and carve the faith as it pleases is another feature of the Papal Apostasy.

"6. That with regard to the doctrine of the civil magistrate and his authority and duty in the sphere of religion as taught in the Subordinate Standard, the Church holds that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of the Church, 'and Head over all things to the Church which is His body.' It disclaims accordingly intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not consider its office-bearers, in subscribing the Confession, as committed to any principles inconsistent with the liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment, declaring in the words of the Confession that 'God alone is Lord of the conscience.'"

It is well-nigh a truism that Christ is the only King and Head of the Church, and that He has dominion over all things for the benefit of His body; but it ought also to be affirmed that He is King of nations, and that nations as such are bound to recognise Him as their King. This most important truth is here excluded, and national atheism is condoned. No wonder that the Bible is shut out of the schools in Australia, when such is the sentiment of their grand United Church, in our opinion, a grand delusion and snare. Australia never saw in actual fact a Church and State united, but that is no reason why the doctrine of Christ's kingship over the nation should not be boldly maintained there, and aggressive action taken to secure the State as well as the Church for Christ. Let it be distinctly laid to heart at home and abroad that the flood of secularism and atheism that is permitted to run without restraint over the confines of the State will also inundate, as indeed it is already doing, the domain of the Church. No individual can be a Christian in the Church and an atheist in the

State, no more than he can serve God and mammon. If he attempts to realise these two things at once, he will find that his atheism will devour his Christianity. Christ claims the whole man in all his lawful activities, and it is wickedness and mockery to keep back a part. It is the duty therefore of the Christian to be a Christian everywhere, and to put forth all lawful effort to bring every institution into subjection to Christ. He is, therefore, to call upon the civil magistrate to recognise and support Christ and His Church and laws. But the principle of national religion is now regarded as an intolerant and persecuting one by degenerate ecclesiastics in Scotland and Australia. They know not the Scriptures, neither do they know what is for the real benefit of humanity. Not until the State as well as the Church will do its duty to Christ will that day dawn when "the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

We are now done with our criticism. A great deal has been made in this country of the Australian Union, and it may be useful for friends here to know what is taking place in the larger Presbyterian bodies in that far off yet closely related colony, where, we are sorry to say, multitudes are surrendering the faith they were taught at their parents' fireside and in the public means of grace in the home country. The love of the world has wrought havoc with the love of the truth in Australia. The state of things there is even worse than at home, and surely that is bad enough. All the more should our sympathies go forth to the Free Presbyterians in Australia who are endeavouring to hold up the banner of truth amid many outward discouragements. J. S. S.

Thoughts on a Decline in Grace.

A LETTER BY THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

March, 1765.

MY LORD,—I remember, when I once had the pleasure of waiting on you, you were pleased to begin an interesting conversation, which, to my concern, was soon interrupted. The subject was concerning the causes, nature, and marks of a decline in grace; how it happens that we loose that warm impression of divine things, which in some favoured moments we think it almost impossible to forget; how far this change of frame is consistent with a spiritual growth in other respects; how to form a comparative judgment of our proficiency upon the whole; and by what steps the losses we sustain from our necessary connection with a sinful nature and a sinful world may be retrieved from time to time. I beg your Lordship's permission to fill up the paper with a view to these inquiries. I do not mean to offer a laboured essay on them, but such thoughts as shall occur while the pen is in my hand.

The awakened soul (especially when, after a season of distress and terror, it begins to taste that the Lord is gracious) finds itself as in a new world. No change in outward life can be so sensible, so affecting. No wonder, then, that, at such a time, little else can be thought of. The transition from darkness to light, from a sense of wrath to a hope of glory, is the greatest that can be imagined, and is oftentimes as sudden as wonderful. Hence the general characteristics of young converts are zeal and love. Like Israel at the Red Sea, they have just seen the wonderful works of the Lord, and they cannot but sing His praise; they are deeply affected with the danger they have lately escaped, and with the case of multitudes around them, who are secure and careless in the same alarming situation; and a sense of their own mercies, and a compassion for the souls of others, is so transporting, that they can hardly forbear preaching to every one they meet.

This emotion is highly just and reasonable, with respect to the causes from whence it springs; and it is doubtless a proof, not only of the imperfection, but the depravity of our nature, that we are not always thus affected. Yet it is not entirely genuine. If we examine this character closely, which seems, at first sight, a pattern and a reproof to Christians of longer standing, we shall, for the most part, find it attended with considerable defects.

1. Such persons are very weak in faith. Their confidence arises rather from the lively impressions of joy within, than from a distinct and clear apprehension of the work of God in Christ. The comforts which are intended as cordials, to animate them against the opposition of an unbelieving world, they mistake and rest in as the proper evidences of their hope. And hence it comes to pass, than when the Lord varies His dispensations, and hides His face, they are soon troubled, and at their wits end.

2. They who are in this state of their first love, are seldom free from something of a censorious spirit. They have not yet felt all the deceitfulness of their own hearts; they are not well acquainted with the devices or temptations of Satan; and therefore know not how to sympathise or make allowances where allowances are necessary and due, and can hardly bear with any who do not discover the same earnestness as themselves.

3. They are likewise more or less under the influence of self-righteousness and self-will. They mean well; but not being as yet well acquainted with the spiritual meaning and proper use of the law, nor established in the life of faith, a part (oftentimes a very considerable part) of their zeal spends itself in externals and non-essentials, prompts them to practice what is not commanded, to refrain from what is lawful, and to observe various and needless austerities and singularities, as their tempers and circumstances differ.

However, with all their faults, methinks there is something very beautiful and engaging in the honest vehemence of a young convert. Some cold and rigid judges are ready to reject these

promising appearances on account of incidental blemishes. But would a gardener throw away a fine nectarine, because it is green, and has not yet attained all that beauty and flavour which a few more showers and suns will impart? Perhaps it will hold, for the most part, in grace as in nature; some exceptions there are: if there is not some fire in youth, we can hardly expect a proper warmth in old age.

But the great and good Husbandman watches over what His own hand has planted, and carries on His work by a variety of different, and even contrary dispensations. While their mountain stands thus strong, they think they shall never be moved; but at length they find a change. Sometimes it comes on by insensible degrees. That part of their affection, which was purely natural, will abate, of course, when the power of novelty ceases: they will begin, in some instances, to perceive their own indiscretions; and an endeavour to correct the excesses of imprudent zeal will often draw them towards the contrary extreme of remissness: the evils of their hearts, which, though overpowered, were not eradicated, will revive again: the enemy will watch his occasions to meet them with suitable temptations; and as it is the Lord's design that they should experimentally learn and feel their own weakness, he will, in some instances, be permitted to succeed. When guilt is thus brought upon the conscience, the heart grows hard, the hands feeble, and the knees weak; then confidence is shaken, the spirit of prayer interrupted, the armour gone, and thus things grow worse and worse, till the Lord is pleased to interpose; for though we can fall of ourselves, we cannot rise without His help. Indeed, every sin, in its own nature, has a tendency towards a final apostacy; but there is a provision in the covenant of grace, and the Lord, in His own time, returns to convince, humble, pardon, comfort and renew the soul. He touches the rock, and the waters flow. By repeated experiments and exercises of this sort (for this wisdom is seldom acquired by one or a few lessons), we begin at length to learn that we are nothing, have nothing, can do nothing but sin. And thus we are gradually prepared to live more out of ourselves, and to derive all our sufficiency of every kind from Jesus, the fountain of grace. We learn to tread more warily, to trust less to our own strength, to have lower thoughts of ourselves, and higher thoughts of Him; in which two last particulars, I apprehend, what the scriptures mean by a growth of grace does properly consist. Both are increasing in the lively Christian, every day show him more of his own heart, and more of the power, sufficiency, compassion, and grace of his adorable Redeemer; but neither will be complete till we get to heaven.

I apprehend, therefore, that though we find an abatement of that sensible warmth of affection which we felt at first setting out; yet, if our views are more evangelical, our judgment more ripened, our hearts more habitually humbled under a sense of

inward depravity, our tempers more softened into sympathy and tenderness; if our prevailing desires are spiritual, and we practically esteem the precepts, ordinances, and people of God; we may warrantably conclude, that His good work of grace in us is, upon the whole, on the increase.

But still it is to be lamented, that an increase of knowledge and experience should be so generally attended with a decline of fervour. If it was not for what has passed in my own heart, I should be ready to think it impossible. But this very circumstance gives me a still more emphatical conviction of my own vileness and depravity. The want of humiliation humbles me, and my very indifference rouses and awakens me to earnestness. There are, however, seasons of refreshment, ineffable glances of light and power upon the soul, which, as they are derived from clearer displays of divine grace, if not so tumultuous as the first joys, are more penetrating, transforming, and animating. A glance of these, when compared with our sluggish stupidity when they are withheld, weans the heart from this wretched state of sin and temptation, and makes the thoughts of death and eternity desirable. Then this conflict shall cease: I shall sin and wander no more, see Him as He is, and be like Him for ever.

If the question is, How are these bright moments to be prolonged, renewed, or retrieved? We are directed to faith and diligence. A careful use of the appointed means of grace, a watchful endeavour to avoid the occasions and appearances of evil, and especially assiduity in secret prayer, will bring as much as the Lord sees good for us. He knows best why we are not to be trusted with them continually. Here we are to walk by faith, to be exercised and tried; by and by we shall be crowned, and the desires He has given shall be abundantly satisfied.—I am, &c.

The Rev. Henry Bazely, B.C.L.,

THE OXFORD EVANGELIST.

THE subject of this short sketch, as was pointed out in a note in last month's Magazine, was the son of a High Church clergyman. He was born in the year 1842, at the Rectory of All Saints, Poplar. He received his early education from his father, who had strong sympathies with the Tractarian movement. In 1855, at the age of thirteen, he entered St. Peter's College, Radley, which was under the care of Dr. Sewell, an intimate friend of his father. Sewell's idea was to train up his pupils "in all that is lovely in nature, worship, and art; they were to live in a world of beauty and grace, and so be moulded into Christian gentlemen." But, however perfect this system of education may have been from the High Church point of view, it had not always the effect of moulding the pupils into Christian gentlemen in Dr.

Sewell's sense ; in fact, in Bazely's case his mind revolted against this High Church training, and the first recoil in his mind against Episcopalianism was felt.

In 1861 he was elected to an open scholarship at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he took up his residence until October of that year. The Tractarian movement by this time had lost its supremacy at Oxford, and an anti-clerical reaction had set in. Scepticism was abroad, and the rationalism of the Essays and Reviews exercised an evil influence on the undergraduates. But amidst all this wild unrest in the theological world Bazely never lost confidence in the truth of the revelation God had given in His Word. It was soon manifest that his sympathies were on the side of the evangelical party. He pursued his studies with diligence, but his mind was already deeply engrossed with the question of church government. What was the true system ? was the question that he now set himself to solve. In 1865 he took his B.A. degree, and it now remained for him to make his choice of a profession. Many things pointed him to the work of the ministry. His whole mind was taken up with the study of theology. In 1864 he was appointed to one of the valuable Hulme Exhibitions at his college, which required the holders to reside two years in the university and to devote themselves to theological study. As already pointed out, his sympathies were now with the evangelical party, and in 1866 he joined the Oxford union for private prayer. It was now thought he would take orders in the Church of England, but grave doubts arose in his mind as to the scripturalness of Episcopacy ; and the prevalent Arminianism of the great bulk of the English clergy turned away his mind from the Established Church, for by this time he had become a decided Calvinist.

In this state of mind he determined to visit Scotland and see Presbyterianism actually at work. He travelled by sea, and passing Aberdeen he pushed on to Lerwick. There he spent the Sabbath, and on Tuesday made his way by yacht to Unst, where the Rev. David Johnston was minister. Of this visit Mr. Johnston says :—"I was struck by the circumstance that, though he had been trained in the Church of England, of which his father is a clergyman, he appeared to be strongly in favour of the simple forms of worship which characterise genuine Scottish Presbyterianism, and admired the constitution of the Church of Scotland as by law established." He could scarcely have met with a better and safer guide among the ministers of the Established Church, for the Mr. Johnston above referred to was the Prof. Johnston who afterwards held the Chair of Biblical Criticism at Aberdeen. Dr. Johnston, as is well known to the readers of this Magazine, was in full sympathy with the simplest forms of Presbyterian worship. That Bazely appreciated the help he received from Mr. Johnston is acknowledged in a letter where he says :—"My chief object in going to the North this summer,

viz., that I might get some insight into the actual working of the Church of Scotland, has been accomplished, through the ordering of God's providence, to an extent beyond, far beyond, what I ever anticipated."

In the autumn of 1866 he decided to take some of the theological classes at Aberdeen. The first rude shock he got was the want of evangelical truth in the sermons of the ministers of the Established Church, and the second was the character of the students preparing for the holy ministry. "I certainly expected," he writes, "to find the candidates for the ministry of the Church of Scotland very superior, in a spiritual point of view, to the majority of those preparing for ordination in Oxford, but the very reverse I find to be the case. The course of education for the ministry appears to be in itself very excellent and thorough, but I must confess I do not see any good effects of it in the students. They strike me as being a very worldly set of men, addicted—which is perhaps a national failing—to smoking and whisky drinking. I am very much disappointed." Again he writes:—"If well administered, I know no church more calculated to train up the members of Christ's mystical body in faith and holiness. It may be that I expected too much. I did expect to find that the majority of the clergy of such a church were men of superior spiritual attainments, but I must own that I have been greatly disappointed, and from what I have seen of the divinity students there does not appear to be much reason for anticipating better things in the future." Notwithstanding his bitter disappointment in the ministers and students of the Established Church, he presented himself to the Presbytery of Edinburgh for license in December, 1869, and, having satisfactorily delivered his discourses, was licensed by them to preach the gospel.

After this he devoted himself to evangelistic work—preaching in the streets and at markets and fairs, and though he had many opportunities of becoming a parish minister in Scotland he refused them all. In 1871 he hired a hall in Oxford, where he conducted meetings after the strictest forms of Presbyterianism—in praise only the psalms, no instrumental music, and standing at prayer. It was very uphill work for him. Financially the Alfred Street Chapel was a serious tax on his resources—he appealed to the Church of Scotland for help but in vain. He became disheartened and questionings arose in his mind as to what if after all he had taken a wrong step in becoming a Presbyterian. He had never lost his love for the Evangelical party in the English Church, and in 1876 when he saw them bestirring themselves he cast in his lot with them again. In the same year he received Deacon's orders from the Bishop of Oxford. But he had no sooner begun to act as a clergyman in the Church of England than all his old scruples came back. The prayer book was too much for him, and in the autumn of this year he returned to Presbyterianism. In the following year he was ordained by the London Presbytery of the

Scotch Church to St. Andrew's Church, Stepney. This church had at one time a congregation of 600, and notwithstanding the attractions of instrumental music and hymns, it had dwindled down to forty. Bazely was willing to become their minister, but only on condition that no instrumental music or hymns should be used.

In 1878 he built, at his own cost, a church at Oxford where he ministered until the day of his death. His time was now almost wholly devoted to evangelistic work, attending racecourses, where he preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to the gambling devotees of the turf. He was a good friend to the poor, visiting them in their homes, and giving them liberally of his means. It is impossible in this brief sketch to even refer to the many efforts he made for reforming the fallen and depraved in Oxford, the homes he opened, and his work among the outcasts of society. Notwithstanding his ardent devotion to the work of his Master there is very little recorded of his spiritual experience in his diary, but of him it could be truly said, that he was an epistle read of all men. His watchword in all the affairs of life was the Word of God. "Shew me from Scripture," he wrote on one occasion, "what my duty is, and I am prepared to do it at any cost." His love for the Lord's Day was another feature of his loyalty to Christ. He would never undertake any preaching that necessitated his driving on the Sabbath, and at great inconvenience he would walk every step to Abingdon and back again in addition to the heavy work he had at Oxford. When in London he did the same, and never entered an omnibus or tramcar on the Sabbath.

In his last illness he often repeated the psalms, and just near the end in an interval of peace from intense suffering he was heard meditatively repeating—

"Into thine hands I do commit
My spirit ; for thou art he,
O thou Jehovah, God of truth,
That hast redeemed me."

And immediately after, as the weary sufferer seemed to get a glimpse of the peaceful haven ; "It will be all peace there," he said, "No controversy—no controversy." He fell asleep on the 12th of March, 1883, at the comparatively early age of 41 years.

He wrote a number of pamphlets dealing with theological and ecclesiastical questions. He has a fine one on the exclusive use of the psalms in public worship.

A word may be allowed in conclusion on the church which he built, and where he conducted public worship during the latter years of his life. It was his intention, says his biographer, had he been spared to endow this church. After his death an attempt was made to continue the services but it fell through because Mrs. Bazely, acting on the dying wish of her husband, could not give her consent to the new forms of worship. The supply of funds was in consequence discontinued, but Mrs. Bazely at the

time the biography of her husband was written (*i.e.*, 1886) expressed a hope that there would be a revival of the work her husband had so much at heart. "Brethren," he said on one occasion preaching in London, "I would not dare—and I say this solemnly as in the sight of God—to introduce a hymn book supplementary to the Psalter into this church, although I knew it would attract five hundred worshippers within a month. . . . Brethren, it does stir my indignation, it distresses me sorely, to see the songs of the Spirit of Truth thus repudiated for the songs of erring men."

Such then is a brief sketch of a remarkable religious life—beginning with High Churchism and ending, through the marvellous leadings of the Lord, in Presbyterianism, and that of the most Scriptural type.

D. B.

A Pastoral Address.*

BY THE LATE REV. CHARLES CALDER MACINTOSH, D.D.,
OF TAIN AND DUNOON.

FAIRLIE, 21st October, 1853.

DEAR FRIENDS,—Several months have elapsed since I last addressed you by letter. Another portion has been gone over of the space given to sinners to repent, and to believers to work out their salvation. Every day God has been speaking to us in His providences,—pleasant or painful,—calling upon us to acquaint ourselves with Him. And death has been busy, driving away the wicked in their wickedness, and introducing tried and tempest-tossed saints into the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

It was with much concern and heaviness of heart that I had to give up the hope of resuming my work among you, and that I learned that any reasonable prospect of future ability to engage in it depended on my taking entire rest for some time to come. The Lord, in denying me health and strength for labour, called upon me to "be still." I have been using every means in my power for the restoration of my health, never having had such a sense of the blessedness of being permitted to engage in the Lord's work, and to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ as I have now. These means have, I trust, in some measure, been blessed to me. I entreat a continued interest in the prayers of God's people,—that I may be delivered from impatience of spirit, and from fainting,—and that it yet may prove to have been good for me to have been "afflicted." Dear Friends, you enjoy the stated dispensation of word and ordinances. But, as one bound, above all others, to have you in my heart, it may not be unreasonable that I remind you, in a few sentences, of the great ends of the Gospel ministry.

One of these is the awakening of the unconverted to a sense of

* This address was sent to the Free Church Congregation at Tain.—ED.

their danger. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." The wrath of God abides upon the unconverted, and who knows the power of that anger? How awful the thought of being exposed to the wrath of an infinite God! What a solemn earnestness becomes a ministry, which has, as its first announcement, that *all* are children of wrath, and as its continued announcement to those who despise the riches of the Divine goodness and mercy, that they treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath! No means, and no human instrumentality will, of themselves, avail to quicken dead souls. But would that I had been more earnest in endeavouring to "pull them out of the fire!" Oh! that the Spirit of the living God were poured out on the prayerless—the impenitent—the formalists,—that many, being pricked in their hearts, might say, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

A great end of the Gospel ministry—the chief end, it may be said—is the drawing of sinners to the Saviour,—by the holding forth of His glory,—His all-sufficiency,—His fulness,—but particularly, His love!—His love to souls,—to the vile,—to sinners,—that love which is commended by His dying for them. The ministers of Christ who have known His love, and experienced its constraining power, will be often dwelling on it in their ministry, and endeavouring to display its unsearchable riches. I have reason to abhor myself for my cold and unworthy handling of this blessed subject. The Lord shew me, and take away this my sin; and oh! that those who are enemies to the cross of Christ were brought under the power of His love, and they would be enemies no more,—and that those who are seeking rest and finding none, and perhaps, ready to sink under a sense of their guilt and of their unbelief, were brought to see this love in its freeness, and to put their trust under His shadow who said, in the days of His flesh, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings?"

Another precious end of the Gospel ministry is the comforting of God's people. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says your God." God's children are often sorrowers. They have sorrows which arise out of the new nature they are made partakers of, in connection with their condition in this world. The Lord, in His providence, often leads them to the bitter waters of Marah. Jesus was "a man of sorrows,"—and they *must* be conformed to Him. But He is the consolation of Israel. He drank the cup of wrath to the dregs. He has overcome the world. He intercedes for them. He sympathizes with them. He is with them in the waters. His love is unchangeable. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed,—but His kindness shall not depart from them. The Comforter apply the word of strong consolation to each one of the little flock who needs it to keep him from fainting!

Let me also remind you that another end of the Gospel ministry is the promoting of the sanctification of believers—that they may follow holiness, and that their conversation may be such as

becometh the Gospel of Christ, amidst all the snares and temptations which beset their path—especially in a day of restraint and gloominess, when iniquity abounds, when there are comparatively few living fervid Christians—when there is little of the evidence of continued intercourse with heaven, and when Divine power is much withheld from the dispensation of ordinances. Dear Christian Friends, unworthy though I am to address to you the word of exhortation, let me say to you, Seek to give evidence that you are Christ's—by your tender walk—by your love one to another—by your concern for the Lord's cause—by doing something for Christ, as He gives you opportunity. You have need of wisdom to know such opportunities, and of a heart to improve them. Alas, too often we fail to see their value, till we are deprived of them. May He, to whom there is nothing too hard, keep His own unspotted from the world, and followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

During the past season, I was in another land in quest of health. I may mention three things which were particularly impressed on my mind, while travelling and sojourning there. 1. The privilege of having a free Bible, with liberty to read it in our own tongue, none making us afraid. 2. The value of the legacy which our godly fathers have handed down to us in our Confession of Faith, and Catechisms. These are human compilations. The Bible is the only rule. But those who come to know the state of the professing Church in other lands will be led to see, more and more, their importance and value, in their own place—under, and subordinate to the Word of God. 3. The preciousness of the Sabbath as a day of holy rest. Oh! how is this felt when one sees it openly and fearfully desecrated on every side. The Lord of the Sabbath preserve his own day amongst us! Let every one do what in him lies to maintain its sacredness. Let heads of families be stirred up to increased watchfulness and diligence, that the Lord's Day be observed in their dwellings, and let the young be warned against the enticements of sinners, lest they glide insensibly into acts of Sabbath profanation, which, at one time, they would tremble to think of. There is sufficient mournful evidence of the truth that there is no sin which has greater power in hardening the heart than that of knowingly breaking the Lord's Day.

It was a cause of great regret to me that, owing to the state of his health, my young brother who has been labouring among you, could not continue to do so during the winter. I have done everything in my power to secure the services of one of whom there would be reason to believe that the Lord had thrust him into His harvest; and I trust that the arrangements made for the discharge of the various ministerial duties during the winter months, will be countenanced and blessed by the Head of the Church.

Poor though my thoughts are, I think daily of you, and try to remember you before God,—the Office-bearers, that they may be

guided and strengthened in their work,—the Sabbath School Teachers, that their hearts may be encouraged in their labour of love,—Heads of Families, that the Spirit of prayer may be poured out on them,—the afflicted, that sore trials may be blessed to the health of the soul, and that God would make the bed of His people in the time of languishing,—the Young, that they may lay it to heart that childhood and youth, passed without Christ, are vanity, and that it is time for them to seek the Lord,—and all that name the name of Christ, that they may depart from iniquity.

Dear Friends, the Lord now speaks to us very solemnly as a land and as a Church. We are threatened with the judgment of war. The pestilence is committing its ravages amongst us. And the righteous perish. One of the cedars in our Church has just fallen. These things proclaim the blessedness of those who have the Lord as their refuge in troublous times. I know not if I shall have an opportunity of speaking to you again the word of God. The great and dreadful day of the Lord is at hand. Let us be warned to make sure work of being in Christ. They only are safe and blessed who are in Him,—and who look for, and love His appearing.—I am, your affectionate pastor,

CHARLES C. MACKINTOSH.

Margaret MacKinnon.

THE notice of Margaret Macpherson in the last issue of the Magazine caused the present writer to remember his faults in the matter of a long-neglected duty. For it is now a considerable time since he was asked to give an account of another Margaret, also a daughter of the King, whose name may be considered not unworthy of some memorial. Her history carries us back further still; for she has been dead well-nigh these five years; but that is a matter for which no apology need be offered. The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance; and the mere points in the movement of time within which their life has been lived are not of so much consequence.

How diverse are the circumstances of God's children, the members of one family, and how varied the conditions under which they run the same race and fight the same good fight of faith. For her part, Margaret MacKinnon began her life under the shadow of the hills of Nèther-Lochaber; there, with but short intervals, she passed all her days, and there her body rests in its grave till the Resurrection. Born in 1869, she was brought up at Onich with her uncle, Mr. Duncan MacKinnon, and there she died in the spring of 1896, having just completed her twenty-fifth year.

Of outward incident in her life there is not much to tell. In those features of it that the eye can see, it was not much different from the life of many other girls in similar circumstances. Only

it is worthy of remark that, in common with most others who are sooner or later brought to the knowledge of the Saviour, she was the subject of religious impressions at a very early age. When yet a child at school, the Spirit of God began to strive with her, and she used to think much of Eternity and to be troubled for her sins. But these impressions would soon wear away, and the natural light-heartedness of youth reassert itself. Not permanently, however; as she grew older there were times when the interests of the soul overshadowed all else. When working in the fields she has been known to cry out, as if much agitated, "O, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

It was during a communion season at Onich that she underwent a saving change. The preacher, it may not be out of place to mention, was Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, Raasay, then of Kilmallie. His text was Jeremiah xiv. 8, and it was when the verse was being read that the Spirit applied the Word with power to her heart and conscience. She saw in the light of Divine illumination the glory of the Hope of Israel and the Saviour in the time of trouble, and she was led to embrace Him by faith as her own Hope and her own Saviour. From that time forward her hope was within the veil, and she looked at the things that are unseen and eternal.

Two features in her character may be singled out for notice. One was her warm love to the Lord's people. They were the excellent, in whom was her delight, the people whose companionship, above all others, she desired. She has been known to walk some fifteen miles, over hill and dale, to visit some of the household of faith, and never was she happier than when an opportunity was given her of showing them kindness. The other characteristic was her more than ordinary penetration of mind. Even in the days of her spiritual ignorance she was a shrewd judge of character. A little incident of those early days may be mentioned in illustration of this. One night she dressed herself as a gipsy and went round among the neighbouring houses, asking alms. This was not merely the light frolic it at first sight appears. She meant it as a test of the district's charity, and afterwards declared that her reception in each case only confirmed her previous impressions of the kind of people her neighbours were. Elevated and expanded through Divine grace, this faculty passed over into a keen spiritual discernment. She was not easily imposed upon by appearances. Of a man in the neighbourhood, who had begun to make a profession of religion, and who was much thought of by many of the Lord's people, she remarked significantly, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" The doubt implied in these words was afterwards proved to have been only too amply justified. She saw through the hollowness of much that passed for religion around her, and when, for example, she heard of some who were being admitted to the Lord's Table

in an adjoining congregation, she was much grieved, and deplored the unfaithfulness of those who made the terms of admission so liberal that an open door was left even for the careless and the worldly.

At the time of the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church she became a warmly attached adherent, and few had a more intelligent understanding of its distinctive principles. She had an intense admiration for the ministers who originally constituted the Church; and when, as sometimes happened, she heard them disparaged as lacking in capacity to lead such a movement, she was ever ready to champion their cause and to express her conviction that the day was coming when their action should be vindicated in Scotland and their names held in veneration as the real friends of Truth.

A visit to Inverness about this time proved to herself one of the most memorable events in her life. She had a few days' holidays, and decided to spend them in the North. It happened to be the Communion season in Inverness. She was, of course, an entire stranger, but she inquired her way to the place of meeting. As she entered, these lines were being sung in the sixteenth Psalm—

“ God is of mine inheritance
And cup the portion;
The lot that fallen is to me,
Thou dost maintain alone.”

The words were accompanied with singular power to her soul; and the place became to her a veritable Bethel, where she anointed the pillar and vowed a vow. She seems to have experienced, during that whole season, much spiritual comfort and quickening. Many a time in after days she would go back to it in memory, and especially she would seek to reproduce, both in matter and manner, the singing that had been so sweet to her then.

But her days on earth were destined to be few. In August of 1895 she contracted an illness which gradually developed into consumption, and some six months later she fell asleep in Jesus. Her latter end was glorious. About a month before her death her soul seemed to rise quite above the trammels of its house of clay, and she thought or spoke of little else but the things of eternity. Her spirit was singularly chastened and subdued. One came to see her from whom she had been somewhat estranged—I think on account of ecclesiastical questions—and her words on seeing her were, “A free forgiveness to all on earth!” On the day on which she died it was indeed in her case light at eventide. “Oh!” she exclaimed, “I have much joy”; and a little later she cried again, “My joy is increasing!” “Do you see the angels?” she said after a while; “I see them. They are very many, and their robes are shining white.” Then she asked the time, and on being told, she replied, “In half an hour I shall join the angels. They are waiting for me with a smile on their faces.” Her prediction was fulfilled to the letter. In exactly half-an-hour she peacefully breathed her last.

A. S.

Obituary.

DAVID MACKAY, PORT-GOWER.

THERE died at Port-Gower, near Helmsdale, on 12th September, 1900, David MacKay, aged 13 years and 10 months. He had by no means a strong constitution; from infancy he suffered more or less from his heart. This trouble frequently prevented him from mingling much with the children of the village in their play. He was a bright scholar for his years, and he possessed a retentive memory.

His mother and an aunt brought him up "in the fear and admonition of the Lord." In his early years he evidenced a strong desire for spiritual matters, and was given to secret prayer. He was fond of the Bible, and he relished its truths in his own soul. It grieved him much to hear any one swearing or using unbecoming language. He wept when he heard a boy cursing or swearing.

At the age of eight years, when his father was absent from home, he used to conduct family worship. In his prayers at the family altar, at that period, he referred regularly to the effectual call of the gospel, and desired perfect hatred to sin, Satan to be cast out, and Christ to be seated on the throne of the heart.

A year ere his end came he was very ill, and the medical attendant informed his mother that he had but a very little time to live, and that he might pass away any moment. The mother's grief could not be hid when she entered the sick room, and David asked what was the cause of grief, and if the doctor had said anything to her about him. "Nothing of any importance, dear," was the reply. "I know," he said, "what the doctor told you; he stated that I have only a very short time to live; but I shall not die this time yet. I shall recover from this attack." "But, how do you know?" inquired the mother; "what is your authority?" "My authority is the word of God," replied the little sufferer, more like death than life. "I shall not die, but live, and shall the works of God discover. The Lord hath me chastised sore, but not to death given over." He did recover from that severe attack, and thereafter lived for a whole year in a fair measure of health, or at least in his ordinary health.

In his last illness he suffered much. His mother said to him, "I did not think, David, you would suffer so much as you are now doing." "The effects of sin, mother," was the noteworthy reply; "we don't know what we may come to." On another occasion she addressed him in these words:—"I trust your hope is not a false one; the hypocrite has a hope, but it is a hope which will be taken from him at death." David paused for a moment or two, and then said, "But we have an access." "To whom?" was next the question. "To God the Father, through Jesus

Christ," was the boy's solemn reply, adding, "Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." One day he said, "I would like to be away, but I must wait till God's time comes. His will must be done. 'With length of days unto his mind I will him satisfy.'" "Ah! David," remarked the mother, "you are not at all like one that would get length of days here." "Eternity, mother," was the brief but striking response from the wasted frame of the patient boy.

The "Pilgrim's Progress" was a favourite book of his, and he seemed to grasp its spiritual lessons, for he often spoke of the various characters represented in that book. He was a student of his Bible. His favourite portions were the 34th and 51st Psalms; Isaiah, 53rd chapter; 17th and 18th of John, and the 6th and 8th of Romans. His delight was in the company of God's people, and not a few of them called to see him. These visits were a benefit to the visitors as well as the one visited. One who called to see him asked him what Psalm would they sing. "The 51st, of course," was his answer. He did not take in that he himself could pray, and yet he could not desist praying.

It pained him to hear worldly talk on the Lord's Day. During his illness some called at the house on Sabbath and spoke about fishing. It was no small cause of grief to him that such a subject was introduced on "the first day of the week." "If ye love me keep my commandments." He enjoined upon his mother to keep his sister and brother from associating with children given to bad language.

These lines in regard to David MacKay are penned in the hope that they may stimulate the young to seek the Lord. "Those that seek me early shall find me." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

D. M'K.

MR. RODERICK MORRISON, BEAULY.

It is with sorrow we record the death of Mr. Roderick Morrison, Beauly, which took place there on the morning of the 8th ult. For the last three years he was mostly confined to his room by a most painful and lingering disease which he bore with much patience and resignation.

Mr. Morrison was an affectionate, humble, judicious, and exemplary man, and much respected by all who knew him intimately. He was very careful in his life and conversation. In his disapproval of misconduct in others, he would not say more than—"Is it not awful that a rational being should so behave himself?" We were often much struck with the reverence and affection he held for the Lord's people, especially the late Mr.

Rose, elder, Moy, whom he knew intimately, and whose memory he held in affectionate regard to the last.

There are but few in this generation who understood better, or held with more devotion, the great principles and doctrines of the Reformation than he did. This caused him to cast in his lot with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1893. Like many others, it was a great relief for him to have got rid of all the unscriptural and anti-christian innovations, both in doctrine and practice, which were foisted by godless men upon the necks of the people in the Free Church. To the end he held unflinchingly to the position taken up then.

His remains were interred in Kilmorack Churchyard on the 11th ult. We desire to express our deep sympathy with Mrs. Morrison, and with their children in their painful bereavement. In him they have lost a loving husband and father, and one whose example they will do well to follow. N. C.

MRS. HOBKIRK, HALKIRK.

WE regret to record this month the death of Mrs. Hobkirk, Sinclair Street, Halkirk, Caithness, which took place on Sabbath, the 8th December. The deceased, who had reached the very advanced age of 96 years, was a woman of deep piety. Her maiden name was Catherine Mackay, and she was born in the district of Berriedale. She came under the influence of the truth in days that are now past, when the Lord raised up a number of bright and lively witnesses for Himself in the county of Caithness; and she bore the impress of the spiritual teaching enjoyed in those days. She was a deeply exercised Christian, the subject of many spiritual conflicts, and a great wrestler at the throne of grace. The fire burned with a vehement flame in her soul, and nothing short of living communications from "the fountain of life" would satisfy her. "Oh, Christ to my poor soul," was her frequent cry. She not only agonised to enter into rest herself, but often entreated others to pray for her. Towards the end, she frequently exclaimed, "O be crying for me. May He make me ready, and prepare my soul and take me to Himself—to lovely Jesus!" Her prayer is now granted; she has entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. It was a great privilege to be acquainted with her, and her removal is a loss to the Church militant on earth, while a gain to the Church triumphant in heaven. Well may we cry in these declining days, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." We extend our deepest sympathy to her sorrowing relatives and friends. J. S. S.

Communion.—Dumbarton, first Sabbath of this month; Inverness, third.

A Bhliadhna ùr.

BU choir rian a bhi air daoine ann a bhi toiseachadh bliadhna eile air an talamh. Chan ann le dannsa, misg, cluichean, orain dhèamhain agus an leithide sin de nithean, a tha Dia a cronachadh anns an fhirinn. Air son aire ar luchd leubhaidh a thurruing a dhiunnsaidh beagan de na h-aobharan sin theagamh gum biodh e feumail cuid dhiu ainmachadh. An toiseach their sinn beagan fhocal ris an oige.

I. Tha an Spiorad Naomh anns an fhirinn a labhairt moran ris an oige. C'ar son? Tha sinn de'n bharail gum bheil moran aobharan air son sin. (1) Tha an oige ann an staid naduir mi-chiallach mar a tha an sgrìobhir ag radh:—"Cuir impidh air na daoineibh oga mar an ceudna, iad a bhi ciallach." Agus a ris—"Dean gairdeachas a dhuin' aig a' d' oige, agus deanadh do chridhe subhach thu ann an laithibh d'oige, agus siubhail ann an slighibh do cridhe, agus ann an sealladh do shul: ach biodh fhios agad air son so uile, gun toir Dia chum breitheanais thu. Uime sin atharraich doilgheas o d'chridhe, agus cuir olc air falbh o d'fheoil, oir is diomhanas leanabachd agus oige." Tha sinn a faicinn bho na firinnean so am feum a tha aig an oige air a bhi cumail na'n cuimhne gum feum iad cunntas a thabhairt do Dhia air la a bhreitheanais air son am mi-cheill, agus air son an uile a tha anns an duine thaobh naduir. (2) A ris tha chuid as mo air an gairm o thim gu bithbhuantachd ann an laithibh na h-oige. Ma sheallas duine og no nighean air an ais air a chloinn a bha anns an sgoil comhla ruithe, chi iad gum bheil moran dhiubh anns an t-soirruidheachd cheana. Ma chaidh iad sinn do'n t-soirruidheachd na'm mi-cheill, agus nan diomhanas, feumaidh tu a chreidsinn gam bheil iad cailte; oir a reir na firinn a dh'ainmich sinn, thug Dia gu breitheanas iad air son am peacaidhean. Co as urrainn a ghealltuinn dhuitse, ma bhuaineachais tu anns a pheacadh, nach bi thu ann an teine ifrinn mun d'thig crìoch air a bhliadhna so? Tha thu air do thogail agus air t-àrach ann an aite de'n talamh anns an d'rinn Dia aithnichte a thoil na fhocal sgrìobhte, agus ma bhuaineachais tu air a bhi diultadh eisdeachd ra ghuth anns an fhocal, tha thu ann cunnart mor gun ruith fhad-fhoighidinn a mach. Chi thu gum bheil so fìor bhò chosamhlachd a chroinn fhige. Mur toir thu mach toradh air a bhliadhna so, gum bi thu air do ghearradh sìos. Cha ruig mi leas ach an toradh ainmeachadh, oir tha araon focal Dhé agus do choguis fein ag innseadh dhuit, nuor dean thu aithreachas gun sgriosar thusa mar an ceudna. (3) A ris tha e na ni ro-shoilleir gum bheil a chuid as mo de na bheil air an tearnadh air am pilltein ri Dia ann an laithibh na h-oige. Tha guth Dhé anns an fhocal gu h-àraidh ris an oige—"Cuimhnich a nis do Chruith-fhear ann an laithibh d'oige, mun tig na droch laithean, agus an druid na bliadhnachan ruit, anns an abair thu cha-n eil tlachd agam annta." Tha air an laimh eile an Satan a deanamh na tha na chomas a chumail na h-oige bho

Chriosd. Tha na cluichean, na h-orain dhiomhainn, dannsa, misg agus an leithide sin, comhla ri companaich dhiomhain, nan cuid de na doighean a tha e cleachdadh a chum an oige a sgrios. Tha e deanamh na tha na chomas gus an oige a chumail o bhi leubhadh na firinn; oir tha sar-fhios aige gur ann leis an fhocal a Dia a slanachadh pheacach, agus g'an saoradh o'n sgrios. Nis, nuair tha na nithean so fa chomhair do shul—gum bheil an Satan, an saoghal, agus am peacadh ann ad nadur fein an comh-bhoinn le cheile chum do sgrios gu siorruidh; agus air an laimh eile gum bheil Dia na fhocal gad ghairm gu slighean a pheacaidh a threig-sinn, agus pilltinn ris fein air son sonais, beatha shiorruidh, sith tre chreidimh ann am fireantachd Chriosd, agus saorsa troimh fhuil Chriosd ann am maitheanas do pheacaidhean—nach eil reusan ag agradh bh'uat comhairle Dhe a ghabhail. Nach mi-chiolach dhuit buanachadh anns an diomhanas nuair tha thu cinnteach gun d'thoir e thu gu truaighe shiorruidh, agus nuair tha focal Dhé agus sluagh Dhé a guidhe ort pilltinn a nis; oir bithidh e a dol nas cruaidhe ort pilltinn na h-uile la a theid seachad ort, agus nas mi-choltaich gum pill thu idir. Tha beatha agus bàs fa d' chomhair, agus feumaidh to pilltinn ri Dia agus a bhi beo; na gabhail air d'aghaidh anns a mhi-churam agus basachadh gu siorruidh. "Pilibh, pillibh, car son a bhasaicheas sibh." (4) A ris, chan e mhain call d'anam fein, ma bhunaicheas thu ann an slighe an diomhanais agus a mhi-churam, ach bithidh tu na'd inneal leis am bi moran de d'chomh-pheacichibh air an sgrios. Tha e soilleir bho fhocal Dhé gum bi na peacaich a bha comhla air an talamh, comhla mar an ceudna ann an ifrinn. Feudaidd nadur truailidh an duine tlachd a ghabhail ann an cur an gnìomh a pheacaidh; ach cha ghabh peacadh agus peanas dealachadh ri cheile. Tha tim cho ro-ghoirid; siorruidheachd gun chrìoch cho cinnteach roimh gach neach; tearnadh an anama cho mòr agus cho ro-luachmhor; an uine ghoirid a tha aig neach air an talamh gu bhi deanamh uile dhìchioll gu ghairm agus a thaghadh a dheanamh cinnteach; gum bheil Dia ann an truas agus gradh siorruidh a' glaothaich ris an oige,—“An diugh, an diugh ma chluineas sibh a ghuth na cruadhichibh bhur cridhe”—a gairm uile comhla air an oige teachd a mach, a nis, a cuideachdan diomhain an t-saoghail, agus teicheadh le'n anam cailte gu Crìosd gu bhi air an tearnadh. Tha coguis gach neach ann an cleachdadh an diomhanais coltach ri coguis a mheirlich—tha eagal air gum bi e air a ghlacadh anns a chionta—mar sin tha e a thaobh a pheacaich anns na cuideachdan diomhain, tha eagal air annta nach eil air aig amanan eile. Tha an nì so air a dhearbhadh mile uair. Nuair tha cunnart teine, na nì mar sin, a tighinn air peacaich ann an tighean cluich, no aig an dannsa, tha a lithid de eagal a deanamh greim orra agus bheil iad na 'n cabhaig a saltairt a cheile gu bàs. Car son? Do bhrìgh gu bheil an coguis ag innseadh dhoibh gu bheil Dia ann am feirg riuthe air son a bhi anns na h-aitean sin, agus ris na cleachdidhean peacach sin. Cha ne eagal gun aobhar a tha anns an eagal sin. Air an aobhar sin

tha sinn a' guidhe air an oige iad a bhi ciallach ; agus an aite a bhliadhna thoiseachadh le diomhanas gur ann a thoisicheadh iad i le bhi ag iarraidh tearnaidh, da 'n anam caillte.

II. Tha an dream a thainig chum aoise, ann an staid naduir, ann an cunnart ro-mhor gum bi iad caillte. Cha'n eil ach ro-bheag air an tearnadh nan seann aois. Nach buineadh dhuibse smuainteachadh, cait am bheil companaich, agus bana-chompanaich laithean bhur n' oige. Tha bhur braithrean, 'ur peathraichean, 'ur nabuidhean uile, gu inbhe gle bheag, anns an t-siorruidheachd, agus tha sibh fein am fagus do dhol as an t-sealladh. Nach mithich dhuibse sgur de na cleachdaidhean aindiadhaidh, agus de na cuideachdan diomhain ! Feudaidd cuid a bhi de'n bheachd, bho nach eile iad a faotinn urad de thoilintinn anns na diomhanasan sin a nis 'us a bha aca annta ann an laithean na h-oige, gum bheil sin na chomharadh gu bheil iad a fas nis fearr. Cha d'fhas duine riamh maith dhe fein. Is ann tre 'n ghairm eifeachdaich a tha peacaich air am pilltinn bhon peacadh gu Dia. Am feadh a tha an aois a gabhail tlachd na'n intinn de bhi labhairt, agus a smuainteachadh air peacaidhean an oige, gu de tha'n sin ach iad ga'n cur an gnoimh a ris na'n intinn na'n seann aois. Fhad agus nach eil tlachd aig neach ann an cleachdaidhean na diabhachd am follais agus an uaigneas, agus fhad 's nach eile fuath de'n peacadh anns na smuaintean agus anns na gnìomharan anns an intinn, tha an duine ann an staid naduir.

Nach bu choir do'n aois eisimpleir mhath a chur fa chomhair na h-oige ? Tha sinn cinnteach gum bi clann a mallachadh am parantan air la a bhreitheanais a chionn nach do thog iad suas iad ann an eagal Dhe. Tha e cheart cho cinnteach sin gum bi coimhthionail a mallachadh mhinistearain nach d'innis dhoibh an fhirinn, agus nach do chuir eisimpleir dhiadhaidh fa'n comhair anns an t-saoghal. Air an aobhar sin thugadh aois agus oige an ro-aire gur mithich Iehobhah iarraidh gus am fras e nuas fireantachd oirn. "Iarraibh an Tighearn' am feadh a tha e r'a fhaotinn ; gairmibh air am feadh a tha e'm fagas. Treigeadh an t-aingidh a shlighe agus an duin' eucorach a smuaintean ; agus pilleadh e ris an Tighearna, agus nochdaidh e trocair dha , agus ri ar Diane oir bheir e maitheanas gu pailt."

Tha e na ni ro-chumanta do chairdean a bhi dol a dh'amharc air a cheile air la na bliadhna uire ; cha-n eil sinn a faotinn coire sam bith do'n chleachdadh sin. Ach car son a bhiodh iad air an la sin a coinneachadh gu bhi 'gol doch laidir ? Tha moran a saolsinn bho'n a tha sin na shean chleachdadh nach eil coire sam bith ann. Cha-n ann le bhi'g ol agus ri cainnt dhiomhain a bu choir do dhaoine bhi toiseachadh bliadhna eile de'm beathe air an talamh ; ach le bhi toirt buidheachais do Dhia air son gun do chaomhain e iad anns an uine chaidh seachad, agus le bhi 'g iarraidh a laithaireach agus a bheannachd air a bhliadhna tha iad a toiseachadh. "Teagaisg dhuinn mar so ar laithean aireamh, chum gun socraich sinn ar cridhe air gliocas." N. C.

Notes and Comments.

Sabbath Cars in Edinburgh.—On Saturday morning, the 30th November, Sabbath-loving citizens in Edinburgh got a most painful surprise. It was intimated in the press that the Tramway Company intended the following Sabbath day to run the cars. The notice was remarkably short, and so the event came with all the greater shock. It appears that the relations between the Company and the Corporation of the city have become strained, and that the Company are in financial difficulties. As lovers of the world more than lovers of God, the latter decided to start Sabbath cars with the view of helping their funds. We are glad to say that a considerable proportion of the citizens are entirely opposed to the innovation, and we sincerely hope that any efforts they may make to get it thrown out may be attended with success. The press in general, but especially the *Scotsman*, defends the new and unholy venture, and employs every carnal argument it can lay hands on in its favour. The *Edinburgh Evening News*, a small paper, we are glad to see speaks out strongly on the right side. It might have been expected, however, that the clergy would have risen up as one man against the new form of desecrating the Lord's Day, but should the expectation have been cherished, it has been doomed to disappointment. With very few exceptions, the professed ambassadors of Christ, and defenders of God's commandments, are totally apathetic and inert. They are affording a new proof that in general they are nothing but compromisers and trimmers, not leading men in the right path from a sense of duty, at all costs, but shaping their views and conduct according to what is likely to be the opinion of the majority.

Principal Rainy has spoken. He delivered himself at a meeting of the United Free Presbytery; but he wrought no deliverance for the city of Edinburgh. With unfailing consistency he showed himself to be a trimmer to the times. Of course, he was opposed, or at least appeared to be opposed to the cars on Sabbath, but his opposition was based on the most flimsy grounds; he never mentioned the Fourth Commandment from beginning to end of his speech. In fact, he made the whole matter to turn upon the will of the people; it was the working men's day, he said, and he advised *them* to look after it. He condoned the practice of Sabbath cars in other and larger cities. Principal Rainy's utterance, instead of helping the cause of the Sabbath, only dragged it into the mire. In fact, he exhibited the kind of conscience he possesses, after a fashion that should have an awakening influence upon the minds of people who look up to him as a religious guide. The man, who can take such low and unworthy grounds upon the claims of the Lord's Day, is not to be trusted in any matter where the interests of truth and righteousness are concerned.

The question, as between the Corporation and the Tramway

Company, is at present in the Court of Session. We sincerely pray that the Lord may in infinite mercy defeat this latest effort of Satan's agents to destroy the sanctity and peace of the holy Sabbath in our country.

High Church Fanaticism.—The following extract from a letter written to the *Dundee Courier* by Rev. F. W. Davis, Episcopalian minister at Blairgowrie, commenting upon the King's action in attending the service at Crathie Parish Church, well illustrates the moral coarseness of the author and the ridiculous bigotry of his views :—“ He (the King) is attempting the impossible, and is posing as two distinct personalities—viz., as a member of Holy Church when in England, or, in fact, anywhere but in the region of unfortunate Balmoral, and a member of the sect Presbyterian—the sect founded but yesterday in ignorance and presumption by the greedy and ambitious, and unrefined in taste and in longings, when in Scotland. He does wrong not to go to church (I oppose the word church to kirk) when in Scotland. Does he act a lie when he goes to a temple of the Lord God in England, or does he act one only when he trusts himself under the roof of a kirk? His Majesty cannot, at one and the same time, be a Churchman and a Primmer man, and so I conclude that he is a Churchman everywhere and at all times, but that when in Scotland he must really do a little business political on Sunday, and where better than in a political preaching shop adjacent to his temporary sojourning place, Balmoral? But how he must abominate the having to transact business political and temporal on Sunday, when he would rather be joining in the worship of God in a building free from Calvinistic-cum-Lutheran-cum-Knoxian-cum-Melvilleistic associations such as attach to all structures of the schism, legalised only, and not approved of God, in poor Scotland.”

In Loving Memory

OF THE REV. DONALD MACDONALD, SHIELDSDAIG.

ALAS! is't nothing to you who pass by
To see the choice cedars cut down?
Sad tokens of Jehovah's displeasure,
For on our lands His face doth frown.

Gloomy and dark are these days of decline,
Cold and bare our once favoured lands;
He's gathering home His brightest jewels
To mansions fair, not made with hands.

Foundation truths false teachers would destroy,
O'er Christ's sweet field they rudely tread;
To faith's desire for the heavenly food
They nought supply but stones for bread.

To brethren strange this man of God became,
The truth and the faith he held fast ;
His heart yearned in love o'er "the living child,"
He his lot with the faithful cast.

"Destroy it not for the blessing is there ;"
The standard he would not pull down,
Zealous for the rights of his gracious Lord,
For his Beloved's claim and crown.

Thus bravely he went without the camp,
And though earth and hell might oppose,
Yet both combined could not the least o'ercome
His love of truth and Sharon's Rose.

With thrilling notes out spoke his moving voice
'Gainst the Church's sins of deep dark hue ;
A heaven-taught steward of gospel truth,
Each a word he gave in season due.

When cast down and faint because of the way,
And the famine and dearth were sore,
The weary soul heard that corn there was still
In abundance in Joseph's store.

Thy sweet, dove-like voice we shall hear no more,
Endued with an unction so rare,
Chanting the valour of the "pretty sons,"
Thy Lord, the fairest of the fair.

The empty to His fulness bidden were,
Much grace to find in time of need ;
'Mong blessed Jesus' fragrant pastures green,
He oft the heritage did lead.

The thorns did sharply pierce the lily pure,
The foe pursued the scattered flock ;
No shelter was found for the trembling doves
But the clefts of the Smitten Rock.

We blame not the mourners' sorrow and pain,
Their tender wounds oft bleed anew ;
Empty their loved one's honoured place is now ;
And such choice labourers are few.

The blinded world rues not the breach so great,
It scorns the weepers' hallowed pain ;
But thy death is a loss to Church and world,
While thine is everlasting gain.

Methinks the reproach thou didst suffer here,
Does but add a fair lustre bright
To thy measure there of glory and bliss
In yonder blest realms of light.

D. T.

Literary Notices.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GREAT INTEREST. By William Guthrie. New Edition, with an Appendix of 40 pages original matter. London : Andrew Melrose.

The demand which the readers of this Magazine are sometimes inclined to make, that we should vary our tale of the badness of the times with occasional notes of cheer and glimpses of sunshine is one which we would like to comply with, but honesty for the most part forbids. However, there is a certain feature of the times which is like the bit of blue sky on a stormy day. We allude to the providential movement in the book world, in the direction of publishing and reprinting select specimens of the literature of our forefathers, books whose spirit and testimony are in the very teeth of the spirit of the age.

Within late years we have had new editions of *Fraser's Treatise on Sanctification*; *Boston's Memoirs*; *Lives of Renwick, Cargill, and Guthrie*; *Robert Bruce's Sermons*; *Patrick Walker's Six Saints of the Covenant*, &c., and now we have to report the re-issue of *Guthrie's Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*.

This book is one of a series called "Books for the Heart," issued by Mr. Andrew Melrose, publisher, London, and edited by Rev. Alexander Smellie, M.A. The series includes—*The Heidelberg Catechism*, *John Bunyan's Grace Abounding*, *Edwards on the Affections*, *Augustine's Confessions*, and some other books whose soundness we cannot guarantee, but those we have named are much to be commended.

The present issue of Guthrie is the twenty-seventh at least that has been made since the book was first published in 1657, a testimony to the strange vitality of Christ's kingdom as it subsists in a good book. What shall we say? That many learned, gifted, and ambitious men who fondly deemed that they were achieving fame have utterly failed to attain it, and their names have vanished like smoke, but the humble and the homely William Guthrie who followed not after fame or applause has attained to solid fame, and his unstudied effort is now in its twenty-seventh edition.

But though truth and righteousness have been thus far vindicated that they stand enshrined in the books we have named, books executed in the best manner of the twentieth century—our congratulations must stop short when we have chronicled the fact. Book buying and book reading are two different things. It is a limited constituency at the best that exists for such books as these, but for the hundreds whom conscience or the instincts of the book fancier will incline to purchase these books, there will only be tens who will buy for sincere and legitimate ends, who will buy that they may read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the author's thoughts. That characteristic of fallen humanity indicated by the apostle in the words "when we were yet without strength" is well evidenced by the treatment accorded in our age to good

books, we do not exclusively mean religious books, but solid literature of every kind. The men and women, youths and maidens, boys and girls of our time are "without strength" to relish and digest the good the wholesome and the true in literature. There was an immense body of good reading launched upon the world at the eve of the Disruption, and during the early and best days of the Free Church, and even now the press yields some output of genuine gold amid the superabundant dross, but it is a lamentation that even in Free Presbyterian homes there is not more attention paid to the needful and beneficial exercise of conversing with the literature of the Reformation, the Covenant, and the Evangelical Revivals. In our intercourse with the various ranks and classes of society we have noted a humiliating lack of historical knowledge and general intelligence to be a prevailing feature. Scholars fresh from the Board School have no specific ideas of the past history of our country. This oblivion of the works of the Lord is a sign that death or a death-like sleep is seizing on the vitals of the Christian world. However, we note the existence of these good books and rejoice therein. Doubtless the old serpent grieves to see another thousand copies of the "Saving Interest" let out upon the world. When the Pope makes his next decree for the burning of Bibles and Bible literature, his creatures will find their task bigger than they anticipate. In respect of good books, we may say that the "Lord hath filled Christendom with judgment and righteousness." The activity of the nineteenth century in the multiplying of such books was great both in the old world and the new. The Puritans, the Covenanters, the Evangelicals lie safely in millions of homes and thousands of libraries. After Anti-christ has done his worst he will fail either to extinguish good men or good books. The present generation will perchance buy, but they will not read; however, "far on in summers which we shall not see," a people shall be created to praise the Lord, and they will make requisition for William Guthrie and his compeers, and it may be some copy of this edition of the "Saving Interest" which a chance purchaser of the present hour will secure, will in that day effect the work which the Lord long ago decreed. The man or woman ordained to eternal life will read, and immediately his soul will make him like the chariots of Amminadib.

The 40 pages of original matter are extracts from unpublished sermons of William Guthrie, and they are of a piece with the rest of this wholesome book.

NEWMAN—AN APPRECIATION. By Alex. Whyte, D.D. Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier.

We remarked lately upon Dr. Whyte's intention to conduct his Bible classes through the life and writings of Cardinal Newman. The book before us is the record of his two preliminary lectures delivered in the class-room. Besides the lectures, the volume contains 100 odd pages of extracts from Newman's voluminous

writings. There is also an appendix containing five or six letters from the Cardinal to the Doctor. Dr. Whyte had sent the Cardinal a complimentary copy of his work on the Shorter Catechism and he, finding certain samples of blunt Protestantism in the Doctor's exposition of the theology of the Supper, favoured him with corrections and criticisms, to which our Free Church divine paid the utmost deference. An inspection of the Doctor's views and pronouncements in this latest book of his fills our Scottish Protestant mind with mixed feelings; on the one hand our anger is stirred by this gratuitous eagerness on the part of a Presbyterian minister to advertise the literary eminence and spiritual importance of a sworn enemy of the Reformation, on the other we are surprised at the amount of salutary truth which Dr. Whyte has been compelled to tell regarding his idol. Had a writer of the old Protestant school uttered some of these home-thrusts they would be scouted as so many ill-natured displays of sectarian prejudice.

We will rehearse some of Dr. Whyte's hard sayings, and will leave the Doctor to defend as best he can his consistency in idolising and exploiting such a thoroughly dangerous unevangelical character as his own mouth pronounces Newman to be.

Says Dr. Whyte, p. 90, concerning Newman's Oxford Sermons, "Looked at as pure literature, these sermons are not far from absolute perfection; but looked at as pulpit work, as preaching the Gospel, they are full of the most serious, and even fatal, defects. . . . They are not, properly speaking, New Testament preaching at all. . . . The very best of these sermons are continually tainted with some impertinent aside at some evangelical truth. . . . As an analysis of the heart of man, and as a penetrating criticism of human life, their equal is nowhere to be found. But, with all that, they lack the one all-essential element of true preaching—the message to sinful man concerning the free grace of God. . . . As it is, they are a splendid literature in many respects; but one thing they are not, they are not what God intends the Gospel of His Son to be to all sinful and miserable men. After all is said in praise of these extraordinary sermons, this remains true, that Newman's constant doctrine is that doctrine which the Apostle discarded with anathemas—salvation by works, whether legal or evangelical works."

Again on page 95:—"So dazzling to me is his writing, and so unsettling is his doctrine of saving faith, that he has disconcerted and distressed me not a little." Page 96:—"Marshall and Guthrie always melt me and draw me to Christ, just as Newman so often hardens me and darkens me and stumbles me." . . . Newman, if it were possible to me now, would still set me on going about to establish my own righteousness; a folly and madness I am only too prone to fall into. . . . Page 97:—"Newman's preaching—and I say it with more pain than I can express—never once touches the true core, and real and innermost essence, of the Gospel. The Epistle to the Romans, the 'Acropolis,' as Olshausen

calls it, of the Gospel, need never have been written as far as Newman's exposition of it is concerned. The righteousness of Christ, of which that glorious Epistle is full, need never have been worked out by Him for all that those enthralled audiences in St. Mary's ever heard of it. There is a whole shining chain of Gospel texts that Newman never touches on, or only touches on them—I shrink from saying it—to misread them and misapply them." Page 103:—"No; Newman never was converted as, say, John Wesley was converted. . . . Newman, in the matter of Pauline truth, was born what he died. Newman's very heart of hearts never got her complete divorce, to use Paul's great words, from the dominion of the law." Page 66:—"A far more significant step than that Newman ought to have taken in 1890. But it was a step which, alas, he died without having taken. He ought to have laid his honoured head in the dust for all the slings and scoffs he had ever uttered in the pride of his heart at men whose shoe-latchet, he should have said, he was not worthy to unloose. The shoe-latchet of such men of God as Luther, and Calvin, and the Anglican Reformers, as well as Bunyan, and Newton, and Wesley, and many more men of God, whose only offence against Newman and his sectarian and intolerant school had been that they were determined to preach no other gospel than the gospel of a sinner's free justification before God by faith on the Son of God, and on Him and on His work alone. Men to whom their Master will yet say, Well done, good and faithful servant! . . . As it is, 'He that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me.' I am not Newman's judge; but if I were, I would say of him, in the language of his own Church, that he died unrepentant and unabsolved of the sin of having despised, and of having taught many others to despise, some of the best ministers of Christ this world has ever seen."

Dr. Whyte's witness as to the soul destroying legalism of Newman's sermons is true. He has said nothing of the superstition and Mariolatry that began to characterise his discourses after his secession to Rome. He has faintly admitted but has not candidly dealt with that destitution of fine truthfulness which unmistakeably appeared in his hero. He has, however, made many fatal admissions, and it is an evidence of the strange inconsequent quality of Dr. Whyte's mind that he should call such a rehearsal of blots and blemishes by the name of an "Appreciation." The Doctor's divergence from the mind of the Apostle Paul, we leave him to accommodate as best he can. Paul's decision was, "If we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that we have preached, let him be accursed." But Dr. Whyte begs to differ from Paul. He says, "Not so." If the angel has a good gift of English composition and exhibits an interesting personality, let him not be cursed, let him be exploited in pulpit and magazines and thrust upon Bible classes. What then does Dr. Whyte mean?

J. M'N.