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Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep it Holy

The attempt by the Government of our land at this present time to legalise Sabbath trading and allow shops to open on the Lord's Day throughout the land is a matter of the deepest concern to Christians throughout the nation and one which fills their mind with great foreboding should the attempt succeed. It is not relaxation of these laws which is required at the present time but their more rigid enforcement and their application to Scotland as well as to the rest of the country.

In Scotland, many shops, especially the large stores, open on the Sabbath day though with some notable exceptions. The shops that refrain from following this general and increasing trend are to be commended for their action in face of the increasing secularisation of the Sabbath day by their competitors and these shops and stores are worthy of the support of all right thinking people. The trend we see of shops trading on the Sabbath day is not confined to this country but is appearing also in other countries which have been noted hitherto for their respect in this regard to the law of the Sabbath. Satan's attack on the Sabbath, at this time is more extensive than may at first be realised.

The law of the Sabbath is one of the great benefits and blessings which the God of heaven bestowed upon mankind from the beginning of time. It is a creation ordinance and, as such, is wrongly represented as merely a Jewish ordinance which passed away with the coming of Christ. On the contrary, Christ revealed Himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath showing that it was intended not only for the Old Testament Church but for the New Testament Church as well. The destruction of the Sabbath would effectively remove from the minds of men their relationship to, and their duty towards the great God of eternity. The worship of God, for which the Sabbath was intended would soon cease and men would lapse into infidelity or heathenism.

It was the act of a gracious God to give to men the inalienable right to freedom from unnecessary secular activities on His holy day. The example which sanctioned this practice was His own resting on the seventh day from the work of creation, while the duty of resting on the Christian Sabbath is additionally enforced by the example of Christ who rested from His great work of redemption when He rose from the dead on the first day of the week. The commemoration of that great event — the rising again of the Son of Man from the dead is deeply embedded in the law of the Sabbath, so that men cannot now neglect or trample underfoot the law of the Sabbath without doing the greatest dishonour to Christ and incurring the wrath of the God of heaven.

No legislation of man can destroy the law of the Sabbath. Though rulers and legislators in nations may pass laws to dispense with the law of the Sabbath, the law of the Sabbath remains embraced forever in the law of God and that law or any of its commandments can never be disannulled.

By this law nations and their rulers shall be judged at the last day. The very law that they trampled underfoot, and which they thought they had buried for ever, shall rise against them at that day and they will discover its binding obligation upon them in that day.

Even now, while "the kings of the earth and rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us", we are told that "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision". His message to them in His own Word is: "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." What fearful blindness has taken hold of the minds of the rulers of the nation, when they are prepared to embark on their present course. Let them give good heed to God's Word and the solemn warnings contained in it to them that defy the Most High. Should they legislate to remove the claims of the Sabbath from the Statute book of our land, it will only be to their own undoing and to the detriment of the people of our nation whom they profess to serve. May God, in His mercy, prevent such an outcome, and may the law of the Sabbath be enshrined, not only in the legislation of our nation, but also, by the blessing of God, in the hearts of the people of the land. Only in this way may the nation be raised up from the depths to which it has fallen. May the same be true also of other once Protestant nations who are following a similar course to Britain in seeking to legislate for the opening of shops on God's holy day.

Sermon

By Rev. J. A. Macdonald, Fort William

“Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.” — Jeremiah 9: 1.

Jeremiah was, and still is spoken of as the weeping Prophet. He had many, many reasons for this, as he mournfully viewed the perpetual backsliding of that Nation. However, he had various visitations from God, which enabled him to learn of His power, might and omnipotence. This is obvious from chapter 32 verse 27, where God speaks of Himself: “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me”. For others, He made a passage through the sea. He called Lazarus from his grave, who was afterwards one of those who sat with Him at the supper. At Nain, he touched the bier of the only son of a poor widow, thus restoring him to her. Luke 7: 14.

The Apostle Paul, along with many others, shewed similar concern in their own days for the salvation of immortal souls. He faithfully declared the gospel message, and expostulated with sinners to be reconciled to God: “As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. 2 Cor. 5: 20. A happy eternity awaits such as are reconciled to God before they close their eyes in death, whereas His adversaries He will clothe with shame.

Such deep sorrow and sighing as this Prophet had can only emerge from such as truly fear the Lord, as they see the apathy and dreadful inclination of the multitudes towards that which is calculated to alienate them forever from the God of eternity; whereas on the other hand, they rejoice, and gladness fills their souls and hearts, as they witness others continuing faithfully, day by day, in following on to know the Lord, and to learn of Him, “who is meek and lowly”. They keep their eyes focused upon the gracious promise: “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgement unto truth” Isaiah 42: 3.

In this portion of God’s Word there are two matters which we wish to bring to your attention.

I. The prophet’s wish: “Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears”. This we believe is the lamentation of every true messenger of the cross in times of apostasy; as they witness the vast majority given over to lasciviousness, and God dishonouring practices, culminating in various activities, deception, frivolities, and lies, such as

partaking of the accursed Mass, so blasphemous and dishonouring to God's Holy Word. This, together, with Sabbath trading, and the fearful delusion of paganism, the pretence of Santa Claus descending down chimneys, laden with toys, etc., for so called Xmas. The latter word or phrase, which is so much on the lips of the vast majority of people at this time of the year is spoken without realising that it is equivalent to taking the name of the Lord in vain. Never utter it if at all possible. This, along with the many other ways in which the Nation were guilty of provoking God, thus filling their cup daily, like the Amorites of old, caused the prophet to cry, "Oh, that my head were waters". (Och, nach b'uisge mo cheann")

Oh, what a heavenly blessing to a people or nation, to have upright and God-fearing pastors, who will declare unequivocally to them, that all their righteousnesses are but filthy rags, and that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? Jeremiah 17: 9. Notwithstanding our desperate condition exposed to the Divine wrath, God passionately calls upon us thus: "Come now and let us reason together, sayeth the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow" — Isa 1: 18. What a sure indication that God has a remnant in that place which are to be plucked as brands from the fire in God's time. We heard the late Rev. MacLeod, Ullapool preach from the words; "If he return not, He will whet the sword; He hath bent his bow and made it ready," Ps. 7: 12. As he proceeded with such unction and affection he declared: "Let the wicked be certain and positive of this, that if the sword will not reach them the bow will overtake them". No escaping. He then quoted the words of our text with great solemnity, "Oh, that my head were waters..."

Noah being a righteous man and a preacher of righteousness for one hundred and twenty years was one who yearned for the salvation of poor sinners, and often bemoaned himself for the poor people upon which the fiery indignation of the Lord was about to descend, when the door of the ark was about to be shut to their everlasting ruin, but this was to no avail. The days of mercy and opportunity were forever ended.

David himself also grieved much for his poor son Absalom, whom he knew to be eternally lost, thus reaping what he had so wickedly sown: "And the king was much moved, and went up to his chamber over the gate, and wept, and as he wept thus he said; O, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God, I had died for thee." Many parents, we believe, have sore hearts and bitter lamentations night and day because of those ways and habits, especially of the young, which are

calculated to alienate them from God and His worship so following in the steps of Orpah, as she returned to Moab to worship her idol gods, whereas faithful Ruth did cleave to Naomi in the face of all opposition, declaring: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people and thy God, my God." Ruth 6: 17. As you read in God's Word of her unquenchable attachment and love to Naomi, and her heart purposing to follow her, through good and evil report, may the Holy Spirit cause you to cry: "I wish I were like her". Blessed be the name of the Lord, He can do just that, for it is written, "And unto God the Lord from death the issues do belong".

In a dark, cloudy and blasphemous day, when the British Parliament is on the verge of abolishing the Sabbath day; this causes us again to lament with the prophet: "Oh, that my head were waters . . ." No nation ever really prospered guilty of such a heinous crime. It is the Lord's day. "And God blessed the seventh day." Genesis 2: 3. Both happy and much favoured are those who see their offspring cleaving to the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Redeemer from the wrath to come, as well as being true lovers of the Lord's day, and His worship on the Sabbath as well as week days. "There remaineth therefore a rest (a sabbath) to the people of God". Heb. 4: 9. In His own time the Lord will raise up sons instead of the fathers, and daughters instead of the mothers, we believe. Like Moses, who refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

II. Secondly — The prophet's reason for such a request — That I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people. Prayers and supplications are almost universally considered as that which is incumbent upon all the fallen sons and daughters of Adam — "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you". The Church of old prayed and covenanted with God thus: "Draw me, and we will run after thee". A splendid example. Jeremiah firmly believed how imperative it is to give place to the Scriptures. These testify that there is much efficacy in the fervent prayers of righteous men: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Elias, in his day solicited a great favour of the Lord in the time of drought, and we read; "And the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit".

Oh, how often the Lord has answered the supplications of His people on behalf of our beloved nation especially in times of war, when the adversary would have devoured us all, in this way depriving us of all our

civil and ecclesiastical liberties. However, it is very obvious from all events that God's eyes were continually focused upon Great Britain in the face of all our unworthiness. Surely the famous and gracious deliverance at Dunkirk, when the Nation's back was to the wall, so to speak, that God then heard the tearful prayers and supplications of His people and He came to their vindication. Truly He is a God who answereth by fire. Peter invariably encouraged the church in her many afflictions: "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you." 1 Peter, 4: 12. Of gracious souls lost in such battles or circumstances either on land or sea, and of whom no accurate account can be traced, let us remind their bereaved ones that none will be missing in the day when the Lord will make up His jewels: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God . . ." Rev. 20: 12. The people of God found much comfort in this sweet assurance; together with what the prophet Isaiah affirmed: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear". Yes, He will hear the prayer of the destitute. Ps 102: 17. "If God be for us, who can be against us." Romans 10: 31.

Obviously, God answered on many occasions the former pleadings of many a parent on behalf of their offspring, while they themselves rested in their graves. Perhaps this is true of yourselves too. David also prayed for refreshing seasons as well as the upholding of His cause, and God hearkened and heard. How real and near to him God was when he prayed:

Thy hand, ev'n thy right hand of might,
why dost thou thus draw back?
O from thy bosom pluck it out
for our deliv'rance sake. Ps. 74: 11

The church prayed earnestly for Peter's release from prison, as they bemoaned his absence. Soon the Angel of the Lord opened the prison door and set him free. God's Word tells us that the afflictions of the righteous are many, "but the Lord delivereth them out of them all".

We read of Joshua's plight with filthy garments on as he stood before the Angel, who, pleaded for his cleansing and beautifying, saying: "Take away the filthy garments from him". The Angel continued to Joshua's joy, saying, "Let them set a fair mitre upon his head", (Cuíreadh iad ceann-aodach maiseach air a cheann) — Zech 3: 5. This intercession was heard in Heaven and an answer immediately afforded: "So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with clean garments. And the Angel

of the Lord stood by". How unspeakably sweet. Be of good cheer, poor sinner, the Lord will also put a fair mitre upon your head, if you will continue faithful to Him. Wrestle with Him, poor sinner, come boldly to a throne of grace and He will continue holding His left hand under your head, while His right hand embraces you.

We so often visualise that eminent servant of the Lord, Rev. Donald MacFarlane leaving the Free Church Assembly in Edinburgh with a fair mitre upon his head. He, like the saintly Rev. Donald MacDonald, Shieldaig, often put apart days in which they fasted and prayed on behalf of their congregations, our beloved Church, as well as the Nation. Jacob in his own day wrestled with the Angel until the break of day, and sweet and very touching are his words: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me". He got the blessing. So shall you if you follow his blessed pattern.

Over and above all who ever made intercession on behalf of any people, none can be compared with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself of whom we read: "He made intercession for the transgressors". His blessed plea, in the midst of His sufferings, was on behalf of those who nailed Him to the cross, and of whom He said: "They pierced my hands and feet". Notwithstanding it all, hear His plea on their behalf: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do". Of the scorn and blasphemy of others, He said, "Reproach hath broken my heart". Truly, there was never any sorrow like His sorrow. It was the firm and candid opinion of many of the old Divines, that God the Father immediately granted His petition; as the Lord Jesus Christ did so graciously respond to the plea of the poor malefactor beside Him on the cross: "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." This view they based on Psalm 21.

"Thou has bestowed upon him
All that his heart would have;
and thou from him didst not withhold
Whate'er his lips did crave."

Now let faithful Jeremiah wipe his eyes saturated with weeping for the slain of the daughter of his people, taking hold of the sweet and abiding promise: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet ye shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold". Ps. 68: 13. This blessed slain, who are in everlasting covenant with the Lord through the efficacious power and good work of the Holy Spirit, can become useful to the Lord yet, and become trees of righteousness which He has planted. Hear David's comparison: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water". Psalm 1: 3.

Lastly may we be blessed with Micah's firm assurance: "He will return

again and He will have compassion upon us", and although His blessed cause is in the meantime tested in various furnaces, it shall yet blossom as the rose, when His adversaries will be crowned with shame; whereas, on the day of judgement, His blessed Church shall be presented before His throne on high, "a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish". Eph. 5: 27. No more weeping or wailing then for the "slain of the daughter of His people". Amen.

Unbelief — the Greatest Sin

By Stephen Charnock

The sin of unbelief is against God.

It strikes peculiarly at God. Whatsoever is done against any institution of God is interpreted by God as done against himself. When the Israelites, weary of Samuel's government, desired his resignation, and the electing of a king, God calls it a rejecting of himself, 1 Sam 8: 7, that he should not reign over them. The slighting a mortal creature in the ends whereto God hath appointed him, being a contempt of God, by whose authority he acts, a rejecting of Christ, who is the highest ordinance of God, whose words are the words of God spoken in his name, as God foretells, Deut. 18: 19, is a breathing forth the highest disdain of God. Though it be an enmity immediately against Christ, it redounds to God, because Christ is his Christ, his anointed. The conspiracy is joint against both, a "taking counsel against the Lord and his anointed, to break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from them." Ps 2: 2. Let us cast away the promises of an eternal kingdom, and those threatenings of hell, whereby they would allure us or scare us into an allegiance, to submit our necks to the yoke of their laws. Let us slight all those reasons, and spurn away those vain hopes and fears, those cords whereby they would draw us unto their power. It casts a dishonour upon God more than all other iniquities; it is a departing from him after the highest and clearest declarations of his nature, a representation of him under all the disparagements imaginable, and under all encouragements of complying with him. As those that trust Christ are "to the praise of God's glory," Eph. 1: 12, so those that distrust him are to the dishonour of his name.

1. It is the greatest reproach and undervaluing of God. He calls it a wearying of him more than other sins: Isa 7: 13, "Will you weary my

God also?" The sin of Ahaz, upon which this speech was uttered, was a distrust of God, not properly this unbelief we are speaking of. God had declared his intent to preserve Judah against the invasion of the Syrian, and to defeat the counsels of the league against them. To strengthen Ahaz in his belief in the promises, he commands him to ask a sign as a seal of this assurance, and gives him the choice of what sign he pleased; wisheth him to put his power to the utmost trial, either in heaven or earth: ver. 11, "Ask it either in the depth or in the height above." Judgments against the enemies, from the bowels of the deep to the windows of heaven. And as he gives him liberty to employ his power, so he assures him of the tenderness of his mercy: ver. 11, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God;" though thou hast been so wicked an idolater, if thou wilt repent, confide in me, walk according to my will, I will be a God in covenant with thee, I will be a God to preserve thee, and a God to judge thine enemies; thy *Jehovah* in being their *Elohim*, and manifesting my power for thee against them. The answer of Ahaz seems to be a start of a modest humility, though indeed it was disobedience not to do as God commanded him, ver. 12. "And Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord;" he would not tempt God, or as some read the word, I will not *exalt* God; the words import, I will not trust God, I will send to the king of Assyria, who can better save me than the Lord. As he did, 2 Kings 16: 7. I will fortify my cities, train my soldiers, crave assistance of my neighbours. Observe that though God, in his message to him offered himself to be his God in covenant with him, Ahaz would not accept of the proffer, owns him not as his God in his answer, "I will not tempt *the Lord*;" not, I will not tempt *my God*, which had been an argument of his trust, and so had altered the tenor of his answer to an humble resignation. Ahaz would not be beholden to God, he would not honour God so much as to give him an opportunity to glorify his great power; if we read the words, "I will not exalt the Lord." Upon this God promiseth a sign, ver. 14, that "a virgin should conceive and bear a Son, and call his name Emmanuel," and this should be a sign. I will not discourse how this was to be a sign to Ahaz, or the body of the people then in being; but take notice, every unbeliever is an Ahaz, reproacheth the kindest offers of God. God calls to men to turn to him, to place their whole confidence in him; but men reject the offer, run to creatures, and thus weary God. If it was so great a scorn of God, not to accept his proffer for a temporal deliverance, not to regard any sign from him, how great is it not to regard the sign of his greatest power, wisdom, and love, which he hath manifested in that Son born of a virgin, who is Emmanuel, God with us!

An unbeliever is such a scorner of God, that he is not willing that that dirt he hath cast in the face of God by his other sins should be wiped off; not willing to sanctify that name by believing, which he hath profaned by other sins against the law; will not embrace that Christ which God offers him, whereby he may in some sense render him a satisfaction for all the wrongs God hath sustained by him. As faith "gives glory to God," Rom. 4: 20, so unbelief casts reproach and scorn upon him.

2. It robs God of the honour of all his attributes. He that believes not God, doth fling dirt in the face of all those attributes which were illustrious in the work of redemption: of his wisdom which contrived it, of his righteousness which executed it, of his mercy which is infinitely commended by it, of his truth which is engaged to make good the intent and purchase of it to every one that believes. Either men believe not that God will perform what he saith, and then it is an injury to his truth; or they hope for salvation by some other means, and then it is a contempt of his wisdom; or that the things proposed by him are not amiable and desirable, and then it is a reproach to his goodness; or they trust to some creature helps against his command, and then it is a disobedience to his sovereign authority, or they think him not able to effect the things he hath promised, and then it is a disparaging his power and sufficiency. Whatsoever attribute in God is a ground of, or an encouragement to, faith, is struck at by unbelief. The grounds and encouragements of faith are these: God is infinitely wise, and cannot be deceived; he is infinitely true, and cannot deceive his creature in declaring what is false; he is infinitely good, and will not deceive his creature, for deceit is most opposite to love and goodness; he is infinitely happy, and hath no reason to deceive his creature, which could not add to his happiness; whereas deceit among men sometimes improves their interest, but deceit in God would dissolve the Deity; he is infinitely powerful, and well able to make good what he asserts, to confer what he promiseth, inflict what he threatens. As all these are indisputable grounds of faith, and are owned and honoured by it, so they are blemished in their reputation by unbelief, and marked with a base alloy; they are all foolishly charged by it, and made the common scoff of it. There is not an attribute but may draw up a particular indictment against an unbeliever, for an offence against its crown and dignity. And as there was not an attribute but God intended to glorify in Christ, so there is not one but this sin doth really vilify.

3. It is an undeifying of God, as much as lies within the compass of a creature's power. He that denies any one attribute of God, seems to deny

God himself, to ungod him, strips him of the glory of a deity. Take but one pin, necessary to the frame of a watch, and you take away the perfection of it. Those attributes which unbelief denies, are essential to the being of a deity. God can no more be a God without them, than the sun can be a sun without light, or any of us men without a rational soul. Unbelief is not so indulgent as to divest God of the honour of one perfection, but of many; not so mild as absolute atheism, which denies the being of a God. It is a less scorn to deny that ever there was such a man as Caesar, than to affirm indeed there was such a person, but he was a fool, coward, false, cruel, and the vilest man that lived: it is better to deny his being, than to count him infamous. Unbelief strips God of his richest robes, his highest virtues,* which were more singularly glorified in redemption, than they were in the creation, or could be in the creation of innumerable worlds, more glorious than this without the death of his Son for them. Not to acknowledge God in Christ, is to deny him that glory that the creation and common providence cannot afford him. As our Saviour was tormented by the Jews in every part of his body, — head with thorns, face with spittle, hands and feet with nails, and wholly with reproaches in what was dearest to him, — so is God dishonoured by unbelief in every perfection. As their actions denied Christ to be the Saviour of the world, so the acts of this sin deny God to be the God of the world.

4. It strikes at all the three Persons. As all have an hand in the salvation wrought by Christ, so the rejecting that redemption dashes a blot upon all. They all sat in joint consultation about man's redemption; they were joint in counsel, joint in publication of it; the Father in his first promise to Adam, and in a voice at Christ's baptism; Christ in his person, and the Holy Ghost bearing witness by the gifts conferred upon men after the ascension of Christ, which was a testimony of his glorious entertainment: Acts v. 31, 32, "And we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, which God hath given to them that obey him." The Father sends, Christ dies, the Spirit offers to apply; the neglect of this is against the wisest counsel, the greatest persons in being. The Spirit was the great witness after the ascension of Christ, by the collation of eminent gifts, whereby a divine approbation was given to the doctrine of Christ from heaven. He revealed nothing but what Christ had before done, and wrought, and built upon that foundation, John 16: 14, he glorifies Christ, for he receives of his. He discovers the eternal counsels of God,

* As the word is, 1 Peter 2: 9, "Shew forth the praises (the *virtues*) of him who hath called you."

the depths of divine wisdom, which "the heart of man could not conceive," 1 Cor. 2: 9, 10. The Father bears witness to Christ by undeniable miracles; the Spirit adds his testimony by internal operations, and urging the truths of Christ upon the hearts of men; Christ bears witness to himself by his obedience and death. So then, any slight of Christ is a slight of the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Days of the Fathers — Question Day Notes

Question Day — Communion in the Ness District — 11 October 1878

The service having been conducted in the customary manner it was intimated that one of the brethren should give a portion of the truth, as the basis of discussion.

The words given were in Isaiah 28: 16. "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste."

Marks were asked on those who build on Christ the sure foundation, distinguished from all other kind of building, and that some things be mentioned regarding the trial of the foundation.

REV. JOHN MACLEAN, BACK, "opened the Question" during which he said that "the person who believes shall not be ashamed, or shall not make haste."

The stone mentioned here is the Lord Jesus Christ, as the apostle Peter says concerning it: "to whom coming as unto a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious etc." The temple of Solomon was beauteous with fine gold, but it was prefiguring a temple greater than that of Solomon. God was manifest in the flesh when the Eternal God came into the temple of humanity. That old temple was a type of the church. Behold I will lay in Zion as a foundation, a stone. "Ye are built upon Him as living stones." God dwells in them by His Spirit. There was a time when His humanity did not have any being, but His Divinity was from eternity. In order that Christ would be a tried foundation, He took the nature of man. He did so, in order that the attributes of the Godhead would be glorified, the law satisfied, and honoured. He was holy in His nature and holy in His sufferings. Oh! He finished the work, so that His people would be saved, and He is therefore set as a foundation in Zion, as the Object of hope in the world.

Regarding the trial of the stone: masons will try stones that are to be

for use, by striking them with a hammer. Oh! many hammers hit this stone, from Hell, from men, from God. The devil came to tempt Him, but he "found nothing in Him". Men did likewise — "Why tempt ye me". The law and the justice of God came to try Him, but he came forth as gold tried in the fire. The fourth party that tried Him was the church of God — they build upon Him. The Holy Spirit teaches them that this is the Object of their faith. Now the soul says "I have discovered this tried stone". God said, I have tried it, and you may try Him as your hope, for the world would be submerged in the ocean ere this foundation would sink. You, as living stones, are forced out with fire and powder from the quarry of the world, so as to be built upon this rock. When God fired His cannon 3,000 were brought to put their hope in Him. He that believeth *in Him* shall not be ashamed. He opened their eyes so as to obtain knowledge of Him as the tried foundation. Abraham found Him thus. These witnesses in the Hebrews chapter 11 found Him thus. These would say, we have found peace, forgiveness of sin, and holiness in Him. They are joined (made one) with the foundation and with the other living stones in Him.

There were afterwards called:

HECTOR MORRISON, TOLSTA:

Those who are now in Christ were once dead in sin, the children of wrath under the power of sin and the devil, walking according to the course of this world (as the Devil would desire them to live), the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. The Apostle John says the whole world lieth in wickedness. A great change came over this people, so that as the Apostle they cried out, "Blessed be God who hath made us worthy of the inheritance of the saints in light" and "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and who hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." This is what God does to the souls of people who are sinners.

They have marks. They are no more strangers and foreigners to the things of God, as they were at one time. There is reason to fear that those who fear God are fewer than people believe, because they do not bear the marks of the Church of God. This is an outstanding mark. You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, thus revealing that God has visited you by His grace. The person who takes pleasure in the practice of sin is afraid that God will be merciful to him when he does not know how he could live if he had to part with sin, but the Lord makes such a ploughing on the hearts of His people, that they rather make choice of God.

The image of the invisible God has been revealed to them through faith. Sin has in their judgment been discovered in their own hearts as the Psalmist says "My sin I ever see". I will circumcise thine heart so that thou shalt love the Lord thy God. There is no way that happiness can be attained to unless we attain to this. Christ looking on His disciples said: "Blessed are those that are poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of God." Because they have a knowledge of themselves they live a life of trouble; but one thing they have desired of the Lord is that they would be like Him when He shall appear.

DONALD MACLEAY, SHADER (BARVAS):

It is evident that this people did not see this stone until they heard from Himself that "everyone that hath heard and hath learned of the Father will come unto me", and they heard what God said to Adam "Where art thou?" "Israel thou hast destroyed thyself". He saw that he had sinned against God, he saw the lostness of his state, that he was married to the law, and that the law had nothing for him but curses. This people were in the miry clay of sin without God and without Christ. Some were in this state longer than others, but the Lord did not leave them in it. But being in this kind of state is not being in Christ but it does bring the soul to see that he is in danger, and his need of Christ. When the waves were going over the soul, he thought these waves would carry him to the pit. But at this time the Spirit came to reveal Christ to him as the only suitable Saviour. The strong man had been keeping his palace in peace, but the One stronger than he came and threw him off the throne, and as the Samaritan woman said, "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" God wrought faith in this soul. Not a blind faith, without fruit is this; not merely a bare assent, but the faith that receives Christ in His two natures, and three offices. He is suitable for the salvation of his poor soul, and though he had 3,000 souls he would entrust them to Christ. He is melted down under a sense of debt to Him. His banner over him is love, then the soul falls in love with Him. We love Him because He first loved us. But this love had no beginning. Some would accept salvation though the attributes of God should not be glorified, but the true people of the Lord behold His glory in their salvation. A mark. They are exercised in love, and the test of this is that they submit to His commandments. Another mark: the word of the Lord is a lamp to their feet and a light to their path. They turned their back on the manners of the world. Not only did they see the evil of sin by the law, but they saw it also in the Cross of crucifixion. Two things here go together, love to God and hatred to sin. Another mark: you are sorrowful for

those sinners who are yet without Christ. This people are knit to the means of grace, private and public. . .

JOHN CAMPBELL, ARNOL (BARVAS):

This portion of truth came to me. I will tell what it was — that “the Lord has founded Zion and the poor of His people shall trust in it”. And poor soul is it not good news to you today, that this foundation has been laid, and that a poor soul whose “is the kingdom” may trust in it? This people need the grace of faith in exercise to strengthen them, for “He is a strength to the poor . . .” And again “from his fullness have we received grace . . .” These obtained both the grace of faith and the grace of love. A mark: They chose *Christ* as the way to Heaven. They follow Christ in His truth. These are they that follow Christ, and besides, pray “O let my footsteps be ordered aright”. Christ is to them the end of the law. They come down from the wilderness leaning upon Christ, as the Surety who has gone up to Heaven. O! that He would come down to those who are still unconverted. May God take pity on them.

MALCOLM MORRISON, GAELIC TEACHER, who said:

When one is going to build a house he begins with the spade and the pick. Some of the Lord’s people were long digging. They were fasting and weeping and praying and they would not accept deliverance until the Lord saw fit to give it to them. But when they were united to Christ, they then said “Thou art my portion forever. There is none on earth whom I desire beside thee.” Now if you do not have love to the brethren, I do not believe you have any love for God. The vows of God are upon these for He “has delivered us from so great a death”.

The Lord makes a short work upon the earth. The thief on the cross was in three states in the one day. The glory of God is a burden upon them, for the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts, and He constrained them. Though the wax be hard it can be melted. The King brought them into the banqueting house and His banner over them was love. They sat under the apple tree and His fruit was sweet to the taste. O sinners without Christ, the mountains cannot hide you when he says to you, “Depart from me, ye cursed . . .”

REV DUNCAN MACBEATH, NESS, who said:

There is not a person here who should be above putting this question to himself, “Have I believed in Christ”. There are some and what they give is an assent. Let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. And what is it to be in the faith? They are distinguished because Christ is precious to them, whereas to others He is as a root out of a dry ground. “He hath no form nor comeliness . . .” When God enabled His people,

they never did anything easier than believing in Christ. On the other hand, there is nothing as difficult as believing. Thomas could not believe. But when the water came on the mill-wheel, he said "My Lord and my God". The soul that has believed said, "He is altogether lovely". I esteem all things loss for Christ.

He is precious to you as Priest, the first office in which you closed in with Him. When these were on the brink of Hell they fled to Christ and Him crucified. They come to Him always, as Priest. He is precious to them as Prophet. Buy of me eye-salve that thou mayest see. O precious Christ! Would that Thou wert precious to me. There is one thing not precious to the hypocrite, that is holiness, but this (believing) soul takes pleasure in holiness. Sin is hated more by them then. Mr Lachlan said there was in one sin what would break the foundation of the earth. "O wretched man that I am," said Paul, when he was growing in holiness. These would not take salvation except the attributes of God were glorified. You who sit at the Lord's table; Abraham and the saints who went to glory are at the table up on high. Like Jacob's ladder, while one end of the table is in heaven, the other end is on earth.

If you wish to be happy, make choice of Christ in the days of your youth. These desire to live for Christ. They must live on Christ in the promises, and in His ordinances, drawing water with joy out of the wells of salvation.

As they grow in holiness, they grow in humility. They grow downwards as they grow upwards. But I am empty, says one, as Joseph's brethren were. Come with any burden that you have, and He will receive you. Open your mouth wide as often as you come. This Bank will not break as the Glasgow Bank has broken. Come with your bill, and you will obtain gold plenteously.

The Properties of the Moral Law

by Rev. John Colquhoun D.D., Leith

The peculiar and distinguishing qualities of the moral law, are these:

1. It is *universal*, or of *vast extent*. It extends to all men, in every age, place, and condition and to all their inclinations, thoughts, words, and actions. "Now we know," says the apostle Paul, "that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that *every* mouth may be stopped, and *all* the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall *no flesh* be justified in his sight." Whilst it binds all the human race, at all times, and in all places and conditions, it reaches to all the dispositions, thoughts, and purposes of the heart, as well as to all the words, and actions of the life. It extends to every motion and affection of the soul, and to every part and circumstance of human conduct. The Divine law is a rule for the heart, as well as for the life, of every descendant of Adam. "Thy commandment," says David, "is exceeding broad." No finite understanding can reach the boundary of it, or find out how comprehensive it is. It extends to countless multitudes of things, in every moment, and in every possible circumstance. The moral law, indeed, is summed up in the ten commandments; but it extends itself, notwithstanding, through the whole word of God. So extensive are those commandments, that every thing which he requires, may be reduced to one or other of them.

2. It is *perfect*. "The law of the Lord," says David, "is perfect, converting the soul." So perfect is it, "that it binds every one to full conformity in the whole man, unto the righteousness of it, and to entire obedience for ever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin." It requires all the duty which a man owes to God, to himself, and to his neighbour; and it demands perfection of obedience. No partial or defective obedience, can be sustained. The smallest degree of imperfection, renders a person obnoxious to the curse: so that, salvation by the law, is absolutely unattainable; because no man, since the fall, can perform the *perfect* obedience which it demands. The perfection of every grace, and of every act of obedience, is required in it. Nothing must be taken from it, or corrected in it, and nothing is to be added to it. The Lord Jesus explained the law, but he did not, in the smallest degree, either correct, or enlarge it. He and his Apostles taught nothing, but what Moses and the Prophets had previously inculcated. He said, indeed, to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." This command, however, is not new as to the *substance* of it, for it is a summary of the second table of the law; and therefore it is called "an *old* commandment which we had from the beginning:" but it is styled *new*, because it is enforced by the new motive and example, of the immense love of Christ in dying for us. This is evident from these words of his, which immediately follow; "As, I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Christ also commands us to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross and follow him; but these duties are comprised in that of loving God supremely. The prayer likewise, which our Lord taught his disciples, contains no peti-

tions, but what the saints under the Old Testament, were taught to present to Jehovah. Indeed, such is the perfection of the Divine law that it cannot require, or sustain, any thing short of obedience absolutely perfect. It requires not only that, there be no direct violation of any of its precepts, but that, there be no appearance of transgressing any of them; no consent of the heart; no inclination, nor affection, to the smallest violation of any, no secret delight in evil, nor desire that it were lawful; but on the contrary, that there be a supreme delight in the purity and perfection, of every one of its commands. This law is despised and dishonoured, if it be not acknowledged to be so perfect, that nothing can be accepted by it, but that which is in all respects perfect. It demands perfection, in the principles, in the parts, in the degrees, and in the perpetuity of obedience. In a word, such is the perfection of it, that it was sufficient to be the *rule*, even of the consummate righteousness of Jesus Christ himself.

3. This law is also *spiritual*. The Lawgiver is a spirit, the God of the spirits of all flesh; and He beholds all the inclinations and affections of the soul, as well as all the deeds of the body. His law therefore is spiritual, requiring internal, as well as external obedience. It reaches the understanding, will, and affections, with all the other faculties of the soul, as well as all the gestures, words, and actions of the body. It extends, not only to external appearances, words, and works, but to the dispositions, thoughts, principles, motives, and designs of the heart, and requires the spiritual performance, both of internal and external obedience. It requires that, every duty proceed from spiritual principles, such as, union with Christ, faith, love, and every right habit of the soul; that, it be performed in a spiritual manner, that is, according to a spiritual rule, and in the exercise of the graces of the Spirit; and that, it be directed to spiritual ends, the glory of God in Christ, and the eternal enjoyment of Him. Every man is commanded by it, thus "to mind the things of the Spirit," and so to "live and walk in the Spirit."

4. It is a *holy* law. "The law," says the apostle Paul, "is holy, and the commandment holy." The moral law is a fair transcript of the infinite holiness of God's nature, and an authoratative declaration of his will; and it binds all the children of Adam, to perfect holiness of heart and of life. It enjoins every thing that is holy, every thing, which is conformable to those moral attributes and actions of God, which are patterns for our imitation. Since it is intrinsically pure and holy, it gives no *just* occasion to the least motion of sin in the heart; but, on the contrary, it discovers, forbids, and condemns every inordinate affection, every unholy desire. It

is the immutable, and eternal, standard of all true holiness, whether of the heart, or of the life; and whilst it is both the rule, and the reason of holiness, its direct tendency is, to encourage and advance it, in every regenerate soul. All the precepts of it are perfectly holy, every way becoming an infinitely holy God to publish, and rational creatures to obey. The Divine law is so holy, that it calls for spotless obedience, not only in the words and actions of the life, but in all the inclinations, thoughts, and motions of the heart. It reaches, not only to the streams of actual transgression, but to the fountain of original sin, and calls for perfect holiness of nature, as well as of life. Hence the apostle Paul, as soon as he discerned the holiness of it, considered the first motions of irregular desire, even before the will actually consented to them, as sinful, and bitterly bewailed them, as well as firmly resisted them.

5. Moreover, it is *perfectly just and equal*. This righteous law, is exactly suited to our frame as reasonable creatures, and to our condition in this world. It requires nothing from us, but what we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour, and what we, in the first Adam, had sufficient ability to perform. Accordingly the holy Psalmist says, "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." "I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgements." The law of God is just and right. Its demands are infinitely equitable. And therefore, to fret against any command of it, or to wish, that it were in the smallest degree relaxed, is unjust, and is a breach of the whole law. Seeing it requires nothing, but what we already owe to God, and nothing, but what we are under infinite, and immutable, obligations to pay to him; our obedience to it, supposing that obedience were perfect, could never merit the smallest blessing from him. Were we, indeed, to perform but a single act of obedience, more than we owed to God, we should thereby, merit some recompense from him. But this it is impossible for us ever to do. It is not the obedience even of a true believer, that merits the blessings of salvation for him; but only, the meritorious righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

6. The law is *good*, as well as holy and just. The commandments of it are so good, that they require nothing, but what is good in itself, and good for the observers of them. "In keeping of them there is great reward." They enjoin nothing, but what is conducive to the happiness, both of the souls and the bodies of men. "Great peace," says the Psalmist, "have they who love thy law; and nothing shall offend them." The apostle Paul also says, "Glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles." And

again, "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." The chief ingredient, in the happiness of Adam, in innocence, was, his having this law inscribed on his heart. And no man, since the fall, begins to be either good or happy, till this promise begin to be fulfilled to him; "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts." It is this, that makes a man, a good man, and *capable* of performing good works. As the law then is good, desirable, and excellent; it is most unreasonable, as well as sinful, not to love it, and not to delight in performing universal obedience to it.

7. Lastly, This law is *of perpetual obligation*. The precepts of it are indispensable and perpetual. They continue, to direct and oblige all men to perfect obedience, not only through all time, but through all eternity. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The law as a covenant of works, will continue not only through time, but through eternity, to bind all who live and die under that covenant; and the law as a rule of life, will continue binding on the spiritual seed of the second Adam, through time and eternity. It is an immutable and an eternal law. "Every one of thy righteous judgements," says David, "endureth for ever."

Is the law of the Lord *perfect*, and does it require that our obedience be perfect in its principles, parts, degrees, and continuance? It is *impossible*, then, that *sincere* obedience, can entitle a sinner to eternal life. A man's faith may be sincere, but if it is not perfect, it cannot be a proper condition of life; it cannot procure for him, a right to eternal life. His repentance also may be deep and sincere; but if it is not absolutely perfect, it cannot afford him the smallest title, either to the progress, or the consummation of life eternal.* His obedience, in general, may be sincere; yet if it is not absolutely perfect, it cannot give him the smallest degree of title to eternal salvation. These cannot entitle him, in the smallest degree, to life, either according to the law as a covenant of works, or as a rule of life. They are necessary as parts of salvation, and as means of attaining complete salvation; but they cannot be the *grounds* of a man's title to salvation. Nothing can be the ground of a believer's title to salvation, but the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith, and imputed to him for justification.

Is the moral law of *perpetual obligation*? Then it follows that, as a *covenant of works*, it retains, and will continue throughout eternity, to retain, its whole authority and obligation, over every sinner of mankind who lives and dies under it. In its covenant-form, it stands in full force,

and can never be repealed. It will continue, and that through all eternity, to hold the finally impenitent, under both its commanding and its condemning power. They shall remain for ever, under an infinite *obligation*, both to yield perfect obedience to its righteous precepts, and to give infinite satisfaction for their disobedience of them. There is no possible way, in which, a sinner can be freed from the perpetual obligation of the law as a covenant; but by presenting, in the hand of faith, to it, the infinitely perfect, and meritorious, righteousness of the second Adam, as a full answer to all its high demands. When this glorious righteousness, is received by faith, and graciously imputed to a man, the law in its covenant form, is fully satisfied with respect to *him*, and, in *that form*, it has nothing more to demand from him. He now passes from the obligation of the covenant of works, and comes under the perpetual obligation of the law as a rule of duty, in the covenant of grace; and he will remain under its infinite obligation, through all eternity. Even the angels in heaven, are under a law, as their eternal rule of duty. And if the holy angels are not without law to God, surely glorified saints, will be under the law to Christ, as the eternal rule of *their* obedience. And so ardent, will their love of this holy and righteous law be, that they will account it their highest honour, and their greatest happiness, to continue eternally, under the obligation of yielding perfect obedience to it. No man sincerely loves it, even in an imperfect degree, but the man, who *hopes* to be under the *eternal obligation* of it.

* This is not to be understood as implying. That the law, either as a covenant or as a rule, requires either perfect or imperfect faith and repentance, as the *proper* condition of eternal life; but only, That no instances of personal obedience, how *sincere* soever that obedience may be, can ever entitle a sinner to life eternal.

Highland Disruption Worthies

Rev. Roderick M'Leod, Snizort, Skye.

Among the great and good men of Disruption days a prominent place may well be claimed for Roderick M'Leod; and the Church acknowledged the claim by unanimously calling him to preside over her General Assembly of 1863, thus conferring upon him the highest honour she had to bestow.

Mr M'Leod was born in Glen-Haltine, Isle of Skye, in the year 1794. His father the parish minister of Snizort, was a younger son of M'Leod of Raasay. His family connection thus gave him a position in society, and may also have contributed to the formation of that chivalrous bearing which characterised him through life. He possessed great natural

force of character, superior intellectual power, and a fearlessness of disposition that even in early youth made him a hero among his associates at school and college. Having completed his college course at Aberdeen, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Skye as a preacher of the gospel, and was soon thereafter appointed to the mission of Lynedale, in his father's parish. At this period of his life, and for a year or two thereafter, Mr M'Leod was still a man of the world — gay and light-hearted — and from his gentlemanly bearing was a universal favourite in the society of Skye. He felt little interest in the souls of others, for he was a stranger to the requirements of his own soul and to the love of the Saviour. But, by the perusal of Bellamy's "Christian Religion Delineated," he was awakened to a sense of his spiritual state, and when he was thus exercised it happened in providence that Dr Chalmers' "Lectures on the Romans" fell into his hands. He studied these lectures prayerfully; and to the light and comfort he obtained by means of them he made a touching allusion in his address at the close of the General Assembly in 1863.

At the time of this crisis in Mr M'Leod's history, there lived in his neighbourhood a remarkable man in humble circumstances whose enlightened views and ripe Christian experience were the means of keeping and strengthening him in the way of the Lord. This man was blind Donald Munro, a name revered in Skye only second to that of Mr M'Leod himself. When the history of living religion in Skye shall be written, one of its most interesting chapters will be the life and labours of this man of God. He was converted through hearing a sermon preached by Mr. Farquharson, an itinerant preacher sent to Skye by the Messrs Haldane; and soon it became evident that God had raised him up to be a faithful and much-acknowledged labourer in His vineyard. He had rare mental gifts, and was mighty in the Scriptures. His meetings for prayer and exhortation were abundant, and the power of the Lord was present in those humble gatherings at the river side in Snizort.

Along with the great spiritual change in the minister, there was seen a very striking change in the Mission House of Tynedale. The preaching was new. The services were multiplied. Meetings were held on week days as well as Sabbaths. Soon these meetings became crowded, for the people flocked to them from the surrounding districts, and many who afterwards became eminent Christians dated their first deep impressions from the earnest services of that time.

When the parish of Bracadale became vacant by the death of Mr Shaw, a minister of eminent piety, Mr M'Leod was presented to the

living, and inducted into that charge in 1823. He used to remark that it was with his sword and his bow that he gained this preferment, referring to the manner in which he formerly commended himself to his patron, by excelling in the use of the gun and in other amusements.

His ministry in Bracadale extended over 15 years. Here he had trials, but he had also great encouragement in his work. His church was crowded from Sabbath to Sabbath with eager hearers. Not only his own parishioners, but many from the surrounding parishes resorted to his ministry. Bracadale became famous as the birthplace of souls, and the memories still floating in the Island of the success that attended Mr M'Leod's labours there would fill a volume.

His views of the sacraments caused him to delay in some cases the administration of baptism, and this unusual strictness gave rise to complaints and appeals to the Presbytery of Skye. His Presbytery had no sympathy with him or his views, and endeavoured to force him into compliance with their own laxer notions. But standing as he believed he did on the firm foundation of God's truth, Mr M'Leod was not the man to be moved from his strong convictions. And so his refusing baptism to a parishioner came up before the General Assembly of 1824 by reference from the Presbytery.

At three different Assemblies Mr M'Leod's case was under discussion in one form or another. His Presbytery treated him with the utmost harshness, and gave him no rest. They harassed him, at first with threats, then by suspending him from the functions of the ministry for a year, and finally they proceeded against him by libel with the view of deposing him from the ministry. It was to this treatment that Mr (afterwards Lord) Cockburn, who was Mr M'Leod's counsel, referred, when in an eloquent speech before the Assembly, he lashed the Presbytery of Skye with his powers of ridicule, describing them as a troop of foxhunters, who had not much to occupy them, and who agreed to keep a bagged fox, at which they might have a run when they wanted a hunt. The case was ultimately disposed of in 1827, when the Assembly appointed a committee of its most respected members to make full investigation and to report to the House. This committee vindicated Mr M'Leod, and recommended that the suspension be removed, and the libel be rejected. The Assembly unanimously adopted their committee's report, and Mr M'Leod was set free, and returned to his home and his flock a happy man.

Mr M'Leod continued his ministry in Bracadale till the year 1838, when, on a vacancy occurring in the parish of Snizort, the people

petitioned the Home Office, praying that Mr M'Leod should be presented to the charge. The application was successful, and he was accordingly translated to Snizort. It was now the period of the "ten years' conflict", and into that movement Mr. M'Leod threw himself with all the ardour of his heart. His sympathies were entirely on the side of the spiritual independence of the Church and the spiritual rights and privileges of the Christian people. The circumstances of the time called for a large amount of extra-parochial duties, and perhaps no man passed through more bodily toil and privation in the service of the Church than Mr M'Leod did on to 1843. But however excessive his labours may have been before, it was the Disruption in that year that laid on him a burden which demanded all the mental vigour and elasticity, and all the physical strength, with which the Lord had endowed him. The Island of Skye, containing eight ministerial charges, with a population of 20,000 souls, was the field he was called to occupy, and he held it for years single-handed. Of his brethren in the island, none stood by him when the day of trial came, except one who was called to another charge a few months after the Disruption. But it was not only Skye which he had to hold for the Free Church. That portion of the Long Island which extends from Harris to Barra Head, with its population of 16,000 or more, and with only one minister who joined the Free Church, was added to the Presbytery of Skye, and demanded a large share of Mr M'Leod's thoughts and labours. He did not however shrink from the work, but courageously and cheerfully set his face to the duties before him. His labours for some years after the Disruption were not exceeded by those of any minister in the Free Church. It was no uncommon thing with him in those years to preach to congregations on the hillside in the midst of a snow-storm; and although he felt no injurious effects at the time, privations and continuous exertions, which were far beyond what any ordinary human strength could bear, left their mark upon him. But in the midst of it all no one ever found him desponding. He was always cheerful, and often even playful. By degrees relief came to him, and his labours were lightened. One after another of the island charges was filled up; and before his removal he saw the whole island supplied with ministers from Rhu Hunish to the Point of Sleat.

Mr M'Leod was married to Miss Anne M'Donald, of Skeabost, in whom he found a partner who sympathised with him in all his labours, and who strengthened him in his various trials. They had a family of thirteen children; and before it pleased the Lord to visit them with

bereavements, the well-ordered and happy household greatly impressed many a visitor to the manse. But one after another they were taken away, until at the time of his own removal, only four remained. His bearing in connection with those family sorrows was very remarkable. He meekly and quietly took all from a Father's hand.

Mr M'Leod continued in robust health till he neared the threescore years and ten. But at length the iron frame began to yield. In the year 1864 he had an illness which confined him to the house for several weeks; but he rallied again, and continued to labour with unabated zeal for some years longer. It may be said of him, that he fell in the field; for it was on returning from South Uist, after several days of preaching, that his last illness came on. He performed this long journey in an open boat, where there was neither shelter nor comfort. Exposure to storm and wet, for a night and a day, left evil effects behind, and his strength rapidly forsook him. The end was like a summer sunset, calm and tranquil. There was no ecstasy, and there was no fear; and without a struggle he passed away.

It is difficult now to credit the "gross darkness" that covered the population of Skye at the commencement of this century. But a reformation period arrived. A tide of religious feeling set in through the island, and the trusted leader of the movement was Roderick M'Leod. No one acquainted with the religious history of Skye can doubt that he was an instrument specially raised up by God to guide and mould the revived spiritual life of the people at that time. But Mr M'Leod was no mere revivalist. He was a man of wide sympathies, who took a deep and intelligent interest in all matters civil and ecclesiastical. . .

Those who had the privilege of intimate acquaintance with him, found him a man of very warm affections, a most congenial companion, and a confiding and steadfast friend, who could be relied on in any emergency. Among his younger brethren, instead of seeking to lord it over them, he often made them feel ashamed by refusing to take the place that they thought belonged to him of right. In their manses none was a greater favourite with the little children. Such a man could not fail to be beloved by the people of his native island, and his sufferings for righteousness sake gave him a place in their hearts that no other man has ever had. It will be indeed a degenerate race of Skyemen that will cease to cherish with reverence and love the memory of Mr. Roderick M'Leod.

J. S. M.

The Just shall live by Faith

Heb. 2: 4; Gal. 3: 11; Rom. 1: 17; Heb. 10: 38.

While Robert Blair, covenanter was regent in the college in Glasgow, upon a report that some sinful oath was to be imposed upon the masters, he inquired of Gavin Forsyth, one of his fellow-regents what he would do in this. He answered "By my faith, I must live!"

Blair said: "Sir, I shall not swear by my faith as you do, but truly I intend to live by faith — you may choose your own way, but I'll adventure on the Lord." And so this man to whom the matter of an oath was a small thing, did continue after he was gone; but he was many years in such poverty as forced him to supplicate the General Assembly for some relief. Robert Blair (who was then moderator) upon his appearing in such a desperate case, could not shun observing that former passage of his, and on meeting him in private, with great tenderness put him in mind, that he had been truly carried through by faith at which Forsyth had formerly scoffed.

Some time after Robert Blair was under deep exercises of soul, wherein he attained unto much comfort. Among other things that great saying "the just shall live by faith" sounded loudly in his ears, which put him on a new search of the Scriptures, in which he went on till Mr. Culverwell's Treatise on Faith came out. It being of the same nature with what was since published by the Westminster Assembly he was thereby much satisfied and comforted. "By this study of the nature of faith," he said, "and especially of the text before mentioned", I learned.

from: The Scots Worthies

Church Notes

Ordination and Induction at Lochinver

The Western Presbytery met in Lochinver church on Tuesday evening, 5th November, for the ordaining and inducting of Rev. Archibald N. MacPhail, M.A., as minister of the Assynt Congregation.

Despite the very wintry weather, there was a large congregation present, which filled the church to capacity, and which included friends from as far away as Glasgow, Edinburgh, Lewis, Skye, Inverness and Caithness. The following ministers from other presbyteries were present and were associated with the Presbytery: Revs. A. F. MacKay, Inverness; A. Murray, Lairg; S. F. Tallach, Kinlochbervie; J. Ross, Tain; A. Morrison, Oban; J. Tallach, Raasay and H. I. MacKinnon, Broadford.

After the Edict was returned and the Proclamation read, the Moderator, Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald, conducted public worship, preaching from Luke 10: 1-2, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

The Moderator, after public worship, gave a narrative of the proceedings in the Call to Mr. MacPhail. The Congregation, made up of the three parts, Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg, signed a Call to Mr. MacPhail on 8th October, and the Call (signed by six communicants and 55 adherents) was sustained by the Presbytery.

The Moderator then addressed to Mr. MacPhail the questions appointed to be put to ministers at their Ordination and Induction. Mr. MacPhail, having satisfactorily answered the questions, signed the Formula. He was then ordained to the work of the holy ministry with the laying on of hands by the ministers of the Presbytery, and with prayer, led by the Moderator. The Moderator, by the authority of the Head of the Church and in the name of the Presbytery, inducted Mr. MacPhail as minister to the pastoral charge of Assynt Congregation; and the brethren gave Mr. MacPhail the right hand of fellowship.

The newly ordained minister was addressed by Rev. D. A. Ross, Laide, who based his remarks on 1 Timothy 4: 16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Rev. N. M. Ross addressed the Congregation.

Messages of good wishes from Rev. D. J. MacDonald, Clerk of the Southern Presbytery; Rev. F. MacDonald, Clerk of the Skye Presbytery; and from Mr. MacPhail's former pastor, Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow, were read.

Before bringing proceedings to a close, the Moderator referred to Mr. MacPhail's late godly father, Mr. Donald MacPhail, and to his usefulness to the Church in his capacity as an Elder of St Jude's Congregation, Glasgow. The Moderator also spoke about Mr. MacPhail's predecessor, "our late, respected friend, Mr. MacAskill" who had been "so much a help to the Church of Christ and was characterised by the wonderful grace of humility."

After prayer, led by Rev. A. F. MacKay, praise and the benediction, the congregation was dismissed and met Mr. MacPhail at the outer door.

A generous tea was very kindly prepared for the people by the ladies of the Congregation.

It is a matter for great gratitude to the Lord that He has sent another labourer into His harvest. It is our prayerful desire that this ministry, now established in Assynt, will be made fruitful by the Lord, who only can give the increase, and that it will be richly blessed to the strengthening of the Cause of Christ among us and further afield.

N. M. R.

Trinitarian Bible Society Staff Vacancies

The October-December 1985 issue of the Trinitarian Bible Society Quarterly contained the following announcement: "The Society's urgent need for new members of staff has been made known in previous issues of the Quarterly Record. Readers of this magazine are asked to consider prayerfully whether they should offer their time and skills for the furtherance of the Lord's work through the Society. It should be mentioned that good rates of remuneration will be paid to suitable applicants, but the most important requirement is a commitment to the Society's spiritual aims." A list of the current vacancies was given. Any person interested should obtain a copy of the Quarterly Record for October-December 1985 or January-March 1986 and make direct application to the Society.

Greenock Communion

The date of the Spring Communion in Greenock is being altered from the fourth Sabbath of March to the second Sabbath of February for this year as Rev. L. MacLeod hopes to leave (D.V.) in March for a period as Church Deputy overseas.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Canadian: At Toronto on 6th February at 2 p.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 11th February at 12 noon.

Skye: At Portree on 25th February at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 11th March at 11 a.m.

Zimbabwe Mission — Staff Vacancies

GENERAL — Post of Administrator/Treasurer.

JOHN TALLACH SECONDARY SCHOOL — Graduate Teachers (Four Posts) with qualifications in English, History, Geography and Mathematics.

MBUMA HOSPITAL — A doctor is still urgently required, also a further Nurse/Midwife and preferably with teaching experience.

With the new situation that exists in Zimbabwe consequent upon independence it is desirable that all of the seven above posts be filled as soon as possible. The work provides a real challenge to all who may have these necessary qualifications, and all our Church people should make the needs of our Mission a matter of constant prayer.

Enquiries to Rev. A. Murray, F.P. Manse, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4EH. Telephone 0549-2176.

Dundee Congregation

Please note the permanent address of the minister is 238 Arbroath Road, Dundee DD4 7SB, Telephone 0382-43198. Mr Macaskill would be very interested in obtaining names and addresses of anyone connected with the church who live in or near Dundee, or of anyone who may be interested in attending services.

Correction

The date of the Editor's return to this country from overseas should have read 13th November and not 13th March as appeared in the January issue.

Notes and Comments

Licence to Kill

Further to the warning on euthanasia reported in the November News and Comments, a Bill was suddenly presented by Lord Jenkins of Putney to the Upper House (I.S.M. News Letter Jan. 1986). This Bill would have subtly amended the 1961 Suicide Act by inserting, "It shall be a defence to any charge under this Act that the accused acted on behalf of the person who committed suicide and in so doing behaved reasonably and with compassion and good faith." Senior members of the Christian Medical Fellowship made representation to the Peers and, on 11th December, 1985, it was convincingly denied a second reading.

We may all be thankful that it was the Bill that died.

— J. R. T.

Visit to the Pope

On 9th December the Prince and Princess Michael of Kent were received twice by the Pope. The first occasion was when they attended Mass in the Pope's private chapel, and the second when they were received by the Pope in his study in the Vatican Palace. Great secrecy sur-

rounded these meetings but no doubt the Princess, who is still a practising Roman Catholic, was seeking the Papal blessing on their marriage which has so far been denied. The Romanising influence of the Princess within the Royal Family is an influence they could well do without. Though the children of the marriage must be brought up in the Protestant faith, we fear that their mother's influence may be crucial and bring about their ultimate perversion to the Roman faith. We pray, however, that this may not take place and that they will be delivered from the ensnaring entanglements of Rome.

The whole Royal Family in our day is exposed to much danger through false religious advisers. Our prayer ought to be that the Lord would raise up faithful men of God in places of responsibility in the Church who would be instrumental in bringing much good to the Royal Family in making known to them the Gospel of God's grace. Otherwise we fear that they may yet be brought to embrace the heresies and idolatry of Rome.

Church Union

The proposal of the 1985 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to unite with the **Scottish Episcopal Church** is likely to lead to a split in the Church of Scotland if it is implemented. This warning was given by a past Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Very Rev. Dr. Andrew Herron in the recent series of Baird Lectures at Strathclyde University. In his lectures, which are to be published by St Andrew Press, Dr. Herron warns that for the Church of Scotland to unite with the Scottish Episcopal Church by introducing a form of episcopacy would be to **change the identity** of the Church of Scotland and cause a split. He warns that those who hold to the original constitution will very likely win the property and assets.

Multilateral Church Conversation

These conversations have been held during the past 17 years between six Scottish Churches — the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Methodist Synod in Scotland, the Congregational Union of Scotland, the United Free Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church within Scotland (formerly the Churches of Christ). They have issued three reports. The most recent one, "**Christian Unity — Now is the Time**", which proposes a united church in Scotland, was welcomed by the 1985 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and sent down to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions for consideration.

The report is a guideline according to which the six conferring Churches might move forward and asks the Churches to acknowledge that there is sufficient doctrinal agreement to allow an organic union.

However, there will need to be a few modifications to the "Articles Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual". These Articles Declaratory form the main basis of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland.

Another proposal is to extend the term of service of the Moderators of Presbytery to seven years and many are seeing in this the **first step towards Episcopacy**. It seems that King James I's "kingcraft" has been studied well! This may be the needle which will draw in the episcopal thread.

Dr. Herron has said this is the Bishops Report of 1957 back again. (That was the last attempt to introduce Bishops into the Church of Scotland). He unsuccessfully opposed this Report's welcome at the General Assembly.

He is now warning that the changes to the Articles Declaratory will change the identity of the Church of Scotland. There have been **other attempts** recently to change the Declaratory Articles by the Church of Scotland Panel of Doctrine, but these failed.

Proposed Changes to Declaratory Articles

These were not detailed at the 1985 General Assembly and Dr. Herron warned the Assembly against signing a blank cheque and he described this failure to reveal the changes as introducing a "sinister element" into the matter.

In the July 1985 issue of Life and Work some of these changes were explained.

1. The phrase "the Church of Scotland adheres to the Scottish Reformation" in Article I should be interpreted in the sense that the Scottish Reformation of the Church is not complete, but is a continuing process.
2. Some of the conferring Churches have suggested that the historic creeds might be included along with the Westminster Confession of Faith in Article II, "the principal subordinate standard of the Church of Scotland is the Westminster Confession of Faith."
3. An addition to the last line of the Article III to make it read "to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish of Scotland through a territorial **and other ministries**".

The **first** change is an attempt to explain away the Scottish Reforma-

tion. It is the sort of explanation that one would give who is envisaging eventual union with the Church of Rome itself and is therefore very far-sighted. It evidently cuts the Church of Scotland away from the actual attainments of and adherence to the Scottish Reformation.

The **second** change is much the same as the one proposed by the Panel of Doctrine which failed last year. This procedure is one of the ploys being used to minimise the influence and standing of the Westminster Confession of Faith as the principal subordinate standard and it is a method approved by those openly opposed to the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The **third** is described as "very small", yet may prove to be very large. Does this loophole act as the small needle's eye to draw in the episcopal thread? I believe it does.

D. M. B.

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