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Half-Yearly Meeting of Synod.

THE summer meeting of Synod took place at Inverness on July the 5th. All the ministers were present but three, while there were present only two representative elders, both from the Northern Presbytery. At the mid-day diet Mr. Stewart, of Edinburgh, moderator, preached from Mat. xvi. 18, and after worship was over constituted the Synod with prayer. After the usual formal business of the first meeting, Mr. Macfarlane moved, and Mr. John R. Mackay seconded, that the moderator shall be asked to give his sermon to be published in the *Magazine*. This was unanimously agreed to, and the Synod adjourned, to meet again in the evening.

When the Court met again, the order of business agreed upon in Committee was adopted, and the examiners of records reported favourably on the minute books of the Northern and the Southern Presbyteries. The Synod took note of the absence of the book of the Western Presbytery, and expressed their desire to have it before them at their November meeting. The report of the Southern Presbytery, who had been appointed a Committee to watch developments of the education question, was then submitted by Mr. J. S. Sinclair, clerk of Presbytery. He reported the steps that the Committee had taken to oppose the framing of a new catechism intended to supersede the Shorter Catechism, and to please all the branches of the Reformed Church in Scotland. The Synod approved of the Committee's action in this matter. Mr. Sinclair also reported the resolution drawn up by the Southern Presbytery anent the clause in the Scottish Education Bill at present before Parliament, dealing with voluntary schools and the rates. A similar resolution was unanimously agreed to as the Synod's finding in this matter, which runs in the following terms:—"This Synod declares its strong disapproval of the clause in the Scottish Education Bill now before Parliament, wherein it is proposed that School Boards shall have power to help out of the public rates voluntary schools over which they have no control, such as the

Roman Catholic and the Scottish Episcopalian ; protests that such use of the rates would infringe upon the conscientious convictions of many of the Protestant and Presbyterian community, who would thus be compelled to support institutions many of which they regard as teaching idolatry and superstition, as well as principles of disloyalty to the Protestant throne ; and warns the Government that if the clause referred to be retained in the Bill its provisions will undoubtedly give rise to trouble in Scotland similar to that which has arisen in connection with the Education Act for England and Wales." Mr. Beaton and the clerk were asked to see to it that copies of the resolution should be sent to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Secretary for Scotland, and the members of Parliament representing constituencies in which the Free Presbyterian Church is strong. The Southern Presbytery, or any three of its members acting as a quorum, were appointed a Committee to act in connection with the proposed introduction of a new catechism. This Committee was instructed to enlighten the people with regard to the excellencies of the Shorter Catechism, and to warn them of the danger of introducing into schools a modified catechism. The ministers were instructed to inform their people in these matters.

When remits from Presbyteries came up for consideration, it was agreed, owing to special circumstances in the case of the Harris and the Dingwall congregations, to make an appeal on their behalf in connection with the usual Building collection, and whenever the first charges on that collection were provided for, that the residue should be, for the year, equally divided between these two congregations.

The action of the Northern Presbytery with regard to Mr. Murdo Mackay, missionary, was confirmed, and that of Mr. Macintyre in connection with the supply of Raasay. The financial condition of this congregation was remitted to the Western Presbytery to consider, act, and report on to next meeting of Synod.

Mr. John R. Mackay reported on his work as Theological tutor, and indicated generally matters that called for immediate settlement in the training of our students. The Synod entrusted the oversight of the divinity students next winter to Mr. Beaton and the clerk, to act as their tutors in New Testament Exegesis and Church History. It was decided that Messrs. Donald Macleod and Murdo Morrison, students, should finish their University course next winter, and that Mr. John Sinclair should take the subjects of Exegesis and Church History, and that Mr. Radasi should continue two months still with Mr. Beaton at Wick, that his examination papers should be set by his tutors on the work he had gone over, and examined by the ordinary examiners in the various subjects. A Committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Sinclair (convener), N. Cameron, and John R. Mackay, were chosen to arrange about Mr. Radasi's field of work and instructions. The subjects for students' final examination in Hebrew and Systematic

Theology were set, and examiners appointed. The examination was appointed to take place on the first day of the coming winter classes.

The Clerk read the reply he got from one of the secretaries of the National Bible Society of Scotland anent the attitude of the directors towards the circulation of Romish and other corrupt versions of the scriptures, indicating that they did not prohibit their agents from selling copies of translations from the Vulgate New Testament, without notes, to Roman Catholics who were willing to buy them. The secretary, in reply to a further question about metrical psalters in the native language of South Africa, said he was sure that no Bible Society published any such thing, nor was he aware of any such publication. It was remitted to Mr. Sinclair, as convener of the Committee who are to arrange about Mr. Radasi's work, to make further inquiry about translations of the Psalms into the languages in which Mr. Radasi is likely to labour.

The annual Financial report was then read and approved of, and the treasurer and the auditors thanked, and the Synod ordered the publication of the abstract and report at large in the August number of the *Magazine*. The Synod's collections for the year were then appointed—that for missionaries and catechists in August, for students in October, for Church and Manse Building in December, for missionaries and catechists in February, and for Foreign and Jewish missions in April. A new Financial Committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. J. R. Mackay (convener), Macfarlane, and Clunas. In view of the fact that the Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund was collected not exclusively for Foreign, but also for Jewish missions, and that some of its contributions were expressly given for Jewish missions, it was decided to give £10 to the Trinitarian Bible Society in aid of its work among the Jews.

The report of the Committee on the Scriptures and Creed Subscription was submitted by Mr. N. Cameron, and was generally approved, and remitted to a Committee of the whole Synod, appointed to meet at Inverness on Friday evening, September 13th. It was agreed that copies of the draft report should be sent to each member of Synod, and that those unable to be present at the Committee meeting should send in writing their suggestions, and that Messrs. N. Cameron and Sinclair should act as an interim Committee to mature the business, travelling expenses to be paid. Three allotments of small sums to stations and agents were made, and in connection with the congregation of Lochbroom it was agreed to send Mr. Donald Macleod, student, to labour there for some time, and that Mr. N. Matheson, who is there at present, should, for some time, be transferred to Oban.

The Synod agreed to meet again on Tuesday after the second Sabbath of November, in Glasgow, at twelve o'clock noon.

The last verses of the 122nd Psalm were sung, and the Synod closed with prayer.

MISSIONARIES' AND CATECHISTS' COLLECTION.

Congregations and friends are reminded that the first annual collection for our missionaries and catechists is appointed for the month of August. It is but right that congregations should make this collection as soon as they conveniently may. The second collection for this fund is appointed for February. The need for this second collection will be at once apparent if the figures of the past five years bearing on this scheme are carefully studied. In response to the Synod's notice in 1902 the sum of £157 9s. 3d. was contributed; the total payments to missionaries amounted to £862 16s. 5d., which meant that £705 7s. 2d. was drawn from the Sustentation Fund for their support. In response to the 1903 notice the contributions came to £161 13s. 7½d., the payments to £914 8s. od., leaving a sum of £752 14s. 4½d. to be taken from the Sustentation Fund. In response to the notice for 1904 there was contributed £156 2s. 10d. before March 31st, and up to the middle of July £48 13s. 7d. in response to the second notice, making a total of £204 16s. 5d. The payments amounted to £924 12s. 4d., leaving a sum of £719 15s. 11. to be taken from the Sustentation Fund. These figures show that for the past three years the Sustentation Fund has been drawn upon to the extent of £2177 17s. 5½d. for the maintenance of our missionaries and catechists. In view of this the duty of congregations towards the collection is plain, and we trust that this year's returns will show that the lesson of these figures is being taken to heart.

Return from Canada.—Rev. Alexander Macrae, who has been in Canada during the last three months on a pastoral visit to the brethren there, has now returned, and we wait with interest his report of what he has seen and heard.

Errata.—We regret very much that an unusual number of typographical errors appeared in last issue. The following are corrections:—At foot of page 81, "fine" should read "five;" page 88, line 5, "anxious" should be "conscious;" line 12, "is what" should be "that;" line 17, omit "as;" last line, for "state" read "sphere;" page 90, line 31, for "man" read "men"—similarly, page 91, line 8; page 91, line 31, for "their" read "then;" page 92, line 16, for "Person" read "Persons;" page 93, line 26, for "day" read "dry;" page 93, line 36, for "crying" read "saying;" page 94, line 23, for "right" read "sight"—similarly in line 24; line 27, for "hear and come unto me" read "Come unto me and hear;" line 44, for "type" read "antitype;" page 95, line 50, for "the name" read "a sinner;" page 106, line 12, for "Trinity" read "divinity;" page 107, line 5, for "Patnpasrians" read "Patripassians;" page 111 line 8, for "men" read "Him."

Sermon

Preached before the Synod in Inverness, 5th July, 1904,

By the Rev. ALEX. STEWART, Edinburgh.

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 "And I say also unto thee That thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. xvi. 18.  
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WHEN Christ came to the coasts of Caesarea Philippi He asked His disciples the question, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" There is divine wisdom manifested in the way in which he led up to the subject with which He desired to confront them. For it is not principally what other men thought of Him that Christ desired to hear: He wished to hear what His own disciples thought of Him, and He wished to hear it from their own lips. So He led them first of all to speak of the views which they had been hearing expressed round about them. That is the setting in which He wishes *their* confession placed. That is the background over against which He desires it set, the erroneous and conflicting conceptions of the unenlightened mind. These opinions He leads them to set forth, first, that their own testimony may appear all the more decided and unmistakeable by reason of the contrast.

They told Him what men were saying. And what strikes us first of all regarding the popular view is the lack of unanimity which it displays. Some said one thing, some another. They were not of one mind or of one speech. There is not here the harmony of belief which is the mark of those who drink at a common Fountain of Knowledge, and listen to one instructing voice. And as it was in the past, so it is still. When men are left to their own speculations, there is always disagreement in their views concerning Christ. They are at variance among themselves. Some advocate one theory, some another. So true is it that in this great mystery of Godliness human reason is no reliable guide. We need a more sure word of prophecy. We need the light of heaven itself, shining in the dark place of our ignorance and our folly.

In refreshing contrast with this discord is the harmony that prevailed among those who were taught of the Father in heaven. One man speaks for them all. When Christ turns to His disciples and says, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter does not reply, "Well, this is John's view, and this is James's view, and this other is Andrew's view, and my own is different from them all." "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," said Peter, and he expressed the thought of every heart. And it is the same still. There are many things about which, unhappily, the people of God are not agreed among themselves. There are many things about which they do not yet see eye to eye, forms of church government,

modes of worship, and other principles and practices of various kinds. But there is one question regarding which the whole family in heaven and on earth speak with one voice. When they are asked "Whom do ye say that I am," one man answers for them all: Peter has answered for them already. And the answer is "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

But we should not forget that this very diversity of view regarding Christ has a certain value of its own. It is a testimony to the many sidedness of His character. All these opinions indeed come short of the truth, as the gropings of the unaided understanding ever must; yet the fact that Christ produced such different impressions on different minds is an evidence of the manifold aspects of character which He manifested. Some said He was Elijah. The majesty and dignity of His character, His stern denunciation of evil, His vindication of the claims of Jehovah, His unwavering adherence to truth, reminded them most of all of the Prophet of Fire. To others He had all the tenderness and soft pity of a weeping Jeremiah. Others He reminded of some one else of the prophets. In Christ you have all the prophets in one. All the strength and beauty and majesty and meekness, and zeal and tenderness and love, which distinguished one or other of the prophets in outstanding measure are found in Him in perfect degree and in the most harmonious combination. He has the strength of each and the weakness of none.

"But whom say ye that I am?" In putting this question to His disciples Christ had manifestly in view a definite end in connection with His public work. It is not merely that it was sweet and refreshing to Him after the jarring misconceptions of the world to hear the voice of those who had heard and learned of the Father, the voice of the dove in the cleft of the Rock; the question was meant to serve a more distinctive purpose. The time had now come when Christ must plainly tell His followers certain truths which should appear strange and distasteful to them. He must tell them about His sufferings and death. Hitherto His references to the Cross had been veiled and obscure; the disciples were not ripe for a fuller disclosure. It needed a deep and solid foundation of knowledge to bear the weight of that awful truth. The necessary prerequisite was an assured conviction of the glory of His Person. Without that conviction the Cross must have overwhelmed them. But a firm grasp of the truth concerning His Divine glory and His Messiahship should have interpreted the Cross for them, and caused light to shine through the darkness and the shame. So we find that their apprehension of this truth has been gradually increasing in clearness and strength. It was the outcome not so much of His specific teaching on the subject as of His Life and Work among them. What He was and what He did were allowed to convey their own impression and communicate their own teaching. In connection with the first miraculous draught of fishes, for example, and again after the great

apostacy when they were asked to contemplate the prospect of following the many who went back and walked with Him no more, we find the disciples plainly confessing their faith concerning His Person and Office. There was this difference, however, between then and now. All these previous confessions may be said to have been wrung from them in the white heat of excitement. They were uttered in the midst of trying circumstances, when the disciples were deeply moved. What Christ wishes to hear now, and this not least for their own good, is the calm and deliberate expression of their settled convictions.

And when Christ comments on this testimony what He emphasises in it, first of all, still with His disciples' good in view, is its heavenliness. He wishes them to realise that their faith does not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." The knowledge at which Peter had arrived had not been attained through his own speculations; it was not merely a shrewed inference of his own judgment; it was not due to the more penetrating keenness of Peter's discernment or the more powerful grasp of Peter's understanding. It came direct from heaven. Why does Christ lay stress on this fact? To assure His disciples, with the sifting experiences of after days before His eye, that this was no delusion that had taken possession of their minds. The conclusions of flesh and blood are always fallible; there is always the element of uncertainty and of misconception and of incompleteness. What we assert with the greatest emphasis to-day we have often to retract to-morrow. But it is not so here. This is the result of the Father's own teaching. There is no room for misconception or uncertainty. This is no dream of the fancy, no creation of a temporary emotion, no distorted fragment of truth that must be modified with a fuller accession of light. It is truth itself, complete, eternal, unchangeable.

Christ proceeds to unfold to His disciples the significance of their testimony. First of all it has a particular significance for Peter himself. "And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter." Simon now gets a new name. That new name had been promised him at his first interview with Christ. When Andrew had brought forward his brother to the Saviour he himself had already found near the banks of the Jordan Christ had seen in the rough weather-beaten fisherman of Galilee the rock-like apostle of the days to come; and, with Caesarea Philippi before His mind, had said to him "Thou shalt be called Peter." The new name is the outward symbol of the new nature. Simon has now manifested that he has received a new nature. The confession he has first made is the evidence of it. He is a new man, and it is fitting that he should have a new name.

But Christ does not stop at Peter in unfolding the significance of this testimony. He proceeds to show its meaning with reference

to the whole body of believers. "Upon this Rock will I build My church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There are three truths brought before us in these words that call for consideration—

I. The Rock.

II. The Church built on the Rock.

III. The security of the Church because it is built on the Rock.

I. The Rock.

I am not going to waste time in proving that the Rock is *not* Peter. I need only remind you of the very significant difference of termination between the word translated "Peter" and the word translated "rock," and merely add that if the reference were to Peter the manner of expression used here would be singularly indirect and unnatural. The Rock is Christ, the Person to whom Peter had borne such wonderful testimony. Let us look again at Peter's words "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Take that expression to begin with, "The Living God." What a wealth of glory we have here. It is deep as the Fountain of the Being of Jehovah. He is Living, not only in contrast with all other gods, the dumb lifeless idols, "which blinded nations fear." He is living in the sense that His life is from Himself. His Being is underived. He is self-existent, independent. The Father hath Life in Himself. The Fountain of His Life has been filled from no other source. It has always been full: it has never been filled.

Now here is the Son of the Living God, and He is living Himself. For His Sonship implies identity of nature and equality of glory with the Father. He is not lower in nature. He is the Brightness of the Father's glory. All the infinite perfections of Supreme Godhead are His. The Jews clearly recognised that this was involved in Sonship. When Christ asserted that He was the Son they accused Him of blaspheming, because He made Himself "equal with God." The Son is the Father's Equal. One thing more may be mentioned as implied in this relation, and that is Communion, deep mysterious unbroken Communion, the fellowship of a mutual love that knows no limit and suffers no change. Nearly always when the Sonship of Christ is mentioned in the Scriptures you find associated with it the thought of Fellowship. The Word not only was God, but was *with* God. The Only-begotten Son is in the Bosom of the Father. This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.

There is something else, too, along with this, we must bear in mind before we can realise how wonderful Peter's confession really was. We are so accustomed to hear the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed that it has become to us well-nigh a commonplace. We have almost ceased to wonder. It is part of the heritage of theological truth on which we enter from our earliest years. But think how different was the case of Peter. There stood One

among the disciples who was in many respects like one of themselves. He had a true body and a reasonable soul. They knew that He had been born in Bethlehem. They knew the circumstances of His birth. They knew Mary who bore Him. They were familiar with His brethren. He was poor and obscure in station. He had handled the carpenter's tools in Joseph's workshop. He was subject to weariness and pain; He felt the pangs of hunger and thirst. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Where is His Throne? Where is the resistless army He is to lead on to victory? Where are the splendours and the magnificence of heavenly royalty? He is despised and rejected of men. His claims are denied and ridiculed. And think, too, in connection with that, how often it happens among ourselves that we fail to recognise worth and merit just because it happens to be at our side. Our very closeness to it, strange as it may, appear, obscures our vision. Familiarity, as we say, breeds contempt, or if not, at least it blunts our perception. It needs distance and the lapse of time to give us the just sense of proportion, to bring out the true perspective. We neglect and despise our prophets while they are with us, and when they are gone we begin to build their sepulchres.

Now all this about Christ must have been before Peter's mind; it must have been clearly present to his consciousness; but through that, and beyond that, his faith passed to take hold of this other truth, here is the Son of God. The Son of man *is* the Son of God. In heaven's own light flashing in upon his soul Peter saw, beneath the veil of humanity and earthly obscurity, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. Whom do men say that I *the Son of Man*, am? Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God.

But there is more implied in Peter's words than a perception of the glory of Christ's Person. They indicate likewise a knowledge of His Office. Thou art the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One. We have here, not only the Son, but the Servant. This is He who had been promised and prefigured, looked for, longed for, prayed for, throughout the successive generations of the Church of God from the beginning of the world. This is He of whom Moses and the prophets did speak; this is He of whom the sacrifices and the types, the manna, and the smitten Rock, and the brazen serpent, and all the other foreshadowings of the coming Deliverer did testify: This, in a word, is the Saviour, anointed for His official work, a prophet to reveal unto us the Father, a priest to reconcile us unto God by His Blood, a King to win and rule and defend us.

This then is the Rock, the Church's only Foundation, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, and at the same time the Son of Man, in the glory of His Person as Emmanuel, and in the completeness of His saving work as the Anointed of the Lord.

II. The Church built upon the Rock.

A great deal might be said regarding the figure that is here employed. The Church is spoken of as a Building. That figure fittingly represents its function in the world. The Church is a house, or dwelling-place, the dwelling-place of the Living God Himself. The Church is a city, the "strong city" of God, which hath salvation "for walls and bulwarks." The Church is a temple, where believers, as a spiritual priesthood, offer up spiritual sacrifices on God's own altar, which is Christ. The Church is a fortress where dwell the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, whom He calls to engage in the conflict with Satan and sin and error in the world. There is a wide and interesting field of meditation opened up before us in that direction; but I forbear to enter it now. There are three truths on which I seek to fix your attention in connection with the Church.

(a) Notice, first of all, that word "My"—My church. There you have the quiet dignity of conscious power and assured possession. My Church, although as yet He had only that despised and feeble following, although He was on nearly every hand despised and rejected of men! But at that hour in Caesarea Philippi, the future, in all the glory of its triumphs, rose up before His view. He saw through the centuries the building in its completeness. He saw the design realised in the finished work. He saw the "lively stones," coming from north, south, east, and west, as numerous and as bright as the stars of the sky or the drops of the summer dew. He saw the walls rise up in stateliness and beauty, until at length the head-stone is brought forth with shoutings; and the Holy City, new Jerusalem, comes down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. His they were by manifold rights. They were His by right of gift. They were a love-gift from the Father to the Son. Love gave them and love received them, though the giving of them meant that God should bruise and put to grief His own Son, and the taking of them meant for that Son Gethsemane and Calvary. They were His by right of creation. By Him all things were made. All things in heaven and on earth were created by Him and for Him. They were His by right of Redemption. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. He loved them, and redeemed them unto God by His Blood. And they were His finally, by right of conquest. He won them, and brought them to give themselves to Him in glad and willing self-surrender.

(b) This leads me to the second point, and that is to consider the meaning of this word Church. The word translated Church means an assembly of people that are called, called out. This is what constitutes the Church. It is made up of those who have been "called out" from the world into union and communion with Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Let us dismiss from our minds every thought about buildings, the material structures made up of wood and stone which we call churches. Let us dismiss, too, for the time being the distinction

between different sects and denominations throughout the Christian commonwealth. It is a necessity for the present that there be separate outward organisations; but the question that lies at the root of this matter is not whether a man is an Episcopalian or an Independent or a Baptist or a Presbyterian: if he has been called by the Spirit of God, quickened in soul, then he belongs to the Church of Christ whatever denomination he may be connected with among men. When I say that I do not wish to be understood as minimising in the least degree the importance of a distinctive testimony for the Truth. We need not be much moved by a great deal of the superficial talk that is heard on every hand regarding this subject to-day, the talk about sinking differences, and recognising only what we have in common, and acknowledging the good in every system of belief. These are among the platitudes that are declaimed in the name of Christian charity, with varying degrees of loudness and vehemence, among all kinds of religious circles, from the General Assembly to the popular bazaar. A great deal of that kind of talk, let us say at once, is about the most sickening kind of cant in the world. Wherever men honestly love the Truth of God they will be ready to stand up for every jot and tittle of it: whenever the truth depreciates in value in their eyes they will be ready to sacrifice parts of it for the sake of external unity. Different denominations are an unfortunate necessity in the present state of the world, and it is the duty of every rational being to seek the communion of that body which adheres most closely to the pattern shown on the mount, which is most closely conformed to the Scriptural model. But while all this is recognised, it must not be forgotten on the other hand that the Church is a spiritual society, an assembly of souls who have been quickened by the Spirit of God, born from above, and united by faith to the Person of Jesus Christ. Wherever there are those who have been made partakers of this heavenly calling there is a deeper unity among them, underlying all outward differences, than is found among others, who may subscribe the same creed, and hold the same principles, and join in the same worship.

(c) Notice again the blessed assurance contained in the words "I will build." There you have the note of certainty, of fixed resolve, of unflinching purpose. *I* will build; not another. He is the Foundation and He is the Builder. This work also He has reserved for Himself. He does not delegate it to any other. None else could carry it through. But when He says "I will build," there is the pledge and assurance of success. No matter how strong death and sin and Satan may be; no matter how great the enmity and the unwillingness of men; no matter how fierce the opposition the work encounters, and how mighty the difficulties, He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He bring forth judgment unto victory.

III. The security of the Church because it is built on the Rock.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The expression "the gates of hell" is sometimes regarded as equivalent merely to the word "hell." On that view the words simply mean that the Church shall never perish. It possesses an undying life. The gates of hell shall never open to receive it. But there is undoubtedly more implied in the words than that. There is plainly the idea of conflict, of an attempt to storm and destroy the Church. In those days cities were usually enclosed within walls, and a great deal of important business was done at the gates. There the elders met to deliberate, there often judgment was decreed, and there councils of war were held. The leaders of the people assembled at the gates, and put their heads together, and brought forth their collective experience and skill. From this fact the expression used here is apparently borrowed. "The gates of hell" is a way of describing the complete resources of Satan, all his strength and and malice and subtlety.

Satan is the avowed and inveterate enemy of Christ and His Church. He is waging continual war against the followers of the Lamb. He will leave no stone unturned to pluck them out of their Saviour's hand. Not with flesh and blood has the Church to wrestle, not with confederacies of human strength, however formidable; but with the principalities and powers of hell, with wicked spirits in high places.

Well, the promise given here is that it is the Church of Christ that shall prevail in this conflict and not Satan. How abundantly have the words been fulfilled already. Satan has been attacking the Church throughout the generations, and he has continually been foiled. Sometimes he has come with the storm of persecution, and the blood of the martyrs has flowed in copious streams, but the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church. Where one man fell ten men were ready to step into his place; and the ranks closed up again. The bush has been burning, but it has not been consumed. Sometimes he has come with floods of error, and many who promised well may have been led astray: nevertheless the foundation of God has stood sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His. Sometimes he assaults with the blasts of temptation. He tempts the believer to sin, or to doubt, or to despair. He treads his life down to the ground. He causes pain and darkness. He leads him to stumble and fall, yet not all the devices of the Tempter can separate a believing soul from Jesus Christ; not all the strength of hell can dislodge him from the Rock.

Two elements go to make up the security of any building. The first is that it have a solid foundation. No building, we say, is stronger than its foundation. If the foundation is unreliable the structure raised upon it shall not stand. Who can estimate the strength of this foundation? Who can define the stability of the Rock? Who can measure the might of Christ's right arm, the

efficacy of His atoning sacrifice, the power of His risen life? There, to begin with, lies the security of the Church.

But the other element is this, that the structure be well and truly laid on the foundation. However solid the foundation may be, if there is defective workmanship in the building, it will not stand any great strain. He who is the Foundation of the Church is likewise its Builder. The work of applying Redemption is His own. It is as divine a work as the procuring of it. Christ's own hands lay the stones on the Rock. He unites the souls of His people to Himself by the power of His own Spirit. The work of grace shall never fail.

Though hill amid the seas be cast,
Though waters roaring make
And troubled be ; yea though the hills
By swelling seas do shake,

the Church of Christ need not be afraid concerning its eternal security; for it is built on the Rock of Ages by the hand of a divine workman, and therefore the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The late James Murray, Catechist, Rogart.

BETWEEN eleven and twelve o'clock on Sabbath evening, the 8th day of May, there passed away from time to eternity a man who was highly esteemed as a living epistle of Christ by those who fear the Lord. This worthy man was born at Sleistary, in the parish of Creich, Sutherlandshire. Here, when a young lad, he taught a school, but finding that this occupation did not suit his health, he left it, and for some time was engaged as a grass-keeper. After that, like David, he followed the ewes. In this occupation his house was in the parish of Rogart, and from the name of the place he was known among his acquaintances as Seumas Braige-an-ault. From this place he was wont to go to Lairg to hear the Rev. Mr. Macgillivray, who was valued as a man sent of God to preach the everlasting gospel to his fellow-sinners. Mr. Macgillivray died in the year 1849. At this period of his life James might have been in his natural state, but he was a possessor of a good deal of sound discernment, and although the Rogart church was as near him as Lairg, he preferred to go where he would hear in truth the glad tidings of salvation.

We have not been able to discover at what age the Spirit of the Lord began with him, but it is known that he was brought to feel the evil of sin in his young days. To those to whom he would open his mind in after years, he would sometimes relate the temptations he had when first moved to seek Christ for his soul. Some may call in question what is real in the experience of the people of God. The slaves of sin under their master, the devil, will not

be disturbed by him, but those who desire a better master, even Christ, will not be left unmolested. James went one night to a meeting some distance from his own home. When listening to the word, the tempter began to suggest that there was no hope for him, and that it was better for him to put an end to his life, as the longer he lived he would only receive the greater damnation. He continued in this state of mind till after the meeting dismissed, and then rose to leave the house without revealing his thoughts, but the inmates would on no account let him go that night, and before the morning the Lord enabled him to see that it was the wicked one who was the author of the evil suggestions with which he was troubled. He often referred to the circumstance of his having been detained in this house as a great kindness from the Lord. There was at this time a very worthy man in Creich whose name was Gustavus Munro. To him James wished to open his mind, but looking upon himself as a great sinner, and Gustavus as a great saint, he could not pluck up courage to do so. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." His employer one day sent him from home with a cart. On the way he overtook the man to whom he wished to make an open breast. He asked him if he would take a seat in the cart, to which Gustavus replied, "It's a friend that would ask me," and then took his seat beside him. James often said afterwards, "Gustavus was not long in the cart when I found out that he was as great a sinner in his own eyes, if not greater, than I was in mine." Thus the Lord revealed to him that no temptation had befallen him but what was "common to man." He was greatly tempted with atheism, and felt much of the terror of the Lord. To some he has said, "I never heard or read of any who got more of 'the law' than I did, but I believe many got more of the peace of the gospel." It was clear, however, that he got what made Christ very precious to his soul. When the Lord's time came the tempted and tried shepherd got liberty. He was one day hearing the late Dr. Aird, Creich, preaching on the words, "And He is the propitiation for our sins," and the Lord blessed the word to his troubled soul. To quote his own account, "I was enabled to cast anchor that day in that passage of the Word of God." For some time thereafter he was dandled upon the knees, getting the word sweet to his taste, and like all babes in grace, thinking he would soon be a very holy man. But the wise Ruler who led Israel forty years in the wilderness that they might learn what was in their hearts began to show him that, although he was justified, sin was still in his nature; and he might be heard, while calling upon the Hearer of prayer, exclaiming "O destroy this wicked essence (*bhith*)." He was thus often tried as to whether his first deliverance was genuine, and the word from which he got comfort was often sifted in his experience, but he was enabled to lay hold of it anew and find it an abiding support as the word of the Lord which endureth for ever. The necessity of the new birth was deeply impressed upon him, and he

was stirred in spirit when he heard men, who professed to be teachers of God's Word, at funerals sending people to heaven who up to the time of their death, showed no proof of a saving change. "It is a wonder," he would say, "that they are not afraid; for the Lord saith, 'Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"

Some of the Lord's people excel more in one grace than in another, but James might be called an all-round Christian, both in regard to his personal character and his usefulness in the vineyard. As a catechist in dealing the word of life, he fed both the lambs and the sheep, and being possessed of a clear logical mind, he gave justice to the word of God when speaking to "the question," or when engaged in any other religious exercise. To tempted and tried ones he was a nurse, for, with the Apostle, he was not ignorant of Satan's devices, and knew where to direct others to obtain relief. He had thus a very warm place in the affections of some who profited by his conversation and counsel, and who could approach him more easily than some other good men.

James was for twenty-five years an elder in the Free Church, where he found Christ for his soul. For a part of this time he lived in the parish of Dornoch, and associated with those who feared the Lord, and kept a meeting in a place called Birichen. In these meetings he seemed to have felt much of the presence of the Lord, and delighted to look back to them. Thence he removed back again to Rogart, where he continued his work as a catechist. When the majority in the Free Church forsook its doctrines and principles and adopted the well-known Declaratory Act, James cast in his lot with the party which in 1893 stuck to the Word of God and the constitution of the Free Church of 1843 and formed the Free Presbyterian Church. Before he took this step he publicly declared his intention of doing so at a fellowship meeting. He declared with tears in his eyes what the Lord did for him through the instrumentality of some who were listening to him that day and who were prepared to remain in the same body with those who were casting the Lord's cords from them, but he added, "I cannot follow you longer." Does not this show that like the Apostle he believed that while the glory of man may wither as the flower of the field, the word of the Lord abideth for ever? For some years after this date, the Lord enabled him to go in and out among the people teaching and admonishing them in the truth, comforting those who mourned and beseeching the unconcerned to flee from the wrath to come. He went on Communion occasions as far north as Wick and Strath, and on the west as far as Gairloch, in which places his memory is held in the highest esteem, and where he seemed to be refreshed in the Lord. On the Sabbath morning at Gairloch he was overheard exclaiming with great emotion "O the marriage robe, the marriage robe! O to be clothed in the spotless robe of Immanuel's righteousness!" When

returning from the communion at Strathy, the first held in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church, one of the ministers addressed James somewhat thus: "As you have been so long under the gospel, can you say that you felt the power of the word since we took this step as you used to do?" To this he replied, "I wont say as to the first while of my experience, if ever I felt the power of the gospel in truth, but I can say this that for over thirty years I did not feel such power in the Word of God as I did lately at Wick and this time at Strathy." The late Rev. Donald Macdonald, Shielraig, was at this communion at Strathy.

Of James it might be said in truth that he obeyed the injunction, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." On communion occasions friends from many parts of the Lowlands and Highlands might be found in his house, and as he welcomed them under his roof he would say, "Glory to God that the gospel gathers people yet." Thus like Gaius he was a host to many. Some time before the end came he got very weak in body, and could no more go about his Master's work as he used to do. But, although the outward man was failing, the new man was renewed day by day. He was often cast down in his weakness, and would sometimes say in these frames, "What if He will cast me away after all? He would be just in doing so." He was often heard praying in the words of the Psalmist:—

"Remember, Lord, Thy gracious word
Thou to Thy servant spake,
Which, for a ground of my sure hope,
Thou causedst me to take."

The Lord revealed much kindness to him at the end of his journey. He was tenderly nursed by his wife and two daughters. One of his sons was in Africa in connection with the Livingstonia Mission, and although he had no intention at that time of coming home, James entertained a strong hope that he would see him before he died, and he got his desire granted. After that he often said, "There is nothing that I desire now but to be prepared for the journey." Towards the end he seemed to think every day the Sabbath. The Lord was preparing him for the eternal Sabbath, when he should enjoy the rest that awaiteth the people of God, in the place where they need no candle neither light of the sun, and the Lord God giveth them light, and "they shall reign for ever and ever." Before the end he was asked how he felt, to which he answered, "I am happy, happy." The good Shepherd was giving a foretaste of the sweetness of His heavenly kingdom. Thus the Lord called to Himself in the 91st year of his age a man who, though ripe in years and in grace, is sadly missed by his loving spouse and affectionate family, by the congregation to which he belonged, and by the Church. May the Lord in mercy look on us as a generation, and raise up the sons to take the place of the fathers that the breath of the Spirit may not utterly leave us!

E. M'Q.

The Duty of Giving Away

A STATED PROPORTION OF OUR INCOME.

By WILLIAM ARTHUR, A.M.¹

(Continued from page 105.)

“*BUT* we ought not to speak of a tenth, a fifth, or any other proportion; our duty as Christians is to give all.” That is not correct. Our duty is not to give away all, but to employ all according to the will of God, and so as to be pleasing in His sight. It is our positive duty not to give away all; but to spend suitable proportions of our income in supplying our own wants and those of our families, as also in fulfilling any commercial or other calling for which property is needful. Our objector replies, “Of course, what I meant was, all *after our reasonable wants are supplied*. We ought to give absolutely all the surplus, and not save any.”

In the lips of some—and I could name the very man—this means noble and incessant liberality, but in the lips of most it would just mean giving as much as was perfectly convenient. If every one, before assigning any portion as a thank-offering to the Giver of all, is to spend what meets his views of providing for his own and his children’s wants, present and prospective, in ninety-nine out of every hundred cases it will prove that the surplus for giving away is next to nothing. In many cases giving liberally will be postponed till family provision is made, till resources are fairly in advance of demands; and by that time *all heart for giving will be gone*. In fact, this rule of giving away all that you have to spare is that by which multitudes think they are living; whereas, could they get an account of all they gave on this system last year, and resolve next year to consecrate the small proportion of a tenth, they would be utterly astonished to find how much the latter exceeds their habitual liberality.

One strong reason for some definite rule lies in this: That we have far better memories for our virtues than for our obligations—for the pounds we give away than for those we receive or spend upon ourselves. Even truly excellent persons who have not *tested* their givings monstrously exaggerate the amount of them to their own mind. The relish of one act of liberality remains long upon the lips, and some who believe that “their hand is never out of their pocket” would be confounded if the great account where all items are entered were placed before them, and they saw how miserably little their endless deeds of generosity amount to. The first expenditure of all should be that which sacrifices the rest—that which is not for self, or flesh, or earth, or time, but for the Lord, for gratitude, for the training of the soul, for store in heaven.

¹ This excellent address was delivered about fifty years ago in the Victoria Hall, Belfast, the Bishop of Down in the chair.—ED.

Our own morsel will be sweeter, and more wholesome too, when the due acknowledgment has been first laid, with a bountiful hand and a thankful heart, on the altar of the Saviour. "Ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, *until* the self-same day that *ye have brought* an offering unto your God." (Lev. xxiii. 14.) This was the spirit of the first-fruits—a spirit of noble preference for the honour of God over selfish care.

Another advantage of deciding that a consecrated proportion shall take the precedence of all other outlay, instead of counting on giving what we have to spare, is this : It materially affects our scale of personal expenditure. Our ideas of what is necessary are ruled by our knowledge of what we have to spend. A gentleman with five hundred a-year, who means to give away what he can spare, unless he be a man of extraordinary generosity and decision united (which cases are never the rule), forms his whole scheme of expenditure on the basis of five hundred a-year, and finds it hard, now and then, to spare a pound or two ; not that he is unwilling, but all his resources are pre-engaged. Another with the same income has his regular BENEVOLENT FUND, into which the first fifth of his regular income goes. The effect is, that all his plans of expenditure proceed on the basis of four hundred a-year ; and thus while the Benevolent Fund is strong for all legitimate claims, it pays itself—perhaps more than pays itself—by acting as a check upon the Vanity Fund, the Hobby Fund, the Folly Fund, and several other exigent funds on which millions of our domestic revenues are wasted. We, then, hesitate not for a woman to prefer the rule of giving regular first-fruits, even in the low proportion of a tenth, over the rule of giving *all* we have to spare. This last, while for a strong and holy man the highest of laws, is for the great majority a law which amounts to no more than is now prevalent.

"*But, at all events, surely you would not apply your rule to the poor.*" Certainly not to the destitute. One object of liberality is to relieve and comfort them. But rising above those who need help, upon whom do you fix as poor ? The man who can afford to spend money on whisky or tobacco, is he poor ? The woman who can afford to spend money on fineries, is she poor ? It would be no small blessing if some of those well-meaning but ill-judging persons who are continually telling the poor that they are too poor to do any good, or support any cause, would stand out of the way of the poor. The worst thing you can do for a man is to pauperise him. If there be a poor man here—and I hope there is, for I never like to see an assembly of human beings without any poor—I would say to him, Never count that man your friend who teaches you to lean on other people. He is your friend, and your children's friend, who teaches you to lean alone on the good providence of God, and on your own right hand.

On the very same grounds that it is a serious injury to a man to pauperise him, it is a great service to teach him to save something,

and give it away. The one induces feebleness, the other power: the one inclines him to be listless in earning and thriftless in spending, the other to be alert in earning and careful in spending. The moment a man begins to save something and give it away, he rises in the social scale, and takes his place in the family circle of benefactors. As to the godly poor, I will test this whole question of proportionate giving by their verdict, sooner than by that of any other class. Let some of those who would bid us not ask them to give, learn what they do, and perhaps they will look anew to their own proportions. And when one sees how the poor tax themselves by waste, by hurtful luxuries, by ill-spent time, how often their spare money, not pre-engaged for good ends, is the cause of their ruin, one feels indignant at those self-constituted friends of theirs who would protect them from the calls of generosity—the very calls which would raise and make men of them; and we say, Stand out of the way of the poor!

There was One who was no amateur in poverty, but had known it from the manger, in His own lot and that of His friends. Did He think it a pity that the widow should give away her two mites? or did He tell Mary that the exceedingly costly box of ointment was too much for one of her means? And when the prophet heard from the widow of whom he had begged a little bread that she was so poor as to say, "I have not a cake," did he think it would be a loss to her to give for the Lord's sake a little of her meal? He who delights in mercy has never yet denied to the poor the joy of giving away. St. Paul plainly contemplates giving as the immediate result of labour in the case of one recovered from the class of thieves. "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his own hands the thing that is good, *that he may have to give to him that needeth.*" (Eph. iv. 28.) If, then, a reformed thief, just beginning to earn his own bread, is at once to set before him the joy of giving away a share of his earnings, who dare degrade the working-men of Christendom by telling them they are to look on themselves as meant only to feed their own wants? O what a blessing had it been to many a poor working-man, what a saving to his means, what a comfort to his home, had his father trained him to honour the Lord with the first-fruits of all his increase!

"But there are those whom we do not call the poor, who yet are in more straits than they—persons of small means and respectable position." I should be the last man on earth to press hard on that class. There are no sorrows I would hold more sacred than theirs, who unite in themselves the feelings of the rich and the fortunes of the poor. Poverty is a cold wind, and the higher your station the colder it blows. But this is to be said: However sacred may be the claims of respectability, of the desire to honour your family and maintain your appearances, more sacred still are the claims of gratitude, piety, and goodness. Nor will it ever prove that what you painfully spare from your own respectability

for the purpose of honouring your God will fail to bring back its reward. "Them that honour me, I will honour."

These are the chief objections to our argument; and having thus noticed them, I now proceed to

PLEAD FOR PRACTICAL ATTENTION TO THE DUTY.

By "practical attention to" it, I do not mean that we should be much interested in the subject, feel ourselves in a very generous frame, look with great indulgence on the lecturer, think the circulation of "Gold and the Gospel" must do good, and intend to be much more liberal than we have been; then go away and say all this a few times, and comfortably come round in the course of a week or two to our old habits. By "practical attention to" it, I mean something different from all this—something decided, something instant, something permanent and life-long. I mean that every one here, without exception, especially the young—for you whose hairs are white had need be thinking of much more than a tenth—that all the young, in solemn gratitude to their God, and under an humble sense that He is owner and they are stewards, should now, here, and irrevocably resolve, that by the help of divine grace, henceforth, to the day when money ceases to be treasure, "OF ALL THAT THOU SHALT GIVE ME, I WILL SURELY GIVE THE TENTH TO THEE."

This resolve once come to, it only remains that at stated times the consecrated portion of what the Lord gives you be set apart for His service; and that it be cheerfully given away. Those stated times may be either weekly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly, accordingly as you can ascertain your income.¹ Those are points of detail of the utmost importance, which anyone who is really resolved will soon adjust for himself. But my point is to obtain the firm resolution of steady and habitual liberality for all that remains of life. I do not want a temporary surface glow, but a permanent quickening of the circulation by greater strength at the heart. Life is ebbing, time is flying, opportunities of doing good are daily growing fewer, and the moment is come for something practical. I plead then—most importunately plead—for practical attention to this duty *now*. I plead for man's sake, for the gospel's sake, for *the Lord's sake*, for your own sake.

I PLEAD FOR MAN'S SAKE, *that men may learn that Christians are sincere*. Thousands dwell in the midst of us who never thought of formally disbelieving the Word of God; yet they have

¹ Persons who have fixed incomes may easily adopt the direct method of weekly "laying by them in store." For those whose income is derived from business this is not so easy; but a gentleman in Dublin, after hearing the lecture, told me a plan he had formed which would be easily applied to thousands of cases. In substance it was this: "By years of experience, I know, after making allowance for bad debts and so on, what percentage of my gross returns comes to me, on the average, as clear profit. Every week I know what my sales have been. If, therefore, I take that percentage on the week's sales, it represents my 'increase' for the week; and hereafter, each Monday morning, I will draw 'a tenth' of that, and put it to a benevolent fund." May thousands go and do likewise!

a habitual suspicion—more than a suspicion—that the practical religion of religious men is only a seemly garb which is beautiful on Sabbath, serves to go to church in, and is at all times respectable. This suspicion is one of the most serious obstacles to their own conversion. There are in Belfast hundreds who would be brought nearer to salvation did they only feel in their conscience that the faith, hope, and love of Christian men are not a profession, but a matter of the heart. Now all worldly men have one deep instinct : they believe that *a man is sincere in what he will pay for*. If they, then, see religious men cheerfully and largely paying for their religion, the habit of doubting their sincerity will gradually be worn away. And surely those principles are worth little which are not worth paying for. A religion that did not check our selfishness could not come from a God of love. He who is not willing to pay for his religion has no right to have a religion. Creatures there are, and creatures, too, calling themselves Christians above all names, who would fain take the benefit of Jesus' religion of love without it costing them anything ! Oh, could we lift one such soul abruptly away from the midst of this assembly, up and up into yonder celestial light, and then set it upon the Sea of Glass—as it saw its own image reflected on that sea, with so much of greed, of earthiness, of self, of meanness, shown in the blaze of that day, would it not shriek out in terror, that heaven was the most horribly exposing place whereinto a poor wretch was ever driven ?

I plead for man's sake, *that man may learn that Providence is benevolent*. One most ruinous influence at work in society is the general distrust in the vigilance of a Power which befriends the right. Most men believe they can prosper more quickly and more surely by keeping an easy conscience than a pure one, by practising clever evasions of right than by boldly shunning all known wrong. To confront this unbelief, to demonstrate before all men that the Power above us does smile upon uprightness and generosity, is the high calling of every godly man. You are not only to obtain your neighbours' admission that the Lord is King of the world to come—they are ready enough to grant that : another point needful for their salvation is to bring them to feel that He is Lord and King of the world that now is. They easily believe that He is the disposer of crowns and harps hereafter ; but they do not so easily believe that He is the disposer of pounds, shillings, and pence ! Doubting here, for the sake of the pressing to-day, they risk the infinite, but unfelt to-morrow. Satan ever boasts, as he did to our Master, that both the good and the glory of this world are in his power, and that to whomsoever he will he gives them. To deny this claim, to maintain the opposite, to lead men to turn upward a reverent eye, and say loyally to the Lord of all, "Both riches and honour come of thee," nothing is so effectual as that all God's servants shall sacredly honour Him with the first-fruits of their increase. Doing this, it will soon be seen that they who

acknowledge Providence bloom in its sunshine, and that seldom indeed is one of their number struck with a blight. Bands—not here and there an individual, as much an exception in the Church as in the world, but—large bands of open-handed men, whose works prosper and whose homes rejoice, will stand before the world living witnesses that we are not given over to the keeping of a demon who pampers wrong and famishes goodness.

I plead for man's sake—that *men may learn that commerce is benevolent*. It is not more hurtful than wonderful how generally even good men look on commerce merely as an engine for fortune-making, and a field of battle for all the selfish passions. Even grave divines may be found calling commerce “the god of the world,” with just the same propriety and truth as they, professing to quote scripture, call money “the root of all evil.” “Well, but is not commerce a hatefully selfish thing?” Is not weather a selfish thing? Both are appointed by Providence for the same end; both perverted by man to the same abuse. For the three-fold purpose of provisioning, clothing, and adorning this world and its inhabitants, the Lord has made a great unconscious machinery of sky and sea, soil and air, and appointed intelligent workers to watch its processes, and complete the result. Neither weather nor commerce separately will suffice for the provisioning clothing, and adorning of our world. Without the mechanical agents the intelligent workers are impotent; without the intelligent workers the mechanical agents revolve in vain.

The covetous underwriter makes the storms the servants of his greed; the greedy corn-speculator turns the blessed sunbeams into tools of gain; the bloodthirsty buccaneer makes the genial breeze serve as charger in his murdering onset. Looking at these disgusting perversions of the Lord's instruments, are we to forget that, above evil eyes and unholy hands, One is guiding the weather for the good of all? And coming into commerce—the providential play of intelligent agents for our comfort—are we to look at the lower side, the motives of traders, and forget the higher side, the design and actual result wrought out by Providence? It is like the web of a cunning weaver: on the lower side you find only tangled threads, on the upper only blooming flowers. Look at commerce as regarded by the hearts of buyer and seller, and selfish indeed is the scene; look at it as designed—ay, as actually wrought out—by the Ruler above, and see every man in a city provided by the hands of others with all things which earth can offer to his convenience, in such proportion as his means will command. Rise up, then, ye Christian men, ye who know a God and bless a Providence, rise up and testify that this commerce, which busies your masses, is not a lawless scramble, but a beneficent appointment whereby everyone may become a co-worker with Heaven in plenishing and provisioning the homes of men! Let all see that when well-won gains come into your hand, you have a joy in scattering them abroad, to spread temporal and eternal happiness

among that race for whom all winds blow and all markets are opened.

I plead for man's sake, *that practical benevolence may be increased.* Of all sources of happiness in a community none acts so gently and pervasively as a spirit of true benevolence. Nothing would so much assuage private griefs, or so greatly smooth the relations of class with class, as the general spread of that sacred brother-love, that true fellow-feeling which breathes so sweetly in our Christian Scriptures. That widows may not weep unconsolated, that orphans may not roam friendless, that wayward men may not pass a lifetime within sound of church-bells, without ever hearing inside their own door a word of loving exhortation, that the poor may not be set against the rich by envy, that the rich may not be estranged from the poor by contempt, that real heathens may not live and die in the heart of Christendom, that nations of pagans may not sit on and on in the darkness of their fathers—in a word, that this cold world may be warmer, and this troubled race have more joy, open your hand and give ; for man's sake, give !

(To be Continued.)

Sovereign Grace.

A LETTER OF THE LATE MISS HOLLOWAY TO MR. LITTLETON.

DEVIZES, Dec. 21st, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR AND BROTHER IN CHRIST,—I fear you will think me a bold and troublesome creature : but I again feel constrained to make my grateful acknowledgments—first to the God of all my mercies, and also to you, His distinguished minister, for your great and exceeding kindness to me in preaching to me, His poor prisoner, the unsearchable riches of Christ, which has proved an unutterable comfort and blessing to my soul. I desire to bless God that He has given me a relish for the doctrines of sovereign grace which He has taught you to preach, and which were once a great and high offence to any proud and unhumbléd spirit. It is distinguishing sovereign, free, unmerited grace which has been richly bestowed upon me—yes, vile, unworthy me, by the Father of mercy, through a Mediator, His only begotten Son, and approved by the Holy Ghost to my sinful, polluted heart ; and, blessed be God, I cannot now appreciate any other. Oh, that the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of a precious, suitable, and all-sufficient Saviour, may make me acquainted with the glorious things, and lead more and more into the mysteries of redeeming love and mercy ! Oh, that you may be greatly encouraged and strengthened for your work of faith, and fully persuaded that the sovereign grace of God is sufficient for you, and may you have souls for your hire, for be assured whenever you preach, if our covenant God has from the beginning chosen any unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, He will in due time call

them unto the obtaining of the glory by Christ Jesus. I think the Lord of life has dealt marvellously with you in giving you such clear, deep, and experimental views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as described by you in your most excellent discourse which you last preached in my house. It is such views as these, through the Spirit's teaching, that can represent sin in its true colour. Yes, it is the bitter sufferings of Christ in Gethsemane's garden, and on Mount Calvary's cross, that can alone demonstrate the damnable nature of sin. Oh, wonderful transaction, that the mighty God should lay aside His robes of Majesty and glory and assume our nature, and when there was no eye to pity, His own arm of strength brought salvation, "When being in an agony, He prayed the more earnestly, and sweat as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground," under the dreadful pressure of His people's guilt. He *only* felt the tremendous effects of sin to the full; "Who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." I know not how it may be with others, but I am frequently afraid after all that I have heard and seen and felt "When I am weighed in the balance I shall be found wanting," for amidst the many mercies with which my heavenly Father has strewn my path, and manifested His rich unbounded love on the right hand and on the left, I can behold nothing in myself but constant cause for shame and confusion of face, and am constrained to cry out with the prophet, "My leanness, my leanness." My heart is like the barren heath, that seeth not when good cometh.

My dear sir, be so good as to accept my thanks, and look upon it as another proof, yea, a strong proof of the sovereign grace of Jehovah that He has so tenderly inclined you to take notice of one of the feeblest and most undeserving of His children. I am grieved at the thought of your leaving, but if He sees fit to remove His servant, I trust the Master Himself will abide with His afflicted worm. And may a triune God bless, preserve, and keep you to the end. Pray regard me as your most tenderly attached friend and sister in Christ, ELIZABETH HOLLOWAY.

[The late Miss Holloway, of Devizes, who was confined to bed nearly 40 years, was much esteemed and favoured in the things of God. Only with great difficulty could she write at all. She suffered from partly spinal affection and disease of bones. The late Mr. Freeman, of Liverpool, mentioned an interview he had with her. Her solemn entry into the doctrines of grace, and the life of those who professed the same, much impressed his mind, of which he spoke many years after.]

Donation from Australia.—Rev. Walter Scott, Brushgrove, Clarence River, New South Wales, has kindly forwarded the sum of £7, the annual Foreign Mission collection of the Brushgrove Grafton congregation to the Foreign Mission Fund of our Church on behalf of our mission to Kaffraria.

Outlines of Lectures on the Bible.

By the Rev. NEIL MACINTYRE, Glendale.

(Continued from page 99.)

AFTER Tyndale's New Testament Myles Coverdale's Translation appeared. Myles Coverdale was born in Yorkshire in the year 1488. He was at first a monk, and subsequently became Bishop of Exeter. He made no pretensions to learning, and made his translation from the German and Latin. It has indeed been questioned whether Coverdale was not entirely ignorant of Hebrew and Greek, as it is evident that the originals were not consulted in the preparation of the work. He had, however, the honour of presenting to the English-speaking people the first complete English Bible, as also the first issued by Royal authority. It was published on October 4th, 1535, just a year before the martyrdom of his friend Tyndale, whom he had also assisted in his work.

Myles Coverdale no doubt was a good man, but his religious character does not stand so high as that of Tyndale and some others. He was weak, and pandered a good deal to the wishes of Henry VIII. In Queen Mary's reign he was deprived of his bishopric and imprisoned, but was released and allowed to go abroad on the intercession of the King of Denmark. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the throne of England he returned, but did not resume his ecclesiastical office, and died at a good old age. The name and memory of Myles Coverdale will never be forgotten as the man who gave to the English people the first complete printed Bible in their own tongue.

The next Bible translator is John Rogers. He was born about 1500 near Birmingham. He was a man of fervent piety, deep learning and singular eloquence. Rogers was not so much a translator as a reviser. The King's printers, Grafton & Whitchurch, engaged him to revise Coverdale's Bible, but Rogers adapted Tyndale's New Testament after carefully comparing it with the original and also with the German. As to the Old Testament, he again followed what Tyndale had previously translated from Genesis to the end of 2 Chronicles, using Coverdale's Bible for the remaining parts, after carefully revising it. It was published in 1537, and the work, with prefaces, notes, and numerous woodcuts, was dedicated to Henry VIII. by Rogers under the name of Thomas Matthew. This Bible is therefore known as "Matthew's Bible." We cannot but regard Rogers as guilty of deception in thus assuming the name of Thomas Matthew. Of the first edition only 1500 copies were printed, and were sold at a sum equivalent to about £7 of modern money per copy. Soon after the accession of Mary to the throne, John Rogers was summoned by the Lords of the Council to remain in his house as a seditious preacher, then he was committed to Newgate, and on February 4th, 1555, he was cruelly burnt at Smithfield, but the word of God for which he lived and died liveth and abideth for ever.

The next Bible which appeared was "Taverner's Bible." It was simply a revision of "Matthew's Bible" with its notes, but without the woodcuts. In the margin the reviser added numerous notes of his own, besides titling the chapters. Richard Taverner was born near Norfolk in 1505. He first studied law, and was made High Sheriff of Oxford, but afterwards was licensed as a preacher. He died on July 14th, 1577. Little is known of this author or his Bible.

The next edition of the sacred Scriptures which we notice is the "Great Bible," so called because of its great size. It measured 15 inches in length and 9 inches in breadth. It was printed in Paris by Regnault, under the editorship of Myles Coverdale, the expense being borne in part, if not in whole, by Cromwell. It was simply a revision of the Tyndale-Matthew Bible. The King of France, Francis I., granted permission to have this Bible printed in Paris, but the ecclesiastical authorities set themselves in determined hostility to its publication, and seized upon it and had most of the copies burned. What does Popery fear so much as that word which giveth light? This Bible was completed in London in 1539. By Royal command it was set up in churches, and for safe keeping was chained to desks, and accordingly these copies came to be called the "chained Bible."

The "Great Bible" had a very remarkable title-page. It had a picture designed and drawn by the Dutch artist Holbein. The following inscription filled the centre of this title-page:—"The Byble in Englysche, that is to saye, the content of all the holy scripture both of ye olde and newe testament truly translated after the veryte (truth) of the Hebrew and Greke texts, by ye dylygent studye of dyuerse excellent learned men, expert in the forsayde tonges."

In the year 1540 "Cranmer's Bible" was issued. This year may be regarded as a memorable one in the history of our English Bible. For the first time in this country both the civil and ecclesiastical powers combined to make the Bible accessible to the people. In 1542 the Popish bishops got an order suppressing the circulation of the Bible. It is told that at the coronation of Edwards VI., who was only ten years old when he ascended the Throne, the three swords of state were borne before him. But he asked where the "fourth sword" was. "What sword, your Majesty?" was asked. "The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," he replied. At his accession the Bible was this Bible was 10s. unbound and 12s. bound per copy.

The late William Mackay, Strathy Point.

WE regret to record this month the death of Mr. William Mackay, Strathy Point, Sutherlandshire, which took place on Sabbath morning, the 10th July. The deceased, who was 78 years of age, was a man of genuine, though unobtrusive, piety,

and was highly respected, not only by his intimate friends, but by all who knew him. William was disposed to take "the lowest room" in respect of Christian attainments, but his circumspect life and secret wrestlings at a throne of grace (which could not be hid) bore testimony to the fact that his godliness was of a very vital character. Indeed, it was of a weightier cast than much which passes for Christianity at the present day. He did not speak much, but his silent, grave demeanour was often a sermon in itself, while his words, when uttered, were marked by a pith and point which betokened a mind of more than average grasp and penetration. Behind a somewhat stern exterior, there also lay much tenderness of feeling and warmth of attachment, which on occasion no reserve could conceal. He was a man of discernment also, who could distinguish between truth and error, and had a high regard for the true gospel of Christ. Of all ministers of the gospel the man who seemed to have left the deepest impression upon him was the late Rev. Christopher Munro, Strathy. Under Mr. Munro's preaching, William had seldom a dry eye, while in later years, a remark about Mr. Munro, or a quotation from his sermons or sayings, would stir the deepest emotion in him.

It is not our intention to write an extended eulogy of this worthy man. Quiet himself, and not given much to the praise of the creature, he is fitly noticed by a brief but affectionate tribute to his memory. His latter end was peace. Much tried and exercised in his spiritual course, and, "through the fear of death," often subject to bondage, he was favoured during the closing days of his life with much peace. His last illness was short, and calm were the waters as he neared the haven of everlasting rest.

"Then are they glad because at rest,
And quiet now they be;
So to the haven He them brings,
Which they desired to see."

Much sympathy is felt for Mrs. Mackay and family in their great bereavement. One of the sons of the deceased is the Rev. John R. Mackay, Inverness.

Church Notes.

Communion.—Dingwall, 1st Sabbath of this month; Portree, 2nd; Lairg, 3rd.

Acknowledgments.—The Treasurer of Dingwall Manse Building Fund begs to acknowledge, with thanks, the following contributions:—Treasurer, from a friend in Daviot, £1 1s. 6d.; Treasurer, from a few friends in Daviot, per Mr. A. M'Phail, £1 4s.; Treasurer, from a friend near Newtonmore, 10s.; Treasurer, from a friend in Newtonmore, £1; Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, per Mr. Lachlan Maclean, Inverness, a friend, 5s.; Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, from a friend, Bettyhill, 5s.; Treasurer, from two friends in Glasgow, £1 each; Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, per Mr. Angus Fraser, from Glasgow friends, £16 16s.

ABSTRACTS of the PUBLIC ACCOUNTS of the FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

FOR THE YEAR FROM 31st MARCH, 1903, TO 31st MARCH, 1904.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1903.			
<i>Receipts—</i>	<i>Payments—</i>		
1. Congregational Contributions, ...	1. To Ministers at Whitsunday, ...	£890 0 0	
2. Missionary and Catechist Collection, ...	Martinmas, ...	900 0 0	
3. Donations, ...			£1700 0 0
4. Interest, ...	2. To Missionaries at Whitsunday, ...	£258 10 0	
	Lammas, ...	202 8 6	
	Martinmas, ...	249 19 0	
	"		
	"	213 14 10	
	3. Interest due to Bank, ...		924 12 4
	4. Postage, Printing, Stationery, etc., ...		0 2 0
			3 4 10
	Balance at 31st March, 1904,		£2717 19 2
			1096 14 10
			£3814 14 0

JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account, ending 31st March, 1903. ...			
<i>Receipts—</i>	<i>Payments—</i>		
1. Congregational Collections, ...	Postage, Printing, Stationery, etc., ...	£0 10 0	
2. Bushgrove-Grafton Congregation, ... New	Balance at 31st March, 1904, ...	497 16 7	
South Wales, ...			
3. Interest, ...			
			£498 6 7

ORGANISATION FUND.

CHARGE.		£49	0	8
Balance of last Account, ending 31st March, 1903, ...				
<i>Receipts—</i>				
1.	Congregational Collections, ...	£62	16	9
2.	Expenses for Pulpit Supply during Mr. Mackay's absence in Canada repaid, ...	13	3	10
3.	Interest, ...	0	13	3
		<hr/>		
		76	13	10
<hr/>				
DISCHARGE.				
<i>Payments—</i>				
1.	Expenses for Pulpit Supply in Inverness during Mr. Mackay's absence in Canada, ...	£13	3	10
2.	Synod's Grant to Editor of <i>Magazine</i> , Clerk of Synod, ...	20	0	0
3.	" " Treasurer, ...	5	0	0
4.	" " Expenses in connection with Orkney and Shetland Fishing Mission, ...	30	0	0
5.	Postage, Printing, and Stationery, etc.	4	0	0
6.		0	13	6
		<hr/>		
		£72	17	4
		52	17	2
		<hr/>		
	Balance at 31st March, 1904, ...	£125	14	6
		<hr/>		

MISSIONARY AND CATECHIST COLLECTION.

CHARGE.			DISCHARGE.
	<i>Receipts—</i>		<i>Payments—</i>
	...	...	In behalf of Sustentation Fund, ...
Congregational Collections, ...	£156	2 10	£156 2 10

STUDENTS' AID FUND.

CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account, ending 31st March, 1903, ... £68 2 8			
<i>Receipts</i> —		<i>Payments</i> —	
1. Congregational Collections, ... £99 16 11½		To Students,	£118 0 0
2. Interest, 1 5 4		Postage, Printing, Stationery, etc., ...	0 13 6
	£101 2 3½		£118 13 6
		Balance at 31st March, 1904, ...	50 11 5½
	£169 4 11½		£169 4 11½

BUILDING FUND.

CHARGE.

Balance of last Account, ending 31st March, 1903, - £57 13 1

Receipts—

1. Congregational Collections, ... £60 3 7½

2. Interest, ... 1 3 6

61 7 1½

DISCHARGE.

Payments.

1. Raasay Building Fund, ... £25 0 0

Shieldaig Manse " ... 20 0 0

Harris, ... 4 5 0

Edinburgh, ... 3 4 0

Wick, ... 3 0 0

Dunbsath, ... 3 0 0

Stratherrick, ... 1 0 0

Scourie, ... 0 11 0

Postage, Printing, Stationery, etc., ... £60 0 0

Balance at 31st March, 1904, ... 0 11 6

£60 11 6

58 8 8½

£119 0 2½

150

SHIELDAIG MANSE BUILDING FUND.

Amount of Debt at 31st March, 1903, ... £462 0 0

Allocated from Building Fund in reduction, ... 20 0 0

Balance at 31st March. 1904, ... £442 0 0

We have examined and audited the accounts of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, for the year ending 31st March, 1904, and we have found the whole transactions properly vouched and instructed. We also certify that the balances brought out in the foregoing abstract are correct.

F. MACIVER, } Auditors
C. MACLEAN, }

ATBULAR VIEW of the SUSTENTATION FUND and SPECIAL COLLECTIONS of the FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

For the Year from 31st March, 1903, to 31st March, 1904.

PLACES.		MINISTERS, MISSIONARIES.		Sustentation Fund.		Jewish and Foreign Missions.		Organisation Fund.		Missionary and Catechist Collection.		Students' Aid Fund.		General Building Fund.		TOTAL.		
<i>Northern Presbytery—</i>				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1.	Alness	..	..	2	8	0	..	0	5	0	..	..	2	15	6	2	13	0
2.	Assynt	..	..	24	5	6	..	0	14	0	..	..	2	6	4	29	6	4
3.	Lochinver	..	..	26	15	6	..	1	2	14	..	..	1	4	6	28	14	0
4.	Stoer	..	..	20	0	0	..	1	4	6	..	..	2	0	4	26	14	0
5.	Greich	..	..	20	17	0	..	1	4	6	..	..	2	4	0	26	5	0
6.	Daviot	..	..	47	17	8	..	1	1	6	..	..	0	18	0	51	11	10
7.	Dingwall	..	..	41	9	0	..	1	14	7	..	..	3	0	0	52	16	4
8.	Dornoch	..	..	10	0	0	..	0	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	11	9	0
9.	Dunbeath	..	..	22	6	6	..	0	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	22	6	6
10.	Duthil	..	..	10	2	6	..	0	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	12	15	6
11.	Farr	..	..	8	0	0	..	0	12	0	..	..	..	..	..	9	12	0
12.	Golspie	..	..	2	8	0	..	0	3	6	..	..	..	..	..	2	18	6
13.	Halkirk	..	..	50	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	51	8	0
14.	Helmisdale	..	..	30	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	0	0
15.	Inverness	..	..	124	13	11	..	3	14	5	..	..	5	10	0	144	18	10
16.	Kilmorack	..	..	31	13	6	..	1	0	5	..	..	..	..	..	36	10	4
17.	Kingussie	..	..	12	11	6	..	0	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	15	3	6
18.	Kinlochbervie	..	..	13	6	0	..	0	15	0	..	..	..	..	..	16	13	6
19.	Lairg	..	..	50	0	0	..	4	3	10	..	..	5	4	3	71	16	2
20.	Moy	..	..	35	0	0	..	2	15	0	..	..	2	13	9	43	10	3
21.	Newtonmore	..	..	4	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	10	0
22.	Rogart	..	..	23	0	0	..	1	5	0	..	..	..	..	..	28	5	10
23.	Scourie	..	..	8	14	0	..	0	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	12	5	3
24.	Stratherrick	..	..	15	5	6	..	1	2	6	..	..	..	..	..	23	18	0
25.	Strathly	..	..	17	0	0	..	0	12	0	..	..	..	..	..	21	15	6
26.	Tain	..	..	14	8	0	..	0	17	6	..	..	..	..	..	21	7	4
27.	Thurso	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	7	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
28.	Wick, Lybster, and Keiss	..	..	86	15	0	..	2	10	0	..	..	..	..	..	107	11	0
				762	17	1	..	26	9	10	..	..	38	13	7	27	13	6
<i>Southern Presbytery—</i>																		
29.	Ballachulish, N.	..	..	4	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	0	0
30.	Dumbarton	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	7	6	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
31.	Edinburgh..	..	..	91	0	0	..	..	1	0	0	..	..	..	..	2	10	0
32.	Fort-William	..	..	4	2	0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
33.	Glasgow { St. Jude's Church	..	..	234	17	10	..	5	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	9	0	0
34.	Glasgow { John Knox's Church	..	..	85	0	0	..	..	4	10	0	..	..	..	..	0	9	0
				85	0	0	..	2	0	0	..	..	..	..	..	4	5	0
																95	15	0

Judgment before Mercy.

A LETTER BY JAMES BOURNE, OF LINCOLNSHIRE, TO
MR. W. MAYDWELL.

LONDON, 19th June, 1855.

DEAR UNKNOWN FRIEND,—I am glad to see your letter to Mr. Gilpin, and that it has pleased God to give you some discernment between the dead professing Church and the true Church of God. I cannot but hope the Spirit of God has made you to feel the inefficiency of the one and the desirableness of the other; for the gay professors of the present day are not denied any of the pleasures and fashions of this world; and if you in your measure are dead to these through the fear of death and a broken law, to such the gospel is sent.

You must not be disheartened because you find not abiding peace—"I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled?" Judgment most commonly precedes mercy, and there is pulling down before building up, and breaking the clods and ploughing before sowing. None of these things are pleasant spiritually, though both safe and necessary. The Lord will sooner or later turn us to destruction, before he bids us to return and live; and in the beginning of our profession we are not at all aware what this turning to destruction means. It is anything but abiding peace.

Be not discouraged if the assurance of salvation does not come about according to your notions of it, nor think that your safety consists in attaining to high things at once—"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

The despondency you speak of is to create a feeling sense of your weakness, and train you not for high things, but for small things, to hear the truth from a child; to think it a wonder of wonders should the Lord condescend to visit you in ever so little a way by the ministry of a poor despised man. The furnace has been the means that has brought me down in many ways from my heights, and the furnace has still been heated and prepared to keep me down, and so it must be with you if you are saved; by this you will get to know what is meant by "enduring hardness as a good soldier." In this low place you will prefer the honour of God to your own, which is hard work, for we value nothing and nobody so much as ourselves; and nothing can reduce this mighty self so much as the true, efficacious, and powerful grace of God. The great and mysterious work of grace in a sinner's heart is not wrought in a day; there is so much to be pulled down, put off, denied, and crucified; and the Lord can do nothing but with broken hearts.

O, may the Spirit of God quicken you! I hope you will be able by the grace of God to abide by the word in this time of persecution and disgrace. Christ "made himself of no reputation."

Can you find power from on high to give up your reputation? Or will the love of this present evil world in a profession entice you to betray him? Do not think that I wish in any way to judge my unknown friend, or can do so. No, by no means; yet we need such words as these left as a caution to us—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" (2 Kings viii. 13.) If we suspect our hearts, we are more likely to seek the Lord for strength to hold out in the hour of temptation.

May the Lord greatly enlighten and comfort you, and discover to you more and more the safety and sweetness of that salvation which is treasured up in Christ for all afflicted consciences.

From your unworthy servant in the Lord,

J. B.

Letters of the late Alexander Kerr, Assynt.

IX.

ACHMELVICH, October, 1872.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was looking for your last letter two weeks before it came, and was afraid something was wrong with yourself or with the family. The world is full of troubles, temporal and spiritual, and many of them we bring on ourselves.

I was away at ——— at the Communion since I wrote you last. There is a young minister there now in Mr. M.'s place. Many a time we will not get in the public means what we are seeking if we are seeking Christ as the portion of our souls. But blessed for ever be His holy name that He reveals Himself to poor penitent sinners who cannot be content without Him in His own word and at a throne of grace. And those who have an interest in His atoning blood they will not be forgotten for ever, but they will get faith from Himself to make them accepted in His sight, and so they have cause to rejoice in Him whatever be their troubles and trials in the world. Oh! for a taste of His love in our hearts; this would be a sure mark of our interest in Him, and this alone will prepare us for communion with Himself and with His redeemed Church in the eternity that is fast approaching to us all. But for my own part I am kept more in communion with my own hard heart than with anything else, which fills me with shame and confusion of face before the blessed Jesus who has given such proofs of his love to lost undeserving sinners. Was it not the lost that he came to seek and to save? Was it not the lost for whom He laid down His precious life?

I hope you meditate on what He did for sinners, so that you may be led to seek an interest in it above everything else in the world. . . . —Your sincere friend,

ALEX. KERR.

X.

ACHMELVICH, May 9th, 1873.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is time for me to answer your last

welcome letter. You will excuse my delay when I tell you that, along with my wife's continued illness, I had other things to weigh down my mind. Did you ever read of one Sanballat, who when he heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being re-built and the breaches repaired, tried every means in his power to stop the work? I believe he lives yet, and Satan has him at his command to try to stop the work of God in the soul. But Nehemiah resisted him by faith and by prayer. Also when Hezekiah, king of Judah, got the threatening message from the King of Assyria are we not told that he went and spread the letter before the Lord in the house of the Lord. So we see that it was by faith and prayer that he too overcame. And is there not still a "house of the Lord" to which we may bring what oppresses us and seeks to hinder the work of God in our souls? Is there not a throne of grace for poor helpless sinners to go to? Is not Christ Jesus on that throne as the one Mediator between God and man, and have not the Lord's people in every age found that their only relief in all their troubles from sin and Satan was to approach that throne of grace and lay their complaints before Him who by His own precious blood made it a throne where even vile sinners could bring all their concerns, temporal and eternal. My dear friend, do we know this for ourselves? As I said, I was much cast down of late by various hindrances to the life of grace (if I knew what that grace is), but it is written "they overcame by the blood of the Lamb." Oh! may we be of their number.

Remember me to the friends in C. Hoping you are all well.—
Yours sincerely, A. KERR.

XI.

ACHMELVICH, 8th November, 1873.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your letter last Monday, and was anxious to hear how you were in bodily health, also the family. I hope the trouble is not spreading in the place. What can you do but commit your family to Him to whom I hope you have committed yourself. Alas! how ignorant we are of Christ in His three offices. As a Prophet we need Him to teach and guide us, as a Priest we need Him to appear on our behalf before His Father's throne, and as a King we need Him to rule over us and reign in us. Now whatever falls out to us in Providence it is all known to Him, but He will have us to make it known to Him ourselves, that He may give us the support and deliverance that we need. I will be anxious to hear soon again how matters are with you; and oh! do not forget the matters of your immortal soul. Seek evidence above all things of an interest in the atoning blood of the Son of God. I am not unmindful of you and yours if that would do you any good.—Your sincere friend,

ALEX. KERR.

Searmon.

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

LION an duine na soithichean feirg. Tha ceartas comasach air a thoirt do na h-uile peacach tuarasdail a h-uile peacaidh. Na soithichean reirg a tha peacadh a' lionadh! Anam bhoichd, bha na Sgriobtuirean a' labhairt air na soithichean sin nach robh iad fathast lan, cha'n eil cup nan Amorach fathast lan. Tha thu ann an sin agus feudaidh Dia a bhi 'feitheamh gus am bi an drap mu dheireadh feirg ann do chop. Nis cha chomasach sinn ghabhail a steach ciod ua tomhasan feirge is comasach an t-anam fhulang anns an t-siorruidheachd agus an earbsa shiorruidh. O! am bheil thu a' mortadh d'anama? Ciod na tomhasan feirge a tha sin a' toilltinn? Nis faic am Fear-saoraidh a' tighinn a stigh fuidhe sin agus a' gradhachadh Dhia ann an sin. 'S e sin ni nach fheigh an Cruithear tre'n t-siorruidheachd ann am creutair cruthaichte. Air de shonsa teichidh tu o'n aon a ni cron duit, ach faic esan ann an so, "mo Dhia, mo Dhia," gun aon smuain mhonmhor ach a' greimeachadh ni's mo 's ni's mo ris agus ris an tagladh: Ach 's ann air bonn cumhnanta a bha so. Bha cumhnant eadar na Pearsachan siorruidh agus chunnaic an Cruithear o shiorruidheachd ni's leor ann an toilltinneas Chriosd gu ceartas a riarachadh airson a shluaigh agus uime sin tha na briathran, "Saor e o dhol sios do'n t-sliochd, fhuair mise eiric."

Ach ciod a tha sin a' foillseachadh? 'S e obair an Athar bhi dion gloir an lagha, nach fuiling sin call air bith. Bha gach anns an Athair do'n t-saoghal o shiorruidheachd agus chuir E cuid air leth anns am biodh a ghloir shiorruidh a' Jealradh 'nan slainte. Ach bha a ghradh ni bu mho d'a ghloir fein air chor 's gu'm feud sinn a radh gu'n robh an Gliocas siorruidh ann am Pearsa an Athar ag amharc le thachd air. Pearsa Chriosd o'n bhroinn agus bha sin 'ga chompanachadh gus an d' thubhairt E. "'S e so mo Mhac gradhach anns am bheil mo mhor thlachd." 'S ann mar sin a bha am Uile fhiosrachd mar fhianuis air mar a bha a h-uile smuain agus iartus a bha ann an Chriosd a' sruthadh o'n chuan oirdheirceis a bha ann fhein a bha 'g ardachadh an lagh agus a' cur onoir air.

Tha olc a' pheacaidh a reir gloir an Ti an aghaidh am bheil peacadh. Dh' fheudadh ni bhi air a dheanamh an aghaidh righ a bhiodh toilltinneach air bas nach biodh toilltinneach air bas nam b'ann an aghaidh creutair cumanta a bha e. Nis, mo chairdean, ma tha gloir creutair cruthaichte ag agairt bais ciod a tha gloir an Dia shiorruidh ag agairt? Thoir an aire ciod a tha thu deanamh. Am bheil gloir na Morachd ag agairt do dhamnadh?

Tha umhlachd a reir inbhe an Ti a thug an umhlachd. Bha oirdheirceas ann am pearsa Chriosd mardhuine nach robh anns a' chruitheachd uile. B' e toiseach cruthachadh Dhe, deabradh gloir an Athar. Ged a tha E anns an t-saoghal 'na dhuine dhoilghiosan

agus eolach air bron gidheadh b' E oirdheirceas Dhe. Na dhaon-nachd bha a ghloir ann a chumachd ris an lagh naomh ach cha robh sin mionaid dealaichte ri a Dhiadhachd, air chor's gu'n robh an Dia sìorruidh ag amharc air mar an Dia sìorruidh air a' chrann-cheusaidh; uime sin tha na briathran, "Saor e o dhol sìos do'n t-slochd, fhuair mi eiric." Cha-n e sin a mhain ach bha an Dia sìorruidh ann an nadur na daonpachd ag analachadh a mach gaol de Dhia agus do'n duine ann an ol cup na feirge.

Tha mi 'ga shaoilsinn a' cordadh ri focal Dhe bhi a' smuain-eachadh air Ceartas a' cur peacaidhean an taghaidh ann an sligibh agus bàs Chrìosd ann an slige eile. Tha e soilleir nach ann air mhodh litireil ach spioradail a tha sinn gu bhi 'tuigsinn nam briathar sin, "a chothromaich na sleibhtean ann an sligibh agus na cnuic ann am meidh-chothroin." Chaidh iomadh gu gloir mu'n do bhasaich Chrìosd. Ach tha mi air uairibh a' smuaineachadh air am peacaidhean mar air an carnadh suas mar eileanan reoite gus an do choinnich iad air Chrìosd. Cha robh aon diubh air a mhaitheadh dhasan. Nam faigheamaid sealladh dhe peacaidhean an taghaidh cha bhiodh iongantais oirnn as na braonaibh mora fola 'bha 'tuiteam sìos air an talamh. Cha mhaitheadh Ceartas tre'n t-sìorruidheachd aon dol air falbh a' chridhe o Dhia. O, ciod na creutairean cruaidh a tha sinn ann! C'àite am bheil am bronneadhon am measg clann Chrìosd? O chreutair bhoichd, am bheil suilean agadsa a na bron airson a h-uile ni eile ach so? 'S e ifrinn d' aite-sa. Cha mhaitheadh Ceartas aon samuio sannt. Nis ciod na beanntan a bha'n sud? Beanntan de pheacaidhean clann a' chumhoaint. Ach ciod iad sin an coimeas ri fulangas an Dia shìorruidh? Uime sin na briathran "Saor iad o dhol sìos do'n t-slochd, fhuair mi eiric"—chum gu'bhiodh E cothromach agus gu'm fireanaicheadh E an ti a chreideas ann an Iosa. An d'fhuair tha d'anam mar chobhartach? Chosd sin moran do Chrìosd. O! ciod e sin an Dia sìorruidh a' cur peacaidhean an taghaidh agus bàs Chrìosd ann an sligibh cothromaceaidh agus ag radh, "Saor e o dhol sìos do'n t-slochd, fhuair mi eiric?" O'na beanntann a bhr ann an sud! 'S e tobar sonas an anama a bhi air a thoirt gu aithne air so. Ann an so a nis feudaidh mi radh, nach iongantach ged a dh' eirich oran nuadh o na h-uile creutair air neamh agus talamh Chuala mi aon de na naomh ag radh, "'nuair a chunnaic mise fuil a' chroinn-cheusaidh, chuala mi oram molaidh do Dhia anns a h-uile ni air an talamh." Ciod a bha'n sud? Bha, a' mhallachd air a togail de'n talamh. O anam, sguir de'n pheacadh no gheibh thu dol fodha anns an t-slochd a ghrunn nach ruig thu fhad's a bhios bith aig Dia.

Ann an so a nis feudaidh mi radh gu bheil Dia fein a toirt dearbhadh air gu'n d' fhuair E eiric. Cha'n eil aon anam air a thoirt beo anns an t-saoghal nach 'eil 'na dhearbhadh air gu'n d'fhuair E eiric. Thusa nach 'eil Chrìosd a stigh air do shon cha bhi agad ach bru is druim fad do laithean; bidh tu air do *reisig-eadh* ann an cruas cridhe, an t-striopach ann an gach na striopach-

ais, agus luchd-sannt ann an gaol an t-saoghail. Cha'n 'eil aon air a thoirt beo anns an t-saoghal nach 'eil 'na dhearbhadh air gu'm d' fhuair Dia eiric. Tha am Fear-saoraidh, fein ag radh, "Ma dh' fhalbhas mise cuiridh mi an Comhfhurtair do 'ur n-ionnsuidh"—agus sin air toilltinneas a bhàis. 'S iongantach aon air a thoirt beo mu a shiorruidheachd. 'S iongantach anam 'na phriosanach. Ach 's e a tha iongantach aon air 'fhuasgladh as a phriosan. And 'fhuair thusa drap de dhochas gu'm biodh tu air do shaoradh o dhol sìos do'n t-slochd? 'S e a tha sin toradh a bhàis-sa, 's e a th' ann toradh an ni a tha tighinn a mach o Dhia air bunachar ceartais. 'S iongantach aon air 'fhuasgladh agus drap de dhochas aige. Nach 'eil e 'na dhearbhadh air gu'n d' fhuair E eiric?

Mar a tha na h-aindiadhaich air an cumail o bhi 'reubadh cuspairean a ghaoil anns an t-saoghal tha sin 'na dhearbhadh air gu'm d' fhuair an Dia siorruidh eiric airson an anam. Agus feudaidh mi radh gu'm bheil cuadhan na Morachd air an cleachdadh ann a bhi 'toirt air meadhonan nan gras bhi freagairt na criche airson an robh iad air an comharrachadh anns a' chumhnant. Cha-n 'eil ni cho faisg air Dia ri slainte an anama, agus O! ciod na drapan comhfhurtachd a tha E 'comhpairteachadh anns na meadhonan? agus aig bord an Tighearna? O! ciod na creutairean iongantach a tha iad ann, air an ceannach le 'fhuil fein! O! bheil thusa ann an sin le cho beag curam mu anam ri bruidean na macharach! 'S iongantach sin anam a' tighinn gu bhi 'deanamh gairdeachais ann an ceartas Jehobhah, dìreach 'ga thilgeadh fein air ceartas Dhe. Nach sona an t-anam sin a' dol a chodal 'san oidhche le curam Dhe m'a thimchioll, dìreach a staid a' beantuinn ri sonas Dhe? Ach gu comh-dhunadh,

I. Tha sinn uile ag aideachadh gu bheil sinn 'nar peacaich agus ag radh, "Co nach 'ejl a' peacachadh?" Ma ta, tha thu 'nad oighre air ifrinn agus thu a' gabhail sin gle entrom; ach bidh tu fathast maille ris an diabhul agus 'ainglibh agus cha-n fhaigh thu entrom an sin e.

II. Nach fheud sinn fhaicinn ann an so, ma fhuair Ceartas anns na sligean so lan riarachadh agus gu'n d' thubhairt E fein, "Saor e o dhol sìos do'n t-slochd, fhuair mi eiric," nach fheud peacach bochd e fein a mheantradh air? Carson a bhasaich Crìosd? Dìreach, chum thusa a shaoradh o ifrinn. Nach fheud thusa ma ta thu fein a mheantradh air ciod air bith cho peacach 's a dh' fheudas tu bhi? Ach O! tha thusa an sin agus tha seann urnuigh sin na ri Crìosd. Bidh cuid ag radh, "air sgàth Chrìosd." Anam bhochd, fhad 's a tha thusa a' diultadh Chrìosd cha-n fhaigh thu mi san bith air a sgath. Is ladarmas dhuit a bhi ag iarraidh air a sgath agus 'ga dhiultadh fein. Ach O! nan gabhadh tu ri Crìosd. Cha-n 'eil aon air neamh no air talamh a ghabhadh do staid os laimh ach e fein agus cha-n 'eil e ag iarraidh ni uait ach gu'n gabhadh tu ris fein ann an saor thairgse na slainte. Esan "a thig a'm' ionnsuidh cha tilg mi air chor sam bith a nach e." Ach

O! tha an t-seann urnuigh agadsa agus cha-n fhag thu i; ach is i 's i 's miosa dhuit na a h-uile peacadh a rinn thu riamh, tha i a' cumail do choguis 'na codal; ach O! nan tigeadh tu an eisimeil Chriosd dheanadh e trocair ort.

III. Cha-n iongantach ged a bhiodh bàs Chriosd priseil aig cus-pairean a ghaoil. Cha-n 'eil ni cho priseil aig Dia ri toradh bais agus beatha Chriosd. Thusa, a fhuair drap de Spiorad an aithreachats agus a tha 'gabhail ri Criosd, 's e sin toradh a bhàis. Iadsan a bhios gùic an sin dealraidh iad mar shoilleireachd nan speur agus mar na reultan fad saoghal nan saoghal. AMEN.

Literary Notice.

"CHAPTER FROM THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF A HIGHLAND PARISH."

By Rev. D. Macnicol. Parlane, Paisley. 1s. 6d.

THE Highland Parish depicted in this small but interesting volume is Strachur, in Argyllshire. The period under review is the first sixty or seventy years of the last century. These years were the days of merciful visitation to that district, and they contrast in a marked manner with the darkness that was before this dawning of the Sun of Righteousness, and the darkness that has followed the going down of that Sun. Mr. Macnicol gives a brief sketch of the principal names and incidents connected with this time of revival. A name familiar to attentive readers of the *Magazine* emerges in this narrative, viz., Donald M'Arthur, the lay preacher of Cowal, whose labours in the gospel one hundred years ago were instrumental in kindling a flame of vital godliness whose afterglow still lingers in the district. It is a melancholy but not an unprecedented fact that the chief hindrance to the Lord's work in Strachur was the parish minister. But if the official exponent of Christianity was also the chief opponent thereof, there were pioneers and helpers found in other spheres of life in a way that shows the sovereignty of the Most High over all hearts. Honourable mention is made of Lady Campbell of Strachur, a devout and honourable woman who studied the highest interests of the parishioners, and busied herself to procure the services of evangelical ministers from among the dissenters. The principal torchbearers, however, were the lay evangelists Donald M'Arthur, Donald Kennedy, and Finlay Munro. When the Disruption took place, an evangelical Free Church minister, the Rev. William Lauder, was ordained to the pastoral office in Strachur, an office which he continued to discharge for forty years. The volume closes with an interesting notice of Mr. Archibald Macarthur, the godly centenarian of Dunoon, who died in 1881, and who was one of the first-fruits of the Strachur revival. In these days of a departing God and glory it is dutiful to write and to read of the years of the right hand of the Most High, and this booklet should be valued by those who have pleasure in the things of the kingdom.

Notes and Comments.

The Final Decision.—The verdict, long waited on, of the House of Lords in the case pending between the two Scottish Churches was pronounced on 1st August. The terms of this verdict are of a sensational character. The appellants of the Free Church, defeated in the two previous hearings of the case before the Court of Session, have had these unfavourable decisions reversed, and are declared victors, while the hitherto triumphant Rainy coalition has suffered a moral and financial defeat which is appalling in its dimensions. They have been declared guilty of breach of trust, and have been ordained to hand over the whole funds, and condemned to pay the whole costs of the law actions.

The King's Present.—One of the gifts received by the Alake of Abeokuta during his visit on which he set the greatest value was a copy of the Holy Scriptures, presented to him by King Edward. The sacred volume, which was exquisitely bound, bore the following inscription:—"Presented by Edward the Seventh, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, to the Alake of Abeokuta, July, 1904; to replace the Bible given by Queen Victoria in 1848 to Sagbua, father of the present Alake, which was lost in a fire twenty-five years after." The African ruler sailed on Friday from Liverpool for his far-off home. May the Holy Spirit bless the Word he bears with him to his court and his subjects.—*English Churchman*, July 14.

Lady Huntingdon's Dance.—This heading lately caught our eye in the evening paper, and it appeared worthy of note. It afforded food for thought much the same as if one had said "John Bunyan's Quadrille Party," or "Samuel Rutherford's Dramatic Entertainment." For the name Lady Huntingdon was once far otherwise associated than with dancing and tomfoolery. The ancestress of this titled dame of the dancing party was the great Lady Huntingdon who was converted to God about the year 1744, and thenceforward devoted her wealth, strength, and influence to the promotion of the cause of Christ. She was a prominent figure in the evangelical revival which overspread England in the middle of the eighteenth century, and she was associated on earth with Romaine, Toplady, Whitefield, and other godly champions of the faith, and is now doubtless associated with them in heaven. Her name is perpetuated in a body of evangelical dissenters which, we suppose, exists to the present time—"Lady Huntingdon's Connexion." Therefore, we say, the words "Lady Huntingdon's Dance" are indicative of a disastrous change. The gold has become dim, and the most fine gold has perished, insomuch that if any of these dancers at Lady Huntingdon's party were visited with light and life from above such an one might be heard saying, "Oh Lord, Why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"