

THE

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. VIII.

OCTOBER, 1903.

No. 6.

A Modern View of "The Next Revival."

IT is one of our efforts in these columns to keep our readers acquainted with the general current of religious thought and practice at the present time, and to point out its usually erroneous character and tendency. The utterances of the men who are the leaders of the multitude are always to be noted in this connection, as they supply us with some distinct indications as to the actual state of affairs within the larger religious bodies, and as to the direction in which the tide of events is moving. The more light we get on matters pertaining to the popular religion of the day the more we are confirmed in our opinion that the old paths are the right paths, the paths which lead to true success in the end, and that all deviations from the doctrine and practice of God's Word are fraught with far-reaching issues of evil and destruction.

The Rev. John Watson, D.D., of Liverpool, a gentleman who combines with the office of preacher the work of writing novels under the name "Ian Maclaren," is one of the leaders referred to. A recent address of his to the students of Bristol Baptist College (which was published in the *British Weekly* of September 24th) presents some points on the condition of the times worthy of note and criticism. His subject is "The Next Revival."

In the opening part of his address, Dr. Watson frankly admits that the Church is at present in a declining and degenerate condition. This admission is of considerable importance, as the speaker is one who is in the full swim of popular religious life. It also gives a pretty strong set-back to those who are constantly enlarging upon our advanced Christian enlightenment and progress, and who unblushingly affirm that the pulse of the Church was never in a healthier condition than it is at present. Dr. Watson's very first words are:—"No serious person, whether he be religious or non-religious, can look out upon society in our day without being depressed and alarmed. There is a general unsettlement, both of beliefs and of institutions . . . an exhausted atmosphere

in which it is difficult to breathe, and which is apt to be charged with noxious germs." It appears from this that things are so bad that people with no religion can observe the disorder and spiritual poverty that prevail. He then proceeds to declare that "if there is one thing for which the Christian Church should be praying to-day, and which above all others she needs, it is a repetition" of that spiritual movement which marked the first century of the Christian era, which visited the nations at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and which was also felt in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "Very likely," he says, "the Christian Church in our country has to-day more buildings, owns more property, and raises more money, has more officials and more elaborate machinery than at any previous date, and it may also be argued that the influence of Christ's Spirit is extensively diffused through society, and indicates itself by many a beneficent charity, but it still remains that everyone who wishes well to religion has grave cause for concern. The attendance on public worship is steadily decreasing, the grasp of spiritual realities is consciously relaxing, the enthusiasm for Christ's Cross is fading, and the light of hope and triumph is dying from the brow of faith." This is Dr. Watson's estimate of the religious world of to-day in which he lives and moves, and we believe it to be a very correct one. No doubt he is sanguine in his anticipations for the future—the present is the night before the morning—but all the same he draws a dark picture that would be treated with scorn and contempt if it had come from anyone who stands aloof from the popular religion of the time. We are indebted to him for his plain speaking, but we are sorry that we are compelled to draw attention to the fact that his exposure casts a damaging reflection upon that kind of gospel which he and others of similar ideas have been preaching and propagating throughout the country for many years. It is clear that their newer and more human gospel has wrought no deliverance in the land; it has possibly made people think that Christianity is a very light affair that can be dispensed with with comparatively little loss, or that it may be safely held along with secularity of spirit and constant indulgence in all manner of social vanities.

Dr. Watson's words, however, imply that there was a time when church attendance was more general, the grasp of spiritual realities stronger, and the enthusiasm for Christ's Cross more intense. When was this time, we may ask? Was it not when the general professing Church held with deep conviction that the Bible was the unerring Word of God, when preachers impressed upon their hearers the infinite importance of things unseen and eternal, the never ending issues for weal or woe of their personal acceptance or rejection of the gospel, and when they proclaimed with burning earnestness as the one way of salvation to fallen men, not an impossible "Do and live" system, but "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." the atoning Redeemer and life-giving Saviour of the

lost? Will Dr. Watson venture for a moment to assert that the proclamation of these truths was a mere coincidence with the spiritual vitality of the times? No; he distinctly admits that the one fact was the direct cause of the other. Now, is it not as clear as a moonbeam that it is because the same gospel is not preached, that the results are not the same? The decay of spiritual life has been coincident with the gradual departure of that gospel that was instrumental, under the Spirit of God, of producing and sustaining it. No doubt it's possible for the true gospel to be preached and at the same time no abiding impression be made, through the absence of the Holy Spirit, but Dr. Watson speaks of a religious decay of such a deep and widespread character that can only be accounted for by the manifest fact that the same necessary and saving truths are not preached to the people as were in former times.

It may be seen, however, that our lecturer has no right appreciation of the true gospel when we note that he praises very highly the religious movement which took place among young men under the late Professor Drummond as belonging to the best kind of revivals. Seriously defective as was Moody's evangelism, Drummond's was radically worse. So far as we have observed, the latter had scarcely one thoroughly sound idea about man's state as a sinner or the way of salvation by Christ. His gospel was just a new and beautifully-worded version of the old corrupt theory of salvation by the works of the law—the theory varnished over with the name of Christ.

In view of all circumstances, the ecclesiastical and literary position he occupies and so forth, Dr. Watson gives a remarkably fair view of the disease which affects the modern religious world, but when he comes to the remedy, "*The Next Revival*," he is not so satisfactory. He first recurs to the circumstance that there were certain special truths which stood out conspicuously in connection with former great revivals, and that these truths were called for by the particular circumstance of the time, "*The Reformation*, for instance," he says, "rested on the doctrine of justification by faith. . . . The great idea in the Puritan revival was the sovereignty of God." With later movements he associates other special messages, and he infers from these particulars that any new revival will have a special message of its own. So far right. But when he comes to speak of the new message, he presents it in terms that we cannot accept, in terms, in fact, that are at variance with the character of any true revival of genuine Christianity. He considers that religion in the past was too individualistic and not considerate enough of the welfare of others. There is no doubt that such a thing as selfishness among professing Christians has existed in all ages, but we consider the following an absurd travesty of the true Christianity of the past or of any age:—"Dying people of say 1850 were solely concerned with the question of what would become of themselves on the other side; dying

men of to-day forget themselves in thinking of what is to become of their wives and children." He further describes the present attitude to religion—"A sermon on the hell beyond the grave would be heard with indifference, a sermon on the hell in the east end of cities will lay hold on every man's mind. . . . Rightly or wrongly people do not wish to escape from the wreck if their ship-mates are to perish. They want to see the whole crew saved together. . . . The sense is creeping over the community that socially and physically we stand together, and religion cannot remain a water-tight compartment of selfishness." Now, it is all very well in this loose dashing manner to set forth the duty of seeking the salvation of others as well as of ourselves, but it is utterly absurd to imagine that sinners can be saved in any way but individually. There is absolutely no such thing as salvation in the mass. Every adult soul that ever has been or shall be saved must be awakened to concern about his or her own personal salvation. And "the whole crew" will never be saved, for multitudes deliberately refuse salvation and die in their sins impenitent and unbelieving.

Dr. Watson's idea is that under the next revival religious people will go forth to the masses and work for their social and physical betterment, "The new prophet that will arise will preach the gospel of social deliverance." He will insist upon freedom and comfort for the poor and the oppressed; better wages, more comfortable houses, free access to education and other social improvements. "When the West-end, the dwelling-place of Simon the Pharisee, takes on its shoulders, as never yet has been done, the burden of the East-end, and is prepared to make sacrifices, and to agonise till its misery be relieved, then will the East-end be ready to hear the gospel of Christ's salvation, and just as the Church establishes the kingdom of heaven on earth shall she be able to commend the kingdom of heaven in the soul."

Now, throughout Dr. Watson's delineation of the new social gospel and the next revival there is a serious fallacy. He omits to notice how the mighty change is to be effected in the religious people in the West-end, or, for that matter, in the debased people of the East-end. Is it by mere insistence on their social duties that the West-end people are to be brought to the great task of helping the poor and debased? Nothing could be further from the mark. These rich people must first be regenerated by the Spirit of God before they will make the sacrifices and put forth the efforts on behalf of their less favoured brethren which Dr. Watson requires of them. It is because they, with all their pretensions to religion, are still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity that they exert no good influence on the home, the shop, or the office, and do not even perform a particle of what they might do for the moral or social uplifting of their fellows. The true gospel of Christ must be preached to the rich, otherwise there is little hope of their regeneration. But is a gospel of social

deliverance sufficient for the reformation of the lapsed masses? Is it not the case that though every person of the baser sort should get a comfortable home to-morrow, he or she would speedily turn it into a hell unless the power of sin were broken? Far be it from us to depreciate any right effort for the well-being of the miserable and destitute; but nothing less than the preaching of the gospel with the power of the Spirit to rich and poor alike will produce any mighty revolution in the present condition of society.

The leading messages of former true revivals dealt with the fundamental needs of man's soul, not merely with relative duties. Ruin by the Fall, Redemption by the blood of Christ, and Regeneration by the Holy Ghost were doctrines that were invariably insisted on in times of awakening and refreshing from the presence of the Lord. To preach, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," however important the obligation, and no matter what the peculiar circumstances of the times, without also a full and preliminary declaration of the former fundamental truths, is like attempting to build a house without a foundation, or like requiring fruit without a root. Dr. Chalmers, in the first part of his career, at Kilmany, preached with great eloquence moral and social duties, apart from evangelical truth, but he saw no reformation among the people; it was only when he was led by God's Spirit to declare the fundamental truths of the gospel that he observed any change for the better among his hearers. Let Dr. Watson then, and all like-minded, be assured of this, that they have not yet found out the secret of the regeneration of society, if they imagine it is to be done by a new gospel of social deliverance. They must go back to the old gospel which the Lord blessed in former times to the conversion of multitudes and to the making of many wildernesses blossom as the rose. When we ask them to go back to the old gospel, they are not to suppose us as suggesting that it is by reading Church history and old books in divinity they are to get at it, though this might prove a very useful exercise to them; no, the old gospel stands ever present and ever new on the page of God's word, if they had only eyes to see it and hearts and understandings to embrace and proclaim it.

In conclusion, we cannot repress an expression of astonishment that Dr. Watson should have to make such a lamentable confession of degeneracy as he does in regard to the religious world that has been so long accustomed to the bright, attractive, non-Calvinistic gospel, and short, varied services, with plenty of music in them. He frankly admits that there has been no great revival in connection with the newer gospel and the newer services. The people have been practically getting worse and worse under their influence. Worldliness, selfishness, and oppression are as rife as ever they were. The greatest revivals and reformations were all under the old gospel and the old services. This is just, in our opinion, consistent with the nature of the case. The newer and more human gospel smoothly plasters up sinners in a self-complacent view of

their spiritual condition, and disposes them to think that they are good Christians if they mean well and walk respectably. The evil of sin is not searched out to the bottom in their souls; they are not told that all their external veneer of morality won't save them and that they need a vital change of heart, which God alone can give—a new birth. They are not solemnly and affectionately warned that apart from this change which is associated with a saving knowledge of Christ, they must be lost for ever. O no; the usual process by which Christians are now manufactured is somewhat as follows:—They attend the Sabbath school in childhood, they then pass on to the Bible class and young communicants' class, and finally into full communion with the Church. After this stage no one hints the least doubt of their salvation; they are now safe for heaven; on their death-bed if they express a shallow platitude or two to the effect that they trust in God, they are assured they are on the way to glory. There are thousands upon thousands of people in the professing churches who are thus set up as genuine Christians, when all the while they are totally destitute of true religion in heart, essentially carnal and worldly in life, and are posting on to a miserable eternity. We are quite sure that Dr. Watson has met a vast number of them, and with his Scottish knowledge of life and theology he will recognise the description given as true to reality.

What is really required at the present day is that the whole counsel of God concerning sin and salvation be preached anew to the religious as well as the profane, that false professions be exposed and condemned, that none be recognised as true Christians but those who give real marks of a saving change, and that the responsibilities of Christians towards their fellows be insisted upon along the lines of the commandments of God and His Son Jesus Christ. It is only when there will take place widespread preaching of the pure gospel of salvation and faithful dealing with the consciences and lives of men, high and low, that the divine blessing may be expected in the professing Church, that many souls will be converted to Christ, and that a general and genuine reformation will visit society. A very desirable and necessary preliminary to "The Next Revival" would be the sound and thorough conversion of many who are at present designated doctors of divinity and ministers of the gospel.

The Old Tradition and the New.—This booklet is by Professor Beecher, of Auburn Seminary, U.S.A., and it presents some strong, refreshing views on the question of the Higher Criticism. The author shows that the insanity which these modern critics charge upon the generation of simple-minded believers is rather an attribute of their own minds than a feature of their opponents' character, and that the stock-in-trade of these theorists is a fluctuating series of unproved suppositions.

A Sermon.

BY THE LATE REV. EBENEZER PORTER, D.D., ANDOVER.

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"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. —ISAIAH i. 18.  
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THE people of Judah, to whom this language was addressed, had become great sinners. Even their appointed feasts and solemn meetings were an abomination to Him who "looketh on the heart." The only alternative before them was deep repentance or speedy ruin. In these circumstances God, by His prophet, called them to pause in their career of sin, and think on their own condition and prospects.

To the same duty He calls every careless sinner in this assembly to-day. Could a stranger from a distant world step into this place of worship, and be told the religious advantages which we enjoy, and the obligations which rest upon us, doubtless he would take it for granted that every individual here is a real Christian. But no one who has lived in this world, and had any just views concerning the moral state of its inhabitants, would feel authorised to take this for granted, concerning any promiscuous assembly of human beings. On the contrary, without pretending to know any heart, must I not, as a preacher of the gospel, presume that some of you, my dear hearers, are without God in the world? Are not some of you perfectly conscious that such is your present condition? You have heard perhaps hundreds of sermons, which you considered as addressed to others. I ask you now, each one individually, to listen to this sermon as addressed to you in particular. It is addressed, not to your passions at all, but to your understanding and conscience. The range of my remarks will unavoidably be more miscellaneous than is commonly proper in a sermon, but nothing will be said which you cannot easily comprehend and remember. You have hitherto neglected a serious attention to religion as the one thing needful; and you purpose at present to continue in the same neglect. Is this course justifiable? Is it safe? Is it right? "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord."

If the tomb which receives your mortal remains were to cover in oblivion your character and actions, then might you say with careless levity, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But if a few short years, at the utmost, will usher you into the unchanging realities of eternity, can it be proper for you to pass heedlessly on without any serious reflection, and yet without any hope beyond the grave? Certainly it cannot be proper. Let us proceed then to look at some of these considerations, which demand your present and solemn attention.

1. You know that you have a rational existence. You see the glorious orbs which shine above you roll on and measure out your days. You find yourself possessed of a body, "fearfully and wonderfully made." You find a thinking existence within you; something distinct from all that appertains to matter; something that perceives, remembers, loves, and hates. You find yourself an inhabitant of this earth—for what? Is this life your all? Was your soul formed, with its noble faculties, just to wake into a momentary existence and then to be extinguished in annihilation? Do you believe that you were placed here, like the poor brutes, to eat and drink, breathe and walk, and sigh, a few days, and then sink into eternal night and nothing? No; a response comes from every bosom—no. I shall outlive time and all its changes. When "the sun is turned to darkness and the stars to dust," I shall exist still in some unknown hereafter.

2. I shall presume that you believe the existence of a God. The fool may say in his heart there is none; but certainly no serious doubt on this point can be the dictate of any man's understanding. Whence came this system of things that surrounds us! Who raised this mighty fabric of worlds? Who preserves it? Is all this the result of chance? Chance is nothing; and nothing cannot produce and govern a system of worlds. Did men or angels create the sun and moon, and stars, and earth? Men and angels cannot create a fly, nor a blade of grass. Besides, how came men and angels by their own existence? It came from the uncreated God, the former of all things.

If there is a God, He is intelligent and omnipotent. He knows all things. Those whom He has made and whom He upholds every moment, He must see every moment. He must be acquainted with all your actions and purposes. You cannot hide from His searching eye; you cannot escape out of His dominion.

3. I shall presume, too, that you believe the Bible to be of Divine authority. That it is so, is proved by a flood of evidence which cannot be even noticed in this place. Did I suppose you to entertain any doubt on this point, I would simply ask, concerning any scheme of infidelity you can name, why are its disciples generally loose in sentiments and morals? Why do they discard prayer and all other duties of practical piety? Why are they so often filled with dismay at the hour of death? Those must be bad principles which make bad men. That scheme must be fallacious which alienates a creature from his Creator, and in the very proof of his immortality furnishes a motive to take refuge in a cheerless scepticism, or in annihilation. No prudent man will risk eternal consequences on a bold presumption, which at the utmost can give but a momentary repose in sin; and then must leave the soul in anguish, without consolation, and without hope. You must therefore admit the Bible to be the Word of God, unless you close your eyes against the light; and regardless of truth and warning,

regardless of all that may be joyful or terrible in eternity, resolve to rush upon the dread experiment.

4. It must be further presumed that you believe yourself and all men to be sinful. Here again, if I supposed you to have any doubts, I would ask you to look into the world around you. Read its history. Whence all the penal laws of every age and country against wickedness if men are not wicked? When men make a common bargain, why do they esteem a paper bond as better security than their neighbour's honesty? If men are not depraved beings, how comes it to pass that in every period, and on every side of the globe, they have universally acted like depraved beings; and have invariably considered each other as deserving this character? If you have any doubts concerning human depravity, after looking abroad into the world, then look into your own heart. If that is not enough, then look into the Bible. Here you will find the point settled. Here your character is drawn by the unerring spirit of inspiration. You are a sinner.

5. You know that God cannot consistently allow the transgression of His own law. The honour of His character and the good of the universe require that He should maintain this law. In the exercise of perfect and unlimited benevolence He has threatened an awful destruction to all His impenitent enemies. You know that He is in "one mind and none can turn Him." You know that He is able to execute his threatenings. Who then can hope to harden himself against such a God and prosper? The case is plain—if you die in your sins, you must lie down in sorrow.

6. The subject now assumes a character of very serious importance. In the sober conviction of your own understanding the point is settled, that you must exist for ever! exist, too, either in glory or despair. Have you ever thought on this amazing subject? Will you be persuaded to think on it now? Have you indeed a soul that must dwell in happiness or misery without end? What then is the worth of that soul? Thrones and empires are trifles in the comparison! "Earth and skies are dust upon the scale!" We dread exquisite pain, though it be of short continuance! How do the hearts of the strong and brave sink within them under the anguish of an acute fever or a broken limb! What man in his senses would deem it a light thing to endure such pain for a thousand years, for one year, or one month? Who then can dwell with devouring fire? who can inhabit everlasting burnings? Eternal misery outstretches and overwhelms human comprehension. Do you believe that there is, verily, such an allotment of suffering for all the ungodly? Can you deliberately view yourself as exposed every moment to plunge into it, and remain indifferent as an atheist or a stone? Is it possible that you should feel easy in such circumstances for one hour?

7. If you have given these considerations their due weight, we are prepared to proceed another step in our reflections. The reli-

gion of the gospel opens before us the only door for hope for perishing sinners. Have you cordially embraced this religion? Conscience perhaps stirs within you at this searching inquiry, and gives the honest answer—"In the midst of light and warnings I have neglected the great salvation." Why then do you neglect it? "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Will you say that the system of the gospel is dark and hard to be understood? Have you faithfully endeavoured to understand it? Have you bestowed on it one-half or one hundredth part as much attention as on other subjects comparatively unimportant? Comparatively did I say? Oh what other subject is not comparatively unimportant? To the humble Christian, whether his capacity be be great or small, the Bible is a plain book. Its essential truths and duties are so plain that the "wayfaring men, though fools, 'need' not err therein." Will you say that you have carefully studied the plan of salvation as revealed in the Scriptures, and after all are not satisfied with it? Then what are its faults? Does it place God too high and sinners too low? He offers to forgive you, if you confess and forsake your sins. Are these hard conditions? Can you ask Him to come down from His Throne and save you on terms that would dishonour Himself? Can you ask Him to be at peace with you while you love and justify your sins, reject the only Saviour of men, and trample on the law which that Saviour died to honour and fulfil? No; He will not, He cannot do this. "Till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle of His law shall fail." Not one sinner can ever be saved unless he confesses and forsakes his sins. You cannot prosper in arms against Omnipotence. The terms of the gospel are written as with a sunbeam; they admit only of submission or destruction. You are shut up to this alternative; you must bow or perish?

You see there is one, and but one, way to escape. That way is as plain and reasonable as you can desire. Indeed it is unalterably fixed, and therefore can never be plainer or easier than it is this moment. What benefit then can result from delay? Is it not wise to treat things according to their importance? Does a prudent man stand to exchange salutations with a neighbour when his house is on fire? In common concerns men act rationally. They are careful in summer to provide for winter; in health for sickness. A wine merchant watches the state of the market. A wise husbandman observes the changes of the seasons, and the proper time to sow and reap. A wise mariner does not sink himself in a storm to save his goods. There was a man among the tombs who mangled his own limbs; but he was beside himself. There was a profane Esau, who sold his birthright for a morsel of meat; and a heathen Lysimachus, who exchanged his kingdom for a draught of water; but these you say were foolish men. What then in the light of eternity must you think of yourself, who can lose your soul, and bury your immortal hopes without a sigh?

Serious as this language is, you will know hereafter that it is the

language of truth and friendship. You slumber on the verge of ruin! All that the Christian minister attempts to do in this case, all that he is required to do, all that he can do, is to pray for you, and say to you, like Paul to the distracted jailer, "Do thyself no harm." Break from this infatuation! Rouse from this fatal slumber! If you slight such warnings, given you in love and faithfulness, the day will soon come when you will be exempt from such disquieting importunities. If you should succeed in destroying yourself, you will have as little disturbance from the Bible and the pulpit, from Sabbaths, and prayers, and sermons, as you can desire. But know assuredly there will then be a reprover in your own bosom, whose admonition will be as the sting of a scorpion; and whose gentlest whisper will be thunder in your ear.

8. Your reason and conscience probably have thus far assented to the serious statements which I have made. May I now ask, what is your purpose? Here you are, an immortal being, standing on the small point of probation, betwixt the extremes of endless pain and endless joy, sustained only by the frail thread of life, which the sword of justice is ready to cut, while the voice of mercy cries—"Now is the day of salvation." Will you embrace this salvation? Two worlds wait your decision. Still, perhaps, you hesitate; still presume on the absurd patience of God for a future season of repentance; and dare to suspend your immortal welfare on the issue of that presumption. You say, "I cannot think on these serious subjects now. Religion would make me gloomy, and spoil all my happiness." What happiness? Are you indeed happy without religion? The world may promise to make you so, but does it fulfil its promises?

Have you no disappointments from without? No moments of anguish within? No fearful forebodings about hereafter? You are not happy without religion. To prove this I need only appeal to your own bosom. Be it so that you are among the number of those who are at ease in Zion; that though now and then startled by a call from the death-bed or the pulpit, you soon dismiss these alarming subjects, and pass along very quietly, for weeks and months in sinful indifference. Is this happiness? If it is, will it last? When the rod of the Almighty touches your estate, your friends, or yourself, will it keep you tranquil? Will it stand by you in death and judgment? Will your heart remain cold when the elements shall melt? Will your heart remain firm when the heavens and the earth are shaken?—No; serious reflection may perhaps be put off to-day; it may be put off to-morrow; it may be put off a few more days; but as God is true, it cannot be put off always. In spite of your heart it will come, it must come finally;—it may come speedily. Religion make you unhappy! That religion which sweetens prosperity, and presents a cordial even in the bitter cup? Go to the dungeon at Philippi, and ask what made Paul and Silas sing at midnight while their backs were smarting under the lash of superstition and their feet made fast in

the stocks. Go and stand by the stake of the blessed martyrs, and listen to their hallelujahs while their bodies were wrapped in the consuming flame. Go to that house of mourning, and ask what it was that enabled a Christian mother to dedicate her little infant to God, reposing all her hopes for that, and for herself, on the Cross of Christ; and in the immediate prospect of death to say, "This is the happiest hour of my life." Was it a gloomy religion that could thus bear up her soul, and fill it with heavenly radiance in such a moment? Or go to the bereaved Christian husband, and he can tell you that the best consolations of philosophy are utterly cold and comfortless in scenes that wring the heart with agony; while religion can give patience, and peace, and joy; and that all the books written by men can do nothing to soothe a wounded spirit compared with one short sentence of the Bible, "Be still and know that I am God."

No, my dear hearers, religion is not a gloomy thing. Angels are not gloomy; men would never be gloomy if it were not for want of religion. Every step you take towards your last hour you are liable to be smitten through with some barbed arrow, from which nothing but religion can shield your bosom. And when you come to that last hour, let me tell you now, that without religion it will be cheerless and awful. No light from heaven will radiate its gloom. Perhaps a circle of weeping relatives may stand around your bed. Perhaps the gentle, trembling hand of a mother, or sister, may wipe away the cold sweat from your face. But what will this avail if you have no inward peace, no interceding Saviour, no reconciled God, no hope nor home beyond the grave?

You say, these are solemn truths, I admit; but still I cannot think of becoming truly religious to-day. I must defer this subject for the present. Then, how long? Shall it be one year, or ten years? Weigh this matter well. There are two serious considerations here.

The first is—what if you should live to the time proposed, and then find within you a heart more stubborn than ever? What if that time when it comes should find you frantic or senseless with disease, or bereft of all your faculties by some special stroke of Providence? What if, before then, God should utterly withdraw His Spirit and leave you in judicial blindness under the curse of a reprobate mind? Your damnation would then be as certain as though you were this moment in hell. "So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust," is the most awful language that has ever yet been spoken by Jehovah concerning any of the human race.

But there is a second very serious consideration to come into account. What reason have you to presume that your term of probation will last ten years or one year longer! Who has given you a guarantee that it will last another hour? "What is your life?—it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little season, and then vanisheth away." You see that men do actually die in every possible variety of circumstances; at home, in the field, on jour-

neys, in bed, at table. From the common scene of amusement, of business, and of idleness, how many are unexpectedly summoned into eternity? And are you proof against the shafts of death? Be not deceived. The hour may be at hand when some fierce disease shall thrill through your frame and choke the fountain of life. To-day you may be strong in the enjoyment of health, to-morrow the colour of your cheek may be exchanged for a mortal paleness, and your body clothed in the attire of the grave.

I know it is painful to think on these serious subjects, but they must be thought of. What will it avail to shut your eyes now? the light of eternity will force them open; what will it avail to keep these things out of mind a few days? they must come home to your bosom shortly. What if you can slumber now in sinful security; the day is coming when you cannot slumber. You cannot slumber amidst the confusion of dissolving worlds. You cannot refuse to hear that voice which will rend the tombs and summon the dead to stand before the Son of Man. Hearken, then, even now, to the admonition of heaven—"If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it."

Robert Flockhart.

SOLDIER AND STREET PREACHER.

IN the Memoir and Remains of the Rev. D. Macdonald, Shieldaig, reference is made to Robert Flockhart as one who was helpful to Mr. Macdonald as a spiritual guide during his student days in Edinburgh.

The life story of this notable personage is full of the deepest interest, and reveals the mysterious dealings of the wonder-working and covenant-keeping God. While still a young man he enlisted in the army, and was immediately transferred to Chatham. He found himself among a set of abandoned wretches—nothing but swearing, drinking, quarrelling, and fighting is his own testimony as to his first experience of soldier-life. The evil influence of his companions soon manifested itself in his own conduct. In after years, in writing his autobiography, he says, "I believe that there is not a sin in the Bible I have not been actually guilty of, except murder. . . . I feel greatly ashamed when I remember that I myself am the very man that was guilty of drunkenness, swearing, and uncleanness, and that I went to such a length as to cast off all shame. I was worse than a beast. I would be ashamed to speak of those things I did in secret, particularly when in the Cape of Good Hope and in the East Indies."

While his regiment was stationed at Fort-William, near Calcutta, some Baptist missionaries, accompanied by a schoolmaster, came and preached to the soldiers, though forbidden by the officers. "Before the missionaries came," says Flockhart, "I do not think

that there was a spark of grace in any man's heart in all the regiment. There was not so much as a mere profession; and I heard one of the soldiers say, long after (for I would not go amongst them then, I was so busy with the devil's servants in the devil's work) that the Lord honoured that humble schoolmaster in kindling a fire in the 22nd Regiment that all the devils in hell would not put out." The man here referred to, along with some of his companions, formed themselves into a church, and at the end of each day, when on the march, they sought out some quiet spot where they poured out their souls to God in prayer. But the God whom they worshipped was not in Flockhart's thoughts—his career was that of the prodigal wasting his substance in riotous living—heedlessly he pursued his course, and greedily ran in the way of the wicked. It was while living after this manner that an incident took place in his career which he regarded as the first step in leading him to think somewhat of a world to come. While under the influence of drink, and sleeping off its effects, a sergeant ordered him to take a message to his officer. This he refused to do and, as a consequence, was apprehended and tried by court-martial. He was degraded from the rank of corporal to that of private, and ordered to receive 150 lashes. He felt deeply humiliated, but alongside of this we find the rebellion of the human heart manifesting itself. "It seems," he says, "I was foremost in wickedness, as I employed my time in speaking abominable language till they were all like to fall down with laughing." Soon after this he fell sick, and was taken to the hospital. While here he took to reading, and among other books Alleine's *Alarm* came into his hands. Alleine's description of the Day of Judgment made a very solemn impression on his mind. He felt that he too would be there among the great assembled multitude, and that it would be an awful account which he would have to render. Shortly after this he was reproved by an Irish lad for swearing, and he now set himself to give up this utterly useless, abominable, and dangerous habit. But so addicted was he to the habit that he found it difficult to break off from it. "Conscience flew in my face, and made me so afraid that for a fortnight I was so engaged in learning to speak fluently without swearing." He next gave up his evil companions, and began to ask a blessing on his food, and never did food seem so sweet to him as then. Knowing the sergeant of the hospital to be a pious man, he asked him for some religious books, which the good man readily granted, with the advice that it would be better for him to read the Bible than too many books. The sergeant was in the habit of keeping family worship, to which he invited Flockhart. The invitation was gladly accepted, and the means of prayer and reading the Bible, and occasionally a sermon of Flavel, were blessed to Flockhart's soul. Sometimes, on coming home from these meetings, he thought that all the angels of God surrounded him rejoicing (Luke xv.), and that the Spirit was applying the blood of

Christ to wash away his sins. But immediately after this came a time of the deepest spiritual trial. He thought he had committed the unpardonable sin and sold his birthright. Dreadful and blasphemous thoughts would pass through his mind. He heard, as it were, a voice from heaven saying, Confess your sins ! Confess your sins ! This went like a dagger to his heart, and for a month he could get no sleep ; he felt that if he fell asleep he might open his eyes in hell. The Lord was thus chastising him for his sins, and when made tender and broken hearted he was led to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. He now took to reading his Bible with new interest, and being a patient in the hospital he could devote much time to meditation and prayer, and whole nights were thus spent with contrite out-pourings of soul for sins that were past. It was while in this state that some came to him saying, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. He did all he could to believe, but found it impossible, though the duty was plain until he got power from on high. After these experiences he had times of the greatest happiness—his cup ran over, and he enjoyed sweet communion with God the Father and God the Son. At last, after serving in different parts of the world, he got home to Scotland, where, after paying a visit to his parents at Old Kilpatrick, he proceeded to Edinburgh Castle to join his regiment. He describes his fellow-soldiers as more like incarnate devils than men—they had been at war, seen its horrors, felt its privations, and were hardened in body and soul through their experiences. He did not know what to do ; at last, he determined that he would perform his religious exercises silently. But it so happened that on Sabbath matters seemed to go beyond all bearable bounds, and, after listening to the disgraceful and sinful conduct of the soldiers, he rose, and putting on his great-coat, knelt in the middle of the barrack-room, and poured out his soul in prayer for his fellow soldiers. He continued praying until they became dumb, and a great peace reigned in the room for some time. His courage in the midst of such trials was strengthened by the Word of God, which said to him, “ Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace : for I am with thee and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee.”

Every conceivable attempt was made by these wicked and unreasonable men to get some occasion against him, but as the Lord had blessed him with two ears and only one tongue, he was “ swift to hear, slow to speak.” One morning, without giving any reason, the adjutant whom he had twice previously remonstrated with for swearing put him into prison, but, as there was a hole in the wall, he began preaching to the soldiers, and soon gathered a great crowd around his prison. The commanding officer, who happened to be passing, gave orders that he should be released. Next morning he went out to the barrack square, and had a much larger congregation. The Perth militia were at this time in the Castle, and they turned out officers, non-commissioned officers, and

privates to hear the earnest preacher. He was again sent to the "black hole" by the adjutant, but Major Rose, the commanding officer, gave orders that he should be released and brought before him. "Well, Robert, what is the reason," he said, "that you have been twice a prisoner in the black hole?" "Please, your honour," he replied, "before the parade drum beat the men met in troops, and were telling the wars they were at and the battles they had fought, and the victories they had won. I could have done the same, but I had better news to tell. If they took liberty to tell news about the world and the wars, will you not give me liberty to tell good news about heaven?" "Yes, Robert, you have my liberty," said the major, before the adjutant and the whole regiment. He now waxed bolder, and was in the habit of conducting family worship in the barrack-room. On one of these occasions the gunner of the Castle came up behind him and delivered a cowardly and stunning blow that deprived him of his senses for a time. On returning to consciousness the men were crying out, "Shame! Shame!" and asked Flockhart to report him. But this he refused to do. Shortly after this the poor wretch took away his life. It was about this time Robert married, and as the married soldiers were allowed to have houses of their own, he in a way escaped from the trials of the barrack-room. His wife was a true helpmeet—a woman of prayer, and one who had obtained like precious faith. Shortly after this an order came that the unmarried men of the regiment be sent to Shetland. His adjutant now thought his opportunity had come. When orders were given for the unmarried men to slip out of the ranks, Flockhart stood still. "What, Flockhart, I thought your religion did not permit you to marry," said the adjutant, with ill-concealed disappointment. "Marriage is honourable in all," came the quick reply, "and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." Turning on his heel in a temper, the disappointed adjutant gave vent to his feelings in the sentence, "Well, I have been in many parts of the world, but I never met any one that could beat me until I met Robert Flockhart, and he would beat the very devil." He was now transferred to the Castle of Blackness, and while the soldiers were as wicked as ever, he was fortunate in having a godly officer. He set to preach to the people in the streets of Linlithgow until the magistrates reported him to his officer. The officer showed him the letter, but being of like mind with himself refused to interfere. For his officer's sake, however, he refrained, but acting on the advice that he is a poor minister that cannot make the devil roar, he began preaching again.

On his return to Edinburgh he continued his practise of street-preaching, choosing the Grassmarket, where the Covenanters suffered, as the centre of his labours. It was while delivering a fervent address that Dr. Stewart, one of the city doctors, came up to him, and, trying his pulse, asked him to accompany him. As he had a great respect for Dr.

Stewart, he willingly obeyed, and found himself in Morningside Asylum ; here his head was shaved, and he was treated as a lunatic. His experience is best told in his own words—"Dr. Stewart," he says, "sent a minister to see me, and he was a strange minister—he told me I should not read the Bible ! I gave him a fright, so that he did not come again. The Bible, said I to him, is the only remedy God has provided to heal the afflicted mind, and to be my compass, to show me the road to Him. Christ is the way, and the Bible reveals Him in all His offices, names, and titles. He prevailed on the governor to take the Bible from me, which he did." Flockhart now refused to take his meals until his Bible was restored. God's word was more to him than his necessary food. At the end of the third day the governor got alarmed, and brought a strong man with him, fully determined that he would make the faithful soldier eat, but with all their efforts they failed. Then he consented to return the Bible, and, on asking a blessing and reading a chapter, Flockhart partook heartily of the food set before him. The governor threatened to take away the Bible again, but Flockhart made it plain to him that he would rather die than part with his Bible. He now made a successful attempt to get out of his enemies' hands, and during the search that was made for him he lay concealed in his own house, carefully attended to by his beloved and pious wife. He was soon at his preaching again, with the result that Morningside again became his home for six months. The governor was now much more kindly disposed than formerly. While in Morningside Asylum his regiment was broken up, and each man received a pension of a shilling the day, but as he was returned as one deranged, a further allowance of threepence a day extra was allowed, in view of which he adds in his interesting autobiography, "What an advantage to be religious ! All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." But his enemies not only used the asylum to put him from preaching, but also the prison. During his street-preaching days he was nine times sent to prison for preaching the gospel. His time was spent in visiting the dying in hospitals and infirmaries, in praying with condemned criminals in their cells and seeking to lead them to that Saviour who had done so much for himself.

Such is a very brief outline of the life story of Robert Flockhart. He was a man undoubtedly of some eccentricity, but his warm love to Christ, his burning zeal in the midst of persecution and indifference, and his undoubted piety, reveal to us a type of Christian character rarely to be met with among those professing to be wise. He wrote an autobiography, which was edited and published by Dr. Guthrie. It is a valuable little book, telling of a life battle right nobly and loyally fought in the interest of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible. His was a career that was chequered, filled to the full with the strange vicissitudes of life ; but it was a career in which

the wise will see a guiding hand that brought the erring soldier to the feet of that Master whom he loved so dearly and served so well, and who made him more than conqueror at last. D. B.

A Serious Address

TO THOSE THAT PROFANE THE LORD'S DAY.

By the Rev. MATTHEW HENRY.

THE Lord's Day was appointed to be an earnest and sign of our everlasting rest—the rest that remains for the people of God. It is intended to mind us of Heaven, to fit us for heaven, and to give some comfortable pledges and foretastes of the joys and glories of that blessed state to all those who have their conversation in heaven and their affections set upon things above. These are the days of heaven; and if heaven be an everlasting Sabbath, surely Sabbath is a heaven upon earth. In them the tabernacle of God is with men; and have you no value for eternal life, sirs—no concern about it? Is heaven nothing to you, as not worth the thinking of? Do you indeed despise that pleasant land, and prefer Egypt and garlic and onions, before Canaan's milk and honey; and a mess of pottage before such a birthright and the privileges of it? Your profanation and contempt of the Lord's Day plainly saith you do so, and according to your choice you shall have your lot—so shall your doom be. You say you hope to be saved, but what ground have you for that hope while you plainly show that you neglect this great salvation by your neglect to commemorate Christ's resurrection, by which it was wrought out, and your neglect to improve the means of grace, by which you are prepared for it? If you had indeed any good hope of eternal life, you would not think much to spend one day in seven in the joyful contemplation of it, and in getting yourself ready for it. You say you hope to go to heaven, but what pleasure can you take in the expectation of an everlasting Sabbath, and of the employments and enjoyments of that world, when you are so soon weary of these short Sabbaths, which are types of that, and are ready to say, "When will they be gone?" What pleasure can it be to you to be for ever with the Lord, to whom it is a pain and a penance to be an hour or two with Him now? What happiness will it be to you to dwell in His house and to be still praising him in heaven, who, by your goodwill, would never be praising Him on earth, but grudge the few minutes that are so employed? Heaven will not be heaven to a Sabbath-breaker, for there is no idle company, no vain sports, no foolish mirth or unprofitable chat there, and these are his delights now, which he prefers before communion with God, which is both the work and bliss of that world. All that shall go to heaven hereafter begin their heaven now. As in other things, so particularly in their cheerful conscientious observ-

ance of the Lord's day ; and now lay all this together, and tell me if there be not a great deal of reason why you should keep holy the Sabbath day, call it a delight, holy of the Lord, and therefore truly honourable, and why you should therefore honour and sanctify Him on that day—not doing your own ways, but His ; not finding your own pleasure, but aiming to please God ; not speaking your own words as on other days, but speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Isa. lviii. 13. Can the entanglement of custom, company, carnal pleasure, or worldly profit be more powerful with you than all those sacred cords and bonds ? Can the pleasing of a customer, the obliging of a friend, much less the gratifying of a base lust, balance the displeasing of God, the dishonouring of Christ and the wronging of your own souls ? I beseech you consider it seriously and be wise for yourselves.

After these considerations which I have urged—surely I need not insist upon any other—I am confident the reigning love of God in your hearts, and a deep and serious concern about your precious souls and their eternal welfare, will furnish you with consideration sufficient to oblige you to as much strictness and care in the sanctification of the Lord's day as the Word of God requires ; and as it is necessary to answer the intentions of the institution, and more than this we do not insist on, think much of that of the Pharisees, which though blasphemously misapplied to our Saviour, was grounded upon a great truth. "This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day." John ix. 16. Will it be to any purpose to suggest this further consideration to you—that the way to prosper in your affairs all the week and to have the blessing of God upon you in them is to make conscience of the Lord's day. That truly great and good man the Lord Chief-Justice Hales writes it very solemnly to his children—"I have found by a strict and diligent observation that a due observance of the duties of the Lord's day hath ever had joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time, and the week that hath been so begun hath been blessed and prosperous to me ; and, on the other side, when I have been negligent of the duties of this day, the rest of the week hath been unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular employment the week following. This I write (saith he) not lightly or inconsiderately, but upon long and sound observation and experience."

Shall I mind you how much it will be for your credit with all wise and good people?—"Them that honour God He will honour." Shall I tell you with what comfort you may lie down at night in the close of a Sabbath, after you have carefully done the work of the day in it?—"Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet." Especially, think how sweet and easy your reflection upon well-spent Sabbaths will be when you come to die, and with what pleasure you will then look forward upon the everlasting Sabbath you hope to keep within the

veil. Wonder not that I am thus earnest with you in this matter. I see how much depends upon it, and I persuade as one that desires and hopes to prevail with you. Let me not be disappointed—as you tender the glory of your Creator, the honour of your Redeemer, and your own comfort and happiness in both worlds, I beseech you, remember the Sabbath day—the Christian Sabbath—to keep it holy. Most certainly true that saying is which I have somewhere met with—that the stream of all religion runs either deep or shallow, according as the banks of the Sabbath are kept up or neglected.

A Lily Gathered.

KENNETH DOUGLAS, HALKIRK.

THERE died at Church Street, Halkirk, Caithness, on the 7th January, 1903, a little boy named Kenneth Douglas. He was in the ninth year of his age, having completed his eighth year on the 29th of the July preceding his death. His illness began when he was a little over four years old, and he continued delicate for the remaining years of his life. He was never strong enough to attend school, though sometimes he moved slowly out of doors. His trouble, which took the form of dropsy, prevented him from joining in the usual games enjoyed by children at his age, but he seemed as happy as any of them, and his face wore a warm, kindly smile, with an unusually intelligent expression. He was subdued and patient in his suffering, and very respectful to his elders. His attitude at worship was most reverential, and he much appreciated the visits of praying persons, and would remark on their exercises after they left. He liked the stories of the Bible in preference to all others, and anyone who would read them to him. Though suffering himself he did not forget others in a like case, and his tender consideration for them, and anxiety about them, were quite remarkable in a child.

It is perhaps difficult to say the exact time when the Holy Spirit began to deal with Kenneth, but he gave clear signs of having undergone a saving change before he died. His conscience was made tender, and he showed much reverence for the law of God. He dreaded the noise of the train which passes on the evening of the Lord's Day, and used to say that God would be angry on account of this Sabbath desecration. One day, feeling sick and troubled, he asked that a story should be read to him. Being questioned if he would like to have one of the ordinary children's tales, he replied, "No; I am done with these. Read to me the story of Jesus Christ, who was crucified between two thieves." At another time, after hearing a Psalm read, he remarked, "What depths are in that Psalm!" When in great pain one night, he said, "I hope I'm not cross. If I am, it's because I'm suffering. But why shouldn't I suffer? He suffered *Himself*" (meaning the Saviour).

Just before he died, he sang, clearly and loudly, the 23rd Psalm, giving out line by line, though he had not been in the habit of singing before then. The little children about the doors regarded Kenneth Douglas as a good boy, and his death was felt keenly by them, and left on them more than an ordinary impression.

His remains were buried in Halkirk Churchyard amid showers of falling snow. There he sleeps in Jesus till the Resurrection.

G. S.

Emilia Geddie.

A CHILD OF THE COVENANT.

(Continued from Page 196.)

HAVING one day taken some view of a football game, she thought it to be vain and idle, and left them. When she returned to the company she was asked "Why she had retired so quickly and wept?" She answered, "That it was not so much for seeing the idleness and wickedness of the football men as because she had seen a godly and grave gentlewoman laughing and taking pleasure at the sight."¹ It is very like that wicked speeches were intermingled with their sport.

She with her young society having met one day for prayer, a minister who was occasionally in the house desired to be admitted into the company, which they modestly declined. After the first prayer was ended, he renewed his desire that he might at least confer with them. This they granted. Then he demanded, "Whether they would put any question to him, or he propose one to them?" Emilia answered, "We would ask a question of you, which is this, Whence is it that a Christian for ordinary enjoyeth more of enlargement in praying alone than with others?"

Near to the same time a persecuted minister, Mr. D. C.,² came to her father's house with a design to stay until the Sabbath was over, and resolved to preach on the Lord's day. When Saturday came he proposed to go to another place, but was much entreated to stay. Yet he declined, and ingenuously gave his reason, which was "That he had broken in upon two or three texts, but could get no digested thoughts about them, which made him suspect he was not called to preach there at that time." Nevertheless, upon further importunity, he was persuaded to stay a little longer and to make a new essay, for which effect the company left him. The child was present and heard all this, no person taking notice of her. Some little while after she went alone to the minister, and

¹ Is not this the mind of Christ? "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it; but it was thou."—Psalm lv. 12.

² This may have been Donald Cargill, the martyr, for he frequently preached in Fife, and even during the years in which he was ordered to keep north of the Tay did not scruple to pass southward when he saw an opportunity of preaching the gospel. Glenvale, among the Lomond hills, was one of the scenes of his field preaching.

asked what he was doing, and whether he was preparing to preach. The minister, wondering at such gravity and confidence in a mere child, answered her, "No, Emily, I am not." She replied, "Sir, go and pray." He answered, "Yes, I will do so, if you will pray with me." To which she agreed, and they both performed the duty the one after the other. After that the child had prayed, the minister declared he found himself so refreshed and strengthened that he immediately resolved to stay, and accordingly he tarried and preached the whole day with power and liberty to the great benefit of the hearers. These sermons wrought mightily, through the Lord's blessing, upon the heart of the child, and were heard by her with much concern and application.

A young woman, A. R., had long struggled under a dreadful temptation, which procured her abstaining from food, in regard she thought it would have been presumption in her to eat, seeing she looked on herself as having no right to the creatures. Many arguments were used to persuade her to a taking of meat, but nothing prevailed. Hereupon the child went to her chamber, and expostulated with her to this purpose, "You refuse to eat, but it is the devil that beguiles you: you cannot live unless you eat. Were I in your place I would beguile the devil; I would eat, and not obey him, but obey the Lord." These words and arguments of the child took such impression upon the poor tempted woman that she shook off the temptation and took her meat regularly. When this was observed, honest people, who saw her, rejoiced much to find her delivered from under the feet of such a cruel temptation. And she ingenuously declared that the Lord had blessed the words of the child for defeating that hellish engine. So far as was known she never afterwards gave way to such diabolical suggestions.

Some while after the same woman, through the power of temptation, desisted from the duty of prayer, and with so much of peremptoriness that no persuasion could induce her to essay it. But again the child prevailed, having prayed with her, whereupon, through the blessing of God, the strength of that temptation was broken, and she went about the duty afterward.

She was still¹ much addicted to secret prayer, and laid out herself in persuading others to it, especially those of her own sex and years, by which means she gathered together a society of children, who did regularly meet, without admitting any others into their company. Thus they continued unknown, save that some persons, whether from curiosity or other motives, did endeavour to overhear what passed amongst them. On a certain day, they having met in a room where there was a closet, a judicious person who had gone into that apartment without their knowledge, kept the door shut and made no noise that he might know their management, which he observed with much satisfaction. After

¹ *i.e.*, Always.

they had met, and before prayer by any of them, a complaint was given in against M. M., one of their number, who was the oldest among them all by three or four years, and also the tallest of stature. Hereupon they constituted themselves into a sort of court of judicature, and made choice of Emilia to preside amongst them. After this the alleged delinquent was challenged. The libel laid against her was this—namely, “That she, being one of their society, had been guilty of some practices unsuitable to their profession and offensive to other good people,” and the following particulars were condescended upon:—First, That she had heard a curate¹ preach in the church of Strathmiglo upon a Lord’s day. Secondly, that being in a company who joined in prayer, she had been seen laughing in the time of duty. Thirdly, that she had spoken evil of some godly persons. To this libel M. M. gave the following answers. As to the first article, she acknowledged that she had indeed heard that curate, but without any knowledge beforehand, and also against her inclination. She had gone to pay a visit to her sister, married to a gentleman of that parish, who was in use to attend Presbyterian meetings, and being desired by him and her sister to attend worship on the Lord’s day, she knew no other than that they were going to hear a Presbyterian minister; whereas, without her knowledge, and contrary to her design, she was brought to the church by force—for which she declared her sorrow, and promised to do so no more. As to the second, she confessed she had laughed in time of prayer, but was induced so to do by a mere surprise—namely, a young woman had fallen asleep in time of prayer, and was so far entangled with the chair on which she leaned that upon her awakening she tumbled on the floor with her stool upon her in such sort that none who saw her could abstain from laughing. As to the third, she denied the charge, but acknowledged she had mentioned some evil things which certain honest people had said of other godly folk, and that she had done it with regret, and did sincerely lament it that such evil reports should be spread concerning godly persons, and declared that she had said nothing of that kind from herself.

This libel, with the answers given thereunto, being considered by the young meeting, and everyone’s judgment asked, they all, with one voice, referred the matter to their president, who, after some discourse to the meeting, proposed her judgment as follows, namely—“That the defender, M. M., should not be debarred from the society, but allowed to be present with them for hearing and converse; but, in regard of some offence both given and taken in this matter, she should not be allowed to pray with them in the society for the space of a month; so that, during that space of time, they might have the occasion to observe her deportment, and she might have access to improve herself by her following

¹ These were the men of whom Bishop Burnet says, “They were ignorant to a reproach, the dregs and refuse of the Northern parts.”

behaviour." Such was the grave, impartial, and wise procedure of this young judicature, by the direction of their grave president.

It was her ordinary custom to get from that servant who was entrusted to serve the poor so much as her parents allowed for them, that she might give them their alms out of her own hand. This was thought a little strange, in regard that children of her age are usually afraid of beggars. It was not so with her, but upon the contrary she followed them to the outmost gate, and without it, and was at pains to instruct and exhort them, showing them that there is a God, a heaven and hell. And, moreover, she reprov'd them for their wicked lives, and plainly told them that their swearing, drinking, breaking of the Sabbath day, and other crimes would bring them to hell. The maid who attended her was often afraid when she missed her, not knowing where she could be, and after they had sought her out she was found conferring with the beggars. One day she said to her mother, "I perceive that you and others give meat, and sometimes a bit of cloth, to beggars; but I see not that you or others call them in and inquire of them if they have souls, or teach them a question or two in the Catechism." There are more passages of this sort which are not thought necessary or proper to be imparted in this manner.

A minister of the gospel, having observed her way and deportment with the beggars, inquired of her of whom she thought the beggars descended. Her answer was, "She thought the renegado or randy-beggars were of the accursed race of Cain; for," said she, "the Lord has sentenced them to be fugitives and vagabonds upon the face of the earth." "Well," said the minister, "what course would you have taken with them?" She answered, "I would have every parish to keep their own poor, and to provide for them and teach them, and thus much sin would be prevented. For I think," said she, "that their abominable wickednesses bring much sin and wrath upon the land."

Upon a Sabbath on which she and other children had been left alone in the house, when the rest of the family came home one of them asked how she had spent the day. She replied that she spent it in her ordinary manner—in reading, singing, praying, and other spiritual exercises; all which, she declared, were so sweet to her that she wearied not, but thought the time very short.

Her father (being clerk to the king's stewartry of Fife) was required and pressed to take The Declaration,¹ and threatened in case of his refusal; whereupon he called his daughter Emilia, and said to her, "I am threatened, and like to be forced to take The Declaration." She, from her concern about the Church and nation, came to know sufficiently what it was. Her father insisted, and said, "Whether shall I take that oath or not? What think

¹ This was an Act declaring it unlawful to enter into covenants or leagues, or to hold conventions or gatherings, and specially denouncing the "National League and Covenant" as unlawful.

you of it?" She answered "Take it not; God forbid you should take it." "But," said her father, "Emily, they will take my place from me." She replied, "That he need not much care for that." "But," added he, "they will persecute me further, and take away my estate, and then how shall I and you live?" She very cheerfully answered, "Dear father, take no thought of me; God will provide for us—let us live by faith." "But," replied her father, "God hath appointed means to be used for an honest livelihood, and hath commanded us to use them." She answered, "He hath indeed appointed lawful means to be used, but we may not use such as are unlawful." "Ay, but," said her father, "I see no mean for our livelihood except I take The Declaration." All this he spoke for trial, being fully resolved not to take that wicked oath. At length, with a great deal of modesty and submission, she said, "Dear father, do not take that Declaration, and I will tell you how we may live." "How is that?" said he. She answered, "I will go to service, and thereby I may get victuals and also old clothes from some persons of honour; and so I will save my wages and give you them to live upon." Her father answered, "Whom can you serve, or who will give you wages? You are but young." (She was at that time but eight years of age.) She replied, "I know a lady who will give me both food, raiment, and wages, which wages I will give to you." Here we have notable evidences not only of a good and dutiful child who bore a fervent love to her parents, but also some clear indications of grace and parts beyond her age; and, in particular, she hereby discovered much of a keen hatred of sin, which was most comfortable to her parents and others connected with her.

(To be continued.)

The Late Mrs. Swanson, Thurso.

IT is with much regret we record this month the decease of Catherine Murray, widow of William Swanson, which took place at her house, 4 Princes Street, Thurso, on the 9th September. Mrs. Swanson, who had reached the advanced age of nearly 88 years, was a well-known and esteemed Christian in Caithness and the North for the last fifty years. Her mother, Ann Sinclair, was a very pious woman, while her uncle, Alexander Sinclair, merchant, Thurso, was one of the most weighty and intelligent Christians of his time.

The subject of this notice was brought under soul concern in early womanhood, not long after she entered upon the responsibilities of married life. She sat under the valued ministry of the late Dr. Taylor, of Thurso, and derived much benefit from his ministrations, as also from those of the Rev. Finlay Cook, whose church at Reay was not many miles distant. In later years, along with Dr. Taylor and Mr. Auld, Olrig, as ministers of Christ, she held in much esteem the late Rev. Christopher Munro, Strathy.

Possessing much of a public spirit, Mrs. Swanson regularly attended many of the Communion in the North, and her presence was much appreciated by ministers, "men," and others who had the privilege of her acquaintance. One note occurs to us of a spiritual deliverance she got on a Communion occasion. She was in great trouble of mind, and when walking outside went down to a well to take a drink of water. Just as she was stooping to drink, the following precious words came with great power to her mind, and gave her a great deliverance: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 13, 14.) Hers was a personality of more than ordinary strength, and made its mark wherever it came. She possessed for one thing a very active and vigorous mind, and took an intelligent interest in all matters pertaining to the Church of Christ. She deeply deplored the many unscriptural changes in worship and doctrine that marked the career of the Free Church, and in her own sphere and way vigorously protested against them. She had a very wise outlook on men and matters, and her opinion was always worthy of respect and consideration. Withal, charitable and sympathetic in spirit towards her fellows, she did not hesitate to give reproof when she saw it was needed, and we seldom met anyone who could do this more skilfully and effectively without causing offence. On one occasion when she was in Edinburgh, she was proceeding to church on the Sabbath, but observing several shops open she boldly yet calmly entered into each, and remonstrated with the shopkeepers for their desecration of the Lord's Day. Many a spiritual advice she tendered to young persons who visited her, urging them to consider the interests of their souls. She was of a very kindly and philanthropic disposition, and in the days of health and activity took a general interest in the welfare of her townspeople. If there was any house, where sorrow or sickness of a specially trying nature was found, Mrs. Swanson was sure to be there to do what she could to minister help and comfort by word and action. And she did it all in such an unaffected and unostentatious way that her presence and services were highly valued and esteemed.

During the greater part of her Christian course Mrs. Swanson enjoyed a comfortable persuasion of her interest in Christ, but during the last twelve years or so she passed through deep waters of soul trouble. Her trials in this respect were considerably accentuated by bodily affliction and family bereavements. But it was the spiritual darkness and cutting exercises of mind she experienced that were the sources of her sorest anguish. Her grieved soul did consolation shun. Like the case of the Psalmist, her former sins were brought to remembrance; the Lord seemed to hide His face from her; she was ready to conclude that all her former experiences of His loving kindness were but a delusion, and

that it was doubtful if there was now any mercy for her; her strength and hope almost perished from the Lord. Many Christian friends visited her, and endeavoured to pour the oil and wine of consolation into her wounds, but their efforts were generally very unavailing. It was the Lord Himself she felt must speak peace to her soul. She would not allow them even to sing the verses of a Psalm that expressed the language of assurance. "Sing," she would say, "a verse or two in the 51st Psalm about the beginning." If any Psalm of a very hopeful or confident tone was given out, she didn't hesitate to exclaim in her own pathetic and intense way, "O I canna sing that; can ye not sing a *low* Psalm?" Many of her friends entertained the hope that she would get a clear and marked deliverance before she would die, and while we cannot say she got relief accompanied with transport of soul, yet we are glad to bear testimony to the fact that for a considerable time before her end she was much composed in spirit, and manifestly cherished a humble confidence in the Lord's favour. Though slow to admit that she had much hope, yet she acknowledged that latterly it was her bodily trouble that lay more heavily on her. It may also be concluded that she was gradually entering into conscious experience of peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ from the circumstance, simple in some respects but not simple in her case, that latterly she used to ask the 53rd chapter of Isaiah to be read to her. She was evidently released from much of her hard bondage, and was feeling at liberty to contemplate Christ the Sacrifice and the Intercessor as the ground of her acceptance before God. Encouraging passages of God's Word were also particularly brought to her mind, and in the appropriation of these she drew a breath of hope, and took a step along the narrow way. She was long accustomed to hear in her soul nothing but the threatenings.

About two months before her death Mrs. Swanson passed through a severe trial in the death of her beloved daughter, Lizzie, who had been her constant companion and tender nurse during the sorest period of her trouble. This bereavement almost overwhelmed her with grief, but she was wonderfully sustained under it. She had the consolation of believing that Lizzie, who was a young woman of excellent qualities and loved by all who knew her, was a child of grace and had gone to a better country. They are now united, we believe, in that blessed place of which the Lamb is the light and the glory, and where sin and sorrow never enter.

Though confined to her house during these years of trouble, Mrs. Swanson has left by her death a great blank in Thurso. A gracious witness for Christ has been removed, and a hospitable door has been closed. All who knew and could appreciate her worth will mourn her loss. At the same time we cannot for a moment grudge her the heavenly rest and unbounded happiness which she must now enjoy, and for which her many troubles in this world were evidently preparing her. She has transmitted to

her family and friends the legacy of a godly example and many prayers, which we trust will yield a rich blessing. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." J. S. S.

Since the previous notice was written, and on the eve of going to press, the following interesting sketch has come to hand from an esteemed contributor in the North:—

To any one acquainted with the religious life of Caithness during the last forty or fifty years, Mrs. Swanson—or Catherine Murray, as she was familiarly called—needs no introduction, for she kept open house to the Lord's people through all these years, and in her native town of Thurso was long well known and respected, even by those who were not in sympathy with all her ways and methods.

Catherine was the eldest daughter of Mr. John Murray, Bank Street, and her mother was Ann Sinclair, sister of the able and godly Mr. Alexander Sinclair, merchant, Thurso, of whom a notice is given in Mr. Auld's "Ministers and Men in the Far North."

Being of prepossessing appearance, Catherine was married at the early age of seventeen to William Swanson, farmer, Howburn, and not long after her marriage became the subject of deep and sore convictions of sin. She has told the writer that previous to the birth of her eldest son she had such apprehensions of the anger of God against sinners that she had no doubt that herself and her unborn child would shortly be ushered into an undone eternity! Her fears as to this were, however, by the mercy of God not realised—and we may say, in passing, that this son, William, grew up to be a God-fearing and exemplary youth. He served his apprenticeship to a draper in Thurso, and then emigrated to Australia, continuing to write affectionate, Christian letters to his mother while he lived, and aiding her by his means.

The serious impressions which Catherine came under were not evanescent, but continued for years, with occasional intervals of relief, obtained in the means of grace and in the society of the Lord's people. Some such times she recalled in her latest years.

But it was in the privacy of her own room, and when perusing the sermons of the Rev. Thomas Shepard, the well-known Puritan divine, that the light of the gospel clearly broke in on her understanding and on her heart. "Thomas Shepard," she would say, "led me to uptake the nature of the covenant of grace in a way I never did before; but," she would add, "am I interested in that covenant?" That she *was* interested no one doubted but herself, for she continued a follower of the Lord and of His people and His ways through good report and bad report, through honour and dishonour. Godly fear, reverence for the Word of God, and tenderness of conscience were marked characteristics of her personal religion; and in this connection it would only be just to her memory to say that when in

the congregation of which she was a member, the mode of conducting the praise was altered, she withdrew for a time, believing the change to be dishonouring to the worship and detrimental to the worshippers. It had been the custom in the Highlands of Scotland since the days of the Reformation that in the public praise of the congregation the Psalm was intoned by the precentor line by line, and when by way of improving the music this practice was abolished, and the line was not read, Catherine and others felt that as "Faith cometh by hearing," the means to faith was so far taken out of the praise. But she has now joined the congregation where the praise, as all else, is perfect.

In her domestic life Catherine had her full share of worldly trouble. It was not easy to bring up a family of eleven children on the limited income of a labourer's wage, which in her early days was only 15s. per week. And yet such was her kindness of heart that a friend would not call at the house without being asked to share the humble fare. In later years, when her family were able to assist her, her hospitality to the Lord's people was unstinted. At the Sacramental season in Thurso every corner in the house from kitchen to attic was utilised, and friends of Christ and of His cause from varied and distant parts of the land have met and parted in sacred fellowship in Catherine's parlour, who shall never meet again until "brought into the palace of the King, and there they shall abide." Once that the winter communion week in Thurso was altered to the date of the Communion in the neighbouring town of Wick, Catherine realising that this would lessen the number of pious people in attendance at Thurso, spoke regretfully to the minister about it. "But you see," he replied, "it's on account of the moonlight, for the country people complain when they have no moon in going out and home to the evening services." "The moon, Mr. Taylor, what's the moon compared with David Steven?" was the rejoinder.

And not only were the solemn feasts of Zion her delight, but equally, the reproach of it was her burden. The departures from the simplicity that is in Christ both in doctrine and in worship that were gaining ground were to her matters of heartfelt sorrow. Going to see her friend David Steven on one occasion, to obtain his sympathy and counsel as to some divisions in the Church which were grieving her, and which she was regarding as a token of the Lord's displeasure, he said, "Catherine, I am sometimes viewing the true Church of God as a delicate piece of workmanship in which the artificer takes special delight. Each touch that he gave it appeared to an unpractised eye to disfigure rather than to beautify it, but rough and painful as must be the process, he is 'forming it for himself.' Now, Christ sees His Church as she is, in all her present deformity, and He sees to what He is to bring her, and so He must apply the tools of trial, of suffering, and of sorrow, these being needed to accomplish His purpose."

Catherine lived to see Mr. Steven—and, we may say, almost all

the associates of her day—taken home before herself, and these and family bereavements preyed deeply on her increasingly-declining strength, and led to a period of long depression. The death of her youngest daughter Lizzie, who was long her dutiful nurse and companion, was the last stroke of an afflictive kind which she met with, and a few months thereafter her own dismissal came, and she was gently removed to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

C. R. A.

The Education Act and Passive Resistance Movement.

THE following is a well-considered opinion on this subject by Mr. A. J. Baxter, pastor of a Calvinistic Independent Church in Sussex, and editor of the *Gospel Advocate*:—

We have been asked personally and by letter to give our opinion on this important subject, and we now do so publicly, according to the best of our judgment. It is conceded as a fact that the High Church Ritualists, in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, originated the Act, and by means of a pro-Popish Government and its large mechanical majority, forced it on the nation without any appeal to the people. It is admitted both by Evangelical Churchmen and Dissenters in general that, in the present Romanised condition of the Established Church, it places the children of Britain chiefly in the hands of the enemies of the Protestant faith, and gives them the power to proselytise. And, as this is to be done at the national expense, without national control, it is an act of oppression in the case of all who, as Non-conformists, are opposed to that teaching which the children are sure to receive at the hands of the Anglican party. We therefore believe it to be perfectly justifiable, on Scripture ground, to passively resist payment, and to allow the goods to be distrained in default. And yet, while saying this, we have not personally joined the passive resistance movement: and why? Because we have watched for many years past the conduct of those who are at the head of it with reference to pure Protestantism and the Word of God. While no open attempt was made on the part of Rome's agents to interfere with their personal liberty, or to take away the young from their congregations and schools and to train them to regard Dissent as an abomination, not a foot would they stir to co-operate with those who, by the press and public meetings and lectures, were seeking to arouse the people from their blindness and apathy in respect of the spread of Popery in the land. So far as religion was concerned, they preferred the principles of Romanism to those Scriptural doctrines which they stigmatised, and would honour the memory of Leo XIII., who has just passed away, rather than that of John Calvin. And even now most of the various denominations which are up in arms against the evil working of the Education Act are not contending for the honour

and glory of Christ and the written Word—for many of them deny the divinity of the Saviour and the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. For this cause we have stood aloof from the confederacy. Had the contest been based entirely on the love of “the truth as it is in Jesus,” willingly would we have taken our part in the fray, even to the spoiling of our goods. And yet, while remaining apart, we approve of the passive resistance, and believe that in His all-wise providence the Lord has stirred up the spirit of so many thousands to do a needful work of a political nature that the Papacy may not again hold the supreme reins of government in Britain. The Reformation was brought about by a somewhat similar concurrence of circumstances. Oppression of the people, through the tyranny of a man-ordained priesthood, made Popery hateful to multitudes who cared not for the Word of God; though that Word and the labours of the Reformers and the death of the martyrs led the way. So now, great Protestant efforts, in which we have taken a humble part, have for years past preceded this sudden uprising against the efforts of modern priestcraft, and how far it has contributed to the present battle is best known to a covenant God. For our part, therefore, we intend with what strength and ability we possess to personally contend alone “for the faith once delivered to the saints,” and to watch a higher hand as overruling the present conflict for His own glory and His people’s good.

The Late William Macrae, Achintee.

SUCH as, in some measure, understand the preciousness of the privilege of having the children of God amongst us cannot but mourn their absence from this world when their translation takes place, be that at what age it may. But the removal of the spiritually minded when they are yet young and their life yet full of promise to the Church on earth has always caused uncommon grief. Such grief we have but recently been made to feel in the lamented death of William Macrae, Achintee, when he was only 34 years of age. His life might be regarded as uneventful as the world reckons matters of stirring interest, but if repentance unto life, if fellowship with God, if faith in His Son, if new obedience be, as they ought to be, regarded as the things that are worthiest of mention in a man’s life, then the subject of this brief notice well deserves that some account of him should be given here. The year of his birth was 1869. We need not hesitate to add that he was born again in the year 1887. Up to the last-mentioned year he was, although of irreproachable moral character, very careless as to his eternal interests. His father—Donald Macrae, a very pious man, whom the Lord’s people in those parts never mention but with reverence—mourned for many a day over the unpromising nature of his youngest son’s spiritual condition. Donald Macrae closed his all too brief course

in the year 1887, and is reported to have spoken to William on his death-bed with all the seriousness that we might expect of a father whose own views of unseen but eternal realities were remarkably vivid, when addressing as from the brink of the grave a son for whose salvation he travailed in spirit. The very night in which his father died William was awakened to the greatest seriousness and thought about his soul; and a sense of his condition as a sinner under the curse of God's law, and without a revealed interest in Jesus Christ, weighed heavily upon him. It pleased the Lord, whose delight is in mercy, that he should not be left long in that condition, and discerning Christians might soon see that William had fallen heir to his father's mantle. From that hour until he finished his brief course on the 24th of August of this year, his life was the proof of the depth of the truth, and of the heavenliness of the change experienced in 1887. He was no stranger to desertions, to despondencies, to great trials, yet upon the whole his life since 1887 is rightly described as eminently a happy one. What we mean is, that in more than an ordinary measure his hope of eternal life was sustained through frequent intimations from the throne of grace that he had found favour. He himself acknowledged that on occasions he received of the fulness that is in Christ in such measure that he did not know whether he was on earth or in heaven. His life was one hidden from too many of his neighbours, but it was a life with Christ in God.

Like his father, he all along took the deepest interest in a public testimony for the truth of the gospel in the world. It was in no mere external sense that he followed the effort, with which the Free Presbyterian Church is identified, in maintaining in this country that testimony. In his own soul he broke through troops for the sake of it, and by his God assisting him he overleaped a wall.

He was a lover of all the Lord's people, and his attachment to some of them was unusually deep. Worthy of mention is the remarkably close fellowship that existed between him and the like-minded late Donald Mackay. The aspiration after fellowship with God, which was similarly conspicuous in each, is doubtless now satisfied to the full in both. Although William Macrae did but comparatively little in the capacity of public teacher, the living Church will long mourn after and miss his exercises in public prayer and in the leading of praise in the sanctuary, and that because of the sweet unction that was so often upon him when thus engaged.

The trouble that resulted in his death was typhoid fever. We have been told that when he was being removed from Achintee to the Dingwall hospital, where he died, he expressed himself to the effect that he did not wish, if that were the Lord's will, to be occupied with the world any more again.

The sincerest sympathy is felt for his widowed mother, and (not to mention by name others of his family) for his leal brother, Rev. Alexander Macrae, Portree.

J. R. M.

A Letter by Alexander Gair.

REISGLE, 10th June, 1818.

DEAR FRIEND,—These lines are sent you from a poor prisoner in the land of Egypt, bound hand and foot in the house of bondage, surrounded with heart plagues inwardly, and oh! fretting crosses outwardly. My light tells me that my unsubdued ass, the flesh, must have two weighty burdens, but proud nature will not submit. I understand from sad experience that self glories when Babel's foundation is laid, and as the work is accurately executed to the plan, the old Nimrod is rejoicing, and gives drink-siller to his mechanics. As the tower rises joy increases, and will till the Lord of heaven and earth shake the foundation of this tremendous building in Scotland outwardly, and in men's hearts inwardly. I say this from my own vineyard, and from my sad second sight of my first days. I was fourteen years an able active fellow at this building—first a barrow man, next a quarryman, till at last I got the charge of the work committed to myself. Oh! to write reality, man's day is like himself, and pleases himself—he is well pleased with his work and reward; as he employs himself, he pleases himself. The Lord's work is like Himself—when He begins to build to the glory and praise of His great name, He begins to rob man of his own glory. Man is ready to glory in his gifts and parts, in his reformation, confession and repentance, in his duties and tears, his diligence and endeavours, in his temptations and consolations—he is puffed up at his approbation, and no less at his persecution, saying that he is suffering as a Christian, and yet may eat and drink at the table of idols, and sacrifice to devils. All his acquired knowledge, gifts, parts, praise and reproach are nothing but marble out of the quarry of nature, and Christ will get a birth-bedroom in Bethlehem's inn as sure as he will get one moment's lodging in this Babel tower. When Christ comes to build a house for Himself in the soul of man, His first work is, by His Word and Spirit, to pull down all towers and turrets of man's imaginations, and He opens a door on his heart and a window in his understanding—opens his graves that his dead devils may get a resurrection in his heart, mind, memory, and in all the faculties of his soul and body—makes his heaven a hell to him, his strength his weakness, his faith delusion, his light darkness, his sun blood, his moon sackcloth—his heavenly meditations in his thoughts once, now a hell of corruptions, and his reformed heart a cage of all abominations—his spiritual mind, once a library of divinity with himself, now a mail-coach to the devil's emissaries. His summer joy is turned now to his winter grief, and he cannot mourn, pray, or sigh under his sad case, all blasted

with the north wind, and grown over in his old days with young follies and lusts. Where is this poor man's Minister now? In heaven, and not in your Inverness nor our Caithness. To stop I must, and tell you, dear, that I am the man that puts amen to said lines. I am very, very lonely and dull—all dead winter with me here. If you can, bring me to your closet.—I am your well-wisher,

ALEX. GAIR.

The Late Donald (Roderick) Mackenzie, Canada.

WE regret that the death of Donald (Roderick) Mackenzie, one of our leading men in Canada, should have been left so long unnoticed. This good man was born in the parish of Lochalsh, Scotland, in the year 1815. In 1847 he emigrated to Canada, and eventually settled near Lake Huron, in the township of Ashfield. We have not been able to trace the history of his early religious experiences, but we are disposed to think that ere he left Scotland he was one who feared the Lord. He was not long settled in Canada when he was ordained an elder of "the Free Church of Scotland in Canada." When "the Free Church of Scotland in Canada" and "the United Presbyterian Church in Canada" by the union of 1861 became one body, he, along with other faithful men in Kincardine and Ashfield, held firmly to the principles professed by the Free Church in 1843, and in consequence found it impossible to enter that union. That honourable position he maintained without once wavering until he finished his course on earth on the 13th of July of this year.

It was not until after the union of 1875 that those who remained true to Free Church principles put up a place of worship of their own in Lochalsh, Ontario. In bringing about this desirable object, the subject of this notice took a prominent part. At that time there were several others who along with him helped to conduct the services, but as one by one of his companions was called away, he for some years before his end had the entire charge in conducting the services. Last year two other elders were appointed in that congregation, and to them the Church will look that the regular Sabbath services in our place of worship in Lochalsh will not be discontinued.

When our deputies visited Canada last year he was possessed of so much bodily strength as enabled him to attend to all the services held at Lochalsh. They were much struck by the clearness and vigour of his mental faculties, considering that he was at that time 87 years of age. He had a very intelligent grasp of the doctrines and principles of the Confession of Faith, and none ever held them with less respect to persons than he. His reverence for the Word of God was most profound. Of all human productions he held that the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland was first in importance. Boston's Fourfold State he held as being next to it.

He must have had a very strong memory, for even then he quoted long passages from the Bible and from sermons he heard when a young man before he left Scotland. That eminent servant of Christ, the late Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Uig, Lochalsh, and Rogart, was, in his opinion, the chief of all the preachers he ever heard. He heard him one day (at Lochalsh, Scotland) express his opinion concerning the meaning of a certain passage of the Word of God, and he immediately said—"Take that with you; you will find it very useful yet in the woods of America." When he told us the above he added—"The day I heard that statement from godly Mr. Macleod I had no thought of emigrating to Canada, but many a day the light I got from him that day on that truth upheld my discouraged soul in the woods of Canada."

He seemed to us to be possessed of very strong convictions, undaunted courage, and firm as a rock in holding to what he considered duty towards his Creator or his fellow-men. At the same time we were much impressed with the real natural affections of the man's heart.

The last prayer one of the writers of this notice heard from him, in the house of Mr. D. T. Mackenzie, on the Monday after the services of the Communion season were brought to an end, made a profound impression on all present. It left the conviction that his name was truly "Israel," and also that he was not far from his everlasting rest.

When our deputies of this year arrived in Ontario they learned with sorrow that Donald (Roderick) Mackenzie was apparently on his deathbed. They were not able to visit him until after they had been five Sabbaths in Canada. He had then only little more than a week to live. Even then they counted it a privilege that he and they had been spared to meet. He appeared as one fully resigned to the Lord's will in dying or living. Early on Monday, the 13th of July, ere the Communion services which were being conducted in that place of worship which he loved so well and so long had quite ended, he breathed his last, and entered we believe upon the reward of a faithful servant. Owing to an unavoidable appointment elsewhere, our deputies were unable to attend the funeral. We have, however, pleasure in putting on record that the sermon by one of the Canadian ministers, which is almost universally prevalent at Canadian funerals, was in this instance dispensed with. Our respected missionary, Mr. Daniel Clark, conducted the service in accordance with the simple and chaste manner recommended in the Westminster Directory.

Our sympathy is extended to the bereaved family, and especially to the devoted daughter who was his kind nurse to the end.

J. R. M.
N. C.

We are pleased to observe that Dr. Robertson's "Roman Catholic Church in Italy" has reached a third edition.

Searmon.

LEIS AN URR. ARCHD. COOK A BHA 'N DEIMHIDH.

“Uime sin thigibh a mach as am meadhon. . . .”—2 Cor. vi. 16, 17.

(An dara cuid de'n t-searmon.)

'N UAIR a tha an Tighearn a' smachdachadh a chloinne tha comhfhulangas iongantach aige riu nach comasach aon a thuigsinn ach E fein; ciod air bith cho geur 's a dh' fheudas an smachdachadh a bhi do fhuil's do fheoil gidheadh tha comh-fhulangas iongantach ann. Feudaidd smachdachadh paraint bhi gle gheur, ach cha bhris e cnamh. Mar a tha e sgrìobhta mu Sholamh, “Ma threigeas a chlann mo lagh, agus nach gluais iad ann am bhreitheanasaihbh, ma mhinaomhaicheas iad mo reachdan, agus nach gleidh iad m'aitheantan, an sin fiosraichidh mi le slait an eusontas agus le buillibh an euceart. Gidheadh cha bhuin mi gu tur mo chaoimhneas graidh uaith agus cha bhreugaich mi mo ghealladh, cha bhris mi mo choimh-cheangal agus an ni a thainig a mo bhilibh cha chaochail mi,” mar sin cha-n 'eil smachdachadh air bith nach ann o Dhia 'tha e. 'S iomadh uair a chunnaic sinn leanabh a' gul ann an laimh a pharaint, ach cha rachadh an t-slat a thoirt dheth gus an aidichheadh an leanabh a chionta. Ma's tusa aon de'n chloinn bidh an t-slat air do dhruim gus an aidich thu do pheacadh agus, 's math dh' fheudta, gus an geall thu nach bidh thu gu brath tuilleadh ciontach dheth. An saoghal truagh, tha an Tighearn tosdach riu. Co an leanabh air an tric a tha an t-slat? Tha, an leanabh a's mo a th' air a ghradhachadh. Tha cuid do chloinn De ris an bidh E a' deanamh cunntaidh gle gheur, 's math dh' fheudta nach labhair iad focal diomhain nach bidh an t-slat air an druim air a shon. Ach is cuimhne leis gur duslach iad.

'Nuair a tha e a' smachdachadh an leinibh tha e a' leughadh a mach aobhar an smachdachaidh. Tha iomadh creutair air an smachdachadh, ach cha-n 'eil an smachdachadh a' ruigheachd gu am beo. Ach ma's tusa aon de chloinn Chrìosd smachdaichidh e thu an doigh a ruigeas a bheo. Millidh e miann-sul nighean Shìoin. Bheireadh tu fein sgian a laimh do leinibh ged bhiodh e a' gul. Ma tha ni agadsa 'tha 'toirt do chridhe air falbh o Dhia bheir e sin uait agus leughaidh e an reuson duit. An saoghal truagh, tha iad air an smachdachadh ach cha-n fhaic iad aobhar an smachdachaidh agus mar sin tha iad a' buanachadh 'nan seann diabhuil mar a bha iad. Faic, tha a bhean air a toirt air falbh o dhuine, ach cha-n 'eil e a' faicinn an aobhair agus tha e a' buanachadh mar a bha e. Ach leughaidh e mach an t-aobhar do chuspairean a ghaoil agus thig iadsan gu bhi fireanachadh Dhe anns na h-uile nithibh. “Cha mheasar smachdachadh air bith am feadh a ta e lathair solasach, ach doilgheasach; gidheadh 'na dheigh sin bheir e uaith toradh sìochail na fireantachd do'n dream a tha gu dlìgheach air an cleachdadh ris,” chum gu'm bidh iad air

an deanamh 'nan luchd-comhpairt de nadur na naomhachd. 'Nuair a thig am bas gus an anam ghrasmhor chithear an sin gu'n robh a h-uile ni a choinnich ris beag ni's leor, gu'n robh feum aig air gach ni. 'S e aithne air sin ni a bhios ag altrun an eagail dhiadhaidh anns an anam, agus thig an t-anam gu bhi 'fuathachadh peacaidh.

Feudaidd sinn a radh gur e a tha ann an suil an Athar Shiorruidh bhi 'cumail cunntadh goirid ri a chloinn. 'S iongantach sin 'nuair a thig am bas ri neach nach bidh ni aige ri dheanamh ach 'anam a leagail ann an laimh Dhe. An saoghal truagh, 'sann an sin a shineas iad air urnuigh. 'S iongantach urramach an doigh anns am bheil anam air a dheanamh 'na leanabh do Dhia. Feumaidh gineamhuinn a bhi ann mu'm bidh leanabh. Thusa, a ta gun a ghin ged a bhiodh tu air do ghluinean gu la do bhais cha bhi breth agad. Ach far am bheil gin bidh breth. Thusa a tha dh' easbhuidh sin cha bhi breth agad a com naduir no a do chuid mhiannan. Feudaidd ta teangadh na h-ath-bhreith fhaotainn. Ach is uamhasach an ni teangadh na h-ath-bhreith a bhi aig neach agus e fein ann an com naduir. Thoir an aire, as eugmhais naomhachd cha-n fhaic neach sam bith an Tighearn. S' ann mar sin a tha an t-abstol Peadar a' labhairt, "tre'n d' thugadh dhuinn geallanna ro mhor agus luachmhor, chum d' an trid-san gu'm biodh sibhse air bhur deanamh 'nur luchdcomhpairt de nadur na diadhachd air dhuibh dol as o'n truaillidheachd a ta anns an t-saoghal tre anamiann." 'S e sin analachadh Spiorad nan gras anns an anam. Tha iomadh seorsa creidimh anns an t-saoghal; ach 's e a th' anns a' chreidimh a tha 'g aonadh ri Crìosd analachadh Spiorad Naomh nan gras anns an anam, a' tarruing an anama mach air Crìosd anns an t-soisgeul, 'S e sin an creidimh a tha 'deanamh duine 'na oighre air Dia. Ann an ceud analachadh creidimh air Crìosd anns an anam tha aonadh deanta. "Oir is sibhse uile Mic Dhe tre chreidimh ann an Crìosd." O, 's iongantach sin, anam ann an aonachd ri Crìosd, e fein agus Crìosd 'nan aon. Tha tearnadh an anama iongantach; ach mile uair 'na iongantas tha so, e bhi air a thearnadh ann an aonachd ri dara pearsa na Diadhachd. Tha a dhol gu gloir iongantach, ach ciod e so e a dhol gu gloir ann an aonachd ri Mac Dhe. 'S iongantach ni amharc air anam agus Crìosd 'nan aon. 'S ann mar sin a tha maitheanas peacaidh a' tighinn a mach a dh' ionnsuidh an anama.

Bha anns an run shiorruidh an t-anam a thoirt gu bhi 'sealbhadh an aon sonas ri Crìosd, mar a thubhairt am, Fearsaoraidh fein, "tha mise 'dol suas chum m' Athar fein agus bhur n-Athar-sa, agus chum mo Dhe fein agus bhur De-se." O, am bheil thusa a' diultadh Chrìosd? Faic, 's e Athair Chrìosd, Athair an anama.

Bha anns an run shiorruidh Spiorad na h-uchd-mhacachd a chomhpairteachadh riu. "Cha d' fhuair sibh spiorad na daorsa a ris chum eagail, ach fhuair sibh Spiorad na h-uchd-mhacachd tre'n glaoth sinn, Abba, Athair." "Agus do bhrìgh gur mic sibh, chuir Dia Spiorad a Mhic fein ann bhur cridheachaibh, ag eigheach,

Abba Athair.” Uchd-mhacachd na cloinne, 's iongantach an t-sochair sin a tha e 'buileachadh air a chloinn agus gu cinnt ach feudaidh e sin a chomh-pairteachadh riu gu faireachail. Tha fhios agad 'nuair a bha thu fein a' d' leanabh chuir thu cràdh air do pharant agus ma thuig thu gur tu a chuir an cràdh air, chaill thu do dhanachd am measg na cloinne, agus cha tugadh ni comhfhurtachd dhuirt gus am faigheadh tu pog an athar. 'S e sin nadur na cloinne. Ach tha thusa ann an sin a bha ciontach de pheacaidhean gidheadh cha-n 'eil sin a' briscadh do shith no do ladarnais ann an urnuigh. Cha-n ann mar sin a tha clann Chriosd, tha an sith tric briste, agus cha toir ni sith dhoibh ach faoilte an Athar. 'S e sin Spiorad na cloinne, agus gu'n sealladh an Tighearn ortsa aig nach robh do shith riamh briste.

Gabh beachd air tearuinteachd an staid mo chairdean, cha bhi deiligidh aig Dia ri duine ach 'na cheann cumhnaint. Bha tearuinteachd aig an duine 'na cheud staid, ach cha b' fhad a bha e 'call sin; ach thusa a fhuair aithne air Criosd mar a tha sinn a' labhairt, air an la a thuiteas Criosd tuitidh tusa agus fhad-'s a sheasas Criosd seasaidh tusa. Thoir thusa an aire, co e do cheann-cumhnaint, oir cha bhi deiligidh aig Dia ri duine ach tre a cheann-cumhnaint. O, is priseil sin a bhi aonaichte ri Criosd, “do bhrìgh gu'm bheil mise beo bidh sibhse beo mar an ceudna.”

Ach ann an so feudaidh sinn a radh nach ann air an dearbhachd tha sonas siorruidh an anama a' seasamh, ach air an aonachd ri Criosd. Tha dearbhachd air tearuinteachd an staid iongantach priseil, ach, mo chairdean. cha-n ann 'na chadal a ruigeas duine air sin, agus thusa a fhuair e cha-n ann a' d' shocair a fhuair thu e. Cha do rainig aon riamh air so gun stri gheur, agus 'nuair a tha na strithean sin ann aig muinntir tha an Tighearn 'g an toirt gu dearbhachd le iad a bhi 'meantradh an anama air Criosd. “Oir tha fhios agam co ann a chreid mi, agus is dearbh leam gu bheil esan comasach air an ni sin a dh'earb mi ris a choimhead fa chomhair an la sin.” 'S ann o'n chomhfhulangas anns a' Mhorachd a tha sin a' sruthadh. Nach iongantach gu'm faigheadh duine drap de dhearbhadh air e 'bhi 'na mhac do Dhia? Nach 'eil e airidh air a bhi 'ga iarraidh? Ach cha-n ann air a dhearbhadh air sin a tha a staid an crochadh ach air 'aonachd ri Criosd. Cha-n e a h-uile creidimh a tha 'tearnadh an anama. Cha-n e neart, ach nadur a' chreidimh a tha 'tearnadh an anama. “Tha fhios agam co ann a chreid mi.” Sibhse aig nach 'eil ach tearc de bhriathran urnuigh maduinn agus feasgar cha-n iongantach ged a tha sibh 'nur creutairean cruaidh. Ach O, 'nuair a thig sibh gu onfha Iordain!

Tha Dia a' toirt spiorad-urnuigh d'a chloinn. 'S iongantach gu'm faiceadh tu aon a' tighinn a dh' ionnsuidh a' Chruitheir cho sona 's a thigeadh e gu parant talmhaidh, 's iongantach e a' tighinn leis an aon saorsa leis an tigeadh e gu athair talmhaidh ach le urram. Faic cha robh a leithid a dh' urram ann an aon

riamh 's a bha anns an Fhear-shaoraidh a' tighinn dluth do Dhia Tha e a' comhpairteachadh do'n anam de'n Spiorad cheudna. Mo chairdean, tha moran a' tighinn dluth do Dhia gun ni's mo dh' urram na bhiodh aca an lathair duine mhoir anns an t-saoghal. Agus chān 'eil iad ach tearc anns am bheil an uiread sin fein. Ach "mur 'eil Spiorad Chrìosd aig neach cha bhuin e dha." 'S e so cuid de shochairdean na cloinne agus ged nach bu mho e na grainne de shìol mustaird, tha ann na riarachas a' Mhorachd. Cha chuir briathran diadhachd an saoghal a mach a peacadh. Ach thigeadh drap de'n urram so a stigh agus cuiridh e an t-anam a mach a peacadh. Agus o, tha e iongantach milis, anam a' tighinn dluth do Dhia leis an urram naomh so.

Notes and Comments.

The Macedonian Massacres.—The civilised world has heard with horror of the terrible programme of outrage and bloodshed which the Turk is now pursuing in Macedonia. The helplessness of the other nations the while is a singular feature of the situation. They are afraid of interfering lest worse should follow. If the Turk should be driven from Europe, as he deserves, the struggle for Constantinople which would ensue would likely convert Europe into an arena of contending hosts. It is our duty to abhor the doings of these bloody and deceitful followers of the false prophet, whose mission from the first has been one of destruction and misery. And we should pray for the speedy relief of the oppressed people of Macedonia. Neither should we forget the sacred Biblical associations of that land. It is not far from the scene of the present massacres where the beautiful moral transformation was effected that we read of in 1 Thessalonians i. 9-10. "How ye turned from idols to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." And it may have been the very ancestors of the present victims of Turkish cruelty that the Apostle mentions in 2 Cor. viii. 1. "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia." Neither are the two scenes, though separated by the space of well-nigh two thousand years, things without a real and significant connection. The God who was working in that moral transformation of the first century is the same who is even now avenging the quarrel of His covenant. We should be awed by the long vengeance He takes for despised gospel grace. It was not long before the converted nations of Eastern Europe began to dote upon a new set of idols, and to desert the pure spiritual form of New Testament worship for the culture of relics, crucifixes, pictures of the Virgin Mary, etc. In the year A.D. 786 this apostacy culminated in the decision of the Second Council of Nice, legalising image worship in the

Christian Church, and pronouncing a curse upon everyone who would attempt any opposition thereto. This consummation was not reached without much strife and bloodshed. Several right-minded emperors opposed themselves with all their power to the popular madness. Among these Leo the Isaurian, who flourished about the beginning of the eighth century, is honourably distinguished. However, the deadweight of superstitious priests and monks was too much even for the Imperial power, and the corruption of the Greek Church was accomplished as we see it at this day. To punish this apostasy God raised up first the Saracens and then the Turks, and it is His long vengeance for the contempt of His spiritual worship that is bringing forth the present horrors in Macedonia, where the victims are reckoned from 35,000 to 70,000. Nevertheless it is to be feared that the result will only be as is noted in Rev. ix. 20—"And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk."

The Great Day of Atonement.—While we write (Thursday, October 1st,) all the scattered communities of Jews throughout the world are proceeding with the maimed and lifeless anniversary which represents the Day of Atonement. It is thirty-four hundred years since, at the command of God, Aaron went in to the Most Holy Place and made an atonement by substitutionary blood for the iniquities of the whole congregation. To-day Israel has neither priest nor temple nor sacrifice, nevertheless on this "tenth day of the seventh month" they still abstain from work and go through the form of afflicting their souls and presenting themselves before the Lord in their synagogues.

Church Notes.

Communion.—Gairloch, Ross-shire, and Scourie, Sutherland, 2nd Sabbath of this month; Edinburgh, 3rd; Wick, 4th; Oban, 1st Sabbath of November; St. Jude's and John Knox's, Glasgow, and Tarbert, Loch Fyne, 2nd.

Return of Deputies from Canada.—We ought to have mentioned with much pleasure in last issue that the Church deputies—the Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Inverness, and Mr. Alexander Maclean, elder—arrived safely home from the Canadian Mission on the 18th August. They had a very pleasant and interesting time. Mr. Mackay preached ten Sabbaths, and held five Communion. During his time there Mr. Donald Mackenzie, one of the oldest and weightiest Christians in the field, passed away. Both Mr. Mackay and Mr. Maclean enjoyed good health. We need not, however, attempt to anticipate the account of the Mission, which will (God willing) be given at the next meeting of Synod in Glasgow, on November 10th.