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Numbering Our Days.

MOSES, the man of God, in the 90th Psalm draws an impressive contrast between the eternity of God and the mortality of man. God is from everlasting to everlasting the same; His years fail not: but man is but for a short season; he is like the grass which in the morning groweth and flourisheth, but in the evening is cut down and withereth. The inspired singer lifts his eye upwards and beholds in the divine displeasure the immediate cause of human frailty. God, in whom we live and move and have our being, is angry with us, and therefore we fly away. This anger, however, must also have a cause, for God is a righteous King and a just governor; He does nothing inconsistent with the most unspotted rectitude. And so the Psalmist, in the language of sorrowful confession, explains the reason of the divine anger. It is sin. "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Sin has incurred God's righteous indignation, and a righteous God has punished sin with death. Such is the doctrine of Moses and the prophets, and such also is the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. "The wages of sin is death"; death in all its forms—temporal, spiritual, and eternal. No one, we hope, will draw from this the absurd conclusion that those who die youngest are most under the divine pleasure. All that is taught is that human life at the longest is but short, and that this general brevity is due to sin and wrath. As for particular cases of premature death, Scripture and experience both testify that oftentimes persons highly favoured of God are cut off in early life. But no doubt the communities from which such persons are removed have occasion for reflection as to whether God's anger may not be manifested towards them in the great losses thus sustained.

Towards the end of this Psalm Moses presents a prayer for divine teaching, a prayer that is adapted to all persons at all

times, but is specially appropriate at this season of the year. He prays: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

1. Let us inquire what is meant by the numbering of our days. This does not merely imply the reckoning of one's age in numerical fashion, a practice common enough and easy enough. But it indicates that we ought to be engaged in reflecting upon the solemn fact that our days at longest are comparatively few. There is undoubtedly a disposition in fallen man to shut his eyes to the brevity of life, and to cherish in a secret manner the idea that he is to live here for ever. How few there be that realise with any measure of vividness that soon their career must cease, that soon they must be launched upon the ocean of eternity; while multitudes there are who madly pursue the race of life with the determined resolution to ignore the very idea of death or of the eternity that lies beyond it. To number our days in truth, then, is to reflect upon all the solemn circumstances that surround our present pilgrimage: the presence of sin, the manifestation of God's wrath, the shortness of time, the near approach of death, the tremendous issues of eternity. In view of these weighty realities would it not become each of us to live as if the Son of Man was at the door? Dying daily is a rare art in these unspiritual times, and yet it must be learnt in some genuine measure, otherwise we shall die eternally. We must even now in a day of mercy begin to number our days, and to live in view of a judgment seat, or it shall go ill with us at last. This leads us to notice—

2. The use we are to make of our reckoning: "That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." "Wisdom," according to the testimony of inspiration, "is the principal thing." It is to be desired more than rubies or fine gold; it is an incomparable treasure. He that lacks divine wisdom is poor indeed. And yet this poverty is the characteristic of all men in their natural estate. We are all by reason of the Fall foolish and disobedient; we choose the evil and refuse the good, forsake the fountain of living waters, and, like persons of no understanding, hew out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Onwards we rush in a mad pursuit of happiness along forbidden pathways, until, if mercy prevent not, we drop into an undone eternity. Should these words catch the eye of any that are still pursuing this vain career of folly, may we not faithfully and lovingly warn them to stop and consider? "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" Soon the day of mercy will be at an end, soon the day of judgment will be at hand, and woe betide those persons that will appear before God destitute of heavenly wisdom.

What, then, is the wisdom spoken of? To this question there is practically but one answer. Christ is the personal wisdom of God; in Him is the fullest display of the infinite wisdom of a Triune Jehovah; and so the exercise of applying our hearts unto wisdom may suitably be taken to mean the seeking to become

savingly acquainted with Jesus Christ, and with the doctrines of the Word taught by Him as the great prophet of the Church. In wisdom there is knowledge, and so, if we are to learn divine wisdom, we must become acquainted in a spiritual manner with divine truth. In wisdom there is the application of knowledge to action; and so, if we become savingly wise, our knowledge will not be a dead letter in our heads, it will exert a direct, powerful, and practical influence upon our hearts and lives. The Psalmist clearly felt that the heart must be put right, and must be quickened into a nobler kind of activity than was natural to it through sin. The heart in its unregenerate state is the abode of every kind of folly. The faculties of the soul are thoroughly darkened and debased. Thus these powers, if they are to fulfil their original end—the glory of God—must be brought to engage in a new exercise, and to be taught in a new school. The school is the school of Christ, and the exercise is one of acquiring that wisdom which is unto eternal salvation.

3. The third thing to be noted is the help needed for the attainment of this end. "So teach us," prays the Spirit-taught Psalmist. Moses, great man of God as he was, was as a little child before the Lord. He felt his need of divine teaching. This was one of the first lessons he learned when he was sent to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt, and a lesson he acquired a deeper and deeper knowledge of all through the remainder of his remarkable life. The most advanced of the children of God are also the most sensible of their constant need of divine light and instruction. No wonder, then, that Moses here cries, "Teach us." It is the Lord alone who can instruct us to saving profit. If we are to be spiritually taught at all, He must teach us all the lessons that are presented us in His Word, from the simplest to the hardest. Nothing less will do, if we shall be made wise for eternity. Here, then, is direction for the most ignorant in divine things. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." Pour out your case before Him. Tell Him all your sins and follies, all your blindnesses and perversities, your sinful engrossment in the world, your mad neglect of the concerns of eternity, and your presumptuous despising of the gracious overtures of the gospel. Tell Him all your depravity and need, and ask for His light, grace, and wisdom unto salvation; and be assured if you ask in truth, it shall be given you. "Good and upright is the Lord; he will teach sinners in the way." And if the reader is one who has been already taught of God, he will readily admit, as we have previously indicated, his need of more and more divine teaching that he may grow in spiritual wisdom, and in devotedness to the glory of God and the good of His Kingdom in the world.

We wish all our readers a good New Year, and, if it be the will of God, a good Eternity.

Expository Notes:

ISA. xlii. 1-4.

By the Rev. ALEXANDER STEWART, Oban.

IV.—The Servant: His Tenderness.

A bruised reed shall He not break,
And the smoking flax shall He not quench,
He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.—(Ver. 3.)

THE reed is a fitting symbol of human frailty. At the best it has little strength. It is "shaken with the wind," it is laid low with the rain, it is the plaything of the storm. But a bruised reed—what at all shall we make of it? You have seen it, perhaps, trodden under men's feet, crushed and flattened and soiled, a poor, valueless thing that merely cumbered the ground, and you would not be easily persuaded that there was anything in the bruised reed to repay the smallest measure of care or consideration. And smoking flax—there is not much light, or promise of light, there. You have seen the wick of a candle smoking after you have extinguished the flame; that is the figure: it implies the nearest possible approach to complete extinction. Christ will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Nay, He will lift up the one "from the dust," and shield it from violence, and smooth out the bruises with a gentle hand, and nourish it unto fulness of growth; and He will shelter the other from the rough winds, and, softly breathing upon the sinking spark, will fan it into a flame. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

What is the characteristic which these words describe? It is *Tenderness*. We have, in the short compass of one or two sentences, a beautiful picture of the gentleness of Jesus.

And how amply were those words of ancient prophecy verified in the realities of His earthly life. Christ lived and moved among bruised reeds and smoking flax. He came into a world that was groaning and travailing in pain. On every hand He was confronted with suffering. On every hand He saw men "bruised" with sore distress, their life crushed unto the dust with grievous burdens. How did He regard this sad scene? What kind of eye did He turn upon the spectacle of human misery? We know that from the very commencement of His public work, His life was one continuous ministry of healing. He set Himself to stanch the flowing wound of the world's sorrow. He had many sorrows that were peculiar to Himself—in that dark realm, as elsewhere, the "Man of Sorrows" claims the pre-eminence—but He was also "acquainted with grief"—the grief of others. He went about continually doing good. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. And who ever ministered with such grace of tender-

ness? He was "moved with compassion" when he looked on the leper's misery, and He shrank not from touching the loathsome mass of disease. His tears fell fast when from the slopes of Olivet "He beheld the city"—the city with so wonderful a past, but so tragic a future, and so stubbornly regardless of its impending doom. He wept again with Mary at the grave of Lazarus, and yet again His pity flowed when He met the mourners of Nain, and heard the simple story of the widow's grief. Alike the pangs of physical pain, and the yet more bitter pangs of mental distress, the misery of men as well as their sin, stirred the depths of His tenderness. His eye affected His heart, and His heart as surely moved His hand. So closely was Christ identified with the relief of human suffering that, when one day He had been engaged from morning until even in healing divers forms of disease, Matthew tells us that these words found their fulfilment, "Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses."

His heart went out to the downtrodden and the oppressed; He took the side of the outcast; He refused to recognise, or recognised only to set aside, the restrictions of social caste. His mission was to the *lost*—lost in the eyes of man as well as in the sight of Heaven. "The friend of publicans and sinners" was a term of reproach hurled at Him by His enemies, but it enshrines a glorious truth. There were many such bruised reeds at that time in Judea. It was a land where national pride and social exclusiveness, and relentless prejudices of various kinds flourished in rank profusion. Those who were outside the radius were kept out with a strong hand; those who were down had little chance of ever being able to rise. The "sinners" were relegated to their own place of social isolation by sinners greater than themselves; the "publicans" inherited a rich legacy of national hate. Christ did not break these bruised reeds. He received the lonely outcasts unto Him. He ate with them, and made them in many cases heirs of the grace of life. He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. He went down to the very depths of human degradation for the trophies of His saving grace. His eye went past the thronging crowds of Jericho, and rested on the sycamore tree, where Zaccheus the Publican, one of the lost, was eagerly looking out for His coming. He must needs go through Samaria, and endure on His journey the burden and heat of the day, because in Samaria was a sinner, fallen even in the eyes of the world, whom He designed to save. And with what heavenly wisdom does the Great Physician deal with that bruised reed. Again, when "one more unfortunate" is brought before Him in the shame of detected guilt, that He may pronounce judgment upon her, with what skill does He turn the weapons of her accusers against themselves, how plainly does He reserve the greater weight of condemnation for organised hypocrisy than for erring frailty, and with what tenderness, yet all the more penetrating keenness of reproof, does He send her away to "sin no more." Yet again, how beautiful an illustration of this charac-

teristic is furnished by his treatment of the Syrophœnician woman. He did not quench the smoking flax. Even while seeming to blow on her petition with the cold breath of refusal, He is really strengthening her desire till it mounts up to a very triumph of living faith.

He was full of forbearance toward the weak. Though high, He had respect unto the lowly. We are often disposed to be impatient of weakness. We are ready to worship strength. We admire the active and the vigorous, and when the weak and the frail go down in the struggle of life, and are bruised beneath the feet of the strong and the unheeding, we are inclined to say, "There let them lie; we are better without them; there is no place on the battle-field of life for weaklings." But that is not the spirit of Christ. His ear was ever open to the cry of those who were "without strength." When the woman with the issue of blood, enfeebled through long years of disease, and heart-sick through hope deferred, tried to make her way through the pressing multitude, when He was on the way to the house of Jairus, and at last succeeded in touching from behind the hem of His garment, He did not say, "I have more pressing work on hand just now. There is no time for delay." No. He turned round and said, "Who touched me?" That feeble touch had laid hold of the resources of His might. When Bartimeus cried to Him from the roadside, when His face was steadfastly set for the last time to go to Jerusalem, He did not avert His head, and say, "This is no time for thinking of such trifles as a beggar's cry." No. He stood still, and commanded him to be brought. And "When mothers of Salem their children brought to Jesus," He did not frown upon the forwardness of their love, and say, "What have I to do with the prattling of children when there are foes to conquer and a kingdom to win." No. He took them up in His arms and laid His hands on them, and blessed them. These were instances of bruised reeds that He did not break.

He was full of compassion for the ignorant, and for those that were out of the way. Take for illustration of this his dealings with His own disciples. They were often like the smoking flax. The light of Divine grace was in them, but sometimes it smouldered low. They were often not very apt scholars, dull of understanding, and slow of heart to believe. Yet how wonderfully did He bear with them, how patient He was, and gentle, and forbearing. When they strove which of them should be the greatest, He took a little child and put him in the midst, and proceeded to give them a touching lesson in humility. When the sons of Zebedee requested that the chief seats in glory should be reserved for themselves, He had no severer reprimand for their presumption than, "Ye know not what ye ask;" and He again begins to instruct them with matchless long-suffering. When Peter fell from his height of self-confidence to deny his Lord, and the reed became bruised with shame and bitter contrition, Christ's thoughts go out to His fallen

disciple in the darkness of his after sorrow. He sends him a special message after He rises from the dead, and, first among the disciples, seeks him out for a personal interview. And when Thomas refused to believe without the testimony of his own senses Christ appeared in the midst of the disciples when Thomas was with them, and furnished him with the very evidence which he desired.

Very specially did He manifest His tenderness in His dealings with anxious, sin-stricken souls. It is in His treatment of the diseased soul, the groping understanding, the awakened conscience, the anxious heart, that the skill and gentle care of the Great Physician are supremely displayed. What more complete description of infinite tenderness could be given than that of this same prophet Isaiah concerning Him in another place, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Connect these words with those that follow, and they appear more beautiful still: the tenderness belongs to One who is full of glorious majesty and power—"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."

His tenderness was not indeed an indiscriminating emotion. He knew what was in man. The Spirit that was upon Him made Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and He did not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears. He could see behind the fairest pretensions of hypocrisy and deceit. He could read the heart. And no more awful words of sternness, no more scathing denunciations of sin, no more withering exposures of guile and dissimulation, were ever heard in this world than those which were uttered by the servant of the Lord. Sometimes there flashed forth from the placid depths of His meekness the white flame of His indignation against wrong, and we gather some conception even here of how terrible in its fulness must be "the wrath of the Lamb." But wherever He saw sincerity and truth, *that* He ever regarded with tenderness and care. The feeblest gropings of the understanding after light, the lowliest movings of true soul concern, the faintest rustlings of the wings of desire, these He was of quick understanding to discern, and He did not despise them for their weakness. When the conscience was troubled with a sense of guilt, He well knew what kind of treatment to prescribe; *when* the pressure might well be heightened, and when it was time to administer relief; He could measure with unfailing precision the distance between bruising and breaking. And when the heart was crushed with contrition and godly sorrow, who could bind up its wounds with such gentleness of touch as He? "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," He said to the bruised ones, "and I will give you rest." His heart went out to them with infinite pity when He

saw them drawing water from the broken cisterns of earth, and He stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. He is still full of forbearance and compassion and gentleness. There are many bruised reeds among His people, many borne down with grievous sorrows, many oppressed with heavy burdens, many tried with strong temptations, many harassed with disabling fears. But He knows where the strong consolations lie, and He administers them with the hand of unerring wisdom and unfailing love. He will not suffer His own to be tempted above what they are able to bear, He will not cast them off because of their weakness. As a mother comforteth her children, so will He comfort them. He will perfect that which concerneth them. He will bring forth judgment unto truth.

The "Glasgow Herald" on the Papacy.

POPE Leo's recent diplomatic inaction with regard to the French Associations Bill seemed to betoken a temper, if not of tolerance, at least of political discretion. But his latest brief is calculated to remind us forcibly that the Pope is still Giant Pope after all. There can be no objection, of course, to the head of the Roman Catholic Church organising an anti-Protestant propaganda in Rome, and putting Cardinals, or any dignitaries he thinks fit, at the head of it. Free discussion and propaganda are of the essence of modern liberty, and the Pope has as much right to a fair field in the struggle as any Protestant missionary society. But that he wants something quite other than a fair field is unmistakeably evidenced by the terms and tone of the brief, which expresses frankly the old intolerant and exclusive spirit of the mediæval Papacy. Pope Leo is described as complaining bitterly in this document of the liberty granted in Rome to the propagation of heresy, and asserting that the existence of Protestant schools and churches is a great danger to the Catholic Church. The utterance is a most damaging one in every way, for not only does it show—what we need hardly to be told—that the papal system is one of repression and not of persuasion, but it confesses, with strange naivete, the weakness of the papal cause. If Protestant schools and churches can do so much damage, it must be because the Catholic organisation is comparatively weak in persuasive power. So the Pope in despair calls out for the old evil weapon which his predecessors used so long till it was struck from their grasp. It is useless for the Papacy to talk of tolerance; ecclesiasticism in that shape is never tolerant save when it has no coercive power. The bitter lament for the lack of that power is an ominous indication of what would be the fate of the present free capital of Italy if anything so impossible and unthinkable as a revival of the Pope's temporal sovereignty were accomplished.—December 4th, 2902.

Earail gu dunadh ri Crìosd.

A chuid mu dheireadh de leabhran—An Slanuighear a dh' fhuiling—leis an Urr. Ian Donullach a bha 'n Calcutta.

AON uair eile, a leughadair ghradhaich, tha mi air mo ghairm agus an trompaid airgid a chur rim' bheul agus fuaim rabhaidh a sheideadh. On sgrìobh mi a' chuid eile de'n leabhran so chunnaic mi leanaban a' tighinn gu bhi 'nan oige, an oige a' tighinn gu lan ire, daoine a bha 'nan lan ire a' liathadh, agus an aois a' sleamhnachadh sìos do'n uaigh. Aon ni chunnaic mi aunta sin uile, am Fear-saoraidh air a chur air chul agus slainte 'na ainm gu taireil air a tilgeadh air falbh. Theagaisg mi anns an teaghlach agus anns an sgoile shabaid: shearmonaich mi anns an Eaglais Chrìosdail: chuir mi an ceill ainm Chrìosd air sraidean ceanna bhaile an t-saoghail: chaidh mi o'n mhinistireileachd anns an Roinn-Eorpa gu bhi a'm' mhisionaraidh anns na h-Innseachan agus tha mi nis re uine a' m' chomhnuidh ann an caithir shonruichte an t-soisgeil anns an Aird an ear: chuala mi an fhirinn bu chumhachdaiche agus chunnaic mi an t-aideachadh a b' airde: gidheadh anns a h-uile aite chunnaic mi blàth curam an anama 'ga mhilleadh le aon olc, coltas gealltanach air dearbhadh peacaidh air a chnàmh air falbh le aon chnàmhuinn, 's e an t-olc sgaoilte sin agus an cnàmhuinn marbhtach sin *dail*. Their clann agus oganaich, daoine agus seanairean mar aon, "Imich romhad aig an am so, 'nuair a gheibh mi am a's freagaraiche, cuiridh mi fios ort,"

Am faic thu an seann saoghaltach sin fo fhrionas a' smeurachadh ann an dorchadas a' bhàis. Imich, 's abair ris, "C'uime am bheil thu 'g ad' sharuchadh fein mar sin?" Ann an cagar a' bhàis tha e 'freagairt, "Tha e tuilleadh is anmoch—tuilleadh is anmoch, rinn mi dàil, tha mi tuilleadh is anmoch." Mar sin tha e 'basachadh.

Crom thairis air an duine laidir sin a tha air ur-thuiteam air do shraid le bàs obann. Lub do ghlun ri 'thaobh 'm feadh 's a tha e a' glugraich a mach na h-analach mu dheireadh de'n bheatha a chaith e ann an sannt, dean cagar ciuin 'na chluais, "C'airson a tha thu ag acain? Feuch am Fear-saoraidh a dh' fhuiling! Déan eigh ris." Greimich a nis air a bhriathran deireannach—"Oh! an dàil a rinn mi—an damnach a thoill mi. Tha mi cailte gu sìorruidh." Mar sin tha esan cuideachd a' basachadh.

Imich, dean suidhe gu caoimhneil ri taobh leabaidh na basmhorachd air am bheir an t-oganach caithe sin a' faghail bàis. Tha a shuilean domhainn 'na cheann is tha iad fathast suidhichte air a' ghrein a' dol fodha, ag ol a stigh a sheallaidh dheireannaich de ghloir mi h-iarmailt. Gabh a lamh bhog 'nad laimh is abair ris gu seimh, "Oh, oganaich, c'uime a tha thu cho bronach is thu cho anmhunn? Nach 'eil Grian ann ni's fearr na sin? Nach 'eil e air a radh, "'S e Dia an grian?" An urrainn thu a bhriathra mu dheireadh a thogail? "Smuainich mi—bha mi an dochas—runaich mi—gheall mi—ach tha sin seachad—air falbh—cailte—cha-n urrainn mi a nis—cha-n urrainn a chaoidh—tha mi 'dol fodha—

tha mi an dorchadas—gun ghrian—seadh, gun ghrian. Dàil—dearmad—oh! 's e sin mo sgrios—Ah! Dhe—tha mi caillte”—Agus mar sin tha esan mar an ceudna a' basachadh. Oh! mo leughadairean, 's iad sin, 's iad sin seirbhisich na dàil agus 's e sin an duais aig a' cheann mu dheireadh.

Tha mi nis 'nad lamhaibh gu do chur air d' fhaicill o'n olc so Tha mi 'g am fhaireachadh fhein mar nach b' urrainn mi dealach, adh riut gus an gabh thu Criosd mar do Thighearn 's gu'm faigh thu slainte ann. Cha-n 'eil mi 'gad fhaicinn, feudaiddh bith nach bi eolas a chaoidh agam ort, ach a nis anns na briathraibh so tha mi a' labhairt riut, agus mar a uchd Chrìosd guidheam ort nach caill thu uine, nach dean thu dàil ach gu'm bi thu air do shaoradh a nis, ma's miann leat, uair air bith, gun thu 'bhi air do dhamnadh.

Aithreachas gun dàil, creidimh gun dàil, iompachadh gun dàil ri Dia tre Chrìosd a chaidh a cheusadh, 's iad sin gun dàil do dhleasdanas agus dearmad air an dleasdanas so 's e sin gun dàil do chionta. Cha dean e feum sam bith dhuit a radh, “nach urrainn thu na nithe sin a dheanamh gun ghras Dhe.” Cha-n e gras is aobhar do dhleasdanas; oir tha dleasdanas ann roimh gras, 's cha-n 'eil e 'n crochadh air. Tha thu fo fhiachaibh gu aithreachas a dheanamh, agus a bhi air d' iompachadh, a chionn gu bheil Dia 'ga iarraidh, ged nach robh Slanuighear no slainte air bhi ann riamh. Tha am fear, a tha 'tagradh cion grais mar a lethsgheul airson nach geill e, a' taisbeanadh gu bheil e de'n aireamh leis nach àill pilleadh agus feumaidh e am bàs-san a bhasachadh, gun leigheas.

Nach 'eil thu a' d' pheacach a nis? So rud nach aicheadh thu. Nach 'eil thu fo bhinn dìtidh a nis? Nach 'eil fearg Dhe cho cinnteach a lathair ris a pheacadh? Mar sin nach 'eil thu a cheana ann an cunnart a bhreitheanais? Agus am bheil mionaid ann nach fheud thu 'dol a dhith gu bith-bhuan? Nach 'eil do bheannachdan a cheana air am mallachadh? Nach 'eil thu 'fair-eachadh a nis ann an doillead do shùl, ann an cruas do chridhe, roimh-ruithearan a' bhàis shiorruidh? C'airson ma seadh a ni thu dàil?

Nach 'eil an Tighearn Iosa Chrìosd a nis fein 'na Fhear-saoraidh? Nach 'eil 'iobairt crìochnaichte agus 'eadar-ghuidhe an deigh toiseachadh? Nach 'eil e beo a nis? Nach urrainn e tearnadh a nis? Nach 'gabh e riut a nis? Nach 'eil e da rìreadh a' tearnadh moran de pheacaich air an talamh so a nis? Am feadh 's a tha thusa ri dàil, nach 'eil feadhainn eile a' tighinn d' a ionnsuidh, eadhon a nis? Agus nach tig moran tuilleadh d' a ionnsuidh an diugh, am maireach, agus a h-uile la an deigh so gus an tig am peacach mu dheireadh agus am bi gach uile “a nis” air a lionadh suas? Agus c'uime a reisd an dean thusa dàil ann an tighinn gu Chrìosd?

Nach 'eil an soisgeul, a 's e teachdaireachd gradh Chrìosd dhuit, fìor a nis? An urrainn e uair sam bith a bhi ni 's frinnich na tha e? Nach 'eil e coimhlionta agus suidhichte? Cìod air bith a

bha e riamh do mhuinntir eile nach 'eil e sin duit-sa nis? An ni a bhios e gu deireadh an t-saoghail nach 'eil e sin duit-sa an ceart uair? An urrainn e uair air bith a bhi ni 's grasmhoire no ni 's saoire na tha e nis? An urrainn e uair air bith tighinn ni 's fhaigse ort na tha e 'tighinn an ceart uair? An urrainn uair air bith am barrachd ughdarrais a bhi ann air na th' ann a nis? Am feud uair air bith tuilleadh de Dhia no de Chriosd no de 'n Spiorad a bhi ann na th' ann a nis? An dean e dluthachadh ni 's mo air leth dhuit no tairgse ni 's pearsanta uair sam bith na a nis? Cha dean gu bràth, ged a bhiodh tu beo mile bliadhna. Cha-n eil atharrachadh a' tighinn uair sam bith air an t-soisgeul, c'uime, ma seadh, an cuir thu dàil ann an gabhail ris?

Nach a creidimh an t-aon ni a nis a dh' fheudas e bhi am feasd? Nach e an aon fhirinn a dh' fheumar a chreidsinn? Nach e an t-aon anam an diugh agus an deigh so a dh' fheumas an t-aon ghnìomh creidimh a ghnìomhachadh? Nach e an aon tuisge a dh' fheumas tuigsinn, an t-aon chridhe a dh' fheumas gabhail, an aon choguis a dh' fheumas geilleadh an dearbh aon phearsa a dh' fheumas a bhi air 'iompachadh a nis agus an deigh so? Tha an fhirinn a tha lathair ag agairt creidimh a bhi lathair: tha an gras a tha lathair ag agairt a bhi air a ghabhail ris air ball; direach mar a tha an lagh a tha lathair ag agairt umhlachd bhi lathair agus am breitheamh bhi lathair ag agairt breitheanas a bhi lathair. Nach 'eil e mar sin? Ma tha thu a' cur romhad creidsinn agus bhi air d' iompachadh an ceann bliadhna nach feum thu sin a dheanamh anns a' cheart rathad anns an coir dhuit a nis? C'uime, ma seadh, an cuir thu dàil ann an creidsinn agus ann an deanamh aithreachais?

Nach 'eil am peacadh a lathair 'nuair a tha dàil a lathair. Ma tha ni mar fhiachaibh orm a nis, gun an ni sin a dheanamh a nis, 's e sin gun mo dhleasdanas a dheanamh a nis, ni a tha 'na pheacadh. Mur 'eil ni mar fhiachaibh orm a nis, is cinnteach nach e dàil a th' ann, nach dean mi e a nis; agus mar sin cha-n 'eil aite aig peacadh; 's e gu bheil dleasdanas a lathair a tha a' deanamh dàil 'na peacadh. Ma 's e 's gur coir dhomh creidsinn a nis is aithreachas a dheanamh a nis, agus nach dean, tha mi nis ciontach. Cha seas ruintean air son an am a tha ri teachd aite a' ghnìomh anns an am a tha lathair: 's e th' annta, gu dearbh, sinn a bhi 'diultadh ar dleasdanas a choimhlionadh gus an tig an t-am sin a roghnaich sinn fein, agus am fear a ni dàil car uine tha e gu toileach a' peacadh re na h-uine sin. Ma tha thu 'cur romhad a bhi air d' iompachadh tha sin 'ga nochdadh gu bheil thu 'ga mheas mar dhleasdanas anns am bheil thu cunntachail; ma tha thu 'cur dàil ann, tha sin ag innseadh gur docha leat buanachadh ann an staid neo-iompaichte; mar sin is breitheamh thu ort fein, is tha thu 'gad dhiteadh fein de pheacadh a bhi lathair agad. Ma's peacadh thu cha choir duit aon cheum a ghabhail ni 's faide ach air ball pilleadh is creidsinn ann an Criosd le d' uile chridhe chum slainte. C'airson an cuir thu peacadh spioraid neo-aithreachail

anns an am a ta lathair ri d' aingidheachd anns an am a chaidh seachad? C'uime an dean thu dàil gu toileach 'nuair is e peacadh a th' ann an dàil.

Ma tha as-creidimh a lathair tha e 'cosnadh diteadh a bhi lathair oir "an ti nach creid tha e air a dhiteadh cheana;" ach 's e as-creidimh a th' ann an dàil agus marsin aite sam bith am bi i tha i 'cosnadh ditidh. Fhad 's nach pill duine ri Dia tre Chriosd tha e 'seulachadh na binnditidh, fo'm bheil e, le binnditidh as ùr a chur rithe. Uime sin tha mallachd an duine, mar pheacach, 'g a charnadh suas a h-uile mionaid agus tha a dhamnadh a' dublachadh gun chrich, fhad'sa ni e dàil ann an tighinn gu Criosd agus a ghabhail mar a Thighearn. Oh gu'n gabhadh daoine beachd air a' chunntas a's urrainn iad a thoirt, eadhon dhoibh fein, aig a' bhàs, anns a' bhreitheanas, ach gu h-araidh anns an t-siorruidheachd, 'nuair a gheibh iad a mach, leis an innleachd bhochd so, eadhon *dail*, gu'n d' thug iad iad fein gus an sgrios a's iochdaraiche ann an ifrinn. An sin feumaidh an toil-inntinn a thug an dàil dhoibh ri am dhoibh a bhi beo tighinn gu bhi 'na pianadh leanailteach dhoibh anns a' bhas shiorruidh.

Agus ciod e an lethsgheul a's urrainn thu tagradh airson a leithid de dhàil? Tha an soisgeul air a chur do d' ionnsuich mar a tha thu nis—cha-n ann mar a bha thu aon uair no mar a bh' feudhas thu bhi fathast. 'S e an aon chumha, gu'n gabh thu ris, gu'n gabh thu ris gu saor, gu'n gabh thu ris air ball, gu'n gabh thu ris gu pearsanta, gu'n gabh thu ris gu toileach. "Eisdibh, agus mairidh 'ur n-anam beo. 'S ann ris an ni a tha thu a tha suil aig an t-soisgeul annad. An ni air am bheil feum agad, 's e sin a tha an soisgeul a' tairgseadh. Ma s'e, mar sin, 's gu'm fuirich thu a' cumail a mach nach 'eil thu maith gu leor, no ag iarraidh fàs ni's fearr an toiseach cha-n 'eil ann ach fein mhealladh, agus breug an aghaidh an t soisgeil. 'S e an obair a's fearr a's urradh dhuìt a bhi agad gu'n creid thu nis 's gu'm pill thu nis agus as eugmhais so cha-n 'eil ach an tuilleadh ditidh anns a h-uile ulluchadh ma's fhior a tha thu 'deanamh. Seadh an aite thu bhi 'cosnadh agus a' fàs ni's fearr le dàil tha thu 'call agus a' fàs ni's miosa. Tha do chridhe a' dol 'ni's cruaidhe, d' inntinn a' fàs ni's duirche, do pheacadh a' meudachadh, d' uine a' giorrachadh, d' uallach a' dol ni's truime, do ghradh a' lughdachadh, d' eagal a' fas, neamh ni's faide as, ifrinn ni's faigse, Dia ni's feargaiche, an Spiorad ni's mo air a bhrosnachadh, am Fear-saoraidh ni's duille fhaicinn, an soisgeul a's lugha druidheadh ort, ministearan ni's anmhuinne, cairdean a' fàs ni's mi-mhisneachaile urnuigh a's lugha dùrachd, am freasdal a's lugha feireachadh air, an saoghal a's treise, an fheoil ni's millse, Satan ni's cumhachdaiche agus suain chodail an dara bais, eadhon am bas siorruidh a tha faisg air laimh, a fàs ni's trice agus ni's buadhaiche. An sin bi am focal sin air a choimhlionadh, math dh' fheudta, "Ni mise gaire ri 'ur sgrios, ni mi fanoid 'nuair a thig 'ur-n eagal oirbh. Gairmidh sibh orm, ach cha fhreagair mi." A leughadair, "bheil sin air a chiallachadh dhuitsa? Ciod e am fios a th' agadsa nach fheud e bhi?

Eirich, teich, tha an t-slighe romhad, cum direach romhad ach dean cabhag, oh! dean cabhag, dean cabhag. Feuch caithir nan gras an sin Feuch an t-Eadar-mheadhonair sin fà comhair le fuil a' chrathaidh. Seall, 's e Fear-tagraidh a th' aan—ag eadar-ghuidhe airson luchd-eusaontais. Theirig far am bheile 'nad chridhe, cuir aireamh do pheacaidhean 'na laimh. Seall mar a tha e 'gad fhailteachadh le gradh nach gabh bhi air a chur an cainnt, gabh ri crathadh 'fhola air do choguis. Nise tog suas do shuilean, an Ti a tha na shuidhe air an righchaithir, do-fhaicsinneach, 's e an t-Athair siorruidh. An Ti a threoraich thu gus an righ-chaithir so, 's e an Spiorad beannaichte, an Comhfhurtair. An Ti aig am bheil greim fear-daimh air do laimh an lathair na caithreach, 's e Iosa an Slanuighear a dh' fhuiling; agus am beannachd a tha nis a' sruthadh a mach do d' ionnsuidh o'n righ-chaithir 's e 'th' ann slainte shaor, iomlan, air ball agus gu siorruidh.

O Thighearna Dhia gu'n deonaicheadh tu do luchd-leughaidh an leabhraìn bhig so a leithid so de ghras a dh' ionnsuidh na beatha maireannaich Guidheadh mo leughadair gradhach ag radh amen agus amen.

Interesting Family Letter of the Rev. John Munro, Halkirk,

TO A NEPHEW.*

MANSE OF HALKIRK, 4th October, 1839.

MY DEAR H.—I have your letter of December 8th, 1838, before me. I think you have written me since, but I cannot at present lay my hand on your letter. Mr. Matheson of Kilmuir, whom I had the pleasure of seeing at the General Assembly, told me how you then were. You tell me he was very kind to you, and I trust he continues to be so. He is a very kind man.

I trust you and John, your brother, keep worship in the family, and that you pray time about with your dear mother. She will tell you that the Lord was pleased to remove our father from us when we were very young. It is now sixty-two years in July last since the Lord was pleased to take him to his rest. I, who was the eldest of the children, wanted four months of being nine years of age at the time. The Lord took care of us in His great mercy. My brother and sister, who both died in hope, are now removed—my sister in February, 1789, and my brother, who in age was next to me, in February or March, 1805. Your mother can tell you how her mother and mine took her leave of us on a Sabbath evening, at Alness—her last Sabbath on earth, for she died on the Tuesday night of that week. Her parting words to us were, "I have been told that your father's grandmother said that the Lord had given her four sons and two daughters, none of whom the enemy, Satan,

* Hitherto unpublished.—Ed.

should ever see at his fireside. I am not without the same hope concerning you. Follow you the way of the Lord." The last words of my grandaunt, who died at Catewell, in, I think, 1801, about this time of the year, were, "Nach d' thanig am Buachaille gloirmhor? Nach d' thanig am Buachaille gloirmhor?" ("Has not the glorious Shepherd come? Has not the glorious Shepherd come?") She died last of the six, and was the youngest of them. I was credibly informed that her mother, Helen Munro, *alias* M'Gillechriosde, said that as a mark that what she had said of her children would be verified, they would leave the world in the order in which they came into it; which actually came to pass, and thus died the youngest above alluded to.

(*The writer now addresses his nephew's mother, his own sister.*) You, Christian, my dear sister, remember her well. . . . You are the fourth link of the chain who are the Lord's by the father's side—*reckoning downwards from his grandparents.** Alexander Munro and Helen M'Gillechriosde, Hector Munro and Jane Sutherland, Alexander Munro and Janet Munro, *our father and mother*; and the Lord in His great mercy has put it in the power of your children to say, Finlay Ross and Christian Munro. I pray likewise it may be the Lord's will that you survive me. The chain on our dear mother's side is—*reckoning upwards*—Alexander Munro and our mother, *Janet Munro*, John Munro, *her father*, and Elizabeth Mackay, Donald Munro, *her grandfather*, and Catherine Munro, *alias* Buie, and John Munro, *alias* Caird, *her great-grandfather*, Mr. Thomas Hog's disciple. I do not remember to have heard his wife's name.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto Thy name give glory for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake." And have we not cause to be humbled in the dust, to remember and be confounded, and never open our mouth for shame? We with our fathers have sinned, but the Lord is following us, because He is good and His mercy endureth for ever. The fountain promised is opened and is now open. The electing, eternal love of the Father, the redeeming, eternal love of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, and the sanctifying, eternal love of the Spirit, is the same. God in three Persons is love, holy love, wise love, just love, unchangeable love, almighty love. The love of Christ passeth all knowledge, but the knowledge of God Himself. We are in jeopardy every hour, but He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I depend upon Him for keeping me in the world, for warning me daily when I am to leave the world, and let you

* We have inserted these and the following words in italics, in order to make the lists of ancestors plain to the reader. It will be observed that the Rev. John Munro's parents were both Munro to name, and that the famous John Munro Caird of Kiltarn was his great-great-grandfather by his mother's side, and not his father's, as has been sometimes thought. Grace does not run in the blood, but it often runs in the line. This saying is remarkably exemplified in the above.—ED.

and children and all do the same. Here we have no continuing city, let us be looking for one to come, a city having foundations where the weary are at rest.

Write me soon. Mrs. Munro joins with me in offering our kind love to you all. Alexander is in Brodick, of Arran, Argyllshire, mostly, since the middle of July last.—I am, yours affectionately,
JOHN MUNRO.

Remarks on our Synod's Finding last July anent Union.

IN that finding there are three statements made—(1) "It is considered that proposals for union with the Free Church are premature;" (2) "It declares its firm adherence to the position taken up by this Church in 1893, and its sense of the necessity of maintaining unimpaired the doctrines and principles set forth in its Deed of Separation;" (3) "It declares its willingness to receive any who may be ready to homologate the same."

(1) It is a fact painfully apparent to all lovers of the doctrines, principles, and form of worship set up at the Second Reformation in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and embodied in her Confession of Faith Larger and Shorter Catechisms, that there had been for thirty years prior to 1893 wilful and deliberate departures from them by a majority in the Free Church. So painful and serious had these departures become that many of her most loyal sons and daughters were quite alienated from her, and could not recognise her as the Free Church of 1843 long before we separated from her corrupt communion. All these held very dearly the principles for which the Free Church was born, and the doctrines held by her at her beginning. As far back as 1863 it became very manifest that the majority of her ministers were quite willing to unite with the U.P. Church. This Church was Arminian in her doctrines and voluntary in her principles. The union was not to be consummated by the U.P. taking the same position with the F.C., but the F.C. was willing to abandon her own and go over to that of the U.P. Thus the F.C. showed criminal unfaithfulness towards her obligations to the Most High, and also to the never-dying souls of her adherents. Had the Confession of her Faith not been based so clearly upon the written Word of God, and had not all her office-bearers most solemnly vowed (which vows are equal to promissory oaths) to assert, maintain, and defend the said doctrines and principles, and to follow no divisive courses therefrom, the sacrilege would not look so wicked. At the time, owing to the faithfulness of a minority, who threatened to maintain the Free Church as originally constituted, the negotiations for union were abandoned. Immediately the Free Church began to demand the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland on the

voluntary ground that State connection was unscriptural and sinful, one of the very things which these men vowed to maintain!

It is a well-known fact to all readers of Church history that at the Reformation hymns of human composition and instrumental music were thrown away as unscriptural by John Knox and his coadjutors. In the Confession of Faith Psalms only are allowed to be sung, and sung by the human voice. The Free Church introduced hymns first, and shortly afterwards instrumental music. These were two long steps taken on the way to Rome. Then men began to declare within her pale that the Bible is not inspired, that it is full of errors and immoralities, and that the most of it is mere fiction. She honoured these men as far as possible by setting them up in her Divinity Halls to teach her future (and her present) ministers. The Confession of Faith was then assailed, not, however, by argument which could stand before truth, reason, or science, but by sophistry and majorities. The issue was the Declaratory Act. This is a feeble description of some of the things said and done in the Babel out of which we fled in 1893. Those who now sent us this proposal for union remained in that confusion for seven years longer, and for anything known to us to the contrary, they would have been with them still were it not that some of them could not get the screen from Dr. Rainy and his party they desired, to make their capitulation appear a victory in the eyes of their followers. We don't say this of them all. This is our first reason for saying that union proposals are premature.

(2) In the month of October, 1900, the Free Church entered into a union with the U.P. Church. The party who now sent our Synod this proposal for union refused to enter. This meant that one party in the Free Church entered into that union, and another party stood where they were—*i.e.*, they stood that day in the same position ecclesiastically which they held all along since we separated from them in 1893. It was not from a party in the Free Church we separated, but from that Church, as a Church, because she abandoned, by passing the Declaratory Act, her own former testimony to principles and doctrines which we felt bound in our conscience to hold to the end of our life, and which it became impossible any longer to hold in her communion. What did these men do in 1900? They refused to enter into an incorporating union with the U.P. Church. What more? Nothing. They have to-day in their constitution all the innovations which the Free Church introduced into her creed and practice till 1900. If this is not true, where have they renounced these innovations? I don't mean that they practice them all, but I mean that they have not renounced them by any public action of that Church since 1900. This leaves the relative positions of the Free Church and of the F.P. Church just as they were prior to the union in 1900. I don't see how any person who desires truth, and looks at facts as they are, can deny this. It is certainly an easy matter for these men to rectify these things, but it is absolutely beyond the power

of our Synod to unite with them as they are. This is our second reason for considering that negotiations for union are premature.

(3) At their Assembly last May they sent down for the consideration of their several Presbyteries (under the Barrier Act) several resolutions bearing on their position since the Declaratory Act was passed in 1892. In these resolutions they justify themselves all along the line since 1892. Therefore, instead of sending a proposal for union, they should have declared that we were schismatics, and should have asked us to repent of our sins and return to where we came from. For certainly, if they have done what was right we have been all along in the wrong. But who in our Church believes that he did wrong in having kept the original constitution of the Free Church, when men offered to give us a *Tulchan* (a calf's skin filled with straw put standing beside the cow to deceive her in order to get her milk) instead of the real Free Church of Scotland? I know of none, but if there are any the sooner they either change their mind or leave us the better for our Church. It is a most painful thing for us to write or speak against our fellow-men after this fashion, but truth must be declared, and as we have not flinched from doing so when we felt it our duty in the past, we hope in the strength of the Lord to continue doing so. We don't do it from animosity against any man, but from sheer sense of duty. We hope none of our people or of theirs will show any bad spirit towards each other on account of these statements, but that men will calmly reflect whether what has been said is truth or not, without prejudice or bias. For if they pass into law these resolutions, in which they indirectly incriminate our Church, they will have set up a wall of separation for all time coming, if our Church proves faithful to her own Deed of Separation, and they will bind the consciences of their own adherents to approve of every step they have taken since 1892. Several of their followers were not prepared to condemn what we did, but after these resolutions are passed into law they will be bound, in accordance with this new addition to their constitution, to condemn us. There is not a word said against hymns, instrumental music, etc., in this new piece of legislation. These innovations, if they allow them in their constitution (even without legal sanction) will not be dormant very long, but will certainly resuscitate. We humbly beg of them not to leave them there.

The second statement in the Synod's finding is—"It declares its firm adherence to the position taken up by this Church in 1893, and its sense of the necessity of maintaining unimpaired the doctrines and principles set forth in its Deed of Separation." In this statement there are two things to be noticed—(1) The Synod's firm adherence to the position taken up by this Church in 1893. What was that position? The very same position which was held by the Free Church at her beginning.

For a very long period prior to 1843 the civil authorities took upon themselves to interfere with the spiritual independence of

the Church of Scotland. For a long time the Church lay dormant under this sacriligious interference. At last men began in her courts to claim full liberty from that spiritual thralldom. They took up the position held by the Church of Scotland at the Second Reformation—that her jurisdiction was not subordinate to, but co-ordinate with, civil jurisdiction. The civil powers refused to acknowledge this; and therefore, in order to maintain the right of the Church to be ruled by the Word of God, and by her own legally and scripturally constituted courts, independent of the civil authorities in her purely spiritual affairs, she refused their jurisdiction, cast their grievous yoke off her, and became the Church of Scotland Free. (There was no controversy about the duty of the nation, as a nation, to defend and support the Church. This was conceded by all in the Church, and also by the civil powers.) This step made a wide gap between those who remained in and those who came out. Those who remained lost their spiritual independence—that is, they gave up the Church's right to govern herself by her own office-bearers, and in accordance with the Word of God and her Confession of Faith, and became entirely subservient to civil authority. The Free Church claimed to have brought out with her all that belonged to the Church of Christ in Scotland. She looked upon herself as standing on the very foundations laid in our national Zion and set forth in her subordinate standards. The bodies which afterwards formed themselves into the U.P. Church were then existent, but because they had before this time become voluntaries, the Free Church viewed them as holding principles antagonistic to her position. This is stated in the speech delivered by Dr. Chalmers on the day of the Disruption:—"The voluntaries mistake us if they conceive us to be voluntaries. We hold by the duty of Government to give of their resources and their means for the maintenance of a Gospel ministry in the land; and we pray that their eyes may be opened, so that they may learn how to acquit themselves as the protectors of the Church, and not as its corrupters or its tyrants. We pray that the sin of Uzziah, into which they have fallen, may be forgiven them, and that those days of light and blessedness may speedily arrive, when 'kings shall be the nursing-fathers and queens the nursing-mothers' of our Zion. In a word, we hold that every part and every function of a commonwealth should be leavened with Christianity; and that every functionary, from the highest to the lowest, should in their respective spheres do all that in them lies to countenance and uphold it. That is to say, though we quit the Establishment, we go out on the Establishment principle—we quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. To express it otherwise, we are the advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion, and we are not voluntaries." This, in the words of Dr. Chalmers, is the position of the Free Church at her beginning. We took up the same position, and have declared in this

finding our intention of adhering firmly to the same. For we have before our eyes many painful examples of the effect of laxity in holding firmly by the truth of God and the order in doctrine and worship set forth in that Word. Where is that Free Church now?—Broken up into three parties. Why?—Because she did not firmly adhere to her own position. That ought to cause us to be very circumspect, and not walk without God's Word as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

In my own mind I was comparing the Free Church to a large ship on board which there were many officers, a large crew, and a great number of passengers. After a while the officers changed the course, threw away chart and compass, and refused to take advice. A party, seeing that all was gone, and that the end would have to be utter ruin, took to the lifeboat, fled, and made for the land, getting into the right course, and setting chart and compass right, they set forth again on the voyage. After seven years the big ship was broken to pieces upon the rocks, and the most of those on board perished. A party got into a longboat, took with them all the regulations which wrecked the big ship, and began to signal to those in the lifeboat to leave all and come over to their boat.

The second thing to be noticed is—The Synod's sense of the necessity of maintaining unimpaired the doctrines and principles set forth in its Deed of Separation. What are these doctrines and principles? They are the doctrines and principles contained in the Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Why does the Synod express its sense of the necessity of maintaining them unimpaired? For two reasons among many others. First, these are the doctrines and principles of the Word of God, which He, by the hands of His servants at the time of the Reformations, set up in His Church in Scotland, and upon their reception by faith, and holding them firmly to the end, the salvation of perishing sinners, not only in this generation, but to the end of time, depends. Surely, what we cannot be saved without ought, by all means, to be maintained unimpaired. And as, in the good Providence of the Most High, they have been brought to our hand, let us faithfully hand them down to posterity without loosing a pin or a cord of this Tabernacle. Secondly, we have vowed in the most solemn manner imaginable that we would do so. Therefore let us do our duty by fulfilling these vows faithfully; for nothing can exempt us from this obligation. Others felt this necessity so binding that they not only took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, but they were ready to lay down their lives to maintain them unimpaired. They were certainly greater men, but their vows and obligations were not greater than ours. It is my firm conviction that none can stand the trials that are before the Church of Christ in this land but such as keep their eye upon God's truth and the principles and doctrines set forth by His true Church in the world, based upon the truth. We can not, we dare not, we desire no

otherwise. As things stand at present, union is quite impossible. We have taken our position, and we are under a necessity to hold to it, whereas those who desire union with us are not prepared to take up the same; that is clearly their duty, or show what they find wrong in it, but they are on another tack just now. Again, the most pious and intelligent among us are quite as decided as we can be that it is not possible. We claim to have the whole of the creed and principles of the Church of Christ, to abandon any of it would be sufficient to brand us with sacrilege. "Therefore, thus saith the Lord, if thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them." (Jer. xv. 19.)

The last thing in the Synod's finding is—"It declares its willingness to receive any who may be ready to homologate the same." We don't claim to have any monopoly of the great and eternal doctrines and principles set forth in our Deed of Separation. We have from the beginning besought the people to hold by them, and we do the same thing still. We never refused any who in sincerity desired to take up these everlasting and unchangeable truths of God's Word along with us, but we all along, as we do still, declare that we were bound to "hold fast the form of sound words." It is not only the Anti-Unionists, but the whole world, we desire: and daily pray for, that they should be led by the Holy Spirit to hold fast the doctrines and principles of the Reformation. May the Lord, of His infinite mercy, grant that the hearts of the children in this generation may be turned to the father's.

N. C.

The Duty and Privilege of those who have the Bible.

ADDRESS BY MR. GEORGE FORREST, CANADA, AT A BIBLE SOCIETY MEETING.

AS the chief end of man is to glorify God, and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule to direct us how to do so, we need not go beyond the teaching of the Scriptures in treating this subject. For our Lord and Saviour said to the Jews, and to us as well as unto them: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that testify of me." And in searching the Scriptures to which he referred—that is, the Old Testament—we find Moses in his parting address to the Israelites saying to them, "And these words that I command you this day shall be in your heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest

down, and when thou risest up." We ought, then, first of all to search the Scriptures for our own personal benefit, so that we may find eternal life : and we can only obtain eternal life through Jesus Christ, who is the Living Word ; and we can only gain the knowledge of Him through written word.

It is, then, a most solemn duty, as well as a great privilege, to search the Scriptures, so that "these words" shall be in our own hearts. And when we get the Word of God in our heart we are not to keep it shut up there. The next duty of those who have families is to teach them diligently to their children. And, oh, what a solemn duty and responsibility lieth on us in this respect ! If we have the Word of God in our hands and in our hearts it is by the grace of God that it is there, and we are under obligation to Him to hand it down to the generation following, as it was the duty of the former generation to send it down to us. And by the authority of this same Word we are commanded to be diligent in this duty : talking of it when sitting in the house and when walking by the way, when lying down and when rising up ; that is, availing ourselves of every opportunity of instructing our children in the Word of God. And when we consider the awful consequences involved in this duty, how intensely earnest should we be in our efforts to teach our children in this blessed Book. Our Saviour gave the commandment, "Suffer little children to come unto me." But how can they come unto Him if they do not know Him, and they can only get the knowledge of Him in the teaching of this Book ; and no parent can shift this duty from himself to another under the excuse that his children are being taught in the Sabbath School, for no matter how efficient the Sabbath School teacher may be he cannot assume the responsibility of the parent, and it should never be imposed upon him. It is a duty and a privilege which every parent should keep in his own hand ; for his interest in his child and his duty to God both require it at his hands.

This much respecting those who have families. But in searching the Scriptures we find this question : "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" and the question is quite as applicable to young women, and the answer applies equally to both : "By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

Young people are starting out to travel through a world that is full of snares and temptations and dangers, on the right hand and on the left ; but if their minds are well stored with divine truth, and they are ordering their way according to it, it will be to them as a light shining in a dark place, or as a voice behind them saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand or when ye turn to the left."

But there is another duty devolving on those who have the Word of God in their hands. That is obedience to Christ's command : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to

every creature." Perhaps, since the days of the apostles, there has never been so much missionary enterprise as there is at the present time. And we admire the courage and self-denial of those men who leave the comforts of home life to face the difficulties and dangers to which they are exposed in heathen lands. But what could the missionary do without his Bible? Some one has said: "We can trust to send the Bible without the missionary, but we cannot trust the missionary without the Bible." But the Bible Society, in whose interest you are here to-night, is doing a great and noble work in publishing the Word of God in so many languages, and sending it to all parts of the world. It has, in the ninety-seven years of its existence, issued nearly 170 million copies of the Word of God; and when we add to that the issues of the American, Scottish, and German Bible Societies, we are amazed at the pile of Bibles that seem to rise up before us. But, after all, what is that among so many? It is estimated that one-half of the people now living in the world have never yet heard the name of Jesus Christ! And yet "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

This is, indeed, a great number of Bibles. But when we consider the great number that have been worn out or destroyed every year of the Society's life, and the constant demand there is for new Bibles even in Bible lands, the number available for new fields is greatly reduced. When we think of that, and of the vast number of our race that are yet to be supplied—400 millions in China alone, and the vast multitudes in all other parts of the world—the magnitude of the work that the Society has before it is truly appalling. But we may be encouraged by the fact that the work of the Bible Society is in some respects like a prairie fire: as it spreads it throws off sparks which light new fires, each in turn becoming a new centre to send out still more; these all spreading and uniting soon burn over all the place.

So with the Bible Society and its work. Every new field that the Bible enters becomes in turn a new centre of influence to throw out, as it were, sparks into other new fields, and thus will multiply the centres of influence until "the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord." This is no idle dream, for the Lord reigneth, and the *promise* is, that He shall have the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. And the time is approaching when He shall be put in actual possession of this promised inheritance; and by contributing to the Bible Society we can help to bring about this grand result.

The opportunity to do so is a talent given to us by the Lord. May each one of us so occupy it that, when we are called to give our final account, the Master may say unto each of us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The late Malcolm MacCorquodale,

NORTH UIST.

THE October number of our *Magazine* recorded the death of Mr. Malcolm MacCorquodale, who laboured faithfully and assiduously as a Free Presbyterian Church missionary at Claddach, Kirkibost, North Uist. We now propose to give a brief sketch of his life, for his name is worthy of being held in remembrance.

The subject of this memoir was born at Carinish, North Uist, about the year 1821. He thus died in his eighty-first year. At that time those parts of the Outer Islands which were not held under the iron keel of Popery were enveloped in the darkness and ignorance of Moderatism. Many forms of wickedness prevailed, and especially the careless manner in which the Sabbath was observed. Malcolm, though then an unconverted man, was horrified to see how the Lord's day was desecrated by the people. We were informed that this was the means of first bringing him to think seriously of his own lost condition by nature.

The godly Finlay Munro, whose labours were so abundantly blessed throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, visited North Uist while Malcolm was still comparatively young, and was the means of casting an arrow into his heart which went deeper than even his horror of Sabbath desecration. Not only was he led to see himself a guilty, lost sinner before God, but also that "God might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

Shortly after this the Rev. Duncan Maclean and the well-known Rev. Alexander Macintyre visited Uist. They were strongly opposed and persecuted by the Moderates. Malcolm was much cheered on their arrival in Uist, and at once set about to erect a tent from which the strangers could preach. The ground officer, who was much opposed to the evangelists, called on Malcolm's father and threatened that if his son would put up the tent he would be evicted from his croft. The father replied that he would not prevent his son from doing what his conscience told him was right.

After the Disruption of 1843 some eminent ministers came to North Uist, among whom were Messrs. Francis Macbean and Alexander Macintyre. Their labours were greatly blessed among the people. Their keen discernment observed in Malcolm talents above the ordinary, and that should be used for the edification of others. He was accordingly sent to get a thorough knowledge of the Gaelic language.

After being examined by Dr. Begg and Mr. Martin, secretary of the Gaelic School Society, which examination he successfully passed, he was appointed Gaelic teacher of the island of Tiree.

From Tiree he was sent to the parish of Sleat, Skye, where he remained for ten years. In this place his services were much owned by the Lord, and there are still living in Sleat some who can testify that through him they were first led to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

About the year 1870 he was removed from Sleat to his native place, Carinish. The cause of this removal was a disagreement which arose between himself and the Free Church minister, Rev. J. S. Macphail. At that time the question of union between the U.P.s and the Free Church was causing much agitation. Malcolm, who was one of the meekest and most unobtrusive of men, would not suffer his gentleness and modesty to come between him and the cause of Christ, and being convinced that the principles of the Free Church would be sacrificed in that union, he firmly opposed it and faithfully warned the people of the danger of giving it their support. Mr. Macphail, who favoured the Voluntary side, was so much displeased at Malcolm for warning the people that he had him removed to Carinish. While at Carinish his wife, who was a helpmeet indeed, died.

After labouring in this place for three years he was removed to Claddach, Kirkibost. While here he married his second wife, who attended him with great care and tenderness till his death. In Claddach he spent three years, labouring indefatigably in the service of his Master, and was then sent back again to Carinish, where he remained for five or six years, after which he was brought back again to Claddach, where he spent the remainder of his days.

There is reason to believe that the Lord was pleased to acknowledge his services in Uist also. He was a man on whom the cause of Christ lay heavily, and was much troubled at the many declensions of the Free Church. A friend who had the privilege of knowing him well tells us that he felt the passing of the Declaratory Act, in 1892, so keenly that he was confined to bed for some time on account of it.

Malcolm was a most intelligent Christian, and had a firm grasp of the principles and doctrines of the Free Church. He was much cheered by the testimony raised by the Free Presbyterian Church in 1893, and had no hesitation in casting in his lot with it.

He was a man of deep Christian experience. Of him it might be truly said that he mounted up to heaven and went down again to the depths, and his soul was melted because of trouble. The state of his health for some years before his death was very precarious. It was seldom he was permitted to attend the church at Bayhead, yet although weak in body he always conducted his own weekly prayer meeting at Claddach until the very last. He was for about six months before his death confined to bed. In his last days he longed much "to depart

and be with Christ, which is far better." To a friend who often sat beside his deathbed he would say, "Oh, how I long to get to my Father's house."

His daughter was married to Mr. Alexander Macaskill, one of the deacons of the congregation. Of her he spoke frequently the night he died. "I am afraid," he said, "that poor Alexander will shortly lose his wife." At this time Mrs. Macaskill was in her usual state of health. Twelve days, however, after her father's death she was taken seriously ill, and in a few hours died. Mrs. Macaskill had many of her father's qualities, and was a true friend of the cause of Christ.

We sympathise much with Mrs. MacCorquodale and family and the congregation of North Uist. They have lost a dear husband, a loving father, and a true friend. We have also much reason to mourn our own loss as a Church. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

N. M.

Letters of John Sutherland, Badbea,

TO DAVID STEVEN, BOWER.

(I.)

BADBEA, 23rd February, 1841.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My loneliness causes me to take the pen, although I am ignorant how to address you or any of my few friends. I am here as an exile, a long distance from any of my intimate friends.

I have the winter within and without. My very affections are frozen; my understanding, dark; am impenitent and hard-hearted; an alien, without nearness to a throne of grace. Would you not pray for such a creature? Perhaps He may, and will tune this harp yet, and cause me to rejoice in Himself, and to sing in the fires or in the afflictions. If I would get nearness, my mourning would be turned into dancing. But alas! I am always provoking Him with the polluted and evil fountain that is within, the original fountain: it is what comes from the heart that defileth. If ever I had any nearness, I have done as it is contained in Hosea, chapter second, that which made all my mirth to cease. "The joy of the harp ceaseth." It was two Sabbaths that I was out of the house since you saw me. I have been poorly with my head and breast, and my sister has been in extreme pain at times with her usual complaint, which was making me silent.

I want to hear your mind as to what is to come of our harlot mother, the Church of Scotland, which is exalted as high as Capernaum with pride and vainglory. Likely, the boar out of the wood will be allowed to waste her, and scour her, and cleanse her.

You are reading how the suspended ministers did at Marnoch in that congregation. This is the first of the tribulations.

I am much concerned about Lexy Calder's hard trials. I hope she will come out of them as gold tried in the fire. Be you fervently for her case at a throne of grace. I hear that Isabel Polson is much better. She has been poorly lately, more so than usual. If you knew my loneliness, myself and my niece many a night watching my sister, feeling the night so long, you would try to send my watch. At times I have been thinking that I am not coming the way of your mind, and I was more troubled with that thought than the want of the watch.

Be sure to write me, for charity's sake, for I am in a remote place here. Mr. Sinclair, Thurso, is writing me sometimes.—I am, dear friend, yours sincerely,

JOHN SUTHERLAND.

P.S.—Pray that I will get a cow yet, for I lost the cow that I had last week. Best wishes to Alexander Stewart, and let me hear how is he. Remember me to your sister.

J. S.

(II.)

BADBEA, 4th February, 1845.

MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIEND,

My loneliness causes me to take the pen, although I am anxious to hear how is your body. I was writing to Thurso to enquire how you are, but they could not tell me as well as you could do yourself.

I have been poorly since this winter commenced. I have had the winter within and without. The trouble that I have been subject to from my youth, in His good providence, lay heavy on me. I have been fretting like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, although I have been in the school of affliction from my infancy. Oh! I am polluted and poisoned by sin. The more the Lord digs and spares, the more I am sinning. Oh! what patience with a poor hell-deserving sinner; oh! redeeming love, free grace, pardoning mercy. Oh, for saving grace to lay hold on the Father's Beloved; oh, for repentance to mourn as a dove of the valley for my sin, my indwelling sin, for I feel the root of sin daily spreading and cultivating my corrupted faculties, and bringing forth fruit more so than I felt since 30 years. My field is full of evil weeds. Oh! the deceitfulness of my heart above any! I am more in danger of my hypocrisy and formal performances in duties than my actual transgressions.

Oh, dear friend, if you can think of me, for those that were concerned for my soul and body are taken home from the evil that has overtaken us. They are happy that got home to their rest with clean garments. This is a dark day, such as our fathers have not seen. The world is in an awful confusion, and the cause of

Christ very low. Oh! that He would look on the cause which is His own, and that He would not allow Satan and the wicked to trample on the travail of His soul. Oh! the cold wind there is blowing daily to separate in place of to unite and to love each other as brethren.¹ May He rebuke Satan! I am unable to go much abroad. I went to Helmsdale one Sabbath with Donald Mackay, Clashcraggan, and James Elder.

I have heard that dear Mr. Cook of Reay is to be on the 12th instant at Canisbay making elders and deacons. I had a letter lately from Mr. Cook at Inverness; he is bearing testimony for his Saviour, and is much fatigued in his person, but the Lord is good to his soul. I heard that you were not at Wick at the time of the Sacrament, but Mr. Cook was there and some of the friends. I am willing to hear how is Mr. Macbeath² since he is placed in your church. Pray that the Lord would take possession in that building and in all the Free Church, May they succeed!

I want to know how is William Macbeath, Castletown. I hear that he is increasing in love and zeal for his Redeemer's cause. Give my kind respects to Alexander Stewart and to your sister, who is a Martha to you and A. Stewart and many more. My afflicted sister is spared, but still in the furnace, but my niece is with me. Write me by Helmsdale. With such mind as I have, I am often at your house.—I remain, your attached friend,

JOHN SUTHERLAND.

Some Famous Books and their Authors.

BY THE REV. DONALD BEATON, WICK.

V.—BUNYAN'S "PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

IT now remains for us to take up the narrative of Bunyan's life where we left off in last article. After his awakening to a sense of the realities of eternity, he desired to find a preacher who would act to him as a spiritual father; this he found in John Gifford. This man had a remarkable history. At the beginning of the Civil War he was on the side of the King, and had the rank of major in the King's army. In 1648 one more desperate struggle was made to win back the county of Kent for King Charles. The Royalist and Parliamentary forces met at Rochester, but the most desperate part of the fight was at Maidstone. The Parliamentary forces drove the Royalists before them from thicket to thicket until the town was reached. Street by street then was fought for, and what with the groans of the wounded, the warring of the elements—for a storm was raging—and the thundering of artillery, the day came to be

This is an allusion to some local differences among "the men."—ED.

¹ The Rev. John Macbeath, a godly minister, son of William Macbeath, referred to subsequently and afterwards minister of the Original Secession Church, Olrig.
ED

remembered as one of the bloodiest in the history of the Civil War. The battle began at seven in the morning, and it was not until ten o'clock next morning that Fairfax, the commander of the Parliamentary forces, was assured of victory. Three hundred of the Royalists were left dead in the streets, and 1,400 surrendered as prisoners. Among these was John Gifford, and from the prominent part he had taken in the rising he was, with some others, judged worthy of death. The night previous to his execution he was visited by his sister, who, finding his guards drunk, advised him to escape. This he managed to do successfully, and after hiding for some time until the search was over, he went to London, whence he came to Bedford, where he practised as a physician. He led an abandoned life, and was much given to drinking and betting. It so happened that on one occasion, after he had lost heavily in some deal, that he felt his enmity rising against God to an extraordinary degree. While in this state of mind, he read a certain book by one Bolton. Something in this book caught his attention, and so wrought on his mind that he fell under an overwhelming sense of sin. He was in this state for over a month, when God was pleased to discover to him that his sins were freely forgiven; and it is left as a testimony concerning him that after this he never lost the light of God's countenance. not for an hour, with the exception only of about two days before he died. Such is a brief history of the man to whose ministrations Bunyan attended.

Matters went on fairly smoothly at the little church of Bedford until the year 1660, when that ever-to-be-lamented event called the happy Restoration ushered in a state of matters the seeds of which England had to reap with tears. The one man who could guide the ship of state, and stand fearless on the deck amidst the raging waves and contrary winds of a nation's passions and wild desires, was dead, and the man who ascended the English throne, in the person of Charles II., and who was received with the jubilant shouts of the English nation, and, sad to say, the Scottish nation too, was already a perjured wretch, destined to end his days, as he lived them, amid sensuality and vice. The presence of the King in England soon changed matters ecclesiastically. The magistrates at Bedford passed an order for the restoration of the Book of Common Prayer. Bunyan paid no attention to the order, with the result that he found himself charged with "devilishly and perniciously abstaining from coming to church to hear divine service, and for being a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the King." He was ordered to be sent to prison for three months for not attending the parish church. At the end of this time, according to the terms of the Con-

venticle Act under which he was convicted, an opportunity was given him of recanting his former opinions, failing which he was "to abjure this realm of England, and all other the Queen's Majesty's¹ dominions, for ever." Bunyan, of course, had no thought of recanting, and had to spend twelve long and dreary years in prison. During this long imprisonment two familiar friends beguiled the monotony of the years—his Bible and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. This was his library, "The least and the best," says one who visited him in prison, "that ever I saw." It was while in prison he produced many of his works. It was here that the famous *Grace Abounding* was composed. At the end of twelve years Bunyan was released and enjoyed liberty for three years when he was again cast into prison. Dr. Brown, in his *Life of Bunyan*, after a careful study of the subject, gives it as his opinion that it was during this second imprisonment that *The Pilgrim's Progress* was written, and that the prison was the town gaol on Bedford Bridge. The work opens with the striking sentence—"As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted upon a certain place where was a den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream." The work first saw the light in 1678, but was greatly improved upon in later editions. It attracted attention at once, three editions being called for in one year. In 1683 a serious attempt was made by an unknown author to improve upon *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The writer regarded Bunyan's work as written in too light a vein, and by way of a wholesome counteractive made his own so heavy that it has mercifully passed into well-merited oblivion. Other attempts of the same kind were made, to which Bunyan refers at the beginning of his Second Part:

"Some have of late to counterfeit
My *Pilgrim*, to their own my title set;
Yea others, half my name and title too
Have stitched to their own book to make them do;
But yet they by their features do declare
Themselves not mine to be. whosoe'er they are."

This Second Part was published early in 1684. Bunyan has here some of his most beautiful descriptions. The contrast between his description of the Valley of Humiliation in reference to Christian and Christiana is very striking: "To him it was a scene of awful conflict with Apollyon; to her and her companions it was a tranquil dwelling in green pastures and by still waters." Here Mercy found sweet solace to her gentle spirit in the great things done by the King. Mr. Fearing, too, found here something congenial to his austere spirit: "Here he would lie down, embrace the ground, and kiss the very flowers that grew in this valley. He would be up every morning by break

¹ I.e., Queen Elizabeth, in whose reign the Conventicle Act was passed (1593).

of day, tracing and walking to and fro in this valley." "It is a valley to the meek and lowly that is ever green and beautiful with lilies. Our Lord Himself had His country house in this valley, and loved much to be there, loved much to walk these meadows, finding the air pleasant." The Second Part is generally recognised as not such a finished production as the First, but it bears the impress of Bunyan's unrivalled genius, and is by no means an unworthy successor to the First Part. As to the originality of this work, there has been a great deal of useless writing. Dr. Brown in his biography has discussed the matter as fully as there is any need for, and he concludes by saying that on this question Bunyan has spoken with unmistakeable plainness:

"Some say *The Pilgrim's Progress* is not mine
Insinuating as if I would shine
In name, and fame, by the work of another."

To this he answers:

"Manner and matter, too, was all mine own,
Nor was it unto any mortal known
Till I had done it. Nor did any then
By books, by writs, by tongues, or hand or pen,
Add five words to it, or wrote half a line
Thereof: the whole and every whit is mine."

Well may Dr. Brown say that a testimony like this from such a man is decisive. As a mere literary production it is one of the great masterpieces of literature. Its perfect spontaneousness, its freedom from signs of toil, its lack of inartistic traces, have made it to be read by men who would spurn its teaching were it presented in another form. Macaulay's essay and Froude's sketch of Bunyan are examples of how men of the world regard this work as one of the treasures of the literary world. But whatever be its place in literature, and that does not so much concern us here, its place as a religious classic is supreme—it stands peerless among the works of men. No book, after the Bible, has had such a circulation. Its remarkable delineation of Christian character appeals to the true child of God, whether he be under the inclement skies of our northern climes or under the clear blue skies of Africa. Its fine balance, lack of exaggeration, and the remarkable power of giving feelings and experiences all the reality and vividness of living persons, appeals alike to the understanding and the imagination with a fascinating power. Innocence, Prudence, Piety, and Discretion cease to be mere abstractions after Bunyan's magic pen has described them. With what masterly but simple touches he makes Pliable, Giant Despair, and Talkative stand out before us, and their characters are forever impressed upon our minds as objects of commiseration, dread, or pity. But after all explanations have been given of the spell that this book has exercised over young and old, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, since it was first published, it may be safely said that, after all, the true explana-

tion of this fascination is its humanness. It describes the struggles of the human heart, its fears, its hopes; it tells of the present condition of things, and points forward to the things that are yet to come. These, after all, are the most momentous questions that are forever rising up before the human mind and crying aloud for solution. And when it is borne in mind that all these questions are dealt with as the Bible deals with them, and that the solutions that Bunyan gives are the solutions that the Bible gave, one can then understand how *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been of such interest to the children of God of every country and time.

One might thus go on speaking of this wonderful book; but this article will not have been written in vain if it sends back some of its readers to the study of a book that they may have read in early years, enjoying its beautiful and homely descriptions while they little understood or appreciated its spiritual meaning. It has been translated into French, German, Gaelic, Dutch, Welsh, Irish, Swedish, Polish, Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Finnish, Lettish, Esthonian, Russ, Eskimo, Servian, Bulgarian, Bohemian, Roumanian, Slavonian, Breton, Italian, Spanish, Modern Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, etc., in all, ninety-five languages and dialects. Various attempts have been made to improve it—Arminians would like it to speak their theology, and Ritualists have foolishly attempted to turn the Pilgrim into one deeply concerned for such important questions as the eastern position, etc.; but all these have miserably failed.

Perhaps, by way of conclusion, an extract or two may be given as an illustration of Bunyan's style and his power in delineating Christian experience. Here, for instance, is Mr. Greatheart's description of Mr. Fearing—one of the finest pieces in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Honest asks Mr. Greatheart, "Well, then, pray let us hear a little of him, and how he managed himself under your conduct?" Greatheart replies: "Why he was always afraid that he would come short of whither he had a desire to go. Everything frightened him that he heard anybody speak of, if it had the least appearance of opposition in it. I have heard that he lay roaring at the Slough of Despond for above a month together; nor durst he, for all he saw several go over before him, venture, though they many of them offered to lend him their hands. He would not go back again neither. The Celestial City—he said he should die if he came not to it; and yet he was dejected at every difficulty, and stumbled at every straw that anybody cast in his way. Well, after he had lain at the Slough of Despond a great while, as I have told you, one sunshiny morning, I don't know how, he ventured, and so got over, but when he was over he would scarce believe it. He had, I think, a Slough of Despond in his mind, a slough that he carried everywhere with him, or else he could never have been what he was. So he came up to the gate, you

know what I mean, that stands at the head of this way, and there also he stood a good while before he would venture to knock. When the gate was opened, he would give back and give place to others, and say that he was not worthy. For all he got before some to the gate, yet many of them went in before him. There the poor man would stand shaking and shrinking; I dare say it would have pitied one's heart to see him. . . . When we went also from the house Beautiful, down the hill, into the Valley of Humiliation, he went down as well as ever I saw a man in my life; for he cared not how mean he was, so he might be happy at last. Yea, I think there was a kind of sympathy between that valley and him; for I never saw him better in all his pilgrimage than when he was in that valley. Here he would lie down, embrace the ground, and kiss the very flowers that grew in this valley (Lam. iii. 27-29). He would now be up every morning by break of day, tracing and walking to and fro in the valley. But when he was at the entrance of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I thought I should have lost my man: not for that he had any inclination to go back; that he always abhorred; but he was ready to die for fear. Oh, the hobgoblins will have me, the hobgoblins will have me, cried he; and I could not beat him out on't. He made such a noise, and such an outcry here, that had they but heard him it was enough to encourage them to come and fall upon us. But this I took very great notice of, that this valley was as quiet when we went through it as ever I knew it before or since. I suppose those enemies here had now a special check from our Lord and a command not to meddle until Mr. Fearing had passed over it. It would be too tedious to tell you of all, we will therefore only mention a passage or two more. When he was come to Vanity Fair, I thought he would have fought with all the men in the fair. I feared there we should both have been knocked on the head, so hot was he against their fooleries. Upon the Enchanted Ground he was also very wakeful. But when he was come at the river where was no bridge, there again he was in a heavy case. Now, now, he said, he should be drowned forever, and so never see that Face with comfort that he had come so many miles to behold. And here also I took notice of what was very remarkable: the water of that river was lower at this time than ever I saw it in all my life; so we went over at last, not much above wetshod. When he was going up to the gate I began to take leave of him, and to wish him a good reception above. So he said, I shall, I shall; then parted we asunder, and I saw him no more. Then it seems he was well at last, says Honest. Yes, yes, says Great-heart; I never had a doubt of him. He was above many tender of sin: he was so afraid of doing injuries to others that he would deny himself of that which was lawful, because he would not offend." The description of Christian's passing over the river—his fears and his assuring cry at last as he felt the bottom, "Oh,

I see Him again!"—and the concluding scene of the Second Part where the other pilgrims pass over to the Celestial City, are scenes as impressive and touching as can be read in our language.

A Country of Corruption.

ARGENTINA RAVAGED BY EXTRAVAGANT GOVERNMENT.

THE *Morning Post* publishes the revelations of Argentina corruption and misgovernment which are appearing in a Rome paper. The description is startling.

Politics are a lucrative profession because of the opportunities they afford of stealing public money. The army has one officer for every five men. The police, who have many criminals among them, are more dangerous than useful.

Argentina, though six times as large as Germany, and very fertile, has more than 10,000 unemployed in a total population of 5,000,000.

DEBT, £15 PER INHABITANT.

Its debt amounts to £80,000,000, or more than £15 a head of the population, and nearly all its railways, and most of its public works, are owned by foreigners.

The public extravagance is shown by the water reservoir of Buenos Ayres, built in the form of a French Renaissance castle, the external decoration of which alone cost £100,000.

In the little city of Cordova there are more than 400 gaming houses. Usury prevails to an astonishing extent, the usurers lending money at rates varying from 5 to 20 per cent. per month.

Lastly, there is no justice, the police even committing murder, of which they escape the penalty by being allies of those in authority.

The Church of Scotland and the Education Bill.

WE are glad to see that *Saint Andrew*, the weekly organ of the Church of Scotland, has a clear and sympathetic account of the Nonconformist objections to the Education Bill. Our contemporary says:—

"In great numbers of the voluntary schools the religious teaching of the present day is not that of the standard of the Protestant Church of England. It is the teaching, either imparted by the parson himself, or under his immediate eye, by the schoolmaster, who must do his bidding, or trudge. There is no real meaning in calling the party in the English Church which is at present the most indefatigable the "High Church" party. The party is Romanist, pure and simple; and it is devoting itself to the uprooting of the Protestantism of the young people of England. . . . Can we wonder at the intelligent Nonconformist revolting against his

children being brought under the fatally sinister influence here referred to, and, knowing the close connection between Church and school; resolving that he will resist with all his might the perpetuation of a system in which general control of the public schools shall be in the hands of men who openly inculcate the doctrine of the corporeal presence, baptismal regeneration, prayers for the dead, the duty of confession, adoration of saints, etc., and who beguile the children of their schools to believe in the idolatry of the mass, with the incense and candles and all the other paraphernalia under which they have disguised the Lord's Supper.

Literary Notice.

"THE 'MEN' OF SKYE." By RODERICK MACCOWAN
Glasgow: John M'Neilage.

THE inner history of religion in Scotland will probably never be written. We are fallen on evil days. The days when true godliness flourished to any great extent in our country are fading into a shadow, and any attempt now made to catch the features of this shadow must fall very far short of a successful picture of the great days that our land has known. In the ordinary histories of the Church attention is devoted mainly to the outward concerns of the visible kingdom of Christ, and when reference is made to the working of the leaven in the measures of meal, the reference is but wide and general. Perhaps this could not be well avoided, in view of the plan on which such works are generally executed. But all the same an opportunity has been lost—lost beyond hope of satisfactory recall—an opportunity of transmitting to future ages the features of the religious life of past days.

There are certain books in particular in which one might naturally expect a warm spiritual breath owing to the subject they deal with, and in which the reader is doomed to be disappointed if he would have something more than the formal and the outward. The history, for instance, of the Secession, if it was written by a man of the warm Evangelical spirit that animated the founders of that body might in small compass, and yet with great effect, have handed down to degenerate days a living record of the piety that acted as a preserving salt in many parts of the country during the blight of the Moderate ascendancy. John Newton suggested an idea with regard to Church history that was taken up and carried out by the brothers Milner (Isaac and Joseph)—the idea of tracing a succession through the ages, not of bishops or of popes, not of doctors nor of systems, but of true and hearty spiritual Christianity. Some such idea might have served as the peg on which a very instructive account of what was best in Scotland since the Reformation might be hung.

It is true that there are many biographies, collections of anecdote, diaries, and letters that still survive, and give one ground to

go upon in endeavouring to realize what the Gospel once wrought in our land, but what is needed is a gathering together of the scattered rays to one focus, so that the light may shine in all its clearness. It goes without saying that high qualities alike of heart, taste, and judgment are required for the satisfactory appreciation of the materials that yet survive for the marshalling of these into order, and for their exhibition in a proportion that would do justice to the subject in hand.

While these remarks bear on a general account of the triumph of truth, we do not mean to assert, or even to insinuate, that parts of the subject have not been handled in a satisfactory, and even in a final way. Such performances, for instance, as Moody Stuart's "Reminiscences of John Duncan," or Kennedy's sketch of the minister of Killearnan, are possessions for the ages, so long as the memory of Scottish piety shall last. Other workers, too, there have been in this field whose work is worthy of grateful remembrance, and now in the book we have under review an addition is made to the works that occupy themselves with these inner facts of the Kingdom of God.

The awakening of the Highlands affords an interesting chapter in the progress of the Gospel throughout Scotland. It was later by a long interval of time than that of many parts of the Lowlands. In the Highland clergy of Stuart times, arbitrary civil power usually had its most obedient tools within the pale of the Church, and with the case standing thus, it was not to be expected that the people, fed by ignorant and ungodly shepherds, should differ materially from their guides. There were, however, exceptions, and civil tyranny, that sore vexed the Church of Scotland, sometimes overreached itself, and was made the instrument of defeating its own ends in after days. That Bruce of Kinnaird, Dickson of Irvine, or Rutherford of Anwoth should be sent out of the way to the northern parts was not, we may well believe, altogether without fruit. Hog of Kiltearn, MacGilligan, and Fraser of Brea, with their contemporaries that suffered more or less during the great persecution, linked the martyred south-west with the hitherto unresponsive north-east. It is interesting in looking over a list of the Bass prisoners for religion to see what a proportion there is of northern names. If the north, however, was adorned with a witnessing remnant, it was also disgraced by such men as Mackenzie of Rosehaugh and the Highland host that plundered the districts where there was a most faithful adherence to the principles of better days. In the succeeding generation, just when a great decay overtook the places where formerly the Gospel was most prosperous, the light began to burn brightly on both sides of the Moray Firth, alike in Moray and Nairn on the south and in Ross-shire and Sutherland on the north. This flourishing period in some of these districts lasted down to the end of the eighteenth century, in others down to a comparatively late date in the nineteenth. The western seaboard of the Highlands was not yet

illuminated. It is true that the Whig ministers, as they were called, who were settled in the Jacobite district of Western Ross-shire were some of them eminent men of God, whose labours were crowned for the ingathering of souls to Immanuel; and in Loch Carron, before the end of the eighteenth century, Lachlan Mackenzie was a bright and shining light. Still, it is not a hundred years since the light of the Gospel irradiated with power the islands of the Western Sea. The Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire were drawing to a close when the time to favour these islands—even the set time—came.

In the darkest days of Moderatism the Church of Scotland lacked not an Evangelical remnant throughout the south country, and shortly after their strength seemed to be quite gone, and the Church, as a Church, ceased to protest against the grievance of patronage, that was responsible for so many of its evils, there were signs of reviving to be seen. Just when the Secession was departine from its original steadfastness, and the influence of party spirit in politics showed itself in their incipient Voluntarism, these tokens of reviving were given.

The last decade of the eighteenth century gave birth to the modern missionary societies. The founding of the Baptist Missionary Society was followed by the journeys to Scotland of Andrew Fuller and others like-minded. The founding soon after it of the London Missionary Society, as it was undenominational, occasioned the coming together of live coals from many Churches, and along with this there was an impetus given to aggressive work among the home heathen. The founding of these societies was a symptom of life in springtime coming through the dead earth. When they were founded attention was excited and directed to the end they had in view, and they were the occasion of a general stirring up. Every true revival comes from above, and wherever it is there will be found a plain setting forth of those things that are foolishness to the natural man. So it was at this time. Men at one with regard to the cardinal verities of Scripture co-operated cordially in the furtherance of the Redeemer's kingdom, and, as the budding of that plant of renown, that forced its way through a stubborn soil after the long winter of neglect, we find that efforts were made to disseminate not only useful tracts and books, but also, and especially, the Scriptures themselves. The founding of the Bible Society was one of the links in the chain of events that brings us down to the prevalence of Evangelical truth in the islands of our North-Western Sea.

About a hundred years ago the Gaelic translation of the Scriptures was executed, and through the exertions of the noble S.P.C.K. and of the Bible Society. in a few years large editions of the Gaelic Bible and Testament were printed. The S.P.C.K., by its schools, its catechists, and missionaries, had done much before these days, and we should never forget the debt our country is under to its high Christian aims and to the character and influence

of many of its agents. Now, however, the Scriptures, alike of the Old and of the New Testaments, were translated into Gaelic and published, but that they might be of extensive use, it was requisite that the people of the Highlands should be taught to read in their own language. There were parish schools and S.P.C.K. schools in many parts, but unfortunately, as a rule, Gaelic reading was not taught in them. They were attended by comparatively few of the children, and so the reading community in the Highlands was far from being numerous. That the Scriptures, now rendered into their own tongue, might profit them, the people must learn to read, and this necessarily called into existence the Gaelic Schools' Society, and led the S.P.C.K. to introduce into some at least of their schools the teaching of Gaelic reading.

The Society for Gaelic Schools did noble work in its day. Its founders were Christopher Anderson, a Baptist minister in Edinburgh; James A. Haldane, the famous evangelist; and Thomas Macrie, the biographer of Knox. It was undenominational; but, founded by men of God, it endeavoured to secure as its agents men full of the Holy Ghost, who should be fit teachers of their fellows. The "Day" will declare what the fruits of their labours were; but we may safely say that this was one of the most powerful and blessed evangelising agencies employed by the Lord for His work in our Western Highlands.

It was about the time that the Scriptures were published in Gaelic, and the Gaelic schools set on foot, that the awakening in Skye began. God's ways are in the sea and His paths in the mighty waters. When the slumber of death was to be broken in Skye it was no prominent man in the religious world that was employed as the Lord's messenger. It was a blind catechist that was called to this work. The story of Donald Munro is very interesting. What he was and what he came to be cast light, the one on a chapter of the history of Skye that was closing, the other on a chapter that was opening. His call by grace is one incident of the movement among the dry bones that characterised the closing years of the eighteenth century.

The brothers Haldane were raised up by God for a noble work, and the appreciative and interesting life of these worthies, written by Alexander Haldane (James' son—the editor of the evangelical Church of England *Record*, and the yokefellow in many a noble enterprise with the great Lord Shaftesbury) gives us glimpses of what the Highlands, and many parts of the Lowlands, were in those days. Sometimes there are errors of detail in describing the districts through which first James Haldane and Aikman passed, and then James Haldane and John Campbell (whose acquaintance we were making last month in his letter to John Newton). When they passed through Gaelic districts where there was little English, their information as to the state of religion was at fault, though through no blame of theirs. In the life of John Campbell there are notices of the brotherly intercourse he

had with worthies in the North that had both Gaelic and English—such as William Fraser of Tomnahurich, Inverness, who, when George Cowie of Huntly came to Inverness, took him to Glenurquhart and other Gaelic districts, and acted as his interpreter. In cases where the evangelists could get information from such sources their recorded impressions were of value; but in their journey through Ross-shire and Sutherland into Caithness they were to a great extent unaware of the influence exercised by such men as Calder of Ferintosh, Bayne of Kiltarlity, Macadam of Nigg, and many of their brethren in Ross-shire. We were saying that the *Life* of the Haldanes gives many glimpses of the state of North and South in their days, and among the most interesting of these is the notice taken of the labours of Mr. Farquharson, one of Robert Haldane's agents. Along Loch Tay this devoted man's labours were very much blessed, and there was a gracious work begun that was continued under the ministry of one of his converts, Mr. Kennedy of Aberfeldy, afterwards Congregational minister at Inverness. This Mr. Farquharson went to America, but on his way thither he "must needs" wait in Skye, and under his preaching blind Donald Munro, the godless catechist, was converted and became as a little child.

We do not go further in the way of tracing the awakening of Skye, but refer our readers to Mr. MacCowan's pages for an account of some of the most noted worthies that were raised up in his native island. We have read his work with great interest, and feel indebted to him for much information with regard to men of whom the world was not worthy. A distinct service has been done to the memory of the Fathers of Skye. Of course, a great part of the accounts of the earlier men is from tradition. But the tradition is recent, and the remembrance of these men has been kept up in many places beyond the coasts of Skye, and the existence of collateral lines of tradition bearing practically identical witness to the life and sayings of these worthies is confirmatory of the general accuracy of Mr. MacCowan's sketches.

If access were possible to the old reports of the S.P.C.K. and the Society for Gaelic Schools, no doubt much valuable information might be unearthed to cast light on the transformation that came over not only Skye but many other places where the agents of these societies laboured. We have left ourselves no space to illustrate by specimens the character of this book. Let our readers make themselves acquainted with it. Skyemen in particular, wherever they are, will naturally feel interest in what bears on so notable a phase of their past history. In assessing the value of any performance men may have regard not only to what has been done, but also to what might have but has not been done. In an author's first work immaturity of thought and defective execution may be well expected; but though traces of both are to be found in this volume, it is pleasing to find that

there is so little of either. At times there are references to questions of mainly local and private interest in which the writer is inclined to state very positively his own sentiments; and in the translation of some verses that occur in the course of the narrative there is much to be desired. In this latter fault Mr. MacCowan is not alone, as in few attempted translations of Gaelic poetry that we have come across can we say that anything like justice has been done to the original. These, along with the insertion of some of the verses in the appendix, are the chief blemishes of the volume before us. With these small deductions we must give our author the credit of having done what he could to embalm worthily the memory of some of the excellent of the earth.

J. M.

Obituary Notice.

WE record this month with sorrow the death of the godly John Macrae, Lochinver, at the advanced age of about 89 years. He entered into rest on Sabbath, 7th December. The fathers are passing away. What need there is that young men should be raised up by the grace of God to fill their places!

Notes and Comments.

Communions.—Dumbarton, 2nd Sabbath of this month; Inverness, 4th. We are asked to call attention to the fact that the winter Communion at Inverness is changed from the 3rd to the 4th Sabbath of this month.

Trial of the late Mr. Kensit's Alleged Murderer.—The trial of John M'Keever for the murder of Mr. John Kensit, the Protestant lecturer, is now past. The verdict of the jury was "not guilty." The evidence largely turned upon the point as to whether M'Keever was the assailant or not. It was affirmed that it was another man named M'Loughlin who threw the missile. The majority of the doctors clearly averred that Mr. Kensit's death was due to the wound received.

Mr. J. A. Kensit coming to Glasgow.—Mr. John Alfred Kensit, son of the late Mr. John Kensit, the Protestant witness, is expected to address two public meetings in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Tuesday, the 13th inst. An afternoon meeting will (D.V.) be held at 4 o'clock—subject, "Our Fight for the Truth"—and an evening meeting at 8 o'clock when the subject will be, "A Call to the Nation." A collection is to be taken for the Wycliffe Preacher's Fund.

"Silver and Gold have I None."—This was the true confession of the holy apostle whose character and office the Popes of Rome profess to reproduce age after age for

the benefit of mankind. Between, however, a Pope wallowing in material wealth and an apostle rich only in the heavenly riches there seems to be little congruity. Four hundred years ago the Popedom was an extensive earthly kingdom with possessions in the Mediterranean, and Luther sarcastically addresses Leo the Tenth, "I salute thee, Peter! fisherman at Bethsaida and king of Sicily!" The scandalous acquisitiveness of the Papacy has, however, been curbed since the Reformation, but shorn as he is the Pope is still a strong financial force. The present Pope, it is reported, has this year received Christmas gifts to the amount of half a million. The capacity for giving on the part of the dupes of Popery, and the strong propensity for receiving on the part of the officials of the hierarchy are both great, and they have their explanation in the very nature of the Papal system. The priest has no softening home influences to be a counteractive to the sordid natural instincts of fallen man, and the whole army of priests are (with few exceptions) as destitute of any experience of the powers of the world to come as were the ancient Pharisees, hence the abandoned sacerdotal heart gravitates to what is earthly and sensual. Gluttony and avarice are well known features of the Romish priesthood. Mr. O'Donnell, in his "Ruin of Education in Ireland," gives many glaring instances of priests and bishops accumulating vast fortunes in poor Irish dioceses. The day of the ascendancy of these agents of slavery and superstition seems again returning. There remains much wealth and spoil of an effete Protestantism to be taken, and one and another of them may say with the self-satisfied devourer of the ancient time, "My hand has found as a nest the riches of the people."

The Puritan Quarterly.—This is a new departure in the literature of the Kingdom of Heaven. In the universal decay of good reading that now obtains and the inordinate activity of printing presses in multiplying the means of bad reading, doubtless the eye of the Lord is upon any sincere effort to keep His cause alive by printing and publishing that which is acceptable, even words of truth. This new quarterly is a praiseworthy effort in that direction. The contents are varied and judiciously short. As its name indicates, the theology enshrined here is that despised, old-fashioned sort which is even now calmly awaiting a resurrection to newness of life. There is in this first issue a useful exposure of the errors and fallacies inherent in Dr. Watson's (Ian Maclaren's) book, "The Doctrine of Grace." In undertaking such a project the promoters run considerable risk, and have even now expended a substantial sum. Probably they do not expect any extravagant return for their pains, but they doubtless hope the Quarterly will honestly justify itself as a business item. The Publishers are Messrs. Wheeler & Co., 17 Paternoster Row, London. It is well printed and nicely got up. The price is sixpence per quarter.