



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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Gideon's Army.

JUDGES, CHAP. VII.

THE Bible is full of instruction for the children of men in all the positions and relations of life. It matters not how exalted or how humble the position that we occupy, there is provided counsel for us in its sacred and inspired pages. Thence issues forth the Lord's voice to kings and rulers, judges and senators, generals and captains, as well as to men of lower stations and ranks. If such had ears to hear, they would not lack instruction and guidance for all situations and seasons—for times of war as certainly as for times of peace. Some people think that the Old Testament Scriptures are antiquated and out of date; they are greatly deluded and mistaken. A careful study of them was never more needed than at the present time of conflict and stress. Our generals and commanders on land and sea would do well to meditate upon and drink in the deep lessons of dependence upon God and practical management that are taught in the books of Moses, the Judges and the Kings.

It is our present purpose to call attention to some lessons from a chapter in the life of Gideon, one of the eminent judges and deliverers that God raised up for Israel during the period that stretched between the days of Joshua, and the days of the Kings. The lessons referred to are almost wholly forgotten at the present time, to our great loss as a nation.

I.—Let us give a brief summary of the principal incidents recorded in the chapter (Judges vii.), and the previous context. After the days of Deborah and Barak, "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years." The Midianites drove them to dens and caves in the mountains, and devoured and destroyed the produce of the land, wherever it grew up. The children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and He called forth Gideon, the son of Joash, the Abi-ezrite, a mighty man of valour, to be their judge

and deliverer. Gideon threw down the altar of Baal, and the Lord, in answer to Gideon's prayers, gave him repeated signs that He would save Israel by his hand. Now, in the seventh chapter of the Judges, we have brought before our view Gideon with a small army of 32,000 men confronting a vast host, consisting of the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the east, who had gathered together to suppress the humble uprising of the children of Israel. To human wisdom, it would seem that Gideon's army was far too small and weak to encounter this great multitude, and that they would require considerable additions to their ranks if they were to cherish any warrantable hope of success at all. But remarkable to relate, "The Lord said unto Gideon: The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand;" and then He adds the reason why, "lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." Infinite Wisdom declares the people not too few, but too many. How wonderful are His thoughts and ways!

And now He proceeds to direct Gideon as to the methods by which the number is to be lessened. He instructs him to proclaim in the ears of the people, "Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him depart early from Mount Gilead," and this proclamation had the effect of sending away 22,000 men. Still, the Lord again declared that the remaining 10,000 were too many, and He directed Gideon to the use of another method whereby he would reduce the number. At the divine direction, Gideon brought the people down to the water to drink, and he was instructed first to set by themselves those who, in a standing posture, lifted the water with their hand, and lapped the water out of their hand, and secondly, to set by themselves those who bowed down upon their knees to drink. The result of this test was that three hundred lapped, and all the rest bowed down upon their knees to drink. The Lord then told Gideon that it was by the three hundred men that He would save Israel. The meaning of the difference put between the two classes would seem to be that the men who bowed down on their knees, while not lacking in courage, were too easy and self-indulgent: they put themselves in a posture in which they might be easily smitten by their enemies; but the men that stood and lapped were more alive to the responsibility and emergency of the occasion, and remained in an alert attitude of readiness for defence or attack; duty was first in their esteem, personal comfort, second.

At the Lord's further direction, Gideon, with Phurah his servant, went down secretly to the camp of Midian at night to take a preliminary view of the situation, and there he overheard a Midianite telling to his fellow a dream concerning a barley-cake which tumbled into the host of Midian, and overturned their tents, and his fellow strangely answering that this was the sword of Gideon into whose hand he believed that God had delivered the Midianites. This extraordinary conversation was the means

of inspiring Gideon with great courage and hope, and he returned to his own men and divided them into three companies of 100 each. "He put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers and lamps within the pitchers." Thus it came to pass that at "the beginning of the middle watch" of the night, Gideon and his three companies moved forward to the outside of the camp of Midian, and at Gideon's signal and example, they blew the trumpets, broke the pitchers, held the lamps in their left hands, and cried, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The astonishing consequence was that "all the host ran, and cried, and fled," and while the three hundred continued to blow the trumpets, "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow." By these simple means, in the exercise of His own almighty power, the God of Israel introduced fear, confusion, and panic into the hosts of their enemies, so that they were completely routed. There fell on this remarkable occasion, not less than one hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword. "Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon" (Judges viii. 28).

II.—Let us notice briefly some of the principal lessons that are to be learnt from this striking narrative.

First, there is the great lesson that pervades the Scriptures throughout, and that accords with the highest reason, that all "power belongeth unto God," and that no success in temporal or spiritual conflict can be obtained without Him. He held the host of Midian as well as the children of Israel in the hollow of His hand, and it entirely lay with Him, whether the Israelites would gain the victory or not. Thus it is also at the present day. The armies of the Germans and the Austrians are in God's hands as well as the armies of the Allies, and no success can come to either side without Him. He is the chief and all-pervasive factor in the situation, and it is the height of madness to forget this. The sooner the truth of it is laid to heart the better, by statesmen and soldiers. It is not enough to plead the righteousness of our cause. The cause, we are fully convinced, is a good one, but the Lord is teaching us that He has a controversy with us as a nation on account of other sins, personal and peculiar to ourselves, and He can, and does, give power to our enemies on this account to inflict heavy strokes upon us. At the same time, He does not fail to crush and waste them also in His holy displeasure. He is the righteous governor, as well as the mighty deliverer, among the nations. The call to us, therefore, is, "Give God the glory due to His name; forsake your evil ways; and look to Him as your all-sufficient helper and Saviour. Thus only may you expect to get a glorious victory."

Secondly, the next lesson that falls to be noted is that God justly frowns upon *trust* in numbers of men and in human resources. He saw in Gideon's time that if the children of

Israel gained the victory even with a force of very moderate size, they would take the glory to themselves and vaunt themselves against Him, and He was determined in their own highest interests to avert this moral calamity. He brought down their army to a handful of three hundred men, so that it would be impossible to attribute the victory, when it came, to their own strength. God is infinitely wise as well as mighty, and it is not to be overlooked that the three hundred were divinely selected men, marked by faith, courage, alertness, self-denial, and a high sense of duty to God and to their country. Still, their number was extremely small, in the presence of powerful foes who were like grasshoppers for multitude. Is not the lesson here greatly needed at the present time? What a cry there has been for vast numbers of recruits and how much dependence there seems to be placed in these numbers! God is almost entirely ignored. His holy day of Rest and Worship has been profaned with a view to add more and more men to our forces. Fighting against God while fighting for one's country is surely the extremest folly. The Most High was against Israel for their tendency to trust in numbers; and He is undoubtedly against us for the same. May we be brought to see the wickedness of our self-confidence, and to trust in the Lord Jehovah alone in whom is everlasting strength!

Thirdly, we are taught by this impressive incident in Israel's history that the Lord can make the simplest means successful for the accomplishment of the greatest ends, if there is unreserved confidence in Himself, and implicit obedience to His commands. The sound of the trumpets, the crash of the pitchers, and the flash of the lamps were sufficient, by God's blessing, to strike terror and confusion into the hearts of the bold Midianites, fierce and cruel warriors as they were. What is the significance of this? Just that the minds and hearts of all men are in God's hands. The mind is the principal part of the human being, and if the mind is overcome, the body falls. God showed that He could touch the minds of these wild Midianites with sudden fear, and in righteous judgment arouse the hidden passions and jealousies of their hearts, so that, in their blind panic, they fought and slew one another. Gideon's men, to begin with, did not need to lift a sword or personally shed one drop of blood. The Midianites executed God's judgments on themselves.

Now, we believe that such wonderful things might happen in our day, if we, as a people, were only wise to obey God's voice and trust in His name. We cast no undue disparagement on the use of means, nor do we undervalue human skill and valour. Much skill and valour have we seen displayed since the present terrible War began, but how little, comparatively speaking, of divine interposition. How few have been the manifest signs of God's favour on our arms! He can make one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. The reasons why He is not doing such exploits for us are not far to seek. May He turn us, and we shall be turned!

A Sermon.

BY THE REV. GEORGE HUTCHESON, M.A., of *Edinburgh*
and *Irvine*.

(*Third Sermon of Series on Psalm cxxx.*)

(*Continued from page 192.*)

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"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice :  
let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications."—PSALMS  
CXXX. 1, 2.  
~~~~~

THE Psalmist (as ye have heard) being in distress, is put to wrestle in the first six verses of this Psalm, partly with the difficulties and plunging perplexities in his case (1, 2); partly, with the sense of guilt, that might hinder his access, or hope of audience (3, 4); and partly, with God's delaying to answer him, and give him an issue (5, 6).

For the first, contained in the first and second verses, ye may remember that I took it up in these four. 1. That which he wrestles with, which he expresseth under the name of "depths." 2. His way of wrestling with these depths, viz., by prayer. He cried out of the depths. 3. He reflects on this his exercise, and avows it before God, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." And lastly, he prosecutes his exercise of prayer, presses for audience in a new suit (verse 2): "Lord, hear my voice, let," etc.

For the first of these, what he wrestled with, the depths, I spake to it, and insisted to explain that metaphor of depth, or depths, and to shew what affinity there may be betwixt that and the distresses and perplexities of the people of God, and spoke somewhat to the use of it. For the second, of his crying out of the depths, I have spoken also to that, and deduced the point a little, and shewn you how distresses and perplexities put the saints to prayer, and what is imported by crying in prayer. Ye may remember that I was cut off by time at a word of use, which was a sad regrave,¹ that distresses should be upon the people of God, and yet prayer restrained; that there should be so much trouble, and so little crying. Several Scriptures I laid before you, wherein the people of God, as in a glass, may read their foul spots in this matter.

I proceed to some more uses. The second in order shall be this: if it be sad to see the people of God in distress and yet not praying, it must be yet more sad to see them in distress, and instead of praying, taking sinful shifts to extricate themselves out of the depths, wherein they are. That the trouble which is sent to call them to God, should be so improved as if it had a commission to drive them from God. That if there be a sinful shift to be had they will try that before they think on prayer, before they stoop to think on calling on God. It's a sad

¹ Complaint.

complaint of a wicked generation that ye have, Jer. ii. 30, "In vain have I smitten your children." It's to no purpose that I have taken pains upon them, for they received not correction; they will not stoop to it, they will not improve it as a correction from God for sin. And would ye know how ye shall ponder these Scriptures, which will lay before you what I would say further on this use? One is, Hosea v. 13, "When that people saw their wound, what did they with it? They went to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb." They were so far from calling on God, that they took a sinful shift, to bring them out of the present trouble. Another is, Isaiah i. 5, "Why should ye be stricken any more?" It's to no purpose, for smite you as I will, ye will revolt more and more; to smite you, that's the high gate, if ye were ill before, to make you worse; if you were far from God, to drive you further from Him. A third Scripture is that spoken of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 22), who in the time of his distress, instead of turning to God, did trespass yet more and more against the Lord. This is that King Ahaz who in his distress would not pray, but would worship the gods of the Syrians, who, he pretended, had helped them against him. I shall say no more to this use, but look to it; it's a dreadful thing when trouble makes folk worse, than they were before trouble came on them; and I shall add, that a people, taken pains upon by trouble, and not crying out of the depths unto God, are in the nearest capacity of any, to increase their trespass under it. A prayerless trouble will be a singularly plagued trouble, to them that are under it.

But a third word of use shall be by way of prevention of a cavillation or objection. It may be said, that there may be a great deal of din made of crying and turning to God in trouble, but are there not many who never own God in their trouble, and who, if they can have a sinful shift, take them to it, and yet these come through when praying folk stick in the mire? To prevent this cavillation or objection, I say, take this word of use, that if it be a duty to cry out of the depths to God, then it is a plague for folks to be brought out of trouble, and not sent to God by prayer; when they are brought through their trouble, and are never sent to God to make earnest of their turning to Him. Job xxxvi. 13. When Elihu is pressing upon folk, the right improving of affliction, he adds, "But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them." They heap up wrath; why? They cry not when he bindeth them. If we will believe the Spirit of God speaking in Scripture, a person, not crying to God, when God binds him, heaps up wrath against himself. And I shall desire such as swatter¹ through their trouble miskenning² God, to consider these three things. 1. That it must be God that gives them any delivery, though they do not acknowledge Him in it, nor for it, and, consequently, it is not given in love, but in wrath.

¹ Dash quickly.

² Mistaking.

There may be much wrath in delivery from trouble in a sad way, as well as in sending wrath upon a wicked person by trouble. 2. Consider, that any delivery thou meetest with, who are not crying to God in thy trouble, it's but a snare to thee. Thou lovest not prayer in order to an issue, and God in His holy providence lets that outgate out of trouble come as a snare in thy way, that thou seest not the necessity of prayer unto Him. And it's the saddest of snares to be put out of prayer's mister,¹ to be like these spoken of, Job xxi. 15, who are brought in, saying, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we should pray unto him?" We get our turn done without Him, and therefore we need not pray. 3. Such as in trouble restrain prayer, should consider that all that is owing them is but fristed,² it is not forgiven. Thou gettest a proof of God's riches, forbearance, and long-suffering; and that should lead thee to repentance, but it doth it not, and thou considerest not, "That after thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of his righteous judgment" (Romans ii. 4, 5). I can give it no better nor apposite term than what ye have, 2 Kings xiii. 23, "The Lord was gracious to them, and had compassion on them, and had respect to them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, nor cast them out of his presence." As yet, there was a reserve in that mercy, the judgment was to come upon them, but not yet. Look to it, then, ye who, in your trouble, get your turn done without God, that what is fristed is not forgiven.

But the fourth and last word of use, I shall give you from this note, shall be this. Ye that are put to pray in trouble, I intreat you, look that ye be at crying with it. I shall not resume what I said upon this the last day, as that ye would be affected with your case, that ye would be in earnest, that ye would have a sense of your distance, get confidence to come speed, and withal a raised fervency of affection after that you cry for to God. Only let your prayers look like your need of God, and the greatness of your distress. Ponder that word, Isaiah xxix. 13, a word which I have often cited to you, "This people draweth near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but they have removed their heart far from me." Mark the phrase: He doth not say, they draw near me with their mouth, while their heart is far from me, but "they have removed their heart far from me," which imports, that there is no more effectual mean of estranging a soul from God, than a trade of formal worship; it is an active removing of the heart from God. I shall only add this word, that as I have spoken to them that in trouble neglect the duty of prayer, that their outgates speak no good to them, but wrath, and a snare; so I would have folks cautious in judging of their liveliness, or seriousness in prayer by their outgates out of trouble. Ponder

¹ Need.² Delayed.

that place, Psalms lxxviii. 34, etc. There ye will find a praying people and seemingly serious; they seek God and return, and enquire early after Him; they remember He is their Rock and Redeemer; "Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant; but he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not." There is a people spared and delivered when they cried to God, when the Lord approves not of their prayer. We must therefore get another testimony to prove our not being formal in prayer, than outgate or delivery out of trouble. A proof of love and compassion in delivery may be God's call to us to mourn over our formality, in prayer, and for our other sins, which He came over to do us good.

But I proceed to a third head in this first part of the words, and that is his reflecting on his exercise, and his avowing it before God, "O Lord" (saith he), "I have cried unto thee." He looks back and considers what he hath been doing in distress, and finding he hath been wrestling, he lays it out and avows it before God. The general which I mark from it shall be this, that reflection on ourselves, and on our way what we have done, or are doing, is very necessary in all them that would approve themselves to God. Such was the psalmist's practice here; he looks back and finds the depths put him to crying, and is able to give an account of it. There is a twofold reflection on that God calls for from the children of men. One is a reflection upon their case what it is, that they be not stupid and senseless without consideration what their lot is. Ye have that quarrelled, Isaiah xlii. 25, "He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart;" and Hosea vii. 9, "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not." That argues dreadful stupidity and senselessness, when folks are in a low condition, and do not consider, and do not mind it, do not lay it to heart. But there is another reflection beside that of our case called for, and that is a reflection on our carriage under our case; when we have considered our case, we would reflect what we are doing in such a case, or under such lots as providence makes our portion. This is it the psalmist expresses, Psalms iv. 4, "Commune with your own heart upon your bed;" and it is that the Lord presses upon His people. Hag. i. 5, "Now, therefore, consider your ways," set your heart on your ways. This reflection self-searching or examination is most necessary in ordinary; a man wots not where he is, nor what he is doing in religion, if he neglect this part of it. If he be a stranger to self-examination, he is a stranger to his progress or decay in religion, his convictions and challenges are confused, and without fruit. His prayers cannot be but confused; if he

pray any, it must be at random. Only the man that is distinct in examination can distinctly lay out his case before God; and this examination, as it's necessary in ordinary, so specially in trouble. If a man in distress neglect examination, he may be carried headlong in stupidity, in passion, quarrelling, fretting, or other sinful improvements of his trouble, and as it is, Eccles. v. 1, he may do all this, and not consider that he is doing evil. He is quite out, and knows not of it; and ye have an idea of that man that is not in reflection on his case and carriage under it in trouble, Jer. viii. 6, "I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright; no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle." He goes hand over head, like a wild horse in his course; why? he reflects not upon his carriage under trouble.

Not to dip on this, let me in short from it recommend self-examination to you, especially in trouble. If ye would haunt it in ordinary, it would be more easy to you in a distress. If ye be in ordinary reflecting upon your weaknesses, and examining your wants, upon your predominants,¹ your temptations, what are your suits that are most binding on you and your success, ye will the more readily (as we use to speak) hit the nail upon the head, when ye come to pray. And these your prayers that come from self-examination, though they be less busked,² they will be to better purpose, than when a man with all the oratory he can reach, vents his gift in prayer. Particularly look what ye are doing as to this duty, when ye come in any distress; I gave you before some Scriptures that speak to them that neglect prayer in trouble. Now, let me mind you of some words, whereby to try your self-examination in trouble. One is, Lev. xxvi. 41, "If then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity;" that were a blessed reflection that did produce this effect; but, on the contrary, look that your reflection be not like that, Jer. xlv. 10, "They are not humbled even unto this day." And like that, Dan. ix. 13, "All this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth;" and Ezekiel xxiv. 13, "Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee." Ye would make use of these, and the like Scriptures, in your reflection upon your way, and what ye are doing when ye are in the depths. And further, when ye are reflecting upon your carriage under trouble, ye had need of tenderness of conscience; passion will give you a blind guess of yourselves, or of your case or carriage under it. When the Lord says to Jonah iv. 4, "Doe'st thou well to be angry, Jonah?" the passionate man says, "I do well to be angry, even unto death." They that would reflect on

¹ Chief faults.² Adorned.

their case and carriage under trouble, would seek a composed frame of spirit and tender conscience from God.

But to come a little nearer unto this reflection, taking the words in the bypast time, "Lord, I have cried unto thee." They will import, that God had kept him long at that trade, and to this purpose we have a word, Psalms lxix., after that he hath complained in the two first verses, that "the waters are come in into his soul, that he sinks in deep mire, where there is no standing, that he was come into deep waters, where the floods did overflow him;" he adds, v. 3, "I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God;" and Ps. cxix. 82, "Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?" but this I may pass, because it will occur in verses 2, 5, and 6, and because the Hebrews expressed things present in the bypast time, because their verbs have not a present time. That which I shall speak to from the words considered as a reflecting on his bygone wrestling, I reduce to these two.

1. That he owns it as a thing that hath been, and is his practice, to be crying to God out of the depths.

2. Because folks may be ready to say, What is he the better of that? He hath not got an answer of his prayers; I shall add this, that his supplication out of the depths affords him a testimony.

For the first, ye may take up the note thus, that no distress, no dispensation of providence warrants the saints to cast all that they have been doing as unsound. Though he be put to the deeps, he owns it that he is a cryer out of the depths unto God. "Out of the deeps have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Thus the Church owns her integrity, Ps. xlv. 17-19, "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way; though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons," etc. Smite us as thou wilt, we avow it that we are in thy way. And Job xiii. 15, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him," that is, my integrity. And chapter xxvii. 5, "I will not remove mine integrity from me;" and so Heman, Psalms lxxxviii. 13, "Unto thee have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee." Do what thou wilt with me, I avow it that I have been at prayer, and I will continue in it. It is true, men should be humble in this matter of avowing their integrity, they should mainly be studying their wants, and short-comings, and the iniquity of their holy things; and it is true also, that, when they are in the deeps of distress, and these tryst¹ them with God's seeming not to notice them, but rather His anger smokes against their prayers (Psalms lxxx. 4), it should humble them yet more, and make them search their imperfections in their best things. It's also true, that the people of God in reflecting on their

¹ Meet.

diligence and prayers, should be far from that quarrelsome humour in hypocrites, Isaiah lviii. 3, "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not?" etc. As readily the greatest hypocrites are the greatest quarrellers, when they want success. Yet all this, notwithstanding, it is our duty to stick by what is right in our way, while we are in the deeps. Men must not be baffled out of their integrity, because they are under the cross, and have the wind in their teeth; they must not cast their prayers, because God holds them in the deeps. It's no small part of the saints' service to stick by, and to avow their integrity, that white robes are allowed them, though their prayers be not answered (Rev. vi. 10, 11). And, therefore, they have silly spirits, who, when they meet with a torrent of cross providences, are baffled from avowing their integrity, and lie by, and dare not face the storm upon that account.

But I proceed to the second observation. It may be said, What is the matter of folks owning their integrity, and crying out of the deeps, when they are not heard, but lie in the deeps for all that? I answer in the second note, that whatever be the seeming success of the saints in the deeps, their supplications out of the deeps afford them a testimony. It's good news, that the psalmist dare own this, "Lord, thou hast cast me in the deeps, but I have cried to thee out of the deeps." It's a good cordial to Heman, while he is in the deeps, Psalms lxxxviii. 13, "But unto thee, have I cried, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee. Lord, why casts thou off my soul?" etc. And if ye ask, What riches can be in this testimony, that we have cried, and continue crying out of the deeps? I shall pass it with the time in three words: 1. It's a token of a blest and sanctified trouble, when folks are led to God by trouble. That's better than many out-gates; they are "blessed whom when God chastens, he teacheth out of his law" (Psalms xciv. 12). And the first lesson God teacheth them, when He puts them in trouble, is to go to Himself with the trouble. It is a remarkable word that Samson's mother had, Judges xiii. 23, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering." So many such folk may say, that if God had a mind to destroy them, He would not turn them unto Himself in their trouble. There is more of the love of God inclining thy heart to cry to Him out of the deeps, than in many out-gates; there is a rich blessing in it. 2. This testimony is rich, because it warrants a man having done his duty, to cast his burden on God and in nothing to be anxious. It's no wonder a man be crushed with his trouble before he go to God with it, but when he goes to Him, he hath a warrant to cast all his cares and fears on Him; he hath Hannah's allowance, 1 Samuel i. 18, "Who being a woman of a sorrowful spirit, went and poured out her heart before the Lord in his bosom, and left her anxiety on God, and came away with her countenance no more sad." This is a practice that few of us attain unto, we seem

to carry our cares to God in prayer, but we bring them back with discouragement, rather augmented than diminished. 3. This testimony is rich, because it assures the supplicant, whatever be his present success (whereof, if the Lord will, we may speak a word in the afternoon), that he shall yet come speed; crying out of the deeps *shall* be heard, or Psalms ix. 18, "The needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever." Israel might think God had forgotten them, when they were so long in the deeps in Egypt, and sighed and cried to Him, by reason of their bondage, but at length God heard their groaning, and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exod. ii. 24). And ye know that word, Isaiah xlv. 19, "I have not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." He never said it in any age, and He will not begin at us.

Take this word of use from it. Labour to have this testimony, to be crying out of the deeps, so as ye may avow and own it; and to be improving it, labour to read love and a blessing in it, to cast all your burdens on God by so doing, and confidently to expect ye shall see "the end of the Lord." In a word, labour to find *that* by grace, in so doing, which trouble cannot take from you; to find a delivery in trouble, rather than a delivery out of it; to find that which is of more worth, than many deliveries, and infinitely of more worth than any delivery can be without it.

(To be continued.)

Account of Mission to Naval Men in England.

By THE REV. D. M. MACDONALD, NORTH UIST.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—There will soon be three years since we began our Mission to the Forces, and few anticipated at its commencement that it would be continued up to the present time. In this mighty conflict of the nations the Lord has given precious opportunities to His people to spread His Word and make known His Gospel in many different places. Thus, while the kingdoms of the world are wasting their strength and their treasures, the Kingdom of Christ is making slow but sure progress, and the time will come when it shall triumph, and then nations shall not engage in war with one another, but "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks."

At the urgent request of the Convener of the Mission Committee, I began my second period of service among our Naval men on the third Sabbath of March. The journey from the Hebrides was dangerous at the outset, because of mines in the Minch, but in the good providence of the Lord we crossed safely. In London I made my headquarters for a short time with our energetic missionary, Mr. Malcolm M'Ewan, and latterly with

Mrs. Mackay, 19 Bryanston Street, Portman Square, who did everything possible for my comfort.

Chatham and Portsmouth are the two ports where we conduct services. To the former I gave five Sabbaths, and to the latter seven. In Chatham there was a service on Saturday evening and two services on the Lord's Day—one in the morning and the other at about 7.30 in the evening. These services were well attended, and it was a pleasure to notice the serious attention of the men to what was declared to them of the Word of Life. When there is no minister the men themselves conduct worship every evening. On Sabbath afternoons I usually visited Gillingham Naval Hospital, a very large and up-to-date building. Patients were here from nearly every part of the Empire. Some were surgical and some were medical cases. As an indication of the protection afforded by our country to inferior races, I may mention that there was in one of the wards an Arab who scarcely knew a word of English. There were several Highland sailors in the different wards, and when convenient I prayed with some of them. One young lad, far gone in consumption, has since died.

It was with considerable satisfaction that I heard from one of the men here the interesting career of H.M.S. "Orama," a large auxiliary cruiser. There were up to about seventy or eighty Lewismen on board, and, every evening when suitable, they had worship in the Gaelic language. On Sabbath they had either one or two services. In Sydney, Australia, where the "Orama" happened to be stationed for a short time, the Highland sailors held Gaelic services in one of the Presbyterian churches. This was a novel experience for the people of Sydney. They never thought, perhaps, of associating religion with sailors, but now they had the rare experience of listening to one sailor preaching and another leading the praise. The emotions of some of the old Highland people present were stirred to their depths and not a few could not keep back their tears.

Discipline was so perfect among these men that there wasn't a single defaulter among them, and they did their work so well that their captain was most reluctant to part with them. The idea of some worldly-wise people is that religion makes men effeminate and unfits them for the sterner duties of life, while others again seem to think that a man cannot be truly religious in the Navy or in the Army. The conduct of the Highlanders on the "Orama" proves both these notions to be false. "Godliness," as the inspired Apostle says, "is profitable for the life that now is and for that which is to come."

I am not able to say whether any of the sailors referred to heard our ministers preach in Chatham and Portsmouth when our Mission was begun, but whether or not, it is possible that some of these who did hear them may to-day be bright witnesses for Christ wherever they happen to be stationed.

Sheerness is very near Chatham, and there was a prospect of services being held in the Barracks there just about the time I left. It seems that one of the officers there conducted services for the Gaelic-speaking sailors, himself addressing them in English and they singing in Gaelic. The fervour and zeal of this officer were most commendable. It would be good for the Navy and for the country if there were many more like him in His Majesty's Service.

The services in Portsmouth were held in the Naval Barracks, Miss Weston's Rest, and Whale Island Gunnery School. There was a considerable number of men in Portsmouth, and the service on Sabbath morning in the Sailor's Rest was well attended. I distributed many Testaments at these morning services and the men gladly received them. May the Word be a lamp to their feet and a light to their path! In the afternoon we had a short service at about 4.30 for those who could not attend the other diets of worship. At night there was a service in the Barracks at 7.30. Latterly, we had brief services in Whale Island Gunnery School on Friday evenings at 7 or 7.30. As in Chatham so in Portsmouth there were praying men whom it was a pleasure to meet. Miss Weston's interest is centred chiefly in the spiritual welfare of the men, and many a sailor owes a lasting debt of gratitude to her for her beneficence. As the "Rest" has already been described in the Magazine I need not give details concerning it here, but would like to express my indebtedness to Miss Weston and her staff for their kindness while with them.

Haslar Hospital is near Portsmouth, and in it I saw several sailors from the west and north of Scotland. I hope that in their affliction they have been led to seek for their souls, as well as for their bodies, the healing power of the great Physician with whom there is nothing impossible.

To illustrate the terrible dangers to which our brave sailors are exposed, and to show how the Lord's protecting care is signally displayed with regard to some, I mention the following two cases. Both men belong to an island which has sent a large number of men to the Navy. The first was instrumental in sinking a submarine which attacked his ship, and he was handsomely rewarded for this deed. He was less fortunate afterwards, for the vessel on which he served was torpedoed and sank in a few minutes. All on board were soon struggling in the water, but, along with several others, he managed to get into a capsized boat which they had sighted, and, for sixteen days without food or water, they drifted about helplessly. By the end of this period all were dead but this gunner and the chief officer. They were eventually picked up in a terrible condition and the gunner is now recovering.

The next case is that of a petty officer who was wrecked four times previous to the War. He obeyed the call to serve in 1914, and his first ship was blown up by a mine. He was picked up, slightly injured, and was soon back on another ship. This ship

shared the fate of the first. Several of the men were killed, and the subject of our narrative was picked up more dead than alive. His neck and one side were injured, while two fingers of one hand were shot off. A few months later he was blown up by a mine for the third time, but no one was injured. Such incidents might be multiplied, and those who experience so many hairbreadth escapes have many reasons to acknowledge the goodness of the Lord to them, and should seek to serve Him all the days of their life.

While in London, I conducted the week-night Service, in our Hall there, on behalf of Mr. M'Ewan. The most destructive air raid, so far, took place while I was in the city, but fortunately no aeroplanes attacked the quarter of the city in which I resided. I regret to record that our London congregation has suffered—since I returned home—a severe loss in the removal of Mr. Donald Sutherland, deacon, to his eternal rest. His anxiety for the cause, and his zeal in maintaining it, at all costs, practically shortened his days. Many friends will sorely miss him, and to his sorrowing widow and relatives we extend our deepest sympathy.

In concluding this report, I would desire to acknowledge the goodness of the Most High to me in sustaining me in body and soul, and in protecting me from danger during my period of service among our gallant sailors. May the Lord protect them on sea and land, and make them partakers of the eternal blessings procured by Christ for sinners!

On my own behalf, as well as on behalf of the Mission Committee, I would render thanks to my office-bearers for conducting the services during my absence from the congregation, and to Messrs. John Macdonald and John M'Aulay, Westford Inn, for free hires.

How beautifully, how satisfactorily—with what indubitable security—is our faith established on the testimony of these two witnesses—the word of promise and the word of corresponding fulfilment! How delightful to contemplate the unity of the Church of God under both dispensations—the expectant and the visited—the desolate and the sought-out not forsaken—the heir, a child under tutors and governors, till the time appointed of the Father, and the same heir, in the fulness of time, set free and rejoicing in the glorious liberty of the children of God; the first fruit holy and the lump also holy! “If ye be Christ’s, ye are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” “When,” says the Honourable Robert Boyle, “I listen to the accordant voice of all the holy prophets and of the apostles of our Lord and Saviour, methinks I stand in Jerusalem at our Lord’s triumphant entry, and hear the multitudes of those who go before and of those who follow after, crying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, to save!’”—*Dr. John Duncan (Lecture).*

One of Samuel Rutherford's Letters

(Taken from *Dr. A. A. Bonar's Edition*).

To the Parishioners of Kilmalcolm.*

[SPIRITUAL SLOTH—ADVICE TO BEGINNERS—A DEAD MINISTRY—
 LANGUOR—OBEDIENCE—WANT OF CHRIST'S FELT PRESENCE—
 ASSURANCE IMPORTANT—PRAYER MEETINGS.]

WORTHY, and Well-Beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord,—
 Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.—Your letters could not come to my hand in a greater throng of business than I am now pressed with at this time, when our kirk requireth the public help of us all. Yet I cannot but answer the heads of both your letters, with provision that ye choose, after this, a fitter time for writing. 1. I would not have you to pitch upon me, as the man able by letters to answer doubts of this kind, while there are in your bounds men of such great parts, most able for this work. I know that the best are unable; yet it pleaseth that Spirit of Jesus to blow His sweet wind through a piece of dry stick, that the empty reed may keep no glory to itself. But a minister can make no such wind as this to blow; he is scarce able to lend it a passage to blow through Him. 2. Know that the wind of this Spirit hath a time when it bloweth sharp, and pierceth so strongly, that it would blow through an iron door; and this is commonly rather under suffering for Christ than at any other time. Sick children get of Christ's pleasant things, to play them withal, because Jesus is most tender of the sufferer, for He was a sufferer Himself. Oh, if I had but the leavings and the drawing of the bye-board of a sufferer's table! But I leave this to answer yours.

I. Ye write, that God's vows are lying on you; and security, strong and sib to nature, stealing on you who are weak. I answer: 1. Till we be in heaven, the best have heavy heads, as is evident. Cant. v. 1; Ps. xxx. 6; Job xxix. 18; Matt. xxvi. 33. Nature is a sluggard, and loveth not the labour of religion; therefore, rest should not be taken, till we know that the disease is over, and in the way of turning, and that it is like a fever past the cool. And the quietness and the calms of the faith of victory over corruption should be entertained, in place of security; so that if I sleep, I should desire to sleep faith's sleep in Christ's bosom. 2. Know, also, that none who sleep sound can seriously complain of sleepiness. Sorrow for a slumbering soul is a token

* Kilmalcolm is a rural parish in Renfrewshire, and one of the most sequestered. It was once a favoured vineyard. Shortly after the Reformation, Knox dispensed the communion there when on a visit to Lord Glencairn, who resided within its bounds. In the days of the Covenant, Porterfield of Duchal, another heritor, exposed himself to much loss in maintaining the cause of truth. And, as is evident from Rutherford's letter, the number of those who feared the Lord, and thought upon His name, must have been considerable. There is nothing in history about them. "Their life was hid," but their names are in "the Lamb's Book of Life."

of some watchfulness of spirit. But that is soon turned into wantonness, as grace in us too often is abused; therefore, our waking must be watched over, else sleep will even grow out of watching, and there is as much need to watch over grace as to watch over sin. Full men will soon sleep, and sooner than hungry men. 3. For your weakness to keep off security, that like a thief stealeth upon you, I would say two things:—(1) To “want complaints of weakness” is for heaven, and angels that never sinned, not for Christians in Christ’s camp on earth. I think that our weakness maketh us the church of the redeemed ones, and Christ’s field that the Mediator should labour in. If there were no diseases on earth, there need be no physicians on earth. If Christ had cried down weakness, He might have cried down His own calling; but weakness is our Mediator’s world; sin is Christ’s only, only fair and market. No man should rejoice at weakness and diseases; but I think that we may have a sort of gladness at boils and sores; because, without them, Christ’s fingers (as a slain Lord) would never have touched our skin. I dare not thank myself, but I dare thank God’s depth of wise providence, but I have an errand in me while I live, for Christ to come and visit me, and bring with Him His drugs and His balm. Oh, how sweet it is for a sinner to put his weakness into Christ’s strengthening hand, and to father a sick soul upon such a Physician, and to lay weakness before Him to weep upon Him, and to plead and pray! Weakness can speak and cry, when we have not a tongue. “And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live” (Ezek. xvi. 6). The kirk could not speak one word to Christ then: but blood and guiltiness out of measure spake, and drew out of Christ pity, and a word of life and love. (2) As for weakness, we have it that we may employ Christ’s strength because of our weakness. Weakness is to make us the strongest things; that is, when, having no strength of our own, we are carried upon Christ’s shoulders, and walk as it were upon His legs. If our sinful weakness swell up to the clouds, Christ’s strength will swell up to the sun, and far above the heaven of heavens.

II. Ye tell me, that there is need of counsel for strengthening of new beginners. I can say little to that, who am not well begun myself: but I know that honest beginnings are nourished by Him, even by lovely Jesus, who never yet put out a poor man’s dim candle that is wrestling betwixt light and darkness. I am sure, that if new beginners would urge themselves upon Christ, and press their souls upon Him, and importune Him for a draught of His sweet love, they could not come wrong to Christ. Come once in upon the right nick and step of His lovely love, and I defy you to get free of Him again. If any beginners fall off Christ again, and miss Him, they never lighted upon Christ as Christ: it was but an idol, like Jesus, which they took for Him.

III. Whereas ye complain of a dead ministry in your bounds; ye are to remember that the Bible among you is the contract of marriage; and the manner of Christ's conveying His love to your heart is not absolutely dependent upon even lively preaching, as that there is no conversion at all, no life of God, but that which is tied to a man's lips. The daughters of Jerusalem have done often that which the watchman could not do. Make Christ your minister. He can woo a soul at a dykeside in the field. He needeth not us, howbeit the flock be obliged to seek Him in the shepherd's tents. Hunger, of Christ's making, may thrive even under stewards who mind not the feeding of the flock. O blessed soul, that can leap over a man, and look above a pulpit up to Christ, who can preach home to the heart, howbeit we were all dead and rotten.

IV. So to complain of yourselves, as to justify God, is right; providing ye justify His Spirit in yourselves. For men seldom advocate against Satan's work and sin in themselves, but against God's work in themselves. Some of the people of God slander God's grace in their souls; as some wretches used to do, who complain and murmur of want ("I have nothing," say they; "all is gone, the ground yieldeth but weeds and windlestraws"), whenas their fat harvest, and their money in bank, maketh them liars. But for myself, alas! I think it is not my sin; I have scarce wit to sin this sin. But I advise you to speak good of Christ for His beauty and sweetness, and speak good of Him for His grace to yourselves.

V. Light remaineth, ye say, but ye cannot attain to painfulness. See if this complaint be not booked in the New Testament; and the place is like this, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I know not" (Rom. vii. 18). But every one hath not Paul's spirit in complaining: for often, in us, complaining is but an humble backbiting and traducing of Christ's new work in the soul. But for the matter of the complaint; I would say, that the light of glory is perfectly obeyed in loving, and praising, and rejoicing, and resting in a seen and known Lord; but that light is not hereaway in any clay body. For while we are here, light is (in the most) broader and longer than our narrow and feckless obedience. But if there be light, with a fair train and a great back (I mean armies) of challenging thoughts, and sorrow for coming short of performance in what we know and see ought to be performed, then that sorrow for not doing is accepted of our Lord for doing. Our honest sorrow and sincere aims, together with Christ's intercession, pleading that God would welcome that which we have, and forgive what we have not, must be our life, till we be over the bound-road, and in the other country, where the law will get a perfect soul.

VI. In Christ's absence, there is, as ye write, a willingness to use means, but heaviness after the use of them, because of formal

and slight performance. In Christ's absence, I confess, the work lieth behind. But if ye mean absence of comfort, and absence of sense of His sweet presence, I think that absence is Christ's trying of us, not simply our sin against Him. Therefore, howbeit our obedience be not sugared and sweetened with joy (which is the sweetmeat bairns would still be at), yet the less sense, and the more willingness in obeying, the less formality in our obedience. Howbeit, we think not so; for I believe that many think obedience formal and lifeless, except the wind be fair in the west, and sails filled with joy and sense, till souls, like a ship fair before the wind, can spread no more sail. But I am not of their mind, who think so. But if ye mean, by absence of Christ, the withdrawing of His working grace, I see not how willingness to use means can be at all, under such an absence. Therefore, be humbled for heaviness in that obedience, and thankful for willingness; for the Bridegroom is busking His spouse oftentimes, while she is half sleeping; and your Lord is working and helping more than ye see. Also, I recommend to you heaviness for formality, and for lifeless deadness in obedience. Be casten down, as much as ye will or can, for deadness; and challenge that dull and slow carcase of sin, that will neither lead nor drive, in your spiritual obedience. Oh, how sweet to lovely Jesus are bills and grievances, given in against corruption and the body of sin! I would have Christ, in such a case, fashed (if I may speak so) and deaved with our cries, as ye see the Apostle doeth, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24). Protestations against the law of sin in you are law-grounds why sin can have no law against you. Seek to have your protestation discussed and judged, and then shall ye find Christ on your side of it.

VII. Ye hold, that Christ must either have hearty service, or no service at all. If ye mean that He will not have half a heart, or have feigned service, such as the hypocrites give Him, I grant you that; Christ must have honesty or nothing. But if ye mean, He will have no service at all where the heart draweth back in any measure, I would not that were true for my part of heaven, and all that I am worth in the world. If ye mind to walk to heaven without a cramp or a crook,* I fear that ye must go your lone. He knoweth our dross and defects; and sweet Jesus pitieth us, when weakness and deadness in our obedience is our cross, and not our darling.

VIII. The Liar (John viii. 44), as ye write, challengeth the work as formal; yet ye bless your Cautioner for the ground-work He hath laid, and dare not say but ye have assurance in some measure. To this I say: 1. It shall be no fault to save Satan's labour, and challenge it yourselves,† or at least examine and

* Halting of any kind.

† To anticipate Satan by jealously searching into it yourselves.

censure; but beware of Satan's ends in challenging, for he mindeth to put Christ and you at odds. 2. Welcome home faith in Jesus, who washeth still, when we have defiled our souls and made ourselves loathsome; and seek still the blood of atonement for faults little or meikle. Know the gate to the well, and lie about it. 3. Make meikle of assurance, for it keepeth your anchor fixed.

IX. Outbreakings, ye say, discourage you, so that ye know not if ever ye shall win again to such overjoying consolations of the Spirit in this life, as formerly ye had; and, therefore, a question may be, If, after assurance and mortification, the children of God be ordinarily fed with sense and joy? I answer: I see no inconvenience to think it is enough, in a race, to see the goal at the starting-place, howbeit the runners never get a view of it till they come to the rink's end; and that our wise Lord thinketh it fittest that we should not always be fingering and playing with Christ's apples. Our Well-beloved, I know, will sport and play with His bride, as much as He thinketh will allure her to the rink's end. Yet I judge it not unlawful to seek renewed consolations, providing, 1. The heart be submissive, and content to leave the measure and timing of them to Him. 2. Providing they be sought to excite us to praise, and strengthen our assurance, and sharpen our desires after Himself. 3. Let them be sought, not for our humours or swellings of nature, but as the earnest of heaven. And I think many do attain to greater consolations after mortification, than ever they had formerly. But I know that our Lord walketh here still by a sovereign latitude, and keepeth not the same way, as to one hair-breadth, without a miss, toward all His children. As for the Lord's people with you, I am not the man fit to speak to them. I rejoice exceedingly that Christ is engaging souls amongst you; but I know that, in conversion, all the winning is in the first buying, as we used to say. For many lay false and bastard foundations, and take up conversion at their foot, and get Christ for as good as half-nothing, and had never a sick night for sin; and this maketh loose work. I pray you to dig deep. Christ's palace-work, and His new dwelling, laid upon hell felt and feared, is most firm: and heaven, grounded and laid upon such a hell, is surest work, and will not wash away with winter storms. It were good that professors were not like young heirs, that come to their rich estate long ere they come to their wit; and so is seen on it. The tavern, and the card, and the harlots steal their riches* from them, ere ever they be aware what they are doing. I know that a Christ bought with strokes is sweetest. 4. I recommend to you conference and prayer at private meetings; for warrant whereof, see Isa. ii. 3; Jer. l. 4, 5; Hos. ii. 1, 2; Zech. viii. 20-23; Mal. iii. 16; Luke xxiv. 13-17; John xx. 19; Acts

* Some read "ridges," *g.d.*, their acres of land.

xii. 12; Col. iii. 16, and iv. 6; Ephes. iv. 29; 1 Pet. iv. 10; 1 Thess. v. 14; Heb. iii. 13, and x. 25. Many coals make a good fire, and that is a part of the communion of saints.

I must entreat you, and your Christian acquaintance in the parish, to remember me to God in your prayers, and my flock and ministry, and my transportation* and removal from this place, which I fear at this Assembly,† and be earnest with God for our mother-kirk. For want of time, I have put you all in one letter. The rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.—
Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus, S. R.

ANWOTH, 5th August, 1639.

Brief Obituaries.

MRS. JOHN MACIVER, SCORRAIG, LOCHBROOM.

IT is with sincere regret we have to record the death of Mrs. John Maciver, Scorraig. Briefly described, she was of a meek and quiet spirit; given to hospitality; a benefactress to the needy—her left hand knowing not what her right hand did; deeply interested in the welfare of others, and a humble and unassuming Christian. She had been in failing health for some time. Latterly, she suffered great pain, which she bore patiently. The words, “for the sake of Thy grace,” and “all my desire is before Thee,” were frequently heard in her pleadings with the Lord. She longed to depart. On the 25th day of August, she was delivered from all “sorrow, crying, and pain,” and entered into the haven of Rest—Eternal Rest. Her mortal remains were interred by sorrowing friends in Dundonnell Cemetery, there to await the resurrection of the just, to whom Christ will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

We express the mind of a wide circle of friends when we desire that the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort would console her devoted and worthy husband, and affectionate family and relatives. A. S.

MRS. T. KIDD, CLARENCE RIVER, NEW SOUTH WALES.

It is with very much regret we record the death, on 9th June last, of Mrs. Kidd, Iona, Lawrence, Clarence River, N.S.W. Her death has made another great blank in our Brushgrove-Grafton Congregation. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family and relatives, and commend them to Jehovah-Rophi. A fuller notice will (D.V.) appear in a later issue. D. M'K.

* My being transferred to another part of the land.

† About this time, Rutherford (who, it will be observed from the place whence this letter is dated, was now relieved from confinement at Aberdeen) had received two separate calls, one from Edinburgh, to become one of the city ministers, and the other from St. Andrews, to the theological chair in that University. These competing calls were to come before the Assembly.

An Taillear Russenach.

(Air a leantuinne o t. d. 75.)

A LEUGHADAIR, smuainich ciod an t-ath-leasachadh bheusan a thachairadh san t-saoghal, nan leanadh ar luchd-oibre, ar marsandan, agus ar luchd-céirde, an eiseimpleir so !

Rinn an rannsachadh so a thrèorachadh gu ni eile fhaotainn a mach. Fhuair e mach, cha-n e mhàin cò a b'urrainn leughadh, ach mar an ceudna co nach b'urrainn, agus air an son-san cheann-aich e leabhraichean litrichean (litreachaidh, *spelling books*), agus chuir e na leughadàirean g' an teagasg ; oir chuir e roimhe mar an ceudna nach biodh duine no giullan anns an obair aige, do nach b'aithne leughadh, as eugmhais a bhi iar an teagasg.

A bhàrr air so uile, chaith e mar bu trice leth-uair anns an fheasgar maille riutha, a' leughadh agus a' mineachadh nan scriobtuirean. Bha an sealladh so araon neo-chumanta, taitneach, agus drùigheach ; chomharaicheadh an seann duine a mach caibideal, an sin leughadh iad uile an rann ceudna, gach fearr 'na chainnt fèin, agus an sin bheireadh am maighstir dhoibh mineachadh aithghearr air anns a' chainnt Russaich, a thuigeadh gach aon diù. Air an dòigh so thàinig atharrachadh cho mòr air an teaghlach 's a thàinig air a' mhaighstir. An àite a bhi air a thruaillleadh le obair shaoghailta air la an Tighearna, 's ann a bha nise a h-uile la mar la sàbaid. Bha ùrnuigh, agus moladh agus oideachas diadhaidh iar a chumail air adhart gu lathail. Bha guth àioibhneis agus buidheachais, agus molaidh, iar a chluinntinn ann am pàillinn an ionracain.

Rè an ath dha bhliathna, cha b' aithne dhomh duine air bith a leugh uibhir de Bhiobull ri Mr. B—— agus bha a thoilintinn air uairibh cho ard 's gu-m faoidteadh a ràdh gu-n robh “aoibhneas aige a' dol thar labhairt agus lan de ghloir” (1 Pead. i 8). Rinn a dhiadhachd e 'na dhuine sona. O'n àm so, chum mi suil air fàs a dhaidhachd le teann chùram agus tlachd. Cha bu chùis chumanta a bha 'na iompachadh, agus is minic a rinneadh mo chridhe subhach leis na beachdan mòrdhalach agus glòrmhor a bha aige mu thimchioll an Tighearna Iosa Criosd. Bha e 'na choigreach air na barailean còistritheach a bhios aig daoineibh mu phuncaibh creidimh. Tharruing e a dhiadhachd gu dìreach as a' Bhiobull, agus bha e an dùil gu-m feumadh a h-uile duine smuaintean agus faireachainnean a bhi aige, cosmhuil ris mar a bha aige fein ; ach air feasgar àraidh fhuair se e fèin ann am mearachd. Aig dha bhi a' siubhal dhachaidh o'n Aoradh fhollaiseach maille ri Sassonnach a bha 'na leth. Shoichineach* (*Socinian*) thòisich còmhraidh eatorra mu dhéibhinn na searmoin. “Ciod e do bheachd oirre?” arsa mo charaid. “Mo bheachd

* Soichineach (a Socinian) aon de luchd-leanmhuinn Shoichinuise (Socinus), muinntir a tha ag aicheadh Diadhachd an t-Slanuighear, agus nach 'eil a' creidsinn teagasg na Trionaid, a' cumail a mach nach 'eil ach aon phearsa san Diadhachd.

oirre," arsa an Sassonach, "cuime is e mo bheachdsa gu robh mòran tuille 's a' chòir mu thimchioll Chrìosd innte." Chuir so clisgeadh air. Stad e, agus ghlaodh e mach, "Tuille 's a' chòir mu Chrìosd, a dhuine! tha thu a' cur oilt orm. Tuille 's a' chòir mu Chrìosd, a dhuine! Is è na h-uile ni dhòmh-sa:—gliocas agus fireantachd, naomhachd agus saorsa. (1 Cor. i. 30.) Tuille 's a' chòir mu Chrìosd, cuime, seinnidh mi a chliù gu bràth."

Air an latha màireach ghairm e ormsa dh'fheòraich an robh iad lionmhor aig an robh beachdan cho suarrach mu dhéibhinn a Shlànuighear, agus thuirt mi ris, "Gu robh." "Mo thruaighe!" arsa esan, "Gu bheil daoine cho dall. A' gabhail orra féin a bhi glic, rinneadh amadain diùbbh. Cha-n ioghnadh ged nach 'eil iad sona."

Tha so a' feuchainn duinn an tobair uaignich as an robh a shonas a' sruthadh. Thug Dia dha sòlas daingean agus deu dhòchas tre ghràs agus dh' imich e air a shlighe a' deanamh gàirdeachais. Cha b' urrainn e ach a bhi sona: agus tha mi gu fìor a' creidsinn gu-m biodh crìosdaidhean am bidheantas mòran nas sona na tha iad nan smuainicheadh iad na bu mhò mu Chrìosd, agus na còraichean a tha aig Crìosd orra.

Ach ged a bha e sona gidheadh cha robh e sàthach. Theagamh gu measar so 'na bhàrail an aghaidh fìrinn; ach ni mi a mhin-eachadh. Bha e a' creidsinn gu robh airde, agus doimhne, agus fad, agus leud, ann an gràdh, Chrìosd, air nach d' fhuair e eòlas fathast, ach air an robh e an ro gheall eòlas fhaotainn; uime sin, cosmhuil ri neach a' ruith ann an rèis, bha e daonnan a' dian-ruith a chum a' chomharaidh air son na duais. Air an aobhar so bha e anabarrach dicheallach an dleasdanasaihb cràbhach, ge b'e uair a gheibheadh e cothrom. Car uime bheag anns an t-samhradh chaidh mi mach do'n dùthaich maille ri mo theaghlach astar naoi mìle, agus chum mi aoradh air feasgar seachduine ann an seòmòr. Air aon de na h-amannaibh sin, dìreach mun do thòisich an t-aoradh, faicear mo charaid a' tighinn a stigh. Thubhairt mi ris, "Tha astar fada an so dhuit ri thighinn, a charaid; tha mi an dòchas gu'n coinnich Dia riut agus gu-m beannaich e thu." "O a mhaighstir," fhreagair esan, "Choinnich Dia, rium air an t-slighe, agus thàinig e maille rium, air chor as gu bheil mi cheana iar mo dheu phàigheadh air son tighinn." Is ann mar so a chaith e a bheatha; ionnus aig an tigh agus uaithe, a stigh agus ri taobh an rathaid mhòir, gu robh e cosmhuil ri bhi a' mealtainn mothachadh cunbhalach air làthaireachd Dhè.

Is minic a smuainich mi' an àm a bhi beachdachadh air iompachadh iongantach an duine so, gu robh ann-san iar a shamhlachadh a mach cainnt a' bhàird.

"Fasaidh leomhuinn 's beistean allaidh,
Mar na h-uain gun chron, gun dolaidh."

Iadsan nach robh eòlach air gus o cheann beagan bhliathnachan, is deacair dhoibh a thuigsinn ciod a' ghnè dhuine a bha ann an uair a thuirt e gu feargach rium-sa, "Am faca tu Dia riabh?"

Ach daoine neo-dhiadhaidh d' am b' aithne e 'na staid neo-iompaichte, ghabh iad iongantas anabarrach ris an atharrachadh a thàinig air. Fòghnaidh aon saimpleir dhuinn. Chaidh duine uasal àraid à Russia, a thuineachadh do Shasonn, agus phill e dhachaidh air samhradh éigin a dh' fhaicinn a sheann chàirdean. Bha an long anns an do sheòl e iar a riaghladh le Caiptein a bhiodh ag ùrnuigh, agus a bha a' cumail aoraidh Dhè gach latha ann an seòmar na luinge. Cha b' urrainn an tais-dealach uasal gun a bhi làthair aig àm na h-ùrnuigh, ged nach robh e ro dhèigheil oirre; gu dearbh is minic a bha i 'na h-aobhar cònnasachaidh, anns am feuchadh an duine uasal ri diadhaidheachd a' chaiptein a thionndadh gu neo-brìgh, le gàire-fanoid. Fa dheireadh chriochnaich e an taisdeal (an cuan-thurus), agus chaidh an duine uasal ann am Bata-toite gu ruig baile St. Petersburg (Petrograd).

B' àbhaist do Mhr. B—— roimh so a bhi tàillearachd dha, agus thaoghail e aige, agus labhair e mu na fasanaibh, agus mhionnaich e, etc., etc.

Uair-éigin de 'n t-saoghal b'è so dìreach a' cheart ni a thaitneadh ri mo charaid, ach a nise chaill e a thlachd d'a leithid sin de chòmhradh. Cha'n e mhàin gu robh e neo-thaitneach, ach mar an ceudna bha e oilbheumach dha. Dh'fhoillsicheadh gràs slàinteil Dhé dha, a' teagasg dha mi-dhiadhachd agus ana-mianna saoghalta àicheadh, agus a' bheatha a chaitheadh gu stuama, gu co-thromach, agus gu diadhaidh anns an t-saoghal agus dh'innis e so gu saor do'n duine uasal, agus thairg e caibideal a leughadh dha, ni nach b' urrainn e a dhiùltadh. An sin thairg e ùrnuigh a dheanamh maille ris, ni nach b' urrainn e a dhiùltadh. Lion an sealladh so e le h-iongantas. Cha b' urrainn dà gaireachdainn a nis. Dhruigheadh air cho mòr as gu-n do rannsaich e air son a' chaiptein, agus gu'n d' aithris e dha an gnothach uile, ag ràdh, "Nise tha fios agam gu bheil cinntealas ann an diadhaidheachd. Mum faca mi an Tailleair Russach, bha mi am barail gu robh sibhse a's luchd-cràbhaidh ann 'nur cealgairibh uile gu lèir; ach cha-n urradh mi bhi sa' bharail sin nas mò. Is eudar dhuit dol maille rium agus an duine fhaicinn." Dh' aontaich an caiptein ri so, agus an deigh sin dh'innis e dhomh-sa an sòlas mor a dh' fhairich e ann an comunn an t-seann duine mhaith sin. O ciod an tròcair a tha ann, a bhi comasach air a leithid de fhianuis dhileas a thogail air son Dhé! Ciod an tròcair a bhi comasach air a leithid a dh-fhianuis a shuidheachadh ann an uchd duine neo-iompaichte! Ciod am mineachadh a tha 'n so air an earrainn sin. Gu ma h-ann mar sin a dhealraicheas ar solus am fianuis dhaoine chum gu faic iad bhur den oibre, agus gu-n toir iad glòir do bhur n-Athair a ta air neamh!" (Mat. v. 16).

Mar a bha e a' cinntinn eòlach air a Bhiobull, thréoraicheadh e a stigh do shaoghal ùr. Chaill e a thlachd de "shòlasaibh a' pheacaidh," ach rinn na nithean a fhuair e mach anns a' Bhiobull a lionadh gu minic le àrd-aobhneas. 'Se mo bharail nach 'eil aig

muintir a tha eòlach air na scriobtuiribh o'n leanabaidheachd, breithneachadh sam bith, air an t-sòlas, air an ioghnadh, agus air an iongantas a bhriseas a stigh air inntinn duine a chluinneas air son a' cheud uair rè a bheatha eachdraidh dhrùighteach ar Tighearna, agus ar Slànuighear. B'e so cor mo charaid. Bha e iar a bhreith a ris an uair a bha e aosmhar, agus maille r'a nuadh bhreith thòisich e air a' Bhiobull a leughadh; agus thaoghail e gu minic ormsa a dh' aithris domh nan taisbeanadh glòrmhor a fhuair e: agus an déigh an aithris, dh' fhoighnicheadh e dhìomsa le simplidheachd leinibh bhig, "An cuala tu riabh ni air bith cho taitneach roimhe?" An seann duine gaolach! Bha e uile ùr dhàsan, agus shaoil leis gu-m b'èigin da uile bhi ùr dhòmhsa mar an ceudna! Ach mo thruaigh! an coimeas ris-san bha mise cho cleachdta ris na nithibh so, 's gu robh' mo chion mothachaidh gu minic a' toirt orm criothnachadh. Och nach sona a bhitheamaid nam b' urrainn duinn ùraireachd nan ceud fhaireachdainnean drùighteach a ghleidheadh nar n-inntinnibh!

Ach cha b'e am Biobull a mhàin an leabhar as an robh e a' foghlum. Bha e 'na sheillean spioradail. Thionail e mil o na h-uile plùran. Faic saimpleir dhe sin o na leanas. Nuair a bha mi aig àm àraidh a' searmonachadh do mhuinntir òga, mhòl mi dhoibh iad a thasgadh leis na briathraibh so.

"Cha-n fhaigheadh cogais chiontach sith,
 Cha nighteadh chaoidh a sal
 Le fuil nan ainmhidh dh' iobradh suas
 Air altairibh o shean.
 Ach thionndaidh Crìosd an t-Uan o neamh
 Air falbh gach uile chiont';
 Tha iobairt-san nas airde glòir,
 Tha luach nas mo 'na fhuil."

Ghabh an seann duine sanas o so, agus dh' ionnsuich e an laoidh; an sin thainig e far an robh mi, ag ràdh, "dh' ionnsaich mi an laoidh." "Ciod an laoidh?" "Cuime tha an laoidh a mhol thu do'n mhuinntir òga ionnsachadh; agus smuainich mi, ma tha i maith air an son-san gu feum i bhi maith air mo shonsa mar an ceudna. An abair mi i?" "Dean, ma 's e do thoil e." Mar sin thòisich e agus chaidh e air adhart gu misneachail leis a' cheud agus leis an dara rann, ach ann an aithris an treas rann thainig reachd 'na ghuth, agus ann an aithris a' cheathramh ràinn.

"Nuair shellas mi gu tric ais
 Air eallach throm gach ciont',
 A ghiulaineadh leat air a' chrann;
 Ma chionta chi mi 'n sin."

Bhrùchd a dheòir a mach, agus cha b' urrainn e dol air adhart na b' fhaide. Bha so dhòmhsa 'na shealladh tiomachail agus drùighteach: a cheann liath, a ghuth critheanach, a shùil dhall, a thuil dheur, agus eud naomh, bha iad so uile cuideachd a' deanamh an t-seallaidh so 'na shealladh cho taitneach 's air an robh mi fianuiseach riabh. Bu mhiann leam a nise gu faiceadh mo leughadair e iar a chleachadh ann an obair bheannaichte bhi

sgaoileadh mu'n cuairt firinn Dhé. Theirear gu tric gu bheil seirc a' toiseachadh aig an tigh, ach cha-n 'eil i a' stad an sin. B'e so cor Mhr. B——. B'e cheud chùram a h-uile dicheall a dheanamh a chum a ghairm agus a thaghadh a dheanamh cinn-teach. A ris thainig cùram a theaghlaich: an sin thainig cùram a' choithionail, agus an sin thainig cùram a h-uile duine air am b' urrainn e ruigheachd. A chum gu-n ruigeadh e air an t-seòrsa mu dheireadh, chleachd se e féin glé mhòr ann an sgapadh leabhraichean beaga agus cuibhrionnau de'n Bhiobull, agus bha e ro sheòlta gu ràidean a dhealbh air son an sgaoileadh mu'n cuairt.

Air làithibh àraid is gnath leis an luchd-céirde ann am baile mòr an Ìmpire coinneachadh ann an Talla-nan-Comunn,* a chum gu-n cuireadh gach luchd-céirde air leth air adhart gnothaichean an Comuinn eadar-dhealaichte féin. Bu làithean fogharaidh iad so do'n t-seann duine mhàith. Là no dhà roimh choinneachadh nan Comunn, thigeadh e do mi ionnsuidh-sa ag ràdh, "Tha mi ag iarraidh beagan de leabhraibh ann an caochladh chànanèan. Tha latha mòr a' dèl a bhi againn an diugh ann an Talla-nan-Comunn (Guildhall) agus is miann leam deù-fheum a dheanamh de'n chothrom. Thabhair dhomh uibhir 's a's urrainn thu de leabhraibh air son Ìmpireil," (mu thuaiream Gini). An sin an uair a bhiodh an gnothach thairis, thigeadh e do m' ionnsuidh a thoirt domh sgeil: "Obair uamhasach an dé, a mhaighstir, aig Talla-nan-Comunn." "Ciod a bha ann?" "Ghabh cuid de mhuinntir na leabhrran agus reub siad 'nam bloighdibh iad, 'gan saltairt f'an cosaibh fa chomhair mo shùl. Ghabh cuid eile na leabhrran agus thilg siad ann am aodunn iad, ag ràdh, 'Ciod an gnothach a tha agad-sa ri mo chreideamh-sa?' Rinn cuid eile an tilgeil anns an teine: ach cha-n 'eil mi iar mo dhi-mhisneachadh, a mhaighstir. Feuchaidh mi ris a ris aig an ath choinneamh, cha toir mi thairis am feasd. Och cha tabhair! cha-n 'eil a h-aon dìth a bha 'na pheacach co mòr rium féin. Agus ma b' urrainn do'n Tighearna Iosa Crìosd e féin ioraslachadh gu greim a dheanamh air mo leithid-sa de sheann cheannairceach, agus mo chridhe atharrachadh, am bheil thu am barail gu-n caill mi mo mhisneach? Cha chaill. Ni mi obair airson Chrìosd gu latha mo bhàis!"

Nach robh so Abstolach? Bha fios aige gu robh an tròcair cheudna a chaidh bhuileachadh airson leòr fhoghainteach a thaiseachadh nan cridheachan bu chruaidhe, agus a ghlanadh nan cridheachan bu truailidhe; air an aobhar sin cha do chaill e riabh a mhisneach. Gun amharus rinneadh e gu buileach 'na fhear-cuideachaidh air son Comuinn nan Leabhrran (Tract Society), agus air son Comuinn a' Bhiobuill (Bible Society).

Bha a chaoimhneas do m' thaobhsa mòr agus cunbhalach. Bhuilich e orm gu bunailteach gach bliadhna còta ùr mar

* Talla-nan-Comunn, Guildhall, Talla no aite far an abhaist do chomunn-aibh an luchd-céirde eadar-dhealaichte, mar tha saoir, clachairean agus taillean, etc., coinneachadh ann an aon chuideachd mhoir a chur an comhairle ri cheile cia mar a chuireas iad rian air an gnothaichibh.

gheanmaith, agus nuair a thug e dhomh an còta deireannach labhair e na briathran comharaichte so : “So dhuit, a mbaighstir, gabh so mar chombarradh air mo ghràdh ; agus cuimhnich gu bheil e 'na Bhuaidh-shuaicheantas (trophy) air gràs Dé cho mòr ris na h-iodholaibh a chaidh a chur dhachaidh à eilean Tahiti.*”

O ciod an t-aobhneas a bhios air na h-iompachanaibh Tahiteach a' coinneachadh ris an t-seann tàilleir Russach so an làthair Rìgh-chathrach Dhé ! ciod an t-àrd-shòlas a bhios òrra le chéile a' seinn na co-sheirm so, “Is airidh an t-Uan a chaidh a mharbhadh air cumhachd agus saoihbheas agus glìocas, agus neart, agus uram, agus glòir, agus moladh, fhaotainn. Oir shaor e sinne do Dhia le fhuil féin, as gach tréibh, agus teanga, agus sluagh, agus cinneach !” (Taisbean v. 12, 9).

Nach iomadh leasan a ghabhadh foghlum o eachdraidh ghoirid an t-seann duine mhàith so !

I.—Tha aobhar misnich an so dhoibhsan a tha ag oidhirp-eachadh ri seann pheacaich a threòrachadh gu aithreachas. Peacach iompachadh o sheacharan a shlighe agus mar so anam a theàrnadh o'n bhàs, agus folach a chur air mòran pheacanna, is obair mhòr sin, ach tha iomadh deacaireachd fhuathasach anns an rathad. Am faod an t-Etiopach a chraicinn a mhùthadh ? An urrainn iadsan a tha cleachdta ri olc maith a dheanamh ? Am bheil e comasach beusan thri fichead bliathna atharachadh gu h-iomlan, agus an seann duine a dheanamh 'na chreutair nuadh ? Och ciod an obair a tha'n so ! Cò a ta foghainteach air son nan nithe so ? Ris gach neach a chi na duilheadasan so theirinn, “Glac misneach.” Faic am peacach aosda so, agus imich air d' adhart ann ad oidhirpibh, gun a bhi idir fo amharus. Cha-n urrainn thu tachairt air aon duine nas neo-chosmhuile ri fàs 'na Chriosdaidh firinneach agus dùrachdach na bha esan aon uair. Smuainich air cruadhas agus doille a chridhe nuair a thubhairt e riumsa, “Am faca tu Dia riabh ?” agus an sin amhairc air a' teagasg a luchd-oibre, a' cathachadh ris an t-Soichineach (Socinian), agus a' feuchan ri ceudan iompachadh mar chòmbhlath : agus an sin abair, “am bheil ni sam bith tuille 's cruaidh air an Tighearna ?” Och cha-n 'eil ! Air an aobhair sin iarr a mach a' mhuinntir is ro mhiosa ann ad choimhearsnachd agus stiùir iad a dh' ionnsuidh Uan Dé a tha toirt air falbh peacaidh an t-saoghail. Cuimhnich gur ann a rèir mar is miosa a tha neach sam bith a's mò a tha dh' fheum aige air do chòmhndadh-sa : agus mar is faide air aghaidh ann an aois am peacach, gur ann a's mò a tha dh' fheum aige air còmhndadh grad, gun dàil. Nam faicheadh tu duine a' dol fodha ann an abhain, thuigeadh tu 'nam bu mhiann leat còmhndadh a dheanamh ris, gu-m b'èigin duit a dheanamh gu luath, no gu-m biodh e tuille 's amnoch. Is ann dìreach mar sin a tha cor pheacach aosmhor. Mur tèarnar a nis iad cha tèarnar a chaoi iad. Bidh iad gu h-aithghearr as an t-sealladh.

* Tahiti aon de eileanaibh Australia a chaidh iompachadh leis an t-soisgeal o iodhol-aoradh.

II.—Tha an t-atharrachadh sona a thàinig air an t-seann duine so 'na aobhar misnich do sheann pheacaich eile gus am beannachd ceudna iarraidh.

Thà, mo sheann chàirdean, so 'na aobhar mòr mhisnich dhuibhse, chum nach caitheadh sibh bhur beatha na b' fhaid mar a rinn sibh cheana, ach a nis aig an aon uair deug gun iarradh sibh tròcair. Tha ann cean liath 'na chrùn glòire, ma gheibhear e ann an slighe na fireantachd: ach nach uamhasach an sealladh peacach le cheann liath, mi-ullaichte air son a' bhàis neo-ùghimichte air son néamh.

B'e so aon uair cor mo sheann charaid ann an Russia; ach thréig e a pheacanna. Dhealaich e ri a chompanachaibh peacach. Thilg se e féin air tròcair Chrìosd air son slainte. Bu taitneach leis dol a thaobh o'n t-saoghal agus a chridhe a dhòrtadh a mach ann an ùrnuigh an lathair an Tighearna; air an dòigh so dh'fhàs e féin sona, agus an sin shaothraich e gus na h-uile mu'n cuairt da a dheanamh sona mar an ceudna. Rinn e dearmad air nithibh naomh an uair a bha e òg, ach a nise chuir e roimhe obair a dheanamh air son Dhé an uair a dh' fhas e aosmhor. Bha fios aige nach robh aige ach ùine gheàrr gu obair a dheanamh, agus rinn e mar a b' fhearr a b' urrainn da, agus dh' oibrich e mòran ann am beagan ùine. Cha robh ni sam bith cosmhuil ri atharrachadh o rùn. Nuair a choinnicheadh e ri dorradasaibh 's ann a dheanadh iad a bhrosnachadh gu bhi na bu ghniomhaiche. “Cha-n 'eil mi iar mo dhi-misneachadh,” theireadh e, “cha toir mi thairis a chaoidh. Cha tabhair! Ni mi obair air son Chrìosd gu latha mo bhàis.” Agus nach bu chòir d'a eiseimpleir-san thusa mhisneachadh gu dhol agus deanamh mar an ceudna? Ma rinn Dia tròcair airsan, nach deanadh e tròcair ortsa nan iarradh tu air sin? Ma rinn Dia esan sona, nach deanadh e sona thusa mar an ceudna, nan deanadh tu ùrnuigh ris? Ma rinn Dia esan feumail, nach deanadh e feumail thusa cuideachd nan iarradh tu sin air, agus nan gnàthaicheadh tu na meadhoinean a shònraich Dia air son maith a dheanamh? Gun teagamh dheanadh e sin, O uime sin cuir a' chùis an dara taobh. Nuair a tha Iosa 'gad ghairm freagair thusa. Nuair a tha Iosa 'gad chuireadh ruith thusa d'a ionnsuidh. Nuair a tha Iosa a' tairgseadh maitheanas saor, sin thusa a mach do làmh gus a ghabhail, agus iar dhuit fhaotainn, an sin seinn gu h-àrd, “O Thighearna molaidh mi thu; ged a bha fearg ort rium, gidheadh a nise tha do chorrach iar a' tionndadh air falbh agus tha thu a' toirt co-fhurtachd dhomh. Feuch, is e Dia mo Shlàinte, cha bhi eagal orm.”

III.—Tha ceann-aobhair gasda an so air son beachd-smuain-eachaidh do luchd-cèirde òga chràbhach.

Air maduinn àraid an uair a choinnich mi e thubhairt e rium, “Tha iomaguin mhòr orm mu dhéibhinn anamanna mo chuid ghilleann, innis dhomh ciod is urrainn mi dheanamh air son an anamanna.” Smuainichibh air so. Och ciod an t-atharrachadh a thigeadh air Breatuinn gu luath nam biodh a h-uile fear-cèirde

diadhaidh innte a' faireachdainn mar a bha an duine so. Ciod gus an do thredraich iomaguin e? Innsidh mo leabhraan sin duibh. Agus is gannachunnaic mi duine riabhaig an robh "faireachdainnean dùrachdach," nach d' thàinig nithean maithe gu crìch.

Tha Mata Mac Eanraic * ag radh gu-n "Toir faireachdainnean druigh-teach a mach briathraan dian," agus chi sinn gu bheil so fìor o chleachdadh an t-seann duine mhaith so. Agus ma rinn esan 'na shean aois uibhir a dhealbh agus a thoirt gu crìch, cia mòr a's mò na sin a dh'fhaodas sibhse a dheanamh, a tha an tràsa ann am maduinn no meadhon-latha bhur beàtha? Feuchaibh ris, seadh feuchaibh ris agus "ge b'e ni a gheibh do lamh ri dheanamh, dean e le d' uile neart," a' gabhail eisempleir o rùn an t-seann duine. "Ni mi obair air son Chrìosd gu latha mo bhàis."

Literary Notices.

Christ and the Sabbath. By the Rev. THOMAS MATTHEW, Original Secession Church, Kilwinning. Published by request of the Edinburgh Working Men and Women's Christian Sabbath Society, and to be had from Mr. John Youngson, 17 Blackfriars Street, Edinburgh. Price, 1d. each; postage of one to three copies, ½d.

We have much pleasure in commending this pamphlet by the Rev. T. Matthew to our readers. It embodies a Lecture delivered by Mr. Matthew in Edinburgh, in which he handles, in a very able, clear, and convincing manner, the teaching of Christ on Sabbath observance. It is one of the best statements of the truth upon the subject in brief compass that we have seen in recent years, and in our judgment it is exceedingly suitable for general circulation, as its readable and persuasive style, accompanied by sound argument, is well fitted to convince and win gainsayers. We make no quotations, but leave the pamphlet to the personal examination of its purchasers. We bespeak for it a wide and extensive circulation, and trust the divine blessing may make it a useful help to the promotion of truth that is much needed in the present day. Many seem to imagine that Christ has abolished the Fourth Commandment, but they are greatly mistaken, as Mr. Matthew very plainly shows. And this is better a thousand times for the individual and the world at large.

A Brief Memoir of James M'Innes.—This little Memoir, which was written in 1862 by the late Rev. J. M. M'Pherson, of Killean, Argyll, is reprinted. It contains the very impressive testimony of a boy who died at seven years of age. Fuller notice will (D.V.) appear next month. Copies may be had from Messrs. Carruthers & Sons, "The Courier" Office, Inverness, or Miss Maclean, 12 High Street, Dingwall—Price, 1d. each; postage, ½d. extra; 12 copies, post free. Copies circulated to Soldiers and Sailors, *free of charge*.

* Matthew Henry.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

MR. ALEXANDER MACGILLIVRAY, General Treasurer, Woodbine Cottage, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following donations up to 20th September:—

SUSTENTATION FUND.

Per Mr. D. Macmaster, Corpach—"Free Presbyterians," Kilmallie, £10; Mr. A. Grewar, Hughton, Beaully, 5/; Aultbea postmark, £1; J. M., Bk., £5; Per Mr. D. Alexander—Keiss Village, Caithness, £1; Per Rev. J. S. Sinclair—Miss Macphail, Ardrishaig, 7/6, Mr. D. Morrison, Saskatoon, Sask., £1 2/, and Mrs. Macdougall, Badnabay, Reay Forest, by Lairg, 10/.

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BIBLES FOR SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.—Captain D. Gillanders, Fernabeg, Shieldaig, 2/6.

Per Rev. J. S. Sinclair:—*Sustentation Fund*—R. Macfarlane, Benbecula, 5/. *Mission to Forces Fund*—"Free Presbyterian," Clachan, Raasay, 5/.

The Editor of Magazine (Rev. J. S. Sinclair) acknowledges, with thanks: *For Bibles to Soldiers*—Sinclair Murray, Scotsalder, 10/; Miss B. Macrae, Gelantipy, Australia, 2/. *For Comforts for Forces*—Nurse E. Murray, Seventh General Hospital, France, 5/; D. Morrison, Saskatoon, Sask., 10/. *For Kafir Bibles*—"A Friend," 4/4, and Miss Mary Munro, 4/, both Simcoe, Ontario.

The Treasurer of the Dingwall Congregation (Mr. Murdo Urquhart, Craig View) acknowledges, with thanks, 10/ from Mr. J. Macbeath, Lonbain, Arrina, Ross, and 10/ from Mr. Hugh Mackenzie, Kincardine, Ontario, per Rev. J. S. Sinclair, for Dingwall Manse Building Fund.

Church Notes.

Communion.—Tolsta (Lewis), first Sabbath of October; Gairloch (Ross), and Ness (Lewis), second; Scourie (Sutherland), third; Lochinver (Sutherland), and Wick (Caithness), fourth. Oban, first Sabbath of November; St. Jude's, Glasgow (Jane

Street, Blythswood Square), second; Dornoch and Helmsdale (Sutherland), third; Halkirk (Caithness), fourth.

Notice by Western Presbytery.—The Western Presbytery requests those congregations under its jurisdiction, which have *not* sent in their annual financial statements, to do so immediately to the Clerk of Presbytery, Rev. Neil Macintyre, F.P. Manse, Stornoway.

The London Mission.—Mr. Angus Fraser of Glasgow (recently at Stratherrick) has succeeded Mr. M. Macewan, missionary, at our London Mission. We express the hope that those in London, who come from our congregations in Scotland, will show their interest more and more in the Mission. It is not without much difficulty at times that supplies can be spared from Scotland, and they, who ought to know the value of a place of sound truth and worship, and neglect the same, incur a solemn responsibility. The maintenance of the Mission is an unselfish effort on the part of the Free Presbyterian Church for the spiritual good of Scottish strangers in the great metropolis, and it deserves all the support it can get. For address, see Magazine cover.

Mission to Naval Men in England.—We understand that the Rev. D. A. Macfarlane, M.A., of Lairg, is to be succeeded by the Rev. J. R. Mackay, M.A., of Inverness, for a period in this Mission. It falls to our deputy to visit sick and wounded men at Hospitals, and friends at home who may desire him to make such visits, should write him to the following address: Mrs. R. Mackay's, 19 Bryanston Street, Portman Square, London, W.

Anti-Opium Protest.—Rev. Alexander Macrae, Portree, as Convener of the Religion and Morals Committee, has received replies to the Anti-Opium Protest from the President of the Board of Trade and the Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. The following is the latter's reply:—

“FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1,
28th August, 1917.

Sir,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 22nd instant, on behalf of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. In reply, I am to inform you that His Majesty's Government have communicated to the Japanese Government their desire to restrict licences for the export of Morphia from the United Kingdom to Japan and to the Kwantung Peninsula, to cases in which applications for such licences are supported by certificates granted by the proper authorities, either in Japan or in the Kwantung leased Territory, showing that the morphia is for actual consumption in Japan or in Dairen and vicinity, and is to be used for medicinal purposes only. It is hoped that, on receipt of a reply from the Japanese Government, it may be found possible to put into force the restriction mentioned in the preceding paragraph.”

The Magazine.

Notice to Subscribers.—We regret to inform our subscribers that we are under the necessity of reducing the size of the Magazine by eight pages (32 instead of 40) owing to the great rise in the price of paper. Even with this reduction, the Magazine will cost us at least £1 10s. more per month than it has hitherto done, which means a decrease in its income of £10 10s. for the remaining seven months of the current year. We think it advisable to let our readers know the facts.

Subscriptions Received for Magazine.—Miss J. Ross, Droman, Kinlochbervie, 3/; A. Clunas, Glenbush, Sask., 6/; Miss Macrae, Gelantipy, Gippsland, Australia, 3/; A. Mackenzie, 13 Coast, Inverasdale, Ross, 3/; J. Macbeath, postman, Lonbain, Arrina, Ross, 3/; Miss Ross, Abbeystone, Strone, Argyll, 1/6; J. K. Popham, Brighton, 3/; M. Beaton, Waternish, 3/; M. Cameron, Inverasdale, 3/; K. Kemp, Cullicudden Schoolhouse, Ross, 3/; J. Macinnes, Broadford, 8d.; J. Adamson, Helmsdale, 4/2; Miss B. Macdonald, 9 Errodale, Ness, 3/6; J. Macleod, Achillie, Rogart, 3/; M. Turner, Dumbarton, 10/5; J. Maciver, 3 Lochganvich, Stornoway, 3/; Capt. Macintyre, Lochyside, 3/; D. MacLennan, P.O. Box 97, Kincardine, Ontario, 3/; James Macdonald, Tigharry, N. Uist, 3/; M. Mackay, Strathy Point, 23/; Miss A. B. Macdonald, Detroit, U.S.A. (several copies), 61/7; Mrs. W. Shupe, Detroit, U.S.A., 4/; Miss Maclean, The Gate House, North Berwick, 3/; A. Macrae, Mrs. J. Macleod, and M. Matheson, Lucknow, Ontario, 3/ each; D. Morrison, Saskatoon, Sask., 3/; H. Mackenzie and Ken. Cameron, Kincardine, Ontario, 3/ each; M. Macrae, Ardree, Lochinver, 3/; Miss Grant, Caprington, Kilmarnock, 1/; Miss H. Maclean, Quay House, Tanera, 3/; N. Morrison, Kyles, by Obbe, 6/6; Sister L. Mackenzie, Ruchill Hospital, 3/; N. Campbell, Farley, Beaulieu, 3/; Miss Petrie, Kirkcaldy, 6d.; Miss C. Matheson, Bonar, 8½d.; Mrs. A. Macdonald, New Buildings, Lochinver, 3/; Mrs. J. Macdonald, 11 Flashadder, 3/; Mrs. W. Black, Melness House, by Lairg, 3/; F. Macrae, Scourie, 5/; H. Macqueen, Rothesay, 3/; Miss Macphail, Stronachullin, Ardrishaig, 3/3; H. B. Pitt, Trowbridge, 6/; J. Morrison and A. Mackenzie, H.M.S. Monitor 16, 3/ each; Mrs. J. Mackenzie, Boor, Poolewe, 3/; J. Mackay, Dalnessie, Lairg, 3/; A. Macleod, Edinbane, Skye, 1/9; M. Tucker, Trowbridge, 3/; A. MacLennan, for St. Jude's Collectors, 51/10½; J. Shaw, Glenfeshie, Kincraig, 3/; J. F. Mackay, Burk's Falls, Ontario, 3/; Mrs. C. Gillies, Arkona, Ontario, 3/; Miss Yeudall, Kingsmills Road P.O., Inverness, 15/; Captain N. A. MacEwan, E.E.F., Palestine, 6/; W. Mackay, Cowane Street, Stirling, 6/; M. Macleod, Brae, Inverasdale, 3/; Miss I. Macaskill, Winnipeg, 8/4; Mrs. Macdougall, Baidnabay, Reay Forest, by Lairg, 5/; R. Macfarlane, Benbecula, 3/; Mrs. J. Mackay, Railway Cottages, Stromeferry, 1/6.

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(Several Subscriptions, etc., held over till next month.)