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Our Protestant Heritage

The Lord has favoured His people with great and high privileges. To possess a saving knowledge of the truth is an unspeakable blessing for which the gracious soul can never be sufficiently thankful. The living soul can say: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: Thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. "May we ever be enabled to confess it, and not be ashamed of it.

In setting up His Church in the world the Lord has given to it His Word and worship and order or government. This worship and service is not of man's devising. The Lord Himself has ordained it in all its parts. As is well known, what God has given men have not adhered to as they ought. Some Churches have strayed away on certain points of doctrine, others on some aspect of worship, while others have erred by departing from the Scriptural form of government and discipline of the Church as it was given by the glorious Head of the Church who is now in heaven. Some Churches, as the Confession of Faith points out, "have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan."

When we consider our own situation in Scotland and remember the Lord's dealings with us as a nation, we have to acknowledge that we have been highly favoured. Some, if not all of the nations of the Continent were favoured with the blessings of the Reformation before our own nation and yet the Reformation, even where it took root in some of these lands, did not reach to the same measure of reformation of religion as it attained in Scotland. Certainly Switzerland and Holland were to have established in them a goodly measure of reform, yet it was in Scotland, to which the Reformation came so late, that the reformation of religion was to reach its highest level. In Scotland, though with considerable difficulty and opposition, the Reformation Church was set upon an unassailable basis, even the whole Word of God and the doctrine, worship and practice which that Word enjoined. No wonder that one of

Scotland's noble reformers should say at the time of the Second Reformation when re-establishing the Church on its former basis by overthrowing the whole paraphernalia of episcopacy which had been foisted on the noble edifice erected by Knox and his fellow reformers, "We have thrown down the walls of Jericho. Let him that will build them again beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite." Truly we can say, We have a goodly heritage.

Since that time many attempts have been made to destroy this heritage and rob the people of Scotland of their noble heritage. This was true in Covenanting times. It was true also at the time of the Disruption in Scotland and again at the time of the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892. Satan's aim then, as it has ever been, was to rob Scotland of its heritage. In this work Satan was partially successful. He robbed many of their heritage and the condition of the descendants of such is perilous indeed, left as they are ignorant of the truth of God's Word and knowing not their right hand from their left. In such a time how necessary is it to maintain and defend that heritage where it still exists.

Bound up with our religious heritage is our civil heritage. Our Protestant Constitution has secured for us as a nation the civil and religious liberties which we enjoy, but how easily may these be lost. The failure of the Royal Family to remain aloof from the Pope of Rome and the present climate in ecumenical relations between the main Churches in Britain and the Church of Rome bode ill for our Protestant heritage and for our civil and religious liberties. May the Lord pour out His Spirit upon us as a nation and people so that we may come to see our danger and come to value those blessings and privileges which we still enjoy.

When we consider the testimony of our own Church we have reason to praise God for it. He has left us His Word and His ordinances and a clear testimony against all that would corrupt that Word and ordinances. The high privileges we enjoy do not give any occasion for self-congratulation but rather for humbling ourselves in the dust. "Be not high-minded but fear." The Lord who has preserved to us our Protestant heritage may quickly remove it if we undervalue it either by giving us over to blindness of mind or by delivering us into the hands of our enemies. May we as a Church ever be alive to the preciousness of our heritage so that we may ever be ready to maintain and defend it as well as having a willingness of mind to share it with those not so privileged as we are. Let us hold fast in the dark day to what we possess, until the light of that millennial dawn breaks which will fill the whole earth with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

Notes of a Sermon

By Rev. Lachlan McPherson, East Williams, Ontario, Canada.*

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” — John 3: 19.

The greatest wonder that ever was heard of is this — that light should ever have come into this dark world. This is the greatest mercy that the world could ask for — the greatest good that could be done to it — and yet this is the thing which the world feels least thankful for, the thing which, more than anything else, it lightly esteems. This is proof enough of the world's badness, and also sufficiently shows the justness of its condemnation.

I. — This world is in a wretched and deplorable state by nature — it is in *darkness*;

II. — The light that has come into it, to remove its darkness;

III. — The *choice* men make between the two — they love darkness rather than light.

IV. — The *consequence* — condemnation.

I. — The world's sad state by nature is darkness. The natural sun is the source of life and happiness to the world. What a sad thing would it be to the world, if by some accident it were turned out of its orbit, and made to wander away beyond the reach of the sun's rays! But quite as sad is the thing that has happened to it in a spiritual sense. Sin has turned it out of its spiritual orbit, and sent it away from God, its Sun, and made it to wander in thick and interminable darkness. What has happened to the world in this case is not much felt nor deplored by the great majority of men, just because this is itself one of the effects produced by its apostacy. O what sad work has sin done in the world! Its state is represented by a being in darkness, and the metaphor suits the case well, for it is a *world without a sun*. Men are in their natural state, sitting in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death, and are “without hope and without God in the world.”

The world's darkness is fourfold — (1) The darkness of *sin*; (2) the darkness of *ignorance*; (3) the darkness of *guilt*; and (4) the darkness of *eternal damnation*.

(1) The darkness of *sin*. Sin is the original darkness from which all the

*Mr McPherson was one of the two ministers who protested against the Union of the Churches in Canada in 1875.

others spring. Darkness is its proper name. It defiles and darkens the soul. Its works are called the "works of darkness." And the world is completely under its power. They are its slaves — "serving divers lusts and pleasures" — "*fulfilling* the lusts of the flesh and of the mind." Sin reigns in them as a king. The natural man knows not to do anything but sin. He is led to it willingly. His nature teaches him the art of sinning. O, what sort of a life is this to an immortal soul!

(2) The darkness of *ignorance*. The god of this world hath blinded their eyes. (2 Cor. 4). They know not what they lost — know not what they are — know not the way back to God. The world are utter strangers to God — groping like men in the dark. This ignorance makes it easy for them to commit sin, and makes them willing to continue in its service, and content to be without God.

(3) The darkness of *guilt*. The world is under sentence of death — in prison, as it were. God's favour is not towards them. His countenance does not shine upon them. A condemned state is a dark state. It is a dark prospect that lies before it.

(4) The darkness of *eternal damnation*. This is the *end* of the world. This is the inheritance to which the sinner is born, and as soon as he is of age he shall come to it. "Children of wrath" — "condemned already." This is the perfection of the world's darkness — the "blackness of darkness forever."

This is the world's deplorable condition, the darkness in which it lies by nature. O what need of the light, and what a blessing it would be, if it should come! But—

II. — "Light is come into the world." — (1) Let us consider what it is; (2) how it came; and (3) why it came.

(1) *What it is* — "The bright and morning star," the Sun of Righteousness — Christ, who is the brightness of His Father's glory, the express image of His person. He is a great light. The people that sat in darkness saw a great light — a glorious sun, sufficient to enlighten the whole world. He is strictly this light. "I am the light of the world." "The true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. — John 1: 9. But *the Gospel* is also meant, which brings the offers of salvation to sinners and shows them the way to eternal life. It is through the Gospel that sinners come to see. It is called light — "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ." — 2 Cor. 4.

(2) *How it came*. The light came out from free grace — free grace sent it. A purpose of grace from eternity brought it forth. It was pure mercy

to the world that this glorious light should ever shine upon it. God had compassion on the world; He so loved it that He sent this light into it.

(3) *Why it came.* To save the world. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (verse 17). That the world might be delivered from its *darkness*, that sinners might come unto it, and be led to God and eternal life.

Now, put these three together and you have the light that came into the world — Christ, free grace, and eternal life. This is the light that shines in the world. Surely now men shall be saved.

III. — The *choice* men make between the two. What would anyone think but that there was no room left for a choice. Their own miserable state would say this. The preciousness of the blessing itself, and the peculiar way in which it came — as the free, rich, and sovereign mercy of God — would all say there is but one thing to be done, that is, to welcome and accept of the light. But, O wretched world, unworthy of such an offer, and deserving to be left to its darkness and perish forever, that knows not the day of its merciful visitation, but desires to be let alone, and despises the remedy that free grace provided and sent unto it! "But men loved darkness rather than light." This was not simply making the best of a hard condition, but a testimony to their entire satisfaction with it. Light and darkness are put in competition, and the sinner gives his deliberate vote which of the two he thinks the better. And he does not thus give his vote simply as a judge, who has no other concern in the matter than to give his opinion, but he does so as one who is making a choice for himself. He *loves* darkness. It is no mistake, undesigned on his part, and falling out through inadvertence; but he takes up with the thing that he has a liking to, and takes up with it just on *that account* — for he *loves it*.

Men loving darkness rather than light! Who will own this charge? I daresay the most of you deny it: it is too disreputable a thing to own. But it is nevertheless true of the most of you — yea, of every one of you, young and old, who are not in Christ Jesus, and thereby become new creatures. And as I bring this charge against you, I will endeavour to prove it.

(1) Men flee from conviction of sin. They are troubled when the light gets into their conscience and begins to discover to them things they would rather not see. The sinner always tries to get rid of convictions. He tries to smother them and blow out the light. He will endeavour either to reason them away or forget them. Many are the means which are made use of for this purpose. Some go to the bowl, others to company and

amusement, and others to their farms and their trade, to drown or drive away their convictions. And why? what harm will these convictions do to them? Why, no harm in the world, but rather much good, if they would only listen to their voice and forsake their sins. But this they are not willing to do, and therefore they hate conviction, because it makes them uneasy in their sinful courses. There is no clearer proof in the world that a man loves sin, than that he will continue in it even when his own conscience reproves him for it, and warns him of the sad consequences of it. And rather than be thus staggered in his evil course, he would rather his conscience had no eyes; and accordingly he tries to blind it. There is no witness that has so much power to convince a man as his own conscience. He may have something to say to our witnesses in defence of his practices, but this witness shuts his mouth, and he cannot stand to hear it. He must stop its mouth from saying anything — he must put it from speaking — for he cannot contradict nor disprove what it testifies.

Ah! how often do men shut their eyes against the light! They don't like to know what they should do. They try not to know it, and then excuse themselves with their not knowing it. They are all the time afraid that someone will tell them of it, and they feel but little obliged to the person who informs them, or points out to them, their duty. Now, is not this true? I put the question to your consciences — the conscience of every one of you. Is it not true that you resist the light in your own consciences? Most of you very likely had some convictions of conscience, more or less, at some time or other; but you got the voice of conscience silenced, and you are yet continuing in the old courses. Is it not true that you shut your eyes against the light, and try to be ignorant of your duty, so that it may give you no trouble? Is it not true that when you find the minister coming too close on your sins, you feel uneasy, and, like the woman of Samaria, would like that he would break off and speak of something else? Is it not true then that you *love* to be in the dark? And O, why? Can you answer that? The text answers it for you, and more correctly than most of you are disposed to do. It is because your deeds are evil. You love your *sins* more than your *souls*.

(2) Men usually hate those who reprove them for their sins. It is not because they are able to disprove what they say, but rather because they know what they say is true; and they love their own evil course so well that they hate the man that would stop them in it. If you loved the light and your own souls, you would esteem him as a real friend who would reprove you for what he saw in you that was sinful. John Baptist reprove Herod for his sin, but Herod only hated John for this, because he

knew what John said was true; but he loved his sin too much to forsake it. Ahab hated Micaiah for a similar reason, and the false prophets of old were esteemed and praised by many because they flattered them in their sins. So now, flatterers are esteemed while faithful reprovers are hated and evil spoken of, just "because men love darkness rather than light."

(3) Men, for the most part, care not about hearing the Gospel. This, as we have said, is the light. It is by it, instrumentally, that men are saved. But O, how many in this place scarcely ever come to hear it! Does not this evidence that they love the darkness rather than the light? And many who do hear it only come occasionally, when the weather is fine and the roads are good. When the Sabbath comes it puts people on making their choice; and O, how clear is it that those love the darkness rather than the light, who prefer to spend the day at home in sloth and idleness and in idle company, speaking about the world and worldly things, instead of coming to hear the Gospel! But there are many of the regular hearers of the Gospel to whom it is more a weariness than a pleasure, and whose hearts were never moved by it. It is called glad tidings, but to them it is dry, uninteresting tidings. They have nothing of that peculiar desire for it that the true people of God have. The same thing is true of the written Word. It is a book that is little read by the greater number of people. All this goes to prove that men love darkness rather than light.

(4) Men, for the most part, have a particular dislike to personal dealings with God. "Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you." — James 4: 8. The most of people are strangers to prayer, to confession of sin, &c. Now, can you say that you love God when you never pray to Him? Some of you never prayed in your lifetime, and yet I daresay you would say you love God. You are strangers to Him, and you desire to continue strangers, which is proof enough — where there nothing more — that you don't love Him. Ah! no, you do not, for you have another object you love, and that is darkness. O, think what is it that you love — "darkness!" You love chains — sin — blindness — devil. Hell? But you don't love hell. Ah! no. The devil does not put that in — he does not tell you to love hell — he does not offer this to you at all; for he knows this will follow the rest. But he offers what he knows you love — sin, darkness. But although *he* does not offer hell to you, yet God will offer it, and oblige you to take it, willing or unwilling.

Notice excuses and objections, &c. (1) Why sinners are not saved. The sinner says, because he can't believe — a decree is against him — can't transform himself — it was not given him — he got no *grace*, &c. Answer. No; we will bring you to the text, and hold you there. Hear it —

"This is the condemnation." What? Decree? No; but "loved darkness rather than light." Did you try? You got talents. What did you do with them? Did you do as you could? (2) Where to put the *light*. Sinner says, "in the Bible." But it must come nearer. "Then put it in the *head*." But no; that won't do. God says the *heart*. Here the sinner objects out and out. And why? The heart is the devil's den. There he reigns, and carries on his own work, and he cares not as long as the "light" comes no nearer him than the head. The heart is sin's den. All abominations are there. *Darkness* is there, therefore the light must *not* come there. Ah! there are many who have much light in their heads, who are yet loving darkness as much as, though they had no light. The sinner would say to God, "O, trouble me not either with the light or with hell, and then I'll be content."

IV. — The *consequence* of the choice sinners make — "*condemnation*." How?

(1) Because this blessing was vouchsafed to thee while God passed by the angels that kept not their first state. He made a distinction between you and them, while He might have left you to perish, as He did in their case. Your condemnation is therefore greater than theirs.

(2) Because without the light you could not be saved, although you were willing and should try. There is a difference between our sinning in despair and our sinning when a door of escape is opened up. There might be some kind of excuse for the former in this, that there was no inducement for them to love anything else but darkness, because their condition was eternally fixed, and nothing could alter it. But to sin when there is hope, is to sin in defiance of mercy as well as judgment, and the light coming into the world takes away every shadow of excuse that otherwise sinners might have. They are hereupon condemned, not so much because they had been sinners, as because they despised and neglected the light. Besides, this decides forever the question of the sinner's enmity to God. This shows his determination to continue a rebel, and to despise the means of reconciliation.

(3) Because of the *nature* of the light, which enhances the value of it beyond all reckoning, and makes it the most precious thing that God could offer. It is Christ, Free Grace, and Eternal Life! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."

(4) Because the Gospel has come to you. You might be in ignorance of all that God has done for sinners. You might not hear that light came into the world, as is the case with many of Adam's race. But God sent you the Gospel, and this is the condemnation, that you love the darkness notwithstanding.

And now what say you to it? This light has come to you today. An offered Christ, an offered salvation, and eternal blessedness, and all this through free grace, are set before you for your acceptance. Will you go away declaring that you will still remain as you are, the servants of sin, and the children of wrath? Are you resolved to keep your backs turned upon Christ? And is this the answer that we must bring back, that you would have nothing to do with Him? If so, then know it, that the Gospel is the saddest thing for you that can be. It were better for you that you never heard it. O, the time is coming when you will curse the day that ever you heard the Gospel! Yes, the infidels of Lobo, the carnal, worldly professors of Lobo, and the self-righteous Pharisees of Lobo will curse the day that they heard the Gospel, and you will count them happy who never had the happiness of knowing that light came into the world.

Let me plead with you before we part, touching this matter, old men and old women, and young men and maidens too. What are your thoughts about it? What was your purpose this morning about it when you made up your mind to come to church? Did you then make up your minds that you would this day come out to hear the Gospel in order that you might come into the light and cease from henceforth to love the darkness? Was this your purpose and your business in coming here today? Or is it not rather the reverse? You came, it is true, to hear the Gospel, but with no intention to obey it. You came with your minds made up to remain in darkness, and therefore the Gospel is but a small matter to you — a thing with which you have no thought of have to do. O, how long shall it continue thus with you! What is it that makes you to hate the light? What is your reason for not coming unto it? If you only once came, you would be repenting all the rest of your lifetime that you had not come sooner. Is not light preferable to darkness, life to death, heaven to hell? What is there in the darkness that comforts you? You say, "It pleases ourselves, and that is the comfort we desire." Well, allowing that you have this comfort of which you speak, yet let me ask you, "Will it comfort you when the darkness of death comes; when that sun that now shines so pleasantly over you shall shine on you no more; and this world, with all its pleasures, temptations and allurements, with which it deceives you, shall bid you adieu?" It will be dark then, O sinner, when you must part with all you know and love in the world, and with the world itself too. What comfort will the darkness afford you then? And will it comfort you when the shadows of the everlasting evening shall stretch themselves over you, and the blackness of darkness forever shall close in upon you? Oh, Christ is on His way, and His

appearance will be terrible to you who love darkness. Prepare yourselves to meet Him, for meet Him you must, once at least, that you may see Him who is the "Light of the world," and know and be convinced whether you have done wisely in preferring the darkness to Him. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." — Rev. 1: 7. For "He shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." — 2 Thes. 1: 7, 8.

O how can you then look Him in the face, high and lifted up on His great white throne, and come to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe! (Verse 10). You will then be ashamed to think that this is the person that you so much despised. Oh! you will say, "We never thought that Christ was so excellent a person, and that those who obeyed the Gospel should have so rich a reward. Alas! what have we done, wretched creatures that we are, that could have chosen darkness rather than Christ! O Christ, we will come to Thee now; we will believe Thee now, and will never more love darkness." But no; you have said to Christ — "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways"; and He will now say unto you, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire; ye loved darkness, and therefore unto the blackness of darkness forever ye shall go."

Persons Debarred from the Lord's Table

by Rev. Ralph Erskine.

In general, all unbelievers, who never having seen their wicked state, as liable to the stroke of Divine Wrath, because of their sin and guilt, have not fled under the covert of the blood of the man that is God's Fellow. What have these to do with the sign, who never apprehended the thing signified, namely, the propitiation of the blood of Christ? And, therefore, in the great and awful name and authority of the great and glorious Jehovah, I solemnly debar, and excommunicate from the Table of the Lord, all who never found themselves in any measure pursued by the avenger of blood, the sword of the Lord of Hosts, and never have fled for refuge to the blood of Christ, the man that is God's Fellow, to stand between them and the avenging sword of justice; these that will not

come to Christ, let them not dare to come to His Table, nor come to abuse the symbols of His blood, who by unbelief trample His blood under their feet, and will not make use of it as the sacrifice to satisfy justice in their room. But that it may appear more distinctly whom I here debar, in the name of the Lord, I shall tell you who they are, that never made any saving use of the blood of Christ, but slight and neglect this sacrifice and offering for sin, and so stand debarred from the Table of the Lord.

1. All those who think to make their peace with God, without minding the necessity of anything intervening between Him and them; not knowing that peace with God must be founded upon the blood of the man that is His Fellow. Some are utterly careless how their peace be made, or whether it be made or not; they hope for it, and think to come at it, but they cannot tell how; and are careless to know the way. Others presume and think God loves them, because they love themselves; and though they know they have sinned, they think God will not be so hard as to reckon with them; they think God loves them, but they can show no ground for it. Others think that God is merciful, and therefore they conclude, they will be pardoned and accepted; because a merciful man sometimes seeks no satisfaction, so they think much more will a merciful God seek none; not knowing, that though God be merciful, He will not show mercy to the prejudice of His justice. But the thought of these people is, that they would have obtained mercy though Christ had never become a sacrifice to the sword of justice, and so they have no respect to the mediation of the man that is God's Fellow. — These, therefore, I debar, in God's great name, from the Table of the Lord.

2. All those who take the legal way of making their peace with God. Not as if they thought to appear before God without sin and in perfect holiness, as the covenant of works requires; but who think, that if they sin, they will make amends; and that either by something negative, that they have not done, or something positive, that they have done; or some internal qualification that they rest upon. Some think to make amends to God by something negative; that they have not been so ill as other people; and if they go to hell, they think few will go to heaven; and if they were to die, they think they care not, they have done no person any injury; they have behaved themselves very harmlessly, like the Pharisee, God, I thank Thee, I am not like other men; I am no drunkard, or adulterer, or oppressor, or swearer, and when they see any profane persons they are puffed up with a good opinion of themselves, because they are not so profane as they; these I debar in the name of the Lord. Others

think to make amends by something positive, they do many good duties, like the Pharisee that boasted, I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess; if any duty be performed, or any good be done by them, their fingers are ready to stick to it; they rest there, and hope God will be pleased and pacified on this account; these I debar in the name of the Lord. Others think to make amends by some internal qualification that they rest upon, if at any time they have liberty and motions of affections in prayer, stirrings of conviction in hearing, and joys of heart, like the stony ground hearers; any sorrow of heart or sadness for sin these, they think, will do their turn; and they think they need no other sacrifice to God but a broken heart; sadly mistaking the nature of true evangelical brokenness of spirit. It is certain, both from Scripture and experience, that many hundreds of professors dash and perish on this stumbling block. "They call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel." (Isa. 48:2). "They seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways . . . yea, they take delight in approaching to God." (Isa. 58:2). Expectation of happiness grounded upon some weak performance, and some internal motions and qualifications, do cut the throat of many civil and discreet men that are not grossly profane. All these, therefore, that make any of these things the ground of their hope and peace with God I debar from the Table of the Lord.

3. All who, though they make use of Christ as the object of their worship, yet make no use of His blood as the ground of their justification and peace with God; as if they would not altogether neglect Christ, and yet they neglect His offering, and would make use of Himself, but not of His sacrifice, like the man that came to Him saying, "Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" He was going upon the ground of his own righteousness; so some, they may come to Christ, to desire His help to enable them to duty, that by doing it they may work out their own salvation, and be helped this way to make their peace with God. Thus by grace sought and received from Him, they hope to be their own saviour and peacemaker with God; and so were never brought to ground the making of their peace with God upon Christ's sacrifice alone. These, therefore, also I debar from the table of the Lord.

4. All those who never got such a view of the love of God, in the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ, as to kill the love of sin in them, and to destroy the reigning power of sin: for the great end of Christ's sufferings was to bring us to God; the great end of His giving Himself a sacrifice to the sword of justice, was to redeem us from all iniquity; and to purchase to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And hence they are

strangers to Christ, who never felt any measure of the virtue of this sacrifice, in sanctifying, purifying, and making them study holiness. Therefore, I debar from this table all impenitent sinners, and breakers of God's commandments; all whose names are in the black catalogue, Matthew 15: 19, Romans 1: 29-32, and all whose names are in the black list, Galatians 5: 19-21, and all whose names are in these black rolls, 1 Cor. 6: 9-10, Rev. 22: 15. All atheists, that practically deny the being of God in their life and conversation; and ignorant persons that know not the principles of religion, and the nature of this ordinance; and profane persons, who mock at sacred things, neglect public ordinances on week days or Sabbath days and neglect family worship and secret prayer. — All profane swearers, whether by God, or the devil, or faith, or conscience, or whatsoever is more than yea or nay. — All Sabbath breakers, who put no difference between that and other days. — All that are unfaithful in their relative stations; as magistrates or subjects, masters or servants, parents or children. — All murderers and those who give way to the killing sins of malice, passion, and revenge; and the self murdering sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and tippling. — All whoremongers, adulterers, fornicators, sodomites, and unclean persons, who never mortify the deeds of the body — All thieves, oppressors, and cheats, that study to over-reach their neighbours in their dealing. — All false witnesses and liars, that make no conscience of speaking the truth; perjured persons, and covenant breakers. — All covetous persons, whose hearts are glued to the world. — In a word, I debar all formalists, and hypocrites, and legalists; all that never saw and bewailed their heart plagues of atheism, enmity, pride, hypocrisy, and unbelief; all who know not the difference between the law and the Gospel; the covenant of works and the covenant of Grace; and between legal and evangelical preaching. All that never felt anything of the power of God's Word upon their hearts, in convincing them of sin, original and actual, and drawing them to Christ, as their righteousness and strength, for justification and sanctification. — I debar all who hate to be reprov'd for their faults, and who contemn their reprovers; and all who can be witness to the sins and faults of others, and yet never give any sort of testimony against them. I debar all who love not the godly, nor care for their company; all who love not the Bible nor search the Scriptures; all who love not Zion, nor care how matters go with the church of Christ; whether its members be divided or alienate; whether its interests sink or swim. — All who can go lightly over the belly of their own conscience, for fear of outward losses or crosses, and easily cross their light to please men. — I debar all that are not lovers of the

truth, but espousers of error; socinians, arminians, and antinomians. — I debar all that think they have believed all their days, and never were convinced of unbelief, nor found religion above them, and their natural powers. I debar all who have no errand to the Lord's Table, but to take a little bread and wine, and think it an easy work to communicate; nor ever had any fears or jealousies about their miscarrying in that work; All who come only to keep up a name among professors, and all that have no other tokens for communion but that which they have got from their ministers or elders; all who have been at no pains whatever to prepare for this work. — And on the other hand, all who think they are prepared enough, and have no other thing to rest upon but their own preparation. — All these and others of that stamp, I do, in the name of the living and eternal God, debar from this holy table, as being strangers to the Man that is God's Fellow, and strangers to the sacrifice by which He has satisfied infinite justice; therefore, as you would not take a cup of poison to destroy yourselves, and bring down the guilt of the blood of Christ upon your own head, dare not to venture to this holy table; for he that eats this bread, and drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. And if you will venture, notwithstanding, remember, though you have got a token from me, or any person else, your blood is upon your own head.*

*Such do fearfully increase their guilt in a very high degree, in making themselves guilty of the body and blood of Christ, though not as an actor in His death, yet virtually, as an abettor and consenter; for an unworthy receiver is a Christ murderer, as he that defaceth the king's picture doth reflect upon his person. He that dares rush upon the sacrament with reigning sin in his heart, would be a Judas unto Christ, if He were personally upon earth, and had he Judas' opportunity and temptations, and other circumstances, he would imbrue his hands in the blood of Christ. And will you so come to have your sin increased instead of having it pardoned? O what a crying sin is blood-guiltiness, though it be but the blood of a common man. But what will it be to be guilty of the blood of the Son of God. And will you have the blood of Christ crying against you instead of pleading for you? Nay, you will sin more than many of the Jews that did actually crucify Him; for many of them did it ignorantly; but you know and acknowledge Him to be such, and yet will be guilty of His blood; they did it in the state of humiliation, but you do it in His state of exaltation. It had been better for Judas if he had never been born, and it would be better for you if you had never received.

Such deserve the damnation of hell; "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Eating damnation! O what a dreadful morsel is damnation! Hence you see the reason why the devil puts on many drunkards to be so eager after the sacrament, it is that they may eat and drink their own damnation for there is death to them in this cup — Eateth damnation! O what a dreadful word is damnation! And that when a man comes to be partaker of a Saviour. Take heed what you do when ye receive, damnation is not a business to be jested with, nor the sacrament a work to be trifled at. Adam did eat his own death, so may you eat your damnation. — Doolittle on the Lord's Supper.

Letter (From Captain Hedley Vicars to Dr Twinning)

Greece, July 19, 1854.

I thank you from my innermost soul, dearest friend, for the comfort and peace I now enjoy; for leading me (as the instrument in God's hands) to Jesus. And now having tasted that the Lord is gracious — having known somewhat of the love of Christ, I would endeavour to win my fellow sinners to Him — from vanity to real enjoyment.

Jesus is very precious to my soul — my All in all. Often have I been on the point of falling away, and yet His arm has held me up, and kept me from bringing dishonour on His blessed name. To Him be all the praise and glory!

Seasons of dispondency and gloom I have had, but my consolations have abounded also, and I trust that I am seeking for more conformity to Jesus in my life and conversation, through the mighty help of the ever-blessed Spirit. But with Paul, often in the agony of my soul am I forced to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Yet with whom also I can say "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We are quartered here with the French who have upwards of 4000 men. They are in tents; we are now in barracks. The weather is very hot, and the climate bad. We are in quarantine, as the cholera has broken out among the French. They have lost two officers and one hundred men. We have not lost a man, but it is a solemn time that calls on each of us "Prepare to meet thy God."

I feel very much being debarred from the means of grace, and from the communion of the Lord's people but Jesus more than makes up for every loss. There have been happy moments when He has been very near, and when I felt I should wish to depart and be with Him.

Extracts of Diary

by Rev. Jonathan Edwards

(continued from page 153)

Thursday, Jan. 10, about noon. Reviving. It is a great dishonour to Christ, in whom I hope I have an interest, to be uneasy at my worldly state and condition: when I see the prosperity of others, and that all things go easy with them; when the world is smooth to them, and they are happy in many respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much honour, &c., to envy them, or be the least uneasy at it; or even to wish

for the same prosperity, and that it would ever be so with me. Wherefore concluded, always to rejoice in every one's prosperity, and to expect for myself no happiness of that nature as long as I live; but reckon upon afflictions, and betake myself entirely to another happiness.

I think I find myself much more sprightly and healthy, both in body and mind, for my self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping. I think it would be advantageous every morning to consider my business and temptations; and what sins I shall be exposed to that day: and to make a resolution how to improve the day, and to avoid those sins. And so at the beginning of every week, month and year. I never knew before what was meant by not setting our hearts upon these things, It is, not to care about them, depend upon them, afflict ourselves much with fears of losing them, or please ourselves with expectation of obtaining them, or hope of their continuance. At night made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, Jan. 12, in the morning. I have this day solemnly renewed my baptismal covenant and self-dedication, which I renewed when I was received into the communion of the church. I have been before God; and have given myself, all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect my own: I can claim no right in myself, no right in this understanding, this will, these affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this body, or any of its members: no right to this tongue, these hands, nor feet: no right to these senses, these eyes, these ears, this smell or taste. I have given myself clear away, and have not retained anything as my own. I have been to God this morning, and told him that I gave myself *wholly* to him. I have given every power to him; so that for the future, I will challenge or claim no right in myself, in any respect. I have expressly promised him, and do now promise Almighty God, that by his grace I will not. I have this morning told him, that I did take him for my whole portion and felicity, looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; and would fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a Prince and Saviour; and would adhere to the faith and obedience of the gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the profession and practice of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my teacher, sanctifier and only comforter; and cherish all His motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort, and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a self-dedication; and to receive me now as entirely His own, and deal with me in all respects as such; whether He afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever

He pleases to do with me, who am His. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any respect as my own. I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to anything that is not to the glory of God, or do not make the gloryifying of him my whole and entire business; if I murmur in the least at afflictions; if I grieve at the prosperity of others; if I am any way uncharitable; if I am angry because of injuries; if I revenge my own cause; if I do anything purely to please myself, or avoid anything for the sake of my ease, or omit anything because it is great self-denial; if I trust to myself; if I take any of the praise of any good that I do, or rather God does by me; or if I am any way proud. This day made the 42nd and 43rd Resolutions.

Monday, Jan. 14. The dedication I made of myself to my God, on Saturday last, has been exceedingly useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the Scripture while reading the 8th chapter to the Romans, than ever in my life before. Great instances of mortification are deep wounds given to the body of sin, hard blows that make him stagger and reel; we thereby get firm ground and footing against him. While we live without great instances of mortification and self-denial, the old man keeps whereabouts he was; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small blows. After the greatest mortifications, I always find the greatest comfort. Supposing there was never but one complete Christian, in all respects, of a right stamp, having Christianity shining in its true lustre, at a time in the world; resolved, to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my might to be that one, that should be in my time.

Tuesday, Jan. 15. It seemed yesterday, the day before, and Saturday, that I should always retain the same resolutions to the same height, but alas, how soon do I decay! O how weak, how infirm, how unable to do anything am I! What a poor, inconsistent, miserable wretch, without the assistance of God's Spirit! While I stand, I am ready to think I stand in my own strength; and am ready to triumph over my enemies, as if it were I myself that caused them to flee; when alas! I am but a poor infant, upheld by Jesus Christ; who holds me up, and gives me liberty to smile to see my enemies flee, when he drives them before me; and so I laugh, as though I myself did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights himself against my enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, how weak do I find myself! O, let it teach me to depend less on myself, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my ability to Jesus Christ. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?

Saturday, Feb. 16. I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the

gospel requires. At night. I have been negligent for the month past in these three things: I have not been watchful enough over my appetite in eating and drinking; in rising too late; and in not applying myself enough to the duty of secret prayer.

Sabbath day, Feb. 17, near sunset. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God, for my whole portion; and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever prosperity, upon any account, I see others enjoy, and I am denied.

Saturday, March 2. O, how much pleasanter is humility than pride! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all pride! The pleasures of humility are really the most refined, inward and exquisite delights in the world. How hateful is a proud man! How hateful is a worm that lifts up itself with pride! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived, poor worm am I, when pride works!

Wednesday, March 6, near sunset. Felt the doctrines of election, free grace, and of our not being able to do anything without the grace of God; and that holiness is entirely, throughout, the work of God's Spirit, with more pleasure than before.

Monday morning, April 1. I think it best not to allow myself to laugh at the follies and infirmities of others.

Saturday night, April 6. This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me, that I should never recover more. Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay! I know, O Lord, that without thy help, I shall fall innumerable times, notwithstanding all my resolutions, how often soever repeated.

Saturday night, April 13. I could pray more heartily this night, for the forgiveness of my enemies, than ever before.

Wednesday, May 1, forenoon. Last night I came home, after my melancholy parting from New York. I have always, in every different state of life I have hitherto been in, thought the troubles and difficulties of that state to be greater than those of any other that I proposed to be in; and when I have altered with assurance of mending myself, I have still thought the same; yea, that the difficulties of that state, are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my thoughts, affections, desires and expectations, entirely from the world, and may fix them upon the heavenly state; where there is a fulness of joy; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm, delightful love without alloy; where there are continually the dearest expressions of this love; where there is the enjoyment of the persons loved, without ever par-

ting: where those persons, who appear so lovely in this world, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. How sweetly will the mutual lovers join together to sing the praises of God and the Lamb! How will it fill us with joy to think, this enjoyment, these sweet exercises, will never come to an end, but will last to eternity. Remember, after journeys, removes, overturnings, and alterations in the state of my life, to consider, whether therein I have managed the best way possible, respecting my soul; and before such alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2. I think it a very good way to examine dreams every morning when I awake; what are the nature, circumstances, principles and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, &c.

Saturday night, May 4. Although I have in some measure subdued a disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain inclination which is not agreeable to Christian sweetness of temper and conversation: too dogmatical, too much of egotism; a disposition to be telling of my own dislike and scorn: and freedom from those things that are innocent, or the common infirmities of men; and many such like things. O that God would help me to discern all the flaws and defects of my temper and conversation, and help me in the difficult work of amending them; and that he would fill me so full of Christianity, that the foundation of all these disagreeable irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary beauties may follow.

(To be continued)

The Woman of Great Faith

by Rev. Alex. MacRae, Tongue

Mrs Mackay, familiarly known throughout the North as Bean a Chreidimh Mhoir, was so interesting a personality and such a distinguished Christian that after a century her memory is still fresh and fragrant. Those who knew her personally and who have written regarding her have used language which at first may seem highly extravagant but which fuller knowledge of her fully justifies.

Dr Kennedy, in "The Days of the Fathers," p. 169, says: "She was one among a thousand. Her brilliant wit, her exuberant spirits, her intense originality of thought and speech and manner, her great faith and her fervent love, formed a combination but rarely found."

Mr Sage wrote in "Memorabilia Domestica," p. 283: "There were a few individuals of whom I have the most pleasing recollections. . . . The most distinguished as a Christian was Mrs MacKay of Sheiggira. . . . She

was naturally a superior woman, quick in apprehension and particularly ready in repartee, especially so when provoked by ungodly taunts and sneers. She was above all things, however, distinguished for the vitality of her Christian character."

The Rev. Eric Findlater, of Lochearnhead, who knew her intimately from boyhood, wrote: "The glory of God seemed to have been her chief end; though mingling in the world, she was not of the world, as the most careless could notice; her conversation was in heaven, and she was truly an epistle unto Christ, known and read of all men."

Still more cordial are the sentiments of the Rev. William Findlater, of Durness, who knew her better than any other of her contemporaries. After he had passed his 66th birthday, and during the trying period that immediately succeeded the Disruption, he composed a beautiful elegy in her memory consisting of forty-one double verses, in which he portrayed her life and character, in incisive language, and with real sympathy and insight.

She represents a type of religion which prevailed generally throughout the North Highlands during the period of the evangelical revival in the first half of the 19th Century, and which was associated with such names as Dr MacDonald, Mr John Kennedy, Mr John MacRae, and Mr Roderick MacLeod. It had its roots in a definite experience of conversion, and in a conscious dependence on the presence of the Holy Spirit for the maintenance of the life of grace in the soul. The source of its life and the object of its affection and inspiration was the Lord Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, glorified, and ever present to the believing consciousness of His people. There are many who hold that nothing better could happen for the life of our land than a revival of such a type of living religion.

HER CONVERSION.

Towards the end of the 18th Century, Margaret MacDiarmid came from Argyll to Sutherland along with her brother, Colin, who was employed as a deer stalker in the Reay Forest. Their father is believed to have been a Perthshire man. Their mother was a daughter of Colin Campbell, of Glenure, a man of high standing in the religious and social life of Argyll in his day.

They had not been very long in the district when her brother was drowned. In order to intercept a herd of deer he ventured to cross an arm of a loch on ice. According to tradition it was Loch Stack. Peggy, as she was familiarly known, was already engaged to a young man, Donald

MacKay, of Sheiggira, in the parish of Kinlochbervie. They married, and she lived in Sheiggira during a considerable period of her married life, where their children were born and reared.

The tragic death of her beloved brother was to her a desolating blow. Her grief was deep and sore, and even her marriage did not relieve her gloom. What she may have thought of death and of her own preparedness for it and for all that it implies is not known. But that solemn event awakened her to real concern. Her natural grief deepened into conviction of personal sin and of soul sorrow, and she began to seek the Lord.

At that time the Rev. John Kennedy, afterwards minister of Killarnan, the father of the celebrated Dr John Kennedy, of Dingwall, was missionary at Eriboll, and it was part of his duty to preach at Kinlochbervie every third or fourth Sabbath. The Lord used his preaching to the conversion and comforting of many in the district. Among these was Peggy. She passed out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and she became at once a bright and shining witness to the saving grace of God.

Her circumstances, however, were far from helpful to progress in religious knowledge and holiness of life. Such occasional spiritual ministry as came within her reach was fully used by her keen and eager soul. The wells of salvation were graciously opened for her in the Scriptures, and out of them she drank with joy.

It was in those days she used to walk bare-footed through the moor by Gualin to Durness to hear Mr Findlater, and to walk back at night — a distance of fully fourteen miles each way. She carried her boots and put them on again at some distance from the church. On one occasion she found she had only one. She had lost the other on the moor. What was she to do? Was she to go to church barefoot was the thought that naturally rose to her mind? "You evil one," she exclaimed, addressing the devil that made the suggestion, "you thought you would cheat me out of the service today, but I'll put my pride where my boots should be — under my feet," and, so saying, she walked to church in her stocking soles! She found her lost boot on her way home again.

Her husband, though always kind to her, was not in the Kingdom of God himself; her children were young and needing her loving care; the work of the home and of the farm was exacting, and years of hard work and of want of spiritual help and comfort was a discipline which threw her more and more into secret communion with God and His word for the life and light she needed. It was a hard school in which she developed that whole-hearted trust in God which so distinguished her in after years.

Her husband was led to the Lord by her prayers. He was opposed to her wandering, as he called it, to communions and other religious gatherings. The preaching of the Gospel was life to her soul. He could not understand her hunger for it. On one occasion, after a heated argument, she retired into the barn to pray. He followed, and overheard her passionate tones as she pled for his conversion. That was the first thing that moved him to repentance and to seek the Lord for himself.

Long afterwards she said of him: "He was just made for me by the Lord's own hand; the grace he had not at first has now been given him, and he will allow me to wander for bread to my soul wherever I can find it."

Of his pre-converted days the following story is told. A ship that traded in smuggled brandy had been wrecked on the coast, and some casks came ashore on the beach at Sheiggira. MacKay's neighbours, the Morrisons, were away at a market, and, during the night, he yoked the black pony and removed three of the kegs to a place of concealment in the sand. Presently he was seized by severe abdominal pains — a not unlikely thing in the circumstances — and nothing could give him relief. After acute suffering, Peggy, who was not supposed to have known anything about the kegs, said to him: "You can get no relief till you yoke the black pony again and return the kegs you have hid to where you found them." He knew she was in the secret, rose quietly, and did what she told him. Peace and rest followed.

Then there took place one of those lamentable events which had so tried and harried the life of the people of Sutherland in the first half of the 19th Century — a clearance. Sheiggira has good arable and pasture land with a large outrun. The tenants had been long established there, and had a specially comfortable living. The Estate evicted them and turned the land into a sheep run. The poor people were sent adrift to find a home wherever they could. The MacKays were allowed to settle in Achininver, Melness, in the parish of Tongue. So Peggy came to Melness, no longer a young woman, but with her soul schooled to trust the providence and grace of an over-ruling and an all-wise and all-loving Father.

When crossing Tongue ferry the Duke's principal agent responsible for those clearances was on the boat. Peggy remonstrated with him for his part in those callous and cruel proceedings. He tried to defend himself by saying that as the evictions had been determined upon someone had to execute them; if he had not done it someone else would have. "Yes," she retorted, "truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed."

HER PERSONAL APPEARANCE.

Hers was a beautiful countenance. Her hair was dark brown, almost black, and wavy. She had brilliant black eyes. In her youth they had the natural sparkle of health, and, as life matured, the light of holy love that glowed in her soul shone in her eyes. The pure white skin, the high broad forehead, and the oval contour of a bright and sunny face, made her the centre of attraction in youthful circles, when she was a girl. She was full of fun.

She owed little to art and nothing to artfulness. Her handiest mirror was often the surface of a pail of water. She had another mirror into which she loved to gaze with adoring eyes that turned in criticism on herself. From that mirror, and from such soul toilet she was never long away. She was careless about dress and outward personal appearance, but she bore herself with such native grace and dignity that she never appeared slovenly or even dowdy.

From some of the stories told of her it might be inferred that she did pay some attention to dress and even affected gay colours. Passing home from Caithness she asked a woman whom she casually met where she came from. On being told she came from Armadale, she said: "Then you know the queen." "The Queen," said the other. "Who is she?" "Jean," she replied, referring to a pious woman known by everyone as "Shine Armadail." "Yes, I do know Jean," said the other. Peggy took half-a-crown out of her purse and gave it to the woman saying: "Give her that with my regards." "Who shall I say sent it to her?" the woman asked. She smiling replied, "Say it is from Cailleach nan ribeanan dearg" (*i.e.*, The woman of the Red Ribbons).

She made everything a matter of prayer, even her dress. When she needed a new dress she prayed for it. She gave thanks for the robe of righteousness and the garments of salvation with which the Lord had clothed her soul, and then prayed for suitable raiment for the body. When the prayer was ended, her daughter, who had overheard her, said: "If you would ask father he would give you a new dress." "Perhaps, he might," was her reply, "but my heavenly Father will give it, and He will never cast it up to me."

Passing through Bettyhill on a beautiful morning, when the glory of God seemed to be fully disclosed on the face of nature, Peggy was happy in meditation, and transported by the glories revealed without and within. She was carrying her hat in her hand by its ribbon strings and twirling it round and round — that is how she often wore her hats.

"What is your news this morning?" she said to a man who was herding his cows at the roadside. "I have no news," he replied in his dull bucolic way. She caught him by the shoulder, and looking into his eyes, trying to reach and awake his soul, she said: "Man, is it not good news that you are still alive in the land of mercy?" and passed on into a house. He looked after her in a maze, and when she left the house he went to the door and enquired: "Co i an onseach a bha sud?" ("What fool of a woman was yon?") — a fool for Christ.

It was with reference to her dress that she gave utterance to the saying by which she is most widely known. When travelling by stage coach her fellow-passengers were amused by her attire and manner. One of them ventured to ask where she came from. "I came from Cape Wrath," she answered. "And where are you going?" "I am going to the Cape of Good Hope," was her quick reply, which at first somewhat mystified her questioner.

He was not kept long in doubt, however, for Peggy got her opportunity to speak of the deep things of God and the soul. They were soon discussing the universality of sin, the sinfulness of the human heart and the necessity of the new birth. The gentleman did not admit that his heart was evil. He stoutly maintained the innocence of his mind and the purity of his disposition and motives. As the coach lumbered on it gave a sudden lurch, which had the effect of throwing a box off the roof. It broke in pieces on the road, and, to the amusement of the passengers, a number of live chickens flew out. "Did you know before it fell what was inside that box?" she asked her fellow-traveller. "No," he replied, innocently. "Neither can you know what is in your heart till it is broken open to the Spirit of Truth."

HER PERSONALITY.

Hers was a singularly attractive personality. The vivacity of her spirit, the sprightliness of her wit, the incessant animation of her countenance, revealing the activity of her mind; the compression of her mouth, indicating the earnestness and sincerity of her soul; the tender kindliness of her soft voice, that spoke of the love of her heart; and the peculiar cordiality of her greeting, gave her a magnetic power over others, which was, if not unique, very rare. Children would look after her with a loving respect. They would drop their play and gather round to listen to her serious talk, often playfully spoken. Her piety did not scare them; it drew them. She spoke to them about Jesus with the naturalness of one speaking about a mutual friend, and with a love that was engaging.

The genuineness of her piety disarmed criticism. Even those who had little sympathy with her ways and with her views of the truth always regarded her with respect and admiration. Her presence in a congregation radiated goodwill and spiritual joy. Mr Eric Findlater, who, when a boy, used to watch her from the manse pew in his father's church, wrote:— "When she entered a worshipping congregation her very appearance would circulate a wave of joy over the faces of all — a circumstance that could not escape a stranger's notice, though he could not account for it." His father put the same thought in verse, somewhat after this fashion —

Preachers and people seeing thee
At worship on the Mount,
Sang out with sweeter melody,
Revived on thy account.

The enchantment of thy presence,
Re-echoed in their song,
Revealed that of the wine of life
Thou drankedst deep and long.

Like the holy women of old, she came on the first day of the week bearing the spices she had prepared, the fragrance of which was felt by all who truly worshipped along with her.

Her quick wit and power of repartee were gifts she possessed to an uncommon degree. People were attracted by these, and yet were afraid of them. Her sharpest thrusts, however, never left a sore feeling, for they were always prompted by love, and on the side of righteousness and truth.

When leaving Glendhu, after a visit to Mr Gunn, he accompanied her to the gateway, which was closed by loose spars across the road. When he was in the act of removing one of the spars she bent down and darted through. "Is that how you expect to enter the Kingdom?" he asked. "Yes," said she, "and if you expect to enter it you must bend your head also."

Near Sheiggira in her time there was a half-wit whose name was James, a word which he could not pronounce. He spoke of himself as Gamers. "Well, Gamers," said Peggy, "I wonder if you can tell me where all the fairies, ghosts, and evil spirits have gone that people used to see when we were young, for we do not see them now." "I am sure I do not know," said Gamers, "unless the people have swallowed them, and they now live in their hearts." "I dare say you are right, Gamers," she remarked.

"Many a true saying have I heard falling from simple lips, and I did not expect to hear such wisdom from you."

On a communion Sabbath evening the conversation took a worldly turn which Peggy thought unbecoming. She said nothing, but bent down under the table as if looking for something. Her host asked if she had lost anything. "I thought we all had lost the Sabbath" was her quiet reply, which had the desired effect.

When the solemnities of a Highland communion season are ended with a thanksgiving service on Monday, there are few companies, as a rule, more joyously happy than those of the manse study or drawing-room. Theirs is the joy of elevated thought. It is, at any rate, a natural rebound of spirit, which may very naturally and easily become worldly and frivolous, unless some strong and wise personality exercise a restraining influence.

Being at dinner in a manse on such an occasion, Peggy felt that the conversation was of too frivolous a nature, after the solemn privileges they had been enjoying, and she ventured to make a remark about it. The Rev. Dr. Ross, of Lochbroom, who was present, remarked that the Apostle Paul did not allow women to speak in public. "Indeed, sir," she retorted, "if the Apostle Paul were here no woman had any need to speak."

At a fellowship meeting in the house of George Brodie, Thurso, Alexander Keith, of Dunbeath, wishing to draw a smart saying from her, asked: "What opinion have you been led to form of the woman of Samaria?" "Indeed," she replied, "I never entertained a high opinion of her." "That astonishes me," he said, "for did she not say to the people, 'Come, see a Man that told me all things that ever I did? Is not this the Christ?'" "All that is very true," she said, "but when the Lord first met her she declined to give him a drink of cold water."

Among her first visits to Caithness on communion occasions, and before she became generally known, she called at a manse and asked to see the minister. The housekeeper told her he was then engaged getting ready for the service, and could not see her. "Then I shall leave my basket here in the kitchen and call for it after the service." After the service she went back but was told the minister had company and could not see her. She persisted, however, and the minister went to the kitchen to see her. He asked her what she wanted, and she told him: "I want to learn the Lord's prayer, and I thought you might teach me." "Well, yes," he said, "sit down." She did so, and he went on: "Say, 'Our Father which art in heaven'." "Our Father which art in heaven," she

repeated. "Have I a Father in heaven?" "Yes." "And have you a Father in heaven?" "Yes." "And is my Father in heaven your Father in heaven?" "Yes." "Then you and I must be brother and sister." "Yes," he admitted. "Then if a sister came to see a brother, would it be a brother's part not to receive her?" The identity of his visitor then dawned upon him and he showed Bean a Chreidimh Mhoir into the dining-room.

(to be continued)

Book Reviews

Psalm-Singing in Scripture and History by Rowland Ward, Victoria, Australia. Obtainable from the F.P. Church Bookroom, Glasgow. Price 25p each.

The author of this booklet of fifty two pages is a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, a body which uses the Psalms only in public worship. His aim in publishing this work is to stimulate a recognition of the honourable history of psalm singing and encourage more reflection on the theology of praise. In his introduction he lays down some broad principles which underly the exclusive use of the Psalms in public worship. There is a chapter discussing Ephesians 5: 19 and Colossians 3: 16, where he concludes that these Scriptures point to the Psalms of David — "Greeks would know the Psalter as Psalms, but the Jews as Hymns." Some of the common objections to exclusive Psalm singing in public worship are dealt with, more particularly the last verses of Psalm 137, to the interpretation of which Psalm he devotes a chapter.

Over half the booklet is devoted to a brief survey of the history of Psalm singing from the early New Testament Church down to the present day.

To achieve the aim of the author, as stated above and found in the closing paragraph of the booklet, we would have expected a more robust defence of the exclusive use of Psalms in praise in the worship of God — in public and private — and a clear exposition of the sinfulness of introducing uninspired hymns, paraphrases etc, into this exercise of God's house.

We feel the author does his case no good by the apparent slight on the King James Bible, (page 43), and his assertion of inaccuracies in the 1650 Psalter, which is the Psalter we use.

The chapter entitled "Christian Praise: The Reformation Period in Europe" is perhaps the most interesting.

The last sentence on page 29 is incomplete.

R. M.

The St. Andrews Seven by Stuart Piggin and John Roxburgh. Banner of Truth Trust. 130pp. £2.95.

This paperback has as its sub-title "The Finest Flowering of Missionary Zeal in Scottish History." It is different from the usual pattern of Missionary books in that its purpose is not merely to give an account of the St Andrews Six, along with their Professor, Thomas Chalmers, who made the seventh, but also to trace the origin and growth of the missionary movement in Scotland in general and in St Andrews in particular in the early 19th Century. Of the six missionary minded students at St Andrews University at that time — Alexander Duff, John Urquhart, John Adam, Robert Nesbit, William Sinclair Mackay and David Ewart, only the name of the first is well known, yet all six were to labour in India on the Mission field.

This book, we feel, is a useful addition to missionary literature and of a higher quality than much that is published today. Though it relates to a time a century and a half removed from the present day yet it has much that is valuable for today.

D. B. M.

A Vision for Missions by Tom Wells. Banner of Truth Trust. 157pp. £1.95.

This Banner of Truth paperback, while seeking to set forth the case for Missions and to encourage Missionaries to go forth with the Gospel of God's grace, yet does this in a way that is not common but which is most Scriptural. The main thrust of the book is to show that God is worthy to be known and proclaimed for who He is and that this is the main part of the missionary motive and message. Man's need is represented as secondary to this. The first chapters are taken up with showing something of God's glory — His self-sufficiency, His sovereign power, His wisdom, righteousness, mercy and faithfulness and goes on to show the bearing of God's character on Missionary work. The writer stresses again and again that the **main** motive for Missions is not human need but God's worthiness and glory.

From this basis the writer goes on to show that those who know the most about God are the most responsible and best equipped to tell of Him. He illustrates this from the lives of Brainard, Carey and Henry Martyn in the closing chapters of the book.

This book should be useful, we think, to those contemplating the Mission field both to help them search out their true motives in undertaking such a work and to assess their suitability for missionary endeavour.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

Prince Charles and the Pope

At the end of April the Prince and Princess of Wales visited the Pope during their state visit to Italy. It is reported that Prince Charles had earlier made a request to attend a papal mass during his visit to the Vatican. The report states that the Mass, organised under strictest security, was to have taken place in the Pope's private chapel but that it was to be excluded from the official list of engagements. This request by the Prince was refused because of the fear of protests from Protestant loyalists and also because of objections within the Church of Scotland although it is said that the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and the Archbishop of Canterbury were agreeable to the proposal. A further report claimed that it was the Queen who intervened to stop it but this was denied by Buckingham Palace.

The whole incident is a sad reflection on the Prince of Wales who as heir to the Throne of a Protestant Monarchy ought to have known better. It reflects the inroads made by ecumenism on the Protestantism of the Royal Family and reveals the Prince's great ignorance of the history of the Reformed Church in our land, and of the true nature of the Church of Rome and of its head, the Pope of Rome. Such ignorance, we think would be culpable in any of the people of our land but doubly so in the case of a Prince of the Realm. May the Lord open the Prince of Wales' eyes.

It is all too evident that throughout our nation men have lost sight of our danger from the intrigues of Rome. If such blindness continues it should be no wonder to us if both people and throne are swallowed up by the Church of Rome and Britain subjected again to the power of Anti-christ. Only God in His mercy can prevent such an outcome.

We would urge individual Christians to continue to pray for the conversion of the members of the Royal Family and for their deliverance from the snares of the Church of Rome. If our people also felt constrained to write to Prince Charles with reference to his visit to the Pope it might well be a reminder to him that the Protestantism of the nation has not altogether disappeared.

Idolatry

The Knights of St Columba are to take a replica statue of the Virgin Mary round Scotland and England, starting at St Mary's Cathedral in Aberdeen on May 3, so that Roman Catholics can pay their respects to it.

In the Middle Ages one might feel some compassion for poor ignorant people being deluded with such tom-foolery in the name of religion. In our day such compassion is misplaced when people have the light of the Bible to show them the idolatry of such practices. This empty gimmick is a renewed reminder that the Church of Rome has nothing to offer souls but the empty shell of carnal display.

Queen Beatrix of Holland and the Pope

Queen Beatrix of Holland has come under criticism from Dutch Protestants for dressing in black to meet the Pope. The wearing of a black dress is taken as a sign of penitance. The wearing of white by Roman Catholic Queens when meeting the Pope is a privilege given to Roman Catholic Queens only. Our own Queen wore black when she met the Pope in Rome. How sad it is that Protestant Queens should show so little self-respect and so little regard for their own Protestant principles as to conform to such an offensive requirement.

One United Scottish Church

According to a Press report, an official Church report has recommended that six Churches, the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the United Free Church, the Methodist Church in Scotland, the Congregational Union in Scotland and the United Reformed Churches should unite to form one new Church. This proposal has sprung from the Multilateral Church Conversations set up in 1967. Our own Church was invited to join in these Multilateral Conversations but declined to join them.

The report maintains that sufficient basic agreement has been reached on Baptism and the Lord's Supper to allow progress towards union to be made. The question of the ministry is the most difficult and contentious problem. Moderators of Presbytery elected for a period of several years is the solution suggested to bring the Church of Scotland more into line with the Episcopal pattern. The Report will be considered by the General Assembly in May.

Rev Dr William Johnstone, a former Moderator of Assembly goes so far as to say that he would personally rejoice at anything that would bring the Churches in Scotland together, including the Roman Catholic Church. Such an expression of opinion gives little hope that the contemplated union will be established on a truly Biblical basis. How different the climate of opinion will be when a truly Scriptural union will be effected in Scotland, by Churches now poles apart but then united in the love of the truth and having as their end the glory of God.

Sabbath Trading

It is thought that the Home Secretary, Mr Leon Brittan will soon propose new legislation to do away with restrictions on shop opening hours. This would allow supermarkets, garden centres and other stores to open seven days a week. This legislation affects England and Wales as in Scotland shops are already permitted to open on Sabbath. Many attempts have been made already to introduce legislation of this kind by means of private member's bills. What is sad about the present attempt is that it is Government sponsored and therefore can be expected to have greater support. It would be good if the enemies of the Sabbath were foiled in this attempt also and that the law in Scotland was brought into line with the law in England on the matter of Sabbath trading, or rather that Sabbath trading was outlawed in both countries. When better days come this is what will prevail.

Church Notes

Deputy to Australia and New Zealand

Rev Angus Morrison, Oban who is acting as Church Deputy to Australia and New Zealand is expected to return to this country early in June (D.V.). During his period overseas, as well as preaching at various places in both countries, Mr Morrison assisted at the Communion Seasons at Gisborne and Grafton and expects to assist at Auckland Communion on the first Sabbath of June before leaving for home (D.V.). It is our prayer that the Lord may bless his labours in Australia and New Zealand and bring him home in safety again.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 18th June at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 18th June at 12 noon.

Western: At Laide on 25th June at 11 a.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 25th June at 2 p.m.

Southern: At Glasgow on 26th June at 6 p.m.

Post of Doctor at Mboma Mission Hospital

The Committee feel concerned that no applications have been received for this important work on the Mission field, and with nursing staff at the hospital since May the work is being considerably curtailed in the absence of a doctor. The whole of the Nkai District with a population of 100,000 is presently without the services of any medical practitioner. In Mboma itself there are some 22,000 persons so deprived.

Post of Teacher of Bible Knowledge at John Tallach Secondary School

A need continues for a teacher qualified at least to university level in some other subject to take up these important duties at Ingwenya.

Post of Nurse/Midwife at Mbumba Mission Hospital

Owing to staff coming on furlough a vacancy has arisen for a nurse/midwife at our mission Hospital in Zimbabwe. Enquiries for above posts to the Clerk of the Foreign Missions' Committee, Rev. A. Murray, F.P. Manse, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4EH (Tel. 0549 2176).

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr. Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 OHE., acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks.

Sustentation Fund: Anon., £50.

Foreign Mission Fund: Anon., £30; Bethel Strict Baptist Chapel, Luton, £50.

Aged & Infirm Ministers' etc Fund: Anon., £10.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon., £100; Visitor, £1.

Sydney Church Building Fund: Anon., £30.

Wellington Church Building Fund: Anon., £30

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

Barnoldswick: Anon., £10; Anon., £10, both for Foreign Miss. Fd. (per collection plate); Anon., £150 for Sust. Fd.; Anon., £25 for Congregational requirements.

Bracadale: Anon., £100 for Sust. Fund.

Dingwall: Mrs M., North Kessock £10 for Church Funds; Anon., £100 for the Cause; N.M. £5; Friend £5; N.M. £5; Mrs E. £10, last four for petrol.

Dumbarton: Anon., £10; Banacharaid £10; both for Congr. Fd.; Anon., £5 for Comm. Exps. (in plate); Anon., Stornoway £20 for Sust. Fd. per Rev. G.I.M.; Anon., £36 for Trinitarian Bible Society; Visitor £10 for Congr. Fd. (in plate).

Edinburgh: Canadian Friend of Scottish origin £10 where most needed.

Flashadder: Corrections to March Magazine:— Friend of the Cause £20 for Sust. Fd. should have read £30; Mrs MacDonald, Lochinver £20 for door coll. should have read Mrs MacDonald, Lochview.

Fort William: Mrs. S. £30; C.C., Glasgow £20; Anon £50; Anon., £12, both for Minibus (both envelope in plate); D. MacD. £10; Friend, Caol £10 for Sust. Fd.; 2 Harris Sisters £5, last three per Rev. J.A. MacDonald.

Greenock: Friend, Inverness £10 per Rev. L. MacLeod; Two Friends, Glasgow £10 (in coll. plate), both for Congr. Fd.; Anon., Stornoway £20 for Sust. Fd. per Rev. G.I.M.; A Friend £20; Mr D.R.M., Glasgow £20 both per Rev. L. MacLeod and both for Congr. Fds.; A Friend, Mull £10 for Comm. Exps (Envelope in plate).

Inverness: Anon., £5 for Congregational Funds; A Friend £10 for Foreign Miss. Fd.; Friend of the Cause £20 for Sust. Fd., all per Rev. A.F.M.

Portree: D.G., Fraser Cres £50 for Congr. Funds (Envelope in plate); P.J.M., Shader Lewis £20 per S.Y.M.; Uig Friend £10 per F.M., both for Sust. Fund.

Stornoway: In Church plate £50 for Trinitarian Bible Society.

Strath: Scalpay Friends £20 for Sust. Fd., (In Broadford Church plate).