



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

# Free Presbyterian Magazine

*And MONTHLY RECORD.*

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## Brief Notes of Assemblies.

THE following are a few notes on some matters of general interest which came before the three Assemblies:—

### ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

The retiring Moderator of this Assembly (Rev. Dr. Paul, Edinburgh) said some true things in a sermon prior to the opening of the Assembly. He remarked that they were not insensible to the events of the situation which existed before the War—the prevalence of ostentatious luxury side by side with crushing poverty, and the indifference and social wickedness that abounded in so many quarters, and in so many forms. Men required to be stirred out of their complacency, and taught to think of other things than their commerce and their comforts. It was through adversity that the souls of nations were purged and refined. This sanguinary struggle might yet be seen to be the beginning of a better time.

The new Moderator was the Rev. Dr. Brown of Bellahouston, Glasgow.

*German Influences in West Africa.*—Among the deputies from other Churches were the Rev. C. E. Greenfield, Buluwayo, and the Rev. D. Iverach, King Williamstown, of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. Mr. Iverach in an address said that when the Union forces occupied a certain German town in West Africa they found a great mass of literature which had been left behind by the Germans. It was of a most immoral character. Fortunately, many of the Union men could not read German, but they could all see the horrible prints. A Captain, one of his own congregation, had written that one could hardly conceive the depths of degradation to which the people there had sunk. The whole of the literature was taken out and sunk in the bay.

German South-West Africa would not be allowed again to be a hotbed of immorality and a menace to their peace.

*Deputation from U.F. Assembly.*—Sir George Adam Smith, the Moderator of the United Free Assembly, and others of the Court paid a friendly visit. Dr. Wallace Williamson welcomed the deputation and spoke in high terms of Sir G. A. Smith as a personality greatly beloved and honoured both as a scholar and a devout Scotsman. The Moderator also expressed his appreciation of the appointment of Sir G. A. Smith to the U.F. Assembly's moderatorship. It may thus be seen that the leaders of the Church of Scotland see no danger in the Higher Critical scholarship, of which Sir G. A. Smith is one of the most outstanding exponents and advocates in Scotland.

*"Call to Penitence."*—There was an overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh asking the Assembly to take steps with a view to stir up the people to a more devout attitude at the present crisis, and with a view to secure the appointment of a national day of prayer. The Assembly resolved to appoint a Commission which would circulate literature, and take steps along with the representatives of other Churches to secure the objects of the petition.

*The Use of Creeds in Worship.*—Mr. A. B. Graham, St. Andrews, appeared in support of an appeal he had given against a decision of the Synod of Fife. He had complained that in a St. Andrews church the innovation was introduced of asking the people to stand and repeat the creed after the elements were placed on the Communion table. He objected to the innovation, and could not take the Communion. Professor Cooper of Glasgow and Dr. W. Williamson spoke and said they saw nothing wrong in the practice. Professor Reid moved that a Committee be appointed to make enquiry. The appeal was dismissed.

*Decline in the Birth-Rate.*—Professor Milligan, Glasgow, in submitting the Report of the Committee on the Religious Instruction of Youth, said there appeared to be a growing lack of religious instruction in the home, yet they never had greater need of the religious education of the young than existed to-day. Lord Balfour of Burleigh said that the situation was one calling for the very earnest consideration of the Church. Professor W. P. Paterson said that all the splendid results of medical science in the saving of human life were being nullified by the diminution of births. The birth-rate was seriously declining among the upper classes. This country had an important claim on the assistance of the Church in checking and combating this evil. A committee was appointed to ascertain what steps should be taken. The Assembly also received an overture calling attention to the serious declension in the numbers of children attending Sabbath schools and Bible classes.

*Social Crime—Picture Houses.*—Dr. D. Watson, Glasgow, gave in the Report of the Committee on Social Work. He said that there was an evil influence on the minds of the young from

sensational and objectionable films at picture houses, and he was convinced that there was needed here a strong censorship. He was glad the Home Office had resolved to institute a censorship, which had not come a day too soon.

This Assembly was closed by an address from the Moderator bearing upon the prospective changes after the War.

#### UNITED FREE CHURCH.

The Rev. Dr. Young (in the absence of Professor MacEwen, Retiring Moderator, through illness) "conducted the public worship which preceded the formal constitution of the Assembly." Like Dr. Paul of the Established Church, he also said some true things on this occasion, among which were the following:—"Had the pulpit been as clear and explicit as it ought to have been in its declaration and application of the great spiritual truths of sin and salvation, of God and the soul, of righteousness and mercy, of the Cross and the throne, of our Redeemer, whose right it was to reign over the nations, the King of all the earth? Surely the need of the hour was a humble, penitent, praying Church." Very true indeed, but where is the consistency when Dr. Young and others of his brethren acclaim to office the new Moderator, Sir George Adam Smith, one of the strongest advocates of the rationalistic Higher Criticism in Scotland? The United Free Church has exalted to the highest honour in her power one who has done great harm to sound Scriptural thought by his expository books on Isaiah, the Minor Prophets, etc. This is no sign for good, or presage of the end of the War; rather an ominous forerunner of severe strokes. Sir G. A. Smith delivered an eloquent address on "The Church and the National Crisis," but it gave no evidence of a grasp of the real, deep causes of God's controversy with the nations, or of any return on his own part to more satisfactory views of truth.

*Sabbath Observance, etc.*—Provost Thomson, Montrose, submitted the Report of the Committee on Church Life and Work. The Committee had under consideration the question of cinematograph entertainments. In some respects these entertainments had an educational value, but there was a tendency in certain places to lower the standard of films until they had a demoralising influence. Rev. James Barr, Govan, referring to the question of Sabbath observance, said that under the first Munitions Act a man could be penalised for refusing to work on the Sabbath Day, but this was no longer the case under the amended Act if a man, on conscientious grounds, refused to work. The great ship-building firms and controlled establishments had found that they were losing by Sabbath labour. The observance of the Sabbath went hand-in-hand with the liberties of the working-classes.

*Decline in the Birth-Rate.*—Rev. J. D. Robertson, Leith, presented the Report of the Committee on Social Problems. He



alluded to the decline in the birth-rate, and quoted figures, showing how the births had declined, and how, along with that, there had been an alarming rise in infant mortality. The empty cradles accounted in large measure for the declining Sabbath schools. It was time the Church should sound the alarm.

*Women's Place in the Church.*—There was a proposal before the Assembly to the effect that women who are in full communion with the Church be considered eligible to be appointed to the office of deacon, or as members of congregational boards, or managers. Rev. Dr. Henderson, Crieff, submitted an adverse motion, which was seconded by the Rev. Dr. Young. Rev. Robert Forgan, Aberdeen, moved that there should be sent down to Presbyteries, under the Barrier Act, an overture on the lines of the said proposal. Mr. Forgan's motion was carried by 163 to 125. Rev. James Barr, Govan, said that he was in favour of opening up all offices whatsoever in the Church to women on the same conditions as to men. Such departure from Scripture example and precept needs no comment.

*National Day of Humiliation.*—Dr. Jerdan intimated that overtures had been received from nine Synods and thirty-six Presbyteries in favour of holding a public day of humiliation and prayer. Rev. G. W. Taylor, Leith, in supporting the overtures, pointed out that among the thirty-six Presbyteries, which represented all parts of the country, were those of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee. Rev. J. Barr said such a movement should be in the hands of the Church, and should be spontaneous and free. He could conceive the working people pointing out that they would have to lose a day's pay or to make it up on Sabbaths or by other overtime. Rev. Dr. Ross, Kilmarnock, said the working men would not be opposed to the proposal, and that the loss of a day's wages would not appeal to them at all. Rev. Dr. Henderson suggested that they should avoid a vote, as it would be unfortunate if they appeared to be divided upon the question. It was agreed, at his suggestion, that the matter should be remitted to a Committee to consider, along with representatives of other Churches, what steps could be taken with a view to the observance of a national day.

This Assembly was closed by an address from the Moderator (Principal Sir G. A. Smith) on the Future of the Empire.

#### FREE CHURCH.

The retiring Moderator of this Assembly (Rev. John Macdonald, Rosskeen) opened proceedings with a sermon on 1 Peter v. 6: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time." The new Moderator was the Rev. Angus Mackay, Kingussie, who was stated to have been thirty-four years in the ministry (twenty-two in Canada, and the remainder in the Free Church). Mr. Mackay delivered an address on "The Need for Humiliation."

*Refusal to take part in Joint Prayer Meeting.*—The Clerk (Prof. J. K. Cameron) intimated that a letter had been received from the Clerk to the Church of Scotland Assembly, stating that the members had arranged for a joint prayer meeting in the United Free Church Assembly Hall, and asking that Assembly to join with them as last year. The Committee differed somewhat in opinion, but ultimately he was instructed to write declining to take part in the joint meeting. Of course it was open to members of Assembly as individuals to go over and join with them. Several members might take up very important grounds, very specially the relation in which their Church stood in testimony to the Word of God, and also that the main source through which this trouble had arisen amongst the civilised nations of the world was largely due to the influence of the Higher Criticism that arose in Germany. There was no hiding the fact that a great many members of that House were influenced by the fact that the United Free Church, in the appointment of her Moderator, had manifested before the world her approval of the attitude of that Church in connection with that Higher Criticism. Therefore, if they as an Assembly were to take part in that meeting, they would require to take some means to show that they were not to be regarded as compromising their position in the least in regard to their testimony, which was a clear and outspoken one, without any bias whatever; that they disapproved of the position taken up by that Church; and that their testimony was one for the divine authority and inspiration of the Word of God.

The Rev. James Henry, Burghead, thought it was a harsh thing if they could not join in intercessory prayer with brethren of other Churches in the present terrible crisis. He would not compromise his brethren one bit, but he would like to join with other brethren in intercessory prayer. He thought they should make a mistake if they did not do so. The Clerk said it was for the House to say so. Without further comment the Report was approved.

*Mission to be Started in South America.*—The Assembly, in the course of a deliverance on Foreign Missions, directed that a Mission would be established in Peru, South America, with Lima as its centre, and appointed Mr. John A. Mackay, B.D., as Missionary. It was also directed that a Medical Mission be established in the Peruvian Sierra, and that after the necessary preparations were made, Dr. Helen Macdougall be appointed as Medical Missionary. Rev. John Macneilage, Bower, objected to this enterprise principally on the ground that as a Church they had failed to carry through their programme at home in the matter of the supply of vacant congregations, nearly one half of their Churches being without ministers.

*Report of Committee on Claim of Right.*—The Rev. Professor M'Leod, Inverness, submitted the Report of the Committee on the Claim of Right, exhorting ministers and people to exercise great vigilance in regard to measures brought forward in the

Legislature as to their bearing on the welfare of the Church and her testimony.

Mr. Archibald Macneilage complained of the paucity of the attendance of the members of the House when such a question as the Claim of Right was being discussed. It personally awakened in his mind grave thoughts regarding the future of the Free Church when he found the younger men—not all of them, thank God—were absent when Professor M'Leod was delivering his address, an address which every young minister of the Church should have heard, since it bore on the reason why they were there that day as a Free Church, and showed that their testimony had not been merged and sunk in the diluted testimony of the United Free Church. He did think they were becoming blind to the fact that the Free Church testimony to begin with was a testimony against the Established Church of Scotland as presently constituted. They were going on the assumption in private—it was not expressed—that theirs was a testimony against the United Free Church, which came into being in 1900, and against it only. It was not. The testimony of the Church of 1843 was a public testimony against the Church of Scotland as constituted in its relation to the State in 1843, and questions that arose in connection with what was known as the Stewarton case were as alive to-day as a ground for maintaining a protest against the constitution of the Church of Scotland as they were in 1843. And since the Disruption grounds against the Church of Scotland and her practices had grown and increased in a marvellous degree. Corruptions in worship were the inevitable forerunners of corruptions in doctrine.

*Lochranza Window Case.*—The Report of the Glasgow Presbytery as to their diligence in this case was submitted. The Presbytery had appointed a Committee consisting of the Rev. A. Ross, Partick, and Messrs. W. Rounsfell Brown, Glasgow, and D. M'Leod, Dunoon, elders, to confer with the Lochranza people. The Committee carried out their remit, and the result to which they were led was embodied in a finding which Mr. W. Rounsfell Brown proposed to the Assembly. The substance of this finding was to the effect that the Assembly had no desire to hurt the feelings of the donor of the window or to depreciate the services of the late Mr. Kerr in whose memory it was erected, but that they were under the necessity of protesting against "the vain practice of attempting to portray in material form the person of the Lord Jesus Christ in His risen glory." They recommitted the matter to the Presbytery with instructions to labour for such a settlement as will ensure harmony in the congregation and conserve the weighty principle for which the Presbytery contended. Several members, including Mr. Robert Reid, elder, Campbelltown, and Revs. D. Munro, Ferintosh, and M. Mackay, Kilmuir, were not satisfied with this resolution, which suggested some alteration only on the window—they desired it removed altogether.

The finding, however, was adopted with the addition that the proposed adjustment of the business be submitted to the decision of next Assembly.

This Court was closed with an address by the Moderator, in the course of which he made reference to his own past work in Canada, and his joining the present Free Church in Scotland. He said that he had ceased to regard uninspired hymns and instrumental music as matters of indifference in the Church, and that he heartily held the Establishment principle and all other Disruption principles.

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#### DAY OF HUMILIATION AND PRAYER.

A Joint Meeting of ministers and elders of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church was held in the New College, Edinburgh, in furtherance of the proposal to hold a day of humiliation and prayer. The Rev. Dr. George Wilson, St. Michael's, Edinburgh, who presided, said a day of humiliation and prayer seemed to be the clamant need of the present moment. The Rev. Dr. Norman Maclean, St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, said that what seemed to stick in people's minds was the unsuitableness of the word "humiliation." To his mind there was no use having a day such as was proposed if they left out the word "humiliation." He did not see how any Christian could object to the word. They had individual prayer, family prayer, and church prayer, but the nation had not yet in the spirit of humiliation called upon God. The Rev. G. W. Taylor, South Leith United Free Church, said that 1,360 ministers throughout Scotland had indicated their unconditional approval of this movement. Fifty-nine in addition said they were favourable to the appointment of a week day, but most of the fifty-nine objected to the word "humiliation." Only fifty-four postcards were received indicating opposition to the movement. After an informal discussion the meeting broke up.

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YE that are young men and women, "What think ye of Christ?" Ye are now in the flower of your age. Oh! shall not Christ have the flower of your thoughts, that, according to the Father's promise to Him, He may have the "dew of his youth," by your dedicating to Him the dew of your youth, and fleeing all youthful lusts!—*R. Erskine.*

GUARD against the excursions of the heart into the fields of folly and vice, the vain and defiling fashions of a world lying in wickedness; for the case, in this respect, resembles that of Israel in Egypt—within the doors sprinkled with paschal blood, there was neither crying nor death; without them, destruction rode in triumph.—*Rev. James Baine.*

## A Sermon.

BY THE REV. NEIL CAMERON, ST. JUDE'S, GLASGOW.

*(Taken down by a hearer at Oban.)*

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 "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."—ECCLES. xii. 1.  
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LET us endeavour to consider for a short time, as we may be enabled, a passage of God's Word in the Book of Ecclesiastes, the twelfth chapter and first verse.

You will notice in the concluding verses of the preceding chapter that God speaks to young men. Young men, generally, are strong-headed, and they persist—not all, but the most—in going on in a way that will not be to their benefit at the end, and God speaks ironically here when He says at the ninth verse, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes," but he gives a young man one thing that he should always have before his mind, and that is, "but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." We believe that, if men kept before their minds, always, that they have to render an account at last for every vain word and every sinful action unto God, it would have a very salutary effect on their conduct in the world. Then in the tenth verse He goes on to show that He meant the words in the ninth verse in a way of irony, for He says: "Therefore remove sorrow"—that means the cause of sorrow, which is sin, and which is strong in the hearts of the young—"from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." Of course, the chapters are divisions made by men and were not in the original text, and so He goes on without a break, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

In meditating upon these words briefly, we shall notice three things:—

I.—The Person whom we are enjoined here to remember,—our Creator.

II.—The duty which we are enjoined to attend to towards our Creator,—to "remember" Him.

III.—The seasonable time God sets forth in which we are to attend to this duty of remembering our Creator,—"the days of our youth."

I.—Now, we are to consider who the Person is that is brought before us here as the object whom we are to remember: He is set before us here as our Creator. And when you speak, my friends, about a Creator, you go beyond anything that any creature can do. Men can do many things; angels can do much more. We read

of one angel who slew in one night in the camp of Assyria one hundred and eighty-five thousand men. Well, it would take a great host of men to do such a terrible piece of execution as that, but one angel was sufficient to do that or more. But though men and angels would combine, they could not create the smallest fly. That is entirely beyond their power, but we are enjoined here to remember One who is the Creator of all creatures—angels, men, and all creatures down to the smallest fly which you can see. If you look up the beginning of Genesis, you will find there how God created all things. God himself gives a history of it—a very brief but comprehensive history, in which really the wisdom of God appears, and, if we were not so ruined, we would see how extraordinarily the Bible is written. Men would require volumes to write a history of the creation. God gives it amply in three short chapters so that any man can see clearly how things were made. We are told that He created the heavens and the earth, the sea and all the creatures that are in the visible heavens, on the earth and in the sea, and everything that grows out of the earth. The way in which He created them was by speaking the word, and it was done immediately. He spoke a word, “and done it was without delay.” As you see about the creation of light, taking that as one instance, God had nothing to do but say, “Let there be light,” and there was light immediately. The words came out of the mouth of God. And that was the way He created all creatures, that is, birds, creeping things and four-footed beasts, and all such upon the earth. But you will notice that, when He came to create man, there was an extraordinary consultation. We do not hear one word till then about any consultation. God went forth and just said, “Let there be such and such,” and such was immediately; but when He was going to make man, you find the words used are, “Let us make man,” and you have the history there of how God created man, Adam and Eve. He gives us not at all a hypothetical history, or a history that a man desiring to his utmost to write down truth should give us, but you have it there infallibly, in such a way that you might give your oath that this was the way God created all things, and, finally, man. Man was created in the image of God. That does not mean at all that God is like man or that man is like God as to his body. Though the Son of God took human nature, we are told distinctly that God is a Spirit, and that He is infinite and eternal and unchangeable in His being; that the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, much less any house that may be built in this world. “Heaven is my throne,” He says, “and the earth my footstool.” But the image of God was on the soul of man. It was upon the faculties that God gave to man, the very faculties which you realise you have even as a fallen sinner. These faculties, to begin with, bore the image of God, and that image consisted in knowledge, in righteousness and in holiness. Man had knowledge; something resembling God; he had righteousness; he was



pure in his nature; innocent as to his actions; and he was perfectly holy in all the faculties of his soul.

God then, being the Creator, had an absolute right to the creature. See, men claim that they have a right to the thing which they form by their own efforts and labour, and still they are only making use of the material that God brought out of nothing and that belongs to Him by absolute right, as He lays claim to "the cattle on a thousand hills," and such things as are in the world. But you will notice, my friends, that God's claim upon man was extraordinary. He made him a rational being, an accountable being. He made him a being that was to continue in existence as long as God will continue in existence. And remember this, my friend, that you may be able to state the place and the day of the month of the year on which you were born into the world; but you can never state when that existence which began then to be will come to an end. You are a being that was created for eternity. We remember having read, more than once perhaps, in sermons that have been published which were preached by that eminent servant of God, the Rev. Archibald Cook of Daviot, Inverness-shire, how he appealed to the sinners of Strathnairn: Did they ever think that they had to exist as long as God exists? We would desire to impress upon sinners here that twenty years, forty years, a thousand years, a million years, or calculate as far as you can go, you will only be at the very beginning of your existence.

Now, as being the Creator, you see that God has absolute lordship over you. The most careless must realise that. You know perfectly well that your life is not your own. God may call you hence to eternity at any moment. No one can stand up here and say that he or she can continue his or her existence for one moment, for when God withdraws the breath He has given you, you fall back to the dust from which you came and the spirit to God who gave it. It is in Him we live and move and have our being. He sustains us, and has absolute right to us, to do with us as He thinks proper. No man has a right to say, "This man or that man belongs to me," for we are God's. We are His creatures, and there is no power in existence that can remove this lordship over us. God very often expresses this. He shews parents and others also how His right is absolute. You will notice God-fearing men in Old Testament Scriptures had much wisdom. Take, for instance, Job. When he lost all his family, what did he say? He said: "It was God who gave and He has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord," thereby acknowledging that God had an absolute right to take away what He had given. The most careless must feel that when God claims what belongs to Him, there is no power that can, for a moment, prevent Him from taking a sinner from time to eternity. While He closes the door, there is no power in the universe that can send one sinner to eternity. The keys of hell and of death are

in the hands of Christ. God has absolute sovereignty over us as His creatures and no man can say, "My eyes are mine; my lips are mine; my ears are mine; my hands or my feet are mine; my soul is mine." God claims all these as His. And if you, my friends, will make bad use of them, God will bring you to an account for it. You see, there were other men who said their lips were their own and who was lord over them, but God made very soon manifest that they were not speaking the truth, but that He was sovereign Lord who might do what He liked with them.

Now, in the second place, I desire to notice that, as things are so, we are absolutely dependent upon Him, not upon any creature. We depend upon God for every breath we draw; for the power to move; for food and drink and everything we have in the world. And as sure as it is said that when He withdraws His breath, we go back to the earth, it is said that when He withdraws the mercies which He bestows upon us, no man can bestow the least. We, as a generation, have become fools, in boasting of what we can do and what we are as men of understanding and wisdom. Indeed, we got so wise, at least in our own conceit, that we began to criticise God's own Book, and we see now the result of it in Germany, where this began. But remember, my friends, that no power of man could create one mouthful of bread although men should die lacking it. If God will not give fruitful seasons, we must perish for anything the creature can do. You see we cannot create rain. This comes from God. Isaiah asks this question most emphatically of idolaters in his own day, when he says: "Which of the vanities (that is the name he gives to idols of the Gentiles) of the heathen can give rain?" We are absolutely dependent then upon God for water to drink, food to eat, and air to breathe; for the health of our bodies and of our minds. You see yourself, my friend, if you think at all, that it is not only that He has an absolute authority over us and a right to us, but we are absolutely dependent upon Him for everything.

The third thing I desire to notice along with these two things which I mentioned—and I am only taking these from among many other things which might be stated—is that we are absolutely accountable to God. I may pass into eternity without having to give an account unto any man, and I may say just now to any man that I am under no obligation to give an account of my actions to him, and you can do the same. Because we can say this, we think this will continue for ever, but, my friends, remember this, that we must render an account to our Creator, our moral Governor and our Judge, for every thought and every word and every action, and none of them shall be forgotten. No: you may forget them, but God will not. They will all meet you at the end, for God writes all these things down in His book, and the books are to be opened at the great day, and men are to be judged according to the things that are written infallibly in His books. We shall all give an account of ourselves unto God; we

shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ in order that everyone may receive according to that he hath done. Now, these are not my thoughts, nor am I making much use of my own words. I am stating these things as nearly as possible in Scriptural language, for I feel these are truths which you will have to realise. You must bow your head and acknowledge them some day, even that you are God's creatures, that you depend upon Him for everything and that you must render an account unto Him for every thought, word and action, and receive according to them. Now, this much on the first head. Before I leave this, I desire to mention just one thing. You see, my friends, the Scriptures make it also very clear who our Creator is, for we are told that it was by the Son that the Father created the worlds. It was the Son of God, who afterwards became the Son of Man, and who came into the world to save sinners, who spoke the words which you find at the beginning of Genesis, "Let there be" this and that, and "Let us make man." Our Creator is certainly God—the Three Persons—but very specially is this the work of the Son.

II.—Let us notice, in the second place, the duty which is enjoined here, and the duty is, "Remember, therefore, thy Creator." The reason why I referred to the things I mentioned above was to show the force of that word "therefore," because it gives reasons why a poor sinner should remember his Creator. I have given some reasons which I think—not that I ever think I have given what I should or that I can do what I would—should cause you to consider your relationship to God, who is invisible but who views all that you think and say and do.

I desire to notice three things that you ought to remember as you are related to your Creator. The first thing is that God is everywhere present. Although you may get into places where no eye of man can see you, and where you may expect, so far as creatures are concerned, that you will never hear in time what you are going to do or to say now, you ought to remember that God's eye is on you. As Joseph remembered in Egypt, "How then can I," he said, "do this great wickedness and sin against God?" He remembered that God was omniscient and omnipresent, and that though there were no persons there but a wicked woman and a God-fearing young man, yet that God was there; that He was seeing him; thus causing him to be an example to young men to the end of time. It is left on record for that very purpose.

Again, He is not only omniscient, that is, He knows all things, but He is everywhere present. As the Spirit of God in David says:—

"From thy Spirit whither shall I go?  
Or from thy presence fly?  
Ascend I heav'n, lo, thou art there;  
There, if in hell I lie."

You see, my friends, that the saints of God right down through

the history of the Church believed in hell, though infidels in our day professing Christianity deny the existence of such a place. But the Bible says that God is in heaven ; and that He is also in hell as to His presence in His justice and holiness, and that God is in the ends of the earth. It does not matter where you may go, He is there. Darkness hides not from Him. The darkness and the light are both alike unto Him.

Now, it is not only that these two things are true, namely, that God sees everything and that He is everywhere, but it is true that He is omnipotent, all-powerful. There is nothing that can resist His power. No. See, my friends, what power God has over the material creation ! When He commanded the Red Sea, it split up and opened a passage with walls of water on either side—because God could make water if He chose as solid as the face of rocks—until His people passed over. You find the same thing true at Jordan. When it was going over its banks, a way was made for the people. God made it “stand upon an heap,” and the waters which came down towards the Dead Sea were cut off, until they all went across. The power of God, the very power that brought these elements out of nothing and into existence, can now command them and make them do exactly what God desires them to do. You see again, my friends, that at the prayer of Joshua, God made the sun and moon to stand still for twenty-four hours without moving. By this it was made manifest that God has infinite power. Men who are wise in worldly things talk nonsense when they go to speak of such things, and say that miracles could not be. They forget that the Creator who brought these things out of nothing by the word of His power, has got full power to use them as He chooses. I was thinking recently upon this. Knowing a little of how much has been written, especially by these Germans, who are more like fiends in human flesh than men, how just it is on God's part to shew how savage men become when they depart from God's truth ! It is to be hoped that their disciples in Scotland will take warning and turn back to God's Word, as otherwise the same result will follow in them. We have now what we call “keyless watches”—I happen to have one of them in my pocket—and you have only to touch a spring in the watch and you can turn the hands back as long as you like. By removing the connection between the hands and the wheels, you can turn this piece of mechanism back without stopping it, and we think if man can make a thing which he can turn and twist as he likes without destroying the machinery, how can man say that God could not put back for twenty-four hours the sun and the moon, and not spoil the mechanism in the doing of it ? But God did it. Although you were to get all the men in the world gathered together to cause the sun to stop one moment in its course, they could never do it. You would only conclude that they were deranged ; but you should not conclude that Joshua was deranged should you hear him speak to the sun and moon in

God's name to give him a long enough day to gain the victory over his enemies, for God answered him. Now, there are many other proofs given of the omnipotence of God. As Job said: "I know that thou canst do all things"; and our Lord Christ said: "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible." Though a man should be dead and lying in the grave, yet Christ, God manifest in the flesh, shewed that He could go to the grave and call that man out as if he were only asleep. We know of nothing so powerful as death. None ever took one individual out of its grasp, but you find that when the Creator, the person brought before us here, came and spoke to Lazarus, saying, "Lazarus, come forth," death had no power to keep Lazarus for one moment. He will yet cause that all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth. These, then, are things you ought to remember—that God is everywhere present, that he knows everything in every place at the same time, and that there is no power that can resist His will, that it is irresistible. To remember these things is very helpful to faith where it is, and it might do a young man or young woman good to remember them so as to restrain them from being so careless and indifferent.

The last thing I desire to notice in connection with your remembering your Creator in the days of your youth is this: You ought to remember that your actions now will fix your destiny for an endless eternity. I stated several Scriptures already to prove that God shall give to men as their actions may have been. Your actions now, if you continue to go on according to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, will fix your destiny, my friend, for ever beyond death and the grave. It will fix it in a way that there can be no change, as the Holy Spirit points out in the preceding chapter: "If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." And remember, my friend, to you as an individual, what extraordinary force there is in this sentence, "There shall it be." If you die in a Christless condition, without repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall lie down in sorrow and there you shall be for ever and ever. I beseech you, my friend, to lay it seriously to heart. But time will not allow me to enlarge on this second head.

III.—Now, let us notice in conclusion two or three things as to the time which God, the Holy Spirit, who is Wisdom, specifies here when man is to remember his Creator and He says that it is in the days of his youth. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." And first of all, my friend, you see there is no limit laid to the time. It does not say a day of youth. That might mean a certain period. It says "days of youth," and we understand by that that it takes up all the stages from the time that reason appears to make distinction between the one hand and the other. He follows men up till the days of youth are

over. You will notice that God's promises are specially to the young. He says, "They that seek me early shall find me." We understand that to mean not only—though that is not excluded—that men should seek God early in the morning, but it means early in life. And I desire to notice in connection with this that we read in history, not at all of one or two, but of several who remembered their Creator to their everlasting benefit before they came up to four years of age, and we question if there be one child in the house under four years of age. Remember you, my dear young friend, who may not be five years of age, that there will be children at the great day of judgment who can stand at Christ's side and say: "I did not get more time in the world than four years, but I remembered God and was wise, and I am reaping the benefit to-day." Most people think that children ought to have nothing to do but to play, and that nothing serious should be put into their minds. We read in the history of the Waldenses in the valleys of the Alps and the Piedmontese also, where God kept His Church alive when the nations of the world went after the beast or anti-Christ, and we read that the godly mothers who lived there sang the psalms of David to their infants to send them off to sleep, and it was noticeable that the most of these children became serious at a very early age. You see, my friends, God's Word can make the sinner wise unto salvation, and you have no right to say that God the Spirit cannot bless His own Word to a child before that child comes to the age of four years, and ought not the Word of God be put into the minds of little children? As Christ says: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." We remember once, many years ago, calling on a family where there was a little boy who would be perhaps about three-and-a-half years. We took a hold of the boy and began to teach him a verse of a Psalm which he might use as a prayer, and his grandmother rebuked us and said she did not approve of putting into the mouths of little children, like parrots, what they did not understand. We asked her who told her that this child would live to see old age, and she just laughed at the thing, but that child, my friends, was in eternity in six months' time. I was reading recently about a little boy, the son of a wealthy man, who had a tutor for his boy. One day the boy went away and came back after being away for a while. Next morning he said to the tutor: "Teach me the Bible." "Oh!" the tutor said, "I must teach you this first, and when you grow older I will teach you the Bible." "Well," the boy replied, "I was down yesterday at the churchyard and I measured the graves there and there were many graves shorter than myself." God's advice to you is to remember Him and to be wise in the days of youth, and He encourages children to do this by telling them most tenderly that those that seek Him early shall find Him. You see, my friends, whenever the winter passes and the spring comes, we set out to plough the ground and to sow our seed, and



youth is the springtime of human life and ought we not to have a little wisdom in endeavouring to sow the seed of God's truth in the spring of life in the hearts of our children? If you were to see one sowing in the middle of summer, you would not expect a very good crop there; if you saw a man sowing in the beginning of harvest in this country you would say: "Surely you are behind, you are out of season." Well, that is how it is spiritually. Men ought to take the springtime of life and endeavour to sow the seed of God's Word in the mind, in the heart of the child, for you see that as the season goes on the thing is not so promising at all and it is very little crop you would expect to have if you were to begin sowing in September; and that is the way with old age. God forbid that I should say that God has closed the door upon any sinner until he comes to death and eternity, but we see that very few of the aged are changed savingly. It is from among the young that God takes His people and in some cases calls them very early. If you will not sow the seed of God's Word in the spring of life in the heart of your son and daughter, Satan will diligently sow the seed of sin there and will get many to do it, so that if you will not do it, Satan will get some other one that will sow a seed that will bring forth fruit unto corruption, that will bring perhaps disgrace upon you and also upon your child. When we are speaking about the young, I may say there never was perhaps at any period in the history of this island of ours so many young men who have become absolutely useless for time, and unless an extraordinary change will come, they are lost. They are good neither for time nor for eternity, and we account for a great deal of that just by the way in which they were brought up by godless parents who never endeavoured to sow the seed of God's truth in their minds in their youth. See, in the case of Timothy, God says by the Apostle that since he was a child he knew the Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and He tells us that it was his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, who taught Timothy when he was a child those things that made him a remarkable man in the history of the world for the good of the Church of God and also an example to others till the end of time. Now, I desire to notice that if you look back or if you were to go and search out the past lives of the few that are left yet in our midst who are truly converted, you would find that in the case of almost everyone of them God began with them in the days of their youth. In the midst of their vanities and carelessness, God, the Holy Ghost, convinced them that they were sinners, that they were lost and going to eternity, and that alarmed them and caused them to begin—if in the country—to go to the back of stones and rocks to pray to God for mercy as sinners. And you see that it was from such beginnings as these that men—some of them who used to be sitting in these seats but who are now in glory—became the witnesses for God, they were faithful to their fellows and,

most of all, to their own souls—by just being brought to attend to this duty of remembering God, their Creator, in the days of their youth. This has been taken notice of by men who were used of God to the conversion of sinners above many others, such as that eminent servant of Christ, Jonathan Edwards of America, than whom very few have been so useful to the Church of God and to the souls of men. That man took notice of this, that almost all—though not all—who were brought to the saving knowledge of the truth, were converted before they reached thirty years and the most of those before they reached twenty-five. He noticed that God began with some even in infancy, and with a great many between twelve and fourteen years of age—that convictions began then—and they began to go to their knees as sinners to pray before God. “Remember therefore thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” Why does He bring this in? The devil will say, the heart of the sinner that loves sin, the pleasures of sin, the fellowship of sinners, will say, “Not just now, I will attend to that in after days”; but God warns the sinner, in the days of youth, that the days which he expects to be more suitable are “evil days.”

I desire to notice this one thing before I stop in connection with this admonition of God, which for all my speaking will be of no avail to any sinner, unless God will make use of it. He can make it of avail to perishing men. You see, my friend, although there are only a few who come to repentance in old age, there are a few. We saw one man—and we do not mean at all that he was the only man whom we saw—in Gairloch in Ross-shire, who lived eighty years in carelessness, prayerless and without a thought as to eternity or the salvation of his soul, whom when he was eighty years, God’s Spirit awoke to a realisation of the truth. He lived five years to prove in the world that it was a real change that came over him, and that is, along with a great many other cases, a great encouragement even to old age to begin to seek God immediately. If a man had a great work to do and had only one day in which it was to be done, and that he should allow the sun almost to go down in the west before he began it, if he were a wise man, you would see him stripping off his coat and going at it with all his might. So with the aged; they should remember that their sun is almost down, that it is time for them to be up and doing, and to leave the mark of their knees on God’s earth pleading for mercy before their sun will go down, never, never to rise again. We are told in the Scriptures of the Old Testament that when men go to their graves, they shall not be awakened out of their sleep until the heavens be no more, but they shall be awakened then.

May God bless to us anything consistent with His mind !

## Meeting of Synod.

*(Conclusion of Report given Last Month.)*

WE regret that, owing to an overlook, the concluding paragraphs of the report of the "Meeting of Synod," which appeared last month, were not forwarded to the printer. The head was (19) Competent Business, and the paragraphs omitted were as follows:—

Mr. Macintyre intimated that the Western Presbytery had appointed Mr. Matheson as missionary at Breascleite, Lewis. The Synod confirmed the appointment.

The Synod appointed a Committee, consisting of the Revs. Alex. Mackay (Moderator), Neil Cameron, and D. A. Macfarlane to make enquiry into the subject of irregular marriages, and to insert a report thereanent in an early issue of the Magazine.

Revs. D. Beaton and J. R. Mackay, as members of the Northern Presbytery, made statements with reference to steps that had been taken with a view to secure exemption from military service for the two divinity students, Messrs. James Macleod and Roderick MacInnes, Mr. William Matheson, divinity student, as a Canadian, being outwith the Military Act. The Clerk also stated that he had recently communicated with the Under-Secretary, the War Office, on the same subject (including the exemption of two Arts Students in the Southern Presbytery, who were employed to supply congregations), asking that an enquiry should be made into the special circumstances of the Free Presbyterian Church as requiring the help of all its students to carry on the work of the Church. He had received no reply as yet. The Synod, after deliberation, agreed to instruct the Clerk to write again to the Under-Secretary for War, urging the claims and needs of the Church. The following decision was also agreed upon:—"The Synod, having considered the case of their divinity students, Messrs. Roderick MacInnes and James Macleod in relation to the Military Service Act, decide to apply to those in authority for the complete exemption of these students from military service, as they were indispensable, as preachers of the gospel, to the work of the Church, and authorise the Rev. John R. Mackay, Inverness, to represent the Synod on behalf of said students at the Inverness Military Tribunal."

Rev. D. Mackenzie moved that the Synod record its strong protest against the recent visit of the Prime Minister to the Pope, and that copies of the protest be sent the Prime Minister and others.

Rev. J. R. Mackay moved that the Synod adjourn, to meet again (God willing) in Glasgow on Tuesday after the third Sabbath of May, 1917, at the hour of half-past six in the evening. The motion was unanimously agreed to.

The meeting was closed at 10.5 p.m. with praise, in the last three verses of the one hundred and twenty-second Psalm, and with prayer.

## Letter of Alexander Gair.

(TO MR. JOSEPH MACKAY,)\*

REISGILL (near LYBSTER),

21st January, 1824.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Solomon saith, "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out," and on reading your letter I am happy to understand, by your account of your own case, that the messenger of the everlasting covenant hath in mercy visited you with the refiner's fire, to purify your soul and to burn the stubble of corruption that is in your heart.

He that hath his fire in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem, knows that Satan hath hampered the heart of mankind with all his infectious plagues and deadly pollutions. Now, the righteous soul that Lot got in regeneration was grieved every day at seeing the unlawful deeds and hearing the blasphemous words of the Sodomites, especially when they surrounded his house on the day that the holy angels came for his delivery and their destruction. So when grace is implanted in the soul, corruptions in the un-renewed faculties begin to stir to a terrible degree. I see in Scripture that the manner of the Lord's dealing with His people is that He brings them to a wilderness to prove them, and to let them see what is in their hearts. "The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light, as if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and a serpent did bite him." I think the "lion" is the guilty conscience, the "bear," the blasphemous heart, and the "serpent" is the flesh, that warreth against the Spirit. The soul is the field of battle—the battle being pitched in the valley of experience. Conscience sounds the alarm, and Christ orders the combat on the very ground on which Satan gained the victory. In the fifth chapter of Galatians you will see Satan's seventeen pieces of artillery levelled at the breast in which grace is lodged, the commanders-in-chief being ignorance and unbelief. Satan as surely tempts gracious souls in a state of grace as he tempted Adam in the state of innocence; and although he does not prevail, yet I fear I am not truly mortified to corruption. If so—if we could give up our Benjamin—Joseph's presence would be with us in all our doubts and fears. For I have to tell you that when the prophet prayed that the eyes of his servant might be opened, it was to see the mountain surrounded with chariots of fire. Every drop of Christ's blood is a chariot of fire, and He promises to be a wall of fire round them and in the midst of them, and that wall of fire will preserve them from being consumed by the fire that is within themselves. The spear pierced sweet Jesus' side, that blood and water might flow

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\* Taken from "Ministers and Men in the Far North," by late Rev. A. Auld.

from His heart—blood to redeem their souls, and water to drown the fire of sin and Satan in their hearts.

The brazen serpent was the only remedy for the fiery serpent; and we must be brought to the foot of the Cross, there to have our soul's enemies laid low, to have our "Absaloms" slain with Joab's "three darts"—the dart of prayer, the dart of repentance, and the dart of faith.—Yours, etc.,

ALEX. GAIR.

## **A Brief Account of Mission to Forces in England.**

BY THE REV. NORMAN MATHESON, HALKIRK, CAITHNESS.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—At the request of the Convener of the Committee of Mission to the Forces, I agreed to labour for a period of six weeks among the naval troops at Portsmouth and Chatham. For two of these weeks an arrangement was made between the Rev. D. M. Macdonald (who was then conducting the services in the London Mission) and myself to exchange places for the first and last Sabbaths of my stay in England. There were then four Sabbaths left to attend to my duties at Portsmouth and Chatham, which places I worked alternately.

After the Reports given by former deputies there remains little new for me to say. I shall, however, give a brief account. I left Halkirk on Wednesday, 12th April, and arrived safely in God's kind providence in London, on the Friday evening following, having broken my journey for a day in Glasgow. I was met by our kind friend Mr. William Grant at Euston Station and was conducted to 8 Wellington Square. There I met the Rev. D. M. MacDonald. With his companionship and that of Mr. Grant's I felt myself at home. As arranged, I held the usual services in our Mission Hall in London, on 15th April. At these services I was glad to meet with some friends from the north whom I knew, and to form acquaintance with others that I did not formerly know. We hope that the efforts of those who labour from time to time in the Mission may be abundantly blessed. Now that Mr. William Grant, who was doing such useful work connected with the affairs of the Mission, has joined the Forces, there is a call for the sympathy and prayers of the Lord's people in a special manner.

I proceeded to Portsmouth on the following Thursday, and held the usual evening service at Whale Island. The attendance was very small, but still I enjoyed the service and experienced I think the fulfilment of the promise that "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." All the other regular services were held with the addition of a service on "Good Friday." The reason why I held a meeting on

that day was that some of the men wished me to do so, as they were at liberty then to attend. I consented, knowing that it was not from any Romish point of view, but to hear the Word that they made the request. The meeting was held in the Hall kindly granted by Miss Weston of the Sailors' Rest. There was quite a large gathering. One of the sailors present at the meeting in Whale Island spoke to me at the close of the service with a view to getting baptism. He was not baptised in childhood as his parents died then. After examining him as to his knowledge of the truth and spiritual things I had no hesitation personally to grant him the privilege of baptism, but as I had no Kirk-Session to consult I wrote one of the senior ministers of the Church for advice about the matter. He recommended me in the circumstances to go on with the baptism. But in the interval that elapsed before I returned to Portsmouth, I was sorry to learn that the young man was drafted, along with others, to their ships. However, I have to say that I had a letter from him from the High Seas. In the letter he says that he is as yet preserved from "the enemies of his body" and desires to be remembered at a throne of grace. We hope that he shall be spared to pass through this terrible conflict and get an opportunity of bearing public testimony of his love to Christ.

At Chatham the services were conducted in the usual way and were on the whole well attended. It is encouraging to learn that a prayer-meeting is still held by the men on the week-days, when there is no ordinary service held. Both at Portsmouth and Chatham there were some men who might be called upon to take part in prayer and praise. May the Lord increase the number of those who are not ashamed to confess Him as their God and Saviour!

In London the Rev. D. M. Macdonald and I visited the sick and wounded soldiers and sailors in one or two hospitals. Some were quite willing to be spoken to about eternal things, but others manifested a spirit of resentment. The only thing we could do was to warn them in the best way we could as to the seriousness of neglecting the things of their souls. May a day of God's power come when those who are careless and indifferent regarding eternal realities may get the spirit of repentance and look to Christ as the only atoning sacrifice and way of salvation.—Yours, etc.,  
N. M.

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HE that hath a blind conscience which sees nothing, a dead conscience which feels nothing, and a dumb conscience which saith nothing, is in as miserable a condition as a man can be in on this side of hell.—*Philip Henry.*

MEN may turn a deaf ear to the entreaties of Christ in the day of grace, but they cannot turn a deaf ear to the sentence of Christ in the day of judgment.—*Flavel.*



## Mu Oibreachadh 'ar Slainte Fein.

“Làn-oibrichibh bhur slainte féin le h-eagal agus ball-chrith; oir is e Dia a dh'oibricheas annaibh, araon an toil agus an gníomh a reir a dheadh-ghean féin.”—PHIL. ii. 12, 13.

(Continued from page 34.)

ACH nach fhèum am peacach sgur do 'n pheacadh agus aingeachd a threigsinn le aithreachas—nach fhèum e an t-olc a chuiteachadh agus maith a dheanamh fholum, chum as gu'm biodh e na chomh-oibriche le Dia ann an obair na slainte, agus leis sin gu'm feud dochas a bhi aige ris an tuille grais, agus fadheoidh ri slainte shiorrudh? Mar is e dleasdanas nan uile dhaoine a bhi ag urnuigh, is amhuil is e dleasdanas nan uile dhaoine aithreachas a dheanamh—an aingeachd a chuiteachadh—sgur do'n olc, agus a maith fhoghlum; agus SIN gun dail. Agus is coir gach aidmheil air diadhachd, as eugmhais na nithe sin, gu h-iomlan a threigsinn. Ach cha 'n e dleasdanas *duine air bith* toiseachadh ri e fein dheanamh ni's fear ann an rathad *ullachaidh*, gu teachd chum Chrìosd, no gus an obair a choimhlionadh maille ris an iobairt a thug Chrìosd suas le a bhàs. Cha 'n 'e: “Oir cha d' thàinig Chrìosd a ghairm nam fireanach, ach nam peacach chum aithreachais.” Is ann do na *daoine neo-dhaidhaidh* à tha fireantachd air a cur an ceill trid ainm-san. Tha an soisgeul air a chur an ceill do gach seorsa pheacach—tha e labhairt riu uile co ionann mu thiomchioll an staid a thaobh feabhais—mar dhaoine caillte—fein-sgrìoste—araon gun neart agus aingidh—agus tha e cur an ceill dhoibh uile maitheanas gu saor agus gu h-iomlan, gu'n cheannach agus gun chosnadh, gun aobhar agus gun eadar-dhealachadh, trid frinteachd iomlan an Tighearna Iosa, neach aig nach robh companach, agus aig nach urrainn comh-oibriche a bhi. Tha glòir agus fìor nadur an t-soisgeil a co-sheasamh anns an iomlanachd neo-chrìochnach ata ann an oibre Chrìosd, chum frinteachd do na daoine neo-dhiadhaidh. Agus is anns an t-seadh so a ta e ri bhi air a chreidsinn, agus ri earbsa ann; seadh, agus uail a dheanamh ann, araon air an talamh, agus air neamh—ann an la' na h-euslainnte, aig uair a bhàis, agus aig àm eagalach a bhreitheanais. Le earbsa ann *gu ceart*, feumar earbsa ann *gu h-uile*; 's e earbsa ann *idir* earbsa ann mar na *h-uile anns na h-uile*. 'S e na h-uile nithe e, no cha ni air bith e. Cha cheadaich cliu Dhe mar bhreitheamh, agus cliu dhaoine mar chiontaich—morachd an t-Slanuighear, agus nadur an ni fein, gu'm biodh a chuis air atharrach. Agus nach 'eil an obair a chrìochnaich Iosa air a chrann-cheusaidh airidh air gu'n cuireadh-mid lan-mhuinghinn innte? An bi eagal oirnn ar'n anamaibh earbsa ris an Ti aig am bheil araon nadur Dia agus nadur duine ann a phearsa dhiomhair? Neach a tha a mhòrachd neo-cruthaichte, agus nadur a dhiadhachd a toirt

eifeachd neo-chriochnach da fhulangais agus da bhàs? Oh, ciod a mhiannaichidh an t-anam ciontach an suil ri sith iomlan, agus aoibhneas, agus dochas, nach 'eil n fhaotainn *an so*? Cha'n eil ni air bith tuille feumail chum na beannachdan ro-luachmhor a tha comh-cheangailte ris an obair ghlormhor so a shealbhachadh ach fianuis De a chreidsinn; no am briathraibh eile, lan earbsa a chur gu saor agus gu steidheal, gu h-onarach agus gu buan-sheasmhach anns an obair a chriochnaich Iosa an aite nan ciontach.

Tha dochas agam gu'm bheil an leughadair a nis dearbhte, ciod air bith brìgh a bha aig an earail so a bha air a toirt do na Philipianaich, "Lan-oibrichibh bhur slainte fein," *nach be* gu'n deanamh iad ni air bith a choisneadh dhoibh saorsa 'o chiont a pheacaidh:—mar argumaid comh-dhunaidh air a cheann so, tha mi ag radh NACH B'URRAINN GU'M BE SIN a bha 'n t-abstol a ciallachadh; oir do thaobh cliu na muinntir ris an robh e a labhairt bha e ga' meas cheana an seilbh air a bheannachadh sin—air dha bhi ag amharc orra mar mhuinntir a chreid ann an Criosd, bhe e ga' meas mar air am firineachadh tre chreideamh agus leis a sin, a sealbhachadh sith ri Dia trid an Tighearn Iosa Criosd, agus a deanamh gairdeachais ann an dochas glòir Dhe.

Am bheil a cheist a ris a teachd a t-aire, Ciod e brìgh na h-earail, "Lan-oibrichibh bhur slainte fein?" etc. Air dhomh cheana a bhi ag ainmeachadh cuid do nithe a tha moran gu mearachdach a saòilsinn a bhi air an chiallachadh leis an earail so, bithidh mi a nis a dol air m' aghaidh gu bhi leigeadh ris ciod anns am bheil an earail a comh-sheasamh. Agus an so a ris chuirinn an cuimhne an leughadair gu'm bheil am focal slainte a ciallachadh caochla nithe—an so tha e a ciallachadh, SAORSA.

Ciod e ma ta a ni o 'n robh feum aig na criosduidhean a bha ann am Philipi air an t-saorsa sin, a bha iad air an gairm gu oibreachadh a mach dhoibh fein, le muinghinn gu'n oibrichidh Dia annta araon an toil, agus an gnìomh, a reir a dheadh ghean fein? Bha saorsa o *chumhachd* a pheacaidh. Agus anns an t-seadh so cha 'n robh an staid eadar-dhealaichte 'o chriosduidhean eile; air chor as gu'm bheil an earail so a bha air a toirt dhoibh freagarach, agus iom-chubhaidh, a bhi air a toirt do chriosduidhean, anns gach linn, agus anns gach ginealach; cha bu ni ar bith eile a bha anns ach earail chum *naomhachd*, ni a chithear gu nimic ann an litirean nan abstol.

Ma tha thu-sa a leughadair cleachte ri bhi saòilsinn gu'm bheil an t-slaime a dh' oibrich Criosd a mach, a comh-sheasamh ann an saorsa 'o chiont agus 'o pheanas a mhain, tha thu fad ann a mearachd. Buidheachas do Dhia gu'm bheil sin air a ghabhail a steach ann; ach tha 'm beachd as farsuinge as urradh dhuinn a ghabhail air a teachd fada goirid air meud a bheannaichd sin. Oh cia mor na tha air fhilleadh anns na briathraibh peanas siorruidh! Oh cia mor am beannachadh saorsa 'o 'n fheirg a ta ri teachd! Cha bhi luach a bheannaichidh sin gu h-uile air

fhaicinn gu la' bhreitheanais, no eadhon an sin; bithidh e gu siorruidh ga fhoillseachadh, ach cha bhi e gu h-ìomlan air fhoillseachadh fad siorruidheachd; agus am feadh a bhitheas truaighe nan aingidh gun chrìoch bithidh comain, taingeachd, agus breith buidheachas, na muinntir shaoirte air a meudachadh. Ach cha'n eil ann an saorsa o pheanas ach pairt do 'n t-slaointe a tha iad a sealbhachadh tre chreideamh; pairt chudthromach gu'n teagamh ach cha 'n e a phairt as cudthromaiche dhith. Bha'n t-ath leasachadh glormhor a bha ri bhi air a thoirt air aghaidh air an duine, 'o a staid chaillte, a reir comhairle neamh, mu'n robh an saoghal ann, ag amhairc ri modhannan agus deadh-bheas. Bha saorsa 'o olc naduir air fhilleadh ann, ach 's e an ni sonruichte a bha aig anns an amharc an duine ath-nuadhachadh' o thruaileachd a naduir, chum naomhachd, agus gloinead bheus. Cha'n urrainn caint a bhi na soilleire na briathraibh an abstoil air a phoing so "A reir mar a thagh e sinne ann-san (Criosd) mun do leagadh bunait an domhain, chum gu'm *bitheamaid naomha*, agus *neo-choireach* 'na lathair-san ann an gràdh." (Eph. i. 4.) Agus cha robh e comasach gu'm biodh meadhon air a ghnathachadh, a b'urrainn sonas a phairteachadh cho saibhir, sa tha leis an doigh so air a bhuileachadh orra-san a tha air an saoradh. Cha'n urrainn an leughadair a dhichuimhneachadh an t-aobhar air son an robh *Iosa* air a ghairm do 'n Fhear-shaoruidh—s'e sin do bhrìgh gu 'n saor e a phobull fein *o'm peacaibh*; agus cha'n fhèud e bhi aineolach (tha dochas) air an aobhar air son a d'thug Criosd e fein suas mar iobairt, s'e sin, "chum gu'n saoradh e a shlugh fein *o gach aingidheachd*, agus gu'n glanadh e dha fein sluagh sonruichte, *eudmhor mu dheadh oibrich*." (Titus ii. 14.)

An d'fhaicich an leughadair a bheag do'n *eud sin*—a bheag do 'n *t-saorsa sin*—a bheag do 'n *t-slaointe sin*? Mu dh'fhaicich bithidh e, 'nuair a tha e air a chleachdadh gu ceart, ri bron air son cho gann sa tha fhaireachduin, agus ri urnuigh, agus ri spairn, gu lathail, air son gu 'n sealbhucheadh e tuille dhiu. Tuigidh es-an cìod e "a shlaointe fein a lan-oibreachadh le h-eagal agus ball-chrith"; agus 'o mhothachadh air aingidheachd agus an fhannachd fein agus 'o fhiosrachadh air aireamh, neart, agus seòltachd, a naimhdean spioradail, tha e ri gairdeachas, nach 'eil e air a ghairm gu dol chum a chogaidh so air a chostas fein. Tha e a gabhail misnich air dha fios a bhi aige gur h-e "Dia a dh'oibricheas ann, araan an toil agus an gnìomh a reir dheadh-ghean fein"; agus "ma tha Dia leis, co dh'fheudas a bhi 'na aghaidh?"

Ach am bheil thu-sa a leughadair ag radh riut fein ma gheibh thu do neamh fa dheoidh, gu'm bi thu *an sin* gu h-ìomlan saor o 'n *pheacadh*, agus gur leoir leat-sa sin. Am bheil dochas agad mar sin gu'n crìochnaich a chuis gu maith? Oh, a charaid, tha thu ann an staid chunnartach! B'fhearr dhuit an dochas sin a bhi uait. Cha'n e an dochas ceart e. Is ann a tha ann dochas meallta. Sgrìosaich e thu. "Gach neach aig am bheil an dochas" a tha taitneach do Dhia—dochas ann an Criosd—

“glanadh se e fein, mar a ta es-an glan.” Tha iarrtas ceangailte ri dochas. Tha iarrtas agad-sa air saorsa o pheanas—tha sin nadurra dhuit. Tha iarrtas agad air sonas—tha sin aig gach duine. Tha thu ag radh gu'm bheil iarrtas agad air neamh—ciod an seorsa neamh? an e a neamh anns am bheil an sonas uile spioradal, agus an t-seirbhis uile coisrigte. Am freagradh a leithid sin a neamh do'd staid a nis? Na bi ga'd mhealladh fein—mar a freagradh, cha 'n 'eil thu fathast air an rathad do neamh. Tha rathad mor gu neamh, ach “gairear slighe na naomhachd dheth; cha siubhal neach neo-ghlan troimhe; ach bithidh e air son na muinntir shaorte.” Agus 'nuair a tha iad a gluasad a reir an cliu, tha iad a cur dhiu an t-sean duine maille r'a ghnìomharaibh—ag aicheadh gach mi-dhiadhachd agus ana-mhiannaibh saoghalta—a claidh am buill a ta air an talamh—a ceusadh na feola maille r'a h-an-tograibh agus a h-anamhiannaibh—a trom-bhualadh an cuirp agus g'a chur fo smachd—a cur umpa an duine nuadh—a ruith na reis a tha air a cur romhpa—a gleachd, cha'n ann amhain ri fuil agus feol, ach ri uachdaranachdaibh, agus ri cumhachdaibh, s'e sin ri aingidheachd spioradail—a cur deadh chath a chreidimh, dh'fheuchainn am feud iad air aon chor teachd chum aiseirigh nam marbh; agus fad na h-uine, a di-chuimhneachadh na nithe a tha air an cùl, agus ga'n sineadh fein chum na nithe a ta romhpa, tha iad a dian ruith dh'ionnsusdh (ri taobh) a chomhara, chum ardghairme Dhe ann an Iosa Crìosd. B'e so an obair a dhiunn-suidh an robh an t-abstol a gairm nam Philipianach; air dha fein eiseamplair mhaiseach a chur romhpa, bha e a gairm orra-san a chum a leantuinn; ag radh, “Uime sin mheud dhinne 's a ta dìongmhailta, biodh an inntinn so againn.” Agus a ris, “A bhraithre, bhithibh-sa le cheile 'nar luchd-leanmhuinn ormsa.” (Phil. iii. 15-17.)

Tha e feumal a thoirt fainear a *modh* air am bheil an dleas-danas so ri bhi air a chur an gnìomh, s'e sin, le h-eagal agus ball-chrith. Ann an rioghailt creideimh cuid do luchd-aidmheil is ann a tha eagal agus ball-chrith, an aite a bhi air earalachadh, mar a tha e sa'n earrainn so leis an spioraid naomh, air a chumail gu leir as an t-sealladh—cha'n fhiu leo ni air bith ach gairdeachas agus muinghinn. Air an laimh eile, tha cuid do luchd-aidmheil ann a tha 'o irioslachd fhallsa—'o bheachdan mearachdach air cho saor agus cho freagarach sa tha 'n soisgeul, a ghnath air an cràdh le h-eagal agus amharusan, agus tha iad a' meas nach 'eil ach an-danadas do neach air bith a nis a bhi deanamh gairdeachas ann an dochas gloir Dhe. B'fhurasd a leigeadh ris mar a tha iad araon a mearachd, nam biodh cothrom air a sin a dheanamh; ach is e mo ghnòthach a an tràs an leughadair earalachadh, ma tha e air a shaoradh o *chiont* a pheacaidh trid creideamh ann an Crìosd, gu bhi ag oibreachadh a shlainte 'o *chumhachd* a pheacaidh, le h-eagal agus ball-chrith. Biodh eagal air gu m faigh Satan, ard namhaid anama, buaidh thairis air. Tha e ann an tir a namhaid, air an aobhar sin tha gach faicill agus

gach dicheall feumail a ghnathachadh an t-eagal as gu'm bi e air a ribeadh gun fhios da, agus air a cheannsachadh. Thugadh e fainear na bochdain a tha air a laimh dheis agus chlith, a leigeadh ris nan creagan corrach leis an do thuit muinntir eile. Thugadh e fainear corpaibh reubte moran do'n luchd-turuis a dh' iomaich roimhe, ach a chaileadh trid mi-churam, an danadais, no fein-earbsa. Gu fìor tha am blàr, rè na slighe trid an fhasaich chum a Chanaain neamhaidh, air a chombdach le cnamhan gealaichte na muinntir nach b'urrainn dol a steach air son a mi-chreideimh. Agus nach bu choir *dha so* a theorachadh gu faitcheas a bhi air, an t-eagal air do ghealladh dol a steach do shuaimhneas a bhi air a thoirt dha, gu'n tig e a dheidh-laimh air trid mi-chreideimh, no eas-umhlachd. Ach mar a tha naimhdean a *muigh* is amhuil a tha naimhdean a *stigh*, agus ma tha iadsan a tha a muigh lionmhor agus mealltach, tha iadsan a tha a stigh cuilbheartach agus laidir. Am bheil thusa a leughadair a saoillsinn nach eil cunnart dhuit? —nach eil aobhar agad aon chuid eagal na ball-chrith a bhi ort ann an oibreachadh a mach do slainte *fein*? Ciod e! am bheil earail an abstoil gun bhrìgh? Am bheil i neo-fheumail no mi-fhreagarrach do chrìosduigh air bith a nis? Am bheil thusa do sheorsa chrìosduighean a tha cho fad air thoiseach air a mhuinntir a bha ann an Philipi, mu'n d'thubhairt an t-abstol gu'n robh e dearbhte an Tì a thoisich an deadh obair anna gu'n coimhlionadh e i gu la Iosa Crìosd, agus nach 'eil feum *agad-sa* air an earail a bha feumail *dhoibh-san*? Bu choir do 'n smuain so fein do dhusgadh as an tearruinnteachd fhallsa anns am bheil thu air tuiteam, ni mur an dean gras a bhachdadh, a bheir sgrios ort.

Ach neo-chrìochnach cud-thromach agus mar a tha an obair so —lionmhor agus mar a tha na nithe a tha ga grabadh—cumbachdach agus mar a tha naimhdean a chrìosduigh—tha tuille air a thaobh na tha na aghaidh. S'e Dia a dh' oibrìcheas ann an toil agus an *gnìomh*. Anns an ath-ghineamhuinn tha beachdan, barailean, agus iarrtais, ùr, air am buileachadh, le Dia, air an duine, agus mar sin tha'n *toil* air a riaghladh; an cumhachd inntinn leis am bheil sinn comasach air nithe a roghnaicheadh, agus a dhiultinn—leis am bheil sinn air 'ur brosnachadh gu gnìomh—agus leis am bheil ar gnìomhara, ann an tommas mòr, air an sonruchadh. B' fhurasd moran a labhairt mu na nithe so; ach bithidh mi gam thoileachadh fein le bhi a toirt fainear ann an comh-dhunadh, gu coitchionnta, gu'm bheil an *Spiorad Naomh* air a bhuileachadh gu grasmhor orra-san uile a tha nan cloinn do Dhia trid creideamh—tha e na chomhnuidh anna, a toirt neart, misneach, agus comh-fhurtach dhoibh, agus ga'n naombachadh. Tha teann sparradh air a thoirt doibh gun iad a “chuir doilgheas air Spiorad Naomh Dhe, leis an do chuireadh seula orra gu la na saorsa”; ach iad a ghluasad san Spiorad, iad a bhi beo san Spiorad. “Oir, ma chaitheas sibh bhuir beatha a rèir na feola”; ars' an t-abstol ris na braithrean a bha san Roimh, “gheibh sibh bàs; ach ma mharbhas sibh tre'n Spioraid gnìomhara na colla bithidh sibh beò.”

## Christ's Fashion and Popery Contrasted.

EXTRACT FROM SERMON BY THE LATE REV. JOSEPH IRONS,  
GROVE CHAPEL, CAMBERWELL, LONDON.

*Preached 3rd September, 1848.*

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"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—PHIL. ii. 8.  
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NOW, let us say a word or two (in the third place), relative to His rendering this (fashion) permanent. I was amazingly struck with this. It is a "fashion" that never changes. It is immutable; it is infallible; it is invincible; it cannot know any change. I trust you will forgive me, if I detain you a moment, with a contrast of the monster that pretends to this. Popery pretends to immutability and infallibility, and frequently we hear the most ignorant and besottedly superstitious amongst them, catching up this saying, technically, from their priests, "Our religion is unchanged and unchangeable." What a lie! It changes every day; it changes to every shape; it changes to suit the customs of every nation; it changes to everything barbarous and horrid. Look, what is the fashion of Popery in Italy? The fashion of the nightmare; a dark incubus, sitting with a morbid crushing power upon the intellects of its inhabitants. That is the fashion there. Is the fashion the same in Spain? Until very lately, the fashion there was a barbarous inquisition, racking human invention, for the tortures of God's saints. What is the fashion in France? Scoffing infidelity; for, after performing what they call mass, they turn round and laugh, and are humbugging the people. What is the fashion in Germany? The fashion of rag-fair, where an old coat is exhibited, forsooth, as a holy coat. Popery changes its fashion everywhere, and yet they tell us it is "unchanged." What is the fashion in Ireland? The midnight assassin. What is the fashion in America? Libertinism. What is the fashion in England? A coquette, seducing all that it can possibly win with its fascinating charms. There is a changeful thing. Is it like our "fashion"? No! I could mention twenty other fashions, all as vile as he who invents them. But I merely give these as a contrast to the glorious old fashion of Christ's work, the fashion of His obedience, the fashion of His perfect salvation. It is immutable, precisely the same thing every day. It is a perfect infallible salvation, for it was never known to fail any poor sinner who confided in it. If it could fail in any, it would fail in me, but blessed be God, it saves to the uttermost. It is infallible; it is an invincible salvation; for it comes right home to the sinner's heart and conscience, pierces him through and through, kills him and then makes him alive. I cannot find such another fashion of religion in heaven, earth, or hell. He

was "found in fashion as a man:" I love His fashion. My Bible is a fashionable book: I love my Bible which declares my salvation in Christ, my Covenant Head, to be secured by the immutable decree of the Deity.

Just mark, further, this is the only fashion in which salvation can be found. I borrow this from my book of fashion again, this precious book: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved." Jesus, and Jesus only—His perfect work—and that in His official character. I cannot help exhibiting a contrast here for a moment. I find the Papists saying, "There is no salvation out of their Church." Now, if you give me leave to change one word, I agree with them. That is coming very near, say you. That "there is no salvation out of *the* Church," is the truth; but for them to say, "there is no salvation out of *our* Church" which, by-the-by, is not a Church at all, but a conspiracy against God and man—that is false. How near a falsehood may come to the truth! Now, there is no salvation out of the Church of God, out of Christ, who is the Head of the Church, and all the living members of the Church are one with Him. Having His life, dressed in His righteousness, and possessing His merits, they plead before the throne of God. They are declared to be saved in the Lord; not in themselves, not in the priests, not in their doings, not in their prayers, no, nor "in" their believing; but saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Oh the blessedness of having a right view of this important point. We cannot allow this "fashion" to be changed for a single moment. We go according to the fashion shown to Moses on the Mount—we go according to the fashion of our precious Christ, and when salvation is received and accepted, we shall go very far by the mighty power of His grace, to the imitating of this pattern.

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THERE is never a crook God makes in our lot, but it is in effect heaven's offer of a blessed exchange to us. "Sell whatsoever thou hast, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven."—*Thomas Boston.*

PRAYING hypocrites there may be; but, sure I am, prayerless saints there cannot be. You may as well suppose a living man without breath, as a lover of God without prayer. It is the very first work of the new creature, as we see in Paul, "Behold, he prayeth."—*Thomas Boston.*

THE warmest addresses that ever were made to heaven by the saints, have come from wilderness, prisons, dungeons, and places of distress; for the Lord grants an enlargement of spirit, as ballast for the confinement and distress of the outward man.—*Thomas Boston.*



## **Modern Infidelity considered.**

BY THE REV. ROBERT HALL, A.M.\*

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"Without God in the world."—EPH. ii. 12.  
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AS the Christian ministry is established for the instruction of men, throughout every age, in truth and holiness, it must adapt itself to the ever-shifting scenes of the moral world, and stand ready to repel the attacks of impiety and error, under whatever form they may appear. The church and the world constitute two societies so distinct, and are governed by such opposite principles and maxims, that, as well from this contrariety, as from the express warnings of Scripture, true Christians must look for a state of warfare, with this consoling assurance, that the church, like the burning bush beheld by Moses in the land of Midian, may be encompassed with flames, but will never be consumed.

When she was delivered from the persecuting power of Rome, she only experienced a change of trials. The oppression of external violence was followed by the more dangerous and insidious attacks of internal enemies. The freedom of inquiry claimed and asserted at the Reformation, degenerated, in the hands of men who professed the principles without possessing the spirit of the reformers, into a fondness of speculative refinements; and consequently into a source of dispute, faction, and heresy. While Protestants attended more to the points on which they differed than to those on which they agreed; while more zeal was employed in settling ceremonies and defending subtleties, than in enforcing plain revealed truths; the lovely fruits of peace and charity perished under the storms of controversy.

In this disjointed and disordered state of the Christian church, they who never looked into the interior of Christianity were apt to suspect, that to a subject so fruitful in particular disputes must attach a general uncertainty; and that a religion founded on revelation could never have occasioned such discordancy of principle and practice among its disciples. Thus infidelity is the joint offspring of an irreligious temper, and unholy speculation, employed, not in examining the evidences of Christianity, but in detecting the vices and imperfections of professing Christians. It has passed through various stages, each distinguished by higher gradations of impiety; for when men arrogantly abandon their guide, and wilfully shut their eyes on the light of heaven, it is

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\* The author of this discourse was a minister of remarkable ability and eloquence. He flourished in England during the early part of the nineteenth century. Belonging to the General Baptist persuasion, he possibly held some views with which we could not agree, but in regard to the fundamental principles, expounded so ably in the present famous discourse, all believers in the Reformed Faith will be practically at one.—ED.

wisely ordained that their errors shall multiply at every step, until their extravagance confutes itself, and the mischief of their principles works its own antidote. That such has been the progress of infidelity will be obvious from a slight survey of its history.

Lord Herbert, the first and purest of our English freethinkers, who flourished in the beginning of the reign of Charles the First, did not so much impugn the doctrine or the morality of the Scriptures, as attempt to supersede their necessity, by endeavouring to show that the great principles of the unity of God—a moral government and a future world—are taught with sufficient clearness by the light of nature. Bolingbroke, and some of his successors, advanced much farther, and attempted to invalidate the proofs of the moral character of the Deity, and consequently all expectations of rewards and punishments; leaving the Supreme Being no other perfections than those which belong to a first cause or almighty contriver. After him, at a considerable distance, followed Hume, the most subtle, if not the most philosophical of the deists; who, by perplexing the relations of cause and effect, boldly aimed to introduce an universal scepticism, and to pour a more than Egyptian darkness into the whole region of morals. Since his time sceptical writers have sprung up in abundance, and infidelity has allured multitudes to its standard: the young and the superficial by its dexterous sophistry, the vain by the literary reputation of its champions, and the profligate by the licentiousness of its principles. Atheism, the most undisguised, has at length begun to make its appearance.

Animated by numbers, and emboldened by success, the infidels of the present day have given a new direction to their efforts, and impressed a new character on the ever-growing mass of their impious speculations.

By uniting more closely with each other, by giving a sprinkling of irreligion to all their literary productions, they aim to engross the formation of the public mind; and, amidst the warmest professions of attachment to virtue, to effect an entire disruption of morality from religion. Pretending to be the teachers of virtue, and the guides of life, they propose to revolutionise the morals of mankind; to regenerate the world by a process entirely new; and to rear the temple of virtue, not merely without the aid of religion, but on the renunciation of its principles and the derision of its sanctions. Their party has derived a great accession of numbers and strength from events the most momentous and astonishing in the political world, which have divided the sentiments of Europe betwixt hope and terror; and which, however they may issue, have, for the present, swelled the ranks of infidelity. So rapidly, indeed, has it advanced since this crisis, that a great majority on the continent, and in England a considerable proportion of those who pursue literature as a profession, may justly be considered as the open or disguised abettors of atheism.

With respect to the sceptical and religious systems, the inquiry at present is not so much which is the truest in speculation, as which is the most useful in practice ; or, in other words, whether morality will be best promoted by considering it as a part of a great and comprehensive law, emanating from the will of a supreme, omnipotent legislator ; or as a mere expedient, adapted to our present situation, enforced by no other motives than those which arise from the prospects and interests of the present state. The absurdity of atheism having been demonstrated so often and so clearly by many eminent men, that this part of the subject is exhausted, I should hasten immediately to what I have more particularly in view, were I not apprehensive, a discourse of this kind may be expected to contain some statement of the argument in proof of a Deity ; which, therefore, I shall present in as few and plain words as possible.

When we examine a watch, or any other piece of machinery, we instantly perceive marks of design. The arrangements of its several parts, and the adaptation of its movements to one result, show it to be a contrivance ; nor do we ever imagine the faculty of contriving to be in the watch itself, but in a separate agent. If we turn from art to nature, we behold a vast magazine of contrivances ; we see innumerable objects replete with the most exquisite design. The human eye, for example, is formed with admirable skill for the purpose of sight, the ear for the function of hearing. As in the productions of art we never think of ascribing the power of contrivance to the machine itself, so we are certain the skill displayed in the human structure is not a property of man, since he is very imperfectly acquainted with his own formation. If there be an inseparable relation betwixt the ideas of a contrivance and a contriver, and it be evident, in regard to the human structure, the designing agent is not man himself, there must undeniably be some separate invisible Being, who is his former. This great Being we mean to indicate by the appellation of Deity.

This reasoning admits but of one reply. Why, it will be said, may we not suppose the world has been always continued as it is ; that is, that there has been a constant succession of finite beings appearing and disappearing on the earth from all eternity ? I answer, Whatever is supposed to have occasioned this constant succession, exclusive of an intelligent cause, will never account for the undeniable marks of design visible in all finite beings. Nor is the absurdity of supposing a contrivance without a contriver diminished by this imaginary succession ; but rather increased, by being repeated at every step of the series.

Besides, an eternal succession of finite beings involves in it a contradiction, and is therefore plainly impossible. As the supposition is made to get quit of the idea of any one having existed from eternity, each of the beings in the succession must have begun in time : but the succession itself is eternal. We have then the succession of beings infinitely earlier than any being in the

succession; or, in other words, a series of beings running on, *ad infinitum*, before it reached any particular being, which is absurd.

From these considerations it is manifest there must be some eternal Being, or nothing could ever have existed; and since the beings which we behold bear in their whole structure evident marks of wisdom and design, it is equally certain that He who formed them is a wise and intelligent agent. To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of more than one author of nature is inconsistent with that harmony of design which pervades her works; that it explains no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose, but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions.

Such are the proofs of the existence of that great and glorious Being, whom we denominate God; and it is not presumption to say, it is impossible to find another truth in the whole compass of morals, which, according to the justest laws of reasoning, admits of such strict and rigorous demonstration.

But I proceed to the more immediate object of this discourse, which, as has been already intimated, is not so much to evince the falsehood of scepticism as a theory, as to display its mischievous effects, contrasted with those which result from the belief of a Deity and a future state. The subject, viewed in this light, may be considered under two aspects: the influence of the opposite systems on the principles of morals, and on the formation of character. The first may be styled their direct, the latter their equally important, but indirect consequence and tendency.

I.—The sceptical, or irreligious system, subverts the whole foundation of morals. It may be assumed as a maxim, that no person can be required to act contrarily to his greatest good, or his highest interest, comprehensively viewed in relation to the whole duration of his being. It is often our duty to forego our own interest *partially*, to sacrifice a smaller pleasure for the sake of a greater, to incur a present evil in pursuit of a distant good of more consequence. In a word, to arbitrate amongst interfering claims of inclination is the moral arithmetic of human life. But to risk the happiness of the whole duration of our being in any case whatever, were it possible, would be foolish; because the sacrifice must, by the nature of it, be so great as to preclude the possibility of compensation.

As the present world, on sceptical principles, is the only place of recompense, whenever the practice of virtue fails to promise the greatest sum of present good (cases which often occur in reality, and much oftener in appearance), every motive to virtuous conduct is superseded; a deviation from rectitude becomes the part of wisdom; and, should the path of virtue, in addition to this, be obstructed by disgrace, torment, or death, to persevere

would be madness and folly, and a violation of the first and most essential law of nature. Virtue, on these principles, being in numberless instances at war with self-preservation, never can, or ought to become, a fixed habit of the mind.

The system of infidelity is not only incapable of arming virtue for great and trying occasions, but leaves it unsupported in the most ordinary occurrences. In vain will its advocates appeal to a moral sense, to benevolence and sympathy: for it is undeniable that these impulses may be overcome. In vain will they expatiate on the tranquility and pleasure attendant on a virtuous course; for though you may remind the offender that in disregarding them he has violated his nature, and that a conduct consistent with them is productive of much internal satisfaction; yet, if he reply that his taste is of a different sort, that there are other gratifications which he values more, and that every man must choose his own pleasures, the argument is at an end.

Rewards and punishments assigned by infinite power, afford a palpable and pressing motive which can never be neglected without renouncing the character of a rational creature: but tastes and relishes are not to be prescribed. A motive in which the reason of man shall acquiesce, enforcing the practice of virtue at all times and seasons, enters into the very essence of moral obligation. Modern infidelity supplies no such motives: it is therefore essentially and infallibly a system of enervation, turpitude, and vice. This chasm, in the construction of morals, can only be supplied by the firm belief of a rewarding and avenging Deity, who binds duty and happiness, though they may seem distant, in an indissoluble chain; without which, whatever usurps the name of virtue is not a principle, but a feeling; not a determinate rule, but a fluctuating expedient, varying with the tastes of individuals, and changing with the scenes of life.

Nor is this the only way in which infidelity subverts the foundation of morals. All reasoning on morals presupposes a distinction between inclinations and duties, affections and rules. The former prompt, the latter prescribe. The former supply motives to action; the latter regulate and control it. Hence it is evident, if virtue have any just claim to authority, it must be under the latter of these notions, that is, under the character of a law. It is under this notion, *in fact*, that its dominion has ever been acknowledged to be paramount and supreme.

(To be continued.)

#### **Memoir of the Rev. Hector M'Phail of Resolis.—**

There is still a number of copies of this Memoir unsold. Price is now reduced to 1d. per copy; postage extra, two,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; four, 1d.; twelve, 6d. To be had from Messrs. N. Adshhead & Son, 11 Union Street, Glasgow; or Editor of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, 248 Kenmure Street, Pollokshields, Glasgow.

## The Free Church.

IF one is to judge of the prosperity of the Free Church by the June number of its *Record*, then the only possible conclusion that can be come to is that said Church is in a very critical condition indeed. The Editor in his "Current Topics" declares that between several Churches in Scotland and the Free Church there are no differences which warrant separation, and among these Churches he classes the Free Presbyterian Church. We are not speaking for the other Churches mentioned by the Editor of the *Record*, but as far as we are concerned it has been made clear in this Magazine, and in the public prints, that there are differences between ourselves and the Free Church which do warrant separation. If there are some in the Free Church—and it seems there are—who think the contrary, their own June *Record* ought to disillusion them, and also confirm Free Presbyterians that they were fully justified in holding aloof from the Free Church and keeping their own honest, scriptural, uncompromising testimony for doctrine and purity of worship in its integrity.

We were glad to see that the Free Church Assembly refused this year to join as they did last year, in a Joint Prayer Meeting with the U.F. Assembly. The reason given was the ample one, namely, that the U.F. Assembly had placed Principal George Adam Smith, the notorious higher critic, in the Moderator's Chair. Perhaps the Free Church Assembly forgot that they had themselves equally honoured a few years ago the higher critic, Professor Alexander, by placing him in their Moderator's Chair. We consider the action of the Free Church in honouring and defending Professor Alexander worse than that of the U.F. Church in the case of Sir George Adam Smith, for the U.F. Church is professedly a house of refuge purposely provided for higher critics.

But to come back to the *Record* revelations, we find Rev. William MacKinnon, Gairloch, one of the fathers of the Free Church, declaring in a letter to the Editor that he came away one day from the Assembly "with disgust and surprise and indignation," on account of the freedom with which the Assembly admitted "place seekers from other Churches or from no Church," while their own "most loyal men are being cast aside." We presume that by their own "most loyal men" he means their Missionaries. He then adds that he has very "gloomy views" regarding the success of his Church, for to all appearance "the young bursary-making ministry" differ radically "from their predecessors." If this is how matters stand in the Free Church, and Mr. MacKinnon ought surely to know, then the breach between ourselves and the Free Church is only becoming wider. There are, however, other utterances in the *Record* coming from equally reliable sources which confirm this view of the situation.

The Rev. John McNeilage, Bower, in another letter to the Editor, writes as follows:—"I am one of those who think that the Free Church crisis is not yet over. The similitude used by Professor Macleod at the Commission in March seems to me quite proper. He likened the Free Church to a sorely-smitten man engaged in the process of staggering to his feet." Mr. McNeilage's conviction that the "crisis" is not yet over, and Professor Macleod's similitude are truly astonishing, and taken together with Mr. MacKinnon's pessimistic statements, they form a sad commentary on the condition of the Free Church. In the light of these statements alone we ask the Editor of the *F.C. Record* if he is honest in maintaining that there are no differences between the Free Church and the Free Presbyterian Church which warrant separation. There are other items in the June *Record* which we cannot refer to now, but we cannot close these remarks without alluding to the fact that there has been another exodus of ministers from the Free Church—two at least have joined the Established Church. There can be no doubt but the Free Church had from the beginning more regard for property and worldly honour than for the Word of God, and now the Most High in His providence is showing the people of the Free Church His abhorrence of such a spirit by giving the Free Church to reap what has been sown.

A. M'K.

## Acknowledgment of Donations.

MR. ALEXANDER MACGILLIVRAY, General Treasurer, Woodbine Cottage, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following donations up to 28th June:—

### SUSTENTATION FUND.

Inverness postmark, 2/; J. M. (Berwick-on-Tweed postmark), £5; Mr. A. Macpherson, Strontian, 10/; Per Rev. J. S. Sinclair—Mrs. Miller, Port Dover, Ontario, 17/6, Mrs. A. Munro, Simcoe, Ontario, 9/4, Mr. T. Finlayson, Forsinard, 4/, and Mrs. Fraser, Youngtown, U.S.A., 4/6; Per Rev. J. R. Mackay—Mr. H. Mackay, Vancouver, £1; From a Soldier, in appreciation of Rev. A. Sutherland's services at Ripon, £2; H. R., £2; From "A Friend," £40.

### JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSION FUND.

Mr. R. Fraser, Kinlochbervie, 5/; Per Rev. N. Cameron—Mrs. D., Edinburgh, 5/, and Mr. Hugh Grant and people, Woodford Leigh, Clarence River, New South Wales, £5; Helmsdale postmark (Radasi Mission), £1; Legacy—The late Mr. George Urquhart, Langwell, Achany Road, Dingwall, £500; "Queensland," 5/; Mr. J. Murray, Balloan, Dornoch, £1.



## ORGANISATION FUND.

Per Rev. J. R. Mackay—Mr. H. Mackay, Vancouver, 10/.

## MISSION TO FORCES FUND.

Per Rev. J. S. Sinclair—Mr. R. Matheson, Lonbain, Shildaig, 3/2; Pte. D. MacRae, Ripon, 3/; Mrs. MacLeod, Kishorn, 5/; Mrs. Fraser, Youngtown, U.S.A., 4/6; Miss J. Macadie, Brawlbin, Caithness, 10/.

Per Rev. N. Cameron—Mr. A. MacSwan, Dover, 5/; Per Mr. William Grant—Mrs. Macpherson, Kingussie, 10/; Helmsdale postmark, 5/; "Queensland," 5/. Per Rev. J. R. Mackay—Lochcarron, 6/.

Mr. A. MacGillivray, General Treasurer, Inverness, acknowledges following additional donations, received per Rev. J. S. Sinclair:—*For Mission to Forces*—Mr. A. M'Lennan, Glasgow, 3/; Mr. J. Campbell, 1/; Grace M. Chaplin, Liverpool, 5/; Mrs. Campbell, Porterhall, 3/6; J. R. Campbell, Esq., Shinness, 7/. *For Sustentation Fund*—J. R. Campbell, Esq., Shinness, 10/; Miss M'Phail, Stronchullin, Ardrishaig, 7/6. *For Mr. Kadasi's Mission*—Mrs. M'Bean, Newtonmore, 5/. *For Organisation Fund*—"Anti-Popery," 5/.

The Rev. E. Macqueen desires to acknowledge, with thanks, from Mrs. W. and Miss M., Greenock, 10/ and 2/6 respectively; Mrs. U., Ontario, 5/; Bible Class, Boston, 65 francs, per R. Macleod; Broadford, Skye, £5 1/, per Rev. Mr. Maclean.

Rev. N. Cameron desires to acknowledge, with thanks:—In aid of Bibles, etc., to Soldiers and Marines—Nurse Murray, 4/; J. Gillies, 3/; Mrs. D., Edinburgh, 5/; Mrs. U., Ontario, 5/8; "Anonymous," Glasgow, 5/6. In aid of St. Jude's Sustentation Fund—Miss M., Aberdeen, £1; Mrs. M'B., Lochcarron, £1. In aid of Foreign Missions—"Lady Friend," Cathcart, £1.

Rev. J. R. Mackay, Inverness, acknowledges, with thanks, £1 12s. 10d. received from a "Friend" in Detroit, U.S.A., of which £1 is for Inverness Congregation, and 12/10 for Comforts for Troops to whom Mr. Macqueen is ministering. We regret this acknowledgment did not appear in April Magazine.

Rev. A. Sutherland, C.F., 1/8 Res. Batt. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, North Camp, Ripon, acknowledges, with thanks, gift of 750 Cigarettes and one pound of Tobacco, from Nurse M——, Denmark-Hill, London, for distribution among Soldiers; £1 from Mr. G. Ross, Shore Street, Ullapool; £1 from "A Friend," Glasgow (per Rev. Neil Cameron); 5/ from Misses Stewart, Isle Martin, for Bibles; and £1 from Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, Jun. (per Mr. A. Mackenzie, elder, Scorraig), for Lochbroom Manse Building Fund.

Mr. John Morrison, Finsbay, South Harris, acknowledges with thanks for Finsbay-Harris Church Building Fund, 10/- from D. F., Gairloch, and 10/- from "Friend," Gairloch, per Rev. D. N. Macleod, Tarbert.

Mr. W. Grant (late Chelsea, London, S.W.), acknowledges with thanks the following donations:—London Church Building Fund—7/, Miss Macdonald, Wickford Lodge, Essex; Bibles, for Soldiers, Miss Cox, Ventnor, Isle of Wight; and *Mission to Forces Fund*, 10s. from Mrs. M'Pherson, Insh, Kincaig.

Mr. Donald Sutherland, 201 Lavender Hill, London, S.W., acknowledges with many thanks the following donations to London Church Building Fund:—Capt. K. K. Macleod and family, Elmbank House, Inverness, £2; also £1 6/, being second amount collected by Miss A. Macsween, Wetherby Gardens, London, S.W.; 10/ from Petty Officer D. Macdonald, H.M.S. Itonian, and 10/ from Mrs. D. Macdonald.

Rev. J. S. Sinclair acknowledges with thanks 38/- from Magazine Reader, for Mr. Radasi; £1 from "Anon," for Bibles to Mr. Radasi; £2 from Two Friends, and £1 from "Magazine" for John Knox's Sustentation Fund; 10/- from "July," for Bibles, etc., to Mr. Macqueen; and 4/, from "Magazine Reader," Water-nish, for Mr. Radasi.

#### COMFORTS FOR THE FRONT FUND.

Rev. J. S. Sinclair acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following donations to above Fund:—Mrs. Cameron, Glennan, Fort-William, 10/; F. P., Kincaig, £1; D. Macrae, Isle Ewe, Aultbea, 10/; J. Shaw, Kincaig (Bibles), 7/; A. M'Kenzie, Ardindrean, Lochbroom, 11/; "Anon," Beauly, 1/6; T. Finlayson, Forsinard, 3/; "A Friend," Edinburgh, 5/; Per General Treasurer, Inverness—Mrs. A. Livingstone and Miss A. Livingstone, Fernabeg, Arrina, 5/ each; Mrs. Campbell, Porterhall, 3/6; Mrs. Macbean, Newtonmore, 5/, and Bibles, 4/; Per General Treasurer, Inverness—"Anon," Helmsdale, 5/, and Bibles and Books, 5/; D. Mackay, Saval, Lairg, Bibles, 5/; Per General Treasurer, Inverness—"Queensland," Bibles, 5/. Mr. Macqueen's address is at present as follows:—Rev. E. Macqueen, C.F., c/o Mrs. Melton, Street Farm, Costessey, Norwich, England.

THINK, my soul, what a charming path, a glorious prospect, Jesus cut through the shades of death, of hell, for me; in His death I see the price, in His life I see the path, in His ascension I see the proof, of my eternal bliss. Truly His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths are peace.—*John Brown.*

WE should pray for a blessing upon the design of preaching the Gospel unto a pagan and a heathen world. We wish that you would mind them that are called to preach the Gospel to the heathens. O pray that the Lord may be with them.—*R. Erskine.*

O, LIGHT, light! How art thou contemned in this land? How is it that no man stands in awe to sin in the face of this light? Well, desolate land, the day shall come that thou shalt say, O! if we had the light we once had, we should be loath to contemn it; and this shall be the doom of this land, even the contempt of this light.—*Welch.*

## Church Notes.

**Communion.**—Beauly, Lairg, and Raasay, first Sabbath of July; Staffin (Skye), Tain (Ross), and Tomatin (Moy), second; Daviot (Inverness), Flashadder (Skye), Halkirk (Caithness), and Rogart (Sutherland), third; Plockton (Ross), fourth; Bracadale (Skye), fifth. Dingwall, first Sabbath of August; Portree (Skye), second.

**Call to North Uist.**—The Rev. Donald M. Macdonald has accepted a call to be minister of our congregation in North Uist, and his induction is expected (D.V.) shortly to take place.

**Synod Protest against the Prime Minister's Visit to the Pope.**—The following protest has been forwarded to the Prime Minister and others: "The Synod records its strong and earnest protest against the recent official visit paid by the Prime Minister to the Pope as an act of serious disloyalty to the Protestant constitution of the realm, and a grievous insult to the well-founded convictions of all true Protestant subjects of His Majesty the King. The Synod desires to remind all whom it may concern that the Pope is at the present time seeking to make the War a means of regaining his lost temporal sovereignty over the nations, and that it is a retrograde step, fraught with the greatest danger to our civil and religious liberties, to do anything towards the success of his unholy ambitions. The Synod therefore strongly protests against the recent visit of the Prime Minister to the Vatican, and calls for the immediate termination of all official relations with Papal Rome, as the manifest enemy of our country and of true Christianity."

**Chaplaincy at Ripon.**—We have pleasure in informing our readers that the Rev. Andrew Sutherland, Ullapool, has been appointed by the War Office as an official chaplain at Ripon, England. His address is—1/8 Res. Batt. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, North Camp, Ripon.

**Mission to Forces in England.**—In my Report in the May Magazine, the following statement:—"A number of the sailors had no Bibles, and the Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow, forwarded 50 copies, *a gift* from the National Bible Society, Glasgow," should have been . . . "*a grant at the most reduced prices* from the National Bible Society, Glasgow."

(Signed) DUNCAN MACKENZIE.

**Mission to Forces in England.**—Rev. Norman Matheson, Halkirk, who was conducting services for naval men at Chatham and Portsmouth, some weeks ago returned home. His place was taken by the Rev. D. M. Macdonald, who had been for some months at the London Mission, while Mr. Macdonald's successor in London is Mr. James Macleod, divinity student, who was formerly there.

**The Sabbath and the War.**—We have much pleasure in recommending a booklet newly issued by Mr. T. Robertson, Edinburgh, with the above title. It is very opportune to the

present crisis. Its matter is sound and its form, readable. Copies may be had at one penny each, postage  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. extra, from the printers, Messrs. Lindsay & Co., 17 Blackfriars Street, Edinburgh.

## The Magazine.

**Notice to Subscribers.—Price of Magazine Increased to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per Copy.**—We respectfully remind subscribers that April was the last month of the Magazine year, and that payments due for past and future will now much oblige. We have also to inform them that, owing to the present shortage of paper and rise in its price, we have been under the necessity of adding one halfpenny ( $\frac{1}{2}$ d.) to the price of each copy of the Magazine, beginning with May last. This, of course, will only be continued as long as the circumstances arising out of the War will demand it. Subscribers will therefore understand that each copy is now  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. (postage,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. extra), and that the Magazine for the year will cost 3/ (including postage) instead of 2/6, as hitherto. All who order directly from the Editor and Treasurer are requested to send their subscriptions to address, 248 Kenmure Street, Pollokshields, Glasgow.

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