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Upon This Rock I will build my Church

It was after Peter's ingenuous and forthright confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that the Saviour said: "I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail it." Consequently it was on the Rock of Peter's confession and not on Peter himself as a person, as the Roman Catholic Church avers, that the Church was to be built.

On what a sure foundation the Church was to be built when the foundation was Christ. How strong and immovable! Built on a less sure foundation the Church would be exposed to defeat from her enemies and to ultimate destruction. This is not so, however. Christ is the foundation and He is the Rock of Ages. It is upon Christ in all the glory of His Person as the eternal Son of the everlasting Father, and in all the meritoriousness of His finished work, that the foundation of the Church was to be laid. If this glorious superstructure of the Church was to be built, then that Church must have an adequate foundation. And in the Scriptures we read that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

What a promise is given concerning the Church when it is said by the Saviour that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her! This means that all the powers of darkness united together against the Church will not succeed in destroying her. It was at the very time when the powers of darkness appeared to be enjoying their greatest success, that is, when the Saviour was hanging upon the tree of Calvary in the midst of His sufferings — it was then that the foundation of the Church was being securely laid.

This, however, does not mean that the forces of darkness have ceased their attack upon the Church. As long as the Church is in the world, she

will be exposed to the assaults of Satan and all his hosts. These attacks will be relentless and persistent. It is foolish to expect otherwise. The nature of the kingdom of darkness is not to change. It is true that for a season at the millenium Satan will be chained and not have the freedom he has at present, but we are not to assume that even then he will be totally inactive. Restraints will be placed on him for a time. Yet at last he will break out in all his accustomed venom and malignity in opposition to the Church of God and re-establish his kingdom for a short season before the end comes.

How glorious the Church will be, nevertheless, in her millenial glory! Then especially will she shine forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." And how glorious will she appear in that day when Christ shall present her before the Father. In view of this, let us not despair in this dark day when the enemies of the Church and of Zion's King appear so formidable. Let us remember that the Church's ultimate triumph is sure. Her King who goes before her on the white horse will lead her on to final victory over all her enemies.

Sermon

by Rev. J.A. MacDonald, Fort William

"And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? . . . Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached." Luke 7, 19, 22.

In the part of the chapter read there are two fruitful fields in which the Church of God may glean in times of famine and distress. First, there is set before us the supernatural faith of the centurion when his servant, whom he so dearly loved was "ready to die". We also see his gracious humility as he declares. "I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof." This has been the language of the people of God in all ages, "unworthy". "unworthy".

There is, second, the incident at the city called Nain as men carried out what was mortal of the only son of a poor widowed mother. Christ

touchingly addressed her, saying: "Weep not." He it is who can both heal and speak comfortably to His people.

*"Those that are broken in their heart,
and grieved in their minds,
He healeth, and their painful wounds
he tenderly up-binds."*

Psalm 147:3

Indeed, all this is a fulfillment of another precious truth — "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Is. 66:13. Some have very few friends in the world, which causes them often to groan within themselves, as David did when he said:

*"I like an owl in desert am,
that nightly there doth moan;
I watch, and like a sparrow am
on the house-top alone."*

Psalm 102:6

However they have a friend in the person of Jesus Christ — "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Prov. 18:24.

In considering verses 19-22 of this portion of God's Word, there are two matters predominantly before us:

- I John's message to Jesus — "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"
- II Jesus' reply — "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; etc."

I John's message to Jesus

One could never visualise such a cloud of dark unbelief coming over the soul of one who once proclaimed on Divine Authority in the hearing of others: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Yet he was but a man. True faith is always tested in many kinds of furnaces. This was true in the case of Abraham before the promise of a son was realised. The late Rev. Neil MacIntyre, Edinburgh, often referred to unbelief, as a "cruel murderer", and the late Rev. D. MacFarlane, Dingwall spoke of it as, "heart atheism".

One cannot but admire the disciples obedience to their revered master, John and the sense of duty, and responsibility by which they were actuated. They did not suggest that others more qualified than they were should convey such an important message. Immediately they proceeded on their way. A good lesson for us to learn. God's promise to Israel of old

was: "If ye be willing and obedient; ye shall eat the good of the land" Isaiah 1:19.

Hypocrites, Pharisees, and worldlings were never troubled with unbelief. No, never. Both Judas and Demas never doubted, but that they themselves were on their way to Heaven; whereas they were on their way to the abyss of a lost eternity, where there is the darkness of unbelief and despair for ever and ever. In the Old Testament we find the Church of God fiercely assailed by unbelief; as she complained:—

*Is't true that to be gracious
the Lord forgotten hath?
And that his tender mercies he
hath shut up in his wrath?*

Psalm 77:9

Blessed be the name of the Lord that this is not true, for He hath promised, "I will never, never leave thee nor forsake thee". Again the prophet Isaiah says: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee" Isa. 49:15. Paul challenges or resists unbelief when he says "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Romans 8: 35-39.

It is as if John were instructing his disciples to ask Jesus, "Art thou He of whom angels declared: 'Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord'" Luke 2: 10, 11. Oh, may the Lord grant yourself the simple faith of godly Esther, when she cast herself wholly on the mercy of God in Christ. "If I perish, I perish", she declared. The devil's aim is to confirm all Adam's race in unbelief, Atheism, and Romanism. In this he is reaping a rich harvest in our dark day. However, the Lord through and by the preached gospel is delivering poor sinners here and there as 'brands from the fire'. John and his disciples, together with many others, both young and old were among those blessed by Christ for eternity. Yes, He is adding daily to the Church, such as should be saved. The Lord will have His own. O, may our souls be terrified at the thought of the death-bed of unbelievers.

Rev. M. Gillies, Stornoway, used to speak of Thomas's squabbles with unbelief over which he could not get the upperhand. Christ came to his vindication, however. The other disciples expostulated with him by way of assuring him that they themselves had seen the risen Lord, but to no avail. Unbelief is "a murderer indeed." At last he laid down his own

requirements before he would believe. "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." John 20:25. As Christ showed him His hands and His side, unbelief got its death-blow, so that Thomas emerged from his doubting dungeon never to return there again. He now believes that Christ has risen from the grave: he now professes Christ publicly anew when he exclaims: "My Lord, and my God."

"Oh, my dear disciples", John says in effect, "go and ask Him, Art thou He who spoke so faithfully to the woman of Samaria at the well, which made her a new creature for evermore"? Are you here this morning assailed by unbelief, as to whether you came in by the door of the sheep, or "climbed up some other way"? Has Satan or unbelief ever suggested to you that it was the eloquence of the minister or missionary or elder, that moved you to a realised sense of your need of Christ? As a proof to the contrary, dear friends, that it was the hand of Zerubbabel, the alone Saviour of sinners, that laid the foundation stone, and began the good work in your soul; you, like John are keeping your head against the streams and the currents that meet you in this vale of tears. Job-like you say: "though He slay me yet will I trust in Him".

II Jesus's reply

"Go and tell John . . . (1) how that the blind see" All are spiritually blind by nature; but notice, "The Lord doth give the blind their sight . . ." The man on whom Jesus bestowed sight at Bethsaida did well in the kindness of the Lord. At first, he could see only "men as trees walking", but now he is enabled to "see every man clearly". Many of those once blind are now seeing and professedly declaring, "I know that my Redeemer liveth". Others in the ways of the Lord, as they see His beauty and holiness, sing for joy:

*"Thou fairer art than sons of men;
into thy lips is store
Of grace infused; God therefore thee
hath blessed for evermore."*

Psalm 45:2

The woman with the alabaster box saw His worthiness, excellency and beauty, so that she did not grudge her precious ointment to be poured upon His blessed head. Did she live to herself she would have sold her ointment for a handsome sum, but she broke the box on His head, washed His feet with her tears, showing her love and faithfulness to Him. Paul also saw well, notwithstanding his being blind for so many years.

The scales were removed from off his eyes so that with confidence he said: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." II Tim. 1:12. I wish I were seeing as well as the Church was, you are saying, when she said: "My beloved is mine and I am His," and added, "my beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand". However, my hope is that I shall be His in the day when He will make up His jewels. Tell John that "the blind see"; that is, that the Holy Spirit is efficaciously applying the eye salve, thus enabling the Church to believe the promise — "He will keep the feet of His saints; while the wicked shall be silent in darkness" I Sam 2:9. His dear ones, blind and all as they feel themselves to be, hope they can truthfully say, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind now I see."

(2) "the lame walk". Do not all God's people feel lame: Yes, but this is the portrait we have of them in God's Word, "They go from strength to strength, everyone of them in Sion appeareth before God". This kind of lameness causes them to cry; "Lord, increase our faith," — the little spark that is there, so that we might make Heaven of it. Remember, poor lame one, that he has promised "to carry the lambs in His bosom", and you feel like one of those weak ones.

No one can adequately explain the joy that lame persons have when strength is restored again to their broken limbs and feeble knees. O, the joy of the man at the beautiful gate of the temple, upon discovering that he could now walk, when Peter took him by the hand. "And he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God". Acts 3:8. Notice, dear friends, that it was not to the vanities and pleasures of the world he turned, but entered into the temple to prove the sincerity of his cure, and to show his appreciation of what the Lord had done for him.

Who was more lame than poor Mephibosheth on his crutches, yet he was at the King's Table, as welcome as any guest there. Hold on, my lame friend, your faith shall stand all tests as sure as Abraham's did. We knew many of His lame ones, who never got that little strength to profess His name publicly in the world. This was a very sore source of grief to them at the end. The candle, however, was lit in their souls, while it shone so dimly. Their lameness, together with the power of the evil one, prevented them from doing their duty. They are at the Table above, no doubt.

Again we have the case of Hobab who seemed very lame indeed, while Moses reasoned with him thus: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us and we will do

thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Numb. 10:29. It is obvious from the Truth that Hobab went with them in face of all opposition. Cast in your lot with the people of God as Ruth did though Orpah went back to Moab to worship her false gods. It was Ruth's attachment to Naomi that caused her to say: "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God" Ruth 1:10.

Remember, dear friends, that it is the lame that take the prey. O, what a sweet promise. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God". The lame man at the pool of Bethesda many times endeavoured to enter the pool but in vain. He must have felt very lame indeed. Great must have been his amazement the day the Lord Jesus Christ visited the pool and commanded him: "Rise take up thy bed and walk." Some are so lame that they are all "their lifetime subject to bondage".

(3) "The lepers are cleansed." Miracles have been performed, because there was no cure known for leprosy then, but, as Jeremiah said, 'Is there anything too hard for the Lord?' Oh, no, thanks be to His name. David was a poor leper in himself as he declared:

*For a disease that loathsome is
so fills my loins with pain
That in my weak and weary flesh
no soundness doth remain.*

Psalm 38:7

Who but the Holy Spirit could have suggested to the poor leper to make his case known to the Lord Jesus Christ. He reasoned with Him: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean". "I will be thou clean", replied Jesus. If not cleansed they must remain unclean forever, because nothing can enter into heaven that defileth, as it is written, "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" Rev. 22:5. None of us could have any hope of entering heaven apart from the efficacy that is in the blood that was poured out on Calvary's Cross. We are told of those who have entered in; "They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

I once attended a deathbed with Rev. James MacLeod, Greenock. He asked the dying man; "And what is your hope for eternity?" In reply he stated, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin". Mr

MacLeod immediately replied, "That will do, my dear friend. Goodbye, I hope to meet you at God's right hand." How immaculately clean they shall appear on the great day of judgment when Christ will present His bride a glorious church, "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." She will be glorious beyond all description; fit to enter into heaven itself, to sing there that part of the song of the redeemed: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5:12. Yes, the lepers are cleansed.

(4) "The deaf hear, and the dead are raised." Good news for John in his low condition. Sin made us all deaf, but God can open our ears to listen to His gracious invitations, such as, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden and I will give you rest". The woman of Samaria heard Him when he so solemnly reasoned with her regarding her past life. She desired that others should hear Him too, that their ears might be opened to the things that matter. She went and expostulated with the men in the city: "Come, see a man, that told me all things that ever I did".

Zaccheus was among them, when he climbed into the sycamore tree where he heard this call; "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thine house". Deaf Saul of Tarshish on his way to Damascus heard His penetrating call: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me", words which went with power to his heart, when the good work was begun in him. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them". Many, by this time, were brought out of darkness and quickened to newness of life. Dead souls were raised in their thousands on the day of Pentecost, to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ, to hold up the banner of the Truth, to declare with David, as he had his feet firmly established upon the rock, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." Ps 66:6.

(5) "To the poor the gospel is preached". This seems to suggest that the Saviour acted as He did at the marriage at Cana of Galilee, keeping the good wine to the end, so to speak. The Gospel is the sweetest music or news you, yourself, ever heard, I believe. This is as if Jesus said to those disciples of John: 'Here is the golden key to the dark dungeon in which my servant John is; read this to him, and his iron chains of unbelief shall be unloosed.' O, what a tonic is the gospel to God's people. John, by his comforting message, "that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached", was greatly lifted up in his soul; and doubtless determined in the strength of grace, to adhere more steadfastly than ever to the pure

doctrine of God's Word, along with worship, discipline, and practice of the church of God.

Who, but the Lord, can raise up faithful ministers and people. A blessed day for Scotland, the day the Lord raised up Rev Donald MacFarlane and Rev Donald Macdonald, in 1893, in defence of the gospel, when the Declaratory Act Free Church abandoned the old path. Mr MacFarlane often stated that it was not for himself alone he made this stand, but especially in order that the generations following should have the unadulterated gospel intact in every pulpit, for the good of never-dying souls. We never had more need than now of adhering faithfully to that priceless legacy left us by them, 'as we see the day darkening'. It is not without a reason that we are left the exhortation " . . . Be ye faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life". Rev. 2:10.

Oh, well did the blessed Physician know the kind of message which would gladden the heart of His faithful servant, and also blow away the thick mist of unbelief which was cleaving to his soul; " . . . that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached". O, the message was sweet to him, as he drew nigh to his sojourn in prison, facing a cruel death. When assailed by unbelief you have often said: "If only I got another draught out of the well of Bethlehem, as I did at the first, I would be a happy person." This is precisely Job's condition: "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me" Job 29:2. It is God's prerogative to give or to withhold, therefore seek to acquiesce in His will having the church's faith, "For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death". Psalm 48:14.

Excessive Adornment in Dress

by Rev. James S. Sinclair.

The subject of dress is one that calls for attention in the times in which we live. It is admitted on many hands that society is at present on the down grade, and it is quite apparent that the downward movement is not confined to the region of the invisible, but appears openly in a variety of forms. One of these forms, we think, is excessive adornment in dress. So widely prevalent has excess in this direction become that not only are light and profane worldlings distinguished for the vanity of their attire, but also many people who are members of churches, and profess to follow

Christ. Now, this ought not so to be. In fact, vain attire does not become the man or woman of common sense. How much less does it become those who profess to be dead to the world and its follies and alive unto God through Jesus Christ? Apart from all subordinate considerations, we direct attention to the explicit testimony of the Word of God in favour of the utmost sobriety of apparel. Observe first, the judgment which the Lord of hosts declares against the daughters of Zion for their sin and vanity in respect of dress and adornment. "Moreover, the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel (embroidered robes), and the mantles, and the wimples (cloaks), and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. And it shall come to pass that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well-set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty" (Is. iii. 16-24). These are the words not of man, but of God, and we would do well to lay them to heart in these days lest the same judgment should descend upon us. Again, in the New Testament there are positive and minute injunctions as to modesty of apparel. The apostle Paul says "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim. ii. 9, 10). The apostle here expressly forbids "costly array" not to speak of that which is showy. It is evident, therefore, that they who expend much in dress, plain or otherwise, are disobeying the apostolic command. Further, the apostle Peter gives a similar injunction, "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves (1 Peter iii. 4-5). Let us not forget that these are the words not

merely of the apostles, but of the Holy Ghost, and therefore we are bound to respect them as possessing the authority of God.

Now, a word or two as to objections that are sometimes raised when plainness of dress is advocated. Some say, "Oh, if the heart is right, one's dress does not make much difference. We should be engaged chiefly in examining our hearts." To this it may be replied that it is invariably a sure proof the heart is wrong in important respects when vain attire is indulged in, and also that in the large majority of cases it is a real sign that the heart is not right at all. No one can consistently claim credit for anxiety as to the state of his or her heart who is not equally anxious to cleanse and reform outward behaviour according to the directions of the Word of God. It is also clear that when people wilfully disobey the divine commands about apparel which may easily be got rid of, they are not endeavouring to get the heart put right, which is a much more difficult matter. It is by the outward bearing and demeanour that persons are known in the world, and in vain does the tongue speak of Christ and religion, when the head and the whole body speak of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Another objection sometimes brought forward is that some good people have been or are showy rather than plain in their dress. What we have however, chiefly to attend to is not the example of men, but the precept of the Word of God. The best of people may err, and are therefore not infallible guides. But the fact is that in the past the great body of people professing piety were exceedingly plain in their apparel. A distinction could be observed between the Church and the world. Now the distinction has to a large extent disappeared. It is told that on one occasion a girl went to a woman of eminent piety professing concern for the state of her soul. The latter simply looked up to the girl's head, and beholding it adorned, said, "Lassie, the devil is only making a fool of ye, speaking about religion and all these flowers on your head." It may thus be seen how the holy women of old time regarded adornment in dress. It is also affirmed by members of the female sex that it is exceedingly difficult to get the vast majority of dressmakers to make plain attire. But who is to reform the dressmaking if persons tamely submit to any kind of attire that is made? This objection only springs from a lack of moral courage on the part of the objectors. Another, and last objection we shall mention is the common one, "Are we to dress differently from other people and make ourselves conspicuous?" Yes, if you are to follow Christ and to have that modesty which becomes His "peculiar people." And you who make no profession of Christ be plain in your apparel that you may not grieve the Spirit of God, nor the hearts of those who desire that all

things should be done decently and in order according to the rules of His Word.

In conclusion, it may be said that it is generally at times that people should clothe themselves with the utmost modesty that they are most vain and gaudy. We consider it to be nothing short of a desecration of the Sabbath, and a profanation of the house and worship of God for people on such a day, and in such circumstances, to appear in showy dress. This may seem strange doctrine to those who make the Lord's day the time, and the house of God the stage, for exhibiting their flowers and finery. But it should be remembered that sackcloth and ashes would become sinners infinitely better in the presence of a holy God. It is further most shocking to see persons in light attire approach a communion table, where the death of the Son of God is showed forth, and where it would become sinners to mourn as one that mourneth for an only son, and be in bitterness as for a first-born. The Spirit of God is undoubtedly grieved by the vain attire of worshippers in the public assemblies of His Church. It is said that many years ago in the north of Scotland there was an awakening among a number of young people under the preaching of the late Rev. Peter Davidson, of Arran, who was at that time a missionary. One Sabbath a gaudily dressed young woman appeared in the congregation. Her appearance caught and fascinated the attention of the young. The awakening was sensibly checked, spiritual impressions declined, and the same hopeful signs were not to be seen. The subject may now be left to the serious consideration of our readers who, in their several places and stations, ought to set a good example in the matter treated of. We subjoin an excellent extract from a sermon by Dr. Thomas Manton, one of the eminent Puritan divines of England, and also a Modern Protest, which deal with this subject.

Dr. Thomas Manton on Dress

Dr. Manton in discoursing upon Titus ii. 11-14 (vol. 16) takes occasion to speak of sobriety in dress, and concludes with the following considerations:—

1. Consider, curiosity in clothes argues deformity of mind; a godly, serious, humble Christian is above these things. Therefore how can we choose but think that a man or woman hath vanity in his heart that is so clothed with it upon his back? Look, as plasters argue a wound or sore, so do these exotic and vain attires argue a wound and blot in the soul; that there is pride, vanity, and levity there. Clemens Alexandrimus observes that the Lacedemonians (heathen) permitted only harlots, and infamous

women, and common prostitutes to go in gorgeous attire. Clothes then, are the flag and ensign which pride hangs out, and the nest of wantonness.

2. To be proud of clothes is to be proud of our own shame. Before sin came in man did not need a garment. Look, as the sun is adorned with light it needs no trimming and ornament, so man in innocency was adorned with grace, and needed no other robe; but when he sinned he needed garments. So then he that is proud of his clothes is but proud of the rags with which his wounds are bound up. Clothes are a memorial that we were once disobedient to God. Shall a thief be proud of his shackles, or a malefactor of his brand or mark on his forehead? This is a time of mourning, not of triumph; therefore God at first clothed Adam with skins, an habit that becomes mourning. We shall not need these things in heaven, clothes are only there in use where sin is.

3. Consider that habit (dress) makes not the man. A horse is not chosen by his trappings, but by his strength and swiftness; the trappings are things external that conduce nothing to his goodness, so man is not to be valued by his habit, it is but the excrement of silk worms; not by the ornaments of the body, but the endowments of the mind. And, therefore, if you would excel others indeed you should excel them in grace and virtue. Alas! many are but dung finely dressed; the hidden man of the heart, that is the man. Grace is the best dressing, and that which is never out of fashion by this men are valued. The more wise and excellent men are indeed, the less curious in their apparel. Cato, that had been consul at Rome, never wore apparel that exceeded one hundred pence. Let great ones be known by their modesty of apparel.

4. Consider, when you are most generous, the beasts excel you. Croesus, king of Lydia, being gorgeously arrayed, asked Solon if ever he had seen a more beautiful spectacle. He answered, "Yes, sir, I have seen peacocks, and pheasants, and other birds." And, Matt. vi. 29, Christ takes notice of this, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies. The draughts and colours of nature are more beautiful than art. Therefore, neither delight in bravery (finery) nor envy in it, when thou seest the bravery of others, thou hast a fairer flower in thy garden.

5. Think often of Jesus Christ hanging naked upon the cross who was stripped of his garments to satisfy for thy excess. Oh! shall we again put him to an open shame, as if he died in vain? Say, shall pride live when Christ died to subdue it, and mortify it, and to expiate for it?

A Modern Protest

The house of prayer is a poor place in which to exhibit beads, ribbons,

gewgaws, and trinkets. The evils of such extravagances are many. It keeps people from meeting, when they have not apparel as gorgeous as their neighbours. It loads the poor with burdens too heavy to be borne to procure fashionable clothing. It leads many into temptation, debt, dishonesty, and sin. It causes many a poor shop-girl to work nearly all of Saturday night, that some customer's fine clothes may be ready for the Sabbath show. It keeps people at home in cloudy or stormy weather, when, if they wore plain clothing, they could defy clouds and storms. It consumes the hours in dressing, crimping and fussing, keeping people from worship, and wasting time, hindering the reading of the Scripture, and making Sabbath a day of folly. It makes the poor emulous, malicious, and envious, and plants many a bitter thought in the minds of children and others, when they see their neighbours decked in finery, often unpaid for, and feel that people are respected, not for the integrity of character, but for the vanity of their clothes. It causes many a frivolous, trifling mind, to forget God and Christ and the Gospel, and to spend the hour appointed for religious service in comparing garments, studying fashions, and arranging their own gay attire. It causes vanity in the rich, and murmuring in the poor. It wastes the Lord's money that is needed for more noble and important purposes. It leads the young in the path of pride, gratifying the lusts of the eye. *It is forbidden in God's Word.* And yet we seldom find a *minister* that dare open his mouth against this fashionable sin. Let us dress plainly before the Lord, for example's sake at home and abroad, for decency's sake, and for the sake of Christ. — *The Bulwark*

Letter

by Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

Lasswade, 2nd April, 1875

My Dear Friend,—First of all, please accept the accompanying copy of those most precious remains of Dr. John Duncan in token of the affectionate remembrance I bear towards you, “being mindful,” if not “of thy tears,” yet of that blessed and holy question you asked me at———
 “How can I serve Christ or His Church while I have an unpurged conscience?” Yes, it is a holy question, and an honourable, because a holy one. “Guilt (says Dr. Duncan, page 40) is the relation between disobedience and punishment.” It is a relation constituted by God

Himself in His holiness and righteousness, and is, therefore, a holy and righteous thing. And to feel it is, therefore, to feel a holy thing pressing on the soul, and to accept the burden with a resolution to acquiesce in no removal of it, with which God is not well pleased, is a holy feeling, the beginning of truest holiness.

And how can we ever praise God enough that the relief is so holy. Holy, holy, holy! The Holy One Himself made sin. The Holy One holily made liable to bear the guilt of all the sins of a people whom no man can number. Emmanuel holily slain, holily giving Himself in death, holily accepted, holily rewarded for becoming in His holy self the balm, the cure, the comfort, the peace, the all-sufficient and everlasting relief of a guilty conscience. Isaiah heard the seraphim exclaim when they saw the Lord's holiness, "the whole earth is full of His glory". Scientific men tell us that the sun is a dark body with a photosphere or atmosphere of light surrounding it. Is not this more certainly true concerning the earth as filled with the Lord's glory, for what is the spiritual photosphere of this dark earth, if it be not a holily slain Christ? So that from those "habitable parts of the earth" where He had His eternal delights, there comes, when in this glorious photosphere of a crucified Christ, is seen the forgiveness of sins, the echo of His song, "My delights were with the sons of men." And when a holy, righteous and real forgiveness penetrates its way into the burning fibres of a guilty conscience, pacifying, cooling, cleansing, then they are given the exact tension for the time which the Spirit of God teaches them, as on shining silver harp strings to sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," "the whole earth is full of His glory," aye, and the whole heaven too! For really federally, all those fibres of conscience were gathered up into Christ when He died, and then and there they discharged their venom. When Christ, the Head died, His body, which is the Church, died. Head He could not be, nor as Head die, without His body. And when the blessed Spirit of God unites actually to Christ the soul that was federally in Him when He died, all the venom of the guilty conscience actually runs up into Him and is in Him eternally and righteously annihilated; and from Him, yea, from His shed blood, there runs down into the fibres of conscience, and into the poor soul's heart's core, the holy peace, purity, love and grace that had their triumph in the cry, "It is finished." And we dare not say, "This cannot be to me;" we are rather bound to say, "This must be to me." Surely here, if anywhere, "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Thou knowest, O Christ, what this guilty conscience of mine will grow into to all eternity, if not purged and cleansed and healed by Thee! It will

be O Lamb of God, an eternal blasphemer of Thee and of Thy Father and of Thy Spirit. Is that any wish of Thine? Thou art its Creator, Creator of this same conscience which I by transgression have made guilty. Hast Thou not a desire to the work of Thine own hands? A conscience is a more wonderful creature of Thine than all suns and stars, with all their photospheres that baffle the search of the sciences. Very glorious art Thou as Creator of a conscience! But Lord, Thou art more glorious far as the balm of a wounded conscience. Father, glorify Thy Son by making Him the balm of my conscience; and the day will not be far distant when, with those who already sing in the land where they say not "I am sick," being forgiven their iniquities, I, too, shall sing to my own heart's solacement and to Thy praise the song of my salvation, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, for He was slain for us."

How near did our blessed Lord come to knowing the agony of having a guilty conscience? That is a wonderful question. We cannot answer it. This only we know, He had a conscience and He had guilt. Holy He was, inviolably holy. "Such an high priest became us, who was holy and undefiled" even by the sin that He bore, and "separate from sinners" even when, "numbered with the transgressors." But He was numbered with the transgressors and sin he did bear. And the sin which He bore was the procuring cause of His sufferings. And He justified the sword that smote Him by an acquiescing reference to the sin that He was answerable for. And to what faculty of His human soul, to what created principle of His nature, if not to conscience, did the Father make appeal when He appealed to Him willingly to bear the stroke of the sword which he awoke to smite Him? Did the blessed Lamb of God not conscientiously suffer the punishment due to His people's sins? "I do always the things that please the Father." Oh, how holy and pure and bright as a burnished mirror was His conscience in all His sufferings! Yet was it not suffering? Yea, its sufferings were infinitely acute because of its perfect holiness. "The bush burned", and surely we may here hear the voice, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet for this place is holy ground." O how little do we know of Christ crucified! The Lord give us the only state of heart that can dare to think of Him, the broken and the contrite spirit. Had we more of that we would understand more of Him. This, however, we do know, that in His soul agony in Gethsemane and on Calvary, He came so near to the agony of a sin-convinced conscience as that of a hair's breadth, less would have disqualified Him for that sympathy which He has experimentally attained by coming to that point and not a hair's breadth further. Surely this is a guilty sinner's friend, and this is her Beloved, O ye daughters of

Jerusalem. The answer then to your question, "How can I serve Christ or His Church while I have an unpurged conscience?" is just this, He who is the Lord of thy conscience is also the balm, the cure, the peace, yea the everlasting relief and health of it.

Well, I was to have told you of my wanderings and preachings these last three weeks. But what matters it? They are in Christ's hands, there let them rest to bring forth fruit to His glory. I go to Glasgow communion next Wednesday.

Yours, &c.,

HUGH MARTIN.

Boston's Fourfold State

by Rev. Angus Mackay, Tarbert
(Continued from page 00)

Boston's next chapter is 'The Kingdom of Heaven' (Matthew 25:34) Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' It is observable, He says not 'Ye blessed of *the* Father' but ye blessed of *my* Father, to show us that all blessings are derived by us from the Father, the fountain of blessing, as He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we are blessed. Now, we can but speak as children of these things, which the day will fully discover. Boston goes on to write of the white robes of the saints and their kingly authority. Then we are told that it will be the consummate freedom of their will, to be forever unalterably determined to good. Absolute innocence will then be restored. There is nothing upon earth more *glorious* than a kingdom, nothing more *venerable* than the priesthood; and both meet together in the glorified state of the saints. The remembrance of the cross will sweeten the crown, and the remembrance of their travel through the wilderness will put an additional verdure on the fields of glory, while they walk through them, looking back on the day when they went mourning without the sun. Patience has had its perfect work, and there is no use for it there. Faith is turned into sight, and hope is swallowed up in the ocean of sensible and full enjoyment. There they rest day or night but their work is their rest, and continual recreation, and toil and weariness have no place there. They rest in God, having the full enjoyment of God, and uninterrupted communion with Him. Eternal sunshine beautifies this better country, but there is no scorching heat there. No clouds shall be

seen there forever, yet it is not a land of drought, the trees of the Lord's planting are set by the rivers of waters. Whatever contentions are among the saints now, no vestige of their former jarrings shall remain there. Love to God and to one another shall be perfected; and those of them who stood at the greatest distance *here* will joyfully embrace and delight in one another *there*. Eden was the most pleasant spot of the uncorrupted earth, and paradise the most pleasant spot of Eden; but what is earth in comparison with heaven; the glorified saints are advanced to the heavenly paradise. Never did a kingdom afford of such a precious treasure, nor a treasure of such variety. *Now*, all things are theirs in respect of *right*, *then* shall all things be theirs in *possession*. The society of the saints among themselves, will be no small part of heaven's happiness. Here some of them are so situated that they seem to dwell alone. Boston is assured that there we shall see Adam and Eve, in the heavenly paradise freely eating of the tree of life. There we shall see our godly friends, relations, and acquaintances, pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out from us; and it is more than probable that the saints will know one another in heaven; at least they will know their friends, relations, and those they were acquainted with on earth, and such as have been most eminent in Church. Why should one question that husbands and wives, parents and children will know one another in glory? Yet that knowledge will be purified from all earthly thoughts and affections (Genesis 2:23/24) (I Thess 2:19) (Matthew 17:4). Boston makes no question but there will be the use of *speech* in heaven, the saints speaking forth his praises with an audible voice. As for language we shall understand what it is when we come thither. Paul, when caught up to the third heaven, heard unrepeatable *words*, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Moses and Elias, on the mount with Christ, *talked* with Him, and spake of His decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Then we read of the angels.

As we derive our grace from the Lamb, so we shall derive our glory from Him too; the man Christ being the centre of the divine glory in heaven. His glorious presence in heaven, then must needs raise their graces to perfection, and elevate their capacities. The saints, now, in the world, experience that the presence of God can make a little heaven of a sort of hell. How great then must the glory of heaven be, by His presence there in glory! This glorious presence of God in heaven will put a glory on the saints themselves, the Sun of Righteousness shining in His meridian brightness on the streets of the city paved with pure gold. 'For now we see through a glass darkly (I Corr. 13:12); but then face to face. Here our

sight is mediate, as by a glass, in which we see not the things themselves, but the images of things; but there we shall have an immediate view of God and of the Lamb. They shall see Jesus Christ, God and man, with their bodily eyes, as He will never lay aside the human nature; there we shall see, with our eyes, that very body which was born of Mary at Bethlehem, and crucified at Jerusalem between two thieves. Then shall we remember that the waters of wrath which he was plunged into are the wells of salvation from which we draw all our joy; they have got the cup of salvation in exchange for the cup of wrath His Father gave Him to drink, which His sinless human nature *shivered* at; how will their hearts leap within them, burn with seraphic love, like coals of juniper, and the arch of heaven ring with their songs of salvation! They will be no more entertained with sips and drops, but filled with the fullness of God. In this life the saints had their temptations and fiery trials, and at times not without fear of falling into the *lake of fire*; but now, by Christ, in His eternal love, they are put beyond all hazard.

Boston says much more of the blessedness of the people of God in heaven, using beautiful illustrations and language superb as if sweetened by the fragrance of heaven. I am only giving fragments of each chapter. Be sure and read it all, every chapter and verse; let us read the Fourfold State prayerfully, and by the grace and blessing of God, our poor withered souls will be enriched thereby.

Now we come to the last chapter of this most precious book, the heading of this chapter is 'Hell'. 'Then shall he say to them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:11). The punishment of the wicked is twofold, the punishment of loss, in separation from God and Christ. 'Depart from me' and the punishment of sense, in most exquisite and extreme torments. Hell, everlasting fire is said to be prepared for the devil and his angels — reprobate angels who fell with Beelzebub, and became devils. They sinned and were condemned to hell before man sinned. The damned hearkened to Satan's temptations and they must partake in his torments, his works they would do, and they must receive the wages. Many a lash in the dark doth conscience give the wicked, which the world doth not hear of; and what is that but the never dying worm already begun to gnaw them. These drops of wrath are terrible forebodings of the full shower which is to follow. God meets the wicked here in time, with rods in the way of their sin, as it were striking them back; yet they rush forward. What can be more like hell, where the Lord is always smiting and the damned always sinning against Him? Adversity

and prosperity, poverty and wealth, the want of ordinances and the enjoyment of them, do all but nourish the corruptions of many. Their vicious stomachs corrupt whatever they receive, and all does but increase noxious humours. Christ's eyes *then* will cast flames of fire on them; and His words will pierce their hearts, like enamoured arrows. The full enjoyment of God is the highest pinnacle of happiness the creature is capable of arriving at: to be fully and finally separated from Him, must then be the lowest step of misery which the rational creature can be reduced to. To be cast off by men, by good men, is distressing; what must it then be, to be rejected by God, of goodness itself? In their separation from God, all peace is removed far away from them, and pain of body and anguish of soul, succeed to it; all joy goes and unmixed sorrow settles in them; all quiet and rest separate from them, and they are filled with horror and rage; hope flies away, and despair seizes them; common operations of the Spirit, which now restrain them, are withdrawn forever, and sin comes to its utmost height. This separation from God is the *very hell of hell*. No sleep to refresh the weary there, no pleasant company to comfort or cheer up the sorrowful; no offer of Christ there, no pardon, no peace, no wells of salvation in the pit of destruction. The doors of earth and heaven both are shut against them at once; this will create then unspeakable anguish while they shall live under an eternal gnawing after happiness, which they certainly know shall never be in the least measure satisfied, all doors being closed on them. Who then can imagine how this separation from God shall cut the damned to the heart? How they will roar and rage under it! and how it will sting and gnaw them through the ages of eternity! It is the opinion of some that every person in heaven and hell shall hear and see all that passes in either state. Boston says that we have ground from the Word of God to conclude that the damned shall have a very exquisite knowledge of the happiness of the saints in heaven. The rich man in hell seeing Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. How will the songs of the blessed, in their enjoyment of God, make the damned mourn under their separation from God! The Gospel offer slighted will make a hot hell and the loss of an offered heaven will be a sinking weight on the spirits of unbelievers in the pit. Some will remember that they had the pen in their hand, as it were, to sign the marriage contract between Christ and their souls; but, unhappily they dropped it, and turned back from the Lord to their lusts again. Others will remember that they thought themselves *sure* of heaven and that they were above examining their state, which was their ruin; but then, they will in vain wish that they had reputed themselves the worst of the congregation and curse the fond

conceit they had of themselves, and that others had of them *too*. Thus it will sting the damned, that they might have escaped the loss. By whomsoever men are rejected upon earth, they ordinarily find *some* pity, but if you be thus separated from God you will find no pity from any in heaven; none will pity you in hell, where there is no love, but loathing; all being loathed by God, loathing Him and loathing one other; yet some are as careless in this matter as if they were incapable of thought.

'I am disposed', says Boston, 'to dispute what kind of fire that it is into which the damned will depart, to be tormented forever, whether a material fire or not; neither will I meddle with the question, 'Where is it'? It is enough that the worm that never dieth and the *fire* that is never quenched, will be found somewhere by impenitent sinners.' Whatever kind of fire it is, it is more vehement and terrible than any fire we on earth are acquainted with. It is not simply called 'a fire' but 'the lake of fire and brimstone,' 'a lake of fire burning with brimstone,' than which one can imagine nothing more dreadful and hell fire will not only pierce into the bodies but directly into the souls of the damned. Nay, God Himself will be a consuming fire in the souls and bodies. Eternity is an ocean where we shall never see the shore, it is a deep where we shall find no bottom, for the creature it is a beginning without a middle, a beginning without an end, a continual succession of ages, a glass always running which shall never run out. The damned filled with hatred and rage against God will roar forever, like wild bulls in a net, and fill the pit with blasphemies forever more. The following is worthy of Boston, 'The Holy Jesus bore the wrath of God without so much as one unbecoming thought of God and far less any one unbecoming word'.

Then Boston gives most solemn, alarming warnings. He says, 'What'? Is heaven a fable, or hell a false alarm? Sin in you is the seed of hell, and if the guilt and reigning power of it be not removed in time, they will bring you to the second death in eternity. Boston sets the terrors of hell as well as the joys of heaven before us all, to stir us up to a cordial receiving of Christ, with all His salvation; and he concludes the Fourfold State with the tremendously solemn words, 'Thus far of man's eternal state, which, because it is eternal, admits no succeeding one forever'.

To ourselves as a church, as well as to others, we say, if we lived according to our profession, ministers, office-bearers, and members, if we read our Bible more, if we prayerfully read and studied the Fourfold State by Thomas Boston more frequently, and if we relished secret prayer, we would not be the withered dwarfs in saving, vital religion, that we are; we would be 'fat and full of sap, and aye, be flourishing.'

It is said that the writings of Boston had more spiritual influence on the Highland (and we would add, the Island) mind, than the writings of any other lowlander. We are also told that Rabbi Duncan, Professor of Hebrew at the New College, Edinburgh, once asked a student what he was reading. The student said 'Boston's Fourfold State.' Doctor Duncan was silent for a little, and then said, 'Boston was a commonplace genius; remember — not a commonplace man, but a commonplace genius'. This estimate of Boston is true.

Recently, in the wonderful providence of God, I was kindly asked to supply our pulpit in Edinburgh. I was not long in that city, when again, in the divine providence, christian friends offered to take me to Simprim and Ettrick, which kind invitation I gladly accepted. There, inside the ruins of Boston's church in Simprim, I stood where the servant of Christ first preached the substance of the Fourfold State. From Simprim we went to Ettrick. There is a church on the site where Boston's church was. With my friends I stood where Boston again preached his sermons, which we have in this precious book. My christian friends and I stood at Boston's grave beside the church. On his gravestone, a monument erected to his memory, is the inscription:—

As a testimony of esteem for the Revd. Thomas Boston, Senior.

Whose private character was highly respectable; whose public labours were blessed to many; and whose valuable writings have contributed much to promote the advancement of Vital Christianity; this monument (by the permission of relatives) is erected by a religious and grateful Public A.D. 1806.

He was born at Duns, March 17th 1676, ordained to the pastoral charge of Simprim Sept. 21st 1699; removed from thence to Ettrick, May 1st 1707 and died May 20th 1732, aged 56 years; leaving a widow and four children.

From his grave, I went along to the out-houses; the walls seem to be the original ones, and I went inside two of them which were open. I was remembering Boston's diary, where he writes, 'I sometimes went into the out-houses to weep, so that my dear children would not be seeing me'. Anyone, reading his diary, can see that Boston had his deep sorrows and great afflictions, which he received with quiet christian submission to the will of God.

Let us be sure that we will all advise and exhort young and old to read and pray over the Fourfold State. This is a book, most suitable for the young, middle-aged, and old, in these modern times, 1979.

The following is from the pen of Jonathan Edwards, 'I have read Mr

Boston's Fourfold State of Man, and liked it exceedingly well. I think he herein shows himself to be a truly great divine.'

Obituary

Rev. Donald A. MacFarlane M.A.

The passing of this worthy minister to his eternal rest at his residence in the hill district of Inverness last October will be mourned by the Lord's people who know how to prize unfeigned godliness. Mr MacFarlane had attained the great age of 90 and peacefully passed into the Lord's presence as a shock of corn fully ripe is gathered into the heavenly garner. He had completed 60 years in the Church's ministry and during this period had his own share of life's trials, mainly affecting his interest in Christ and his ministerial labours for he took a lowly view of his own attainments in grace and in the Master's service. He is now with the Redeemer whom he loved to commend in his own simple and affectionate way to others over whose salvation he yearned with godly jealousy that he might by some means present each one as a chaste virgin to Christ. Even in his last week among us he seized the lapel of a friend who visited him and plied her with close questions about the Lord's work in her soul till he was satisfied with her answers. Zeal for the Saviour's honour and a sincere desire to see souls turning from their sins to him characterised his ministry in public and private.

Mr MacFarlane was born in the Raasay schoolhouse where his father, Alex. MacFarlane, was headmaster for 40 years. He enjoyed the blessing of a godly home. His mother, an Argyllshire woman, was a daughter of Alex. MacColl, cousin of the eminent Rev. Alex. MacColl, latterly of Lochalsh with whom the family were on terms of the closest friendship till the end of his life. His father lived in the time of the great Highland preachers, being baptised by Rev. Robt. Finlayson. He often sat under the preaching of Rev. Rod. MacLeod, Snizort and Rev. Alex. MacColl; of the other godly ministers such as Rev. John MacRae, (MacRath Mor), Rev. Frances MacBean, Fort Augustus and Rev. Malcolm MacCrichtie, Knapdale and Kock, Lewis, he could relate interesting and instructive notes, received from those who had been their hearers. Mr Alex. MacFarlane took part in the steps leading to the separation of our Church from the Free Church over the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1893 and along with Revs. D. MacFarlane and D. MacDonald was a signatory of the Deed of Separation, signed at Portree in August 1893. At this time Rev.

D. MacFarlane was minister of Raasay and for some years crossed by boat each Saturday for the Sabbath services to Raasay from his temporary home at Broadford till a manse could be built for him among his people, and stayed on these occasions at the godly schoolmaster's home. Here the observant boy was often left in the company of the aged saint whose prayerful habits in private when, unmindful of his young companion, he poured out groans and longings of his soul for deliverance from the carnal mind and sinful heart, left a lasting impression on his young mind. When the father retired from the Raasay school in 1910, the family came to live in Inverness. After a few months his mother passed away, and among her last counsels to her family of 2 girls and boy, she particularly charged her son with the duty of preparing for the ministry of the Church.

From the Raasay school Mr MacFarlane went to Kingussie High School, then to Aberdeen University where he graduated in 1910. He took the Divinity Course of 2 years with Rev. J.R. Mackay at Inverness and 2 years with Rev. D. Beaton at Wick. His first charge was in Sutherland as minister of the joint congregation of Dornoch & Rogart, Lairg & Bonar to which he was inducted in August 1914. His father came to stay with him in the Lairg manse, and the Lairg people looked forward with no ordinary pleasure to listening to his orderly and attractive way of presenting the Gospel when called upon to take the services in his son's absence.

He moved from Sutherland to the Oban congregation in 1922. While in Oban, he was joined in marriage with Catherine, daughter of our godly elder, Andrew Cameron, and here also he lost his father. He passed through a period of distracting doubt about his own state and his fitness for the office of the Ministry, which completely incapacitated him for his pastoral duties. The months he spent in Glasgow during these months under the ministry of the Late Rev. N. Cameron were blessed to his recovery and he returned to his congregation greatly strengthened. In 1930, he came to the Dingwall & Beaully congregation as successor to his saintly namesake, Rev. D. MacFarlane. His wife's last illness was for her husband a period of great mental and spiritual darkness, leading to physical prostration which required medical attention at Inverness. In the Lord's kindness he recovered his health and 2 years after his wife's death, in 1957, he was joined in marriage with a daughter of one of our Dingwall families, Isabella Finlayson. Like her predecessor in the Dingwall manse, she proved to be a great help and comfort to her husband, a "succourer of many" and a "servant of the Church", and survives to mourn her

husband. After a ministry of more than 45 years at Dingwall, Mr MacFarlane moved to Inverness into retirement in 1973 and here finished his earthly pilgrimage last October.

Next to the early influence of the home, it appears that Mr MacFarlane derived great help from a little work that has helped many a tried soul to peace in Christ, J. Angel James' "The Anxious Enquirer". Years later, when at Dingwall, after 50 years in the ministry, he was beset with doubt when he questioned the depth of the work of conversion during those years. One morning, a religious magazine arrived, in which the editor dealt with Peter's denial of Christ and pointed out that Peter's dreadful lapse did not prevent him from serving the Lord after he had obtained repentance and forgiveness. So those who mourn and repent past failures should not despair but take heart and seek grace and strength to go forward in the Lord's service. He enjoyed thereafter great personal assurance. His words on this subject to his people at Dingwall, we may give here, as they will recall his pulpit manner which was peculiar to himself. "With assurance about Christ, a permit to heaven, are these 3 things. 1. The stamp of the blood is upon them. You know in a God-given way what the efficacy of the Atonement is and joy in Christ through the Atonement. Where sprinkling of the blood is, there is no condemnation. 2. Where the blood is, the oil is there too. Wherever the blood is and the conscience singing of the blood of the Person of God, the Lord sees to it that you get a drop of oil. 3. And where there is oil, there is incense. Christ is the incense of the soul. "A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me". At the same time you have what Cornelius had when he saw the glory of the blood and had oil and incense of gratitude and desire to be for the Lord, incense of praising the Lord from the heart. You have the incense in virtue of the union to Christ. A bundle of myrrh would be the Lord's Prayer. When Cornelius and those with him were baptised invisibly, not only Peter was there, God was standing there, Christ was there. 'I aver that I am their Mediator'."

Mr MacFarlane was a choice pracher and very consoling to the Lord's tried people. His preaching was of a high standard, often requiring of his hearers some knowledge of the subjects of his sermons. He was an assiduous student, the habits of close study acquired from his student days at Kingussie, he maintained through life. From a retentive memory, called upon to yield up its stores, in private conversation, he offered varied information in a diffident and quite deceptive manner. He was a lover of good books which as they passed through his hands were marked in the margin on every page with the results of his reflections. Dr. Owen

was a constant delight to him as were all the English Puritans; he gave a high place to Halyburton, and Dr. Colquhoun's little vol. of sermons was in his hands up to the end. In public and private therefore he was always fresh and stimulating, the mark of a mind constantly being replenished from the best sources. When occasion arose, he could speak out sternly against the moral and spiritual state of the country and the declension of the professing Church. He served for a time as tutor of the Church's students and on the Church's Committees. He never travelled abroad but took a prayerful interest in all that related to the Redeemer's Cause. He had no family. In private life his walk and conversation were clothed with the deep humility of grace, preferring others before himself.

In his last years it was a pleasure for his friends to visit himself and his wife in their hospitable home in Inverness. His conversation on such occasions had a heavenly fragrance, derived from the upper sanctuary. On the Sabbath before the end, he complained of great weakness and from remarks he made it was clear that he realised that his sojourn on earth was coming to an end. On Monday, he rallied and in the evening was able for almost an hour to listen to a sermon on Sanctification by Dr. Colquhoun of Leith. The following day, he was quite alert and able to converse with friends who called to see him but on the Wednesday he became much weaker and spoke again of the approaching end and bade farewell to the nurse who attended him and to his wife. The words of the Apostle: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. i. verses 30, 31) which had often been in his thoughts for the past weeks, brought seasonable help and confirmed his hope in Christ as his sole righteousness and all his redemption. Some weeks previously, he had directed the attention of a friend to remarks of Halyburton on this passage, in his Memoirs at page 216 which seemed to agree with his own experience. He at the time spoke much of the union of Christ with believers, begun on Christ's part in quickening the dead soul by His Spirit so leading the soul to embrace Christ by faith and the union thus effected would never be broken. He considered that Halyburton summed up Dr. Owen on this subject.

He was glad to welcome his wife's nephew, Cameron Fraser, on his arrival that evening from the U.S.A., and to express pleasure in their meeting once again. On Thursday, he did not speak much and appeared abstracted, lost in contemplation and could be heard repeating the words: "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have

told you"; "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" and it could be gathered that his thoughts were in John, chapter xiv; and the words of Psalm xxxiv, verse 7: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them". One of his last remarks was: "I want to be with Christ; I would like to be like him; I would like you all to be like him". To a visitor who called that evening he could only indicate with his hand that he understood and was pleased to see her. He then fell into a deep sleep and passed away that night. He has now entered into the rest that remaineth to the Lord's people. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev. xiv, verse 13). The memory of this godly minister will long linger among his friends. We extend to his sorrowing widow our deep sympathy in her great loss.

A.F.M.

Book Review

The Work of the Holy Spirit by Thomas Goodwin. Price £4.50

Thomas Goodwin (1600-80), an English Puritan divine was born in Rollesby, Northfolk. He was in 1643 elected a member of the Westminster Assembly. In 1650 he was appointed by the Parliament, president of Magdalen College, Oxford. His works show that he was an able, learned, careful expositor of Scripture. There is refreshing warmth with his theological, experimental exposition of the Word of God.

It would be our wisdom and for our spiritual edification to read and study prayerfully the Work of the Holy Spirit by Goodwin, Owen and Smeaton. This book by Goodwin is precious. 'Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit' and it is very refreshing and interesting to notice these diversities of gifts exhibited in the writings of these good men.

Goodwin says that there is a general omission in the saints of God in their not giving the Holy Ghost that glory that is due to His Person, and for His great work of salvation in us, insomuch that we have in our hearts almost lost this Third Person. He states that the Holy Ghost is indeed the last in order of the persons, as proceeding from the other two, but yet in the participation of the Godhead that He is equal with the Father and the Son. In His work, though it be last done for us, He is not behind them, nor

in the glory of it inferior to what they have in theirs. Goodwin distinguishes between that dispensatory sending of the Holy Spirit from the Father to His people and that substantial proceeding of His from the Father, as a Third Person.

In writing of the glory, love and work of each of the persons of the Trinity, Goodwin points out that the persons of the Godhead are wary and careful to provide for the honour of one another in our hearts; and then he emphasises that we should be careful to give it to them accordingly. He also directs our attention to the visible coming of the Holy Ghost, both in the appearance of Him as a dove, descending on Christ at first, and afterwards in the resemblance of cloven tongues.

Then, this divine tells us that Christ had John the Baptist to foretell His manifestation in the flesh; but that the Holy Ghost had Christ Himself to foretell His coming upon flesh. He does not like the idea of some who say that the Spirit had that special honour of tying the marriage knot, or union between the Son of God and the man Jesus, whom the Holy Ghost formed in the virgin's womb. He says that he has not found ground why to attribute the personal union more particularly to the Holy Ghost. Goodwin shows from Scripture that the Father indeed sent the Son into the world to take flesh; that the Holy Ghost formed that human nature He assumed; but that it was the Son's special act to take that human nature up into one Person with Himself and we are told that He took a foreign nature to be one Person with Himself. So the apostle tells us, Goodwin says, 'he took on him the seed of Abraham' Heb. 11:16, or He took to Himself, which word denotes the very act of union. This view of Goodwin coincides with Owen where he says, 'The only singular immediate act of the Person of the Son on the human nature, was the assumption of it into subsistence with Himself'. Such Scriptural views regarding the Person of Christ we ought to study carefully and prayerfully.

Then, Goodwin shows how it was the Holy Ghost that had the honour of the consecration of Him to be the Christ, and that by anointing Him 'without' or 'above' measure as John the Baptist witnessed. Our author puts the question, 'What is Messiah or Christ, but the Most Holy One anointed?' Dan. 9. We are told that it was the Holy Spirit that anointed Him to all His offices, and that made Him a preacher of the Gospel, to utter things which man never did, and to speak in such a manner as never man did. It was the Holy Ghost that anointed Him with power to do all His miracles, and all the good He did, Acts 10:38, and Matt. 12:28. And we read of the work of the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of Christ from

the dead; also in His ascension, and it is the Holy Spirit that proclaims Him Christ in the hearts of believers.

Our attention is directed to the work of the Holy Spirit in His operations upon the church as collectively taken, and then His operations in every believer, and here Goodwin shows the absolute necessity of regeneration and the nature of it. He puts the question, 'Hast thou seen thy sinful condition, and been humbled, even as to hell for it?' It is this Spirit which works repentance on this discovery of sin, and turns our heart from sin to God effectually.

This author says it is Christ's name that affords the merit and virtue for both justification and sanctification, but that the Spirit is the applier of them and all other blessings. Where he writes of, 'through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father', he beautifully says that Christ indeed leads us to the Father (as it were) with one hand, and the Holy Ghost by the other.

In showing that the Holy Ghost is a Spirit of counsel, powerfully instructing and convincingly teaching how to walk and act, Goodwin says that such He was to Christ the head; for instance in that agony and conflict in the garden, when He prayed 'Let this cup', it was this good Spirit that counselled Him to die; and in Ps. 16:7 He blesseth God for it. It was that counsel that caused His heart to say, 'Not my will but thine'.

One needs to read this book for oneself to realise the preciousness of it. Goodwin's style of writing may not be as pleasant as Flavel's; his style may be more like Sibbe's or Howe's, but we get used to it the more we read. We are grateful to the 'Banner of Truth' for publishing this edifying volume, and may the Holy Spirit bless and sanctify to us our reading of it.

A. MacK.

Notes and Comments

Enthronement of Archbishop of Canterbury

For the first time since the Reformation a Roman Catholic dignitary took part in the enthronement service of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The service was attended not only by Church leaders from all over the world but also by a representative of the Chief Rabbi, the Imam of the London Mosque and leaders of the Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities, according to a "Scotsman" report. All this is fully in accord with the present-day attitude to Christianity — that it is but one among many religions and that it has much to learn from them all. It is little wonder that the uniqueness of Christianity as the only true religion

should be lost on men who have long ago parted with the faith of the gospel as it is in Jesus Christ. May the Lord be pleased to raise up as leaders in Church and State men who know the reality of the saving power of the Divine Redeemer.

The Name "Sunday"

We took occasion in the first issue of this magazine to express disapprobation of the name "Sunday" as of heathen origin and significance. It was customary in Pagan times to worship the natural sun, as a god, on a special day of the week, and, therefore, that day was called "Sun-day". These times, we would hope, are now past. God in His Word has set apart a day for man's rest and His own worship, and has given it the name "Sabbath". All, therefore, who prefer the heathen to the Scriptural name are, consciously or unconsciously, displaying a lack of reverence for the Bible, the Sabbath, and the Lord of the Sabbath. For our part, we would fain erase the name, Sunday, out of the English dictionary, and relegate it to the list of ancient barbarisms. Its widely prevalent use is far from creditable to individuals and communities that boast of their Christian civilisation. To any of our readers who are in the habit of using the word we would say, "Don't use it again."

(F.P. Mag. April 1897)

Church Notes

Meeting of Synod (D.V.)

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in St Jude's Church, Glasgow on Tuesday 20th May 1980 when the retiring Moderator, Rev. Donald M. Campbell, Shildaig, is expected to preach.

In view of the many matters which are likely to come before the Synod for discussion and decision, we would ask for prayer that the Lord may give wisdom and guidance so that all matters may be resolved in a way that would be to His glory and for the good of His Cause.

Barnoldswick Congregation

In the March issue a paragraph appeared telling about the Barnoldswick Congregation. The name and address of the Congregational Treasurer to whom all donations should be sent should have read: Mr C.T. METCALFE, 47 YORK STREET, BARNOLDSWICK, COLNE, LANCS. BB8 5BD.

Sustentation Fund Appeal

The Finance Committee at its meeting in March took into serious consideration the state of the Substentation Fund. While the Congregational givings showed an increase over the previous year of £6,865, there was a deficit for the year of over £12,000. In the previous year there was also a deficit of over £11,000. The balance at the end of this year only amounted to £7,216, which is equivalent to the salary payment made to the ministers by the General Treasurer for one month. The Committee would have liked to raise the salary of the ministers from £2700 to £3000 but felt that the state of the Fund would only permit an increase of £150 from 1st April 1980. The Committee hope that the response to this Appeal will be sufficiently generous to permit a further increase of £150 before the end of the year.

A 25% increase in the Congregational givings will be necessary to cover the debit balance and the proposed increase. As this would merely square the Account, a still further increase is needed to put the Fund in a healthy state. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, the Committee would confirm that no assistance for this Fund is available from the Forsyth Legacy.

It is not usual for the Committee to have to issue an Appeal for the Sustentation Fund, but it is felt that the circumstances warrant this. The Committee are encouraged by the remembrance that their Appeal some years ago was very successful and feel that making known the facts to our people will bring in a generous response.

The Word of God lays a real obligation on those who hear the gospel to provide adequately for such as preach the gospel. This is particularly true of congregations who have ministers set over them. Every effort should be made by these congregations to raise their Sustentation Fund Collection to the level of their minister's salary, wherever this is possible.

"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" 1.Cor.9:11

(Rev) Donald MacLean, Convener,
Finance Committee.

Acknowledgement of Donations

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

Sustentation Fund: Mrs MacKellar, Tarbert, Argyll, £100 "in memory of John Weir"; Alec MacLeod, Unapool, £10.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: D.Moore, Sussex, £12.

Aged & Infirm Ministers' etc Fund: Grahame House, Dornie, £1.70.

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Mrs MacAlpin, Grafton, £71.76 for work in Italy.

Trinitarian Bible Society: Auckland Congregation £96.23; Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg congregations, £125.40.

Underground Evangelism: Anon., £3 for Bibles to East Russian Evangelicals and £3 to Cambodian Evangelical Relief.

Correction In Congregational Donations for 1979 as shown in March issue Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund . . . Laide Congregation should be £284.92 not £526.52, Gairloch Congregation should be £389.12, not £147.52.

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

Free Distribution Fund: Dumbarton Friend per J.A. Henderson £6.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congregation £20; Miss MacIver, Glasgow £20.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Barnoldswick: A Friend, England £2; A Friend per Rev. D. MacLean £50; In memory of the Puritans — Raasay £20; Congregational Purposes £110; A Friend £5, all for Building Fund.

Glasgow: Anon, Dumfries £8; N.H. £1 per Rev. D.M. (twice); Anon £24; M. Mackinnon, Waternish £20, in loving memory of Alex. Campbell, all for Sust. Fund; Anon £2; Anon £10, both for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund; Anon £20; Anon £5; Anon £10, all for Aged & Infirm Ministers etc. Fund; Anon £5 for Dominions and Overseas Fund; Anon £5 for General Building Fund; Anon £10; Anon £5; Anon £4, all for Trinitarian Bible Society; Raasay Friend £1 for Blythswood Tract Society; Anon £5, for Fabric Fund; Anon £12 for Underground Evangelism; Anon £100 for Congr. Fund (for Bible distribution); Anon £100 for Congr. Fund (for vacuum cleaner etc.); Anon £30 for Congr. Fund per Rev. D.M.; Mother, in memory of Hamish B. Grant £100 for Bus Fund per Rev. D.M.; I.C. £5; I.M. £1; Anon £5; Anon £3; Anon £2 (Perth Induction), all for Bus Fund.

Greenock: R.H. Conway, Bangor, N.I. £15 for Congr. Purposes; Anon (envelope in church plate) £15 for Trinitarian Bible Society.

Kinlochbervie: M.M., Poolewe £20; Friend £10; A. Morrison £5; M. MacLeod £5, all for Manse Extension.

Kyle: Grahame House, Dornie £2.20 (Door collection) per Mr Van Woerden; Mr. C.M. £5 for Sust. Fund; Glasgow Raasay Friend £5 per Mr C. MacLeod; Envelope in plate £10, both for Kyle Manse Building Fund; J. & A.M. £20 to decorate Kyle Church.

Oban: Mrs F., Stirling £30 for Manse Fund; £15 for Church Fund per J.M.; Mrs F., Oban £5 for Church Fund per Rev. A.M.

Portree: Friend £5 per F.M. for Manse Expenses.

Shieldaig: Friends £10 for Manse Repairs; A Friend, Dingwall £3 for Sust. Fund.

Stornoway: A Wellwisher £5 for Communion Expenses per Rev. J. MacLeod.