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"Men of the Covenant."

THE present age is not one that exemplifies the spirit, or holds fast the principles, of our Covenanting ancestors. The general character of the time is of an entirely different, or even opposite, cast. Most of the fundamental doctrines, which the Covenanters valued so highly as the very truths of God most pure, are now esteemed as antiquated and unbelievable, while their noble spirit of resolute adherence to principle and bold opposition to error has given place to a spirit of compromise and surrender, which assumes to itself the sacred name of charity. And yet, strange to say, much has been spoken and written in our time in praise of their character and lives. Their love of freedom, and the greater sacrifices they made for it, no doubt still appeal to the popular mind, but it is very clear notwithstanding, that their view of liberty, as regulated by the laws of God's infallible word, is quite removed from the lawless notions of it that obtain among the majority of learned and unlearned, religious and profane, at the present day.

We are glad, however, to welcome almost any book that describes the character of our witnessing ancestors, and extols their glorious deeds, and one such, much above the common in excellence, though not quite our ideal, we have found in the "Men of the Covenant," by the Rev. Alexander Smellie, M.A., of the Original Secession Church. Mr. Smellie is already well known as the accomplished editor of a series of new and beautifully got-up editions of such gems in religious literature as "Augustine's Confessions," "Bunyan's Grace Abounding," "Edward's Religious Affections," and "Guthrie's Saving Interest," which he has prefaced with finely written introductions. The "Men of the Covenant," which is now before us, is his latest effort, and it is his best. From the beauty and freshness of its style it is admirably adapted to attract a multitude of readers among all classes, while the author's powers of vivid and winning description are fitted to kindle admiration, if not love, in the hearts of even a generation of "Pliables," to the stern and faithful men of the Covenant. In fact, we think the chief merit of Mr. Smellie's work, as a record of

facts and a eulogy of men of God, in whose footsteps we would do well to tread, lies in its manifest power to win the attention and esteem of outsiders, who are ignorant of, or alien to, the thoughts and ways of our noble progenitors in the faith. It is with the keenest regret that we shall have occasion to notice, however, some things that must be regarded from an orthodox point of view as decided blemishes in an otherwise beautiful book.

Mr. Smellie does not set himself in this work to deal with the period of the First Reformation; it is that of the Second Reformation he describes. He does not go back so far as Knox and Melville, though he has references to them, but he takes up mainly the story of the 28 years' persecution, beginning at the year 1660, and portrays the "Men of the Covenant" then flourishing. The titles of his various chapters are fresh and apt. The chapter on Samuel Rutherford is entitled "A Deathbed at St. Andrews;" on the Marquis of Argyle, "Marquis and Martyr;" on James Guthrie, of Stirling, "The Short Man who could not Bow;" on Archbishop Sharp (for Mr. Smellie describes the bad men as well as the good), "Sharp of that Ilk;" on William Guthrie, "A Sabbath Morning at Fenwick;" on Richard Cameron, "The Lion of the Covenant;" on Robert Baillie, of Jerviswood, "For a Gentleman there is Mr. Baillie;" and on James Renwick, "He was of Old Knox's Principles." It is a matter of much satisfaction that Mr. Smellie in the main upholds the attitude of the more faithful and uncompromising Covenanters. He argues in their defence, even where he does not fully endorse their proceedings, and is always dignified and tender when he handles the words and ways of men who loved not their lives unto death for the sake of Christ and His truth.

Now, a word as to the blemishes. Mr. Smellie devotes the seventeenth chapter to a review of the preaching of the Covenanters, whom he well designates as "Spokesmen of Christ." In the course of his review he points out that they were in a most noticeable degree expositors of the Word of God, and then proceeds to quote a statement of Dr. George Adam Smith's in commendation of the expository lectures of the Scottish pulpit and its "continuous tradition and habit of scholarship." A little further on Mr. Smellie adds, "Much was necessarily wanting—the results of modern research, and the conclusions of a believing and reverent criticism." Now, we are constrained to express our doubt, to say the least of it, as to the wisdom or appropriateness of quoting the opinion of Dr. G. A. Smith, as if he were somebody whose name ought to be associated with the Covenanters, unless it be on the principle embodied in the words, their enemies themselves being judges. Has not Dr. Smith written of the covenants of Scotland as covenants with death and hell? And, moreover, are we to conclude that Mr. Smellie associates Dr. Smith with "the conclusions of a reverent and believing criticism?" Anyone who knows Dr. Smith's recent book on the Old Testament can only associate him

with the most unbelieving and irreverent criticism that has ever appeared in Scotland. Criticism has nowadays come to be almost another word for infidelity, so that Mr. Smellie, if he means something entirely different from what we attach to his words, should have been much more explicit than he is. A true and loyal son of the Covenanters, who loved God's word as their very life, should give forth no uncertain sound in regard to the dangerous character of the higher critics. There are a few other passages in the book that afford scope for criticism, but we forbear.

A very interesting feature of the work is "a whole gallery of admirable pictures." Some of these are quite new to us, such as those of Samuel Rutherford, John Livingstone, and William Guthrie. The book, which consists of 440 large pages, is got up in excellent style, print and paper being all that can be desired. The price (7s. 6d. net), however, is rather high for the common people, but it may be found possible to have a cheaper edition yet.

Notes of a Sermon

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN KENNEDY, D.D., DINGWALL.
Preached in Wick on December 1st, 1862.¹

(Taken by a hearer, and hitherto unpublished.)

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?"—Rev. vii. 13.

THE questions here asked by the elder, John could not answer, and no wonder, for it would be with difficulty he would recognise—indeed, he might utterly fail to recognise—these arrayed in white robes, and standing before the throne, as those he had known on earth. He knew them in their temptation—it may be, in their sin; and, above all, in their great tribulation. No wonder then that his recognition failed, and the answering of the questions was difficult. Let us notice:—

I. *Whence* came these redeemed ones?

II. *How* came they hither?

III. *Whither* are they brought? To what home and how are they occupied?

On this latter point, I remark seven particulars:—(1) As to position, they are before the Throne; (2) As to occupation, they are serving; (3) They are enjoying the presence of Him who sitteth upon the Throne; (4) They hunger and thirst no more; (5) They feel no heat nor light of the sun; (6) Jesus, the Lamb, leads them and feeds them as a shepherd; and (7) God wipes away all tears from their eyes.

¹ This sermon was preached in Pulteneytown Free Church, Wick, on Monday after the Communion held on Sabbath, 30th November, 1862.—ED.

I. In looking at the first main head, "Whence came they?" I remark that they came from earth. They were of the race of Adam, and that race a fallen, sinful one. Not the whole of Adam's race are there; all are not forthcoming, nor ever will be; but many—very many—of them are, and will be, before the Throne, and those are from every land, and nation, and kindred, and people.

Thanks be to God, there are many from our own land, from your country, your town, your congregation, and, it may be, your home and family. And if it be so, may you not ask yourself, "What if I am left behind?" They have got to that glorious home, that everlasting home before the Throne, and what if you are the only one to be left behind? Let me tell you there is but one way of getting there, by the strait gate and the narrow way. The fear of being left behind may well be a serious one; it may well rob you of rest; sleep may be refused your eyes and slumber your eyelids. Better far it should be so than that you should stand at last and see the door shut, while others go in.

Though there was so much diversity on earth among these redeemed ones, they having come from every nation, and kindred, and people, yet in many particulars they were alike, and in none so much as this, the state in which they were first found by redeeming grace. In what condition were they when found?

They were lying under the curse of God's law in guilt and misery, having to account for a broken covenant. They were lying at the grave's mouth, on the brink of hell, without one thought of doing ought to escape it, with not one moment they could say belonged to them between them and everlasting burnings. The Lord knew they deserved to be cast into the grave's devouring mouth, He knew they deserved to be plunged into these burnings. It was not because He could not be independent of these worms of the dust that He resolved to save them. It would not have cast the least shadow of a spot on His justice, mercy, or glory if He had left them to perish, but it pleased Him to save them; it pleased Him to raise the beggar from the dunghill and set him among the princes of His people.

Yes, He found them under the power of sin, entirely under its power. So completely was it their master that there was not the least possibility of a hope that they could be delivered, unless by the exercise of a power stronger, mightier than it, even the power of the Almighty. Besides, being under sin's power, they were covered with its vile leprosy; so covered all over, so full of corruption, that hell seemed the only fit place for them. They had lost the image of God; it was entirely defaced. They were destitute of holiness, and had not the least desire after it. . . . When their meetness for hell was complete, when they were on the very threshold of it, with, as it were, but the lifting of a foot between them and it, then saving grace reached them, then redeeming love saved them. When I say they were in sin's power, under God's wrath, under Satan's power, leprous, corrupt, and vile, I have not said enough;

I have not said that they were willing also to remain so, not caring to be delivered. Not that they were willing to come under the punishment that their sin and vileness deserved, or that they were willing to be under the power of Satan as executioner. They served him willingly, eagerly, as prince; they fancied themselves happy in their allegiance to Him as such; but his subjects fear much the wages that their firm allegiance gets them. And might not God have let them get the wages they had so justly earned, and might he not allow the sentence of death to be executed—that sentence they had so truly earned?

When the Lord at first approached them, as they were lying in the state I have described, I do not know, friends, but they thought He had come as an executioner, and not as a deliverer, and that, when He came to rouse them up, it was but to cast them for ever from His presence. And, moreover, poor, befooled, silly ones as they were, they thought it safer and better to be left in peace on destruction's brink than to be wakened up to a realisation of their state, which peace would only have made them feel their fall into eternal misery all the more. Yes, they raised the sluggard's cry, and pleaded the sluggard's petition, "Yet a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep," and turned them again with their face to the precipice. But God's love would not thus be set aside, nor His power be thus defeated. The time of the fulfilling of the eternal purpose had arrived, the time of effectual calling had come. He saw them lying in their blood, and then His time was a time of love. Why was it so? Is that your question? Because all He was then and thereafter to do was done to the praise of the glory of His grace.

I wish here to remark before passing on that the passage to hell along the course of this world is a smooth, pleasant voyage. The floating is easy. Many, the nearer they approach the end, the more they are assured of peace, and the more loudly they talk of safety. Such are drunk with the world's pleasures, never heeding warnings, that seem to them but a blast of rudeness, till at length the end is reached, and they leap into everlasting perdition.

II. We come now to the second division of our subject, "How came they hither?" What were the means the Lord employed in conducting them to their place before the Throne? As we previously saw, if any power could deliver them out of the state in which they were, it must be an Almighty power; and so it was. The Lord Jehovah stretched His hand from above, took them from below, and set them among the princes of His people. What mode did God take to accomplish His end?

First, I remark, they were washed in blood, the blood of the Lamb. None without this washing can stand in the New Jerusalem. The washing must be complete; they must part from all defilement; no spot or blemish must be found on them. Nothing unclean can go up on that way of holiness, not only

nothing that is unclean but nothing that can communicate defilement. This washing, to begin with, is the washing of regeneration. There may be many differences in experience, but in this respect the resemblance is complete; they are all regenerated by one and the same Spirit. This washing never needs to be done over again. It is a washing that is kept by the power of the Lord unpolluted through time, till the redeemed take their place in eternity. A seed of *all* holiness was planted in the sinner's heart when regeneration took place. Not the seed of one particular grace, but the seed of all graces. Not one member was regenerated, but all the members; not one faculty, but all the faculties. When this washing was accomplished, it left behind it, then, a germ of universal holiness. A germ, not the full-grown flower, but yet a seed that is destined to bring forth fruit into life eternal. There is often much need of reviving the grace in the regenerate sinner's heart, but there is no need of the implantation of a new life. There is no possibility of destroying the life already implanted; it will be kept there in spite of Satan, sin, and the world.

Secondly, after regeneration, I would speak of justification. The sinner is justified freely through grace, not on the ground of regeneration, but solely on the ground of Christ's finished work. The obedience and death of Christ is as much the groundwork of the one as of the other. It is because of this, and this alone, that Jehovah can without reflection on His justice be the just God and yet the justifier of the ungodly.

The act of justification is as complete as it is free, and as sure as it is complete. It does not need to be revised or done over again, and it shall never be cancelled. It is the perfect act of Him who is the Rock, whose work is perfect. . . . In this act of justification all sins are forgiven; not only those known and remembered by the sinner, not only those felt and seen by him, when standing self-condemned and guilty, but those that the Judge saw, as He alone seeth; all, all were blotted out. It must be so, friends, in justice to Christ's righteousness. The guilt of one idle thought, one vain word, as an infringement of God's law, will expose us to His wrath. Thus, if even a word or thought were left unpardoned, it would be, as it were, a reflection on Christ's finished work, as well as it would doom us to destruction.

The believer's title to heaven is settled. There is no fear of its ever being shaken or his ever being deprived of it. God does not set sinners on the way and then leave them to themselves. He does not say, "I have given you a fair start; you must now make the rest of the way yourselves." No, the believer starts an heir of heaven, by virtue of a title God secures him, and he holds on his way by the help of the Lord, till he reaches the threshold of eternity and there presents the title-deed written and sealed in the blood of the Lamb.

Thirdly, I observe the work of sanctification. Sanctification differs from either regeneration or justification. It is a work, not

an act. Justification is an act done in heaven ; sanctification is a work performed on earth. There is danger of placing the one for the other. Many in idle fashion trace their hope of sanctification to Christ's righteousness, and would fain believe that they personally had little or nothing to do with the matter. Such is not the right way of looking at it. Sanctification is a divine work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, distinct from Christ's finished work, and in connection with which the soul must be exercised. Others think—and alas ! this class is large—that sanctification is something to be got at when the individual is a stranger to the corruptions of his heart and to the exceeding sinfulness of his sin. Fancying they have attained to regeneration and justification, and that these entitle them to sanctification, they think they can well afford to dispense with the Spirit, and can well afford to be indifferent to a life of holiness. Such, I much fear, are yet in the bond of iniquity. The work of the Spirit in sanctification is a work that must go on, not outside, but in the believer's heart. Others again dream of holiness only after death, and look upon sanctification as a thing quite unattainable in this life. But, friends, sanctification is a work that is to be completed at death. And if this is not the case, there is no hope of it after. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still.

Don't wonder, aged Christian, thou who hast wandered in the wilderness many a day and tried to serve the Lord these many years, don't wonder now, when you are drawing near death, when your journey cannot now be much longer, if you feel you have more need of holiness than ever, and you find yourself saying, "Surely I am not meet for heaven, I who am seeing so much of my own increasing defilement and those sins and corruptions becoming more powerful ; no prayer, no utterance of mine that is not steeped in this defilement. Ah, how unlikely it seems that ever I shall set foot in the New Jerusalem." Dear friend, look less at yourself and more at blessed Christ. Take the Lord at His word. He that hath begun the good work, will He give it up now. think you ? He will not leave thee at the end of thy journey ; even when the last step is to be taken, when in the death throes thou mayest *feel* the presence of the old man in all his entirety, yes, as strong as ever. But even in death the Lord is worth the trusting. You may depend upon it that trust will not be betrayed. He will be as good as His word. When you have passed through the valley, crossed the river and parted with the old man, nothing will appear more astonishing to you, not even the first great change of being made spiritually alive, than this wonderful parting with the old man for ever.

Again, I wish to remark that this washing we have already spoken of is a washing in the blood of the Lamb, Christ. It is only through the blood of His Son that God can extend His hand to sinners. It is only through the right of His blood that the Spirit can give them His everlasting blessings. It is a wondrous

sight, that of the Spirit bringing the sinner into God's presence and claiming sanctification through the right of Christ's righteousness. Think of Jesus putting in His claim on behalf of His blood-bought ones! Think of Jehovah's response and of the settling and sealing the sinner's title. This is indeed a sight passing wonderful. All washing, all justifying, all sanctifying, is at the expense of the blood of the Lamb. Nought out or away from this precious blood—all things in it. All, from the first moment of effectual calling till the believer reaches heaven, is done at the cost of Jesus' blood.

It is well, friends, to understand the connection between a life of holiness and the cross of Christ. How sin can be subdued, how lust can be weakened, how a soul cleaving to the dust can become heavenly, panting after the Lord and the enjoyment of His service—all this is only to be got at by dealing with the blood of the Lamb. If I knew more of the life and death of my blessed Saviour, and were I less a stranger to His precious blood, I would have less cause to complain of hardness and death. Just so much the more dealing I have with this blood, just so much the more will I experience of the blessedness of the man who enjoys sweet and uninterrupted communion with God. The truest believer, the most advanced Christian, can never afford to be independent of the blood of the Lamb. When the finishing stroke is given, when they are going down to the Jordan, never were they more dependent, and you may hear them saying with Paul the aged—"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

We have now come to another point of our subject, namely, to remark that these washed, justified, and sanctified ones are brought "out of great tribulation."

Some may ask "How can this be? We have known many go there out of great and manifold tribulations, out of much sorrow and suffering, out of the pains of martyrdom, but others have entered peacefully, having had a pleasant, and it may be, a speedy journey." It may be so, friend, but if we knew the story of each of these redeemed ones, and if we took the accumulated stories in the aggregate, we would see how very great was the tribulation they were brought out of. But again, it may be urged, "Have not some had scarcely a journey at all? Have they not just breathed, and then been carried hence?" Yes, that may be the case too; but, friend, did they not open their eyes upon a world of misery, blighted by sin, did they not draw one breath in a polluted atmosphere? Were they not surrounded by a sea of troubles, exposed to the powers of hell and the fiery trial of Satan? In this sense they came out of great and manifold tribulation. The smallest of these troubles they passed through was great, contrasted with the joys and happiness of their present glorious home.

This question may suggest itself to many of you, and how often it has been a hard question to some of us, "Why does the Lord

expose His children to so many sorrows and trials, and when they meet them on their way, why does He not give them wings *over* these troubles, or why does He not lead them *past* by a more peaceful path? He, who loved them so much as to give up His well-beloved Son to the death, and who washed them in the blood of the Lamb, one would think He would do otherwise." I cannot answer your questions, except in this way. I am quite sure that the path the Lord leads them by is the best, and another thing I am sure of is, that He will draw glory to Himself and good to them out of what appears to us a grievous affliction and a tedious delay. If it is my Father's will that He should be glorified in me in his particular way, dare I murmur? Far be such a thing from me!

I shall now point out four ways in which the Lord has an opportunity of manifesting His glory in His people's afflictions. He manifests His faithfulness, His power, His wisdom, and His tender mercies.

His faithfulness. How often when the Lord's people are bowed down with sorrow, assailed with many and great temptations, struck to the ground by heavy afflictions, when it seems they are surrounded on every side by a very sea of troubles, when their heart grows faint within them, and they are ready to be engulfed, when they cry "Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?"—how often does He come mightily to their deliverance and give them cause to sing to the praise of His faithful word! And when, after all delays, trials, fears, and suspicions, how shines forth the glory of His faithfulness in their triumphal entry into glory! Then that dark cloud of trial and tribulation will appear but as a background to show off more clearly His glorified faithfulness. The promises of the Lord are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. The word of the Lord endureth for ever.

The *power* of God will be glorified in the affliction of His people. Satan is the great enemy of the believer. All his powers and artifices are employed, and all the blandishments of the world are used by him for the accomplishment of the believer's destruction. The more Satan molests, the more he aims his fiery darts, the more numerous the hosts he calls into the field, the more is the power of God glorified in beating back and defeating him. Had the Lord always made the journey of His people a short one, Satan might say "Had He left them longer here, I would have easily defeated them, but I got no opportunity of trying them." But Satan has not this to say. The Lord gives him a chance of doing his worst. He leaves them forty years in the wilderness. Satan, with all his hellish hosts, tries every plan, and puts forth his utmost strength, but all to no purpose; he is vanquished. And after all, God's power triumphs, and His Israel arrive at the promised land, singing "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?"

Again, God's *wisdom* is glorified in His people's afflictions. What has not the wisdom of the Lord to do in defeating iniquity

and in giving a way of escape to His people from the wiles and deceit of Satan? When the believer is oftentimes in darkness and cannot see the need or wisdom of a mysterious providence, yet in the time of his deliverance he comes to see that in all the intricacies of the wheels of the machine there is written, Glory to God in the highest and good to Israel. . . . I must see Jehovah's glory to be the first and great end, and that the way He takes to accomplish this end is worthy of Himself. Seeing this, it is surely well my part to be contented and to bow meekly to His wisdom, saying no longer, "Why did he do this or that? Would it not have been better if He had taken such a way or such another?"

Lastly, I remark that the *tender mercies* of the Lord are glorified in the afflictions of His people. The flesh likes an easy way—no trouble, no sorrows, no wounds, no fears, it would have. But had God's way been such an easy one there would be no gracious relievings, no sweet sense of His power and love in deliverance, no precious drops of comfort in the flames.

The Lord takes His children's hearts off the loved things of earth, and must have nothing coming in between Him and them. When they are crushed under affliction, there is more cause for entire dependence in Himself. Were it not for troubles, friends, we would have little knowledge of the tenderness of our Lord's loving kindness. It is those who are laden with sorrow, those with open wounds, faint hearts, moist eyes, to whom Jehovah has an opportunity of showing His tender mercies. It is they who know how to get draughts from the fountain of His love. It is a blessed tempest, dear, tried child of God, that tosses you into the bosom of Jehovah.

What good may also be got from tribulations in the way of coming to know ourselves a little better! The heat of the furnace throws up the dross and corruption of our vile hearts. Hard though the heat be, scorching though the fire be, yet the Lord brings great things to thee out of it all. Some poor tried one here may be saying "I have been in the furnace, yes, in a hot fire, but what good has it done me?" It has at least done thee this good; it has shown thee how much of dross and corruption and defilement there is still in thee, and don't say that is a small thing. . . . There are some of us, my friends, who would like now and then to get a little pleasure and sin out of the cisterns of this world, but God breaks them and leaves us no other resource but to go to Himself. Rest you assured you are greatly the better of the troubles that send you oftenest on errands to the throne of grace. All furnaces are good that shut up to blessed Christ. When your journey is over, believer, will not the home seem sweeter to you, when looking back upon all the dangers and griefs and fears you have passed through? I think it will.

Two vessels left the harbour together. One of them had a pleasant and speedy voyage. No storm assailed her not an hour

of the voyage, but the sea was quiet, beautiful and calm. She entered the port in safety. The other, from the moment of setting out, was storm-tossed and in danger. The wind blew fiercely, the waves raged, the hurricane roared, the waters rose like mountains; she was almost engulfed. When at last she did reach the harbour, with shattered mast and tattered sail, and hardly got in—was “scarcely saved”—which think you of the crews felt their spirits happier, or the haven sweeter? Was it they who had a pleasant voyage and an easy entrance, or they who had endured terrific storms and been in fearful dangers and had been scarcely saved? I think it would be the latter, friends. Their hearts would be fuller of thankfulness, and the repose to them would be sweeter. And just so will it be with those entering the haven above, vessels of mercy, brought “out of great tribulation.”

III. I must confess I shrink from the third point—“Whither are they brought?” It is too much, even a glimpse of this glory, for flesh to bear, unless accompanied by unction from the Holy One, and unless spiritual eyesight is given. If we push aside the veil in an irreverent manner, and if the fleshly prevail over the spiritual in our view, we shall at last come to regard those most holy things, a glimpse of which we have here vouchsafed us, with utter indifference. With becoming awe and solemnity, let us approach and look at these *seven things* that are recorded in connection with those redeemed, justified, and sanctified ones.

1. They are “before the Throne.” And is this the goal they have reached at last? They, who were lying in their guilt and misery on the brink of hell, they who suffered in the pangs of the new birth, they who passed through the wilderness fainting and weary, they who so lately trembled in the death throes on the threshold of eternity—has it come to this with them at last? Yes, it is even so. They are basking in the effulgence of the glory issuing from the Throne and Him who sitteth upon it.

I know not how it is, friends, but we cannot tell anything of that glorified body they now wear, nor how it is that they are so strengthened as to be able to endure the showing forth of that glory, nor do we know the exercise of soul they experience, which prevents their being struck down before the majesty of Him who sitteth on the Throne. All of us can know little of it, and all our talking is but poor babbling at the best. But this I venture to say, with John, “It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” What a wonder, we exclaim, that they were ever brought there. Yes, it is a marvellous thing, but it would be a greater wonder if they were *not* there. If we look first at the wonder on Mount Calvary, our surprise will be less at this latter wondrous manifestation of God’s love. When I see the Son of God pouring out His blood on the Cross, and when I think of Jehovah’s marvellous love in the gift of His Son, my wonder would be great indeed, if the love that gave such a Son to shed

His blood would not bring those cleansed in that blood to Himself at last, even to a place before His Throne. The wonder on Mount Calvary is *the* wonder after all. Nowhere is the glory of Jehovah's love and justice combined more manifest than in the Cross; and where can the objects of this love get a more fitting place than that which they occupy before His Throne above? Kings are wont to show forth and exhibit the trophies of their power and skill. These arrayed in white robes are the trophies of Jehovah's power and the specimens of His skill. Where can they be shown best but in that glorious place He has given them? In them is manifested, as in nothing else, the glory of His love. The reflection of that glory is cast back again from them in songs of praise and thankfulness towards the Throne and Him that sitteth upon it and the Lamb.

2. The second thing we are told of them is, "They serve him day and night in His temple." They serve Him. Observe, they are *not* idle. There is rest, but no idleness in heaven. Idleness would be no rest to them. . . . I do not know, nor can any of us tell, what this temple is in which they serve God. We are told they are always there day and night. Not that there is any night in heaven; it means that they serve *continually*. Had they nothing to do but enjoy rest and repose they could not be happy. There are two classes of professors, apart from them, very common in the world. The first is the idle ones. They never do anything either in the family, church, or congregation. They do no good either to themselves or others. Another class is the noisy professors. They are always bustling about doing something all day long, making a great noise, but it is all "before men." Their religion is entirely one-sided; there is no God side. They do much that men can see, but one hour of closet communion they are strangers to—they care not for it, and are perfectly indifferent to soul exercise. The serving of the redeemed is a joyous and cheerful service. O yes, when that glory from the throne shines upon them, and the love of God fills their hearts to overflowing, they long to respond to the manifestations of Jehovah's beauty and desire to have an opportunity of letting out that love in serving Him day and night.

3. The third thing said of them is that "he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them." O wondrous disclosure, marvel of marvels! Even here in the wilderness He did not leave them fatherless. He vouchsafed to them oftentimes His reviving power, giving them sweet foretastes of the blessedness they now enjoy. There will be an intimacy in communion above that is unattainable here. We cannot venture far into this holy communion. We cannot tell how it is that each one among that throng will enjoy the delight of his ravishing countenance, as if that one alone was there; nor can we tell how it is that at the same time as they are enjoying the presence of Jehovah, they are receiving in their filled souls wave upon wave of the precious

assurance of His love. This is beyond the tongue of man to tell, or mind to conceive.

4. We observe of them, fourthly, that "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." There is hunger here; often craving, consuming hunger and panting thirst. Not that the carnal heart craves spirituality; but the cry of the new nature is ever after holiness; it has a never-sufficed desire for spiritual life. The body is no longer below in its weariness and weakness; corruptions no longer grieve. The fire of Satan's temptations is quenched; all defilement is removed. There was a void *here* ever to be filled up, a craving for something more, something better yet. But *there*, these washed, purified glorified souls are filled full of joy and peace and the love of God, though not to satiety. They are kept full, yet capacity remains. They are all vessels of mercy sailing in the ocean of Jehovah's love, yet not overwhelmed in its depths. There remains, after ages of sailing, an ocean unfathomable yet to be taken in. Yes, they are filled, kept full, yet ever filling. There is a great mystery, friends, in this fulness. They have enough; there is no painful longing, yet progression is made towards the infinite.

5. We are told that "neither shall sun light on them, nor any heat." No sun lights on them now with its painful scorching. No fierce trial nor bitter opposition of the world reaches them there. No; nor that which is more difficult still to bear, the unkindness and trouble they meet with from believers themselves, no trials, no afflictions, no grievous burdens now to bear! No heat now from Satan's temptations, no fiery trial, no heat from the Father's chastisements. Free from all trouble are they, nothing to annoy, nothing to discomfort. They have reached the land where "the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

6. The sixth thing revealed to us is that "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." He is known as the Lamb even there, the Lamb "as it had been slain," the Lamb of Mount Calvary. Yes; and you also will know Him as the Lamb on whose very head you laid your hand in your bitter confession of sin; the Lamb whose blood flowed to cleanse thee, whose chastisements got thee peace, whose stripes brought thee healing. You will not grudge Him His place of honour then, believer. You had a heart once in you that would have robbed Him of His glory and kept Him in the grave of Joseph. But *there* you will rejoice that His place is high in heaven, and it will fill you with happiness to see Him, the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Even in the Father's house he will feed and lead His flock. Many a day did He lead them in the wilderness, and the leading does not end when they enter the promised land. In the Father's house he is still the shepherd.

I could not bear the thought that Jesus was not there to lead me. If I thought such was the case, heaven would not be the

same to me. When I stand at the gates of the New Jerusalem, and they are rolled back, and when the glory from within shines upon me in all its glorious effulgence, I would be utterly bewildered, and sink abashed with awe before the majesty of the glory, and be driven out again by the flood of brilliant light issuing from the Throne and Him that sitteth upon it, if Jesus, He, in whom I have believed in on earth, was not there to meet me. But He *will* be there; Christ, my Saviour, whom I have loved and trusted in my journey thither. He will be there to meet me on the threshold. He will take me by the hand and conduct me to the Father's presence. He will give me strength to endure the manifestations of Jehovah's beauty, of His love, and of His glory.

He leads them to fountains of living waters, in order to open up to them the beauty of holiness and the exceeding great riches of the grace that brought them there. He leads them to fountains of Jehovah's love and feeds them with the pure fresh waters. He reveals to them day by day some new glory and divine excellency, and all this He does with a man's sympathy as well as a God's bounty. In Him is seen the wondrous union of perfect humanity with all the glorious excellency and beautiful holiness of divinity. In the wilderness He sometimes gave His people just as much food as kept them alive, just as much as kept them seeking more. But there, in the Father's house, He places before them all the resources of the Godhead, without stint or reserve. What better security could they have that these resources are theirs for use, and that these reservoirs will remain inexhaustible for ever, than that it is the Lamb, who is in the midst of the Throne, that leads them to these fountains, yea, that helps them there to drink! Ah! there is a holy mystery in the Lamb feeding and leading the redeemed in heaven; and, friends, I think it is sweet to feel that I can't understand it, that its glorious height is above my comprehension. Ah, yes, they will admire and adore, and their souls will be filled with a sense of the beauty of holiness as seen in the Godhead. They will feel now, in an incomparable measure, how lovely and how ravishingly beautiful is the Lamb, Jesus, in the glory of His purity and love. There is no end to His beauty. He is the altogether lovely one, the chiefest among ten thousand.

7. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." This last word, how wonderful! God, the Lord Jehovah, He who sitteth upon the Throne, shall wipe away their tears. Surely, this is surpassing wondrous! Ah! there were tears through the journey. They came even to the gate, to the threshold with moist eyes, but they were soon dried. God wiped them away—and for ever. They who had known sorrow all their life on earth, they who had bent under its weight, they who for many a long day had carried a faint heart within them, they who had reached the gates of the celestial city at last, ready to give up and footsore and weary, they are those whose tears God will wipe away, and who have left sorrow and suffering behind them forever. God the Father

will take away all sorrow, grief, and care from His people's hearts, and all tears from their eyes. And as sure as He does this, He will place Himself, with all His infinite resources of happiness, love, and peace, between them and the possibility of any return of their sorrow and tears. And if He will do this, and if He has pledged His truth and love to them for the performance of it, what has He not done in order to complete and perfect the joy of the redeemed?

Now that we have come to the conclusion of our subject, and have seen the redeemed reach their eternal home, and have looked at those seven things we are told of them there, let each one of us ask ourselves the question, "Are we on our way to that place before the Throne? Will we be among that throng arrayed in white robes and washed in the blood of the Lamb? Can we lay claim to an interest in that precious blood, and have we had any dealings with it? Or are we living in guilt and misery on destruction's brink?" Whatever state you are in, friends, one thing I am certain of concerning you is, you are on your way to eternity, your journey thitherward has commenced. Is it to an eternity of happiness and peace, or to one of woe and misery that you are hastening? There is a road leading to each, the broad and the narrow way. You have not much to choose between; either of these two roads you must take—yea, are taking.

Unconverted man, who art wandering on the broad road, you must *turn*. Set your face towards the strait gate and the narrow way. You must be born of God and united to Christ—sanctified by the Spirit—before you can venture to hope that that house and these joys we have been speaking of can be yours.

Let me now ask you, believer, you who profess to be such, "Is your salvation nearer than when you believed? Are you making progress Zionwards?" "Ah, that is a hard question," some person answers. "All the progress I make is but in finding out my unfitness for entering there. My progress seems only backward to the world, sin, and Satan. My progress is but to feel my utter need of finding Christ and of His becoming all and all in and for me." If there is as much light in you, dear friend, as to feel death, if there is as much life as to see your darkness, as much desire after Christ as not to be able to breathe freely without Him, don't fear that He will leave that faint desire unsatisfied. Don't fear that Christ will fail to help you. No; poor, witless, strengthless creature that thou art, though thou art weak as smoking flax, He will not quench thee, He will make His great strength perfect in thy exceeding weakness.

I would entreat all unconverted ones to come to Christ to-day. "To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts." Come to Him for life, for light, for healing. Come, that He may add your name to the list of His redeemed by power, those whom He has washed in His blood and clothed in the white, fair robes of His righteousness, and to whom He will give a place before His

throne. Would it not be well, I ask you, would it not be well, to get this question settled? Let there be no more wavering, no more indecision. Come to the point at once. Tell me, would it not be well? "It would," you say, "but then, just think of what I am in my guilt and sin and defilement. How could I ever come with my impurity before the holiness of the Lord? How could I ever hope to appear before His throne but to be judged? No, no, it is too much for *me* to expect." Anything would be too much for thee in that sense, friend; a cup of cold water would be too much for thee on the ground of your own merits, one breath would be too much for thee. But looking to the merits of Christ's precious blood, nothing is too much for thee. Look out and away to this blood. What can not it cleanse? What can not the grace of God accomplish? What hard dead heart, with all its desperate wickedness, cannot the Spirit soften and quicken and renew? Will not the word of God prove good, think ye, and has He not said, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"? Make then, sinner, this blood thy ground work, thy strength, thy staff, and glory is not too much for thee to win. And fitness for that glory is not too much for the Spirit to accomplish.

I am not here to-day to tell you only that you are a sinner, vile, and helpless—an outcast. That is not all my message. That I leave to your conscience and the open Bible before you. But my chief message is to tell you of a way of escape, a way of cleansing through the shed blood of the Lamb. Do not plead your inability and your wickedness. That is but an excuse for delay. If you leave the question of your salvation unsettled, leave it just where it is, and this day, this hour, is carrying you nearer destruction, and but hastening your progress to the brink of hell. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Don't thou say then, "Ah, my guilt is so great, my sin so heinous, my corruption so strong, I am altogether so unclean, so leprous, that I am only fit for hell; I cannot move a step or think a thought aright." Sinner, the Lord bids me tell thee to-day that He has placed Christ within your reach in the gospel. Christ Jesus can take away thy guilt and the curse of the broken law from thee. If your sins are of a crimson dye they can be washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Your uncleanness and leprosy Christ is able to remove, and He can make you fair and beautiful, clothing thee with the pure white robes of His righteousness. He will give you a heart to love Him and strength to follow Him whithersoever He leadeth.

The Lord offers you this day Christ Jesus, His unspeakable gift. And see, Jesus stands with open arms outstretched to receive thee. Hear His blessed words, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." May the Lord help thee to come to Him in whom "the fatherless findeth mercy," who will guide thee and preserve thee here, and give thee a place with Himself at last—yea, even a place before His Throne.

A Sermon

BY DR. JOHN LOVE, DATED LONDON, DEC. 7, 1789.

(Continued from page 388.)

When the soul is disentangled from self and other idols, and sees the God of glory before it in the fulness of His perfection and love, how unlimited, how steadfast, how joyful is its confidence in Him! "Behold," says the church (Isa. xii. 2), "God is my salvation: I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation." The soul being thus settled on the everlasting Rock, there follows:—

III. In this beholding of God, a glorious train of holy and delighted emotions of the soul. "Faith worketh by love;" the spices flow forth; God's love, loveliness, and manifold glory draw out the supreme esteem, desire, and longing of the soul. Then, it is melted down in sweet complacency, delighting itself in the Almighty, and drinking in ineffable pleasure from His smiles and embraces. Then the fire of divine zeal is kindled, and burns partly with the fuel of sacred gratitude and partly with disinterested ardour, forgetting self and all its interests in comparison of God himself and His glory, yet rejoicing inexpressibly in His love. Then to imitate God, to obey Him, to love His creatures and children, to spread abroad the knowledge of His excellency, to hasten to His immediate presence; these, and such like, are the natural, the unforced consequences.

Thus you see, my brethren, how spiritual knowledge, faith, and love make up that beholding of Jehovah which the text requires. I proposed

II.

To explain what is signified by the pressing, pathetic manner in which the call is issued out in this text; "I said, Behold me, behold me."

I hope, my friends, you already feel the melting energy of this repetition. I am sure that if the Spirit of the Lord once touches your hearts with these words and brings them home as the voice of Jesus your beloved, you will feel in them all the sweetness, fire, and majesty of more than celestial eloquence.

I shall endeavour, however, to furnish you with some distinct ideas of the meaning, propriety, and force of this manner of address.

"I said, Behold me, behold me." This is expressive,

I. Of that Divine consciousness which the Lord hath of His own boundless excellencies, and His desire to manifest and communicate Himself to miserable, unworthy creatures. God speaks of Himself in a style which no other being can assume without being guilty of the most criminal arrogance. He speaks as one

wrapt up in the sense of His own excellency, and proclaims to others His own glory. This becomes the majesty of the self-sufficient and Infinite Being. And it is equally becoming the Divine benignity and beneficence ; for as He sees nothing in the universe comparable with Himself—as it is His felicity to contemplate with delight His own independent beauty and glory—so He knows that all the happiness of intelligent creatures lies in their acquaintance with Himself. More especially, in reference to the recovery of ruined men, He knows the extent of their misery, the vanity of other refuges, and the glorious worth and fulness of the preparations He hath made for their relief. Therefore He gives vent to infinite compassion and liberality in calling the attention of men to Himself as the alone Author of salvation. Such is the voice of God in many passages of Scripture besides the text. As, for example, Isa. lv. 2. “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not;” and Prov. ix. 1 2 3 4 5, “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars, she hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table, she hath sent forth her maidens : she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither ; as for him who wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled.”

II. The manner of address in the text may be considered as set in opposition to the careless neglect on the one hand and the discouraging fears on the other which hinder our obedience to the call. He must knock and knock again ; he must utter with vehemence and importunity to gain the attention of trifling and hard-hearted sinners. And when we begin to listen and to perceive the infinite value of the offers our guilty fears suggest a thousand surmises and suspicions. Our hearts would misgive us and sink back did not the God of grace multiply and repeat over again the assurances and invitations of mercy which warrant our approaches to His throne. Luke xiv. 23, “Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”

III. Hereby He intimates His readiness to interpose with His effectual grace so as to render successful the endeavours of those who attempt to obey the call. For this is our next difficulty ; we feel ourselves blind, dead, and unable to believe. But the Lord insists on our making the attempt. “Behold me ! why do you hesitate ? I say, Behold me ! I know your inability : But have not I commanded you ? Am not I able to create faith ? Therefore, attempt, and attempt again, to behold me.” Such was the force of the repetition in those sweet words addressed to the prophet Daniel, chap. x. 19. “Peace be unto thee ; be strong ; yea, be strong ;” that is, in spite of all thy weakness, depend on me, and endeavour to gather strength, and thou shalt succeed.

IV. This pathetic repetition, “Behold me, behold me !” conveys the idea of the boundlessness of that glory and love which

are to be seen in the Lord ; and that this beholding must be continued in, repeated, and advanced from one degree to another. Look, and look again. We are called to dwell upon this glorious object. One gracious discovery makes way for another, and rises above another, like the steps of Jacob's ladder, till it ascends to the highest heavens. So David resolved to spend his whole life in this contemplation. Psal. xxvii. 4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." And the apostle in the following words marks the happy progress of believers in this exercise :—"But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

It now remains,

III.

To show the beauty and force of that which the text mentions as an aggrandising circumstance of the call. It is addressed to those who were not called by God's name.

The entire alienation from God which overwhelmed the Gentiles is brought to remembrance to heighten the wonder excited by God's merciful procedure. This circumstance has a peculiar beauty and force in it for that purpose. So it will appear from the following observations :—

I. The sovereignty and riches of the grace of God appear in its venting itself abundantly towards those who were altogether unworthy. The heathen nations were, to appearance, almost already in the belly of hell when Divine mercy came upon them. They had no appearance of connection with the true God, having wrapt themselves up for many ages in the shades of idolatrous darkness. After multitudes of them had been justly left to perish in that apostacy, God at length visited the posterity of those who had for thousands of years been peopling the abodes of misery. But why did he distinguish the children from the fathers? Not, surely, from any superior goodness on their part ; for never had wickedness advanced to greater maturity among the heathen than at the very time when the mercy of Jehovah began to triumph among them. "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." "O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ; how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out ! For who hath first given unto Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again."

II. The mercy which reached lost heathens was in a high degree preventing, surprising mercy. It came upon them suddenly, unsolicited by themselves, and unexpected by others who might have better understood the counsel of God as revealed in the Scripture. The unknown God burst in upon them in the splendours of His majesty, holiness, and compassion, and turned

them from idols to Himself, from the horrors of hopeless condemnation to the life-inspiring hope of eternal blessedness. "I am sought," says He, "of them that asked not for me; I am found of them who sought me not;" "I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that were not called by my name."

III. This circumstance of the antecedent outcast state of the heathen leads us to observe the wonderful contrast between their gracious state and their natural misery. Who can justly conceive of this strange transition? The holy angels in heaven look back with wonder to that nothingness from which Divine power brought them, and with still greater wonder to that fall into the abyss of sin and misery, from which the distinguished goodness of God held them back in their time of trial. But the people to whom the text relates were already lost. To all human appearance they were sunk past recovery in the depths of an entire apostacy from God. His very name and every vestige of his glory were blotted out from among them. Hell, from beneath, was moved for them to meet them at their coming. When, lo! millions of these kindled brands are plucked from the fire. The hopeless enemies of God and heirs of wrath are called back, reconciled, washed, made kings and priests to God, initiated into the mysteries of celestial joy, and conveyed into the holiest of all to see the unveiled face of God for ever and ever. If this contrast does not strike us with wonder it is for no other reason than because Satan, the god of this world, hath blinded our minds.

APPLICATION.

What improvement, my brethren, is to be made of this subject?

1. I infer from it—and I defy all the hypocrites in the world to gainsay on solid grounds this inference—I infer that a steady, spiritual contemplation of God, in His real and harmonious perfections, is the soul of true religion. There are many who hover, as it were, around this, who intermeddle with everything else in religion, but the main exercise of religion in fixing the understanding, the conscience, and the heart steadily upon God; this they will not come near: it is too deep for them: they will talk, hear, sing, profess, rejoice as much as you please; but to sit down to think closely on God, to strive as in an agony, till they, by prayer and close attention, get into the light of the knowledge of God's glory they will not do. What is this conduct but directly to rebel against the voice of God in the text? And will such people be saved? Shall they sit in heaven contemplating God with endless pleasure? No, verily; their doom is already written in the Scripture and will not fail to be executed if repentance prevent not: "It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour."

2. Let us mourn over it that so gracious a voice should be so little regarded, so vilely contemned. How few do truly answer this sweet call? What is the reason? What have men got to spend their thoughts and their time upon? Are these better employed elsewhere? "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God," says the Most High, "they have provoked me to anger with their vanities." And what is the consequence? "A fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth and its increase and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. To me belongeth vengeance, their foot shall slide in due time. If I whet my glittering sword and my hand take hold of judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies and will reward them that hate me." What words are these! Words the weight of which the damned constantly feel, in whose miserable footsteps multitudes—multitudes are now hastening forward. But why, my brethren, are we so little moved with concern at the dishonours generally done to God, and at the ruin, the awful ruin bringing on myriads of souls? Is it because we are indeed much bowed down to submit to Divine sovereignty? Is it not rather because our hearts are yet too hard and selfish, and because we do not by faith realise the certainty, terribleness, and endless duration of threatened punishment? How shall many, in a little, rave with sorrow and gnash their teeth with despairing envy who are now living at ease, while God shall justly laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh! O the awful Sabbaths of London, the woful evenings, the tavern-haunting, the oaths, the uncleanness, the raging thirst for the world, the scornful neglect of ordinances or mock attendance on them! These things, if duly laid to heart would bring us to something like what David felt when he said, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy law."

3. Amidst these causes of deep sorrow let us rejoice that the sovereign God can conquer the obstinacy of the human heart; He can command attention and draw to Himself the inmost part of the soul. I hope some of us are monuments of this. What cause have they to rejoice in whom the text hath been fulfilled! You little know, my dear friends, the value of that little saving knowledge of God which you have obtained. But let us examine ourselves closely lest we be deceived. What kind of knowledge have we? Is it that holy and powerful kind of knowledge which bears genuine marks of its coming from above? Let us bless God if such is our knowledge, though but as a grain of mustard seed.

5. Whatever our condition has hitherto been let us now urge this call on ourselves and on each other. The Lord now utters the call to us. "Behold me, behold me!" He utters it as really and particularly to each of us as though a voice from heaven were now rending the sky and summoning each of us, by his name, to attend to the concerns of salvation. Yea from day to day, from

night to night, in every secret retreat where there is opportunity to seek God, there this voice secretly sounds forth from the Invisible Being, "Behold me, behold me!" What shall be our reckoning if we shall be found disregards of these numberless calls? Millions of them we have already slighted. Let none venture to-day to harden his heart. Let us now look to the crucified Redeemer. Let us look and look again till, through the illumination of the Spirit, we see the cross, as it were, all in a blaze of Divine splendour, and God Himself, in the awfulness of His justice and in the sweetness of His mercy, beaming forth from the marred visage, the wounds, the blood, the unknown sorrows, the expiring groans of Jesus the Lamb of God. To Him be glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

The Bible and Catechism in Gaelic.

(From *Notices of Churches of France and Scotland*, by late Rev. Dr. LORIMER in 1841.)

WE have seen that even in the 16th century there is reason to believe the Psalms of David were circulated in the Gaelic tongue; and in the middle of the 17th, about 1650, we find the Synod of Argyle publishing the first fifty Psalms in the same language. Twenty-seven years later, or about 1687, the Hon. Robert Boyle, of London, a name dear to every Christian heart, had the Irish Bible of Bishop Bedell published at his own expense, and 200 copies sent down to the Highlands, on the conditions that the ministers should "read some chapters every Lord's day to the people," and that the Bible should be taken care of "as for the use of the parish." This reading of the Word of God excited great interest, so much so that the Bible travelled through different parts of the parish during the whole week, and was restored upon the Saturday evening or Sabbath morning, that it might be read publicly to the assembled multitude, as a part of divine worship; and as a proof of the salutary effect of even this imperfect diffusion of the knowledge of the Word, it may be mentioned, that in the troubles which followed the revolution of 1688 in the Highlands scarcely any of the natives who had received Bibles, or been instructed from them, were implicated in hostility to the Revolution Settlement.

Immediately after the Revolution an impression of the Irish or Gaelic Bible was printed in London, and 3000 copies of the Bible, 1000 of the New Testament, and 3000 Catechisms transmitted to the agent of the Church of Scotland for distribution in the Highlands and Islands. It is an interesting fact that £1000 Scots, or £83 6s. 8d. sterling were given out of the vacant stipends for binding the Gaelic Bibles, and the balance, if there were any, was to be devoted to the publication of a new edition. The Rev. Robert Kirk, of Aberfoyle, first translated the Psalms into Gaelic

verse, and altered Bedell's Bible from Irish to Gaelic, and published it in Roman letter in 1690. In 1699 a fund was begun by the Church for printing another impression; and sixteen years later there is an earnest demand from several places for more Bibles, so much so that the Commission are entreated to do their best endeavour to procure them. In the meantime the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, which contain a large body of Scripture, were translated and published. So early as 1708 a letter is written to the Synod of Argyle requesting them to undertake the work. Shortly after a collection is made to defray the expense, and in 1714 the Confession appeared, and ten years later the two Catechisms. This was a most important publication, and quite in keeping with the other exertions of the Church at the same period to provide the destitute parts of the Highlands and Islands with the blessings of religious instruction. At the beginning of the century a work was revived and enlarged in which the Church had been engaged many years before. Bursaries of £10 a year were raised by the Synods for the encouragement and support of young men at college having the Gaelic or, as it is called, Irish language. These were continued for four years to each student, and strict care was taken not only as to the punctual payment, but as to the real Gaelic knowledge and acquirements of the young men at college. In 1704, when the lowlands had come to be well supplied with ministers, one-half of the bursaries, which had served as an encouragement to young men having English, were transferred for the use of those having Gaelic. About the same period the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge began its inestimably important labours; and by the establishment of schools, the translation of works of practical divinity, the employment of catechists, and the establishment of libraries, was honoured to affect a vast amount of good, which eternity alone will be able fully to reveal. Were it not that I wish at present to restrict the reader's attention to the Gaelic Scriptures, I might mention many pleasing proofs of the zeal both of the Church and of the Society in attending to the spiritual wants of the Highlands. To recur to the Scriptures: though I have not been able to lay my hands upon any document which shows that the Scriptures in the Gaelic language were translated in Scotland previous to 1767, yet from the anxiety displayed in other ways to promote the spiritual welfare of the Highland population, and the actual fact that there were copies in England, I cannot doubt that many were obtained from London. The delay of the new translation in this country seems to have been owing to an unhappy idea, in which even intelligent and good men concurred, after the sad Popish rebellions in 1715 and 1745, that it was essential to the civilisation of the Highlands, in the first instance, to abolish their language. This impression, by no means an unnatural one, of course, for a time postponed the translation into Gaelic, but gave new animation to the efforts of Christians through English channels.

After trial for a season it was found that this was not the way of getting rid of the language, and that the Christian instruction, conveyed through the medium of English, was partial and imperfect. Hence good men recurred to the former plan of reaching the people through the Word of God translated into their native language; and in 1767 the New Testament, translated by the Rev. James Stewart, of Killin, under the care of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, was published in an edition of not less than 10,000 copies. It may be mentioned that the great Dr. Samuel Johnson heartily approved of the object, and encouraged the translator in his important undertaking. Thirty years after a second edition was published by the same society, of course before the days of the Bible Society, amounting to the immense impression of nearly 22,000 copies. The Old Testament was published in parts as it was translated. Collected together it was printed in 1802 to the extent of 5000 copies, and five years afterwards an edition of 20,000. In 1810 the old society printed the New Testament anew in an edition of 10,000 copies, so that in about 49 years it had been instrumental, under God, in putting 66,000 copies of the Gaelic Scriptures into circulation, without counting the parts of the Old Testament or the editions of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the latter of which now came into considerable circulation. It is an interesting fact that so early as 1782 collections were made throughout the Church, and in subsequent years repeatedly renewed, to defray the expense of the Gaelic translation. In 1816 it was considered desirable to revise part of the translation of the Old Testament. This was done; and in the course of a few years a quarto edition was brought out under the care of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge and a committee of the General Assembly, which for excellence is not surpassed, it is understood, by most modern versions of the Scriptures. So impressed were the Lords of the Treasury with the great services which had been rendered to the cause of God and the moral and religious interests of the Highlands by the labours of the late eminent Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Luss, son of Mr. Stewart, of Killin, as a translator of the Gaelic Scriptures, that in 1820 they awarded him the sum of £1000. Previous to that period and since various large impressions of the Scriptures have been published by the British and Foreign, and latterly by the Edinburgh, Bible Society; and instead of perpetuating the language it is believed that never was the anxiety to acquire English stronger or more general in the Highlands than at the present time.

Thus it appears that both the Protestant Church of France and the Protestant Church of Scotland were remarkable for their love of the Word of God and their anxiety to disseminate it; and what higher testimony could be given in behalf either of an individual or a Church? Next to the love of God Himself, what is more beautiful or befitting than the love of His Word. Indeed they are

identical. Few tests of religious character are better or more conclusive than the way in which men feel towards the Scriptures, and in which they treat the Scriptures. How often does the Psalmist tell us of his love for the Word of God ; and whatever scoffers and the supporters of an apostate Church may allege to the contrary, the benefits which attend the wide and indiscriminate circulation of the Scriptures are incalculable. The 12,000,000 of copies which have been scattered during the last thirty years by the Bible Society may seem a vast number, and some may think there has been no corresponding fruit ; but could we estimate how much evil has been prevented which but for them would have burst forth, how much substantial good has actually been wrought out, and what trains have been laid for infinitely more in the future, no philanthropist, and much more no Christian, could hesitate for a moment to approve of, yea, to rejoice in the sacrifice.

The late Norman Munro, Staffin, Skye.

AS one by one those who are termed "the salt of the earth" are called away to their eternal happiness, and notice is taken of their departure and their memory treasured in these pages, it brings our faults home to us in that we have hitherto neglected one of the brightest and most valiant for the truth that in our day lived in the Highlands—namely, Norman Munro, missionary, Staffin, Skye.

This worthy man was born in Colbost, in the parish of Duirinish. Early in life he left his native soil, and served his time in one of the yards on the banks of the Clyde as a ship carpenter. Up to this period he lived like the rest of the fallen race, without God and without hope in the world ; but, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, when Norman was on one of his yearly visits to the island where he was born, and where many at that time were called from darkness into God's marvellous light, the arrow of conviction entered his benighted soul. What instrument the Spirit took to awaken this sinner to a sense of his dreadful state we could not ascertain ; but the neighbours knew that he attended the meetings of the old soldier and servant of Jesus Christ, Norman Macleod, under whom the awakening began at Unish. The young carpenter was now experiencing what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin and to be exposed to the wrath of God. On his return to his old companions the situation was not so easy for him as it used to be. Their conversation was a source of pain to him, and he used to long for the time when he could throw from him his tools and get to a corner where he could pour out his complaint to Him who regardeth the groaning of the prisoner.

When he got away from his work, he now sought the society of those who feared the Lord and that thought upon His name, such as Margaret MacPhee, of whom he used to speak with veneration

till his dying day. In her house he met that great scholar and loving saint, Dr. John Duncan. He used to tell what Margaret MacPhee said to him about Dr. Duncan—"When Dr. Love died I thought the Lord left us and there would be nothing for us in His house, but when *my pet* came I got feasts as I used to get."¹ With her also he met first with the late Mr. Macdonald, Shieldaig, and John MacCounel, a worthy elder, in whose house they used to hold meetings. After he served his time he went as carpenter on board one of the liners, and on his return he stayed for some time in Greenock, where he sat under the much honoured minister of the Middle Church, Mr. Kenneth Bayne, of whom he used to say, "Dear Mr. Bayne would give soul refreshing drinks to his flock."

After he married he returned with his family and settled for some time at Unish in his native parish. At that date there were quarterly question meetings held in the parishes of Snizort and Kilmuir. At those meetings Norman took an active part along with the worthy catechist of Uig, Ronald Macdonald, and Angus Munro. Mr. Roderick Macleod was then minister at Snizort, and Mr. Christopher Munro at Kilmuir. For these worthy ministers and men he had the greatest regard. In after years one would hear him, in addressing the people of Kilmuir, use these words, "Oh, fellow sinners, if lost, what an account you will have to render at the bar of judgment, although you would never hear of the gospel, but what you heard from Mr. Munro in my presence."

He used to walk from Unish to Kilmuir, a distance of over 20 miles, and often told that he never felt tired but on one occasion, when, on his return, without food, he felt so weak when he came to Uig that he could scarcely walk. Mrs. Clow met him at the door as she was going away to Portree, and told him to go in and get some food before proceeding on his journey. "It was a favour from the Lord that she met me," he would say, "for if I had continued my journey I would be found dead on the road. He did not carry much flesh on his bones, although he always complained of the flesh in his nature, as the carnal mind is opposed to the Spirit. He was truly a man like the Spartans, at war from his youth. In every duty in which he engaged one would understand the knowledge he had of the sinfulness of our nature as he cried to the Lord to destroy sin in the heart. The emphasis he laid on sin we cannot convey in these lines, but those who heard him well remember how in his broad Skye dialect he would say "am peacadh."

On Sabbath he rose very early, and would say that he could not understand how a child of grace could sleep long on that day. As he thought in his heart, he was not afraid to express himself. Like Knox he feared not the face of man. When his companions

¹ Dr. Duncan came from Persie to Glasgow in 1831, and was for a time assistant in Duke Street Gaelic Church. He was ordained in Milton Church in 1839.—ED.

were called away by death he resembled the Psalmist when he said "I am like the sparrow on the house top alone;" and to the end of his life one would hear him groaning and saying to himself, "My companions are gone leaving me mournful behind them. In the long winter nights when a friend would visit him he would speak of the times they had together, naming places like Carninghill. As a Friday speaker he was always brief, and could put much matter in few words, while he was very lively in his remarks. Some will remember how he and David Johnston, another worthy man, who has also gone to his rest, would take up the attention of old and young.

In 1874 he went as catechist to Eastside, where he went in and out among the people declaring to them the Word of Life. From there he had to go to Kilmuir the Sabbath the minister came to his end of the parish. Norman was a man who spoke to the consciences of sinners, and was not afraid to tell them what they were by nature and practice. On the east of Skye the bagnets for salmon fishing are left open on the Sabbath, and those employed are paid for the fish caught in these nets on the Lord's holy day. Against this ungodly practice Norman stood in the Session and Presbytery, which brought upon him the displeasure of ministers and elders of latitudinarian principles, who were always willing to give Church privileges to the men thus employed; but a conscience void of offence towards God was more sought for by the soldier of Jesus Christ than the goodwill of men.

At the time that that Declaratory Act, which made enemies of friends and turned the Highlands into a cauldron of strife, was passed (1892) he raised his voice against it and warned the people of their danger. The time-serving party, on hearing that their plots were being exposed, first offered him a pension if he would retire and be quiet. On being told of their generosity he said, "I care nothing for themselves and their money. It was not they who opened my mouth, and they will not shut it. As long as the Lord will enable me I will seek to declare the truth." Seeing that their offers or threats would not stop this troubler of their peace, the minister sent him one day to his own church and went himself to Norman's place, and after the sermon on Sabbath gave out the following intimation:—"There are two ministers who left the Church of the Fathers going about the Highlands seeking to draw the people to themselves, and if they should come here I advise you all not to go to hear them. And I will give you two reasons why you should not go—first, they are against the crofters; and the second is, they are like Rehoboam, King of Israel, counselled by young men who are too rash." On Norman's return he was told what the minister had said on Sabbath. "Ah," he said, "did he not bait the hook well for the carnal mind? He knew what would suit it." After that Norman left them and joined with a number of the people of the Free Presbyterian Church. For some years he was able to go to communions here

and there, and went as far as Glasgow to collect for a wooden church the people had put up for him. At the time of a Sacrament the ministers with a few of the "men" stayed in his house, and they may remember how he would entertain them. On one occasion on the Sabbath morning it appeared like rain, which, should it come, would inconvenience them, as they had to worship outside. At family worship in the morning he was asked to conclude, and among other petitions he used words somewhat like these—"Thou hast the clouds in Thine hand and Thou mayest make them empty themselves where Thou wilt. We are to-day to worship Thee in the open field. O that Thou wouldst send the rain where people are not in such circumstances." Some worldly wise man may say that *that* was presumptuous, but those who are taught from above will receive it, knowing that the Lord giveth the spirit of adoption to His children, and those who were present had to see that the threatening rain passed away.

Years before he died he suffered very much pain in his back. In that state he would break out, as if speaking to death, "Ah, death, thou art strong: who can stand before thee?" and then cast down in mind, he would say, "I am afraid I will at last be a castaway." On being told that the Lord had promised that He would not cast off His people, he would say, "I have been a great sinner, and if I get to heaven I will be with the greatest sinners saved by grace, such as Manasseh, Saul of Tarsus, and Mary Magdalene." The last year of his life was a time of incessant prayer. Sometimes, as he sat in his chair, he would cry to the Lord to wash him from all sin and make him holy, and then would add amen only to begin anew. One who watched him night and day said to him one day, "You might not be saying amen, for you don't stop although you say it." But Norman was tuning his harp soon to begin to praise.

Three weeks before he died he wanted to know the price of an invalid's chair, and said, "If they would wheel me to the church I think I would address the people yet." Thus at the age of 94, and within a few weeks of his death, we see how his soul was in the work of his Master; but soon the pain returned, and he felt that his end was near, so he began like Joseph to give charge concerning his bones. His wife, who died some years before him, was buried at Uig, to which place he went while in health to see her grave. Now that he felt that the time when he should put off the earthly house of this tabernacle was drawing near, he told the family (consisting of two daughters) what they would do. The clouds of doubts were now clearing away, and one of his daughters said to him, "I am afraid you are going to leave us." "Yes," he replied, "I am going home with the saints to be for ever with the Lord." On Sabbath he told them to go to church, but his end was now come and they could not leave him, Half-an-hour before he died he bade them farewell, and addressed himself to his journey, speaking of "the blood," and saying "Set ye open unto

me the gates of righteousness." Thus slept a man who valued the blood and the righteousness of Christ ever since he was called by God to the fellowship of His Son. His mortal remains were laid beside those of his wife in Uig burying ground.

" Help, Lord, because the godly man
Doth daily fade away ;
And from among the sons of men
The faithful do decay."—Ps. xii. 1.

E. M'Q.

A Letter from Canada.

PURITY OF WORSHIP, ETC.

(To the Editor of the *F.P. Magazine*.)

DEAR SIR,—As the inclemency of our Canadian winter and my own increasing infirmities are keeping me confined within the house, there has been given me an opportunity of taking a retrospective look at what is commonly counted a long life. And in doing so I find very many things both *omitted* and *committed* that I deeply regret and deplore, but for which, through the free and sovereign grace of God, the atonement and intercession of Jesus Christ, and the operation of the Holy Spirit, I hope to obtain a free and full pardon.

But there are two things that I have never regretted. The first is refusing to enter the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in 1875 ; but that event is long past, and I do not intend to discuss it here. The second is my resolution to abide by and uphold the principle that the Reformers acted upon ; that is, " That what is not commanded to be used in the worship of God is forbidden." And the longer and more carefully that I consider this matter the more firmly am I convinced that it is the only principle by which the religious worship and ordinances that God has appointed in His Word can be kept pure and entire. If the other principle be admitted as correct—that is, " That what is not forbidden in the Scriptures is allowed"—it would open a door for any or for all the corrupt practices of the Church of Rome, such as putting salt in the water used in baptism, making the sign of the cross, and burning candles in daylight, and many other rites and ceremonies which I need not mention. And it is sad to think that so many Protestant Churches are acting on that principle, and are using their own inventions as substitutes for or as supplements to the ordinances of God's appointment.

It is a positive command in both the Old Testament and the New Testament to sing psalms, and there is a complete absence of any command to sing anything else in the worship of God. This being the case, the positive command to sing psalms is a virtual prohibition of everything else. And assuredly it is more honouring to God, safer, and more profitable to the worshipper to use what the Lord has prepared and given to us for that very pur-

pose than to substitute our own productions in their place. For the difference between the Psalms of the Bible and human hymns is just the difference between the Divine and the human. And apart from the question of authority, the Psalms are so much superior to all their rivals that I would use them from choice, for notwithstanding the fine sentimentality that is in some of the hymns they are but the words of fallen, sinful creatures like myself, and altogether unreliable to rest my soul upon. But the Psalms are something that will stand when the earth is dissolving, for Jesus Christ has said—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." And there is something inexpressibly sweet in the Psalms that is not to be found in any human production whatever. The Psalms are the very words of God that He has given to us, just that we may bring them back to Himself, and when we bring them to Him He accepts them because they are the production of His own Spirit. And they are of such universal application that innumerable multitudes in different circumstances in all parts of the world have received spiritual nourishment in them, and yet they never wear out nor get old. It therefore seems to me the height of presumption to think that we can prepare and present unto Him anything that would be more pleasing or more acceptable to Him than what He has prepared and given to us for that very purpose. Especially when He has so decidedly said—"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it." And Jesus Christ in His commission to His Apostles said—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Jesus Christ also said—"Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." With regard to the use of instruments, it is clear that there is no authority for using them in the New Testament Church, but there is this plain command—"By him (that is Jesus Christ) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our lips*, giving thanks to his name."

Under all these considerations I am most firmly convinced that the Reformation principle is what is most honouring to God and safest for the worshipper. And I hope the Free Presbyterian Church will always continue to receive, observe, and keep pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath appointed in His Word.¹—Yours respectfully,

GEO. FORREST.

Brucefield Ontario, Canada,
February 4th, 1904.

¹ We are glad to say that no one in the F.P. Church even hints that uninspired hymns should be used in divine worship. Surely our esteemed friend, Mr Forrest, must have his eye on a correspondence that has been proceeding in our contemporary, the *F.C. Record*.—ED.

The late Janet Mowat,

HAIMER, THURSO.

IN his book "Ministers and Men in the Far North," the Rev. Mr. Auld apologises for chronicling some recollections of the godly women of that time by quoting the words of the Apostle, "In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." As is known to northern readers of this magazine, the outstanding piety that characterised these eminent women has almost wholly disappeared from among us, but if there still remain "one or two berries in the outermost branches," certainly Janet Mowat was one of these.

She was born of humble parents, her father, James Mowat, being a crofter in the parish of Thurso, a man of a meek and quiet spirit, and latterly an office-bearer in the Free Church there. But his daughter Janet was no ordinary young woman. There being no sons in the family, she assisted her father in working the croft, following the plough, reaping the harvest, and even cutting drains and ditches. And her mental powers were in no way inferior to her physical capacities. The late Mr. Hosack of the Crofters Commission told the writer that when a few years ago Sheriff Brand and he were in the north no one that they examined—man or woman—exceeded or even equalled Janet Mowat for intelligence and grasp of mind.

But it was not on these grounds that her character won its respect. It was because of her sterling religious principle. When a girl the ministry of the late Rev. David Campbell, Dunnet, was blessed for awakening her to know her lost state as a sinner and to lead her to the remedy provided in the Gospel. Every Sabbath morning before most people were awake she might be seen going along the road towards the village of Castletown, and then traversing the Dunnet Links towards the church, a distance of eight or nine miles from her home. After Mr. Campbell's death she became an attached hearer of the late Dr. Taylor, Thurso.

Janet's Christianity, as much as any one we knew, was an illustration of the excellence of the injunction—"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." Her mind seemed saturated not merely occasionally, but constantly with views of divine truth, and one would not be long in her company until she began to speak of what she was finding in the Scriptures—notably in the Psalms. The last time the writer conversed with her Janet quoted the 17th verse of the cxxxii. Psalm—"There will I make the horn of David to bud," adding "David's horn is a divine horn, a full and inexhaustible horn, and so it will still bud from age to age." "What are the buds?" she asked. "The buds—surely the buds are the precious Words of Truth coming in the rich anointing of the Holy Spirit." That is rare in our day," was said. "Yes, it is," she replied; "but look, it's all here, 'I will make it to bud

I will do it ; I cannot break my word ; *I* will do it.' Oh ! to get hold of the Divine *I*."

Her appreciation of the efficacy of God's Word was not only experimental, but practical. Travelling one day in a stage coach a young man being the only other passenger, he, to beguile the journey, began to sing hymns. When he had finished Janet said, "Sing a psalm to us now, man." "Well, I like the hymns," he said ; "they are so sweet." "Maybe they are," replied Janet, "but if the Lord will put a hungry heart and conscience within your breast, my dear lad, you will want something more substantial than *sweeties*."

Coming out of a church, where the giving out of the line in the praise had been recently discontinued, she accosted the precentor—"Oh, man, what ails ye at the Word of the Lord that you did not sound it aloud to-day in the great congregation? Your singing without it was like cold milk that had the cream skimmed off."

By reading and reflection Janet had made herself well acquainted with the contendings of the Church of Scotland from Reformation times downwards, and therefore became dissatisfied with the attitude of the Free Church in making void the testimony raised by our forefathers for the honour of Zion's King, and for her determination to be subject to His infallible Word as her only rule. Consequently when the witnessing party separated in 1893, she identified herself therewith, and became a member of the Free Presbyterian Church, although she gladly heard any who proclaimed the old Gospel and upheld the old paths. She much enjoyed an address given last autumn by Mr. Archibald MacNeillage, Glasgow, in which it was established that in all ages the Church of Christ, when endeavouring to know and to do the will of her Lord, might be as assured of His guidance and presence amid her difficulties and perplexities, as was Israel in the wilderness when led by the pillar of cloud and of fire. Referring afterwards to this, she remarked—"Many nowadays tell us that they get their religion in the New Testament, to the disparagement of the Old. But, no, no, the grace of the Gospel, the grace of the Everlasting Covenant, is as truly made known in the Old Testament as in the New. The Lord is One and His Name One in all generations."

An internal complaint, that had been weakeniug her for some time, developed acutely in the beginning of this year, and being accompanied by frequent fainting fits, her strength rapidly declined. "Hold thou me up, so shall I be in peace and safety still," was her exclamation one morning when attempting to move up in bed, and a few hours thereafter she entered into that "peace and safety" which is "the everlasting inheritance of the saints in light."

C. R. A.

Trusting in the Lord.

A LETTER BY EDWARD BLACKSTOCK, 1840.

I CAN sympathise with you in your trials, having myself experienced many such in the wilderness, and to me these have made it a valley of Baca or a vale of tears.

I would be thankful that any lines of mine should have been made useful to you, and could be more thankful still might I be enabled to write anything at this time for your edification and comfort. You wish me to give you a few thoughts on Ps. xxxvii. 3—"Trust in the Lord," etc. You will understand the meaning of these words as they apply to temporal things, therefore I shall confine my remarks to what I believe to be their spiritual intention.

"Trust in the Lord." God says, I taught Ephraim to go, taking them by the arms. God has quickened your soul by His Spirit, convinced you of sin, and led you to the fountain of Christ's blood for pardon and peace; He has bestowed both upon you. You have experienced the drawings of the Father. Sensible comforts, as leading strings, have drawn you to Christ, that you might trust and rejoice in His dear name.

You have found it very easy to trust in the Lord when drawn and supported by sensible comforts; in this way the Lord first taught you to go. When we are sensibly strengthened and the promise is unto us a cluster of the rich grapes of Eshcol, it is very sweet and mighty easy to trust in the Lord; and now you have to learn what it is by a *naked faith* to trust in a naked promise. "Be strong"—in the absence of sense, sight, and comfort—"when hope decays, and God delays, and seems to quite forsake us." To trust in Him is the hardest work to do, especially when all God's dealings and all His providences seem to cross His promises. To believe in hope against hope, when nature fails, and sight and sense and means are no more; even then true faith (after a fainting fit or two) will sometimes in her Creator's strength get up, close her eyes and senses to whys, whens, hows, and wherefores, men, means, and instruments, and against hope, steadfastly believe in hope.

When a divine faith gets up she bolts the door upon the scoffing crew, laughs at impossibilities, and says "It *shall* be done." Then, to trust in the Lord is to adventure upon Him, and to rest in Him, even when unbelief would vilify the God of Truth, and that atheistical scoffer, Carnal Reason, would call us fools and fanatics for such a wild- goose adventure.

This is your present lesson and mine in Christ's college; the Lord strengthen and qualify us for it! That word still sounds in our ears, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For

yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry ; for the just shall live by faith."

" To trust His gracious promise,
When sore beset with evil,
This, this is faith will conquer death,
And overcome the devil."

"Trust in the Lord," etc. But to show the world and ourselves that, although our faith is but little, it is not a *dead* faith, the Holy Ghost exhorts us to "do good"—namely, to obey our Lord's precepts and walk as obedient children, carefully to observe the rules of the house, and honour our Master in them. Grace does all for us, and works all in us. "So shalt thou dwell in the land." God in Christ is our portion, our inheritance, our land. He inherits us, and we inherit Him. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance (Eph. i.)

If God be our dwelling place, our inheritance, He must be our Lord. Canaan's land was a type of Gospel rest and of Gospel privileges ; therefore these are in a time state our land. So shalt thou dwell in the land—that is, Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou enjoy the highest and best privileges of the saints on earth, now and then sliding for a few moments into promised rest by faith, and sitting with Christ and with saints and angels in heavenly places.

"And verily, verily thou shalt be fed." Christ, His presence, and His doctrine, and His promises are the bread of life ; He is the fatted calf, tender and good, for prodigals dressed. His Spirit is living water. Comfort is honey out of the rock. His unction is the marrow of divinity which He gives to His children, whilst dogs that are without gnaw the bones. Trying providences and hard texts of Scripture are Gospel nuts. The Father's love and Christ's blood well mingled are the wine of the blessed, and these are well refined and free from dregs. God's table is the board of plenty, and the board of health too, and there you may eat, and so may I.

But whilst here we must have fast days as well as feast days. "A little while and ye shall not see me"—that makes us sad ; "A little while and ye shall see me"—this makes us glad. In the time of famine you shall be satisfied, for lest we should miss a meal God has undertaken to feed us Himself. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd." The times of refreshing come from His presence ; and though unsent, shepherds blow their serannell pipe and the lean and hungry sheep look up but are not fed, Christ will not serve you so. No, He will lead you in green pastures, in a good land and large, and by the sweet waters of quietness, where you shall lie down and none make you afraid. Upon the high mountains of Israel shall their folds be. "Verily thou shalt be fed." Here is the solemn affirmation of a Triune Jehovah—then you shall "eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to them to whom nothing is (ministerially) pre-

pared." You shall find it so. Therefore, the Lord help you to trust in His dear name!

I have found it good to write to you. May a divine unction fall upon your spirit, and you shall find it good to read these scraps as an earnest of a full-soul feast. Remember, my dear sister, that Jesus Christ is our daily manna; His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed. Here you may eat and drink and forget your poverty, which may the Lord grant for His own name and mercy's sake. Amen and amen!

I wish I could, as you exhort me, give my fears to the winds. I have a great presentiment that I am going into a great fight of affliction, for "in every city bonds and afflictions abide me," and it is only now and then I can feelingly say "None of these things move me." Still I have a hope that however deeply plunged in tribulation, and although all men should forsake me, the Lord will not, but that, in due time, the good Lord will deliver me from all my foes and all my fears, and that I shall sing His praises on the bright hills of everlasting day, and live to see that I have not had one trouble too many or too heavy. O to be favoured to hold the conqueror's palm and sing the conqueror's song!

As the Lord enables you, pray for a poor tried one. You see how large a letter I have written to you with mine own hand. May the Lord make it the means of refreshing your soul and secure the glory to Himself! And when it is well with you, remember me.

ED. BLACKSTOCK.

Searmon.

LEIS AN URR. ARCH. COOK, A BHA'N DEIMHIDH.

Iosua vii. 12.

FEUDAIDH an Tighearn an eaglais fhagail. 'S aithne do 'n Chruithear cho beag eagal 's a tha eadhon anns an anam ghrasmhor, agus gu h-araidh anns an eaglais fhaicsinnich, a so, cho beag trioblaid 's a bheir smuain pheacach dhoibh.

Cha-n 'eil ceangal no coir aig an eaglais fhaicsinnich air Dia, gu'm fanadh E maille riu. Cha d' fhuirich am Fear-saoraidh riamh o thoiseach an t-saoghail fad ann an aon aite. 'S e eaglais nan Iudhach an t-aite anns am b' fhaide a ghabh Dia comhnuldh air an talamh, agus 's iomadh fiosrachadh agus sgiursadh goirt a thug E dhoibh mu'n d' thug E thairis iad ach mu dheireadh dh' fhag E iad. Ghabh E comhnuidh fhad ann an eaglais na h-Alba, ach thugamaid an aire do no briathraibh sin, "Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as bhur measg." Bha an Cruithear air amannaibh a' toirt foillsichidhean iongantach soilleir dheth fein ann an cuid a sgireachdaibh agus ann an cuid de theaghlaichibh ach ann an cumantas bha iad gle ghoirid. Thubhairt aon de na naoimh nach cual' e riamh iomradh air cumhachd lathaireachd Dhe a' fantuinn ni b'fhaide na

sea bliadhna deug 'ar fhichead ann an aon aite. Bha an Cruith-eàr air uairibh a' toirt foillsichidhean iongantach dheth fein agus na h-anaman nach do bhlaiss air anns na tiomaibh sin bha E ann an cumantas 'g am fagail gu la am bais. Tha ni eigin anns na briathraibh sin, "chaidh am fogharadh seachad, tha an samhradh thairis, ach cha-n 'eil sinn air ar saoradh"—samhradh nan cothrom anns an robh Dia a' toirt foillsichidhean iongantach soilleir dheth fein, agus ciod a leanas? "Cha bhi Mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as bhur measg." Oibrichidh ni mallaichte ann an cumantas, agus thusa, a tha ann an teaghlach diadhaidh togaidh tu fuirm agus cuiridh sin cnamh ann am beul do choguis gu la do bhais agus bi e mar fhaileadh breoite a' cumail Dhia air falbh o d' anam. Ach ma chi thusa drap de'n Chruithear ann an aite air bith iarr nach rachadh sin seachad ort.

Bha an Tighearn a' bagradh so air 'eaglais, "gabh foghlum, o Ierusalem, air eagal gu'n dealaich m' anam riut, air eagal gu'n dean mi fasach dhiot, fearann neo-aitichte." Nis feudaidd bagradh luidhe fada fa chomhair a' Chruitheir mu'n cuirear an gnìomh e; ach cuirear an gnìomh e. Ris, focal eile, "Imichidh mi agus pillidh mi gu m' aite gus an aidich iad an cionta agus an iarr iad m'aghaidh, 'nan amhghar iarraidh iad mi gu moch." Thug E thairis aon ghaol 'anama do laimh a naimhdean.

Tha Dia aig cuspairean a ghraidh ann an cumhnant. "Deal-aichidh na sleibhtean ri am bunaitibh agus atharraichear na beanntan as an aite ach cha dealaich mo chaoimhneas riutsa agus cha-n atharraichear coimhcheangal mo shith, deir an Tighearn." Tha Dia aca ann an cumhnant ach feudaidd E a lathaireachd spioradail a tharruing air falbh agus am fagail gle thruagh. Ach cha-n 'eil Dia aig an eaglais fhaicsinnich ann an cumhnant. 'S ann dhe 'fhad fhoighidin a tha e gu bheil an aite aca. "Tha an Tighearn maille ribh an feadh a tha sibhse maille ris-san;" agus "ma dh' iarras sibh E gheibhear leibh E; ach ma threigeas sibhse Esan, treigidh Esan sibhse." Cha-n 'eil coir aca air, agus feudaidd mi radh gu'm feud E leigeil leo a pheacachadh air falbh uatha. Cha bhi E air a chur air falbh o 'chuid fein, ach ciod e d' fhios nach falbh E uaitsa? Tha sinn a' leughadh anns a' chomhsamhlachd air cuireadh a bhi aig moran, ach bha 'fhearann aig fear, a chuing-dhamh aig fear eile agus a bhean aig fear eile, agus ciod a leanas? "Tha mi ag radh ribh, nach blais aon de na daoineibh ud a fhuair cuireadh dem' shuipeir-sa." Tha thu ann an sin a fhuair cuireadh agus a dhiult e agus math dh' fheudta nach blais thu air a ghaol gu la do bhais. Ach tachraidh so dhuit, fasaidd tu sgith dhe na meadhonan, sgith dhe'n urnuigh agus ciod a leanas? "Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as bhur measg."

AN DARA SEARMON AIR A' CHEANN CHEUDNA.

'S e beannachd co mor 's a tha an Tighearn a' buileachadh air creutair bhi 'feuchainn da, nan nithe a chuireas dealachadh siorruidh, eadar e 's an Tighearn agus 'bhi 'deanamh a' chreutair

toileach dealachadh ris na nithibh sin, agus builichidh E sin air a h-uile aon a chuir E air leth airson sonas sìorruidh. Ged is ann ri clann Israeil a chaidh na briathran a radh an toiseach gidheadh tha iad a' labhairt ris an eaglais gu crìoch tìm, Tha an t-aon fhuath aige do pheacadh an diugh a bh' aige ann an sud agus bidh tre'n t-sìorruidheachd.

Ann an labhairt o na briathraibh so bha sinn a' nochdadh

I. Gu'm feud an Tighearn falbh o'n eaglais fhaicsinnich ;

II. Cuid de na haobharan no na brosnuidhean airson am bheil an Tighearn a' falbh o'n eaglais no o'n anam ;

III. Cionnus a ta na haobharan gu bhi air am faotainn a mach.

Tha sinn a' faicinn ann an so an geur rannsachadh a bha ann gus an d' fhuair iad an t-Achan mor agus an sin mar a bha e air a sgrios. An t-anam a thig gu so gheibh e lathaireachd an Tighearn ann an tiom agus anns an t sìorruidheachd. Bha sinn a' nochdadh gur e gnìomh arduachdaranail ann an Dia gu'n cuireadh E peacaich air leth mar eaglais fhaicsinnich anns an t-saoghal tre'n comhpairticheadh E ris an t-saoghal aithne air fein. Bha sinn ag radh gur e an Tighearn a dhol air falbh o'n eaglais fhaicsinnich truaighe nan truaighean, cha-n 'eil ni cosmhuil ris. Mo chairdean, cha-n 'eil ni cosmhuil ri gort a dhith eisdeachd focal an Tighearna. Feudaiddh moran de'n fhocal a bhi ann gidheadh muinntir a' fannachadh foidhe, mar a deir an sgrìobtur, "siubhlaidh iad o fhairge gu fairge agus o'n airde tuath eadhon gus an aird an ear ; ruithidh iad air an ais agus air an aghaidh a dh' iarraidh focal an Tighearn agus cha-n fhaigh iad e." Ciod am focal? Focal a bheothaicheas an anam. Agus anns an la sin fannaichidh na h-oighean maiseach agus na h-oganaich le toirt. Ciod na fannaichidhean? Direach, a' tuiteam ann an ainearbsa. Feudaiddh ni's leor de'n fhocal bhi ann gidheadh fannachadh foidhe do bhrìgh gu bheil Dia air falbh. Cha-n 'eil ann an ni ach plaoisg 'nuair a tha an Tighearn air falbh. 'S e an Tighearn anam an anama agus 's e neart an anama a' toirt aghaidh air a bhàs.

Bha sinn ag radh gu'm feudadh an Tighearn 'eaglais fhaicsinneach fhagail do bhrìgh nach d' fhuirich E riamh fad ann an aon aite. Feudaiddh E dearsadh dheth fein a thoirt ach cha d' fhuirich E riamh fad ann an aon aite air chor 's gu'm feudar a radh "chaidh am fogharadh seachad, tha an samhradh thairis, ach cha-n 'eil sinn air ar saoradh." Bha sinn ag radh gu'n robh E bagradh gu'm fagadh E 'eaglais agus gu'm feudadh am bagradh luidhe fada fa chomhair, ach nach do labhair E focal riamh nach robh 'na fhirinn. Ach a nis, gu bhi 'dol ni's fhaide, feudaiddh E 'eaglais fhaicsinneach fhagail, 'nuair a bheir E air falbh a phobull ionmhuinn fein. Ged a ghradhaich an Tighearn a shluagh uile gidheadh bha air an talamh cuid ni b' fhaigse air na muinntir eile. Tha e air a radh gu'n do ghradhaich E Eoin agus gu'n do luidh Eoin air 'uchd, nis 'nuair a tha an Tighearn a' toirt nan creutairean araidh sin air falbh feudar a radh gu'm bheil E a' fagail 'eaglais.

Co fhad 's a tha cuid air am fagail anns an eaglais tha buaidh iongantach aig an urnuighean maille ris an Tighearn. 'Nuair a bha am Fear-saoraidh 's an t-slighe gu Emaus, tha e sgriobhta, gu'n do chomh-eignich iadsan E, ag radh, "fan maille ruinne," agus gu'n d' fhuirich E maille riu. Agus seall air Maois 's a' bhuaidh a bh' aige maille ri Dia. "Leig leam, agus lasaidh mo chorruidh 'nan aghaidh agus claidhidh mi iad." Ach ghuidh Maois. Agus Eliah, le urnuigh dhuin e na neamhan, nach robh uisge ann re thri bliadhna agus le urnuigh dh' fhosgail e na neamhan. 'S e an la mor a nochdas a' bhuaidh a bha aig urnuighean cuid maille ris an Tighearn. Tha am Fear-saoraidh dhe a leithid de nadur 's nach comasach E air cuspairean a ghaoil aicheadh ann an ni a tha chum a ghloir fein. Nis an comasach ni air a bhi ni's mò chum a ghloir 'na orduighean na a lathaireachd spioradail fein? Co fhad 's a tha iad sin anns an eaglais fanaidh an Tighearn innte agus bidh a lathaireachd maille rithe. Tha ni eigin anns an anam ghrasmhor nach deanadh na flaitheanais fhein a chomhfhurtachadh. Far am bheil an drap gaoil so tha an nadur sin anns an anam nach comasach e bhi beo as easbhuidh an Tighearna. 'Nuair a tha a leithid sin ann feudar a radh gu bheil a lathaireachd anns an eaglais.

Bha ni anns an Tighearn o shiorruidheachd a ghradhaich a bhi maille riu. Cha-n fhios duinn co dhiubh bu mo a thlachd annta anns an t-saoghal so no ann an gloir. 'S e an ni ceudna a ghaol dhoibh o shiorruidheachd agus rachadh e tre chuan na feirge air an son agus am feadh a bhios tearc dhiubh sin anns an eaglais nach fheud sinn dùil a bhi againn ri a lathaireachd? Ach O! c'aithe am bheil aon le anam a' gal an deigh an Tighearna?

Tha sinn a' toirt fanear, gu'n robh cuid aig an Tighearn nach biodh riarachta leis na meadhonan as 'easbhuidh fhein annta. Bha cuid aig an Tighearn anns a h-uile linn a bha 'cur eadar-dhealachaidh eadar na meadhonan agus an Tighearn anns na meadhonan, agus ge b'e air bith cho priseil 's a bhiodh na meadhonan bhiodh iad falamh dhoibh as 'easbhuidh fhein annta. Cha riarachadh eadhon saoradh o ifrinn an t-anam as easbhuidh an Tighearn. Chà dheanadh na flaitheanais fhein sona iad as easbhuidh lathaireachd an Tighearn. Tha mi cinnteach gu'm b' fhearr le Muire a bhi 'gal 'na h-aonar na comunn nan aingeal as easbhuidh an Tighearna. Am feadh a ta drapan de sin anns an eaglais nach fheud sinn a bhi 'g amharc airson lathaireachd an Tighearn anns an t-saoghal? Tha sinn a' faicinn mar a bha na h-Abstoil, cha bu chomasach iad bhi beo 'nuair a bha E gu'm fagail. Ach ciod a thuirt E riu? "Cha-n fhag mi sibh 'nur dilleachdain, thig mi do 'ur n-ionnsuidh." "Guidhidh mise an t-Athair agus bheir E dhuibh Comhfhurtair eile." Tha mi cinnteach nach b' urrainn duine a ghabhail a stigh mar a bha an osnaich a' beantuinn ris an Tighearn. Tha sinn a' leughadh gu'n do ghul Iacob. Ciod a ghul? Ghul gras anns an anam, agus bhean sin ris na h-innigh neo-chriochnaichte ann an doigh nach

aithne do aon ach E fein ; oir tha innigh comhfhulangais anns an Tighearn.
(Ri leantuinn.)

Notes and Comments.

War at Last.—The quarrel between Russia and Japan over their rights in Manchuria and Korea has at last issued in warfare. On Monday, February 8, Japan struck the first blow by attacking the Russian war ships in Port Arthur. Several of these were disabled or destroyed, and Russia is for the present smitten back. The attack by Japan has found Russia very unprepared both on land and sea. The Russians are a religious people after their own manner and supplications, prayers, and intercessions are now being made against the heathen enemy in all the churches with the help of incense and candles. The situation is one of painful interest to all the civilised powers, as the possibilities of complications are not slight. We know that whatever be the passions or purposes actuating the hostile kings and peoples there is a hidden purpose of the most High God which all these upheavals and commotions are effectually serving. In the 16th chapter of Revelations we read of the river Euphrates being dried up that “the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” Commentators have debated much who are intended by these “kings of the east.” It may be that the turn of those Eastern peoples, China and her neighbours, who have for ages been mere ciphers in the scheme of human history, is now about to come, and that this ascendancy of Japan is the signal for a new departure in human affairs. However the influence of such a Power, civilised but not Christianised, and armed with weapons of precision, is not very likely to be beneficent or pacific. It may be we are nearing the period of those universal shakings which are to usher in the righteousness and peace of the latter day. In the 9th chapter of Zechariah there is a vivid prophecy of the devastating march of Alexander the Great from north to south of Palestine, with a promise of the protection to be afforded to Jerusalem while the indignation is overpassing. But there is a contrast drawn between the Macedonian conqueror and another Victor whose weapons of war and triumphs are of a different order. For “I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and He shall speak peace to the heathen, and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.”

Dr. Kennedy's Sermon (p. 405).—We cannot resist calling the special attention of our readers to the notes of Dr. Kennedy's sermon in the present issue. They are among the best we have ever seen taken down by a hearer, while the glow and freedom and heavenliness, that generally characterised his preaching, are conspicuously manifest in these notes.

Church Notes.

Communion.—Tarbert, Harris, 2nd Sabbath of March, and Portree, 3rd.

New Church at Lochgilphead.—A neat little church has recently been erected at Lochgilphead, Loch Fyne. It is capable of holding 230 persons, and has a small meeting-room and vestry attached. The cost has been £500, and it is satisfactory to state that about £400 of this sum have been contributed. An opening service was held on Friday evening, February 5th, when the Rev. James S. Sinclair, Glasgow, preached on Exodus iii. 2—"And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." At the end of the service he gave a brief account of the distinctive history and testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church. There was a large attendance, a number of people being present from other denominations. On the Sabbath following, the Rev. Alexander Stewart, Edinburgh, conducted services in Gaelic and English, which were also well attended. The collections at all the services mentioned amounted to the sum of £36.

Acknowledgment.—Rev. Neil Cameron begs to acknowledge, with thanks, 10s, received from "Two Young Friends, Dornoch," towards the St. Jude's Building Fund.

Donation from Canada.—Mr. Hector Morrison begs to acknowledge, with thanks, the sum of £9, received from friends in Canada, towards the Free Presbyterian Church at Scourie. Sutherlandshire.

Donation from Australia.—Rev. Walter Scott, Brushgrove, Clarence River, N.S.W., has kindly forwarded a contribution of £4, towards our Foreign Mission Fund, from Woodford Dale Mission Sabbath School, in connection with his congregation.

Memoir of Rev. D. Macdonald.—Mr. Macfarlane expects soon to have several hundred copies in hand of the "Memoirs and Remains of Rev. D. Macdonald, Shieldaig." Persons desirous to obtain copies may now send in their orders to the Rev. D. Macfarlane, F.P. Manse, Craig Road, Dingwall. The price is, as formerly, 2s 6d. per copy, postage 3d. extra.

Northern Presbytery.—This Presbytery met at Dingwall on 8th February, 1904. There were present, Rev. D. Macfarlane, moderator; Rev. J. R. Mackay, and Rev. Ewen Macqueen. In the absence of the Clerk, Rev. J. R. Mackay acted in that capacity. It was agreed by the Presbytery that wherever a missionary, whose sphere of labour was within the bounds of this Presbytery, had to pay lodgings, the congregation to which he ministered should pay £3 annually as a help in defraying his expenses.