



THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
 AND
MONTHLY RECORD.

(Issued by a Committee of the Free Presbyterian Synod.)

*"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may
 be displayed because of the truth."—Ps. lx. 4.*

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THE

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Remarks on an Address Entitled "The Nation and Its God."

THE Free Church Council in England is a gathering of representative men from the various larger dissenting bodies there, such as the Congregational, Baptist, and Presbyterian. The dominant note of this gathering is that of the broad school in theology. The Council met during the past month at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and the new President was the Rev. Alexander Connell, B.D., of Sefton Park Presbyterian Church, Liverpool. His opening address was entitled "The Nation and Its God." As Mr. Connell is a Scotsman and a native of the Highlands, who was brought up amidst orthodox surroundings in the Free Church of thirty years ago, we have scanned his presidential address with more than usual interest, as it appears in the columns of the "British Weekly." Mr. Connell makes it plain that he does not now adhere to the creed that he was taught at his father's fireside, but at the same time he voluntarily expresses the doubt as to whether he has replaced it with anything better. He casts his eye also over the Churches around him, and practically gives away the case for the supposed religious progress of the present day. His address is a plain concession (whether he fully realises the thing or not) that the modern Churches have lost infinitely more than they have gained—they have gained new ideas of destructive Biblical criticism, and new forms of worship, with cornet, flute, organ, and all kinds of Babylonian music, but they have lost God—the most precious of all treasures—without whose presence everything else is less than nothing, and vanity. Mr. Connell's text is the saying of a friend of his, who seemed to some extent alive to this loss, and who exclaimed on one occasion, "We have somehow lost our grip of God." Mr. Connell endorses the truth of this statement, and proceeds to give proofs or illustrations of it, but fails to acknowledge the real roots of the evil or to point out adequately the proper remedy. We shall notice a few things that emerge from the surface of his address.

1. Mr. Connell gives us a glimpse of the inner history of the man who has left behind him the Scriptural Calvinistic faith of his childhood, and has adopted the broad creed of the present day. He does so from his own history and experience. He recalls the faith of his father, and compares his own with it. "Forgive," he says, "an intimate reference. The man to whom I owe, humanly speaking, whatever spell lies on my being of the sovereign will of God, turned with joy to such books as Baxter's 'Saints' Rest' and Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding.' In memory I can see him standing on the headland of a Highland loch, looking over the sea, as I waved my farewell to him. Stern and grey and solemn he stood, as his native hills, and deep-rooted, as I think no other man I ever knew, in the consciousness of God. I would surrender much could I claim to-day that man's simple and unescapable sense of God. 'We had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence,' for they struck into our soul a note of destiny that can never again fall to silence. But there is a change. Frankly, I cannot say my taste lies to the same venerable line of tradition. And the question that alarms me is this: Have I replaced the old taste with something as profound? Are the men and women who stand for religion to-day, who are going to give the tone to the next generation, in contact with great voices, ancient and modern, that will stir for them the deeps of the soul and cast on them the spell of a holy God?"

Mr. Connell here clearly allows that his father possessed a "simple and unescapable sense of God" which he has not, but which he would fain enjoy, and he also recalls the fact that this consciousness of God was associated with a certain "venerable line of tradition" to which he tells us his taste does not now lie. He was, of course, at one time under the influence of this line of tradition, as he describes it "but there is a change," and yet, remarkable to relate, he frankly admits that "the question which alarms" him, is, "Have I replaced the old taste with something as profound?" Now, let us notice that these self-revelations are exceedingly far-reaching and infinitely suggestive. Here is a voice direct from the depths of the soul of an able, cultured man who was nurtured in a sound Biblical faith, but who has adopted the lax Arminian creed of the present time. It is a confession that he has made an exchange for the worse. His new faith, with its supposed advance in knowledge and freedom, instead of leading him nearer to God has had the effect of putting him farther away from God. He can recall the invaluable sense of God which his father had along with adherence to a "venerable line of tradition," which phrase, rightly interpreted, means "the faith once delivered unto the saints," and he can observe and confess his own lack of this sense along with his adoption of newer theology. If this is not a testimony entirely in favour of the old faith, and entirely against the new, we know not what else it is. He says in a

subsequent part of his address that "the democracy which loses hold of God, loses hold of everything." We strongly endorse the sentiment, and seriously commend its individual application to Mr. Connell's consideration. We are fully convinced that Mr. Connell has spoken for thousands of others in this country who are not conscientious or frank enough to confess the melancholy truth of their utter want of God under conditions supposedly more enlightened than those of a previous generation.

2. Mr. Connell points out that the weakness of the sense of God which he illustrates from his own experience is characteristic in a marked degree of the Churches and Nation in general. His terms are sometimes rather roundabout and halting, but the scope of his discourse is that faith in the authority, claims and presence of God is at a low ebb among professing Christians throughout the country, and that a worldly materialistic disposition is largely in the ascendant. Even people who are taking an active part in what is considered Christian work are not living as conscious of the all-seeing eye of God, or seeking true fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Almost everything is done in a carnal business style with little regard to the approval or glory of God. The awe of things unseen and eternal, is far from them, and formal, mechanical attention to religious duties and services is the order of the day. God is but very rarely in their thoughts at all. The world has carnalised the Church, and spiritual death reigns where the life of God should be. A worldly spirit also pervades the nation (which let us remember consists largely of the same persons in their civil capacities and relations), and Mr. Connell suggests that the Church as such is responsible to a large extent for the general decline, in the following sentence. "And if for a moment the Church has been unwary or has slept at its post, if it has lowered its standards or coarsened its temper, when it should have stood sentinel in God's name over the sanctuary of our national ideals, is it strange that it should feel the stress?" So far, so good. There is a partial recognition of the facts that the nation has departed from God, and that the Churches have become unwatchful, compromising and worldly. But when we examine Mr. Connell's analysis of the causes that have led to this state of matters, we find him wanting.

3. Mr. Connell dismisses the "altered attitude to the Scriptures" as a chief contributory cause to the present declension, and justifies as "true and enriching" the supposed "light which scholars have shed on the method and process of Revelation." "It is idle (he proceeds) to ask us to reject the facts that convince; we cannot be false to our conscience, or to the truths to which God guides us. If we are but suffering from the necessary readjustment of mind which belongs to a transition age, we need not have a shadow of fear. Utter loyalty to the truth, as, and when God reveals it, will bring us infallibly to a ripper wisdom and surer hold of God." We put our amen to the last sentence. But

the question arises, "Does the newer light, which the Higher Critics have shed on Revelation, consist of facts and truths as Mr. Connell declares them to be?" After long reflection on such matters, we unhesitatingly answer "No; their facts are fancies and their truths are lies." We have seen and read nothing for the last twenty years that has convinced us that the Bible is anything else from Genesis to Revelation but the inspired Word of God. The whole system of higher critical interpretation is based upon an infidel evolutionary theory of the development of religion in the race. It ignores the supreme testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, and undermines the fundamental doctrines of the faith concerning sin and the atonement and the work of the Holy Ghost. It is not God, but the devil that has guided men into this labyrinth of error, and there were some teachers in the earlier Free Church who, wrong themselves, led astray Mr. Connell and many other poor unwary students with a "will o' the wisp" of advanced critical knowledge of the Holy Scriptures.

No wonder that the Spirit of God has departed from the Churches and that the enemy has come in like a flood, when the sword of the Spirit has been broken in shivers by the hand of unbelief within the Christian pale. We ask Mr. Connell and men of his opinion, "Who were the instruments that introduced the Gospel and vital Christianity into these realms? Were they not men who, under the teaching of the Spirit of truth, received the Bible as the Word of God from beginning to end, and preached the whole counsel of God as therein contained?" Under the preaching of such men, there were thousands born again and made new creatures in Christ Jesus—living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men—witnesses who were prepared to die for the truth of the Gospel. And let us be assured that, just as it is in the case of the individual soul, which must be sustained and nourished by the means of the same Word through which it has been born again, so it is in the case of the Church collectively. The Church must be sustained and edified from one generation to another by the ministration of the same Word of God in its purity, through which it originally came into existence. Apart from the supply of this divinely-provided nourishment the professing Church will become a miserable starveling—far from God and from righteousness. This is the condition of affairs that obtains to-day, and it would be good if Mr. Connell and many others had the scales taken off their eyes, to perceive the real root of the disease. The Lord has magnified His Word above all His name, and when His Word is cast out, He departs along with it.

4. Mr. Connell sketches in eloquent language, but very indefinitely, from the point of view of revealed truth, the way by which men are to recover the hold of God that they have lost. Our space wont admit of quotation. Suffice it to say that he presents no clear pathway of Christian doctrine along which they are to return to the sense and fellowship of the Most High, that

he almost wholly overlooks the necessity for the agency and power of the Holy Ghost, and that he lays the chief stress upon human effort. He forgets that it is not the creature's hold of God, but God's hold of him, that is the fundamental source of life and strength. "Salvation is of the Lord," and His true children are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." It is much to be feared that the spell of human wisdom and creature religion lies more heavily on the spirit of the new President of the English Free Church Council than the spell of God's sovereign will which fell upon him in his early years. May the Lord, if it be His good pleasure, cause a return to the truth in its simplicity and purity!

A Sermon.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER MACKAY, OBAN.

(Taken down by a Hearer.)

PSALM I.

I SHOULD like to direct your attention to-night, as the Lord may be pleased to enable me, to the whole of this Psalm. We have been familiar with the Psalm from our infancy. We have read it for ourselves and we have heard it read by others. We have heard it sung over and over again; yet it is to be feared that it has been a meaningless song to the most of us. This Psalm is a most beautiful Psalm, and every word in it is significant. It is brimful of meaning from beginning to end, and if we took one verse without considering the Psalm as a whole, we would lose the meaning of this precious Psalm, for it is concerned about two things from beginning to end. It is concerned about the godly and the ungodly, or we might put it otherwise, and say it deals with the two divisions into which men have been divided since the Fall, and into which they will be divided till the end of time, and shall be divided throughout an endless eternity. Let us consider, then, these two divisions of this Psalm.

I.—You notice here that the Psalmist begins the Psalm with "the blessed," or "the righteous," or "the godly," and in dealing with the blessed man, the Psalmist speaks (1) about his *character*; he speaks (2) about his *state*; and he speaks (3) about his *end*.

(1) You find the *character* of the righteous man brought before you when it is said that "he does *not* walk in the counsel of the ungodly; that he does *not* stand in the way of sinners; that he does *not* sit in the seat of the scornful"; and further, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." This is the character of the good man. And you will notice, further, that his character is also divided. It has, as it were, two sides. It has an outward side and it has an

inward side, or, to speak otherwise, it has a negative side and a positive side. In dealing with the character of the righteous man we shall notice, first of all, the negative side. "He does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful." That is to say, the godly man is known outwardly by his walk and conversation. There is a difference between the righteous and the wicked as to their outward walk and life in the world, yet you often hear such an expression as this, "Oh, we must not judge men." Well, you find Christ Himself saying, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Now, here we have the outward character of the godly man. He is one who seeks to abstain from all appearance of evil; he is one who is not found associated with the world and with its vanities in any shape or form. In our day religion has come to such a low ebb that there is practically no difference to be seen between the world and the professing Church; but God has put a difference between the world and His Church, and the difference is seen by the godly in this life—even those whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Ghost—and it will be seen by an assembled universe on the day of judgment.

Nevertheless, we have to say about this negative part of the character of the righteous man, that an unconverted man might, to a certain extent, lay claim thereto. You remember the young man in the gospel. He laid claim to this negative side of the character of the godly. "All these," he said, "have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" So we see that men who are unconverted may have in their life and conversation this outward side of the Christian character. It may not be laid to their charge that "they walk in the counsel of the ungodly, that they stand in the way of sinners, or that they sit in the seat of the scornful," yet they lack something still—they lack the "new heart." It ought to be true of every one to whom God has sent His word, that they should be circumspect in their life and conversation, but at the same time, while all this may be true, they may be still "without God and without hope in the world."

We see, however, in considering the positive side of the character of the godly, that there is a great distinction drawn here between outward morality and inward religion. Men may have outward works, commendable in themselves, and yet be destitute of vital godliness; and here we have a distinction drawn between the outwardly moral and the truly pious as to their minds or dispositions with regard to the word of God. We see that the Psalmist says, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord," or "in the law of Jehovah," for that is the meaning here. Not only does he keep himself unspotted from the world, but he has a heart to know the word of God—he has a heart that delights in the law of Jehovah; and no unconverted man can lay claim to that. This is where the distinction comes in between the unconverted and the converted. It is not at all so much as to their outward

character in the world, but the inward religion of the heart. "Man looketh at the outward appearance; God looketh to the heart." And it is said here, "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate *day and night*." Does this mean that the godly have unbroken fellowship with God? Does it mean that the godly have a sense of constant delight and unbroken meditation in God's law? Oh, no; it does not mean that. What does it mean, then? It means, just in one word, that it is the bias of their minds to meditate in the law of the Lord. And you see that may be a test for each one of us. We may ask ourselves the question—"Is it true about us that we do not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful?" Is it true about us that we have outward morality? And if we answer "Yes," then let us consider further this question—"Do we love the law of the Lord?" Can we say what the Psalmist says in another place?

"Upon my heart, bestowed by thee,
More gladness I have found
Than they, even then when corn and wine
Did most with them abound."

Can we say that about the law of the Lord? Now, the law of the Lord means here the written Word of God. The Psalmist had not the Bible as we have it. It is very probable that he had only the five books of Moses, but there was enough in the five books of Moses to give delight to the heart of the Psalmist.

What does this delight in the law of the Lord mean? It means that one has found in the Scriptures more joy and more satisfaction than can be found in anything else under the sun. It means that one has come to experience joy which the world cannot give, even life, through the Word of God. This is then the first thing to which our attention is drawn here—the *character* of the godly man. He is outwardly religious, but he is also inwardly religious. He has a heart to know God; he has a heart to love holiness, and I may ask yourself the question—What do you know about this delight in the law of the Lord? What do you know about finding in the Word of God more consolation and more happiness and more joy than ever you found in anything in this world? Did the Word of God become to you the "Word of Life?" But some of God's people may say:—"Well, the Scriptures are often very empty to me, and I cannot say that my delight is in the law of the Lord, as the Psalmist puts it, "*day and night*." You may say:—"It is true about stony-ground hearers that they rejoice for a while, and who knows but I may be one of them?" The Psalmist, however, takes away the foundation from the stony-ground hearers when he says:—"His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate *day and night*." To "*meditate day and night*" means simply this that they continue to meditate in the law of the Lord, even in spite of sin and Satan. You see sin claims our thoughts as well as our

actions, and God's people will be carried away in their thoughts very often by sin. They are often led into captivity in their minds. Sin robs them of this delight; robs them of this sweet meditation. Sin wants them to delight in itself, wants them to have their meditation on itself. Oh! how miserable sin makes God's people! When they consider how much of their life is spent in the grasp of the carnal mind, and how little of their life is spent in delight and meditation in His law, they are ready to conclude that the character of the righteous does not belong to them, but at the same time it is true of God's people that their mind is continually biassed towards the Word of God. They know this for a fact that, if they are to have any enjoyment in this world, if they are to have any comfort in this vale of tears, it must come through the Word of God.

(2) In the second place the Psalmist draws our attention here to the *state* of the godly; and how does he describe the state of the godly? Well, he describes the state of the godly by a comparison with something in nature, and he takes here a tree—"a tree that is planted by the rivers of water." And you will notice that when he makes mention of a tree he does not say any kind of tree, but he makes mention of a tree that is *planted* by "the rivers of water." God Himself hath planted His people in His own vineyard in the world, and this vineyard is watered by a river "whose streams make glad the city of our God." And what are the rivers of water by which this tree is planted? Well, there is the river of the pardon of sin, as we sang in the thirty-second Psalm:—

"O blessed is the man to whom
Is freely pardoned
All the transgression he hath done;
Whose sin is covered."

The stream of pardon of sin flows by the roots of this tree. And another stream that flows by this tree is the stream of grace—the grace of God! "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." We might say also that the streams here are just everything that God has done for His Church in connection with her salvation; that all the provision of His grace is, as it were, streams which continually keep this tree living, for we have here this tree said to be "bringing forth fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

You know yourselves that in the winter trees lose their leaves; and is it true about God's people that they are in such a state as that they are always green? Oh, no! God's people have their winter as well as their spring and their summer. You also know that there is a great difference between a tree that is withered and a tree that is leafless in the winter. You have seen trees which were altogether withered, and they were easily distinguished from those which were not withered, and you have also seen trees

which were leafless in the winter, and when the spring-time came those trees broke out in leaves as if they had never seen a winter. That is what is meant here when he says: "His leaf shall not wither." It does not mean at all that they have not got their winter at times. You remember what Isaiah said: "We all do fade as a leaf." That meant that, as far as the feelings of God's people were concerned, they were just like trees in winter—without a leaf at all; but when "the time of the singing of birds is come," then the leaves will appear as if there never had come a winter, and they will be thinking then that they really have marks of grace.

The Psalmist says here also that this tree "shall bring forth his fruit in his season." Now, God's people have their seasons. They have their seasons of joy and their seasons of sorrow. They have their seasons of prosperity and their seasons of adversity, and they bring forth fruit in these seasons. When they are troubled and tried, their faith appears and brings forth fruit which they may not, however, be seeing, but God sees it. You remember that, when Abraham was tried, he brought forth the fruit of great faith, and he was recommended for the fruit that he bore. You remember Job also when he was afflicted, and how the great patience that he exercised is spoken of as "the patience of Job," as if there never was any patience like this. And so right down through the Scriptures you see God's people in different circumstances, bearing fruit in all their seasons. You see them in their spring, in their winter, in their summer, and in their harvest. You see them in their youth, in their manhood, and in their old age; and they bring forth fruit in their season.

(3) Now, in the third place the Psalmist describes the *end* of the godly. Remember, friends, there is an end before you and before me. And what is the end of the godly? The end of the godly is this: "They shall stand in the judgment; they shall form the congregation of the righteous" at last, and in that congregation there will not be found one of the wicked. There is no congregation of the righteous just now but the wicked are to be found along with them, but when the end of all things will have come—when God shall call the world to an account—then there will be an eternal separation made between the righteous and the wicked, and the righteous shall form one congregation then. They shall stand on the right hand at the judgment of the great day, and shall be eternally welcomed into the everlasting happiness that has been prepared for and awaits them. Such, then, is the Psalmist's description of the righteous man—of the godly man. He brings before us his *character*; he brings before us his *state*; and he brings before us his *end*. Many a one has said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." And likely every one here would like to die the death of the righteous. Well, lay this to heart: you will never die the death of the righteous unless you live the life of the

righteous. The two things are inseparable. The end will correspond with the life. "As the tree falleth, so shall it lie." And if the tree has not been like this tree—"planted by the rivers of water"—then the fall into eternity will be a terrible one indeed.

II.—Let us turn our attention now to the other man that is brought before us in this Psalm, or the other class or the other company—even the ungodly. And what does the Psalmist say about the ungodly man? The Psalmist speaks also about the ungodly (1) as to his *character*; (2) as to his *state*; and (3) as to his *end*.

(1) Let us, first, then consider the *character* of the ungodly. You notice here that there are degrees in a life of sin—that he speaks about *walking*; that he speaks about *standing*; and that he speaks about *sitting*. Some men begin to walk in a course of sin in their youth, and then they begin to stand in the way of sinners, and at last they sit down in the seat of the scornful; and it is a terrible thing to be sitting in the seat of the scornful. I cannot bring this matter before you better than by a practical illustration. There is such a class in the world as drunkards. Well, the drunkard is not a drunkard to begin with. The drunkard becomes a drunkard by degrees. The drunkard begins his career by listening to and walking according to the counsel of his companions. Many a young man begins a course of sin by just walking first of all in the counsel of his ungodly companions. When they say to him, like this, "There is no harm in taking a little whisky now and again," the young man might be ashamed perhaps to refuse, and perhaps ashamed also to begin to take strong drink; but he does not walk very long in the counsel of his associates until you see him standing in their ways. You will soon see him drunk on the street, and there is not a word about shame now. Perhaps, to begin with, he was ashamed to be seen going into the public-house—he would sneak in; but he has cast his shame aside, and now he will stand at the public-house door and enter it quite boldly, glorying rather in his shame. But, again, the matter does not end there, for the aim of sin, friends, is to ruin the creature—body and soul. And when the drunkard has begun to stand in the way of sinners—when he stands boldly up for strong drink—he will very soon "sit down in the seat of the scornful." He will ridicule religion altogether, and he will go headlong on in the ways of sinners, as if there was nothing now to be done but "to eat, drink, and be merry."

We might take another illustration to bring out the significance of this walking and standing and sitting. If you saw a man going through a miry place, and if you saw him walking through it, you would say—"There is hope that the man will come out of it when he is only walking through it;" but, if you saw the man standing in the miry place, you would say—"What does the man mean that he stands in such a place as that?" but, if you saw the man sitting down in it, you would say—"This is a terrible case indeed.

A man sitting down in the mire!" This is the way, friends, sinners begin courses of sin which may not appear, and which are not so terrible to begin with, as that to which such courses lead.

This is then the character of the wicked. They "walk in the counsel of the ungodly," they "stand in the way of sinners," they "sit in the seat of the scornful," and these three conditions are terrible conditions, and any one of them is sufficient to ruin you for ever. In other words, if you are walking in the counsel of the ungodly, although you are not standing in the way of sinners, walking in the counsel of the ungodly will bring you to hell; and if you are standing in the way of sinners, and not altogether ridiculing piety and godliness, yet your standing in the way of sinners, if you do not repent of it, will bring you lower than the grave. If, on the other hand, it is true about you that you are sitting in the scorner's chair, and that you laugh at everything that belongs to God and the everlasting welfare of your own soul, then mark this, that there is only a step between you and going down into everlasting woe. You remember what was true about Lot's sons-in-law—"He was to them as one that mocked," and that is what is true concerning those who are sitting in the seat of the scornful. Everyone who speaks to them seriously is just "as one that mocked," but the fire and brimstone from heaven soon put an end to the indifference of Lot's sons-in-law. Now, how is it with yourself? What is your character? Are you going along with the ungodly and taking their counsel? Well, if you are, rest assured of this that the end of these things is death. Or, is it true of you that you are standing in the way of sinners, that your delight is in wickedness? If your delight is in your ungodly ways, then know assuredly that you are in a terrible condition. Or is it true about you that you are just a mocker? Well, if it is so, as I said already, there is nothing between you and hell but the very breath which you breathe, and, if you slip a mocker into eternity, you will lie down in everlasting sorrow.

(2) Secondly, the Psalmist describes the *state* of the ungodly, and he describes their state also by a figure. And what figure does he use? He uses the chaff, and there is a great difference between chaff and a tree. You see the chaff is the most worthless thing that is to be found on the face of the earth. You remember what John the Baptist said about the chaff—"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Why do you think does the Psalmist describe the state of the wicked as being like the chaff? Well, you know yourselves that it requires a high wind to have any effect upon a tree, but very little wind will carry the chaff away. There is a storm coming, friends, which will try our standing, and, if we are not like the tree planted "by the rivers of water," we shall be carried away like the chaff before the wind. That, then, is what is meant here when the Psalmist compares the state of the ungodly to the chaff. They are in such a state as this that, if a breath of the wrath of God will blow upon

them, they shall be carried away into outer darkness. There is nothing at all about which the farmer is so indifferent as he is about the chaff. The husbandman was not indifferent about the tree, although it was not bearing fruit. He said—"Let it alone this year also until I dig about it," but there is no thought taken about the chaff at all. It is a thing that is very easily got rid of, and the farmer has no thought whatever about sustaining any loss when the wind carries away the chaff. Ungodly man and woman, remember this, that God will not consider that He sustains loss in sending you away into hell, if you persist in following a course of sin. Remember that, and remember this also, that your present condition is just like the chaff—you are liable at any moment to be driven away by the wrath of God. You would think that the farmer would be willing to get rid of the chaff at once. Why does he keep it in his barn? Because it is mixed with the wheat. That is the reason, but the day will come when it shall be eternally separated from the wheat. "He will gather his wheat into his garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

(3) Let us now, in the third place, consider briefly the *end* of the wicked. What does the Psalmist say here about their end? He says—"The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." They may now be side by side with the righteous, they may be associated with them in such a way that they may be counted by their fellowmen as righteous, but the day will come when the wicked will be calling on the mountains and on the rocks to fall upon them and cover them from the face of Him who shall sit on the great white throne, because they shall not be able to stand before Him. God will separate the wheat from the chaff, and He will send the wicked away everlastingly into outer darkness, as we have it brought before us in the 25th chapter of Matthew, where Christ speaks about the great day of judgment. He says there that the wicked will be on the left hand, separated from the righteous, and He will say to them on the left hand—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." This is then the awful end of the wicked.

Well, how should we be disposed towards these things? How should these things affect us? We have here the two classes brought before us, and their different characters, their different states, and their different ends, and we must belong to either class. We must have the character of the godly or the character of the ungodly; we must be in the state of the godly or in the state of the ungodly. And if we are like the tree "planted by the rivers of water," then let us rest assured of this, that our end will be a happy one indeed; but, on the other hand, if we are like the chaff—if we are the servants of sin—if we are like a dog which never did a good turn for his master, but, on the contrary, snarled and barked at him continually—then let us lay this to heart, that the Great Master will soon get rid of us. You would

think that the master who would keep an animal that would be of no service to him at all would be a foolish master. God will not be foolish. He will bear long with sinners, but He will not bear for ever with them. He will get rid of those who are His enemies, and who delight to be alienated from Him, and who have not a thought about His claims upon them.

The Psalmist closes this Psalm by saying, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Now, what does he mean here by saying, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous"? He means by it that the Lord knows and delights in the way in which the righteous walk. You remember the Church said of old, "My way is hid from the Lord." Now, her way was not hid from the Lord, for "the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous." He knoweth their way when their way is through troubles and trials, and God will see to it that, whatever will befall them in the world, He will bring them at last to be with Himself. Yea, He says that all things shall work together for good to them who are His people.

It is said here, on the other hand, "that the way of the ungodly shall perish." And what does that mean? It means that the ungodly shall not find satisfaction in their ungodliness in another world, for their very way shall perish. There will be no strong drink to satisfy the drunkard in eternity, for "his way shall perish." No satisfaction there for the unclean; no satisfaction there for those who spend their time and their talents and their substance in the sinful pleasures of this world.

Oh, then, what manner of creatures ought we to be! Do you think it is wise on your part to say that you will go on a little while longer in your wickedness? Do you think it is wise for you to say you will turn some day? Remember this, that the longer you go on in a course of sin, the more entangled you become; the more impossible, humanly speaking, you make it ever for yourself to turn again to God. God says in His word—"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation," and He counsels us in this Psalm to make choice of Himself as the way to blessedness, and He warns us, on the other hand, what the end of a course of sin will be. Do not then contemn His counsel and His warning, but turn now to God in Christ, who is "reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." All manner of sin is forgiven freely through the efficacy of the blood of Christ. God invites you to come unto Himself, and He will not cast you out now on account of your sins, but if you enter eternity and meet Him there clothed in the guilt and corruption of your sins, He will cast you out for ever into the place where He hath forgotten to be gracious. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

May God bless our meditation on His word!

Rutherford's "Letters."

BY THE REV. D. BEATON, WICK.

(*Concluded from page 440.*)

ANOTHER of Rutherford's noted correspondents was Lady Boyd. Her maiden name was Christian Hamilton. She was the eldest daughter of Thomas, first Earl of Haddington, and was first married to Lord Lindsay, who died in 1616. Her second husband was Lord Boyd, who died in 1628. John Livingstone speaks of her as a "rare pattern of Christianity, grave, diligent, and prudent." "She used every night," he says, "to write what had been the case of her soul all the day, and what she had observed of the Lord's dealing." To her he writes:—"I rejoice exceedingly that the Father of lights hath made you see that there is a nick (mark) in Christianity which ye contend to be at; and that is, to quit the right eye and the right hand, and to keep the Son of God. I hope your desire is to make Him your garland, and that your eye looketh up the Mount; which is certainly nothing but the new creature. . . . I hope your ladyship will keep the King's highway. Go on (in the strength of the Lord) in haste, as if ye had not leisure to speak to the innkeepers by the way. He is over beyond time, on the other side of the water, who thinketh long for you."

Among his clerical correspondents are to be found such famous men as Alexander Henderson, George Gillespie, John Livingstone, David Dickson, James Durham, and James Guthrie, the martyr. To these eminent ministers of Christ Rutherford was bound by the closest ties of spiritual communion, and though questions afterwards arose which put a great strain on the chain which bound some of them to him, it was never broken.

But if Rutherford's spirituality is eminently reflected in these *Letters*—if his ability to speak a word in season to the bereaved and heavy-laden proves an attraction to many a heart which has felt that there are sunless depths in human sorrow when Christ is not present—yet in a pre-eminent degree Rutherford reveals himself as the true pastor, deeply concerned for the well-being of the souls of all committed to his charge. From Aberdeen he writes to his parishioners at Anwoth:—"I long exceedingly to know if the oft-spoken-of match betwixt you and Christ holdeth, and if ye follow on to know the Lord. My day-thoughts and my night-thoughts are of you. While ye sleep I am afraid of your souls, that they may be off the Rock. Next to my Lord Jesus and this fallen Kirk, ye have the greatest share of my sorrow and also of my joy: ye are the matter of the tears, care, fear, and daily prayers of an oppressed prisoner of Christ. As I am in bonds for my high and lofty One, my royal and princely Master, my Lord Jesus, so I am in bonds for you. For I should have slept in my warm nest, and kept the fat world in my arms, and the cords of

my tabernacle should have been fastened more strongly; I might have sung an evangel of ease to my soul and you for a time, with my brethren, the sons of my mother, that were angry at me and that have thrust me out of the vineyard; if I would have been broken, and drawn on to mire you, the Lord's flock, and to cause you to eat pastures trodden upon with men's feet, and to drink foul and muddy waters. But truly the Almighty was a terror to me, and His fear made me afraid. O my Lord, judge if my ministry be not dear to me, but not so dear by many degrees as Christ, my Lord. God knoweth the sad and heavy Sabbaths I have had since I laid down at my Master's feet my two shepherd's staves."¹ And in another letter, written in September, 1638, he thus writes to them:—"I long exceedingly to hear of your ongoing and advancement in your journey to the kingdom of God. My only joy out of heaven is to hear that the seed of God sown among you is growing and coming to a harvest. For I ceased not, while I was among you, in season and out of season (according to the measure of grace given unto me), to warn and stir up your minds; and I am free from the blood of all men, for I have communicated to you the whole counsel of God. And I now again charge and warn you, in the great and dreadful name and in the sovereign authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords, and I beseech you also by the mercies of God and by the bowels of Christ—by your appearance before Christ Jesus, our Lord—by all the plagues that are written in God's Book—by your part of the holy city, the New Jerusalem—that ye keep the truth of God as I delivered it to you before many witnesses, in the sight of God and His holy angels. For now the last days are come and coming, when many forsake Christ Jesus; and He saith to you, 'Will ye also leave me?'"²

And the same earnest solicitude for his people finds expression in a letter to Marion MacNaught, in which he writes:—"Pray for my poor flock; I would take a penance on my soul for their salvation. I fear that the entering of a hireling upon my labours there will cut off my life with sorrow. There I wrestled with the angel and prevailed. Wood, trees, meadows, and hills are my witnesses that I drew on a fair meeting betwixt Christ and Anwoth."³ It was the great ambition, if we may so put it, of his ministry that he might present Anwoth a chaste virgin to Christ, and even the hope of one soul from Anwoth meeting him in heaven would make it two heavens to him.

His faithfulness as a pastor is further revealed in those remarkable letters⁴ written to John Gordon of Cardoness, the elder. "Dear sir," he writes, "I always saw nature mighty, lofty, heady, and strong in you, and that it was more for you to be mortified and dead to the world than for another common man. Ye will

¹ Letter ccxxv.² Letter cclxix.³ Letter cclxxix.⁴ Letters lxxxii. and clxxx.

take a low ebb, and a deep cut and a long lance to go to the bottom of your wounds in saving humiliation, to make you a won prey for Christ. Be humbled; walk softly. Down, down, for God's sake, my dear and worthy brother, with your top-sail. Stoop, stoop! It is a low entry to go in at heaven's gate. There is infinite justice in the party ye have to do with; it is His nature not to acquit the guilty and the sinner." In another letter to him he says:—"Believe me, I find heaven a city hard to be won. 'The righteous shall scarcely be saved.' Oh, what violence of thronging will heaven take! Alas! I see many deceiving themselves; for we will all to heaven now! Every foul dog, with his foul feet, will in at the nearest to the new and clean Jerusalem. All say that they have faith, and the greatest part in the world know not and will not consider that a slip in the matter of their salvation is the most pitiable slip that can be, and that no loss is comparable to this loss. Oh, then, see that there be not a loose pin in the work of your salvation; for ye will not believe how quickly the Judge will come. And for yourself, I know that death is waiting and hovering and lingering at God's command. That ye may be prepared, then, ye had need to stir your time, and to take eternity and death to your riper advisement. A wrong step or a wrong stot (rebound) in going out of this life, in one property is like the sin against the Holy Ghost, and can never be forgiven, because ye cannot come back again through the last water to mourn for it."¹

And if he was anxious to prepare the sojourners who had travelled far over life's perilous way, and who were about to begin a longer journey, he was no less concerned for those who had not yet experienced the evil days or the years in which they could say they had no pleasure in them. His letters abound with admonitions and exhortations to the young. Perhaps the thought of his own negligence stirred his soul within him to warn the young. "Like a fool," he writes of himself, "as I was, I suffered my sun to be high in the heaven and near afternoon before ever I took the gate by the end." But his evident desire was that others might not be so long in taking "the gate by the end," for in writing to Patrick Carsen, he exhorts him thus:—"I cannot but, upon the opportunity of a bearer, exhort you to resign the love of your youth to Christ; and in this day, while your sun is high and your youth serveth you, to seek the Lord and His face. For there is nothing out of heaven so necessary for you as Christ. And ye cannot be ignorant but your day will end, and the night of death shall call you from the pleasures of this life; and a doom given out in death standeth for ever—as long as God liveth! Youth, ordinarily, is a first and ready servant for Satan, to run errands; for it is a nest for lust, cursing, drunkenness, blaspheming of God, lying, pride, and vanity. Oh, that there were such an heart in

¹ Letter clxxx.

you as to fear the Lord, and to dedicate your soul and body to His service! When the time cometh that your eye-strings shall break, and your face wax pale, and legs and arms tremble, and your breath shall grow cold, and your poor soul look out at your prison house of clay, to be set at liberty, then a good conscience and your Lord's favour shall be worth all the world's glory. Seek it as your garland and crown."¹

But the commanding figure that stands out with a glory that belongs to no created being is the Lord Jesus Christ. Under a thousand figures of speech he gives expression to the love he had to his adorable Lord. One quotation will suffice. "Oh! if ye knew Him and saw His beauty, your love, your liking, your heart, your desires would close with Him and cleave to Him. Love, by nature, when it seeth, cannot but cast out its spirit and strength upon amiable objects and good things and things love-worthy; and what fairer thing than Christ? O fair sun, and fair moon, and fair stars, and fair flowers, and fair roses, and fair lilies, and fair creatnres; but O, ten thousand thousand times fairer Lord Jesus! Alas, I wronged Him in making the comparison this way. O black sun and moon, but O fair Lord Jesus! O black flowers and black lilies and roses, but O fair, fair, ever fair Lord Jesus! O all fair things, black and deformed, without beauty, when ye are beside that fairest Lord Jesus! O black heaven, but O fair Christ! O black angels, but surpassingly fair Lord Jesus! I would seek no more to make me happy for evermore but a thorough and clear sight of the beauty of Jesus, my Lord. Let my eyes enjoy His fairness and stare Him for ever in the face, and I have all that can be wished. Get Christ rather than gold or silver; seek Christ, howbeit ye should lose all things for Him."²

If the reader wishes to get some idea of the spark of genius that lit up Rutherford's soul he must read these *Letters*. His scholarship and dialectic skill are revealed in his polemical works, but to have any idea of Rutherford as a saint one must turn to the *Letters*, and there learn with what ecstatic devotion he adored Him whom he lovingly called his "sweet Lord Jesus."

The late Mr. John Mackay, Swordly, Sutherlandshire.—We regret to notice briefly this month the decease, after a short illness, of this worthy elder and missionary. This removal causes a real blank in the more northern part of our Church, and his genial presence will be missed at those Communion gatherings he was accustomed to attend. Much sympathy is felt with his widow and family in their great bereavement. We hope to have a fuller notice in a future issue.

¹ Letter clvi.² Letter ccii.

The Baptised family:

OR AN INQUIRY INTO THE CONDITION OF CHILDREN
IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY CAESAR MALAN, DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY.

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"For me and my house, we shall serve Jehovah."—JOSHUA xxiv. 15.  
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(Translated for the first time from the French.)

(Continued from page 383.)

CHAPTER III.—THE FUNDAMENTAL ERROR OF THOSE WHO
ARE OPPOSED TO THE BAPTISM OF ALL INFANTS CONSISTS
IN THEIR INTRODUCING AN ACT OF THE WILL OF MAN
WHERE THE SUPREME ORDINANCE OF GOD SHOULD ALONE
BE REGARDED.

Samuel.—"Do you mean to say, I pray you, that the ordinance of baptism may be entirely independent of the choice and consent of him that receives it?"

The father of the family.—"I repeat what I said. I believe that every ordinance of God is sovereignly independent both of the approbation and disapprobation of man. That is why, in the controversy which now occupies us—a controversy which unhappily adds to the divisions which afflict the Church of God—it seems to me that it is much less a question of the baptising of infants than a question of the place which infants occupy among the people of God, under the gospel, and of the dignity which God assigns them. Let me put it thus: Water baptism is a sign of a certain will of God towards man, and man, in order to take on him this sign, ought to find himself in a certain condition, a condition the nature of which has been determined by God. That is the reason why, if a child is found in that condition or circumstance, it ought to have this sign placed on it."

Samuel.—"That is to say, is it not, that you consider baptism as a seal which God, of His supreme authority, puts on a man, and not at all as a mark to which man, taking the initiative, comes and accepts?"

The father of the family.—"Let me say again, my brother, that under the reign of grace man *accepts* nothing, and, I believe, that that which you have just spoken reveals the root of the error in which, as I reckon, you are found. You think that there is in baptism on the part of man, a certain independence. Man, according to you, comes, as it were, to meet an appointment for which he prepares himself and of which he approves. And therein is there, as I reckon, that which shows to the eye of faith the defect of your practice."

Samuel.—"Where, I pray you?"

The father of the family.—"In that man changes thereby into an act of his own will what is absolutely an ordinance of the authority of God, and through that misunderstanding he goes forth from the domain of grace in order to enter upon the toil of works. He *works* where he ought only to *receive*. He seeks to accomplish something himself where he ought to let God work. That is to say, he appropriates in some sense to himself, under the name of obedience, a work which is altogether that of God toward him, and is by no means a matter of consent or agreement on the part of man."

Samuel.—"Pardon me, dear brother, if I tell you that I find your observation very difficult to understand."

The father of the family.—"This is what I mean: If the Lord had said to man—'Thou shalt baptise thyself,' baptism would have been an active duty, as, for example, it is an active duty to sanctify the Sabbath day. But if God has said, '*Be baptised*,' it is a passive duty which, in this case, He imposes on man."

Samuel.—"I grasp your meaning. You consider baptism to be, after a manner, like the anointing with oil, which was put on the vessels of the sanctuary, but which the vessels by no means accepted."

The father of the family.—"Exactly. For although the vessels which God had thus caused to be sealed with the anointing oil were only metal like to that made use of in any other vase, nevertheless what a dignity was put upon them through this divine destination! Why could not the Levites approach them, and if they dared touch them, why behoved they to die? Why those lamentations when they were put to profane uses by impious kings? (Dan. v. 3, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7). And why also that lamentation of David over the shield of Saul, when it was left on the fields of Gilboa, as if it had not been anointed with the sacred oil? (2 Sam. i. 21). The reason was, as you know, that God, by His sovereign will, had put them apart to a special use, and they were holy, although insensible of their having been so dealt with. The same thing held true of old in respect of circumcision, and it holds true even to-day in respect of baptism. Moreover, as circumcision, a passive sacrament, was distinct from the Passover, an active duty, so also under the gospel, one of the ordinances of God is a passive seal, the other an active duty."

Samuel.—"That distinction, which is one quite new to me, seems to me worthy of attention. Be good enough, I pray you, to develop that thought."

The father of the family.—"Ah, well, pay attention, to begin with, to the terms made use of in respect of these two ordinances. The first was instituted with this command—"Go and baptise": and the Apostles, when they obeyed this order, obeyed using such terms as these—"Be thou baptised," or "I baptise thee." As an example, Paul says—"I baptised Crispus" (Acts ii. 38, 1 Cor. i. 141). And so, when a disciple sees for himself the necessity of

baptism, he says—‘What doth hinder me to be baptised?’ and the reply he gets is not *do it*, but, ‘thou mayest’ (Acts viii. 36, 37). All these expressions show that the question here is of a mark received, and not at all of a work to be done, a work in which the will or acquiescence of man affects something. But the supper has quite another character. Its institution is in these words—‘Take, eat; do this in remembrance of me,’ and the partaking of it is preceded by an examination—a personal and very active putting to the proof on the part of a disciple who must eat the Supper unworthily if he does not act conscientiously and conform his whole will to that of the Lord.”

Samuel.—“Here is something which strikes me, dear brother, I mean this examination, this proof of faith which the Christian is bound to undertake before taking the supper, and to which he is certainly not called by any written word when the question is one of baptism. Yes; that fact, beyond question, makes a difference.”

The father of the family.—“That difference is a real one. In the supper faith examines itself, since it acts with reflection, with choice, and with preference. In baptism nothing parallel to this is commanded nor suggested by the word. On this account, if the question be put, why those who baptise their children give them not the supper also? the answer is at hand, and it is the Scripture that supplies us with it—to wit, that baptism is a seal put on by the authority of God, whileas the supper supposes a self-examination to which the communicant is obliged. Now, the little child is capable of receiving a seal put on it by the Lord, but isn’t capable of self-examination. He may then be baptised, but he cannot partake of the supper.”

Samuel.—“That reply is very clear, and to me entirely satisfactory.”

The father of the family.—“It will also convince you of the error of that form of examination and preparation which Baptists habitually demand of those disciples whom they baptise.* Assuredly the Scriptures not only do not command it, or give an example of it, but besides, they do not so much as suggest it. On the contrary, they are opposed to it. For, if the Scriptures demand faith and, consequently, an action of the will in the matter of the supper, they speak of baptism as of an ordinance having all its force in the sovereign authority of God. Baptism is then as a seal, or as the stamp which the people’s official puts on gold or silver coins—a stamp which marks and designates those coins, and it is done by one whose right it is so to do.”

Samuel.—“Do you mean by that to say that the converted adult whom the minister baptises is under no obligation to give any thoughtful attention to the ordinance, or to prepare himself beforehand, no more than though he were a stone?”

* Of course, on the supposition of the truth of baptism being only for believers, such an examination as is now referred to, would be quite in place.
—J. R. M.

The father of the family.—"No; certainly that is not my meaning. For the adult Pagan or Jew who has received from the Lord faith in the name of the Lord Jesus, receives also by the Word a command to be baptised. He is in duty bound, then, according to that commandment which he believes, to receive on himself with gratitude the seal wherewith God has deemed him worthy of being marked withal. But it is one thing to thank God with adoration for having consecrated me with the seal of His name, which He Himself has put upon me, and it is another thing for me to imagine that my dispositions and my inward preparations have rendered me a more fit and proper person to receive that seal, or give more reality or efficacy to His stamp."

Samuel.—"Now I understand you. You mean that the adult disciple should render himself in his baptism as passive as an infant, although the adult knows what God does for him."

The father of the family.—"That is what I mean, and I reckon those preparations and dispositions on the part of the Baptists comparable—if I may so use my imagination—to those of a gold coin which should think itself better stamped because it was persuaded that the stamp had made its mark upon it. Certainly such a persuasion made no odds either to the impression made by the stamp or to the blow of the hammer that fixed it."

Samuel.—"You return then, don't you, always to the sovereign authority of God, and you attribute to Him, in its entirety, the ordinance of baptism?"

The father of the family.—"Yes, dear brother, in its entirety; and if I tarry long on this head it is because I am persuaded that here lies the principal and thorough-going error of those who are opposed to baptising any infant. They change into an active duty of faith that which is a passive duty, to which the authority of God summons man, to whom the ordinance has come. Consider the blue collar of the little negroes."

Samuel.—"I acknowledge that I never supposed that the ordinance of baptism was so serious and so important a matter as you show it me to be."

The father of the family.—"It has a close connection with the fundamental doctrines of the faith. According to these doctrines, the man who mixes in any way his works and dispositions with the grace of God, misconceives and dishonours the latter, and holds himself at a great remove. In the same way, I think that to change, even in any respect, an ordinance of God into an active duty on the part of man, is to misconceive the majesty of the former and to thrust away the benefit of the ordinance. Such a piece of work is, in my opinion, a kind of insult to the Most High, in that, to say the least, it brings the choice and acquiescence of the creature into association with the sovereign authority and majestic independence of the divine ordinance."

Samuel.—"Are you not going too far, my friend? Are you not doing injustice to what is but the performing of a work of

obedience? Could it procure such joyful and blessed effects in the soul if it were all as faulty as you say?"

The father of the family.—"It is easy to think oneself blessed when one is only pleased. It is a form of speech that is quite ordinary with the people of God to say, 'How I have been blessed,' when they possibly ought simply to say, 'What satisfaction I have drawn from what I did.' The superstitious man will tell you he is blessed in his austerities and vain observances, for his imagination stands him in place of faith, and his personal approbation seems to him to be the Spirit of God. There is only too much of the same kind of thing among true disciples, and this Christians will tell you who, after having been Baptists, cease from that persuasion. They had thought themselves blest, and that abundantly, when they had got baptised; and they had also spoken of the happiness of their soul and of all the good which they had received. But when their illusion had been spent and they returned to the simplicity of the faith, they justly conclude that those emotions were not of God nor of His Spirit, but merely the result of their personal persuasion, or due to the influence of those who were about them."*

Samuel.—"I assure you, nevertheless, that that is not the case with me, for I am able to render a reason, in accordance with the Word, for that which I have done, both in seeking rebaptism for myself and in repudiating baptism for my infant child."

The father of the family.—"Oh, well, would you please tell me then wherefore you rebaptised yourself?"

Samuel.—"For two reasons—first, because I came to know that the baptism which I received in my infancy was invalid, and secondly, because I saw positively in the word of God that water baptism belonged only to those who had believed and who made a profession of their faith."

The father of the family.—"Tell me then, in the first place, what made you think that your first baptism was not valid?"

Samuel.—"There was first, as I said to you already, the incapacity which attached to me then, so that I could not understand the nature of the ordinance of God."

The father of the family.—"Does that reason yet appear to you a good one?"

Samuel.—"No; I give that one up, for I understand now that the ordinance of God has its authority in and from itself. But there were other reasons which made and yet make me doubt the validity of my first baptism, and one is this, that I am almost certain that the minister who baptised me in my infancy was anything but a converted man himself."

The father of the family.—"Alas, alas, dear brother, this is a

* We do not quite agree with Dr. M. here. Some truly godly Baptists have no doubt derived special blessing through the exercise of living faith on the gospel mysteries set forth in the ordinance.

new blow struck at the authority of the ordinance of God. Your first objection bore on the subject of baptism—the infant whose feebleness rendered it incapable of receiving it. Now it is the instrument that disannuls it. Your baptism, say you, was not valid because he who administered it lacked faith! Ah, dear friend, the more you say, the more I see that your zeal was zeal without knowledge, howsoever sincere you may have been in it all.”

Samuel.—“But how so, I pray you?”

The father of the family.—“In this, that you supposed that the ordinance of God receives some power or some efficacy from the instrument that administers it. No, no, brother, it isn’t so. That which the Lord has instituted is good and perfect of itself because that it is His work. The money which the king puts into circulation is good because it bears the likeness or the arms of the king, and not at all because of the person that uses it. In the same way, the ordinance of the Lord is valid because it bears the seal of Jehovah, and not at all because of the man who administers it. It is thus, my brother, that the Supper of the Lord is good—not at all because of the Lord’s servant who serves the Lord’s table, but because it is the Lord of that table who has said, ‘Take, eat, this do in remembrance of me.’ In this case the minister who serves does not make palatable the elements; it is the Word of God that does that, and it is faith that relishes it. So also is it with water baptism. It is neither Paul nor Apollos nor Cephas that renders it valid, but the Lord’s commandment—‘Go and baptise.’ Here the Word of God and the invocation of His holy name are everything. Let the institution thus be attended to and administered according as God commanded it, and it will take care of itself. As for the instruments, let them know, and let it be acknowledged, ‘that they are nothing’; and if Balaam was reproved by God when the voice went forth from a brute, so also Jehovah may bless although His word pass through an unclean mouth. If the case were otherwise, what should become of the ordinances of God in His Church? What disciple could receive them in peace if it was necessary at the outstart to assure oneself of the faith and absolute holiness of the minister who dispensed them? Surely in that case my conscience would be in subjection to the conscience of another, and my God should bless me only so far as a sinner like myself was faithful? No, dear Samuel, the case isn’t so, and I don’t hesitate to say that on this second point, as on the first, you have merely been acting under prejudice, and if it was for these two reasons only that you got re-baptised, it was in the darkness of ignorance that you had it done.”

(To be continued.)

A GENEROUS gentleman appeared to be dying. His heir asked him where his fortune was to be found. He answered, “In the pockets of the indigent.”—*Cheever’s Anecdotes.*

Memoirs of the Life and Experience of Marion Laird of Greenock.

(Continued from page 391.)

WHEN Mr. Fisher came to speak of the King of glory's opening the heart of sinners, I got leave to reflect on the work of the Spirit of God upon my own soul in the day of my first believing. O what unspeakable joy did this fill my soul with! He said, among other things, "If your hearts have been opened to the King of glory in a way of believing, your affections of love, desire, and esteem will be strongly moving out towards Him; or, at least, you will know sometimes what it is to be sick of love: that is, to have a soul-sickness because you cannot get Him loved according to His worth." And this was the grief of my heart, that I loved glorious Christ so little when I saw so much of His love to my own soul. O this is joy above all the joys of this world to have this conclusion surely sealed, "Christ is mine, and I am His." O wonderful love to a poor sinful wretch that has ten thousand times over grieved the good Spirit of God, and every sin deserved to be sealed up to damnation. O how did this inflame the love of my soul to Him who is altogether lovely! And I desired to be with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from His glorious face again, and where I would not be afraid of a deceitful heart to dishonour God any more; nor ever any more be afraid of Satan's temptations.

Never doth a soul lie lower in the dust, and abhor itself, than when the Lord makes the most singular manifestations of His grace and love to it. And I must say, to His praise, upon the last day of this feast, His marriage robes smelled of "myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces," whereby I was made exceeding glad. I came away from this solemnity rejoicing in the faithfulness of God, who hath accomplished His promises; so that I was made to say, "Not one word of that which the Lord spake hath failed." But when I came home again, and fell to my ordinary employment, the Lord hid His glorious face. I went to prayer in order to plead that He would return again, and let me have communion, peace, joy, and comfort in the seasons of duty again. I got no comfort; and a dark day of desertion, and some combats with Satan's temptations followed. I was made to cry, "O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord did shine upon my tabernacle." The hiding of His countenance was my great burden. And methought He said, too, "It is expedient for you that I go away." I was much afraid to enter into the cloud: it continued, however, about three months. And I had the roaring lion to grapple with, who loves well to fish in muddy waters.

Another thing that burdened me much was, that ordinances

were tasteless to my soul. Before this time Sabbath-days were to me heaven upon earth. O the presence of God in ordinances! O the taste of that joy my soul hath been made to taste of in ordinances! the fulness whereof is in heaven. The state of this mortality cannot bear the fulness of that joy. At one time I got such a glimpse of His glory, I could hold no more in this clay vessel; it so wrought upon the very body, by sympathy with the soul. O with what vigorous desires did my soul long for that day when this body of mine would be cast into a new mould, that I might be ever with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from His glorious countenance! O that I could mourn over these sins that provoked Him to withhold the light of His countenance from my soul! And no wonder though Christ suffered me to seek long ere I found it again, seeing I had given Him so little room in my heart when He was present.

About this time I heard Mr. M'Cara preach on the Sabbath-days for several weeks: but still the Lord hid His face, and I could not but be duly burdened when the glory was departed from me. Then I thought, O that I were at home at our own minister again. Then I imagined I would have some communion and nearness with God, for Mr. Cock's preachings had been exceeding refreshing to me before now.

On the first Sabbath after I came home, Mr. C. preached on Psalm cxix. 10, "Let me not wander from thy commandments." I looked for comfort, but instead of that, I was filled with sorrow: for He spoke much of the wanderings and strayings of the saints. Then I was afraid that I would dishonour God as they had done, for the fire of sin is a burden that I win little above. The Lord knows that I am more afraid of sin than of hell, or of death. The enemy strongly suggested to me that it was pride and gross hypocrisy in my heart to think that I was a saint. But I studied to improve a covenant-relation with God, who had so far condescended to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me after all I had done. When I thought how I had dishonoured God by unbelief before this time, I had no will to do it again. But the enemy pursued me, making me believe that I would one day or other fall by His hand. When I was coming home, the adversary gave me a new onset, and told me I might stay away from the ordinances till Mr. C. had done with preaching on that text. To which I replied, "This is not God's way; for He 'delights more in the gates of Zion, than in all the dwellings of Jacob.'" At which these words were borne in upon my mind, 2 Tim. iv. 3, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." I took this to be a reproof from God for my sins: for I knew the doctrine was sound, although I could not endure to hear it. It pleased the Lord, however, after this, to rebuke the tempter for a time. And Mr. C. preached on John x. 14, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep; and am known of mine." And I must say to the Lord's praise, He

did, with power, shine upon His word and ordinances again, and filled my soul with joy and peace in believing. Sometimes when Mr. C. read over his text, it was like a preaching to me; I saw so much of Christ in it, and the relation He stands in to us.

Now the year 1755 is ended, and I cannot but say to the praise of my Lord, although a year of great temptations from Satan, yet a year also of the most glorious manifestations of Christ that ever I enjoyed. And I may say to His praise, He made Sabbaths my "delight, the holy of the Lord and honourable;" and "He caused me to ride upon high places of the earth, and fed me with the heritage of Jacob."

PERIOD SEVENTH.

This period presents us with an account of her exercise during the year 1756; the temptations she met with from Satan, and how she was enabled to repel them: together with the signal manifestation of the love of God she met with, in attending on some Communion solemnities, with the concern she had on her spirit for the nation in general, and particularly for the congregation she lived in; and the gracious return made to her requests.

IN the beginning of the year 1756, Mr. Cock preached on Isaiah xxvi. 9, "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." The doctrine he insisted on was to this purpose: "When God's judgments are abroad in the earth, all ought to learn righteousness; but some only will learn righteousness." He spoke very much of the sin-procuring judgments, and of the likeness and similarity that took place between the sins and the judgments. Sometimes when I was hearing these sermons, my soul was made to tremble for fear of the Lord's righteous judgments; for, at this time, there were several signal evidences that the Lord's righteous judgments were abroad in the earth: great claps of thunder, fire, hail, stormy-winds, and earthquakes were in divers places, besides many spiritual judgments. All this made my soul within me to tremble for fear of His righteous judgments. Yet I may say to His praise, He kept the faith of His redeeming love in my view, and this kept me from fainting. Sometimes I was made to come to the Lord burdened with my own sins and the sins of the land, and made to cry, O my father, the hope of Israel and Saviour thereof, in time of my trouble!

Sometime after this, it pleased the Lord to manifest Himself to me, even unworthy me, both in duties and ordinances, and especially the duties of meditation. O but the love of glorious Christ is a sweet field to meditate on! I have just reason to acknowledge to His praise, that He condescended so far to me, for some time, as to give me a blink of His glorious countenance every day in one duty or another. O wonderful love, that ever He loved so unworthy a creature! O sirs, the glorious beauty

that I saw in Him ! He is the God-man : " Emmanuel, God with us." Yea, I say, His glorious beauty has ravished my heart, and filled my soul with vehement desires to be with the Lord ; and this made me to cry, " O time, time ! O cruel time, that hasteth not thy paces, that long eternity might approach, that I might win to the full communion with Him." I saw such excellency in glorious Christ that darkened all created glories. O that I could love my altogether lovely Lord ! But, alas ! this idol of self many a time pulls the crown off the head of my lovely Lord, and sets it upon the head of sinful self ; but, O that He may wear the crown and possess the throne in my heart for ever and ever !

So violent, however, were the temptations of the strong enemy, that his fiery darts were as a sword within my bowels. By this time my health was very much broken, and the weak body scarce able to subsist any longer, which threw me in a fever. For some days the enemy did so sorely assault me, that for the most part of seven nights and days I slept little at all ; sleep really became a terror to me : and my body was so very weak, that I thought death might be in the cup ; and because I thought it might be death, I told very much of my mind both to our minister, and some other Christians, but especially to our minister.

On the back of thus communicating my mind to Mr. C. and others, the Lord brought in upon my mind with power those words in Job v. 19, " He will deliver thee in six troubles ; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." From this I saw that the Lord would yet turn me back to the wilderness again ; nevertheless, He made me willing. But the enemy strongly assaulted me with that temptation—for all the profession I had made in religion, I would yet fall into sin and dishonour God. Between this and that of pride of graces, to pull the crown off glorious Christ's head and to set it upon the head of self, sinful self, ah ! how did the enemy assault me ! But it pleased the Lord to rebuke the tempter and the fever both. And I have just reason to say to the praise of the Lord, He was very kind to me ; and gave me now and then a blink of His glorious countenance through the whole time of this fever. O that I could praise Him for His love ! O wonderful love ! it is not the manner of man, O Lord, to give love for rebellion. O love Him ! O my soul, love Him !

It was agreed that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be dispensed at Crawford's dyke on the last Sabbath of May, 1756. Upon the Sabbath-day before the preparation, Mr. C. preached on Luke xiii. 24, " Strive to enter in at the strait gate." This was a day I thought the Spirit of the Lord bore witness with him, that he was sent express from Christ his master, with a commission to us. And it was a day in which I was made glad and induced to rejoice, and I was big with expectations that the Lord's presence would be with us at the approaching solemnity. But the next Sabbath, which was the preparation, Mr. C. preached on another text, and I was disappointed. I imagined he would be on the

fore-mentioned text again ; for he promised he would give some marks of those who had entered in at the strait gate ; but the Lord hid His face, and my heart-plagues prevailed. Then began I to enquire after the cause of it, and I had saw that I had not given God the glory of what countenance He had given to His servant. This grieved me much, that I had sinned the Lord away from His servant, and from myself also. When I was in my confusion the tempter was not idle ; he would have me to believe that our minister had forsaken the Lord, and the Lord would not countenance him again.

The night before the fast-day I was in our minister's house, and saw him in some confusion on account of some disorder in his family. I was uneasy, and said to him, Sir, I am grieved to see you so perplexed. He said to me, I cannot help it now. And he moreover said, I have much need of your sympathy. Ah ! this was like fuel to the fire of temptation ; and unbelief was so strong with me, that when I went to prayer with him, I could neither get liberty for him, nor yet for the Lord's coming to the feast. And to increase my grief, these words haunted me, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters." Now had this been true, it would have put the sacrificing knife to the throat of the promise, for many a time I have gotten access to plead with the Lord for him : and the promise, with a majesty, lustre, and divine power borne in with the word ; which no delusion can have, neither from Satan or any of his temptations. Sometimes the Lord did bear in His own word with such majestic power and sweetness as that I was made to say, "It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh." There is always something in Christ's voice that is not in Satan's nor in any of his temptations.

On Saturday our sermons were very sweet to me, but especially Mr. C.'s on the Sabbath-day. O how shall I put an observe on the Lord's loving-kindness this day ! When Mr. C. came out in the morning he seemed to have much of the Lord's presence with him ; yea, I thought every word he spoke had a majesty and a divine power coming along with it. I must acknowledge that this was one of the most glorious days that ever I beheld ; it was like an emblem of heaven, for the glory of the Lord filled the house.

Mr. C.'s action sermon at this time was on Rev. xix. 7, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." This was a very remarkable and savoury discourse to my soul. Among many other things he said, "This is a remarkable day ; a great day on three accounts : 1. It is a festival-day ; 2. It is a coronation-day ; 3. It is a marriage-day : "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him." He also said, "There is not one within this house, but they are married to one of two husbands : ye are either married to the glorious and worthy Lamb, or ye are married to the law ; and that husband will curse you to your face." He called us all to match with the worthy

Lamb, and said, "Whatever contemptible an eye ye may look on us with, O look not with a contemptible eye upon the worthy and glorious Lamb." Then he obtested and beseeched us, by all the joys of heaven, and by all the torments of hell, to match with the worthy and glorious Lamb; then it would be a day of gladness to the Lamb, and also a day of gladness to the bride, the Lamb's wife: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him." He had some remarks how the bride, the Lamb's wife, had made herself ready. He told us "That if any deserved a rich and wealthy bride, it was the Lamb; but instead of that, he got her a divour, and he left her one: for no sooner was she out of arrears to law and justice, but she was deep in arrears to the sovereign grace of God." He also said, "She was a naked bride, a blind bride, and a deaf bride; yea, in some sense she was worse than the devils; for devils never rejected so many offers of the Lamb." And he likewise said, "Withal she is unwilling; for she is tied neck and heel to the covenant of works." O this was a day that the Lord surprised me with His loving-kindness. Mr. C. moreover added, "Take it for a good token, the Lord's appearing here this day, that He will yet do great things amongst this poor handful in Crawford's dyke. At hearing this, I was extremely glad, for the burden of this congregation lay much upon my spirit; and sometimes I got the promise that the Lord would do good with the gospel in it. Many a request I have had for it, that it might become fruitful, and bring forth many sons and daughters to Christ; and was answered with that word, Psalm lxxviii. 31, "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God."

This day I got leave to hear the action sermon with both joy and sorrow: sorrow for my sins, especially the sin of unbelief. When I saw how I had pierced glorious Christ, I was disposed to cry out, "O that I could weep over my sins, if it were possible, with tears of blood!" yet I was filled with joy and wonder at His love. O sirs, I got leave to behold love shining in a cup of red wine; O that I could praise Him for His love! But before I rose from the table of the Lord I was sore afraid that I would dishonour God again; but when my spirit was overwhelmed within me, for fear of sin, I must say to His praise, O how sweetly did the Spirit of God shine upon these words, Mal. iii. 10, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord." O how did that attribute, the faithfulness of God, shine forth in these words, "Prove me now!" I thought it was as if the Lord had said to me, "In times of temptations, when thy foot had almost slidden, did I not uphold thee?" To which I replied, "That is sure, thou didst uphold me, O Lord." And also as if the Lord had said, "Prove me now for times to come." O that I could praise Him for His love! His love is unparalleled love: if we would have a parallel to His love, we must leave the earth and go away to heaven, and see the "Father loving him as he hath loved us" (John xv. 9).

On the back of this Communion, I cannot but say that the

impressions of what I met with were sweet for me for some time ; yea, I had a great pleasure in thinking upon, and also in telling to others, what God had done for my soul. Likewise those with whom I conferred about those things, told me that this Communion was to them a great day of the Son of Man, as for a great while they had experienced ; which were very desirable tidings to me. O this duty of meditation was very profitable and sweet to me, in which I really found much of the Lord's presence, with power : and when I was helped to keep at this duty, I found my spiritual enemies not so strong. For two weeks I lived as it had been in the suburbs of heaven, when I thought on the Lord's loving-kindness to my soul. He did not satisfy the vehement desires of my soul, so as to give me heaven in its full possession ; yet I must say, to His praise, He gave me a heaven sometimes upon the earth.

(To be continued.)

Mrs. MacHardy, Brown Place, Wick.

THE subject of this brief notice was a daughter of Mr. William Sinclair, one of the most outstanding of the later Caithness "Men." Mrs. MacHardy gave evidence in her daily life that she profited by her godly upbringing in a home where both her parents were followers of Christ, and by her consistent Christian life she showed that her religion was not merely a bare profession but a reality. Most of her married life was spent at Lybster, and the cheery and bright welcome of her husband, with her own unostentatious kindness, made their house to be a place recalling pleasant memories for all those who were privileged to enjoy their hospitality. Mrs. MacHardy, though of a quiet and retiring disposition, had commendable determination in her character when the cause of truth demanded it. Hence, along with others, when the pre-Union Free Church was playing false to the integrity of God's Word in the Dods' case she left the Free Church, and to these the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church at a later date was regarded as a notable deliverance. On the death of her husband she came to Wick with a young family. As a mother, she had in rare combination the qualities of firmness, gentleness, and love. She set a fine example to her children, and ere God called her away, they had reached womanhood and manhood, and their unfeigned and deep sorrow showed, if any signs were necessary, what an intense hold she had taken in her children's hearts. An outstanding feature of her character was its sterling integrity which, combined with a sincere desire to walk in the ways of God's commandments, gave a calm and chastened dignity to her life. Her death a few months ago has made a decided blank in the congregation and the community.

D. B.

Earail do Mhaithrichibh.

ANNS a' choimhearsnachd aig Philadelphia, bha màthair dhiadhaidh, aig an robh do thoil-inntinn a bhi faicinn a cloinne 'nuair a bha iad fathast ro òg, air an toirt gu eolas na firinn, a' gluasad ann an eagal an Tighearna, agus 'nam buill mhaiseach ann an eaglais Chrìosd. Chuala Ministear a bha air thurus an ni so mu thimchioll na màthar so, agus mhianaich e gu mòr a faicinn; a' saòilsinn gu'm feumadh ni-eigin sonruichte a bhi 'na doigh ann an toirt seachad teagasg diadhaidh, a rinn fhàgail cho eifeachdach. A reir sin chaidh e ga faicinn, agus dh'fhiosraich e dhith a thaobh na doigh anns an do choimhlion i dleasnais màthar ann an oileineachadh a cloinne. Fhreagair a' bhean, nach b'fhiosrach ise gu'n robh i ni bu dilse na b'àill le màthair chreideach sam bith a bhi ann an oilein diadhaidh a cloinne. An deigh beagain seanachais thuirt i, am feadh a bha mo chlann 'nan naoidheanaibh ann am uchd, air dhomh bhi g'an ionnlaid, thog mi mo chridhe ri Dia gu'n deanadh e an ionnlaid anns an "fhuil sin a tha glanadh o na h-uile peacadh," air dhomh an sgeadachadh anns a mhaduinn, dh' iarr mi air m' Athair neamhaidh an sgeadachadh le trusgan fireantachd Chrìosd:—air dhomh biadh ulluchadh dhoibh, ghuidh mi air Dia an anamanna a bheathachadh le aran nam flaitheas, agus uisge na beatha thoirt dhoibh r'a òl. Air dhomh an ulluchadh air son tigh Dhé, thagair mi gu'm biodh an cuirp 'nan teampuill iomchuidh do'n spiorad naomh a ghabhail comhnuidh anna:—'nuair a dh'fhàg iad mi air son na scoil sheachdanach, lean mi an cas-cheuma leanabail le urnuigh, gu'm biodh an slighe trid na beatha cosmhuil ri "slighe nam firean, a dhealraicheas ni's mò agus ni's mò gu ruig an latha-iomlan: agus an uair a chuir mi luidhe iad gu fois na h-oidhche, b'i urnuigh thosdach m'anama, gu'n gabhadh an Athair neamhaidh iad na bhroilleach, agus gu'm paisgeadh e iad 'na ghairdeinibh athaireil."

An so tha *buaidh* an t-saoithreachaidh thosdaich, neo-fhaicinnich aig màthair dhiadhaidh; buaidh a bhios air a faireachduinn, 'nuair a bhios buaidhean sin an leth a muigh, agus na sòlasan faileasach, a tha moran a saoithreachadh r'an toirt d'an cloinn, air an dichuimhneachadh; no a mhain air an cuimhneachadh mar na meadhona a mhìneachadh dol sìos ealamh do shaoghal a' bhròin. Anns an sgeul bheag so, tha dà ni a' bualadh ar n-aire—gu'n robh na h-oidhirpean sin air an toirt trath, agus ann an earbsa ri beannachadh Dhé. Thuig a' mhàthair so gur ann o Dhia a fhuair i a clann, agus gu'n robh i gu cunntas a thoirt Dhasan air son an doigh anns an deanadh i an togail suas. Bha fhios aice gu'm biodh a saothair ann an diomhain, ni's lugha na dheonuicheadh Dia dhith 'na thròcair comhnadh a spioraid a naomhachadh agus a shabhaladh an anamanna: uime sin, trid uile dhleasnasan an latha agus an iomlain do dh' ùine chudthromach na naoidheanachd, sheall i suas ri Dia a tha'n comhnuidh dluth dhoibhsan a

ghairmeas air, agus a dh'eisdeas r'an glaothaich. Cia sona dh'fheumas an teaghlach sin a bhi d'an Dia an Tighearna! ciod an t-aobhbneas neamhaidh a tha dearsadh o gach gnùis, agus ciod an dochas glormhor leis am beil iad ag amharc an taobh thall do'n uaigh, chum an aite-chomhnuidh sin a tha air ulluchadh air an son ann an tigh an Athar! Agus feumaidh a' mhàthair sin a bhi da rìreadh sona, a rinn ann an eagal De, agus le siorruidheachd anns an amharc, mar so a dleasnas a choimhlionadh.

Tha faireachduinn ann am broilleach màthar, a tha a mhàin air a thuigsinn le mathair—an t-snaim a tha gu'n ceangal r' an gineil, is aon i, ni r'a samhluachadh rithe, tha na h-uile snaim eile annbunn. Is ann do na faireachduinnibh sin, a ni'n fhirinn a chaidh dìreach ainmeachadh càinain a labhairt a dh' fheumas bhi air a tuigsinn; agus a dh'fheumas fuaim a bhualadh air an teud so a ruitheas a sìos 'sa suas air feadh uile shnaithinibh an anama. Am feadh a tha fhianuis air a leigeadh gu tric rìsan a chaith a bheatha fada ann am peacadh, a tha tuiteam cosmhuil ri fuaim na gaoithe fhalaimeh air a' chluais; agus a tha guth an rabhaidh a labhairt a mach fhirinnean mar thairneannach, ri cridheachaibh adamaint, tha an fhianuis a tha air a leigeadh ris, air a leigeadh ri cluais nach 'eil bothar, ri cridhe is urrainn faireachduinn.

Tha gleadhraich agus gluasad an t-saoghail ghnìomhaich gu tric a' bàthadh guth ciùin caol an t-Soisgeil, a tha ri fuaim ann an cluais an fhir-mhalairt; agus tha gliocas saoghail, agus cunntas mion, air uairibh a' treorachadh dhaoine gus a' cheist a dhearmad, "Ciod an tairbhe a ta ann do dhuinne, ge do chosnadh e an saoghal uile, agus 'anam féin a chall!" Ach tha'n earail so air a sonrachadh airson staid eadar-dhealuichte, anns a' bheatha so; air son na dream sin nach 'eil a measgadh ann an gluasad 's an cabhaig an t-saoghail; ach a tha gluasad ann an gnothuch is samhaiche, ged nach 'eil e ni's neo-chudthromaiche. Ann an uair eigin do bheachd-smuaineachadh tosdach, feudaidd so tuiteam ann an lamhaibh màthar chreidich; agus is urrainn na dleasnais a tha e cliuthachadh a bhi air an coimhlionadh, am feadh a ta i eadhon a sàs ann an gnothuch coitchionn an teaghlach.

Cha sgleo bàrdachd idir e, gur "ann dìreach mar tha 'm faillein ag amharc tha aomadh na craoibhe." 'Nuair thoisicheas an intinn ri fosgladh, agus a tha greim air a dheanamh air an aire 'n toiseach leis na cuspairibh a tha gar cuairteachadh, tha moran an earbsa *rithe*, a ni anns an aimsir mhaoth sin a' cheud drùghadh air an inntinn sin, agus a sheolas an toiseach a h-aire. Is ann an sin a tha fosgladh agus cumhachd aig a' mhàthair, nach 'eil seol air ruigheachd orra aig àm sam bith eile. Feumaidh ceud cheistean an leinibh bhig a bhi air am freagairt *leathasa* a thug a dh' ionnsuidh an t-saoghail e. Air dha bhi sior-bheachdachadh air na reulta soillseach sin a tha dealrachadh ann an iarmailt an fheagair, agus a dh'fheòraicheas e, "co rinn na nithe dealrach sin?" is e dleasnas màthar innseadh do'n bhruidhuichne bheag mu'n Tì mhòr agus mhaith sin, a tha chomhnuidh anns na neamhaibh; agus an

neach is e Athair ar n-uile thròcairean. Agus mar a dh'fhosglas an inntinn, innsidh a' mhàthair do'n fhear-eisdachd bheag mu Iosa, neach a luidh ann am prasaich, agus a bhàsaich air a' chrann-cheusaidh.—Agus an uair a chaislicheas i a chluasag air son fhois gach oidhche, agus a ni i faire thairis air dùnadh a shul, is e a sochair a chluinntinn a' pronnadh “Ar n-athair,” agus a sheòladh gus an t-Athair sin a ghradhachadh, neach air ainm a tha e luaidh co moch. Rachadh an cothrom luachmhor so seachad, imicheadh làithean na leanabuidheachd sin air falbh, agus biodh an inntinn air a lionadh a mhàin le sgeulachdaibh breugach, agus le luinneagaidh aighearrach; agus tha an neo-bhasmhor luachmhor air a thogail suas air son staid eigin eile, seach am Parras gu h-àrd. Am bheil thu 'g ràdh gu bheil thu aineolach, agus nach 'eil thu comasach air teagasg a thoirt seachad? Mar a tha do leanabh an crochadh ri d' bhroilleach, tha e stiuradh a ghnùis fhiosrachaidh do t'ionnsuidh air son naidheachd thaitnich eigin; is aithne dhuit gu leoir gu innseadh dha mu ghaisgeach rìgh eigin; agus nach urrainn thu innseadh dha mu Rìgh Shìoin, Prionnsa na Sìth? Agus ciod tuilleadh a b'urrainn am feallsanach foghlumte innseadh do'n inntinn leanabaidh so? Tha thu gun iomradh ort agus leth-oireach an dubhairt thu? Ach tha thu aithnichte do d' leanabh, agus tha do chumhachd an sin ni's mò na cumhachd lagh-thabhartair, no Ceannard. Tha do bhriathran air gabhail riu le muinighin, agus “dh'innis mo mhàthair dhomh mar sin,” is argumaid leoir fhoghainteach i a thoirt làn-dearbhadh do'n leanabh air na firinnibh is ro-chudthromaiche.

An so tha cumhachd agad nach urrainn creutair air bith eile bhi aige, agus is urrainn thu chur an cleachdadh anns an rathad is ro choltaiche gu buadhachadh. Ch'n e gu'm fosgladh do mhac ionmhasan ealainn an eòlais, a ni a dheasachadh gu shuidheachd am measg muinntir fhoghlumte agus ghlic an t-saoghail:—cha'n e gu d' nighean a dheanamh maiseach leis a' ghrinneas sin a thairneas aire na dream sin a dhomhlucias talla an toil-inntinn, no tha gluasad ann an cuideachd na finealtachd agus an fhasain:—tha'n cuspair a tha san amharc gu mor ni's urramaiche, agus ni's fearr an airdh air aire shonruichte na muinntir a tha caitheadh am beatha air son neo-bhasmhoireachd.

Feudaiddh an leanabh sin a tha nis pronnalais air do ghlùn, no tha cluiche mu'n cuairt do t'àite-comhnuidh, fathast innseadh do chinnich eigin a tha dol am mugha mu Iosa o Nasaret; feudaiddh e fathast a bhi 'na shaighdeir comasach ann an armailte Immanuel; agus feudaiddh e bhith bratach a chroinn-cheusaidh a chur 'na seasamh air cladaichean *Ghreenland*, no fuidh ghrein loisgeach Africa. Amhaire air nithibh dearbhta. Ciod a rinn an toiseach t-Eoin Neuton diadhaidh agus anabarrach feumail, a threoruchadh chum eòlais na firinn? Rinn teagasgan a mhàthar air an toirt seachad aig aois thràth cheithir bliadhna dluth-leantuinn r'a choguis, agus threoruich iad e dh'ionnsuidh Slanighir. An urrainn thu luach a chur air toradh a shaoithreach? Cha ghabh

e deanamh, gus an urrainn thu feumalachd *Bhuchanain* agus *Scott* a chuir ri cheile, daoine bha air an iompachadh tre a shaoithreachsan—gus an urrainn thu 'n lan leus do'n t-solus sin fhaicinn, a ghiulain a' cheud fhear do theis-meadhoin nan Innsean Geintileach; agus a bhios tu t'fhianuis air a' chomh-fhurtachd agus air an dochas dhealach a thug saothair an dara fir air an aghaidh 'nar tìr fein. Co theagaisg do Thimoteus òg a bha 'na shaoithriche moch ann am fion-lios Iosa Criosd, na ceud theagasgan do fhirinnibh an Tighearna? Co threoraich Samuel, a bha 'na Fhaidh agus 'na Bhreitheamh ann an Israel, do thigh an Tighearna am feadh a bha e fathast og, agus a choisrig e do sheirbhis Dhe nam flaitheas? Màthair a bha air toirt suas do bhi deanamh urnuigh.

Ged fheud nach dean an siol a chuirear mar so ann an aois na naoidheanachd eiridh suas agus toradh a thoirt a mach am feadh a tha e fo shuil a màthar; gidheadh, cha'n fheum sinn a chomh-dhùnadh gu bheil e cailte. Thachair ministear o chionn ghoirid air maraiche ann an sràid baile mhòir, agus thug e sparradh dha thaobh a dhleasnais ann an aire thoirt do na nithibh a bhuineadh d'a anam. Bhrùchd an seoladair treun a mach ann an deoir, agus ghlaodh e, "Stad, stad, na labhair riumsa mar sin, is ann ceart dìreach mar sin labhair mo mhàthair rium, 'nuair a bha mi ann am leanabh."—Lean comhairle a mhàthar e tre uile chuairteachadh, agus fathast ghleidh na briathran aice-sa a bha'g urnuigh air a shon, an greim air a choguis aige.

Tha e nis air a chunntadh 'na urram ni's mò aon a bhi'na mathair do *Bhrainerd* na do *Mhartin*, seach 'na mathair do fhear-riaghluidh no do fhear-cogaidh urramach. Agus cha'n ann idir airson na staid ghoirid so do bheatha a mhain, a tha thu gu d'chlann a thogail suas. Tha bhuidheann, bheag a tha tional mu'n cuairt duit, air an orduchadh air son siorruidheachd. 'Nuair a shiubhlas an saoghal air am bheil iad 'nan seasamh air falbh, agus a bhitheas a shòlasan agus a nithe urramach air an dichuimhneachadh; an sin cha bhi iadsan do'n fhosgail sibhse slighe a stigh do'n ghne bheatha so, ach a' tòiseachadh ri tighinn beò. Tha'm buaidhean a nis g'an dealbh air son siorruidheachd, agus tha sibhse cuideachadh chum an dealbh.

Ged fheud nach 'eil sibh ga rùnachadh, agus ged fheud sibh sibh fein fhàgail suaimhneach le bhi saolsinn, mur urrainn duibh aon mhaith a dheanamh dhoibh, nach dean sibh aon eucoir orra; gidheadh tha sibh a' cur an gnìomh cumhachd a tha air a faireachduinn, agus a bhios air am faireachduinn, 'nuair a bhios 'ur cinn air an cur 'nan luidhe anns an duslach. Biodh uime sin an fhianuis so a tha air a leigeil ri faireachduinn màthar air a h-eisdachd; leigibh leatha tighinn a chum 'ur broillichean fein; agus beachdsmuainichibh orra ann bhur cridheachaibh. An urrainn duibh saothreachadh chum gu'm meal iad nithe maithe an t-saoghail shiubhlaich so, agus nach seòl sibh an inntinnean d'a ionnsuidh-san, neach is e aran na Beatha? An aithne dhuibh an t-slighe gu cathair thròcair, agus na guidh sibh gu'n deanadh Esan

a ghabh leanabana beaga 'na ghàirdeinibh, agus a bheannaich iad, bhur clannsa a dhluth-ghabhail d'a ionnsuidh, agus an ulluchadh air son a rioghachd?

Chunnaic thu lamh na h-euslainte a' deanamh greim orra, agus chuir thu seachad laithean do shaothair iomagaineach, agus oidhchean do chùram gun fhois, gus an eucail aca chumail air a h-ais; agus ghlaodh thu o chridhe briste, "Och! caomhain mo leanabh!" Chunnaic thu cupsair do ghraidh ro thairisneach a' tuiteam sìos ann an gairdeinibh a' bhàis, agus le cridhe air a reubadh le cradh, thuirt thu maille ris an duine chumhachdach, "Thig a nuas mum faigh mo leanaban bàs." Agus an uair a bha na dleasnais mu dheireadh do ghràdh mathaireil air an coimh-ionadh, agus a dhùin an uaigh air leanabh do bhroillich, feudaidh e bith, gu'n d' amhairc thu air t-ais ris an àm a bha e air do churam, agus gu'n d' rinn thu bròn nach do ghabh thu barrachd cùraim mu n chuid neo-bhasmhoir dheth,—nach d' rinu thu barrachd ùrnuigh air son 'anama luachmhoir.

Ma chaidh thu troimh'n leithidibh sin do cheumanna, ma dh'fhairich thu air an doigh, so uime sin cuimhnich orrasan a tha nis ann am beatha agus an slainte, agus builich gu maith an cothrom a tha nis air a thoirt dhuit. Tha'n ùine air son do shaoithreachaidh ro ghoirid. Ann an ùine ghoirid ruigidh do chlann an t-àm sin do bheatha, 'nuair a bhios cumhachd màthar air fhaireachduinn ro a anmhuinn ni's lugha na bha e air a chur an gnìomh tráth. Am b'áill leibh gu'm faigheadh sibh annta tomhas soaibhir do dh'aobhar sòlais, 'nuair dh'fhásas bhur cuirp a' cromadh a dh'ionnsuidh na h-uaigne? an sin ni sibh a nis an cur air a churam-san, Neach is urrainn an t-anam a naomhachadh agus a shabhaladh. Ma's e 's gu'n teid sibh sìos do'n uaigh agus gu'm fàg sibh na cuspairean sin aig bhur gràdh ann an saoghal coimheach, neo-thruacanta, ciod is fearr is urrainn duibh a dheanamh air an son, na dìchioll a dheanamh air càirdeas an Tì sin fhaotainn dhoibh "a leanas ni's dluthe na bràthair," agus neach "a tha ghràdh ni's laidire na'm bàs?" Bithidh an ceangal caomh a tha nis ga'r ceangal-riu, ann an ùine ghoirid air a sgaoileadh; cha'n urrainn dhuibh cuir an aighaidh a' bhuille a spionas iad o bhur broillichibh. Feudaidh gu'n do mhothaich thu an cràdh—feudaidh gu'n robh do chridhe air a lionadh le doilghios—O uime sin, ma rinn thu ùrnuigh riamh, ma chaidh t'anam a mach riamh a dh'ionnsuidh do Dhé, ann an iartusaibh iriosal; innis dha mu thimchioll do chloinne aig nach 'eil eòlas air: 'nuair a ta fhios agad ciod e gleachd ann an diomhair ri Dia Iacoib, thoir dhàsan air an ais do chlann ann an creidimh. An sin anns an t-saoghal sin eile dh' ionnsuidh am bheil thu dol, feudaidh tu ràdh trid gràis, "A Thighearna, feuch mise, agus a' chlann a thug thu dhomh."

Ach feudaidh na duilleaga so tuiteam ann an lamhaibh màthar (mo thruaighe! gu'm biodh na h-uiread do'n leithidibh ann), a tha curam air son a cloinne a mhain a' ruigheachd gus an comh-

fhurtachd san àm a ta làthair, agus am meas san àm ri teachd, ann an saoghal is eigin dhuibh fhàgail ann an ùine ghoirid. Tha so 'na dhearbhadh laidir gu bheil thu dearmad do chòraichean neo-bhasmhor fein. Stad far am bheil thu nis air stairsneach na siorruidheachd, agus cuimhnich, mar a tha thu beachdachadh air a' ghnùis a tha ri gàirdeachas ann ad bhroilleach, nach robh curam ort mu thimchioll anama, a bhios beò gu bràth. Bhitheadh tu làn trioblaid, mur biodh doigh agad air 'uireasuidh shaoghalta a leasuchadh, gidheadh cha'n'eil thu faireachduinn mi-shuaimhneas sam bith mu thimchioll e bhi buailteach do leir-sgrios gun-chrioch: trid do dhearmaid sa air deadh-sgeul na slainte tre bhas Chriosd; seanachas a dh'fheadadh a bhi air a shileadh 'na inntinn òg le buaidh dhrùghaidh shonruichte o bhilibh mathar.

Thoir fairead do chunnart fein mar an ceudna. A reir fianuis firinn an Tighearn, a tha freagarach do na h-uile nach 'eil air an ath-nuadhachadh leis an Spiorad Naomh, tha do chridhe 'na naimhdeas an aghaidh Dhe. Tha'n fhianuis so air a daingneachadh le d' chaoin-shuarachas a thaobh maith spioradail do chloinne: oir nam biodh gràdh agad do Dhia be do mhiann agus t-oidhirp gu'm mealadh do chlann a dheadh-ghean-san a tha nì's fearr na beatha, agus gu'n deanadh iad seirbhis dha. Ged fheadh thu bhi neo-thoileach gabhail ris gu bheil do chridhe air seacharan o Dhia, mar is lugha, aontaichidh tu gu'n do bhris thu cuid d'a àitheantaibh. Nis thubhairt esan, "Is malluichte gach neach nach buanaich anns na h-uile nithibh a ta sgriobhta ann an leabhar an lagha chum an deanamh." Cha tuit am bagradh so chum an làir. Cha'n urrainn thu aon chuid teicheadh o làthair, no cuir an aghaidh cumhachd an Ti a labhair e. Ach dh'ulluich e fein slighe gu dol as. "Is ann mar sin a ghràdhaich Dia an saoghal, gu'n d' thug e aonghin Mhic fein, chum's ge be neach a chreideas ann, nach sgriosar e, ach gu'm bi a' bheatha shiorruidh aige. "Thainig Criosd do'n t-saoghal a thearnadh pheacach"—"thug e 'anam an eiric air son mhòrain," agus tha e toirt cuireadh dhuitsa comh-pairt a bhi agad 'na shaorsa mhor. "Seallaibh riumsa," deir am Fear-saoruidh beannuichte, "agus bithibh air bhur tearnadh, uile iomalla na talmhainn,"—"an ti a thig a m' ionnsuidh, cha tilg mi air chor sam bith a mach e." Gabh uime sin ri maithneas trid fola Chriosd. Biodh impidh air a cur ort gu cùl a chur ri t' fhireantachd fein, agus earbsa chur ann am fireantachd an Fhir-shaoruidh. Ma thig thu dh'ionnsuidh Dhe trid an "aon Eadar-mheadhonair," gabhar ruit, agus bithidh tu mar an ceudna comasach air an t-slighe do neamh a theagasg do d' chloinn. Gabhaidh tu tlachd ann an Slanuighear a chliutachadh dhoibh, air dha bhi luachmhor ann ad shuilibh fein.

Dluthaichibh tu ri caithir na trocair a dh'asluchadh beannachadh air do theagasgaibh, a dh'fheadas bhi mar so air an deanamh eifeachdach chum slainte shiorruidh do chloinne. Agus nan eireadh e mach iad a bhi air an atharrachadh as an t-saoghal air thoiseach ort, feudaidd do bhròn a bhi air a chiùineachadh leis an smuaineachadh, gu'n d' imich iad gu bhi maille ri Criosd.

The Origin of "Easter" and the "Eastward Position."

IT is well known that the custom of observing *Easter* is still kept up in Ritualistic Churches from year to year as a season of a religious festival; and we are accustomed to hear of the "Easter holidays." Now, there is no foundation in Scripture for the religious observance of Easter. The word *Easter* is not a Scriptural term. It may be objected that the word *Easter* is in Acts xii. 4. Yes, the word is there, but it is a mis-translation of the original. The Greek word there is *pascha*, and all who know the Greek language know that the word *pascha* means *passover* or *paschal* lamb, and not Easter. The same word is used by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. v. 7, where he says, "Christ our passover (*pascha*) is sacrificed for us." Those who observe the Easter festival say that they do so to commemorate the death and resurrection of Christ. But as the Lord's Supper is the ordinance Christ instituted to commemorate His death, the Christian Sabbath is the ordinance He appointed to commemorate His resurrection. Every Sabbath reminds us of the resurrection of Christ; and to add Easter to that memorial of His resurrection has no divine authority. It is a mere human invention.

The observance of Easter is of Pagan origin. There was a Pagan goddess of the name of *Eastre*, and her worshipper celebrated an annual festival in honour of her in the month of April—the month in which Ritualists observe Easter! Some think that the goddess *Eastre* was the same as *Astoreth*, the goddess of the Sidonians—1. Kings xi. v., and that she represented the *moon*, which was an object of heathen worship. As the Ritualistic Churches borrowed a great deal of their religion from the Pagans, they borrowed this part of their religion from them too. This of itself is a sufficient reason why men calling themselves *Christians* should give it up as a heathenish practice. But some may say that it is an ancient custom, and that *Easter* was observed in the Christian Church at an early date. But the antiquity of a thing is no reason for its continuance, if it is not sanctioned by the Word of God. There was no observance of Easter in the days of the Apostles; but it was introduced into the Church, along with other heathenish practices, soon after they had left the world.

The observance of Easter is not the only heathenish practice to be found in Ritualistic Churches; there are many more. Among others, may be mentioned the clergyman's practice of turning his face to the *east* when he is conducting public worship. The Pagans did the same, and especially the conductor of worship. What was the reason for this attitude? The reason was that they worshipped the *Sun*, and, as the sun rose in the east, the conductor of worship turned his face to the east when leading the worship of his god.

Now, it is lamentable, not to say sinful, that men and women bearing the Christian name should, in the twentieth century, be imitating the dark heathen in their worship of the living and true God! The poor heathen did not know better; they had no Bible to guide them. But men and women who have God's Book in their hand are left without excuse if they do not worship God according to the rule of His Word. These heathenish practices are pointed out that those who are guilty of them might be led to discontinue them, and begin to worship God in a *Christian* manner, and that those who worship Him according to His Word might not be led astray by the example of Ritualists who borrowed much of their religious observances from the dark heathen. Should this friendly warning fail to produce the desired effect on either party, the blame must lie on them, and not on the writer of this tract.

D. M'F.

Protestant Notes.

Meeting of Scottish Reformation Society.—The annual public meeting of the western branch of this Society was held in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on the evening of the 20th March. W. C. Maughan, Esq., J.P., presided, and delivered a brief but vigorous opening address. The other speakers included the Revs. David Ness, M.A., Jas. M. Brisby, John Hay (South America), James Pollock (Belfast), Professor Morton and Mr. Archibald MacNeilage. Several of the addresses hit the nail on the head when it was asserted that the callous indifference of nominal Protestants was one of the chief evils with which the Reformation cause had to contend with at the present day. There was appropriate condemnation of the Home Rule Bill for Ireland, and disgust was strongly expressed at the want of thorough-going Protestantism among both political parties in the State.

The Smashed Images at Sheffield.—A case was raised at the beginning of February before the Sheffield Police Court against Mr. H. A. Baker (Wyckliffe Preacher) for breaking and destroying a crowned Madonna in St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, on the 22nd January. The prosecutor was the vicar, Rev. G. C. Ommanney. The case aroused great public interest, and the large court-house was crowded. Defendant's counsel was Mr. T. W. H. Inskip, a Protestant lawyer, who stands high in his profession. Mr. Baker was formally committed for trial at the Assizes, which took place at Leeds, on 3rd March. This court inflicted a fine of £10 upon Mr. Baker. A great demonstration was held at Sheffield on 14th March, when the Wyckliffe preacher received an enthusiastic welcome. Some people may stand in doubt as to the Christian lawfulness of forcibly breaking these images, but Mr. J. A. Kensit points out in *The Churchman's Magazine* that the Homilies of the Church of England have the

following statement on the "Peril of Idolatry," which Mr. Baker stands by as justifying his action: "Therefore God by His Word, as He forbiddeth any idols or images to be made or set up, so doth He command such as we find made and set up to be pulled down, broken, and destroyed."

Rank Popery in English Church.—Mr. Kensit, in a faithful letter to the Bishop of London, calls attention, among other things, to a sermon by Rev. G. N. Whittingham, vicar of a church at Kentish Town, in which the following most Popish statement was made: "The souls of the faithful departed need our prayers, for they need to be further purified before they can see the Blessed Virgin Mary, let alone Jesus Christ." In another church, he observes that candles were carried in procession on Candlemas Day, and a hymn was sung to the Virgin with the refrain in every verse, "Hail! Mary, full of grace." Other superstitious observances are also being revived, and the Bishop, while weakly objecting to some things, tolerates in practice the whole business. Truly we have fallen upon evil and blasphemous times!

Church Notes.

Communions.—John Knox's, Glasgow (Hall, 2 Carlton Place, South Side), and Ness (Lewis), first Sabbath of April: Lochgilphead, second; Greenock, third; St. Judes', Glasgow (Jane Street, Blythswood Square), and Wick (Caithness), fourth. Oban and Kames, first Sabbath of May.

Communion at Chesley, Ontario.—Rev. Walter Scott desires us to intimate, for the benefit of the Mission friends on that side, that the Communion will (D.V.) be held in his congregation on the last Sabbath of May.

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Uist; and 10/- from Miss Macaskill, Lochboisdale School, South Uist. *For Kaffir Psalms*—20/- from "Psalm lxvi. 8," 20/- from "Friend," Strontian, 10/- from S. Kyle, 30/- from "Two Friends," Broadford, 31/- per "Miss K. M.," 10/- from Mr. A. Stewart, all per Rev. N. Cameron; and 5/- from "B. F." (Balnluig P.O.) *For Matabele Church Building Fund*—10/- from "Anon" (Helmsdale P.O.); 20/- from "Friend," Inverness; 20/- from "Anon," Rogart; 5/- from "A Friend," Staffin; 5/- from "Friends," Glasgow; and 10/- from "Friend," Stornoway, per Rev. J. R. Mackay. *For Building Fund*—10/- from Mrs. Macaskill, Polochwe, S. Uist; and 10/- from Miss Macaskill, Lochboisdale School, South Uist.

The Magazine.

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