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The Church of Rome

That iniquitous system, known as the Church of Rome, has been in existence for many centuries. During the Dark Ages it attained an ascendancy in Europe which was so extensive that almost all nations were enslaved by it. At the Reformation its power was greatly diminished when the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ spread across Europe. Through the Counter Reformation it was able to re-establish itself in some of the nations of Europe and the fruits of the Reformation in these lands were practically destroyed, as in Poland, France, Italy, Spain and elsewhere. In other nations the Reformation was too well established to be overthrown as in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, England, Scotland and elsewhere. Since that time the aim of the Romanist Church has been to completely crush Protestantism so that the Romanist Church would attain to the ascendancy it had before the Reformation.

Though the system of Rome is spoken of as a Church and claims for itself that title yet it is unworthy of such a title in view of the fact that it is only masquerading as a Church to delude the hearts of the simple. The Confession of Faith speaks of some Churches as having so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Of these the so-called Church of Rome is one; its head, the Pope of Rome, being named by the Confession as "that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God." No system in the world answers the description of the Mystery of iniquity in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 2 so well as does the politico-religious system of the Romish anti-christ. Its teachings are the very antitheses of the teachings of Christ and these have already led millions upon millions of souls, and are today leading millions of souls to eternal perdition.

It is under this evil system that thousands upon thousands have perished even in our own day. The guiding force behind the persecuting power of the Romanist system has been the Jesuit Order, an order masquerading under the name Society of Jesus while doing the work of the devil. It is under the leadership of a Cardinal, known as the Black Pope, but under the ultimate authority and rule of the Pope who goes about in white garments but is blacker than the Black Pope because it is under his headship these Satanic works are carried out. Of the political intrigue carried out by the Jesuits on behalf of the Pope and the Romanist system at the present time, no one can have any conception. For instance, we may wonder why the Serbs of Yugoslavia are at the present time so opposed to the Croats in that country. Yet we would not wonder if we remembered that during the Second World War Catholic Action was engaged in the massacre of thousands of Serbs, slain only because they belonged to the Orthodox Church. The name of the Ustashi under the fanatic Antone Pavelich and Archbishop Stepinac will ever be regarded with vile abhorrence in the annals of Yugoslav history. Behind it all was the Church of Rome. Though so well documented that none can deny it, yet how successful the Church of Rome has been, through its manipulation of the Press, in keeping it largely a hidden matter.

Communism has fallen or is in process of falling in Eastern Europe. What is to take its place? The Jesuits supply the answer. They have been busy in the councils of the nations in order to ensure that out of the ashes of Communism there shall arise a body of nations in Europe subservient to "Mother Church", as the Church of Rome is sometimes designated, though more accurately "the Mother of harlots".

Surely then Rome will be satisfied when the Baltic Republics, the Ukraine in Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Croatia, all bow down to her. Far from it! The Church of Rome intends to bring all of Europe under her sway, as well as lands outside Europe. So far as Western Europe is concerned she is well on her way towards accomplishing her end. European Union is but an end to Romish domination. Britain is moving very fast in that direction. So far as the Churches in Britain are concerned their Protestant backbone has long since been removed and it would require little movement for the main Churches to be swallowed up in Rome. Even those Churches once denominated evangelical have long lost their fear of Rome and have embraced an arminian theology which would well fit in with the theology of the Roman antichrist.

What can we say to these things? Surely dark days lie ahead, days of persecution for those who, in Rome's view, will have the effrontery to

adhere to a long dead Calvinism. It may well be that only at the peril of their lives will men be able to maintain and assert the doctrines of God's Word. Romanism remains implacably opposed to the truth and she will do all in her power to destroy or subvert it whenever and wherever she gains the upper hand. Those who embrace Protestant teaching will have to stand firm in the midst of abounding apostasy. Let us, in the strength of divine grace, be resolved to hold fast in an evil day to those glorious doctrines resurrected at the Reformation and still maintained wherever the truth of God's Word is still valued.

Sermon

by Rev. Charles Calder, Ferintosh (1774-1812)

(Preached at the Contin on 15th August, 1793, at the Ordination of Mr Dallas.)

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." — John 12: 32.

The great design of the ministry of the Gospel as declared to Paul by the heavenly vision, which so suddenly and graciously arrested him in his career of persecuting zeal, is to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the living God. Christ is the light of the world and the only way to the Father; it is therefore by leading men to Christ that the great object of our ministry can alone be fulfilled — that they can be brought to the enjoyment of true light, and restored to the image and favour of God. Thence, in pursuance of the divine commission which the holy apostle had received, it was his devout resolution, as expressed by himself, writing to the Corinthians, to know nothing among them except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The doctrine of the Cross to be the power of God and the wisdom of God in winning sinners to Christ and salvation, he knew from happy experience, as well as from our Lord's declaration in our text, signifying by what death He should die: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." By a display of love so rich and amazing, our blessed Lord was now to lay a foundation for conquering the most stubborn hearts, and was to engage a multitude, which no man can number, of all ranks and all nations, to enlist with joy under the banner of the Cross. Though there be virtue enough in the blood of Christ to expiate the guilt of the whole world, and attractive power in His dying love, sufficient to draw to Him every heart, and though we have a warrant to preach the Gospel to every creature; yet we know of the many thus called that but few are chosen, and that of those to whom the word of this salvation is sent many perish in their sins: "For

wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7: 13,14). As Christ was of old to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, so He is still, alas! despised and rejected by many to their own aggravated condemnation and eternal ruin. The benefits, however, of His death are offered unto all, and by the preaching of the Cross, a glorious church shall be gathered unto Him out of the Gentile as well as the Jewish world, out of every kindred, people, and nation, — of all languages, ages and conditions: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

I propose in discoursing from these words, in dependence upon divine aid, to show wherein lies the attractive influence of the Cross of Christ, by illustrating those views of His death, from the representation of which, in the preaching of the Gospel and through the accompanying influences of the divine Spirit, the great end of our ministry may be accomplished, and sinners effectually drawn to Christ and salvation. In order to the accomplishment of this important object, and that men may be brought to experience the powerful magnetism of the Cross of Christ, it is necessary to represent to them:

First, The divine glory of Him who was lifted up upon the Cross. Little indeed is the portion which we can comprehend of the infinite glory of our Redeemer, before whom Isaiah in his vision of the upper world, beheld the highest orders of celestials, veiling their faces with their wings, and worshipping Him with the most profound reverence; and of whom, rapt into the vision of future times, he cries out in holy ecstasy, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9: 6). Had it been only a mere man, a creature though of the most exalted rank, who had condescended to suffer and die for us, whatever admiration and praise such friendship might excite, it could afford us no solid consolation, as it could be of no avail to expiate the guilt of sin, or to obtain for us eternal redemption. The redemption of the soul was precious, and it must have ceased for ever, had not a ransom of infinite worth been provided, adequate indeed to the redemption of a multitude which no man can number, and each soul of that multitude, incomparably more valuable in his estimation, who best knew its worth, than the whole world. Adequate to such a redemption was the price by which it hath been purchased: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and

to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20: 28). "Feed the Church of God," says Paul to the elders of Ephesus, "which he has purchased with his own blood." That one of such infinite dignity should humble Himself thus, and shed His blood on a cross for the salvation of men, is altogether wonderful and mysterious, and is a doctrine, therefore, which corrupt reason is ever ready to reject as false and absurd. But he that believes that there is a God must believe mysteries, and in the eye of sound reason, nothing can appear more arrogant than for man to pretend to search out the Almighty unto perfection, and obstinately to reject the clear and express revelation which Jehovah hath made to us of His nature or of His ways, because they are incomprehensible to the poor grovelling creature who is a mystery to himself, and can no more account for the union of soul and body — two substances, yet one person — than he can comprehend a subject infinitely removed beyond the narrow ken of the human understanding, — this great mystery of godliness, the manifestation of God in the flesh.

That our glorious Redeemer is God as well as man is a most comfortable truth, of which we have the fullest and clearest evidence from the Word of God. "Without controversy," says Paul, writing to Timothy in the passage just alluded to (1 Timothy 3: 16), "great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And in his Epistle to the Philippians, 2: 6, speaking of Christ, he says: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." If the heavens declare the glory of the Lord and the firmament sheweth his handy work — if the vast creation bears the stamp of an almighty agent; if the Cherubim and Seraphim that shine around the throne of God proclaim that the hand that made them is divine, then this honour is due to Christ: "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1: 16-17). Again, He is expressly styled "the Beginning and the End" (Rev. 22: 13); the Beginning, that is the efficient cause from which all things proceed; and the End, that is the final cause to which all things are referred; and nothing higher can be said of God the Father. It is this infinite dignity of Christ that imparts infinite worth to His obedience, and sufferings, and gives virtue and efficacy to His sacrifice, which the sufferings of the whole

human race would not have, if they had been doomed to everlasting punishment.

This transcendent glory of Christ imparts infinitely attractive virtue to his Cross. He who humbled Himself for our sakes was higher than the heavens; He who emptied Himself had the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily; He who endured the Cross, despising the shame, was that great and glorious Being whom highest angels worship and adore. His humiliation, His poverty, His shame and sufferings, have, therefore, not only infinite merit in them to expiate the evil of sin and satisfy divine justice, but likewise an infinite virtue to bring nigh those who were far off, and to draw unto Him the remotest wanderers, — sinners from the utmost ends of the earth, yea, from the very confines of hell. "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else; besides me there is no Saviour." Isaiah 45: 21, 22. This is Christ's call to us in His word. The great business then of ministers of the gospel is to publish and urge this gracious call, and to direct perishing sinners to Him as the great God, and the Saviour lifted up upon the Cross, to take away sin by the sacrifice to Himself. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich." 2 Cor. 8: 9. The knowledge of this grace, which can never be fully comprehended, which angels contemplate with wonder, and which the redeemed of the Lord shall celebrate in eternal hallelujahs of praise: the knowledge and admiration of this grace must be proportionate to the views which the soul has got of His glory who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. It is by the display of Christ's glory that the grace manifested in His humiliation and sufferings is illustrated, and its attractive influence comes to be experienced. In preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, when accompanied by the influences of the divine Spirit, whose peculiar office it is to testify of Christ, and to glorify Him, a powerful and irresistible attraction is felt flowing from the grace and condescendence which brought the only Begotten of the Father to become an outcast of men, and the Lord of life and glory to expire on a cross for the salvation of sinners and enemies.

Christ is "the desire of all nations"; it was said of Him in prophecy that the Gentiles should come to His light, and kings to the brightness of His rising; and when He is set forth in the preaching of the gospel as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of His person, voluntarily substituting Himself in our room, submitting to the curse which we had incurred, and pouring out His soul unto death on the accursed

tree for wretched sinful men, such ineffable glory united with such astonishing grace, viewed in the light of the spirit of wisdom and revelation, overcomes man's natural alienation of heart from God, converts enemies of the Cross into faithful followers of the Lamb — renders a crucified Saviour altogether lovely, altogether desirable in the eyes of His people — worthy that kings should fall down before Him, and that all nations of the earth should serve Him. "I will now turn aside," said Moses, "to see this great sight, the bush burning and not consumed." It is by the representation of the glory and of the goodwill of Him who dwelt in the bush, that thoughtless perishing sinners will be induced to turn aside from the downward paths of sin and folly, to contemplate this astonishing sight, the Son of God in our nature lifted up upon a Cross, till by the view their hearts are melted, won, and drawn, till they are brought to enlist under the banner of the Cross, and to say with Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world" (Gal. 6: 14).

Secondly. That sinners may be effectually drawn to Christ, it is necessary to represent to them the evil and the danger of sin as manifested in the Cross of Christ. It was part of God's commission to the prophet (Ezekiel 3: 17-18), "Son of Man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand." That the sinner's life may be saved, or the watchman acquitted of his blood, sin must be laid faithfully before him in its native deformity and malignity, in its fatal consequences and dreadful desert; as that accursed thing which God's soul hates, and against which he has denounced indignation and wrath, tribulation and eternal anguish. Though much of the pernicious nature of sin may be learned from the woes without number under which the creation groans, yet none of its dismal consequences alone, nor all of them united, set its evil and danger in so awful a light as the Cross of Christ. The dying groans of the Son of God declare this more loudly than the wailings of the damned. How atrocious must that guilt be which nothing but the costly sacrifice of the Lamb of God could expiate. How deep the stain which nothing but the blood of God could efface. When Christ is held forth in the preaching of the gospel as lifted up upon a Cross, and when sin is viewed as the procuring cause of all his sufferings and sorrows; of the bloody agony and ignominious death of the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory,

how must the conscience-stricken sinner shrink with horror and tremble for his own fate!

Seeing thus in the glass of Christ's sufferings, and by the light of the divine Spirit, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, and reflecting with himself, "If these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry," he is brought to listen with eager attention to the offers of salvation through Christ, and to fly as if he heard the footsteps of the avenger of blood behind him, to lay hold of the hope set before him in the gospel. As there is no sanctuary for the sinner, no place of security from the wrath that is to come but the Cross of Christ, so there is no other point of view from which sin appears so exceedingly sinful, so much the object of God's detestation, and so contrary to his divine nature. The soul therefore to whom sin has been discovered in this light must be deeply convinced of *their* fatal error who hope for salvation whilst they indulge themselves in the practice of sin, and must feel drawn to Christ no less powerfully to obtain redemption from sin than to obtain deliverance from wrath. As the children of Israel, when stung by the fiery serpents in the wilderness, looked for healing to the brazen serpent elevated by the divine appointment on a pole, so it is by the faithful representation of the evil and danger of sin as manifested in the sufferings of the Son of God, that the sinner is led to look with eagerness to Christ lifted up upon the cross for the healing of the nations, and to apply to Him for remedy from the malignant poison of the old serpent by which his nature has been tainted, with no less ardour than he repairs to Him as his hiding place from the wind, and his covert from the tempest of the divine wrath, or as the high tower to which the righteous flee and are safe.

(To be Continued)

The Praising Part of the Word

Learn to be well acquainted with the book of Psalms, and the praising part of the word of God. The book of Psalms is a book of songs; and in the Old and New Testament too, there are a great many songs uttered by the holy men of God, and written by them, and ordered by the Holy Ghost to be in our Bibles, as God's mind and will to us; and if ever you would mind the work of praise well, you must be acquainted with the praising part of the word. The apostle Paul hath an exhortation, commonly known, but not well understood, Col. 3: 16, 17. *Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts*

unto the Lord; and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Pray observe these two verses; the apostle names no more of the word, but the singing part of it. There is a great deal in the word of God beside psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and there is another use to be made of the word than singing; it is also to be read: but the apostle confines his exhortation to the duty of praise, directs us in it, and proposes this as one great mean, *Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you:* and what part of the word of Christ is it that he means? The praising part of it; *admonishing one another, saith he, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs.* Sirs, it is a great help to the duty of prayer, that we have so many of the prayers of the saints recorded in the word; though it is a rotten use that is made of the praying part of the word, when here a scrap, and there a scrap, is gathered together to a book of common prayer; an abomination that God will visit for, though man forget; which hath sent thousands of souls to hell in this nation, rocking them asleep in security. This is a great abuse of that part of the word. There are many poor believers that, in reading David's Psalms, have been made to say, "Surely this man speaks as if he was in my soul's stead." The same spirit was in believing David, as is in the poorest believer this day in London; no greater wonder then that they fully perceive and understand the words of one another. Thus, as we find a great help in praying, from the praying part of the word; so we find a great deal of help for praising, by being well acquainted with the praising part of the word. I must say, and I believe very few are able to contradict me in this, that the greatest part of believers in all ages, of all the books in the Old Testament, have been most edified by the book of Psalms. I do not speak this with any kind of reflection of any other part of the sacred writ; the prophets are excellent; the prophet Isaiah is a most evangelical prophet; but for the spiritual pulse of a Christian, the book of Psalms is the greatest index thereof of any book in all the word of God. All the saints have felt it, and I dare say you have felt it, if ever you have been exercised unto godliness to any purpose.

— Robert Traill.

God's Marvellous Works

by Rev. J. A. MacDonald

In the Bible we have an account of David as he looked up into the heavens and admired the sun, moon and stars.

“When I look up unto the heav’ns,
which thine own fingers fram’d,
Unto the moon and to the stars,
which were by thee ordained;

“Then say I, What is man, that he
remember’d is by thee?
Or what the son of man, that thou
so kind to him should’st be.”

Psalm 8: 3, 4

It is important for us to think on the marvellous works which the Lord has done, and in so doing may He enable us to sing with the Psalmist:

“Thou my sure portion art alone,
which I did choose, O Lord:
I have resolv’d, and said, that I
would keep thy holy word.”

Psalm 119: 57

The world and its wealth is a poor portion. Our Saviour became poor for our sakes that we through His poverty might be made rich. yet He had to say of Himself: “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of Man hath not where to lay His head.” The Saviour was so poor that he had not a penny even to pay His tribute tax, either for Himself or for His disciples. Rather than be in debt He instructed Peter to take a hook and cast it into the sea. Instantly the fish was caught and within its mouth was found the coin which the Saviour instructed should be used to pay the tribute both for Himself and for His disciple. How wonderful is the Lord Jesus in stretching out His hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people! In view of this I cannot but greatly admire Jacob’s submission to God’s holy will when he said that if God would graciously grant him some bread and a garment to clothe him then God would be his God.

All the Lord’s gracious works should breed admiration in our hearts and souls. It is good and wise counsel which the Holy Spirit gives to the young in Ecclesiastes 12: 1, “Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth”, and also in Psalm 90: 14,

“O with thy tender mercies, Lord,
us early satisfy;
So we rejoice shall all our days,
and still be glad in thee.”

Psalm 148 gives instruction to praise the Lord and in verse 12 specific reference is made to

“Both young men, yea, and maidens too,
old men, and children small.”

Admiration is as it were a shield which protects the soul from the darts of Satan. The Bible is full of the Lord's gracious acts, above all in his voluntarily coming, as He said, “not to condemn the world (that was already done) but to give his life a ransom for many.”

The people of Nineveh could tell of what God did for them in bestowing repentance on many of them, thus saving them from destruction. Rather than that His ancient people Israel should perish in the wilderness, God caused manna to come down from heaven daily to feed them. I am sure too that Jeremiah would never forget what the Lord did for him. He told him in the day of his distress: “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” Jer. 31: 3. Some of you will remember what the Rev. D. MacFarlane used to say of these precious truths: “Make a parcel of them.” The words too of Isaiah 54: 10 also comforted the Church, reminding her of what the Lord did for her: “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.” Elijah had cause to admire the doing of the Lord in His providence in many ways, not least when God caused the meal in the barrel to multiply and the oil to flow to satisfy his needs.

The Lord's wonderful works are so numerous that only a few of them can be mentioned but his people have within their hearts an admiration for them all. The widow of Nain never forgot, the loving-kindness, which he shewed for her, when he touched the bier and her son was raised from the dead. At another time He turned the water into wine. He it was, too, who instructed Noah to build an ark for the saving of his house.

Let us think of the Lord's patience with the prodigal son, notwithstanding how far astray he went. He returned in dire poverty and filthy rags. Oh, his father's love for him when he saw him. He fell on his neck and kissed him. What the Lord has done for poor sinners is beyond our comprehension. For our sakes He became poor. He wore the crown of thorns and the purple robe. The words of the prodigal son's father were most touching: “Bring forth the best robe.” “He gave his life a ransom for many.” What a sweet truth that is: “He made intercession for the transgressors.”

Listen to what Moses declared. “There is none like unto the God of

Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." Deut. 33: 26. this has been a cause of happiness for the Church in the midst of her lowliness and in her fear of falling some day into the hands of Saul. It is wonderful how full the psalms are of the sufferings of Christ: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Psalm 22: 1. These are His marvellous works.

The children of Israel have reason ever to admire the wisdom and love of God in that He made a way for them in the midst of their enemies when He separated the waters of the Red Sea for them to pass over to the other side. Then they could say: "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." His people can say: "Our light afflictions, which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Surely this should fill their soul with admiration for Christ.

Paul said: "Who loved me, and gave himself for me." I have no doubt but that he is with Him in glory. He said Himself of His life as he drew near the gates of that terrible death: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." Oh never, never despair all you who have the free offer of the gospel. Oh, the surpassing love which caused the Saviour to take upon Himself our nature and then to pour out His blood, thus giving perfect satisfaction to the inflexible justice of God in the room and stead of His people. What a loving Saviour we have!

Let His doings breed more and more admiration within us. Think earnestly of His doings and sayings on Calvary's Cross. These should breed admiration in our hearts so that we could say like Job: "Though he slay me yet will I trust in Him." Oh let His last words on the cross kindle love and deep admiration in every faculty of our souls. There are those whose hope is that they will not forget either in time or in eternity Christ's sweet words: "It is finished." Many a night it lulled you to sleep, as it were. Happy are all they who can say: "Who loved me and gave himself for me." Be assured of it you will be His in the day when he makes up His jewels. Notice David's admiration of the blood. Listen to David's request and his assurance: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." It was Christ himself who said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Oh may saving faith be imparted to your soul to say with the Church: "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand." May the Lord cause admiration to breed as readily in your heart as in the heart of Jeremiah: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." This reminds me of Kenneth MacLean, Breasclete's story which he told when speaking to the question on the Fri-

day of a Communion many years ago. He said: "Today I received a letter from a dear friend which contained a sum of money which I appreciated very much. However, although the money was valued, what gladdened my heart more was a wee note at the bottom of the letter which said 'MORE TO FOLLOW'." Dear Kenneth then went on to spiritualise this in a most sweet way.

Think on the time you were at death's door, as it were. He spake to you thus: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." You made a good recovery. When they were together again Mary and Martha and Lazarus would recall Christ's loving kindness and works of wonder to them in restoring Lazarus after being three days in the grave. Oh think on the works which He hath done which admiration breed! It breeds a longing in the soul to be washed in the fountain open for sin and for uncleanness, and to say with David: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow." David could also say: "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope." Ps. 130: 5.

For the benefit of those who are poor and needy God gives some sweet promises.

"Those that are broken in their heart,
and grieved in their minds,
He healeth, and their painful wounds
he tenderly up-binds." Psalm 147: 3

Again it is written: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." With severe storms he will bruise the reed, this way and that, but this promise never fails. He will not "break" it. "None perish that him trust." He gave of His blood to the last drop. Such will say in time and in eternity: "Thy love to me was wonderful."

Think often of the resurrection morning when Christ rose from the dead, leaving an open grave behind him, reminding us that we too must rest in the grave until the last trumpet shall sound. He shall then say: "Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away." There is but one Saviour for God's people. Oh, keep thinking of Him on the cross for you. None could complete the blessed work the Father gave Him to do but the Lord Jesus Christ. If another could have been found to do it, He that was in the bosom of the Father from all eternity would have been saved from it. I often heard the Rev. James MacLeod say there is no bosom like the bosom of the Father. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" "To them that believe he is precious." Precious beyond words was He to Mary Magdalene as she wept at the empty tomb, and uttered these words: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

Rev. James MacLeod often said that Christ stripped himself of His glorious robes which were His from all eternity, exchanging them for the rags of our humanity. No wonder we hear Him say: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." All this he did for the poor troubled child of God. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name." Phil. 2: 9. The thief beside Him on the cross cried: "Remember me, when thou comest into thy kingdom." Oh, let Christ's reply breed more and more admiration in our hearts and souls: "This night shalt thou be with me in paradise."

It is scriptural also to think of Christ's cause in the world. I shall never forget the first Synod I witnessed. The dignity of the ministers and elders was memorable. Another thing that is freshly in my mind is the first division I witnessed — a solemn sight. About 300 left Rev. Neil Cameron's congregation. Then more recently many left for more and more freedom. May the Lord bestow repentance on them before it is too late. Truly Jesus can bring us near to Him to touch the border of His garment.

Our beloved Church before very long shall have been in existence for 100 years. During that time it was much hated and spoken evil against by both strangers and those who had once been within her bounds. However, the names of those who made the noble stand in 1893 are as fresh and fragrant as ever both at home and abroad. We in the Free Presbyterian Church, like the people whom the Lord delivered from the bondage of salvery in Egypt, have reason to admire His loving kindness and think on the wonderful works which he has done."

In drawing these few thoughts to a conclusion, I trust that I can give you the same message that came from Paul of old: "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." II Tim. 1: 12.

Let us never forget those well known to us who, in the face of stiff opposition and cruel mockings, bore the burden and heat of the day thus proving themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ. The opposition was cruel, and they could say with the church of old:

Had not the Lord been on our side,
May Israel now say;
Had not the Lord been on our side,
When men rose us to slay;
They had us swallow'd quick, when as
their wrath 'gainst us did flame:
Waters had cover'd us, our soul
had sunk beneath the stream.

Psalm 124: 1-4

The Lost Sheep Found

by Rev. Archibald Cook.

As the communicants were going to the second table (the first served that day by Mr Cook) my thoughts were going into eternity, the boundlessness of which was opening to my mind, and how awful the thought that the scream, Lost, lost, would be filling eternity. In those thoughts I lost consciousness of my surroundings and of where I was, but was called back to consciousness by people around me rising on their feet and stretching themselves forward over my shoulders, wishing to see or hear. I then saw Mr Cook standing at the head of the table, as if in agony, with the palms of his hands together, and without uttering a word for some minutes. At last at the height of his voice he exclaimed, Lost, lost, lost. O poor creature, here today with that scream in your soul, I will tell this to thee, they are now in glory that had that scream before. (My heart said, Oh, is that true?) Yes, it is true. They were lost in their feelings, and they were lost in justice, and they are now in glory. (My heart said, Can that possibly be true?) Yes it is possible. They were lost in their own judgment, yes, and they were lost by the Word of God, and they are now in glory. There was a child that strayed from his father's house and wandered into a wood. Night came on, he could not make his way back, he was even afraid to move, lest he should go further away or fall into a pit. So he could do nothing but stand still, crying, Lost, lost, lost, and by this cry the father found the lost child. And you that have that scream in your soul, you have there a cry that was heard in glory, and that was it for which Christ came out of glory — to seek and to save that which was lost — and in your having that scream in your soul you have there an evidence that there is love in God. Then followed a display of the revelation of that love in Christ, coming to suffer and to die for that which was lost.

(Portion of a table address taken down by a hearer at Inverness Communion in 1852.)

Revivals of Religion in the Isle of Skye *

In 1805, Mr Farqharson, an itinerant preacher in the Independent connexion, first appeared in Skye. He was from Perthshire, where his ministrations had been much acknowledged, as, indeed, they were wherever he

* Extracted from the Tracts on Revivals, *Scottish Christian Herald*, 1839.

proceeded in his labour of love. It is probable that the "truth as it is in Jesus" had never before been publicly proclaimed in the island which he now visited. From the parochial pulpits, there is too much reason to fear, it did not go forth; and the remoteness of the district had hitherto precluded the visits of those not connected with the Church, who, towards the close of last century and beginning of the present, travelled over the country promulgating sound doctrine and, we believe, sincerely seeking the salvation of souls.

When Mr Farquharson appeared in Skye there is reason to believe the state of religion was as unfavourable as it had ever been. The novelty of field-preaching on weekdays, as well as Sabbaths, by one who held no communion with the clergy, attracted the notice of the people, and they flocked in crowds to hear him. His sermons consisted of powerful and faithful testimonies against the abounding sins of the country, clear and energetic illustrations of evangelical truth, solemn protests against the soul-destroying doctrine of justification by human merit, with affectionate and solemn warnings and invitations addressed to his hearers as lost sinners. His appeals excited great attention, and produced no small inquiry among the people. But their external disadvantages were many — few could read, and scarcely any copies of the Sacred Volume were in their possession. In a population of many thousands, not above five or six New Testaments could be numbered, and their value had never been appreciated. Still the preaching of the Gospel continued. In Portree and Snizort, Kilmuir, Duirinish, and Bracadale, Mr Farquharson itinerated for a considerable time; the people heard, and deep seriousness marked their whole demeanour under the word of life.

At this time there lived in the parish of Portree a person named Donald Munro. In childhood he had been the victim of smallpox, by which he had lost his sight. To gain a livelihood he had learned to play the violin; and being naturally of a pleasant disposition, this quality, with his musical talent, made him a general favourite. The calamity of his blindness engaged the sympathy of all, and his other qualifications secured their patronage. It was thought that the office of Catechist in the parish, to which a small salary was attached, might be superadded to his professional character with advantage to his circumstances. The inconsistency, if observed, was overlooked, and the benevolence implied in making a provision for Donald, concealed the incongruity of a blind fiddler being also a parochial catechist. The minister favoured him, the people were pleased with the arrangement, and a retentive memory, enabling him to master the questions of the Shorter Catechism and a few chapters in the New Testament,

his qualifications for the office to which he was promoted were held to be complete. How often are we made to know, as the sequel of this man's history will illustrate, that "God's ways are not our ways," that they are "past finding out," "for he giveth not account of any of his matters!"

Donald's official character led him to hear Mr Farquharson, for where religious exercises — extra-ministerial — were held, there he conceived it his duty to be. Hundreds and hundreds had come to listen to the word of salvation; but although serious attention was given, the preacher seemed to have "run in vain and laboured in vain." The Spirit was not poured out from on high, and no "blade" of heavenly growth was yet discoverable in that dry place. Nevertheless, God had sent him; and, although he was not, himself, to be the direct instrument of an abundant harvest, like the prophets of old, he was made the medium of the "unction from the Holy One", to another who was raised up to show how 'the weak things of the world are made to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things which are not, chosen to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.' "To me he was a messenger from God," declared Donald Munro many years after; and although in his Christian charity he expressed an opinion, that one or two besides were converted by his means, no evidence exists that faithful Farquharson's mission had any other direct fruit than that of the conversion of this remarkable man. He soon after emigrated to America, and his ministrations had no further connexion with the revival which took place in Skye.

The Catechist of Portree was no longer a pluralist. He had "got new views", to use his own language, of "Scripture truths, of himself, and of the practices of the inhabitants of his island;" and the light which had been given to him he did not put "under a bushel". His official situation afforded him opportunities of speaking in the name of Jesus; and, before he had been himself a convert for a year, he was made the instrument of turning three or four from the error of their ways to the faith and obedience of the glorious Gospel.

But the great awakening did not take place now, nor for a few years after this; nevertheless, as the events which follow were connected with that manifestation of divine grace and power, and as they illustrate the ways of God's providence in promoting His purposes of love towards sinners, they are here recorded.

In the first place, a prayer-meeting was established. This was in Snizort, the neighbouring parish of Portree. A very few only attended at its establishment; but, in course of time, the numbers increased. The pre-

judice against it was strong; for nothing of the kind had ever before been heard of in the country, and an innovation of so marked a character was not readily tolerated. But it grew in popularity; and by its means many were induced to attempt to call on the name of the Lord. For two years it flourished. At the end of that time a Baptist preacher appeared in the country. The members of the meeting heard, and some were drawn after him. Eleven were baptised by him — division ensued, and the prayer-meeting was in a short time finally dissolved.

In the next place, soon after the institution of this meeting, it pleased the Lord to bring "out of darkness into marvellous light" one of the ministers in the neighbourhood. The gentleman referred to was the late Mr Martin, then of Kilmuir, and latterly of the parish of Abernethy. The change in his doctrine, as well as life and conversation, soon attracted notice, and he was sought unto by those in the country who, by this time, had themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious. The cause of the prayer-meeting was espoused by him; and as even men who knew not the saving power of the Gospel in their own experience, esteemed him for his virtues, his countenance given it, secured either their neutrality or favour. As a minister, he was instant in season and out of season; reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine. The usual result followed — a desire among his parishioners to search the Scriptures, to see that the things which he declared were so. But the Sacred Volume was wanting — and no supply was at hand to meet the demand which the preaching of Christ crucified by this good man had produced. What might have followed so prosperous a state of outward privilege no one can say. A very few, it is believed, were during the short period of Mr Martin's living ministry, savingly impressed; but as he removed from the island in about two years after the change in his own character, and the Gospel ceased to be proclaimed — although he left a pious Catechist behind him — no further additions of such as "were ordained to eternal life", were at that time made to the "Church of the living God".

And here we may be permitted to remark, how serious a consideration it may be for a minister of the Gospel to remove, under whatever solicitations, from a sphere where indications may be perceived of an incipient work of grace, such as a few years after distinguished this part of Skye. That Mr Martin should be exposed to much that might harass his spirit, under his change of views and character, in the place where his lot was cast — that "living godly in Christ Jesus" he should suffer persecution — may be readily believed, as the experience of another, but more undaunted "fellow-servant" subsequently attested; but surely here was an

opportunity to "endure the cross, and despise the shame," connected with the prospect of honouring his Master and promoting his cause, such as does not often occur, and which, not being embraced, is seldom a second time offered to any man. It cannot be wondered that Mr Martin, as we have heard, should in after years have felt and lamented his error.

It has been stated, that he left behind him, in the parish of Kilmuir, a pious Catechist. This individual also acted as schoolmaster. But besides his services, the parish now enjoyed the benefit of those of Donald Munro, who had been discharged from his office in Portree, and was therefore not confined in his labours to that locality. Under their direction and conduct, meetings, subsequently to the dissolution of the prayer-meeting, were regularly held in the parish, attended by large multitudes; and much interest, apparently, was taken in the things which belonged to their souls. This state of matters, however, lasted not long. The new incumbent did not walk in the steps of his predecessor. The Catechist, disgusted with the new order of things, left the country; and Donald Munro stood single-handed without even the weight which his former official name afforded. He did not, however, cease his efforts; and, though under many inconveniences, this good man persevered in holding his meetings, encouraged by the great numbers who came desirous to listen to the word of life.

But the Lord raised up a new friend to the cause in the person of the late Mr John Shaw, who, about this time, was appointed minister of Bracadale, a parish in the neighbourhood, and situated in the same district or county. He had previously been the assistant of the minister of Duirinish, a parish also in this district, but, acting there in an inferior capacity, his influence, until now, had not been efficiently exerted. He was a holy and humble man, little acquainted with the ways of the world, and naturally little qualified to withstand its opposition, directed, whether insidiously or in open violence, against the interests of Sion. But, whatever his failing in this, his heart trembled for the ark of the Lord; its safety was the object of his deepest solicitude, and the theme of his importunate and constant prayers. He was consequently the friend of the friends of Christ, and, few and despised as they were in Skye, he constituted a rallying point and counsellor, whose unwavering faithfulness, at least, seldom failed them in whatever emergency.

Mr Shaw secured for his parish the benefit of society teachers, all of whom were godly men — one from the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, another from the Gaelic School Society, and a third from the Inverness Education Society, by whose means a knowledge of the truths of the Scripture was extensively communicated. And not least in impor-

tance, as preparing the way for the work which the Lord was about to perform in this hitherto dark corner of the Church, the minister of Bracadale introduced to the country Mr M'Donald of Urquhart, "whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches," and whose rousing appeals to the assembled multitudes who congregated to hear him, caused "no small stir about that way".

It was about the year 1812 that the *awakening* properly so called, had its commencement — about seven years after Mr Farquharson first preached in Skye. It began in the parish of Kilmuir, of which Mr Martin had been minister, and where Donald Munro's services had been most uniformly bestowed and best appreciated. As there can be no doubt that the meetings held under his management were the means especially employed in the work, it may be proper to state the mode in which the services on these occasions were conducted. We are not here to defend the *regularity* of these meetings, if this be impugned. It pleased the Lord to bless them, and, considering the circumstances which gave them birth and caused their continuance, he will be a bold man who maintains that they ought to have been suppressed or that they are now to be condemned.

The services, on the solemn and happy occasions of which we speak, began with praise and prayer, which were sometimes repeated in course of the occasion, and always concluded the duties for the time. The reading of the Scripture followed the opening of the meeting, large portions of which were read aloud without note or comment. The works of such authors as were to be had in Gaelic came next, viz., translation of Alleine's Alarm, Boston's Fourfold State, Baxter's Call, Bunyan, Willison, Gray, and Edwards. Then a passage of the Word of God was selected for exposition. Munro usually had this part of the service allotted to him; but although few, when he was present, were willing to occupy the place which became him so well, others also, at times, opened up the truths contained in the passage thus commented on. It has already been noted that Donald was a blind man, but he required the aid of no reader. His memory was stored with the Scriptures, and he had become, literally, a living concordance. Whole chapters could be recited by him without the commission of the slightest error. References, for illustration, were made with a precision which never betrayed, in a single instance, those who followed him in his exposition by turning to the passages. His style of address was solemn and deeply impressive, the effect being not a little heightened by the visitation of Providence, which had made him an object of sympathy to all connected with the evidence in him of the riches of His grace who had come.

. . . "To clear the inward sight;
And on the eyeballs of the blind
To pour celestial light."

He spoke as one "scarcely saved" — "a brand plucked out of the burning" — lately "dead in trespasses and in sins;" but to whom "the grace of the Lord had been exceeding abundant," and who now stood among those of his own country and kindred who knew his "manner of life from his youth," apparently by divine commission, to warn them to flee from the wrath to come; and to proclaim the truth, worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom he had been chief. A holy unction characterised — as a sound judgment ruled — all that he said; for his words were weighed in the balance of the sanctuary and were not found wanting. To witness his appearance on the occasion alluded to — if the heart were not melted — was sure to disarm prejudice; and even bitter enemies, whilst they condemned the proceedings, acknowledged that Donald was a good man — honest and sincere in the cause in which he was embarked.

Three times every Sabbath day the meetings were held — in the open fields — in barns — or under such shelter as circumstances required, and as at the time could be commanded. But not on the Lord's day only: one stated meeting was held, weekly, at Donald's residence, on another day; and besides this, he travelled to other points in the country round, so that he was rarely disengaged.

Great power followed. When this came, the effects were striking in the highest degree; and filled Munro and the other leaders with adoring wonder. That it was the Lord's doing, not man's, soon became so evident that they were made to feel, and exulted to acknowledge, that they were not to be accounted of, and not worthy to be named in connection with the glorious manifestation which it pleased the Most High to vouchsafe of his redeeming love. "What are we and what is our Father's house!" was the language of their hearts while they contemplated the effects of the irresistible power now savingly exerted. It was a common thing, as soon as the Bible was opened, after the preliminary services, and just as the reader began, for great meltings to come upon the hearers. The deepest attention was paid to every word as the sacred verses were slowly and solemnly enunciated. Then the silent tear might be seen stealing down the rugged, but expressive countenances turned upon the reader — the convulsive and half-suppressed sigh might next be heard — female sobbings followed — and, after a little, every breast was heaving under the unaccountable agitation which moved the spirits of the assembled

multitudes. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one who is born of the Spirit."

Sometimes those affected cried aloud; but this was not common; at other times they threw themselves upon the grass in the utmost distress, and "wept bitterly". A spirit of prayer and supplication was granted in a remarkable degree, both upon the leaders of the meetings and upon the people. After the services for the occasion, at any time, were concluded, they were to be seen in all directions on their knees, or stretched along the ground calling upon His name with whom is "the residue of the Spirit". An insatiable desire to hear the Scriptures read and opened prevailed; and no length of service fatigued during those days of life and power. Hours passed insensibly, and the night was often "far spent" ere "note was made of time". The usual seasons for food were forgotten, and even necessary nourishment was sometimes neglected. The redemption of the soul is indeed precious. When the eyes are enlightened to perceive this truth, and the conscience is awakened, under the operation of the Holy Spirit, to testify the fearfulness of coming short of the great salvation; and when this occurs, not to an isolated individual, but to a multitude circumstanced in all respects as those of whom we now speak, who can wonder that such appearances as have been described should be exhibited — that such results should follow; nay, who that knows the Word of God and the mind of man, but might expect that such occurrences should take place?

We have called those occasions *happy*. They were truly so; for there is no joy like that which is felt when a sinner, melted under a sense of sin and of the mercy of God, learns to weep from "godly sorrow" and a blessed persuasion that everlasting love is manifested towards him in the dealings with his soul which he experiences, when at one and the same time "repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ" are produced within him by a power which he knows is divine. One striking trait, accordingly, in the character of the meetings was the life felt and manifested *in singing the praises of God*. The assembled multitudes engaged in the duty as with "one heart and one soul" and often seemed as if they knew not how to stop. The utmost cordiality and brotherly love prevailed — every man feeling his heart more tenderly drawn out to his neighbour — and such as were savingly affected experiencing a holy influence leading them to testify for Christ in the house and by the way, in private conversation and by a devoted public profession.

(To be continued)

Inspired Psalmody*

By the Rev. Henry Bazely, B.C.L.

“Speaking to yourselves in psalm and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.” — Eph. 5: 19.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” — Col. 3: 16.

I wish to state to you, dear brethren, my reasons for the practice, which I have constantly followed since I became your minister, of choosing our songs of praise to Almighty God exclusively from the book of Psalms. I ought perhaps to have done this sooner, since you may have naturally desired a fuller statement than the statement I gave in a brief paper on Public Worship written for your inspection before I accepted this pastoral charge, of the reasons which compel me under a solemn sense of duty to God and to our Church, to abstain from the use of uninspired hymns in the public worship of the congregation.

At the time of the Reformation one of the important subjects of controversy discussed between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformed Church was the *rule of worship*. The Roman Catholic Church adopted the principle, “Whatever Scripture does not forbid it allows” (*Quod Scriptura non vetat, permittit*); whereas, the Reformed Churches took as their principle, “Whatever Scripture does not command, it forbids” (*Quod Scriptura non jubet, vetat*). Observe the vast difference between these two principles. According to the Roman principle there is scope for the introduction of ten thousand rites and practices unknown in the days of the Apostles. The manner of worship is thus made dependent on the various and everchanging tastes of men, and their ideas of what is expedient and comely. The only uniformity possible is that which is enforced by the despotic government of the rulers of the Church for the time being. On the other hand, according to the principle of the Reformed Churches, the manner of worship is wholly regulated by the perfect wisdom of God, and an end is at once put to controversy. Does a church or a private individual desire to make an alteration in the accustomed manner of worship? It is incumbent on the church or on the individual to bring forward the express warrant from God’s written Word. If no such warrant can be produced, the proposed change is *ipso facto* condemned; whereas, ac-

* A Sermon preached in St. Andrew’s Scottish Church, Philpot Street, Commercial Road, London, E., on 10th February, 1878.

according to the Roman principle, a door is opened to an interminable controversy as to men's taste and notions of expediency. I do not now intend to enter upon the proof of the soundness of the Reformation principle, but let me simply remind you that it was received with hardly an exception by all the Reformed Churches. The Church of England, unhappily for her own prosperity, did not accept this principle and she is suffering to this day from internal disorders that threaten her very existence. The Church of Scotland, like the other Churches, accepted this principle in its integrity with the result that a clean sweep was made of every rite and practice for which no sanction could be found in the New Testament. The principle is asserted in the Confession of Faith, chap. 21, sec. 1, in the following words:— "The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or" — mark this — "any other way not *prescribed* in the Holy Scriptures." It is for us, if we accept the doctrine of the Confession (and surely every loyal member of our church does accept it), to inquire, with regard to this matter, whether the use of uninspired hymns is *prescribed* in Holy Scripture. If it is, then such hymns must be used; if not, then the use of such hymns is unlawful. The answer to the question need not detain us long. Our church, as we shall presently see has given a plain and decided reply.

But let us first look, independently of the formularies of our church, at two or three passages in the New Testament. The shortest text bearing on the subjects is that which contains James' exhortation to Christians who are cheerful in the enjoyment of the good gifts of our merciful God, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." To the same effect Paul exhorts the Ephesians and Colossian Christians in the passages, so like each other, which I read as my text. His phrase in both epistles is "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." I cannot doubt that many of the Apostle's readers, who have not examined with a little care his meaning have come to the conclusion that *uninspired* hymns and spiritual songs are in these texts not barely permitted, but explicitly prescribed, by Paul. My brethren, there is not, I am persuaded, the slightest ground for the supposition that the Apostle refers here to uninspired poetry, or to any poems outside the canonical book of Psalms. The reference is simply to the different classes of poems contained in the Psalter, as is sufficiently clear from the fact that the three Greek words for "psalms, hymns, spiritual songs," are just the words which are used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, which Paul employed to express the different Hebrew

words occurring in the titles of the Psalms, and are rendered in our version by "psalm," "song," "praise," and so forth. That this is the true significance of Paul's phraseology is shown by the instructive circumstance that the praise sung by our Lord and His Apostles after the Last Supper — doubtless that portion of the Psalter which was entitled by the Jewish Church and Egyptian Hallel or Thanksgiving (Psalms 113-118), and customarily sung by them at the Passover — is designated by the Evangelists Matthew and Mark "a hymn" — "when they had sung an hymn, they went to the Mount to Olives." A further proof is furnished by the epithet spiritual attached in the above texts to "songs", which means according to its use in the New Testament that which comes directly from the Spirit of God. Moreover, there is no trace in the extant writings of the early Church of the use in Apostolic times of any uninspired hymns; and surely if such had been in use they would not all have perished.

Indeed, as late as the year 563, we find a decree made by the Council of Braga in the following terms:— "No poetical compositions are to be sung in the church except the Psalms of the Canonical Scriptures." "There were still some churches, even in the 9th century which did not admit metrical hymns into their offices." (Smith's Dictionary of Christian Antiquities — Art. Hymn).

That the Bible furnishes us with no warrant for the use of any songs in public worship but those contained in the Psalter, is not the private opinion of this or that individual; it is the deliberate judgment of the Church of Scotland, clearly expressed in her standards. In the Confession of Faith, chap. 21, sec. 5, "singing of *psalms*" is the description given of one of the constituent parts of worship; and at the close of the Directory, in which document there are several references to the psalmody of the church, a paragraph contains the following words: "It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly by singing of *Psalms* together in the congregation and also privately in the family." There is not the most distant allusion in any of our Formularies, in the Confession, Catechism, or Directory, to uninspired hymns. Such hymns were absolutely unknown in our churches until the close of last century (*i.e.*, the eighteenth). During the latter half of that century, when the unevangelical principles of so called Moderatism were dominant, and intrusions of unacceptable presentees into vacant parishes were driving many Christian people into secession, some hymns — five in number — were, in conjunction with sixty-seven Paraphrases of Scripture, "collected and prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly, in order to be sung in Churches." Note the wording of this sentence, which stands on the title page of the Paraphrases. Very

different is the wording of the title page of the Psalter: "The Psalms of David, in Metre; according to the version *approved by the Church of Scotland, and appointed* to be used in worship." The Paraphrases and the five accompany hymns never received formal ecclesiastical sanction; never, as was necessary to authorise their use, were they approved by a majority of Presbyteries, in the terms of the Barrier Act. "Certain it is," says Dr John Cunningham in his History of the Church of Scotland, "there is no Act formally sanctioning them." Those who used them did so by nothing more than the temporary sanction of the General Assembly. There is certainly, as has been sometimes pointed out, a difference between Paraphrases, *i.e.*, loose renderings of passages of Holy Scripture, and such hymns as are original compositions. The former are not open to precisely the same objections as the latter. But it may, I think, be fairly argued that paraphrases are at least unnecessary; and with regard to the sixty-seven attached to our metrical Psalter, while in all of them undue liberties are taken with the inspired text, several are portions of the Bible that were not intended to be sung; so that we may be thankful our church was preserved from giving a formal sanction to this collection.

I have already given sufficient reason for the exclusive use of the Psalter in public worship, inasmuch as I have shown you that uninspired hymns can find no warrant from either precept or example in Holy Scripture, that they were not used in the purest days of the Reformed Church of Scotland, and that they have at no time — not even at the most unsatisfactory periods of our Church's history — been constitutionally approved. I shall add a few more reasons in confirmation.

(1) The first and most weighty reason is the acknowledgment which we thereby make of the supremacy of Scripture. We thus draw an unmistakable distinction between inspired and uninspired writings. We refuse to put on an apparent level with the words spoken and written by men under the supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost, *any words*, however true, however beautiful, for which such suggestion and guidance cannot be claimed. To add by way of supplement to the Psalter uninspired hymns — and much more, of course, to substitute these hymns for the Psalms — is really to disparage Holy Scripture as imperfect and insufficient for the needs of the Christian Church. Can we doubt, brethren, that if the Psalter were inadequate, as some venture to treat it, our blessed Lord would have guided His Apostles by His Spirit to draw up a new manual of praise for His Church? He has not done so; and we may surely infer the perfect adequacy of the Psalter, which He Himself and His Apostles used. Certainly there was never a time in the history of the Christian

Church when it was more dangerous to disparage the perfection of Holy Scripture or to neglect the assertion of its supremacy, than now, when its specific distinction from all other writings, and its adequateness as the sole rule of doctrine and practice for Christians, are by very many denied.

(2) Secondly, I would insist on the use of the Psalter only in public worship, for the sake of the profitable and delightful familiarity with it which every member of the Church will thus readily attain. No one can express how dear the Psalms have been to devout Christians in all ages, what sound instruction has been furnished by them, what strong encouragement, what real comfort, what unspeakable joy. They who have been best acquainted with the Psalms have valued them most highly. In the early Church there was a rule in some provinces that no one should be ordained until he could repeat the Psalms by heart. I could almost wish that this rule were revived in the Church of our own day. In the fifth century — so Jerome tells us — the poor husbandman was heard singing the Psalms as he walked behind his plough. Another writer of the same date exhorts the artisans to sing the Psalms in their shops. They were translated into Greek metrical verse that children might learn them in the schools, for as Augustine writes, the Psalms were specially intended for the delight of children and young men. I have often been greatly pleased in visiting our Scottish poor to discover the accurate knowledge of the Psalms possessed by aged people, who in their youth heard no other songs in the public worship of their Church. Now, alas, since other hymns have been introduced, this knowledge of the Psalms is no longer common; the children of this generation are far better acquainted with uninspired hymns, some perhaps good, many indifferent, and not a few containing positive error.

And lastly, another reason for the exclusive use of the Psalms in public worship is the danger of erroneous doctrines creeping in through uninspired hymns. This is not an imaginary danger. Students of early church history know that the monstrous systems of the Gnostics, and the attractive heresy of the Arians which denied the perfect deity of Jesus Christ, and in the fourth century almost overspread the Church, were often covertly introduced, and then greatly helped forward and successfully propagated by the use of uninspired hymns, and in our own day the retrograde movement in the Church of England towards Romish doctrines and practices has been, as Evangelical ministers bitterly complain, largely promoted by the popular book entitled *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Nor shall I conceal my conviction that the false doctrine which is spreading like a canker in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, is not obscurely connected with the unscriptural innovations which have been made upon the purity of our worship.

Short Gleanings

The Conflict Within

"For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7: 19). This is humbling, but a just, account of the Christian's attainments in the present life, and is equally applicable to the strongest and to the weakest. The weakest need not say less, the strongest will hardly venture to say more. The Lord has given His people a desire and will, aiming at great things; without this they would be unworthy the name of Christians; but they cannot do as they would; their least desires are weak and ineffectual; not absolutely so, for He who works in them to will, enables them in a measure to do likewise, but in comparison with the mark at which they aim. So that, while they have great cause to be thankful for the desire He has given them, and for the degree in which it is answered, they have equal reason to be ashamed and abased under a sense of their continual defects, and the evil mixtures which taint and abase their best endeavours. — *Newton*.

Growth in Knowledge

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hosea 6: 3). The mysteries of Christ are not learned in a day. Some are in a good mood, maybe, and they will look into the Bible and read a chapter or two, and away they go for a week, and never practise it more; like some boys, if at school one day, truant all the week after. Is it any wonder such thrive not in knowledge? It is a good speech of one:— "The study of the Word and the reading of it differs as much as the friendship of such who every day converse lovingly together doth from the acquaintance one hath with a stranger at an inn, or whom he salutes as he passeth by in the street." If you will get knowledge indeed, you must not only salute the Word now and then, but walk with it, and enter into daily converse with it. — *Gurnall*.

Notes and Comments

The Collapse of Communism in Russia

The collapse of Communism in Russia and the virtual break-up of the Soviet Republic has followed swiftly on the failed coup in Russia when an attempt was made to re-establish a hardline communistic regime. As with the collapse of the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe it is clear that events are out of the hands of men. The Lord is fulfilling His purposes in connection with the nations of the world. None can stay His hand or

say to Him, What doest Thou? He is ruling in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the world. What the outcome of these events will be has still to be seen, but it is gratifying to see the collapse of a system based on atheistic belief. It will need more than this, however, to establish true Christianity in the lands which have been set free. The antichristian Romanist system is doing its best to fill the vacuum created by the fall of communism, but this is only to replace one evil by another evil, and one delusion by another. What the countries of Europe and of the Soviet Empire need is the gospel of God's grace. This only can bring true liberty from the bondage of repressive regimes. May such a day be speedily hastened.

Serbs and Croations

The European Community has been trying to establish a peace accord between the warring parties in Yugoslavia. It would appear that Croatia has strong support from neighbouring Roman Catholic nations. This will not give much confidence to the Serbs after all they have suffered in the past through Romanist atrocities and persecution. The sad matter for the Serbs is that they belong to an Orthodox Church which is anything but orthodox. Croation and Serb alike need the gospel, in order that they may be delivered from false systems of religion. When the Lord pours out His Spirit upon the nations, only then will the nations learn war no more and beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Charismatics and the Romish Church

The Archbishop of Canterbury recently gave his blessing to charismatics and now Cardinal Hume also gives his full backing to them. Indeed it is said that charismatic renewal has the backing of most church leaders today. Recently 3000 Roman Catholic charismatics gathered at Walsingham, Norfolk, where the mass of the transfiguration was celebrated. The delusion of the Charismatic movement is clearly seen in that it unites persons of the most divergent belief, let it be Protestant, Orthodox or Romanist. The tongues and healing movement has become a potent weapon in Satan's hand to deceive poor sinners for eternity. Those who have come to value the doctrines of the truth reject such delusions and declare: "We have not so learned Christ."

Euthanasia

An all-Party Parliamentary Group has been established by the Voluntary Euthanasia Society in order to promote a Bill in Parliament for the

legalising of euthanasia. It is alleged by some that passive euthanasia has already been generally accepted by the medical profession by withholding treatment. The Voluntary Euthanasia Society would support a Bill allowing terminally ill patients in agony the choice of death. Much is being spoken and written about euthanasia at the present time which presents euthanasia as an act of compassion. Nowhere is reference made to the divine command: Thou shalt not kill, which includes a prohibition to the taking of one's own life. How clear it is that man left to himself becomes worse than the beast. It is good to know that doctors generally will not succumb to this evil practice.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Canadian: At Inverness on 1st October at 9 p.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 15th October at 12 noon.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo on 8th October at 2 p.m.

Australia and New Zealand: At Gisborne on 25th October at 2.30 p.m.

Committee Meetings

The following Committees will meet (D.V.) on Tuesday, 1st October at Inverness Church.

9.00 a.m. — 10.00 a.m. Church Centenary Committee

10.00 a.m. — 11.00 a.m. Training of Ministry

11.00 a.m. — 12 noon Church Magazines

12 noon — 1.00 p.m. Publications

2.00 p.m. — 3.00 p.m. Welfare of Youth

2.00 p.m. — 4.30 p.m. Finance

3.00 p.m. — 4.00 p.m. Sabbath Observance

4.30 p.m. — 5.30 p.m. Dominions and Overseas

4.30 p.m. — 5.30 p.m. Religion and Morals

7.00 p.m. — 9.00 p.m. Foreign Mission

South Harris Communion

The Kirk Session of the South Harris Congregation has recently decided that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should in future be dispensed there in Spring on the second Sabbath of April (D.V.) This is to get away from the situation where the communions in the two Harris congregations take place on successive weekends.

K.D.M.

Mission News

Miss Katie MacAulay returned to Zimbabwe at the beginning of September to resume her teaching duties at John Tallach Secondary school at Ingwenya. Miss Jean Nicolson, Edinburgh, who spent many years working at Ingwenya recently visited the Mission and we have no doubt would have been warmly welcomed by the people there.

In a letter received from Miss Nicolson from Zimbabwe since the above was written, she refers to Mr and Mrs Neil Murray's safe arrival in Zimbabwe. Mr Murray is at present working in the Mbumba area. He hopes to obtain a Permit to enable him to do general missionary work. The teachers at Ingwenya are preparing entrance tests for John Tallach Secondary School. Last year there were 1000 applicants from different areas of the country. A Sabbath School began by Miss Graham for local Primary School children attracted 90 children on the first occasion. Rev. P. Mzamo and Mr William Mpofu, elder, returned to Zimbabwe after visiting Kenya and Malawi where they had a heavy programme of engagements. We trust that a blessing will follow their visit.

Church Deputy

Rev. John MacLeod, Stornoway, is due (D.V.) to leave early in October as Church Deputy overseas and also to the Mission in Africa. He expects to spend one Sabbath in Vancouver before proceeding to New Zealand and Australia. He expects to return (D.V.) by Africa and hopes to visit Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe before returning home at the end of the year. We are sure that the prayers of the Lord's people will follow Mr MacLeod on the journey which he hopes to undertake.

Eastern Europe

Rev. D. A. Ross expects to pay a visit to Russia in October. He hopes that his brother Rev N. Ross will be able to accompany him on this occasion. It is desirable that contact may be established with pastors sympathetic to the Reformed outlook. So far this has not been possible. Bibles, Reformed Literature and medicines will be taken to contacts already established. The prayers of the Lord's people are requested that the deputies may be guided to those who would profit from this attempt to place Bibles and sound religious literature in the hands of those so long denied contact with the West.

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Bracadale: Anon., £10 per J.C.; Anon., £20 per Rev. G.G.H., both for Induction Expenses.
Daviot-Stratherrick-Tomatin: Friends, Wick £50; Friend, Lochcarron £20, both for Congr. Purposes.

Edinburgh: Friend, Beaully £20 for Congr. Fd.; Friends at Breasclete for Church Fds £20, £10 and £5; Lewis Friends £100 where most needed; Mrs C., Ness £5, all per Rev. D.B.M.

Inverness: Anon., £20 "where most needed"; Anon., for T.B.S. £150; Anon., £3; Anon., £6; last two for Sust. Fd. — all per envelopes in plate. (We regret that these donations which should have been acknowledged earlier were overlooked. Editor.)

Laide: Friends, Hilton, Inverness £50; G.M. and F. Petrie £20 both for Bibles for Russia per D.A. Ross; in Raasay Collection Plate per R. MacBeath £30 for Eastern Europe; Mrs A. MacLean, Poolewe £5 for Bibles for Eastern Europe for Mrs Ross; Mr N. & J. M. £100 for our fellow believers in Russia; P.A.S. South Humberside £5 for tapes; Aultbea Friend for Church Funds £20, last three per D.A.R. Donation £150 for shower in manse; Aultbea Friend for Church Funds £20; Dutch Friends where most needed £24; Aultbea Friends for Church Funds £20; Friends, Tarbet for Church Door Collection £10; Dutch Friend for the Laide Congregation £1000; The Lord Provides, all per Rev. D. A. Ross; A Friend of the Cause, Stornoway per W. Mackay £5; Friend, Aultbea for Church Funds per D.A. Ross £20.
North Uist: Late Mrs M. A. MacDonald per R. J. Macleod and Co. £100 for Church Fds.; A Friend £20, where most needed; Mrs M. A. MacA. £10 per Rev. A.M.; From the Estate of the late Mrs Christina Maccuish £200; Miss I. MacD., Clarkston £100, last three for Sustentation Fund; Mrs M. A. M., Solas £9; Anon., £5, envelope in plate; Anon., £5, envelope in plate; Anon., £5, envelope in plate, last four for Bus. Fund.

Staffin: Anon., £10 for Door Coll. (Portree Postmark); Anon., £460 for Car Fund.

Stornoway: Friend, Glasgow £50 for Sust. Fd.; Harris Friend £5 where most needed, both per Rev. J. MacLeod; Mr and Mrs D.J.M. £20 for Church Fds per church plate.

Ullapool: Anon., £40 for Recording Exps; R.B. £20 for Tape Ministry; F.M. £10 for Tape Distribution, all per Rev. N.M.