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Time and Eternity

As another year draws to a close we have every reason to take stock and ask ourselves anew where we stand in relation to God and what preparation we are making in view of eternity.

The fleeting nature of time is brought to our notice again and again as one here and one there of our fellow sinners is ushered from time into eternity. Yet how easily we forget these warnings and become again wholly immersed so quickly in the things of this world. Our days, our years are passing, swifter than a weaver's shuttle. Time is carrying us on nearer and nearer to the eternal world. Soon the place that knows us now shall know us no more for ever. Yet have we not sought and found the Saviour?

Does this question ever arise in our minds — How am I spending time? or, To what end am I passing my days in this world? We can be fully assured that God has placed us in this world for a high end. To aver otherwise would be to cast a reflection on the wisdom of the infinitely wise God who gave us a being in time. What is our end then and how should we be spending our little span of time? The Shorter Catechism gives the answer — Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever. How sobering, how searching is that answer! Where do we stand in the light of such a high end, in the light of such a glorious unending prospect? Can we say that we are motivated in all our thoughts, words and actions day by day by a desire to glorify God? A lower end than this will not do. It is God's glory we must seek and enjoyment in Him. But you will say — 'This is too high for me. I cannot attain to it.' That is true indeed. In our own person we can do nothing that is God-glorifying. If we are to attain to anything that is pleasing to God it must be through Christ. In Christ and through Christ we can be and can do what otherwise would be unattainable. If then we would desire to serve God and honour and glorify Him it is by coming to the Lord Jesus Christ by a living faith and by laying hold on His strength. We must receive out of His fullness. There is a fullness of grace and of glory with Him. Here we may rest, not only for time but also for an endless eternity.

Beyond time is eternity. Only a thin veil separates time from eternity —

a veil so thin that for the believer it can be expressed in these words: "absent from the body, present with the Lord." Eternity is before us. What a glorious prospect is an eternity of bliss! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." How wonderful for the weary soul to find a resting place in the bosom of the Almighty where the storms of this life shall never again break over his head. "There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest." Often in this world they were lashed by the waves of conflict, trials and temptations but now are safe in the harbour of rest.

Then are they glad because at rest
and quiet now they be
So to the haven He then brings
which they desired to see.

On the other hand, what a dreadful prospect is an eternity of everlasting sorrow! "There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked." Time idly or wilfully misspent to the end of the day will give place to an eternity of unutterable woe. The very thought of departing from time to the ceaseless storms of an undone eternity ought to fill our minds with the deepest horror. Does not the very thought of the bottomless pit cry out to us in terms of compelling urgency — Flee from the wrath to come. But where are we to flee to? you say. There is no safety out of Christ. Flee, oh flee, to a cleft of that Rock which is Christ so that you may find a hiding place in Him and may never awaken in that place where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. If you are still out of Christ then let not this year close without seeking for your own soul the mercy and the pardon which is to be found in a crucified Saviour. If you find refuge in Him, then you may look forward, not only to His Presence with you in time, but throughout a never-ending eternity. In His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Whether God come to His children with a rod or a crown, if He come Himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee: and sure I am, it is better to be sick, providing Christ come to the bedside and draw the curtains, and say, Courage, I am thy salvation, than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong and never to be visited of God.

Samuel Rutherford.

The Cross of Christ

But the truth of God's essential holiness needed a more clear and impressive discovery and illustration; and God has given it. Where was there ever such a demonstration of God's infinite hatred of sin, and his fixed and solemn determination to punish it, as is seen in the cross of Christ? Put thy shoes from off thy feet, draw near and contemplate this "great sight." *Who was the sufferer?* God's only begotten and well-beloved Son! *His own Son!* In addition to the infinitely tender love of the Father, there was the clear knowledge of the truth, that He who was enduring the severest inflictions of his wrath was innocent, guiltless, righteous — that he, himself, had never broken his law, had never opposed his authority, had never run counter to his will; but had always done those things which pleased him. *At whose hands did he suffer?* From devils, from men? They were but the agents; the moving Cause was God himself. "It pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief." His own Father unsheathed the sword: he inflicted the blow: he kindled the fierce flame: he prepared the bitter cup. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd." "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" *And what were the nature and degree of his sufferings?* Imagine, if we can, what must have been the outpouring of God's wrath upon the whole church for all the sins of that church, through eternity! Can you compute the amount of her transgressions? Can you conceive of the degree of her punishment? Can you measure the duration of her woe? Impossible! Then, who can tell what Jesus endured, when standing in the place and as the Surety of his Church, in the solemn hour of atonement, and in the day of God's fierce anger? Never had God so manifested before, and never will he so manifest again, his essential holiness, — his spotless purity, — the inconceivable heinousness of sin, — His utter hatred of it, — and His solemn purpose to punish it with the severest inflictions of His wrath. Never did this glorious perfection of His being blaze out in such overwhelming glory, as on that dark day, and in the cross of the incarnate God. Had He emptied the vial of His wrath full upon the world, sweeping it before the fury of His anger, and consigning it to condign and eternal punishment, it would not have presented to the universe so vivid, so impressive, and so awful a demonstration of the nature and glory of His holiness, of His infinite abhorrence of sin, and the necessity wherefore He should punish it, as He has presented in the humiliation, sufferings, and death of his beloved Son. What new and ineffably transcendent views of infinite purity must have sprung up in the pure minds even of the spirits in glory, as bending from their thrones they fixed their astonished gaze upon the cross of the suffering Son of God!

Octavius Winslow

Sermon

by Rev. Donald Macdonald, Shildaig

"My beloved spake and said unto me, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. Song 2: 10-12.

There is no temporal relationship so close as that of husband and wife; they are "one flesh." The husband chooses his wife from among all others; and the wife also makes choice of her husband, looking to his beauty to please, his strength to uphold, and his wealth to sustain. The church is the mystical spouse of Christ, and she here declares what her beloved has said to her. Jesus uses tender language, as an affectionate husband to an afflicted wife. He is united to his people in a spiritual marriage which is indissoluble. He chose his people in himself before the world was, and his people were made willing in time to choose him, and renounce all other lovers. "We forsook all and followed thee." They forsook the works of the law, and followed the works of faith with Moses. They forsook the world, Satan, and the works of the flesh. Their minds became absorbed in Christ's beauty: "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." That glory was human and divine, created and uncreated. When His divine glory appeared, its effulgence darkened the glory of all created objects, because it was infinite and eternal, surpassing all created glories.

(1) When Christ addresses His church in the verse, she was under a spiritual winter.

Christ calls her his "love," or "beloved." He had loved her from all eternity. In the exercise of this love in the bosom of God, he had unspeakable joy. For he looked forward to the time when He would purchase, redeem, and deliver her. "My delights were with the sons of men." Christ gave proof of His love to His people in His bodily and soul sufferings in the furnace of God's wrath. That love was hotter than the furnace; along with the satisfaction He rendered to the law it quenched the fire of the furnace. He set them free from the curse.

Christ tells her to rise up, and it is clear from this that her soul had been "among the pots," and was lying low. Her enemies had got the victory over her; sin awakened by temptation, had pulled her down from her elevated position in fellowship with the Lord. Sin was an old Canaanite, which, after the land of Canaan was reached, was still a thorn in the flesh. It was "the law in the members warring against the law of the mind." (Romans 7) or Satan might be groundlessly accusing and tormenting her as in the case of Job. Or God Himself was permitting her to be cast down through worldly persecution, so that her faith would be glorifying Him in the fires. The church had a winter before now, when she was convinced of sin and its

guilt, and the wrath of God, as storms, floods, and darkness went over her head, and her hope perished from the Lord. But Christ made Himself known to her as her Saviour, and restored her to His favour. Christ the Sun with His refreshing beams of life and light broke in upon her soul. The winter disappeared and the summer of consolation set in upon her soul, and she began to apprehend what God in Christ had done for her and in her. She began to be fruitful in the Lord. It was a time of love, enjoying communion with God, like the sweet moments our first parents had with Him before the fall.

But the severe winter sets in again upon her soul. God withdraws from the soul when sin gains the ascendancy. His blessed face was withdrawn, as the sun when he hides himself. Darkness sets in, and the soul now becomes dark with respect to his hope of safety, and Satan tempts the afflicted soul to believe that it was all delusion, its pretension to godliness. The storm and floods of God's wrath prey heavily upon the imagination; the soul is tossed at the mercy of these tempests mixed with the thunder of the threatenings which conscience arouses for sin. The poor soul is like a vessel that has lost her anchor and moorings.

In winter one needs shelter, clothing and a friend. God's people need friendship in the bosom of God. They need the shelter which Christ, as their tower, has secured for them in the covenant of grace. They are afraid they are not clothed with Christ's righteousness. They need the favour of God renewed to their souls as they once enjoyed it. This sad winter took away everything they had from the Lord. The natural winter leaves nothing of the beauty and fruitfulness that preceded it, everything around looks dull, dark, and dreary. The birds that used to sing are dumb and shivering with cold. It is the same with the spiritual winter of the soul. The joy the soul had with God is gone. The ability to worship Him is at an end in her estimation. Prayer becomes empty of God. Instead of rejoicing she is mourning.

(2) Christ says to her, "Rise up." His heart is full of sympathy towards her. He comes through the promise, and anew infuses life and light into her soul. He declares that she is still his beloved. She could not be satisfied in His absence with any other. She loved Him and was looking through faith to Him to make up her wants. Like Job, though he should slay her, yet she would trust in Him. "Rise up," he says, with me, your God, your Creator and husband, to take your journey to glory. "Rise up, my love, my fair one." Christ uses the word, "My" twice to encourage her against unbelief, and to assure her she was his. "You are my love that got room in my thoughts and affections from eternity. Many sore thoughts I had about you when bearing you and your sins, when wrestling at Gethsemane and suffering at Calvary: Alas, you often let me out of your sight, and thoughts, which is ungrateful in you — for example, when you slept with the foolish virgins. But I have never let you out of my sight or thoughts; I have carried you all along to glory. I began then to intercede for you, and the floods of

the Spirit's supplies that came down to refresh you are the blessings that flowed from my death and intercession, which reminds you that your husband is your advocate within the veil."

Christ declares that she was his fair one, beautiful as she was shining with His own image, and increasing in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. She was fair in Christ's sight, when she appeared to herself to be very ugly. The more sense one has of a filthy heart and the more one abhors it and pants after a new heart, the more dependant is the soul upon Christ for cleansing in His blood. The less confidence one has in oneself, the more one is beloved and admired of God. The soul has no love for those that brought it into spiritual bondage, no more than the Israelites had to the Egyptians that brought them into natural bondage. The more progress holiness is making in any soul, the more that soul hates sin, and the more vehement is its desire to get rid of it. Christ says, "My fair one, you call yourself black, and you mourn over your blackness. Satan and the world also say you are black. But you are not black in my estimation, considering the time is short until you shall be white all over. You are fair through my blood, my righteousness and my sanctification (Song 4; 7). You are fair with tears of repentance, you are fair, longing to be perfectly white. I see you very fair. I do not like always to be putting you in remembrance of your blackness, for you are tired remembering it yourself; and it is not worth my while to find fault with your defects, seeing you shall soon be with me in heaven; without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. It encourages you greatly when I declare you are fair. Faith infers from this declaration that you will soon be white.

(3) "Lo, the winter is past." It has been the winter of God's wrath. There never was a winter in nature like it. People are weary of the severity of winter. Oh, how weary is a child of God of the winter of God's chastisements!

How did the winter of God's judicial wrath go away at first when he dealt with the sins of His people? His wrath did not return to Himself. Christ met the severity of it, and it exhausted itself upon Him. Otherwise it would have annihilated the whole elect in a minute. Oh, what glorious news it was to the church when she heard that His anger was turned away! Although all the saints in heaven and earth should tell the church that God's wrath was removed, she could not have peace till God Himself would speak to her. The people of God shall have winters and summers all the way to heaven. On the meadows of glory they shall have an eternal summer. Their winters here shall make their happiness in glory more precious to them. Their winters here shall not destroy them, no more than the fire destroyed the three children in the fiery furnace.

But you, that are out of Christ, you have no sense that God is angry with you for your sins that are not pardoned. Your winter is not past. If you go with your sins to God's bar, you shall endure an eternity of God's wrath. When millions of years are past in hell, you shall be saying, "Alas, when

shall my winter be past." But Christ shall never say to you, "Arise from eternal torments; your winter is past."

Christ says to His spouse, "Rise up; the winter that laid you low is past." She replies, "I am so weak; I cannot rise; for strangers have eaten up my strength." He answers, "My grace is sufficient for thee; roll all your burdens on me and my finished work; my strength is made perfect in weakness. I shall be life and light unto thee. Rise; you cannot do without me, and I cannot do without you. The honour of my name is in danger, if I would not implement my promise relative to you. Arise from sorrows, doubts, and fears to partake of the full blessings that you can realise at the throne of grace. Come to the rivers of blessings to drink thy fill out of them. Come to the means of grace, to prayer, to reading, to hearing the word preached. Come with an enlightened mind to dive into the mysteries of my death and resurrection, that you may see what I have done for you, that I have purchased and redeemed you from the curse of the law, from sin and its various evils, that I have overcome all your enemies that would have delighted to destroy you eternally. Come to Mount Pisgah to see a view of the land of Canaan above. When you shall come, I shall put you in the Spirit and you shall see more clearly, and there shall be less dimness upon your eyes, yet it shall be through a glass darkly. A view of the glory of Immanuel, and the sweet odour of honey off the land, and its riches shall be a strength to you going down to the chambers of death." Faith is the telescope which shows the rich fruit of the land to the souls of God's people. Their hope revives as a man whose bands are broken and dances with joy, the heart, thoughts, and affections joining in the dance. "Come, the flowers appear on the earth; they are breaking forth upon the ground." The promises are coming with power and conveying all needed comforts. As apples are pretty and sweet, so are God's promises.

"Come with Me through a frowning providence. I shall be with thee, as I was with Job and David. Come with me through pain and sickness. I shall bless you and make everything work for your good at last. Come with me from Lebanon, which is sometimes termed a pleasant and glorious place, at other times a barren wilderness, abounding with wild beasts." Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lion's dens, from the mountains of the leopards! Come with me, because where you are is barren and dangerous, exposed to privations and ill-treatment from tyrants and persecutors as savage and bloody as wild beasts. Come with me to Mount Zion to consider your glorious and exalted position, as also the heavenly society to which you belong (Heb. 12, 22-24). Come with me to death and then to glory, to perfect your happiness and to drink eternally out of the wells of living waters, and where my presence shall put you in possession of an eternal summer."

Unbelief — A Marvel

by Bishop J. C. Ryle, D.D.

(continued from page 338)

And now let me wind up this subject with a few words of kindly advice to all my readers, and especially to the young. I am no longer young myself. It is thirty-five years since I first began to write on religious subjects. But even now I think I know the heart of a young man. I can remember the days when I tried hard to be an unbeliever, because religion crossed my path, and I did not like its holy requirements. I was delivered from that pit, I believe, by the grace of God leading me to a book which, of late years, has undeservedly fallen out of sight, I mean "Faber's Difficulties of Infidelity." I read that book, and felt it could not be answered. But the remembrance of the struggle I went through in those days is still fresh in my mind, and I always have a deep feeling of sympathy, when I hear of the mental conflicts of young men.

Some of my readers, I dare say, are often troubled with sceptical doubts about the truth of Christianity. You are not professed unbelievers; God forbid that I should say this. But you see many things in the Bible which you cannot quite understand. You see not a few men of powerful and commanding intellect rejecting Christianity almost entirely. You hear many slighting things said, and depreciatory remarks made cleverly and smartly about the facts and doctrines of the Bible, which you are unable to answer. All this puzzles you. You stand in doubt. Is it really worth while to pray in private, and read the Bible, and keep the Sabbath holy, and attend the Lord's Table? Is it necessary? Questions such as these are the first steps in the downward road. Unless you take heed, they may land you in infidelity. Listen to me while I offer a few friendly counsels.

(a) For one thing, let me entreat you *to deal honestly with your soul about secret sins*. Are you quite sure there is not some bad habit, or lust, or passion, which, almost insensibly to yourself, you would like to indulge, if it were not for some remaining religious scruples? Are you quite sure that your doubts do not arise from a desire to get rid of restraint? You would like, if you could, to do something the Bible forbids, and you are looking about for reasons for disregarding the Bible. Oh! if this is the case with any of you, awake to a sense of your danger! Break the chains which are gradually closing round you. Pluck out the right eye, if need be; but never be the servant of sin. I repeat that the secret love of some vicious indulgence is the real beginning of a vast amount of infidelity.

(b) In the next place, let me ask you *to deal honestly with your soul about the use of means for acquiring religious knowledge*. Can you lay your hand on your heart and say that you really take pains to find out what

is truth? Do not be ashamed to pray for light. Do not be ashamed of reading some leading book about the Creeds and Confession of your own Church, and, above all, do not be ashamed of regularly studying the text of your Bible. Thousands, I am persuaded, in this day, know nothing of the Holy Book which they affect to despise, and are utterly ignorant of the real nature of that Christianity which they pretend they cannot believe. Let not that be the case with you. That famous "honest doubt," which many say is better than "half the creeds," is a pretty thing to talk about. But I venture a strong suspicion that much of the scepticism of the present day, if sifted and analysed, would be found to spring from utter ignorance of the primary evidences of Christianity. For my part, I take my stand on these words of Solomon, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." I fear many professed unbelievers never took the course Solomon here recommends. — Proverbs ii. 1-5.

(c) Last, but not least, let me entreat you *to deal honestly with the religion of faith*, and those who profess it. That there is such a religion in the midst of us, and that there are thousands who profess it, are simple facts which nobody can deny. These thousands believe without doubting certain great truths of Christianity, and live and die in their belief. Let it be admitted that, in some points, these men of faith do not agree. — such as the Church, the ministry, and the sacraments. But after every deduction, there remains an immense amount of common theology, about which their faith is one. On such points as sin, and God, and Christ, and the atonement, and the authority of the Bible, and the importance of holiness, and the necessity of prayer, and self-denial, and the value of the soul, and the reality of heaven and hell, and judgment, and eternity, — on such points as these, I say, these men of faith are very much of one mind. Now, I ask, is it honest to turn away from these men and their religion with contempt, because they have many weaknesses and infirmities? Is it fair to despise their religion, and wrap yourself up in unbelief, because of their controversies and strifes, their feeble literature and their party spirit? Mark the fruits of peace, and hope, and comfort, which they enjoy. Mark the solid work which, with all their faults, they do in the world, in lessening sorrow and sin, and increasing happiness, and improving their fellow-men. What fruits and work can unbelief show which will bear comparison with the fruits of faith? Look these facts in the face and deal honestly with them. Systems ought to be judged by their fruits and results. When the so-called systems of modern unbelief and scepticism, and free thought, can point to as much good done in the world by their adherents as simple faith has done by the hand of its friends, we may give them some attention.

But till they do that, I boldly say, that the simple, old-fashioned religion of faith has a just claim on our respect, esteem, and obedience, and ought not to be despised.

After all, I must conclude with the humbling and sorrowful remark, that we who profess faith, and are never troubled with unbelief, are not altogether free from blame. Too often our faith is little better than a mere "otiose assent" to certain theological propositions, but not a living, burning, active principle which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. It is not the faith which made primitive Christians rejoice under Roman persecution, and made Luther stand up boldly before the Diet of Worms, and made Ridley and Latimer "love not their lives to the death," and made Wesley give up his position at Oxford to become the Evangelist of England. We are verily guilty in this matter. If there was more real faith on earth, I suspect there would be less unbelief. Scepticism, in many a case, would shrink, and dwindle, and melt away, if it saw faith more awake, and alive, and active, and stirring. Let us, for Christ's sake, and the sake of souls, amend our ways in this matter. Let us pray daily, "Lord, increase our faith." Let us live, and move, and have our being, and deal with men, as if we really believed every jot and tittle of our creeds, and as if a dying, risen, interceding, and coming Christ were continually before our eyes.

This I am firmly convinced, is the surest way to oppose and diminish unbelief. Let the time past suffice us to have lived content with a cold, tame assent to creeds. Let the time to come find us living, active believers. It was a solemn saying which fell from the lips of an eminent minister of Christ on his death-bed, — "We are none of us more than half awake!" If believers were more thorough, and real, and whole-hearted in their belief, there would be far less unbelief in the world.

Letter

by Rev. William Romaine

Brighthelmstone,
Oct. 8, 1765

My Dear Sister,

I have been waiting for an opportunity to write to you, and it is now come. You love to hear, and I love to write, about our common Friend, that matchless, loving, lovely Jesus, a subject one is never tired of. The more we dwell on it, the sweeter it grows; the longer we enjoy its sweetness, the more of heaven will come down to us, till we get up into heaven itself. To see Jesus in heaven, and to enjoy Him, is the bliss of heaven. Thanks be to Him. He is the joy of your heart and mine. Although we do know Him, and rejoice in Him, yet we know but little of what is to be known; for He is

an infinite subject, and we can but know Him in part. But let us press on to know more; and, as we grow more humble and teachable, He will show us more of the excellency of His knowledge. Pray earnestly for more deep heart-humility. Mind — what He hideth from the worldly wise, He revealeth unto babes, unto them who are childlike and simple. The Lord make us more so daily, that we may know Him aright; and then we shall always see our salvation from sin and hell, and our title to heaven and glory, in Him. We cannot know Him truly without believing in Him. When we understand His power, God-man — His errand into the world, to save sinners — His Almighty arm, and the love of His bleeding heart to save them — and what an innumerable company He has plucked out of hell's mouth, and raised up to His heaven — the more we know of these things, the more we can trust Him. He says to all sinners, 'Come to me, and I will save you.' O what grace is in these lips — that you and I have heard His voice, and have come, and are saved. We do believe, Lord, increase our faith! Let us pray much for it; because, as our faith in Him increases, so will our love to Him. I cannot believe He has finished salvation's work for me, and daily experience miracles of His love, without loving Him in return; and as His miracles increase, I would love Him more and more. O for more love to this best and dearest of friends! I am sure your heart says, Amen! Now the way to have His love both growing and increasing, so as to abound in us, is to be continually making use of Him. He has all good in Him; and He has it for you and me. He has the fulness in Him of a fountain, to communicate of it. Of His fulness He would have us to make free; He invites us, commands us, to come with strong faith and much love, that, by receiving from Him great grace, He may get much glory from us, while we get much happiness from Him — His generous offer, is, 'Come with boldness — all I have is for you.' Faith replies, 'Lo! I come, sweet Jesus, at Thy bidding, every moment, for everything, for grace and glory: I am content to receive all at Thy hands, and to be indebted to Thee for all, and that for ever and ever.' — While you live thus, my dear sister, in constant fellowship with your Saviour, He will give you continual reason to love Him, and to bless Him. He will so treat you, so comfort you, so strengthen you, will make you in Him so holy and so happy, that every day He will enable you to trust Him more, and to love Him better. Thus you will come to enjoy more of Him, you will delight more in His company, you will get greater intimacy with Him, and will walk in close communion with Him, which is heaven upon earth. This growing fellowship with Him will increase the joys of your present salvation. So that, when doubt of His love, sense of indwelling sin, earth or hell, would tempt you from Jesus, He will speak in His Word, and will speak to your heart by His Spirit — 'I am thine, fear not. I will guide thee with my counsel, and, after that, will receive thee into glory.' You will believe steadfastly what He says, and will thereby resist and overcome the temptation. He will keep you; and you shall hold out unto the end, and shall know it too, and praise Him for

persevering grace. He will bless you in death; and the happiest time you ever knew will be, when He lays your body in a sweet sleep, and your spirit with open face, shall see Jesus in the highest glory. To be with Him for ever is the highest bliss. To this, I trust, He will bring you and me, that we may praise the riches of His grace, and get more in His debt for ever and ever. He is now teaching us this heavenly employment. — You can, and I can, take the crown of all our graces and throw it at His feet. — Soon, very soon, we shall do the same with that crown of glory. O what a thought is that! — The good Lord is preparing my mother to do the same. I heartily pray for her establishment in the faith: and am, with my wife's duty and love, your faithful friend and affectionate brother in our precious, most precious, eternally precious Jesus,

William Romaine

David Livingstone — IV

"All I can add in my loneliness is, May heaven's rich blessing come down on every one — American, English or Turk — who will help to heal the open sore of the world." These words, penned by Livingstone exactly one year before he died, were eventually engraved in the tablet which was placed in his honour in Westminster Abbey. They form an eloquent expression of the longing which carried him through the last weary years — the longing to see the slave trade blotted out. And weary years they were (1866-73) as Livingstone, officially in the service of the Geographical Society, searched for the source of the Nile. He never did trace it, though in his travels he made many other important discoveries. It may seem strange to think of Livingstone spending his last strength tramping back and fore in the execution of geographical exploits. But his motives were pure, and his mind was as clear as ever. He knew that if he discovered the source of the Nile he would have a greatly boosted influence. He knew also how he would use that influence if once he got it — to marshal the moral feelings of mankind to help him fight the slave trade to the death. This, he was convinced, was not only an inherent evil. It was also the great barrier that must be removed before the gospel could get into Central Africa, and therefore he wrote about this time "I would forget all my cold, hunger, suffering and trials, if I could be the means of putting a stop to this cursed traffic."

To list Livingstone's miseries in these closing years would be to provide melancholy reading: we will not dwell upon them here. Details of this period are given in the other Magazine, and here we do no more than remember his remarkable death, which took place on the first of May, 1873. His last months had been spent traversing trackless, watery wastes: now he crossed the Jordan River, and his journey had an end. Now he was where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

Lessons from Livingstone

Looking once more over the life which has been the subject of these articles, it might be of benefit to emphasise some of the points which have impressed the present writer.

Livingstone's character was of course a remarkable one: the combination of qualities which he displayed mark him as one of the most extraordinary personalities which Scotland has ever produced.

He was a truly humble man. This view is not based on Livingstone's words, but on his actions. Men's words must always remain suspect, as a basis for judging their character, but their deeds are a surer guide. When Livingstone was tried beyond ordinary endurance by the faults of others, he still exercised restraint. Instead of railing on those who upset his plans and thwarted his purposes, he remembered his own faults, and could say, "consciousness of my own defects makes me lenient . . . I have my weaknesses." Another expression of his humility which arose from his self-knowledge is found in a letter from Livingstone to Arthur Tidman, Secretary of the L.M.S. in London. Livingstone is discussing his proposed trek to the West Coast in 1851 and writes, "Some of the brethren do not hesitate to tell the natives that my object is to obtain the applause of men. This bothers me, for I sometimes suspect my own motives." This calm and humble reaction to the malicious gossip of his colleagues gives the measure of the man. It is not merely that he refuses to strike out in righteous anger against those misrepresenting him. He acknowledges there is that in him which might possibly give some substance to their talk, and openly confesses this before his superiors at home.

He was a hard working man. Whoever has the slightest acquaintance with what Livingstone accomplished knows this. And his hard work was not an ostentatious display of how his spirit triumphed over his flesh. Rather, he enjoyed hard work, as he wrote: "The sweat of one's brow is no longer a curse when one works for God, it proves a tonic to the system, and is actually a blessing."

He was a happy man. In writing of the privations and trials which Livingstone endured, it is dangerous to describe his sufferings in full detail. The reason is that when we read a list of his woes, we naturally assume that he must have been perpetually downcast in his mind. In fact he was a happy man. Perhaps the most wonderful confirmation of this fact comes from Stanley, in his description of Livingstone at the time when they met at Ujiji. The signs of weariness were there and they were not lost on Stanley. There was a wanness over his features and a heaviness in his tread which bespoke the excessive work and worry to which he had been subjected. But there was something else, which to Stanley was more remarkable: "I never saw any spleen or misanthropy in him . . . it is notorious that the Doctor has a fund of quiet humour which he exhibits at all times when he is among friends . . . His gentleness never forsakes him; his hopefulness never deserts him. No harassing anxieties, distraction of

mind, long separation from home and kindred, can make him complain. He thinks 'all will come out right at last'; he has such faith in the goodness of Providence . . . There is a good-natured abandon about Livingstone which was not lost on me. Whenever he began to laugh, there was a contagion about it that compelled me to imitate him . . ."

When contemplating the journey to the West Coast Livingstone was directed by those in London to take a suitable white companion with him. However, Livingstone replied that the only suitable person was Moffat, and that he could not leave Kuruman. Proposing that he go himself, and that loneliness would be no object, Livingstone said "I am not given to despondency or lowness of spirits." Writing again just on the eve of his departure for the West, Livingstone referred to the severe bout of fever he had just endured, and to the uncomfortable heat. But he went on: "A merry heart doeth good like medicine. If I allowed my mind to dwell constantly on the miserable degradations, wickedness and sad prospects of the people here, I might become melancholy and soon die. But we have a fair world, and all the wonderful works of our Father in it, and I believe we ought to allow our minds to dwell on the beautiful more than on the evil. I am never low spirited."

Just before she contracted her fatal illness, Mary said to Livingstone, "You must always be as playful as you have always been. I would not like you to be as grave as some folks I have seen." Livingstone noted in his journal that his wife's remark confirmed him in "what I have always believed to be the true way, to let the head grow wise, but keep the heart always young and playful."

The great thing about Livingstone's profession of Christianity was that it was matched by his practice. Stanley watched him hour by hour for over four months, and afterwards wrote, "His religion is not of the theoretical kind, but it is a constant, earnest, sincere practice. It is neither demonstrative nor loud, but manifests itself in a quiet practical way, and is always at work. It is not aggressive, which sometimes is troublesome, if not impertinent. In him religion exhibits its loveliest features; it governs his conduct, not only towards his servants, but towards the natives, the bigoted Mohammedans, and all who come in contact with him . . . religion has made him the most companionable of men and indulgent of masters — a man whose society is pleasurable to a degree."

As a man, he had that gentle strength seen in the humble, the unaffected, and the realistic. As a Christian he had that irresistible appeal of those who are truly like their Lord.

Turning to look at aspects of the science of missions met with in our study of Livingstone's life, we can only mention here three points.

Of course Livingstone placed the greatest possible emphasis on the necessity of becoming intimately acquainted with the native language. In one of his books he mentions the phenomenal numbness of moral perception which missionaries encountered. He says, however, that this

may be in part explained by "the mode of communication, either by interpreters, or by the imperfect knowledge of the language, which not even missionaries of talent can overcome save by the labour of many years."

On the financing of the missionary projects, Livingstone's views were forcefully expressed: "We Protestants provide missionaries with a bare subsistence, and are unsparing in our praise of them for not being worldly-minded when our niggardliness compels them to live as did the prodigal son . . . It is quite possible to find men whose devotion to the work of spreading the gospel will make them ready to submit to any sacrifice. What, however, can be thought of the justice of Christians who not only work their agents at the lowest terms, but regard what they give as charity!" On more than one occasion Livingstone recorded his indebtedness, not to Christian societies, but to Mr Oswell, the gentleman hunter with whom he travelled to Lake Ngami in 1849. In March, 1852, Livingstone wrote London to explain, not only that the whole of the present year's salary had already been spent on "oxen, waggon repairs, wages, etc., etc.," but that he had already been forced to spend £57 of his next year's salary as well. It is pathetic to read how he says in this connection: "I have now to crave your indulgence with respect to this overdrawing," and to hear him protest that his life has been innocent of all luxuries apart from meal, tea and coffee. As to a way out of his financial troubles, Livingstone stated: "Had Mr Oswell not presented us with about £170 since we came here, I should have been in a fix." When he heroically faced the distressing separation from his family which his work demanded, he had to ask for an extra allowance so that they could be provided for at home. Why did the most noble and independent of men have to degrade himself to ask for money so that he could support his wife and children? Is the answer what it seems to be — because he was a Christian missionary? Is this a class of people who are doomed to exploitation till the end of time?

Only one last matter can here be raised out of the many facets of Livingstone's missionary experiences. We refer to his relations with the authorities at home. Of course Livingstone's connections with the L.M.S. were severed during his first furlough. But during his single term under their auspices he experienced to the full the bitter difficulties of working in Africa under the direction of men in London.

One example will suffice. Livingstone knew to his bitter cost that some of the men who were his colleagues were worse than useless. The man who was with him at Kolobeng grew so green with envy at his success, that Livingstone felt constrained to leave, and begin afresh elsewhere. At the time Livingstone wrote nothing home. After some years, however, when he was away from these parts and was ploughing a lonely furrow to the North and West, he felt that he should communicate his views to the Society Secretary at home. He got little thanks. How could Livingstone reasonably

expect, the secretary asked, that the directors would accept his side of things on the bare assumption that he was right and that his colleagues were wrong?

We know that Livingstone was capable of reporting only what was, to the best of his knowledge, true. But we have to admit that the Society secretary in London was not unreasonable either in the reply he gave to the missionary in the field. What then is the key to the situation in which both men differed, and were yet, from their own points of view, quite right? The obvious answer is that the men were all right but the system all wrong. It was a sheer impossibility to run a mission successfully when you were six thousand miles away. And because the system was wrong misunderstandings arose, heartbreak was endured and missionary time and talent were thrown away.

Hudson Taylor had a different idea, and most missions have long since accepted it. He ran the mission from the field itself. If Livingstone had been backed on the spot by men of sympathy, foresight and zeal, what would he not have achieved?

J.T.

Obituaries

The Late Mrs M. Matheson, Aird, Uig

Many friends in Lewis were sorry for the death of the above. She had been a member in full communion for many years, and was one who said herself she would never tire of hearing the Word of God. She would only be displeased if the prayer meeting in her home was too short. While she was able, she would be at Miavaig Church, an example to those much younger, who neglect the means of grace on Sabbath and week day. She and her husband had a large family, some of them abroad, and there was no bereavement in the family for many years.

Her home was hospitable to many of the Lord's people, and the family are still very kind to the Lord's people, and liberal to the Cause of Christ.

She wanted her grand-children to avoid modern fashions of dress, and was grieved if they would not obey her. She took a shock, and we were privileged to see her passing through Jordan peacefully to her everlasting rest. May her passing be blest to all the family circle at home and abroad, especially to her son and daughter, and daughter-in-law, who were with her in the home, and showed the greatest affection to her to the end.

In 1929, when the Established Church united with the United Free Church, to form the Church of Scotland, 300 of the State Church joined our Church in Uig, as we held the Establishment Principle (i.e. the principle that the State should support the Cause of Christ), and they

would not join with Voluntaries. To the testimony of our Church Mrs Matheson continued in warm attachment to the end.

D. J. Macaskill

The Late Mrs Maggie Matheson

The above was a member in full communion here at Uig. She was of a happy, friendly disposition, and was well loved by everybody. Her attendance on the means of grace was most exemplary, sometimes even when she was not well. She received treatment at Inverness, which benefited her for a period, and she was once again in church, but the Great Shepherd needed her for the pastures above. May God bless her son and daughter and grand-children, who were devoted to her.

Mrs Matheson knew of the writer's great grandfather, Alistair Maciver, who was at the head of the Cause in Stornoway, when they worshipped in the Drill Hall, before they secured a church and minister. His obituary is in the first volume of the Magazine in English and Gaelic. The Free Presbyterians were then called "Seceders," because they separated from the Declaratory Act Free Church, which had seceded from the Constitution of the Church of Scotland (Free), as settled by the Disruption. Fathers in 1843. The Declaratory Act was passed by a majority of Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and became binding on all office-bearers. There was Arminianism in it, and the Church was made the supreme authority, instead of the Confession of Faith, founded on the Word of God.

D. J. Macaskill

The Late Malcolm MacIennan, Uig

The subject of this obituary notice was an elder of long standing. He had been a Deacon in Balnakill congregation. He served as Treasurer of the congregation at Miavaig, and was very conscientious in looking after every detail of the congregation's finances. He was "one of the meek of the earth," as one of the former ministers of the Miavaig congregation, said.

Being most hospitable, he entertained the ministers on occasions when the Manse was closed. It was always a pleasure to visit him. His invariable answer, when asked how he was, was, "We have no reason to complain." May God bless his son and daughter, who were very dutiful and devoted to him. May He raise them up to witness as their godly father did for so many years.

D. J. Macaskill

The Late Mrs Buchanan, Mangersta

The subject of this obituary notice reached the advanced age of 95 years, when she went to the better country in August, 1971. We had many

cottage prayer-meetings in her home, sometimes in wild weather, but the house was very often full. She always received us with Christian kindness. Latterly she became dull of hearing, but was very patient, and bore the infirmities of old age with Christian fortitude.

She was devotedly nursed by her daughter-in-law. May God bless her and the son and other relations, and make them witnesses as Mrs Buchanan was, who "served her generation, and fell on sleep."

D. J. Macaskill

Gathan de Ghloir na Diadhachd

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 350)

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce.

Nis, anns a chomhairle, na t-òrdugh so, tha E neo-chaochlaidh-each, agus a' nì ceudna gu bràth; a' nì a tha a reir a thoile, tha e reir a thoile gu bràth, oir tha a thoile na aon ghnìomh fìor-ghlan gu'n atharrach-adh na sgàile tionndaidh; thà na Sgrìobturàn làn dhe so. Faic Salm xxxiii. 11. "Seasaidh comhairle an Tighearna gu sìorruidh, smuaintean a chridh o linn gu linn." Mar sin tha Gnàth. xix. 21, "Is lionmhor na smuaintean ann cridhe duine: ach is ì comhairle an Tighearna a sheasas." Faodaidh daoine a bhì gu h-innleachdach a sabaid an aghaidh Dhé agus a chomhairle ach cha seas e, agus sin gu bràth; agus thà'n fhìrinn so agaibh air a chur an ceill le Dia Fein, thà e agaibh bho bheul Fein." Seasaidh mo chomhairle, agus gach nì is àill leam nì mì." Isaiah xlv. 10. Nì Dia tàire air comhairle dhaoine sheasas na aghaidh agus an aghaidh a shluaigh, gu sònraichte ag innse dhoibh, Isaiah, viii. 10. Ach air son a chomhairle Fein, seasaidh sin; mar sin thà sinn a leughadh mu neo-chaochlaidheachd a chomhairle, "Uime sin air bhi do Dhia toileach air neo-chaochlaidheachd a chomhairle nochdadh na bu phailte do oighreachan a gheallaidh, dhaingnich e le mionnan e: chùm tre dha nì neo-chaochlaidheach, anns an robh e eu-comasach gu'n deanadh Dia breug, gu'm biodh againne comhfhurtachd làidir, a theich chùm dèidin gu greim a dheanamh air an dòchas a chuireadh romhain. Nì a tha againn mar acair an anama, araon cìnnreach agus daingean." Eabh. vi. 17, 18. Gabh beachd, "neo-chaochlaidheachd a chomhairle, agus dà nì neo-chaochlaidh-eachd a chomhairle dà nì neo-chaochlaidh anns an robh e eucomasach gu'n deanadh Dia breug; 's e sin, a chomhairle agus a mhionnan, agus a chomhairle air a daingneachadh le a mhionnan; air a daingneachadh le a mhionnan; air a daingneachadh, 's e sin, dha ar creideamh; cha'n ann Ann Fein, oir tha chomhairle Ann Fein cho daingnichte as eugmhais, cho maith ri le a mhionnan, agus tha

mhionnan air a chur ris, a mhàin a chùim gabhail rì ar n-anmhuineachdan, agus ann an ìsleachadh dha ar laigse; uime sin, thà e air a chur ris, "chùim gu'm biodh againn "comhfhurtachd làidir," 's e sin, dha nochdadh do oighreachan a gheallaidh. Agus mar a thà chomhairlean anns a choit-chionas, mar sin thà chomhairlean sònraichte a thaobh cor siorruidh, neo-chaochladheach mar an ceudna: "Thà bunait Dhé" (a deir an t-Abstol) a' "seasamh daingean, aig am bheil an seula so, Is aithne do an Tighearna an dream sin as leis." II Tim. ii. 19. Fodh shamhla an dà chuid bunait agus seula, an so, (mar a tha duine foghlumaichte a gabhail beachd air an àite) tha e rì thuigsinn rùn Dhé ann an taghadh chùim na beatha mhaireanach, agus thà so a seasamh cìnnreach, (tha'n t-Abstol ag ràdh) cha'n eil so ag atharrachadh na caochladh; agus a chùim na crìche ceudna tha Calvin ag ràdh air an àite. Tha'n t-Abstol (tha e'g ràdh) dhà'r gairm gu amharc air ais air taghadh Dhé, a tha e'g ainmeachadh bunait, le so a nochdadh cho daingean agus cho neo-chaochladheach 's a thà e; mar sin mar an ceudna, ann an Rom. ix. 11 "Chùim gu'm biodh roghainn Dhé a reir an taghaidh seasmhach, cha n ann o oibre, ach o'n tì a ghairmeas." Bheir Dia air a run siorruidh a thaobh an taghaidh bhi seasamh, ag seasaidh e, gu bràth. Mar sin tha Dia neo-chaochladheach na chomhairl thà chomhairlean uile saor, glic, seasmhach, cumhachdach, agus uime s cha'n urrain iad atharrach-adh. Agus so thà Calvin a gabhail mar chia sònraichte a chinn-theagaisg, 's e sin, neo-chaochladheachd Dhé 'n a chomhairlean; oir tha e mar so a labhairt. "Tha Dia," (tha e'g ràdh) a fantuinn daingean agus cìnnreach 'n a rùintean Fein, nì motha tha E air a lùbadh na air atharrachadh, an rathad so na'n rathad ud eile, mar a tha daoine bitheanta a gabhail aithreachais, agus ag atharrachadh an comhairlean, do bhrìgh gu'm bheil nithean a a tighinn na'n inntinnean nach do smuaintich iad air roimhe; agus thà iad air son sin a bhi'g atharrachadh na nithean a rinn iad, agus iarruidh iad a mach ròidean gu bhi tarruig air ais an gnìomharan fein. Agus 's e briathran a leugh mì ann an Austin, "Thà Dia," (tha e'g ràdh) ag atharrachadh oibre, ach cha'n eil a chomhairlean. O thoireadh-mid urram agus deanadh-mid aoradh do Dhia air son a neo-chaochladheachd."

4. Tha Dia neo-chaochladheach 'n a rioghachd agus na riaghladh. Thà aig Dia rioghachd agus uachdaranachd thairis air an t-saoghal uile, agus 's e'n rioghachd agus an uachdaranachd sin Aige a chòir agus an cumhachd iomlan leis am bheil E ann an seilbh air na uile mar a chuid Fein, agus mar an ceudna a dh'òrduicheas agus a riaghlas e iad mar is aill Leis, a riaghlas agus a rioghicheas E'n saoghal uile a reir comhairle a a thoile Fein, agus ann an iochdaranachd do chrìochaibh ro ghlic agus naomha Fein; uime sin thà e air a ràdh gu'm bheil E os ceann na'n uile, Rom. ix. 5. Agus os ceann na'n uile, Ephes. iv. 6, sin rà ràdh, ann an rioghachd, cumhachd, agus uachdaranachd; thà còir Aige anns na h-uile, araon pearsachan agus nithean, stàidean agus rioghachdan. Is E'n Tì is Airde, a riaghladh ann an rioghachdan dhaoine, dha'n toirt dha'n a

mhuinntir is àill leis, Daniel iv. 32. Thà E'g oibreachadh, agus thà E'g òrduchadh na h-uile nì ann an rioghachd an Fhreasdail, cho math ri ann an rioghachd na'n gràs, agus a reir comhairle a thoile Fein, Ephes. I. 11. Thà E riaghladh agus na cheannard air na h-uile. "Agus thà a rioghachd a riaghladh os ceann na'n uile." Salm ciii. 19. "Ge b'e nì bu toigh leis an Tighearna rinn e air neamh agus air talamh, anns na cuaintibh, agus anns na doimhneachdabh uile." Salm Cxxxv. 6. Nis anns an rioghachd agus an uachdaranachd so Aige, thà E neo-chaochladheach. Cha'n eil E gabhail a stigh, na stad, na fois. The E riaghladh le a chumhachd gu bràth. Rioghachd na'n àll. "Is rioghachd shiorruidh do rioghachd-sa; agus mairidh t-uachdaranachd air feadh nan uile ghinealach." Salm cxlv. 13. "Agus bheannaich mì an Tì as àirde, agus chliuthaich mì, agus thug mì onair dhà-san a thà beo gu siorruidh aig am bheil uachdaranachd 'n a h-uachdaranachd shiorruidh, agus a rioghachd o linn gu linn." Daniel iv. 34. Ah fhearaibh, ge b'e air bith a smuainticheas daoine, fathasd tha'n Tighearna a riaghladh an t-saoghail agus thà uachdaranachd os ceann na'n uile. "Thà an Tighearna a rioghachadh" (a deir an Salmadair) Salm xciii. 1. Bhà E rioghachadh, thà E rioghachadh, agus rioghaichidh E gu bràth. Tha'n latha a teachd 'n uair a bhitheas gach rioghachadh, ughdarras, agus cumhachd air a chur sios, agus sin gu bràth, eadhon uachdaranachd na'n aingeal fein, (mar a Calvin a toirt fa'n ear) gu'n a bhi'n taobh a mach dhe so. I. Cor. xv. 24. Ach thà Dia a rioghachadh gu saoghal na'n saoghal, agus cha'n eil crìoch air a rioghachd. Mar so thà E neo-chaochladheach 'n a rioghachd agus na riaghladh anns an t-saoghal, nì thà na mhisneachd mhòr do shluagh Dhé. Oh! luchd mo ghràidh, thà Dia a riaghladh an t-saoghail a nis mar anns an àm a chaidh seachad, seadh, thà E dhà riaghladh ann ar nàdur a nis mar anns an àm a chaidh seachad, Iob v. 27. Thà E riaghladh na'n uile leis an duine Criosd, aig am bheil cùram a thà gu nadurra tais, agus aig am bheil speis dà eaglais agus dà shluagh uile. Abradh-mid mar sin maille ris an t-Salm-adair, "Thà an Tighearna a rioghachadh: criothneachadh na slòigh." Salm xcix. 1. Cha'n eil Dia, cha'n urrain Dia, bhi air a chur bhar a righ-chathair agus bho rioghachd.

(R'a leantuinn).

I urge upon you . . . a nearer communion with Christ and a growing communion. There are curtains to be drawn by in Christ that we never saw, and new foldings of love in Him. I despair that ever I shall win to the far end of that love, there are so many plies in it; therefore dig deep, and sweat, and labour, and take pains for Him, and set by so much time in the day for Him as you can: He will be won by labour.

Samuel Rutherford

An Outside View

(The following letter appeared in the Parish Magazine of St. Martin's Church of England, Tipton. The writer, who is attached to Reformed principles, is the vicar of that church. The letter gives an interesting insight into the effect which our Church services may have on those who are unfamiliar with our form of worship.)

"Visiting Scotland recently gave us an opportunity to worship with a congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church, to which our host belonged. It was an instructive experience, and may be of interest to any of our readers who are not familiar with this Church and its worship. It is one of the smaller denominations in Scotland, but does consider itself to be in direct line of descent from the Church of Scotland as reformed and established in 1560. All its ministers and office-bearers must give their wholehearted assent to the Westminster Confession of Faith, a very full and excellent statement of Christian teaching drawn up by order of Parliament in the seventeenth century, when a thorough-going attempt was made to reform and purify the churches in England to bring them into closer relationship with the reformed churches in Scotland, and on the Continent. Our equivalent standard is the 39 Articles of Religion, printed at the back of the Prayer Book, but the Westminster Confession is much more detailed.

"With reference to church services, we in the Church of England work on the principle that it is permissible to use any form of worship which is not contrary to the teaching of the Bible in any way. The Free Presbyterians take the stronger line that only what is positively taught in the Bible is lawful, and if it cannot be found there then it is wrong. Thus, while we feel free to use a prayer book and hymn books and instrumental music in our services, they have none of these things. There is singing, but only of psalms, and it is without musical accompaniment, being led by a precentor. The minister prays in his own words, and there is, of course, a Bible reading and sermon. The congregation stands for the prayers and sits for singing. Even with a very numerous congregation, of all ages, there is complete silence in the church before worship begins, and when it is over, all leave silently and only speak when they are outside. There is no visible personal prayer such as we are used to, on coming into church, or before leaving. This is because of our Lord's words in Matthew 6:5. And there are no flowers!

"Now, however much we may raise our eyebrows at all this I think those who take worship seriously will realise that there is food for thought here. I myself am far from agreeing with all the practices mentioned above, but I am bound to say that here are people who manifest a wholesome fear of God, to whom worship is a very wonderful and solemn thing, and who count it of the utmost importance to conduct it in a way which will be

pleasing to God. And wouldn't we wish all that to be true of ourselves?

"To take just that small point, mentioned above, of kneeling or bowing the head for a moment when we take our place in church; it is so normal to us. We shouldn't think of missing it. Yet has it become a formality? (One can't help noticing how often, when two or more people kneel together, they usually get up together. Were their prayers exactly the same length? Or was it a formality?) If so, then it is simply for appearance' sake and our Lord's words in Matthew 6:5 do apply. Perhaps our Free Presbyterian friends have a point?

"There is a lot to be said, I think, for the way we read the Bible in the Anglican services. Both Old and New Testaments are always included, readings are often consecutive from week to week, and the reader going to the Lectern helps to remind us of the solemnity of hearing God's Word. We miss those things in other churches, such as the one we are speaking of now. But when it comes to the Sermon, the Free Presbyterians leave us in no doubt as to their reverence for the Scriptures. As with ourselves the sermon is designed to explain and apply a verse or passage or theme of the Bible. The difference is that in their service the minister preaches for anything from 45 minutes to one hour! And let me emphasise that he includes nothing in the way of elaborate language, padding or illustrations. It is all direct, closely reasoned, and detailed teaching and exhortation. And what you may think even more remarkable is that it is followed with the closest attention throughout by all the congregation. Incidentally, it is just the same at the mid-week meeting. At one of these which we were able to attend, the minister spent about 50 minutes explaining two verses of a psalm to a well-filled church hall, with many children and young people present. They clearly expect and want this kind of ministry.

"One of the secrets of this, of course, as you will no doubt be thinking, is that it all depends upon what you are used to. Yes indeed! And amongst the people of whom we are speaking the utmost importance is attached to worship and Christian teaching being given within the family circle. Any father who is a church member, and does not conduct daily worship in his own home, with all his family present, is regarded as being guilty of serious misdemeanour, and is likely to be rebuked by the church leaders. (The Free Presbyterians maintain godly discipline within their church unlike us where so often 'every man does that which is right in his own eyes').

"Likewise of course, it is normal for the entire family to be present at the Sabbath Service and the mid-week meeting. It is a truly fine sight to see not only the parents but the young people — some very young indeed — actually *listening* to sermons of the kind I have mentioned above. 'Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it.' And many in our Church of England are telling us that we must have quizzes and pictures and models in our pulpits, to keep not only children, but adults, interested for 10 minutes or so!

"Yes, there is much about our Anglican way of worship which one feels

is right and helpful. The more one sees of other churches, the more one realises the value of our Book of Common Prayer — provided we are always on our guard against formal and thoughtless use of it. Our hymns can contribute a real uplift and warmth in the service — so long as we remember that they are only human compositions, not to be placed on a level with the words of the Bible; and provided we do not utter words of profound devotion just because we enjoy the tune to which they are set. Music, flowers and other details can, each in their place, play a helpful part in making a suitable setting for spiritual worship. There can be, perhaps, a variety and fulness in our form of service which is harder to find in that described above.

“Nevertheless, one is left with the feeling that, if we are willing, there is still much for us to learn about worship; and that we still fall short of expressing as clearly as our friends above do, that, (to quote the Westminster Catechism which they use):

‘Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God,
and fully to enjoy Him for ever.’”

Book Review

Sermons to the Spiritual Man

by W. G. T. Shedd. A reprint by the Banner of Truth Trust, 1972. £1.50

This book was first published in 1884. The Banner of Truth Trust has done what is for the glory of God, and of the Redeemer, in having this volume reprinted. The print is excellent, even for failing eyesight. The Lord own and bless the labours of the Trust! C. H. Spurgeon reviewed this volume, in his day. Reference to this is on the dust-cover — with a photograph of Dr Shedd. It would be well if such a portrait were not only on the dust-cover, but reproduced in a suitable place in the volume. This notice of the book is just to direct attention to this issue of the volume. Dr Shedd, prior to the publication of this volume, compiled a volume of discourses, having the title of “Sermons to the Natural Man.” It might be well — where possible — to read this volume of Sermons — or some of them, as the last two — before endeavouring to read through — and prayerfully follow — these sermons now reprinted.

An ancient proverb may be quoted regarding these discourses of Shedd “to the Spiritual Man,” — namely, “Hasten slowly.” What great grace must have been on Dr Shedd in preparing these discourses! May any who have — or may obtain — a copy have grace reigning in the precious soul — that treasure may be laid up which moth cannot corrupt, nor thief break through to steal! Perhaps the best course for us regarding such a volume of “beaten gold,” and containing, spiritually, such “beaten oil,” is to give a few quotations with a view to whetting the appetite of readers.

Here is a quotation from p.7. "There is no true knowledge of the Creator, but a practical and sanctifying knowledge . . . True meditation, thus proceeding from filial love — brings the soul into intercourse and communion with its object." Let us note that we must have filial love prior to true meditation. From p.10, we quote: "There is no thinking that gives rest and satisfaction, and joy to the soul, but thinking upon the glorious and blessed God. All other thought ultimately baffles and tires us. Heaven comes into the human mind, not through poetry, or philosophy, or science, or art, — not through any secular knowledge, but through religion." On p.113, Shedd states, "Religion is worship, and no creature who is destitute of a worshipping disposition is religious. Morality — or the practice of virtue — is only the shell of religion." When we come to p.176, he has much to leave on record concerning the "Father's house," with its many mansions. "The phrase, 'many mansions,' denotes that there is a definite and appropriate residence beyond the tomb for finite, and distinctly personal spirits; a residence in which they can unfold their powers in a well-defined and self-conscious manner; in which they can think, and know, and feel, as vividly as they do here; in which, as happy individuals, they can look upon the face of a personal God, and worship Him; in which as blessed intelligences, they can apprehend his excellence, and glorify him for evermore." What follows the above should refresh the longing soul. Dr Shedd, according to the old proverb, was "over there, and saw," and returned, in a spiritual way at any rate, to give a report of the land.

On p.304, there is an edifying account given as to the difference between such men as Lord Bacon and Richard Porson. Lord Bacon's words remind one of portions of Ralph Erskine's "Believer's Riddle"; "I'm in the way — the way's in me." Richard Porson did not know what to make of Bacon's paradoxes. A quotation from pp.309-10 will suffice to bring to a close these references to Shedd's sermons. This quotation answers the question, "Who is the spiritual man, whom he has in view in his title?" His own reply — flowing from his own experience — and according to the Scriptures — is that a true believer has "a sense of guilt, and a cordial acceptance of Christ's atonement, a desire to be justified by his precious blood, a peaceful confidence in God's righteousness, and method of justifying a sinner — this, is the first and infallible token of a new heart, and a right spirit." Shedd adds: "Then, secondly, a weariness of sin, 'a groaning, being burdened,' under its lingering presence, and remaining power — a growing desire to be entirely delivered from it, and a purer simpler hungering after holiness — these are the other evidences of regeneration." "The 'new man' in Christ Jesus will eventually slay stone-dead the 'old man' of sin."

Dr Shedd must have had what Bunyan in a certain place, terms 'golden hours' as he composed these discourses. May such as peruse this book have, by the Lord's free grace, 'golden hours' also!

If there is a reprint, as there likely may be, the printers might add a

query mark at the top of p.14, after the words, "too much." On p.275, 1.15 fr top — n.b. "meritoriousness" and on p.359, 1.2 fr. ft., "io" instead of "oi."

D. A. Macf.

Church Notes

Induction in London

On Tuesday, 23rd October, 1973, the Southern Presbytery met in St. Michael's Hall, London SW1 at 7pm in order to induct Rev. M. MacInnes, formerly minister of Ullapool, to the pastoral charge of the Free Presbyterian Church congregation in London.

In the absence of the Moderator, Rev. D. Campbell, Edinburgh, Rev. L. MacLeod, Greenock was appointed Moderator pro tem. After the usual proclamation had been made at the door, and no objection made to Mr MacInnes's life and doctrine, the Moderator pro tem conducted Public Worship, and preached an appropriate sermon on the words in Acts, 20:19: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind." Public Worship being ended, the Clerk pro tem read the Narrative of Proceedings. Mr MacInnes returned satisfactory answers to the questions appointed to be put to ministers on their induction to a pastoral charge. He then signed the Formula in the presence of the congregation. The Moderator pro tem, after engaging in prayer, did by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the name of the Presbytery, induct Mr MacInnes as minister to the pastoral charge of the London Congregation, and the brethren in the Presbytery gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Rev. I. R. Tallach then addressed Mr MacInnes in suitable terms on entering into his new charge, and the Rev. D. MacLean exhorted the congregation with respect to their duties. A letter was also read from Rev. D. Campbell expressing his regret at not being present, and conveying his good wishes to the newly inducted minister and congregation. This part of the meeting of the Presbytery, with the congregation, was concluded by the singing of Psalm 122 from the 6th verse and the Benediction. The congregation then had an opportunity of shaking hands at the door with their new minister.

There was about one hundred people present on this occasion, and the proceedings were conducted in a spirit of warmth with deep interest being shown by those present. It is the wish and prayer of the Presbytery that the ministry thus begun in this large city will be abundantly blessed by the Lord, so that Mr MacInnes may be an instrument in the hand of the Head of the Church of bringing many souls out of darkness into the marvellous light of the everlasting Gospel.

Rev. D. MacLean,

Clerk, pro tem.

Rev. M. MacSween,

Clerk.

Concerted Prayer

The proposals adopted by the Synod in May 1972 requested believers to set aside time on Saturday and Sabbath evenings for prayer and that at such times they be exercised regarding the following matters:

(1) The confession of sin.

(2) The acknowledgment of our helplessness to better any aspect of the circumstances of God's cause.

(3) The imploring of divine mercy and grace —

(a) To effect a revival of the graces of the Spirit in the hearts of the godly.

(b) To visit the Christless in the power of His Spirit, blessing His word to the conviction and conversion of their souls.

In addition, it was proposed that the first Sabbath of January, April, July and October be given over in a special way to prayer for revival, and that those conducting public worship on these days keep this in view.

So far as topics for concerted prayer are concerned we would again suggest prayer for the ingathering of God's ancient people, the Jews; that the time might soon come when they will look to the Messiah whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him. Events in the Middle East in recent times thrust anew upon our attention Israel's plight and Israel's need. We cannot hope for true reconciliation between Jew and Arab until they meet together and find peace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another pressing topic for concerted prayer is the suffering part of the Church of God, persecuted under the oppressing heel of Communism and Romanism. Let us bear before the Lord upon our hearts at a Throne of grace these persecuted and tried followers of the Saviour, pleading that the Lord would, in His mercy, bring to an end their sufferings at the hands of cruel and wicked men, or, if that is not His will, to give them grace and strength to stand in the evil day that they might witness a good confession on the side of the Lord Jesus Christ, as many of them have been enabled to do already by His grace.

London Communion Services, December 1973

It is hoped, the Lord willing, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered in the London Congregation on the third Sabbath in December, 16th December.

The following services will be held in the places indicated.

Thursday 13th December at 7pm in the Norfolk Room, Caxton Hall; Friday 14th at 7pm in the Alliance Hall; Saturday 3.30pm and Prayer meeting 6.00pm in St Michael's Hall; Sabbath 16th December at 11am and 6.30pm in St. Michael's Hall (opposite Victoria Coach Station); Monday 17th at 7pm in the Alliance Hall.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald, Fort William, and Rev. J. W. Ross, Lochcarron, are expected to assist at these services. (DV).

FP and YP Magazine Prices

We regret that, owing to increased printing costs, the price of the FP Magazine will have to be raised to 10p a copy and the price of the YP Magazine to 7p a copy from 1st January 1974. Intimation of the new subscription rates will appear in the next issue of the Magazine (DV).

We trust that our readers will bear with this additional burden at a time of quickly rising prices, and that they will understand that the Magazine Committee had little alternative in the circumstances.

Synod Proceedings

It is expected that the Synod Proceedings will be ready for distribution to congregations before the end of the year.

Communions

The List of Communions on the inside front cover of the Magazine has been corrected for 1974. Would ministers kindly intimate any additional corrections required.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, F.C.M.A., 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 0HE, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

Sustentation Fund: M. R. MacKay, Bettyhill, £2 per R.W.W.M.; Ontario Friends, \$5; Mrs Robertson, Leven, £4.

Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund: A Friend of the Cause, £3 per R.W.W.M.; Mrs E. M. MacLean, Applecross, £5; Ontario Friends, \$15.

Home Mission Fund: M. R. MacKay, Bettyhill, £2 per R.W.W.M.; Anon., Helensburgh postcode, £2.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Ness Congregation, £5; Friend of the Cause, £2.

On behalf of Trinitarian Bible Society: A Friend of the Cause, £5.

Dominions and Overseas Fund: Miss I. MacDonald, Kindersley, Sask, £20.24.

Home of Rest Fund: Mrs A. Campbell, Glenfield, Struan, Skye, £10.

The Publications Treasurer, Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, C.A., Hilton of Cadboll, Fearn, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Free Distribution Magazine Fund: "For the Lord's work and in memory of my dear mother," Delhi, Ontario P.Mk., £4; Mrs I. Nicholson, 80p; J. R. Munro, Lindsay, Ontario, £5.80; M.G., £1.

The Treasurers of the following congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations —

Auckland — L. Gillanders, Stratford, \$100; M. D. McGrail, Wanganui, \$40; J. MacRae, Auckland, \$100, all per E. A. Christensen.

Stirling, Perth and Dundee — Inverness Friend, £10 for congregational Purposes per A. N. MacRae; Anon., £60; Friend, £2; Friend, Inverness, £5 all for Church Extension per Rev. I.R.T.

Tain and Fearn — Anon., £1 per K.R.; Friend, Staffin, Skye, £5 per Rev. J.N. both for Manse Fund; A Friend from Skye, £10 per Miss A. MacAngus.

Portree — A Friend, £10 for Church Renovation per A. MacD.; Interested Portree Friends, £5 in Church Plate; £5 and £3 in Church Plate; Two Portree Friends, £5 per F.M., all for Communion Expenses; Mrs MacKinnon, Willowbank, Portree, £5; Miss K. Gillies, Park House, Portree, £5, both for Door Collection; Mr Budding, Holland, £10 for Foreign Mission per Miss MacA.; Mrs MacLean, Sconser, £6 for Sustentation Fund; Anon., Braes, £3 per F.M.; A Friend, Braes, £5, both for Church Bus; A Friend, Braes, £5 for Church Renovation.

Raasay — Friends, Portree, £5; Friend, Portree, £5, both for Manse Extension per J. M MacLeod; Mrs MacRae, Osaig, £6 for Sustentation Fund.

Strath — M.G., £3 for Sustentation Fund per Rev. S. F. Tallach; M.G., £2 per Rev. S. F. Tallach; Envelope in Plate, £5, both for Luib Car Fund; Envelope in Plate, £2 for Communion Expenses; Envelope in Plate, £2; Miss MacLean, Sconser, £5 per Rev. F. Tallach; M.N., £3 per D. MacKay, all for Sustentation Fund.

Tomatin — Wellwisher, £1 for Communion Expenses per D. C. Mackintosh.

Dumbarton — M. Macleod, North Tolsta, £4; Envelope in plate, £5; Anon., £1; Mr & Mrs Balfour, £5; Mrs R. MacDonald, £5, both per A. J. Morrison; M. MacKenzie, Airdrie, £3, all for Church Manse Fund.

Aberdeen — J. MacPherson, £1 for Communion Expenses; "Rorandle," £1 for Dominion and Overseas Fund; "Rorandle," £2; Anon., £5 per M.M.; Anon., Balintore, £5; D.McK., £5 per W.J.F., all for Manse Fund.

London — Friend, Inverness, £10; Anon., £5; Friend, Fort William, £15; Friend, Dingwall, £5, all for London Church & Manse Building Fund per Rev. M. MacInnes.

Glendale — Absent Subscriber, £4; A Friend, £3 per Rev. J.C., both for Sustentation Fund.

North Harris — Friend, Kyles-Scalpay, £5 (£3 for Manse Kitchenette and £2 for minister's car expenses); Friend, Tarbert, £1 for minister's car expenses, both per Rev. A.McK.; In Tarbert collection plate, £5 for Congregational Purposes; Friend, Tarbert, £2 (£1 for Manse kitchenette and £1 for minister's car expenses); Mrs Macdonald, Leacklea, £5 (£4 for Manse kitchenette and £1 for minister's car expenses); Friend, Tarbert, £10 (£7 for Manse kitchenette and £3 for minister's car expenses), all per Rev. A.McK.; Mrs Macleod, Meavag, £5 for Communion Expenses per J.F.; Friend, Tarbert, £1; Friend, Tarbert, £1; Friend, Kindibeg, £1.50, all for minister's car expenses per Rev. A.McK.

Lochinver — A Friend, £2.50 for Sustentation Fund per M. MacDonald; £2.50 for Home Mission.

North Uist — Two Friends, £100 for Hougharry Mission House Repairs; Wellwisher, £10; Friend, North Uist, £10; Friend, £5, all for Congregational Purposes; Stornoway Friend, £8 D. & M., Stornoway, £6, both for Car Maintenance; Anon. in collection plate at Vatten Communion, £5 for minister's car, all above per Rev. A. Morrison; Tigharry Friend, £5; Mrs Morag MacMillan, Aberfoyle, £3, both for Sustentation Fund; Mrs C. MacDonald, Hosta, £5 for Church Heating; Portree Friend, £5 for Foreign Mission Fund per Rev. A. Morrison.

Greenock — A Lochcarron Friend, £5 per Rev. I. MacLeod; In Loving Memory, £10, both for Car Fund; A Friend, Greenock, £100 for Sustentation Fund.

Dornoch — Anon., £10 for Communion Expenses per D.M.