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Who Hath Despised the Day of Small Things.

THE seventy years' captivity in Babylon had ended. Under the edict of Cyrus the Jews had returned to Jerusalem, a free people. On the long journey back to the land of their fathers, whatever high hopes had filled their hearts were destined to bitter disappointment and disillusion. What they saw on arrival was a city whose walls were heaps of rubble; and a temple, the beautiful temple in which their fathers had worshipped, in ruins. For a few years after returning, the work of renovation had progressed slowly, but what had been accomplished appeared only to accentuate the vast amount which still remained undone. Moreover, during these years, enemies numerous, powerful and subtle, had arisen, whose intrigues had been all too successful in delaying the work. The very names, Sanballat and Tobiah, have assumed a sinister significance in religious history, proverbial of all that is malevolent and hypocritical. These men have died, but far too many of their kind are still to be met with. The sword of defence was as necessary to each day's work as the trowel of construction. With all but insuperable difficulties to overcome, faced with constant danger and weary to the point of exhaustion, was it any wonder that the builders grew discouraged and only too ready to listen to the many unbelieving voices whispering both within and without. "What's the use?" "The task is utterly beyond us and quite hopeless," "Let's sit back and take our ease." A day of small things indeed, and despised.

All this Zechariah saw and heard and the holy man was moved profoundly. But this was not all that he saw; being the man of faith he was he saw also the things of God and assessed their value: "Then he (the angel) answered and spake unto me saying, 'This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, said the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.'" Zech. : 4. 6, 7. On these words he takes his stand, and confident of the ultimate success of the great work to which, in the Providence of the Lord, they were dedicated, he reassures the true and loyal remnant whose hearts were downcast, and at the same time

utterly contemns the evil work of both open enemies and false friends, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" The words are a challenge; a challenge of faith and trust and hope and love and devotion; a challenge, moreover, which from the walls of Zion rings in our ears today as surely and as clearly as it did in the days of the Prophet Zechariah.

It is a day of small things with the Church today.

There is no subject upon which men differ so widely in their opinions as the subject of religion. Evidences which to one indicate great prosperity, and to another a cause of censure and grief. To determine the question there must be some common and recognised standard of religious values. That standard we have in the Word of God. By this standard one is forced, however reluctantly, to the conclusion that the present day is indeed a day of small things. The Holy Spirit, who is at once both the source and the substance of true godliness, is greatly restrained. His presence, grace and power are, to a large extent, denied to us as a generation; and is it any wonder! We have grieved the Holy Spirit and He is departed from us. Where the Spirit is, the Word of God will receive its rightful and honoured place as the divinely inspired, infallible Word of Eternal Truth; the discipline within the Church will be according to the government and laws of the Word; the gospel preached will be consistent with the doctrines of Scripture; it will be accompanied with convincing and convicting power in the hearts of the hearers; sinners in considerable numbers will be born again and made new creatures in Christ Jesus, and they will give unmistakable evidence of repentance, faith and new obedience in their lives and conduct; the whole character of godliness in the Church itself will be quickened, purified and deepened. But these signs we do not see, greatly though we desire to see them; instead, other signs of an unmistakably opposite character, and of ominous portent are forced upon our notice. To the small things of the Kingdom of God, the big things of the Kingdom of Darkness stand out in startling and vivid contrast. Witness the godless craze for all kinds of sport, the vast and varied traffic in gambling, the widespread desecration of the Lord's Day, the shameless immorality, and the all but complete neglect of the House of God which characterise the life of the British nation today. The numbers of sincere men and women devoted to the Redeemer's person and cause are by comparison lamentably few, and these few scattered in small groups here and there throughout the country. "Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries on the top of the uttermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof." Is. 17, 6.

There are those who despise the day of small things.

The things of God are deemed contemptible by the many, just because they are so small and unpopular. This attitude of mind and the conduct which accompanies it, we are to expect from the godless world, and we need not be surprised at it. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." These are, of course, the open enemies of all true

godliness, and we may expect them to oppose the restraints which godliness imposes on all the sinful activities of the world, the flesh and the devil. These sensual and materialistic forces are greatly in evidence today and appear, for the time being, to be in the ascendancy. Their contemptuous and scornful enmity constitute a threat not only to the progress of true godliness but even to its very existence in particular places.

There have always been some even in the Church itself who have made things difficult. Being covered by some kind of attachment to the Church, their true character may not easily be discerned. Situations have arisen which gave opportunity to pride, stubbornness and self-seeking to make trouble, and in the day of small things these difficulties are increased and intensified, because at such a time every man occupying a place on the walls of Jerusalem counts, and when one fails the disastrous effects may be very great. The Church in Isaiah's day speaks of these in this way, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." Was ever the cry of a loving and devoted mother over her unnatural children more pathetic! There is doubtless a good day coming, a day of great things for which we cannot pray too earnestly, when "the watchmen in Zion shall lift up the voice: with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." But evidently that day is not yet, for this is a day of small things and there are some who, from motives far other than the glory of God, have been all too successful in making the small things smaller still. They shall doubtless bear their own burden, and it will not be a small one.

In the day of small things there is always a subtle temptation to resort to the use of unscriptural methods for the advancement of the Cause of Christ. Many otherwise admirable people, under the impulse of an unwise zeal grow impatient at the restraints imposed by the 'small things'; they crave for something big and sensational and advocate the use of more 'promising' methods: make the gospel easier, with less emphasis on sin, wrath, hell and regeneration: more emphasis on human will and ability: introduce more modern methods to attract the multitudes, choirs and solo singing by experts, plenty of attractive hymns and music; clear the way for union on a big scale: and much more to the same effect. Such methods cannot be too strongly condemned, and any temptation to adopt them too vigorously resisted.

In such a day it is, moreover, not to be wondered at if some among the truly godly are themselves affected by the low state of things, and they become downcast and discouraged. Satan no doubt has a large hand in this, and as long as these good people give place to the devil in this way they become a burden rather than a help. We have, as we ought to have, every sympathy with those who "sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst of Jerusalem," and we would desire to be of them, but such a spirit is of quite a different order to that which despises the day of small things.

It is quite wrong to despise the day of small things. The great Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, never despised the day of small things, nor does He ever do it. His treatment of the smallest of these small things is the very opposite. "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." In early Spring the green blade pushing its way through the hard, cold ground, is very small, tender and readily crushed, but Christ does not despise it, nor does He wish it to be despised: "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." By means of this figure he fittingly describes His tender and loving sympathy with, and interest in, the earliest beginnings of grace in the soul of a sinner, and shows to us how clearly He recognises the connection between the great and the glorious things of eternity and the earliest beginnings of grace in time, and how inseparable the whole weight of everlasting glory may be from something which in its early beginnings is as weak and fragile as a blade of grass. These small and weak things have in them the promise and potentiality of great and marvellous things. Not only for the individual soul does this hold true, but for the whole Kingdom of God on earth also. There are many precious portions of Scripture which contain this principle—that a very glorious and prosperous future may have a very small and unpretentious beginning, and therefore the beginning, however small, is not to be despised. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth or the top of the mountains: the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men: and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."

The Lord has greatly privileged us as a Church with His Word and that form of Worship and of government which are according to His Word. Thereby we become the honoured custodians—not, indeed, the *sole* custodians, nevertheless as far as our borders go and our influence extends the honoured custodians—of priceless treasure. The vessel containing it is earthen; the treasure itself is priceless. This handful of corn to be cast upon the earth on the top of the mountains; this gospel of the mercy of God conserved and preached in face of difficulties and in circumstances most unpromising; this day of small things is by no means to be despised.

The eternal purpose of God's mercy and love; the Word itself with all its great and precious promises; Christ and the Gospel of a Crucified Redeemer; the presence, power and grace of the Holy Spirit in so far as He abides on earth; the only hope of a lost world; the life and future prosperity

of the Church of God on earth; and the eternal salvation of a countless number of precious souls are all bound up in these small things. Let us seek to see in them what Zechariah saw in them. Let us identify ourselves with them as he identified himself with them. Let us devote ourselves to them as he devoted himself to them. Let us thank God for them and take courage.

A Sermon.

By REV. JOHN COLQUHOUN.

Preached in Glendale on Sabbath, 6th February, 1955.

"If he turn not, he will whet his sword." Psalm vii. 12 (first part).

The title of this psalm is "Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite." The word "Shiggaion" is supposed by many interpreters of Scripture to be the same as "Shigionoth" in Habakkuk iii. 1, and is translated by them, "According to variable songs or tunes." Cush the Benjamite may have been of the kindred of Saul, and, although no such person is mentioned in the historical records of the period, yet he seems to have been very actively engaged in slandering David to Saul. This slandering, and the persecution arising from it, brought the Psalmist so low that he was at his wits end as far as creature help was concerned, and, conscious of his innocence of what was laid to his charge, casts himself on the Lord as his only hope. This shows faith in living exercise, and causes him to say, "My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart." He sees the safety of the righteous, and from that goes on to contemplate the dangerous condition of the wicked, with whom God is angry every day. In this connection he pens the words of our text, from which we may notice three things. I. The one spoken of. II. The way in which he walks. III. The result if he continues in that way.

I. The one spoken of—the wicked. The words "the wicked" are not mentioned in the text, nor in the original in the preceding verse, but the context reveals clearly that the wicked are intended in the text.

(1) We see from the tenth psalm, in which we have been singing, that the besetting sin of the wicked is pride. There it is stated that "the wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor." We see this very often instanced in the dealings of men of the world with such as are weak and helpless. Advantage is often taken of those who are weak, mentally, to defraud them of their worldly substance, and especially, if no one is seen to champion their cause, while, if they complain of injustice, sport is made of them because of their weakness, or, if that does not succeed, threats are used, which, if made to men of ordinary mental powers, would soon be silenced, but which are serious enough in the estimation of those of a low mental capacity. What the Apostle says, in another connection, holds true in this also. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

The persecution of the wicked also goes out against those who are unable to help themselves, because of bodily weakness, or being deprived of their natural guardians, or being in a low social condition where they cannot engage influential persons to protect them. The Psalmist could say of such, "They persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded." Psalm lxxix. 26. They are represented as saying, "Goth hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; for there is none to deliver him." Ps. lxxi. 11. A reason given why the sins of the wicked should be before the Lord continually is, "Because that he remembered not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart." Ps. cix. 16. It is against such that the Lord "ordaineth his arrows," and especially when the Lord's poor and weak ones are persecuted and defrauded. We read the Lord's own exhortation concerning them: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." On the persecutors of such He shall assuredly take vengeance.

(2) The wicked encourages evil. We read that he "boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." Thus, he, first of all, encourages evil in himself by refusing to admit the shame and the sin of his heart's desire and his covetousness. The natural man is under the delusion that if the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, are confined to the heart and do not break out in outward actions, that they are not sins, forgetful of the Lord's solemn reminder that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Many a one who may pass off as an orderly man and a good neighbour is an abomination in the sight of God, because of how he harbours sin in his heart, and denies that he has sinned, thus following the example of the adulteress spoken of by Solomon, "She eateth, and wipeeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness." Prov. xxx. 20.

As he encourages sin in himself, so he encourages it in others. In this there is a fearful reckoning before men who ought to set a good example before others. Magistrates are set up to be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well. When rulers disregard God's law they are incurring, by their evil example, responsibility for the wickedness of those who are under them. In this connection the truth must be fulfilled, "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted." Rulers in the Church ought to be a pattern for the people and, in the way of righteousness, ought to go forth "as the he-goats before the flocks." What can be thought of ministers, elders, and church members, who, as regards the vanities of this world, are everything but what their profession requires? Many are the leaders and promoters of all the vanities of the world set a-foot in their parishes, and imagine, for all that, that they are going to heaven when they die. Verily, for all their profession of religion, they can be classed among the wicked, who by their evil example, are leading others on the broad road to Hell. There will be a fearful account to be rendered when such ministers

and office-bearers shall meet their congregations at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Again, it is the duty of parents to bring up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, but, in our day, that duty is very much neglected. Parents, as a very general rule, pay only the same attention to their children which they do to the brute creation under their care; they attend to their temporal needs, and seem to think that their responsibilities end there. Having fulfilled what they regard as the end of their responsibilities, they think it no sin to lead those children, whom God has given them, to the vanities of the world, and to everything where there is a total disregard for the Law of God. Thus the wicked encourages others to wickedness.

(3) Of the wicked, it is said, that "through the pride of his countenance" he "will not seek after God." Between God and the wicked there is a great gulf fixed so that the wicked has no personal knowledge of God. The natural conscience warns the wicked that God will punish sin, and, therefore, the only knowledge he has of God is, as One who shows His displeasure by punishing the actions of those who transgress His Law. The wicked does not wish to retain that knowledge of God, and, therefore, he does his utmost to quench the strivings of that conscience which reminds him of the existence of the God whom he would ignore, and of the awfulness of that punishment which He meets out to the sinner. Such a knowledge of God, though by no means a saving knowledge, if cultivated, might keep the sinner from committing many sins which he does commit. This reminds us of what the Rev. Archibald Cook, Daviot, used to say to his congregation. "People of Strathnairn, if you will go to Hell, go there with as few sins as possible, for God will not punish you but for the sins which you do not commit."

As the wicked has no personal saving knowledge of God, he does not see his need of God. It is the Holy Spirit alone Who convinces the sinner of his needs, and when He does so, the sinner is brought down to the dust before God. Apart from this saving operation of the Spirit the wicked imagines that God is easily satisfied, and that he can bring all that is necessary, and bow with these before "the most high God." He fails to see that his best offerings are polluted by sin, and therefore an abomination to the Lord. He comes far short of realising that only God can "provide a lamb" to atone for the sins of sinners, and therefore thinks that he himself can furnish all that is required in order to approach God. Sadly blinded, as to his need of God in Christ, is the wicked when, through pride of countenance, he will not seek after God. This blindness has overtaken him in a twofold manner. He has "the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." It is also true of him that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

The wicked is ruled by a proud heart, unbroken by the Spirit of God. This was the case with Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, King of Judah. He scorned to walk in the ways of his godly father, but "made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel." The same was true of Saul of Tarsus, who "made havoc of the church," and who went on "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," until God's time came. In both instances we have an unrivalled example of the power of the Spirit of God in breaking the proud and hard hearts of the wicked, the one in the dungeon in Babylon and the other on the way to Damascus, and in both cases we have an instance of the love and condescension of God in raising up sinners to the view of succeeding ages to the end of the world as trophies of His all-conquering grace.

(4) God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked. He does not think of God as the One who should be honoured. The Westminster Divines, in their answer to the first question in the Shorter Catechism, say that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever." Viewing the conduct of the wicked, one would think that man's chief end was to eat, drink, and be merry, and his whole concern does not rise higher than, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" It is in connection with such a dishonour done to God by the wicked, who professed to be His people, that God says, "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" Mal. i. 6. We read of the people of the old world, that "they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." God did not find fault with them for engaging in these matters, which are lawful in themselves, but the fault was in the manner in which they went about these things, for in them God was not honoured. We have not far to look in order to see how God is dishonoured in these very things in our day.

The wicked has not God in his thoughts as far as the day of reckoning is concerned. It is appointed unto all men once to die, but after death the judgment, is a doctrine that is plainly taught in Scripture, and there the Judgment Day and its solemn transactions are vividly described, yet men and women will put this day far from them, and seek to banish all thoughts of it from their minds. Many delude themselves with the idea that when man dies he will go out of existence, while others deny God's power to gather man's body after it has been resolved into its elements. In spite of all the cavils which men frame, and all the efforts of the wicked to blot out all thoughts of God, as a God who will reckon with them, God has appointed a day of account "for the manifestation of the glory of His mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect, and of His justice in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient."

II. I now come to consider the way in which the person spoken of walks. That is implied in the words, "If he turn not." He is represented as pursuing a journey, and a journey brings up before the mind a destination. All of us here this evening are pursuing a journey, and making for a destination. It is a solemn thought that, while it is true that some are in the way of life and have Heaven as their destination, others are in the way of death and have Hell as their destination if they continue in that way. It is to the latter class that the words of our text refer. The Word of God leaves us in no doubt as to their destination. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." It is, therefore, the way that leads to this destination which it is our purpose to consider at this time.

(1) That way may be traced in the heart even when there is nothing outwardly to show that a man or a woman is walking in the way of the wicked. It is a way spoken of in the Scriptures as a "broad way," and is thus described because the sinner finds no obstacles in it, with everything in it that is so pleasing to the dictates of fallen nature, and so much in accordance with the views, the desires, and the motives of a heart that is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. The young man may be outwardly orderly, so much so, that in many places he may pass for one who fears the Lord, and yet, in his innermost soul, he may be walking in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes, forgetful of the solemn fact that, for all these things, God will bring him into judgment. Such, as much as the outwardly vicious, have need to take heed to the words of Scripture, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." Such may, for a time, refrain from active participation in the excesses to which others go, but, very often, this state of matters is only the forerunner of what may prove a very hasty descent to the depth of infamy and shame.

The next step in this way is when the sinner begins to plan wicked devices, and puts them into practice. This step may be with a good deal of caution at first. "He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." At first, to a certain extent, there is secrecy but, sooner or later, he is emboldened to bring to the notice of a few associates the mischief which was conceived so secretly in his heart. That device which, originally, he had no thought of putting into practice, is brought into the open, perhaps in order to better that of a companion, whose plan is considered somewhat more clumsy. The success of it encourages him to be more venturesome, until at last he becomes an habitual criminal.

(2) This leads to open transgression of God's Law, where men dare to defy God to His face and think that they can escape with impunity. In our degenerate age, though the whole Law of God is flagrantly transgressed, yet there are certain commandments, the transgression of which is more prominent than the transgression of others, and the frequency with which these commandments are transgressed, are outstanding witnesses to the enormity of the way of the wicked.

A child of God who has to associate with his fellow-creatures at his lawful calling, will testify to the profane language of this generation. Many have come to the stage that they cannot speak fluently unless they have three or four oaths and curses mixed up in every sentence. The name of God is so often on their lips that they utter it without noticing that they do so, showing how little regard they have for that thrice-holy name, at the mention of which the seraphim veil their faces. Such would do well to consider the solemn words of the Holy Spirit, "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart." Mal. ii. 2. They wantonly curse themselves, curse their fellow-creatures, and even curse the brute creation over which they have control, and it is very much to be feared, that on account of this sin alone, there will be, out of this generation, plenty of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth in Hell, "for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."

There is also, in the way of the wicked, the sin of Sabbath desecration. Our native land used to be famous, among other countries, for its observance of the Day of Rest, but now, from the highest in the land to the meanest of the Queen's subjects, in all walks of life, a determined effort seems to be put forth to abolish the Sabbath out of our midst. Much unnecessary Sabbath labour is promoted in our public works, while the most of families, in their private capacity, treat that day as a holiday. The promises which God gave to the Children of Israel, conditional on their keeping holy the Sabbath, hold good for all nations to the end of time. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." As He gives gracious promises to those who observe His Day holy, so He threatens with dire punishment those who transgress that day. "But if thou wilt not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." In this He brings before them a sin upon which He will assuredly be avenged.

Another sin by which the holy law of God is flagrantly transgressed in our day is the sin of uncleanness, in its various and often unmentionable forms. These outward acts of uncleanness manifest that the heart of man is as a cage of every unclean bird, as the Saviour tells us, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." These are the members of the body of sin which we ought to crucify. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence,

and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." The Holy Ghost gives very vivid description of what is true of such as yield to temptations to commit such sins when He says, "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." Prov. vii. 22, 23. Solemn indeed, and faithful, is the counsel which He gives to those who are thus tempted. "Hearken unto me now therefore. O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths, for she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death." Prov. vii. 24-27.

There are many things which provoke poor young men and women to the sin of uncleanness, and which ought to be avoided like the very plague. Among such are the vanities of the world. Those who make a study of the downgrade in morals are well-nigh unanimous in their verdict that picture-houses, theatres, cinemas, and the dancehall, are prolific of moral evil. One often sees on posters advertising films, pictures and plays, titles which have a decidedly immoral bearing, and invariably one sees, judging by the queues, that these pictures and plays are well patronised, giving clear proof of the salacious bent of the minds of many, and reminding one of what the Lord says of Aholibah: "She doted upon the Assyrians her neighbours, captains and rulers clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men. . . . And as soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted upon them." Ez. xxiii. 12-16.

Another prime factor in provoking to uncleanness is the sin of drunkenness. When licensed premises are opened in a district where there was no license for the sale of strong drink previously, it is the greatest curse that could come into that district. It is regarded as a novelty and becomes well-patronised, with the result that young men, and, I am sorry to have to add, young women, who might otherwise have lived sober lives, become addicted to drunkenness. Such go from the public-house to the dancing-hall, and, between the liquor consumed on the premises and what is carried out, when men and women meet each other on the dancing-floor, passions are inflamed, so that they become an easy prey to the Devil's temptations. The fault, in this case, is not wholly that of the publican. He never comes out to the street, or the public road, to invite men and women to come in and get drunk. He puts up his sign, by the authority of the law of the land, and is out to make his money in the easiest possible manner. The easiest way is at the expense of fools for the old proverb holds true that "a fool and his money are soon parted." Such are fools, not only from the point of view of losing their money, but also from the point of view of losing their health, ruining their homes, and injuring their posterity, and the fruit of their sin shall follow them to the grave. "His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust." Job

xx. 11. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babblings? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." Because of this the counsel is given, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Prov. xxiii. 29-32.

I shall give one more prominent mark on the wicked, and that is, his addiction to the sin of lying. This is an alarming symptom among the rising generation, and it proves how destitute they are of the fear of God. Lacking the moral courage to confess a fault, many will tell scores of lies if thereby they can cover that fault from a fellow-creature, so that Isaiah's confession of the sins of the Jews is applicable to our generation: "In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood." Isaiah lix. 13. When a regard for the truth, between man and man goes, everything goes, and the character of such a people may be summed up in the words of Paul, "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Rom. i. 29-31.

(4) In the light of what has already been said of the way of the wicked with respect to God's Law, it goes without saying that Christ is despised and rejected by him. Though the wicked has sinned so heinously in transgressing God's Law, yet sinners, whose sins are crimson and scarlet-dyed, are invited to come to a conference with God, and encouragement held out to them, yet the wicked reject such gracious invitations. Here we have sinners trampling the invitation under foot, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace. How will it fare at death with sinners who have the Bible and ability to read it, who had the preaching of the Gospel and were exhorted to consider their ways, who had much labour bestowed on them, and who preferred to go through life in uncleanness, as drunkards and liars, forgetting the claims of God upon them and their accountableness to Him, thinking little of the preciousness of time, and recklessly thinking not of what a solemn matter it is for a Christless sinner to go to eternity?

III. The third part that falls to be considered is the result if the wicked continues in his way. "If he turn not, he will whet his sword."

(1) We are here brought face to face with how God will deal with the wicked. It is with the sword of His Justice in order to punish. "If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me." Deut. xxxii. 41. "Say, a sword, a sword is sharpened, and also furbished: it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished that it may glitter; should we then make mirth?" Ezek. xxi. 9-10. This glittering sword is seen in

its most terrible aspect in the humiliation, sufferings, and death of the Son of God as the substitute of His people. He suffered all that Justice required and satisfied the claims of that Justice to the uttermost, so that the awakened sword became sheathed in the Person of the Son of God until it reached its Divinity, where it met with such infinite satisfaction that it has nothing more that it will require of the elect of God throughout eternity. But we are meantime dealing with the wicked.

(2) The Lord sometimes makes the wicked His sword to execute His just vengeance upon those who act wickedly. The history of the Jews furnishes clear examples of this. They "were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works," and God used these heathen as His sword to chastise them. In the one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm we have their painful groanings in the land of captivity, when He used the wicked Chaldeans as His sword to punish them for their apostacy. There is a repetition of God's use of the wicked as His sword when He used the equally wicked Romans to bring about a dispersion of the Jews which has continued unto this day. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps. lxxvi. 10.

(3) Often the Lord makes use of the forces of nature, and the most insignificant creatures, as His sword, to bring down His proud enemies. It was thus that He dealt with Pharaoh in Egypt. Pharaoh said, in the pride and wickedness of his heart, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go. The LORD unsheathed His sword in the form of frogs, lice, flies, disease on cattle, hail, locusts, and thick darkness, so that proud Pharaoh and the land of Egypt were greatly distressed, and even made the stubbornness and hardness of Pharaoh's heart His sword, by which the King of Egypt and his host were drowned in the Red Sea, and thus fulfilled what He said, "And I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." In this way He often makes the sins of sinners His sword to destroy them, and that, even after many manifestations of His long suffering. Thus He says to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

(4) Wicked companions are often made God's sword to punish a sinner. It is with great grief that one often sees a young man, who has many good qualities, being led away by foolish and wicked companions. He may be of a respectable family, had a good upbringing, and even had the example of true godliness, but, through weakness of character, and the fear of being laughed at, he falls into bad company, and at last becomes a slave to the crave for strong drink. He soon comes to the stage when counsel, given in tenderness and faithfulness, is wasted on him, and when those who would wish him well have to say with Jeremiah, "But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride." Because he refused to obey the counsel tendered and follow the example given, the Lord gave him over to be a prey "to the wicked, which is thy sword." Much as a young

man may boast in his strength, when he refuses to obey the advice of the Holy Ghost, who says, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not," he shall soon find that "the Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands," and his wickedness becomes the whet-stone upon which the Lord whets His sword.

Not only are wicked companions God's sword in this world to destroy those who would not hearken to His counsels in a day of mercy, but they are also His sword to execute His just vengeance in eternity. The parable of the tares sown by the enemy teaches that the wicked shall be bound in bundles and cast into a furnace of fire, "where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Being "bound in bundles" teaches that those who were together in sin in this world will be together in eternity, and so wicked companions will have throughout eternity incessant reminders of how they lived in this world, and this will cause a continual gnawing in their consciences world without end. We fully believe that this was the reason why the rich man in the parable was so solicitous that Lazarus would be sent to his five brethren to warn them lest they would come into the place of torment. The presence of those who were his companions in sin in the world would, when acting the part of God's sword, add to his torment in a lost eternity.

(5) That these torments were not small nor to be lightly esteemed is manifest from the consideration that they are the torments of Hell, and from the consideration of the fact that it was the Hell of His people which the Lord Jesus drank to its bitterest dregs in that suffering which He endured in this world, and which culminated on Calvary. Dr. Duncan, after proposing the question, "What was in the cup which the Father gave to the Son to drink?" answered it himself by saying, "It was damnation; the damnation of His people. He took it willingly and drank it lovingly." Without enlarging on this point let us view Him drinking this Hell, during the forty days and forty nights in the wilderness of temptations which were so unutterably repugnant to His holy soul; let us again view the drinking of this cup in the wrestling of soul and sweat of Gethsemane, and in the mysterious and awesome desertion of Calvary. Let us bear in mind that this was gone through by One who could bear it, for He was God manifest in the flesh, and at the same time let us remember that the Holy Sufferer said, "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry." Sinner, consider that these sufferings were endured for those who will be saved with an everlasting salvation, and that if you despise Him who suffered, as the Substitute of His people, the sword of Divine Justice, which was awakened against Him, and found satisfaction in Him alone, shall be turned upon you, and shall continue to seek satisfaction throughout eternity.

I cannot dismiss you, my dear fellow-sinners, without reminding you that this Saviour, who drank the Hell of His people, is still on a throne of mercy. In infinite condescension He is still stretching forth His hands "unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." This does not at all mean that you can come to Christ by any efforts of your own, for that is an absolute

impossibility. Your inability, however, does not excuse you, neither does it do away with your responsibility, and you are responsible to the Lord for what He has given you. It is for you, however unable you are to do it, to plead with the Lord for that power that would convince you of sin and enable you to come to Him as a sinner. Our duty is to warn you of your danger, to point out to you God's provision in Christ Jesus, to remind you of what He has given you in the way of privileges and opportunities, and of how accountable you are to God for them, and to warn you, as Christ's ambassadors, to flee from the wrath to come. This ends our duty towards our fellow-sinners, and our duty towards God is to pray for a rich and abiding blessing upon anything said that was consistent with the mind of His Spirit.

George Medway, the Old Ploughman.

A Marvellous Instance of Sovereign Grace.

From Free Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. xxi. (Abridged).

GEORGE MEDWAY was a native of Shropshire, born in 1766. He laboured on a farm until he was over 70 years of age. Our interest in him begins then, although it appears that the Lord had an interest in him from a past eternity. As an old man it was his boast that he had not missed spending an evening in the public house, seven evenings a week, for 50 years. Growing too feeble for work, he went to live with a son who owned an inn. Here his mental faculties, never of a very high order, became further impaired until they assumed a condition of permanent stupidity. Not being so well known where he now dwelt, he spent much of his time just wandering about. One day he fell in with John Dean, a godly inmate of a nearby cottage. In the course of conversation Dean took early advantage of an opportunity to introduce the subject of religion. He found the old man not only ignorant of the Bible, but incapable of understanding the simplest statement of truth. The only remark he made after a detailed account of the Crucifixion was, "Methinks it was too bad to sarve Him so, they wouldn't do so in Shropshire."

After inviting the old man to call again at his cottage, Dean said to his pious wife, "We must pray to the Lord for the poor old man and who can tell but faith and prayer may prevail." Next evening he came and a considerable time was spent in religious conversation. Many efforts were made to make him feel that he was a sinner in need of a saviour; but no impression seemed to result. At parting, Dean said to him, "I wish you would come next Sabbath morning and go with me." This he agreed to, thinking that this meant a walk in the country. On Sabbath morning he duly put in an appearance and they started off, Dean telling him that his intention was to go to chapel and asking if he had any objection. "Why, as for that, I shan't tell what to do, for I never goed to one but when I was married, nearly 50 years agoe last Easter Sunday." "You will have nothing to do

but sit still and hold your tongue, and just hearken in what the minister says." "Part of that, methinks, is easy enough, as I shall soon be off to sleep, if I be to sit still and do nothing."

It was communion Sabbath at the Congregational Chapel, and the minister, who afterwards wrote the narrative himself, preached on the design of Christ's death and the obligation of its commemoration in the Lord's Supper. Being Congregationalists the custom on communion occasions was for those of the congregation who were not communicants to leave their seats after the sermon and take their departure, leaving the members to partake of the bread and wine. Throughout the service the old ploughman remained motionless in his seat, but he was by no means asleep; rather did he give every evidence of rapt attention. After the sermon and when the non-members were withdrawing, Medway refused to move, saying to Dean, "I am in a new world; and I shan't go till you go: and I shall do as you do." What to do John Dean knew not, but finally he resolved to leave him to act for himself. Along with the other members he partook of the bread and the wine, and after the conclusion of the service walked away for some distance in silence. At length he broke silence by repeating his first startling utterance, "I am in a new world; yes, I be in a new world." This he repeated again and again in such a way as to indicate that he himself was filled with solemn awe and wonder.

He returned to the evening service, when the text was, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Luke 15, 2. He appeared to be deeply impressed with this discourse, even to tears. The following morning he was introduced to the minister who had been preaching the previous day and the following conversation ensued: "I am now, sir, in a new world. I'll tell you what I mean. I know I am in the old world: but what you said yesterday morning has led my heart into a new world; and my heart, not my eyes, sees wonderful things." "What have you seen in this new world?" "I have seen myself a sinner against God, and didn't know it till yesterday morning." "What sins have you committed?" "A power of sins, I've been a great sinner. Why, sir, I didn't love God, nor fear him. I didn't know anything about Him till yesterday morning." "What else have you seen in the new world?" "I have seen Jesus Christ. Oh, how kind to come down from heaven and die for us: this is new to me, it is wonderful." "What made you stay and take the bread and wine yesterday morning?" "Why, sir, you said all should do it who loved Jesus Christ. I felt I loved Him. Yes, my heart told me so. It has been telling me so ever since. It tells me so now. I can't speak His name, but I feel I love Him. I can't think about anything else very well. If I think of anything else, my heart gets dull and cold; but when I think about Jesus Christ it gets young again." "But why do you love Jesus Christ?" "Because He come'd down from heaven and died on the cross. I don't know how to make out very well what I mean. But I think Jesus Christ will save me. This makes me love Him. I feel a great change here"—putting his hand over his heart. "I can't tell it, but it's something real." "Are you quite sure that you feel a real change of

heart?" "Why, if there be no change in my heart, where do my fresh thoughts and feelings come from? I never had none such till yesterday morning. I dont know much now; but I wouldn't be again such a poor ignorant sinner I was before yesterday morning for all the lands and houses in our village, or all the parish." "I hope your change is real, and that it will prove a lasting change." "I hope so: I should cry a power of tears if I thought I should be changed back again. The Lord save me from that!" "Then you must thank Him for making this great change in you, and pray to Him to make the change a lasting one." "I do, I'm sure I do. I cried hundreds of tears last night when I was in bed, and they be such tears as I never cried before. Tears of heart sorrow and heart gladness." "You hope to be saved?" "I do, and I'm main thankful for it." "But how do you expect to be saved?" "Why, just how you told yesterday morning. By Christ, and by nothing else. I should not like another Saviour because He was so good as to die for us. How wonderful! I never heard anything like it before. I wish I had heard that blessed sermon fifty years ago." Though simple and guileless in his description of the change through which he had passed, he satisfied the minister, and ultimately the whole church, that he was a new creature in Christ Jesus, and he was admitted to the membership of the Church. Thereafter he was most regular, summer and winter, and punctual in his attendance in the public worship of God, and showed sincere attachment to it.

Many months passed, and during this time the old man seemed to grow younger, his eye brighter and his intellect clearer, and he was now capable of sustaining a lengthy conversation with an ease and facility of expression which astonished those who knew him. In the course of further conversation the minister said, "I suppose you would not like to go back to your native village and live as you used to do?" "Why, sir, methinks no happy spirit would like to come out of heaven to live on earth again." "You often think of how you used to live." "I think of it with sadness and horror. But I know'd no better then. What a mercy that I was not taken for death when my poor wife died!" "What thoughts had you of God?" "I didn't think much about Him; but when I did, I thought He was a great mighty Being who never cared nothing at all about what we said or did." "Had you any idea of your soul or immortality?" "Why, sir, I was always puzzled about it. Sometimes I thought that very wicked people went to hell when they died, especially the rich." "Had you never any fears about going to hell?" "No, never. My common thoughts were that when I died there would be an end of me; just the same as with the sheep or the horse." "You believe there is a change in you now, and one for the better?" "Oh, yes, the Lord be praised! I know'd there was a change in me when I was in your vestry the night after I heard that blessed sermon; but I know it better now. I now find it lasts with me; but then I feared it wouldn't. If I had known fifty years ago what I know now, it would have been a good thing for me. I should have been all that long time a power happier in my soul. I wish my poor wife had lived to see this day." "To whom do you ascribe the great change that has been produced in you?" "Yes, it is a great

change, like changing a flint stone into bread, or a bog into a garden. The Bible calls it being called out of darkness into marvellous light. This is a faithful account of it. Darkness, I take, means ignorance, and light, I take, means knowledge. I have come from one state to another, and nobody can make me think otherwise. Why, if a blind man sees the sun, he must know that his eyes be opened." "Very true, but who produced the change which you say you have felt?" "At first I thought it was you, because I felt it when you were preaching that blessed sermon. But now I know better. Now I know that it is the Lord that gives light to the understanding and grace in the heart. And praised be His name, I can now say what Paul said, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'" "You have felt a great change, but do you feel perfect; or do you feel that your heart is still wicked?" "Oh, sir, there is a power of sin in my heart. The fallow is ploughed up, but it is not cleared yet. And this puzzles me. I pray the Lord to make me holy, but He hasn't done it yet. But I had great comfort when Master Dean read to me the seventh chapter of Romans. I thought when he was reading that the writer of that chapter felt that he had a wicked heart, as I often feel that I have one." "I suppose you believe that He who has begun the good work in you will carry it on, and bring it to perfection?" "Yes, if you mind, sir, you proved that when you preached a sermon t'other Sabbath from the gladsome words of Paul. I got them on my heart the next day. 'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'" "Do you remember any illustrations which I brought forward to show the reasonableness of our expecting that the Author of the good work of grace will complete it?" "Yes, sir, you said that a wise builder, when he has put in the foundation, and carried up the house a storey or two, will not leave off and let it tumble to ruins when he wants to use it. No, he'll go on till he has finished it. And so I hope the Lord will finish the good work He has begun in my soul. It is wonderful. I sometimes think about it till I get puzzled that I have to go for a walk to get my thoughts back. And then my heart gets warm with gratitude to Him for His great kindness." "I suppose you sometimes long to have the good work brought to perfection?" "Now, sir, on this point I'm a bit disappointed. I thought at first, when I felt the change, that I should soon get free from sin. But now I find, from reading the Bible, and from Master Dean's talking to me, that I shan't get free from sin till I get to heaven. The sermon you preached last Sabbath morning brought a power of comfort to my soul; I got the text on my heart and don't think it will ever get off, 'We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' How wonderful! To see Jesus Christ in His glory so soon as we be dead, and to be like Him! I should like that hour to come."

By this time he had actually learned to read considerable portions of the Bible and had made a practice of committing the texts he heard to memory. He also devoted a part of his time to tract distribution and then he began regular visiting of the sick and praying with and for them.

After pursuing the noiseless tenor of his way for about the space of five years, growing in knowledge and grace, developing his deportment in the great and good and lovely principles of the Christian faith, and highly esteemed by those of his brethren who knew him, his natural strength began to decline and other symptoms indicated the approach of his latter end. During his confinement his minister visited him and on one occasion the following conversation ensued: "Are you suffering much?" "Yes, sir, my sufferings are great, but not so great as the sufferings which my dear Saviour suffered for me. When He was suffering for me He was forsaken, but the Lord does not forsake me. He was on a cross, but I be on a good bed. He was mocked when dying by the wicked but all speak kindly to me." "You are not afraid to die?" "Why should I be? I got upon my heart yesterday this blessed verse, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' Oh, I long to see my dear Saviour and be like Him, and with Him for ever!" "Then you have no doubt of going to heaven?" "Why should I, when Jesus Christ says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'" "Then you consider heaven as your future home?" "Yes, sir, I do, and I believe my dear Saviour is waiting to receive me. This comforts my heart."

He was confined to his room for the winter but in the following spring he rallied and was able to attend chapel for a time. His last attendance was on a Communion Sabbath when, during the service, his countenance indicated deep emotion, a mingling of sorrow and joy. One morning during the following week he was found dead by his relatives. The only comment we think it fitting to make upon the above wonderful instance of saving power and grace of the Holy Spirit is in the words of our Saviour Himself: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And let us not forget the place which the goodly John Dean and his pious wife, and their prayers occupy in the ingathering of this lost and bewildered sheep, George Medway.

Regeneration—An Illustration.

(Continued from Vol. LX., page 359.)

"I strove to draw the covering from the pit, that I might behold the lake of fire, and hear the wailings of the damned. But the more I sought those awful feelings of conviction, the further they seemed to fly from me. My heart seemed to grow harder every day. I was sensible of nothing but insensibility. I became discouraged, and the more because I was obliged to remove from the scene of the revival to a place where there was no concern about religion in the people generally, and where I expected the preaching to be cold and lifeless. I spent a day before my departure in secret, and in solemn reflection

on my deplorable and hopeless case. I ran over all the kind dispensations of God's providence towards me, and reflected on the many precious means of grace which I had recently enjoyed without effect. The conclusion which seemed now to be forced on my mind was that God had given me up to a hard heart and that I never should be so happy as to obtain religion. This conclusion had, to my mind, all the force of a certainty, and I began to think about the justice of God in my damnation; and no truth ever appeared with more lucid evidence to my mind. I fully justified God in sending me to hell. I saw that it was not only right, but I did not see how a just God could do otherwise. And I seemed to acquiesce in it, as a righteous and necessary thing. At this moment my mind became more calm than it had been for a long time.

"All striving and effort on my part ceased, and, being in the woods, I recollected that it was time for me to return to the house, where I expected to meet some friends. Here I found a minister waiting for me, whom I had seen but never spoken to. He took me aside and began to represent the many privileges which I had enjoyed, and expressed a hope that I had received some good impressions. I told him that it was true that I had been highly favoured, but that I had now come to a fixed conclusion that I should certainly be for ever lost; for under all these means I had not received the slightest conviction without which my conversion was impossible. He replied by saying, 'That no certain degree of conviction was necessary—that the only use of conviction was to make us feel our need of Christ as a Saviour; and appealed to me whether I did not feel that I stood in need of a Saviour.' He then went on to say, 'Christ is an advocate at the right hand of God, and stands ready to receive any case which is committed to His hands, and however desperate your case may now appear to be, only commit it to Him and He will bring you off safely, for He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. Here a new view broke on my mind. I saw that Christ was able to save even me, and I felt willing to give my cause into His hands.

"This discovery of the bare possibility of salvation was one of the greatest deliverances I ever experienced. I was affected exceedingly with the view, which I had of this truth, so as to be unable to speak. Hope now sprung up in my desolate soul—not that I was pardoned or accepted, such a thought did not occur—but that it was yet possible that I might be, hereafter, and I was resolved never to give over seeking until I obtained the blessing. All that evening I was sweetly composed and precious promises and declarations of the Word of God came dropping successively into my mind, as if they had been whispered to me. I never could have believed, unless I had experienced it, that the mere possibility of salvation would produce such comfort.

“About this time, next morning probably, when I retired to the woods, where my secret devotions were usually performed, I experienced such a melting of heart from a sense of God’s goodness to me as I never felt before or since. It seemed as if my eyes—so hard to weep commonly—were now a fountain of tears. The very earth was watered with their abundance. Indeed, my heart itself seemed to be dissolved just as a piece of ice is dissolved by the heat of the sun. Of the particular exercises of this melting season, my memory does not retain a distinct recollection. For some months I attended to religious duties with various fluctuations of feeling. Sometimes I entertained a pleasing hope that I was indeed a Christian—a renewed person—but at other times I was not only distressed with doubts but came to the conclusion that I was still in my sins. The only thing which I deem it important to mention during this period was a deeper discovery of the wickedness of my own heart. This conviction of deep-rooted, inherent depravity, distressed me much, but I obtained considerable relief from reading Owen on *Indwelling Sin*. This book exhibited the state of my heart better than I could have done myself.

“Still, however, I was much dissatisfied with myself because after so long a time I had made so little progress. On one occasion, at the close of the exercises of the Sabbath, I was so deeply sensible of the fact that my soul was still in eminent danger of perdition that I solemnly resolved to begin a new and more vigorous course of engagedness to secure my salvation.. I had spent much time in reading accounts of Christian experience, and those which lay down the marks and evidences of true religion, such as Owen on *Spiritual Mindedness*, Edwards on *The Affections*, Guthrie’s *Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*, Newton’s *Letters*, Pike and Hayward’s *Cases of Conscience*, etc. I also conversed much with old and experienced Christians, as well as with those of my own age, but all these having as it then seemed to me very little facilitated my progress, and the evils of my heart seeming rather to increase, I hastily resolved to lay aside all books except the Bible and to devote my whole time to prayer and reading until I experienced a favourable change. In pursuance of this purpose, I withdrew into a deeply retired spot, where I knew I should be free from all intrusion from mortals and began my course of exertion with fasting and strong resolution never to relinquish my efforts until I found relief. For five or six hours I was engaged alternately in reading the Scriptures and attempting to pray, but the longer I continued these exercises the harder did my heart become and the more wretched my feelings, until at length I was exhausted and discouraged and began to despair of help, and was about returning from my chosen retirement, in gloomy despondence, when it occurred to me with peculiar

force that if I found I could do nothing to help myself, yet I might call upon God for mercy.

"Accordingly I fell down before Him and said little more than is contained in the publican's prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' But this I uttered with a deep and feeling conviction of my utter helplessness. The words were scarcely out of my mouth, when God was pleased to give me such a manifestation of His love in the plan of redemption through Christ as filled me with wonder, love and joy. Christ did indeed appear to me as altogether lovely, and I was enabled to view Him as my Saviour and to see that His sufferings were endured for me. At no time before had I the full assurance of being in the favour of God, but now every doubt of this was dissipated. I could say, for the first time with unwavering confidence, 'My Beloved is mine and I am His.' And this assurance of God's favour arose not from any suggestion or impulse directly made to my mind but from the clear view that Christ as a Saviour was freely offered, and from a conscious assurance that I did truly accept the offer.. I now opened my Bible and began to read at the 18th chapter of John and onward. Every word and sentiment appeared glorious. I seemed to be reading a book which was perfectly new, and, truly, the sacred pages seemed to be illuminated with celestial light. And I rejoiced to think that the sacred Scriptures would always be read in the same manner. How little did I know of the spiritual warfare. After my feelings had a little subsided, but while the glorious truths of the Gospel were still in full view, I made a formal and solemn dedication of myself to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and having writing materials with me, I wrote down the substance of this covenant and subscribed it with my hand.

"I now believed, assuredly, that I was reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, but being naturally inclined to be suspicious of myself, I resolved to make the Holy Scriptures the test of the genuineness of my exercises, and to leave the final determination to the fruits produced, as our Lord says: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

"I remembered that it was written that faith works love and purifies the heart. I hoped therefore that I should now be delivered from those evils of the heart with which I had been lately so much affected. But, alas, in a few days I found that the 'old man' was not dead but had power to struggle in a fearful manner. I must acknowledge, therefore, that after a few weeks I was much in the same spiritual condition in which I was before this remarkable manifestation."

Here the narration breaks off abruptly. The following helpful comments upon it are made by Professor Alexander:—

It will not escape the notice of the attentive reader that in this account all circumstances are avoided which could lead to the discovery of the writer. The true reason of this, I have reason to believe, is that the writer is still alive and has no desire to be made conspicuous. It would be attended with no advantage to explain by what means this imperfect narrative came into my possession. The use which I make of it is not contrary to the wishes of the writer, while the injunction is peremptory, that no hint shall be given to the public by which it may be conjectured who it is.

It may be remarked, in the first place, on this narrative that sometimes persons are brought along very gradually in their acquisition of the knowledge of the truth.. One discovery is made at one time, and between these steps there may be a long interval. It may again be remarked that commonly before a person comes to the knowledge of the truth the need of information is sensibly felt, and the appropriate means of communicating it are provided. A book, a sermon, a casual conversation, may be intimately connected with our salvation. Those who commence a religious life, though they may appear sincere, should always be urged to go forward: there is much before them which they have not yet experienced. If they are not yet in the right way they may arrive at it. In looking over the various exercises here detailed I am utterly at a loss to say when the work of grace commenced. Perhaps scarcely any two persons, taken at random, would agree on this point, for while some would scarcely admit that there was any exercising of saving faith until the last manifestation here described, others would be for carrying it back to the very beginning of the exercised soul's serious attention to religion. However this matter may be decided, one thing, I think, is evident, that it is a great practical error to suppose that nothing connected essentially with the sinner's conversion is experienced or done until the moment of his conversion.

He may have to unlearn many erroneous opinions taken up through prejudice or inclination. He must learn the truth of the Christian religion if unhappily he has adopted sceptical notions. He must learn to know what the Bible teaches, as to man's duty, and the true method of salvation. God's methods of bringing His chosen into the paths of truth and holiness are often wonderful. They are, at every step, led in a way which they knew not. How remarkably true is this, as it relates to conviction of sin! When the sinner is most convinced, he thinks he has no conviction at all. And in regard to conversion, what a different thing does it turn out to be in experience from what it was conceived to be beforehand! Whilst the anxious soul was expecting something miraculous, or entirely out of the way, he experiences

a new train of thought, new and pleasing views of truth, with corresponding emotions, by which the mind is so occupied that it has no time or inclination to scrutinize the nature or cause of these pleasing exercises. He believes and hopes without asking himself the question, are these the views and feelings of a renewed soul? Afterwards, he can look back and see that faith was exercised in these very acts, and that the peace which he then enjoyed was the peace of reconciliation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, as described in the last part of this narrative, the distressed soul is made sensible at once of its happy state, and is made to rejoice in the smiles of the divine favour. Then he can no more doubt that God is reconciled and has lifted upon him the light of His countenance, than that the sun is shining at midday. All Christians, however, are not favoured with these bright discoveries, but always walk in a degree of darkness or at best in a mere crepuscular light; yet they fear the Lord and obey the voice of His servants. I have known instances of some persons changing their opinion of the time of their own conversion several times and fixing it at different periods of their experience, as their sentiments became more correct and mature; and those converts who shine forth more brightly at first are not always they who appear best after the lapse of years.

Malady and Remedy.

(EDWARD BLACKSTOCK, 1833.)

There are especially two things which I know and feel this day—viz., my spiritual malady and the preciousness of the blood of Christ.

In self I am guilty, dark, deserted, polluted, dull, cold, insipid, unbelieving, treacherous, wandering, rebellious, light, vain, inconstant, frothy, unclean, corrupt, envious, murmuring, carnal, and full of enmity. But blessed be my God! I feel that I greatly need the fountain.

I have a strong desire that the Holy Spirit would condescend to baptize me or, in other words, take and put me, polluted as I am, into the sea of the rich blood of Jesus, that I may come out spotless as snow and as white; and that I may have the answer of a good conscience towards God and enjoy, under the precious power and witnessings of the Holy Comforter, a sense of divine forgiveness, the peace of God, justification, acceptance, sweet communion with God,

the light of His countenance, the delights of my Redeemer's presence, grace superabounding, and divine love shed abroad in my heart, that I might serve in newness of spirit, take my old harp down from the willows, sweep its strings, or weep a silent flood to the praise of that *astonishing* mercy which has often dissolved my *hard* heart by its sweet sunshine.—*Ed. Blackstock.*

The late Mrs. Macfarlane, Dingwall.

ON 4th May last year Mrs. Macfarlane, the worthy wife of our beloved brother minister in Dingwall, departed this life. She entered within the veil, we believe, to behold the Face of the glorious Redeemer, who drew her with the cords of His love. This was her gain but her departure evoked feelings of sincere sorrow in the hearts of many by whom she was beloved, and of deep sympathy with her bereaved husband and relatives.

Mrs. Macfarlane was a daughter of the late much respected Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Cameron, of our Oban congregation. Her father, of whom a biographical sketch appeared in our Church Magazine for May, 1922, was an eminent elder of that congregation. It was evident that the subject of this brief obituary had undergone a saving change long before she made a public profession. In 1922 she was at the death bed of her younger sister, Mrs. James MacAulay, Wolverhampton, an event which made a deep impression on her mind. Following that, at the May communion season in Oban she heard the late Rev. John MacLachlan preach from Song of Solomon, chapter 8, verse 5, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?" She could no longer refrain from obeying her beloved's command, "this do in remembrance of Me," and was received into membership. A sweet savour of love to Christ manifestly issued from her heart as a sinner saved by grace. She loved the gospel but clearly indicated that a gospel without the efficacious "blood, that cleanseth from all sin," was no Gospel to her. She had spiritual discernment. A friend remarked, "One would soon feel in her company that she had 'the one thing needful' that Mary had which would not be taken from her."

Before her departure she spoke of the promise, "I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43, 25. Her bright, warm-hearted Christian friendship and hospitality endeared her to many. The end came suddenly, at the age of 71, following a period of failing health, during which all that medical skill and tender nursing could do was done.

The prayers of many on behalf of the bereaved husband were answered in his receiving sustaining grace in rich measure. It is their hope that he will continue to have that all his days.

The bereaved sister and brother in Oban share in our sympathy.

"Them also which sheep in Jesus will God bring with him."
(1 Thes. 4, 15.)—W.G.

Searmonan.

LEIS AN URR. TEARLACH C. MAC AN TOISICH, D.D.

(Air a leantuinn Vol. LX., bho t.d. 373.)

A chreidmhich, tarruigibh dlùth agus deanamh aoradh, am feadh agus a tha sibh a cluinntinn an fhuaim oibhnich gu'n d' rugadh dhuibh-se Slànuighear, Criosd an Tighearn; agus faicibh, mar an ceudna, mar a chuir ioraslachd do-labhairt Mhic Dhé urram agus uaisleachd air bochdainn, agus mar a chuir E seula na bochdainn air greadhnachas agus glòir dhiamhain an t-saoghail so. Am bheil thu bochd? Cuimhnich gu'n robh Criosda bochd. Cha'n e mhàin sin, ach dh'ioraslaich se E féin gu bhi air a mheas na chnuimh agus cha'n e duine. Bha E "naomh, neo-lochdach, neo-thruaillidh, air a dhealachadh o pheacaich, Chaidh E mu'n cuairt a foillseachadh naomhachd 'n a maise fhior-ghlan agus dhiadhaidh, a deanamh maith a ghnàth, agus a cur an céill slàinte; a cur an céill a ghràis do-labhairt fein, agus a cuireadh nan creutairean ciontach agus truagh, iad a thighinn da ionnsuidh. Agus, gidheadh, b'e a chuibhrionn, sgainneal, tàir, agus masladh. Bha e air a ràdh mu Uan Naomh Dhé, duine geocach agus fear-labhairt toibheum. Bha oibribh cumhachdach, a bha foillseachadh a ghtàidh agus a thròcair, air an cur as leth Bhelial, agus bha iad a coinneachadh ri soisgeul a ghràis le bhig ràdh, "Tha deamhain aig, agus tha e air mhi-chéil, car son a tha sibh ag eisdeachd ris?" Ghabh E na nithean so; dh'ullaich se E féin air an son. Ghabh E iad bho chealgairean truailidh, bho shiol nan nathraichean neimh, bho'n fheadhan a thàinig E thearnadh, bho'n fheadhan a dh'fhaodadh E ann am mòmainte a chaitheamh as. Ghabh E ris gu foghaidneach agus gu macanta. Ghabh E ris gus an do bhris E a chridhe. Bu duine dhoilgheasan E, Cha robh neach na chòmhnuidh riamh air an talamh coltach ris, agus, gidheadh, cha robh leithid de mhasladh riamh na chuibhrionn aig aon de luchd àiteachaidh na talamhuinn. Cha do dh'fhàiltich neach riamh Mac Dhé, ni motha labhair iad gu maith uime, gus an do chuir E féin, le gnìomh cumhachd cruthachaidh nuadh, nan cridheachabh sin a dheanamh. Is gann a thainig E stigh do'n t-saoghal, mar an duine cloinne a rugadh, 'n uair a bha's ag iarraidh a bheatha thoirt air falbh, agus cha mhòr nach ann anns a cheud fhosgladh a rinn E air a bhilean naomh gus an soisgeul a chur an céill, a dh'oidheirpicheadh a chlachadh. Dh'fhuiling E uile e, oir shuidhich E a ghnuis mar chloich theine. Bha cur an céill agus a foillseachadh a ghràis ag eirigh agus a fàs ni bu shoilleir ri aghaidh a chàinidh agus an nàimhdeas a bhà e dùsgadh. Bhà E mu dheireadh air a ghlacadh le làmhan aingidh, air a tharruig air beul-thaobh cùirt eucorach, gu h-aingidh air a dhìteadh, smugaidean air an tilgeadh air mar gu'm b' E anabas na'n uile nithean, air a sgiùrsadh, air a chrùnadh le droighean, agus mu dheireadh, anns an dòigh bu chràitich, a bu mhotha fulungas, agus a bu mhaslaiche, mar nach b'urrainn innleachdan dhaoine agus dhiabhol gu leoir a dheanamh gu bhi toirt fianuis air a ghràin a bh'aca dhà, air a chur gu bàs eader dithis luchd-droch-bheirt. Agus b'e an neach so a bha fulung Mac Dhé, a bha

siorruidh agus do-labhairt saoi bhir agus glòrmhor; and T'i a b'e Cruthaithear agus Fear-riaghlaidh neo-chriochnach naomh agus uile-fhoghainteach a chruinne-ché. 'S cinnteach gu'r ann an so a bha bochdainn. A chreidmhich, suidh sios aig a chrann-chéusaidh; agus amhaire air-san a rinn thu lot, agus dean bròn air do shon fein mar aon de'n t-sliochd mhortail sin a mharbh Prionnsa na Beatha. 'S cinnteach gu'm bheil againn an so dearbhadh gu leoir air an truailidheachd nàduir agus an nàimhdeas diabhlaidh a th'anns a chridhe. Thoir urram, mar an ceudna, do'n ghràs do-labhairt a threoirich E gu bhi gilltain an t-ealach de sgainneal, de nàire, de fhanaid, de mhasladh, de phian gun choimeas, agus nach gabh a bhi air a choimeas. Is e do dhoilgheasan-sa a ghiùlain Esan. Chaidh E air thoiseach ort anns an fhàsach gus an gath a thoirt as do dhoilgheasan; ach O! fòghlum a bhi faireachadh bho'n dachaidh, anns an t-saoghal sin anns an deachaidh do Thighearn a chéusadh.

Rinneadh bochd E gu h-àraidh anns an t-seadh ged a b'e Tighearn agus Fear-tabhairt an Lagh E, gidheadh thainig E, da shaor thoile, gu bhi air a dheanamh fodh'n Lagh. Chuir se E féin fodh lagh nan deas-ghnàthan—lagh a bha gabhail a stigh anns na iarratasan aige, cho salach 's a bha iadsan a bha fodha—chùm gu'm bitheadh E comasach air Eaglais a shaoradh bh'uaithe. Chuir se E féin fodh lagh na modhanan anns na nithean a bha e'g iarraidh agus a toirmeasg mar chùmhnannt' beatha, mar gu'm feumadh E beatha oibreachadh a mach le ùmhlachd phearsanta. Thug E ùmhlachd dhà ann an suidheachadh iosal agus bochd, agus thug E'n ùmhlachd sin ann am meadhon cheannairceach, agus ann am meadhon dhuileaghtasan agus bhuaireidhean gun tàmh. Is e cuspair-labhairt naomh a tha'n so; ach cia cho glòrmhor agus a tha ùmhlachd Chrìosd a dealradh a mach eadhon an so, ann am meadhon deuchaineach nach gabh a bhi air an coimeas—deuchaineach a tha eadar-dhealaicht' ri deuchaineach air bith a bha air am fulung, na bhitheas air am fulung, ann an so, gu'n d'fhuing E gu neo-chiontach—agus cha do sguir toil an Athar, air son aon mhòmaint, a bhi air a meas leis le tlachd agus strìochdadh neo-chriochnach. Cha b'aithne dha peacadh. Bha E mothachail air nach b'aithne dha E; agus, gidheadh, bha E air a chomharrachadh a mach mar an aon chuspair a tha seasamh a mach bho'n riaghailt a th'ann an riaghladh Dhé a tha ceangal fulungais ri peacadh. Agus cia cho glòrmhor agus a tha'n ùmhlachd so a seasamh a mach ann an so mar an ceudna, ann am meadhon a mhi-thaingeachd, an casadh fhiacal, an fhanaid, an nàimhdeas, am fàth, agus, mu dheireadh, na h-oidheirpean mortail a rinn peacaich, nach do sguir E bhi cleachdadh dha'n taobh an coibhneas agus an gràdh a b'fhior-ghloine. C'àit am bheil an oirdheirceas am measg chreutairean a b'urrainn tighinn a mach as na deuchaineach sin gun a bhi air a thruailladh? Cò ach Mac Dhé a b'urrainn anns na suidhichidhean sin, ionracas a ghleidheadh?

(*R'a leantuin.*)

Notes and Comments.

Adoniram Judson's Conversion.

A New England student sets out on a tour through the Northern States. Before leaving home he avows himself an infidel. His father argues, his mother weeps. He can resist his father's arguments, but finds it more difficult to resist his mother's tears. Still, he leaves home, resolved to see life, its dark side as well as its bright, having perfect confidence in his own self-control that it will protect him from anything mean and vicious. In the course of his travels he stops at a country inn. The landlord mentions, as he lights him to his room, that he has been obliged to place him next door to a young man who is probably in a dying state. The traveller passes a very restless night. Sounds come from the sick-chamber—sometimes the movements of the watchers, sometimes the groans of the sufferer; but it is not those that disturb him. He thinks of what the landlord said—the stranger is probably in a dying state; and is he prepared? Alone, and in the dead of night, he feels a blush of shame steal over him at the question, for it proves the shallowness of his philosophy. What would his late companion say to his weakness. The clear-minded, intellectual, witty E——, what would he say to such consummate boyishness? But still his thoughts will revert to the sick man. Is he a Christian, calm and strong in the hope of a glorious immortality, or is he shuddering on the brink of a dark unknown future? Perhaps he is a "Freethinker," educated by Christian parents, and prayed over by a Christian mother. At last morning comes, and its light dispels what he would fain consider his "superstitious illusions." He goes in search of the landlord and inquires for his fellow-lodger. "He is dead." "Dead?" "Yes, he is gone, poor fellow!" "Do you know who he was?" "Oh, yes; he was a young man from Providence College, a very fine fellow; his name was E——." Our traveller is completely stunned. E——! E—— was his friend, the friend whose wit and raillery he dreaded, when he blushed at the thought of his own weakness during the wakeful night. And E—— was now dead. The traveller pursues his journey. But one single thought occupies his mind. The words Dead! Lost! Lost! ring in his ears. Neither the pleasures nor the philosophies of the world can satisfy him now. The old resolution is virtually taken—"I will arise." He abandons his travels and turns his horse's head homewards. His intellect does not readily accept the evidences of religion. But his moral nature is thoroughly aroused. And within a few months this young man surrenders his whole soul to Christ as his Saviour and Lord. This was Adoniram Judson, whose six-and-thirty years of unwearied devotion to missionary work have won for him the honourable and well-deserved appellation of the "Apostle of Burmah."

A Word of Warning.

I beseech you, by the salvation of your precious soul and the mercies of God, to make good and sure work of your salvation. O for the Lord's sake, look narrowly to the work. Read over your life with the light of God's day—light and sun; for salvation is not casten down at

every man's door. It is good to look to your compass, and all that you have need of, ere you take shipping; for no wind can blow you back again. Remember, when the road is ended, and the play either won or lost, and you are in the outmost circle and border of time, and shall put your foot within the march of eternity, and all your good things of this short night dream shall seem to you as the ashes of a blaze of thorns, and your poor soul shall be crying, "Lodging, lodging, for God's sake," then shall your soul be more glad of your Lord's favour than if you had the charters of three worlds for all eternity. Let pleasures, gain and the desires of this world be put over into God's hands as arrested and fenced goods that you cannot intromit with. Be humbled and walk softly. Stoop, stoop; it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gates. There is infinite justice in the party you have to do with: it is His nature not to acquit the guilty. The law of God will not want (deduct) one farthing of the sinner; and every man must either pay in his own person or in his cautioner, Christ. It is violence to corrupt nature for a man to be holy; to quit will, pleasures, worldly love, earthly happiness, and an itching of heart after this overgilded world, and to be content that Christ trample upon all. My counsel is that you come out and leave the multitude, and let Christ have your company, let them take clay and this perishing world who love it—Christ is a more worthy and noble portion. Blessed are they who get Him.—*S. Rutherford.*

The Redeemed in Heaven.

The saints in heaven shall have the glorious presence of God and of the Lamb. God himself shall be with them, and they shall ever be with the Lord. God is everywhere present in respect of His essence; the saints on earth have His especial *gracious* presence, but in heaven they have His *glorious* presence. There they are brought near to the throne of the Great King, and stand before Him, where He shows His inconceivable glory. There they have the tabernacle of God, on which the cloud of glory rests, the all glorious human nature of Christ wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwells; not veiled as in the days of His humiliation, but shining through that blessed flesh, that all the saints may behold His glory, and making that body more glorious than a thousand suns, so that the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, but "the glory of God doth lighten it. And the Lamb is the light thereof"; properly the candle thereof, that is the Lamb is the luminary or luminous body, which gives light to the city; as the sun and moon now give light to the world, or as a candle lightens a dark room. And the light proceeding from that glorious luminary, for the city, is the glory of God. Sometimes the candle burnt very

dim; it was hid under a bushel, in the time of His humiliation, only now and then it darted out some rays of this light, which dazzled the eyes of the spectators, but it is set on high in the city of God, where it shines and shall shine for ever in perfection of glory. It was sometimes laid aside, as a stone disallowed of the builders; but now it is, and for ever will be, the light or luminary of that city, and that like "unto a stone most precious even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."
—*Boston.*

Church Notes.

Communions.

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness and Portree; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, London, Portnalong, Achmore and Stoer; second, Fort William; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; and fifth, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie and Broadford; third, Edinburgh. *June*—First Sabbath, Tarbert, Applecross, Coigach; second, Shielraig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Inverness and Gairloch. *July*—First Sabbath, Lairg, Raasay and Beaulay; second, Staffin, Tomatin and Tain; third, Halkirk, Rogart, Flashadder and Daviot; fourth, Bracadale, North Uist and Plockton; fifth, Achmore and Thurso. *August*—First Sabbath, Dingwall and Vancouver (Canada); second, Portree and Stratherrick; third, Bonar, Finsbay and Laide; fourth, Vatten and Stornoway. *September*—First Sabbath, Ullapool and Breaslete; second, Strathy; third, Tarbert and Stoer. *October*—First Sabbath, Tolsta and Lochcarron; second, Gairloch and Ness; third, Applecross; fourth, Greenock, Lochinver and Wick. *November*—First Sabbath, Oban and Raasay; second, Glasgow and Halkirk; third, Edinburgh, Dornoch and Uig. *December*—First Sabbath, London.

Special Notice.

We have published above all the Communion dates for the year 1956. Will ministers kindly check the list and forward a note of omissions or corrections to the Editor.

Magazine and Synod Business.

By the time this issue has appeared in print we expect, in the goodness of the Lord, that the Rev. R. R. Sinclair, the Editor of the Magazine and the Clerk of the Synod, will have returned to this country from Rhodesia.

All correspondence in connection with the Magazine and the Synod will therefore be addressed to him at the Free Presbyterian Manse, Wick, Caithness.

Bracadale Congregation Appeal.

This appeal for financial help to friends throughout the Church is on behalf of the Portnalong Church Repairs Fund. The roof of the Church has been leaking badly during the past year and it has now to be re-slatted. As the congregation themselves are bearing the cost—about £400—of a recent extension to their Manse, they feel this additional burden too heavy for them without help from Church friends. Subscriptions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Rev. M. MacSween, Free Presbyterian Manse, Carbost, By Portree, Skye.

This Appeal, which was cordially endorsed by the Western Presbytery, was ordered to be sent to the Free Presbyterian Magazine.

MALCOLM MACSWEEN, *Moderator.*

JOHN COLQUHOUN, *Clerk.*

Binding of Magazines.

Owing to binding difficulties, Messrs. Adshead & Son Ltd. are unable to continue present arrangements.

Please note that Magazines should not be sent until further notice. Senders of those already in their hands but unbound will be informed as to what is to be done.—W. Grant.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

Mr. J. Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—*Sustentation Fund*.—North Harris, "In loving memory of my Father and Mother," £5; Mr. M. McK., Fiscary, Bettyhill, £2.

Home Mission Fund.—North Harris, "In loving memory of my Father and Mother," £5; Mr. M. M. McK., Fiscary, Bettyhill, £1; Mr. J. F., Seannlios, £1.

Home of Rest Fund.—Anon., Dornoch postmark, £1.

Dominions and Colonial Missions.—Mr. W. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, £4; Mr. A. McL., 15th Avenue, Vancouver, £1 15s. 4d.

Organisation Fund.—Mr. W. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, £3.

Publication Fund.—Friend, Ross-shire, 4s. 3d.; Anonymous Friend, per Rev. Wm. Grant, £75.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—"Z," Ross-shire, £5; Mr. W. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, £5; Mr. M. McK., Fiscary, Bettyhill, £1; Mr. J. F., Seannlios, £2; Dr. M. G. Tallach, London, Collecting Box, o/a. South African Mission, £4 10s.; London Friend (under Covenant), £5; A Skye Friend, 6s.; Anon., Dornoch postmark, 10s.; Mr. J. R. M., R.R.2. Hannon, Ontario, £5.

Legacy Fund.—Received with grateful thanks from the Executor of the late Miss Flora McLean, Balemor, Bayhead, North Uist, the sum of £30, bequeathed in terms of her Will to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland for Foreign Mission Work, per Messrs. Anderson, MacArthur & Co., Solicitors, Stornoway.

Magazine Free Distribution Fund.—Anon Friend, £2 6s. 6d.; Mr. W. Ross, Ottawa, Canada, 8s. 6d.; Mrs. A. MacK., Struthmore, 8s. 6d.; Mr. W. MacK., Inverness, £1 8s. 6d.; Mr. J. C., Inverness, £1 8s. 6d.; Mr. D. J. MacK., 13th Avenue, Vancouver, £2 2s. 6d.; Mr. A. McA., Golspie, 8s. 6d.; Mr. A. Munro, Drumbeg, 7s.; Mrs. D. MacR., Laide, 8s. 6d.; Mrs. M. A. M., Portree, 5s.; Mr. W. M. S., Thurso, 8s. 6d.; Mr. J. S. G., Chatteris, £1 1s.

The following lists sent in for publication:—

Portnalong Church Repairs Fund.—Rev. M. MacSween acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £2 from A Friend, per Mr. D. McAskill; also £2 from A friend on behalf of *Manse Extension Fund*.

Broadford Church Building Fund.—Mr. J. McLean, 5 Upper Breakish, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—M. Nicolson, Ullapool, £5; A Friend, Breakish, £5; Mrs. McD., Shore Street, Applecross, £1. The following, per Mr. J. Nicolson:—"Interested," Skye, £10; Friend of the Cause, Gairloch, £5; Miss R. McL., Helensburgh, £1.

Glendale Congregational Funds.—The Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—Per Rev. J. Colquhoun, Minister's Car Fund Friend, £2; Friend No. 2, £1.

Halkirk Congregation.—Rev. Wm. Grant gratefully acknowledges £1 from Mrs. M., Toronto, and £5 for Publication Fund from Mrs. M. Barvas.

Oban Congregational Funds.—Mr. John Martin, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the sum of £100, "In loving memory of a beloved father," on behalf of Oban Congregational Funds.

Plockton Church Building Fund.—The Treasurer gratefully thanks the following donor:—A Malayan Friend, £5.

Raasay Manse Building Fund.—Mr. E. MacRae, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—Wellwisher, Stornoway, £4; Mrs. McA., Stornoway, £4, per Rev. J. A. Macdonald; also £2 from Friend, Raasay, per Mr. E. McS.

Ullapool Manse Building Fund.—Mr. A. Corbett, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges the sum of £10 from Ardmail and Rhu by Card.

Valtos (Uig) Meeting House Repair Fund.—Mr. M. MacLennan, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges the following:—Mrs. MacRae, Lochcarron, £1; Miss Matheson, Drambuie, £1.