

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.*

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Religious Instruction in the Schools	321
God's People Comforted: A Communion Sermon by the Late Rev. James Begg, D.D., Newington Free Church, Edinburgh ..	324
God is Able	338
History of the Shorter Catechism	339
Christian in the Valley of Humiliation Meets Apollyon, by John Bunyan	341
Martineus An Dall	346
The Late Mr James Dawson, Elder, Oban	351
John Bunyan	353
The Big Task with Small Salary Preferred	355
Notes and Comments	356
Church Notes	358
Acknowledgment of Donations	359
The Magazine	360

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Religious Instruction in the Schools.

THE question of religious instruction in the schools has always occupied a prominent place in the scheme of Scottish education. When the schools were managed by the Church, and our modern educationists should not forget that for centuries when the Church of Scotland made provision for the education of the children in Scotland, religious education formed an important part of the curriculum. Then came the 1872 Act with its "use and wont" formula and the Conscience Clause that allowed children of Jews, Roman Catholics, etc., to withdraw from such instruction if they desired. This state of things continued until 1918 when the notorious Education (Scotland) Act did away with the old order of things. In this Act provision was made for the religious teaching of the children of the transferred voluntary schools (Roman Catholic and Episcopalian) in their own faith. Such instruction was not optional, for Protestant Education Authorities were under obligation to see that such instruction must be given. But for the great bulk of Scottish children it was left with Authorities to say whether "use or wont" would be continued. Such was the Act engineered through Parliament by a Scotsman (Mr Robert Munro, now Lord Alness), and the son of a pre-Union Free Church minister. At first sight it seems almost incredible that such a thing was possible. But the Bill was passed through Parliament when the minds of the people were overwhelmed with

the War, and the few protests made were brushed aside. Owing to the requirements of the Scottish Education Department the school time is crowded with all sorts of subjects, some useful, others indifferently so, and some utterly useless, so that teachers with the very best intention find it increasingly difficult to get even a half-period a day in their time-table for giving religious instruction. This is specially the case in the secondary schools. "Use and Wont" is all right where there are teachers interested in the subject, and while we gratefully acknowledge that Scotland still possesses many such teachers there are others who, owing to their own religious beliefs, or rather want of them, would rather see religion outside the door of every school in Scotland. These exponents of the newer education are strong in advocating the training of the mind and the muscles, but hold that the soul should be severely left alone. It is the kind of godless education which the Duke of Wellington sententiously characterised as capable of turning out clever devils. Though the Scottish people have drifted down the religious stream they have not yet come to that sad pass when there is a loud cry for a godless education of the children, and may that day never come in a land whose educational system recognised religious instruction as a vital factor in the education of the young.

When the Government's proposed Local Government Bill was announced the matter of making some provision in the bill, as far as religious instruction in the schools was concerned, was brought before the Scottish Secretary. In a long letter to Dr White, Convener of the Church and Nation Committee, Sir John Gilmour makes it very plain that the new Bill makes no provision for mandatory religious teaching in the schools except for Roman Catholics and Episcopalians. The reasons advanced by the Scottish Secretary for ignoring the claims of the great body of Scottish Protestants would in equity deny to Roman Catholics and Episcopalians the privileged position they have in the 1918 Act, and which they are likely to retain in the new Act unless there is a change made when the Bill is passing through Parliament. To meet the claims of the Churches in Scotland guaranteeing that religious instruction be given in the schools all that the Bill provides for is that in the clause which says: "in all cases at least one person conversant with the custom which has

prevailed in the public schools of Scotland of giving instruction in religion to children whose parents do not object to the instruction so given." When the matter came up at the General Assemblies of the Established and United Free Assemblies in November there was a lack of firmness in dealing with the subject which was virtually playing into the Scottish Secretary's hands. Dr W. Mackintosh Mackay, Convener of the Joint Committee on Religious Instruction in Non-Transferred Schools, said he did not think that the Government had acted as fairly in regard to the matter of co-option to the Protestant Churches of Scotland as they had done to the Roman Catholics. It was most unfair that the Government should give this privilege to the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches and refuse it to the Presbyterian Churches. They did not see why the great Presbyterian Churches of Scotland should not have two co-opted members and the other denominations one. Yet like Dr White he goes no further than asking for the "safeguarding" of the present position. As a matter of the barest justice, if Roman Catholics and Episcopalians must have mandatory religious instruction, we ask on what ground is this denied to the great bulk of Scottish Protestants? Dr Mackintosh Mackay informed the Assembly that there was an invincible objection on the part of the Educational Institute of Scotland to mandatory legislation. If so, why is the Institute not agitating for the abolition of clause 18 of the 1918 Act which confers special privileges on Roman Catholics and Episcopalians? Now is the time for the Scottish people to demand their rights. If the Bill passes through, as it is drafted, the position so far as religious instruction is concerned is worse for the Scottish schools (except the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian) than it was in the 1918 Act, which sold the pass to the enemy. Lady Frances Balfour, in a letter to the "Morning Post," says: "The fiery cross is out, and the Highland host will know why special facilities are granted to Papists and Episcopalians, while Presbyterian Scotland is left out in the cold. The elections are at hand, and betrayed Scotland is preparing to vote." We advise our readers who have a vote to get into touch with their M.P. at once. At its last meeting the Northern Presbytery sent a protest against clause 18 of the Scottish Education Act of 1918 to the Scottish Secretary, and asked that provision be made in the new Bill for mandatory religious teaching in the national schools.

God's People Comforted.

A Communion Sermon

BY THE LATE REV. JAMES BEGG, D.D., NEWINGTON FREE
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"In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing."—Zeph. iii. 16, 17.

THESE interesting words, addressed originally to God's ancient people, were intended to apply to the true Israel of God in all ages. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. The words are the more remarkable, as coming after many sad denunciations against the Philistines, Moab, Ammon, Assyria, Ethiopia, and even Judah itself. All the more striking are they as contained in the very chapter in which the sins of Jerusalem are unsparingly unfolded and denounced. Jerusalem is here called the "filthy, polluted, and oppressing city," whose princes are "roaring lions, and her judges evening wolves," her "prophets light and treacherous persons," her priests men who "have polluted the sanctuary, and done violence to the law." But this is the manner of God. Just as the sound of condemnation had not ceased in Eden, till it was succeeded by the voice of mercy; just as the prophet Isaiah had no sooner, in his first chapter, exposed the wickedness of the Jews, than he said, in God's name, "Come and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow": so, no sooner had Zephaniah laid open the abounding wickedness of Judah, than he pointed forward to brighter scenes—to the returning suppliants, under the power of the Spirit, ashamed of their doings—to those who rejoiced in their pride removed—to the power of sin destroyed by the omnipotence of Divine grace, and to the full flood of Divine eternal mercy going forth towards those who were redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. "I will also leave in the midst of thee

an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid." "In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thy hands be slack. The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will rejoice over thee with singing."

The text is consolatory. Its object is to bear up and establish the souls of true Christians in faith, hope, and joy; and I trust the meditations to which it naturally leads may be found suitable on a day of high communion, when God brings His people into His banqueting-house, and says, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Open the gates of righteousness, that my people may enter in and bless the Lord. The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. Trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved. He will be thy sun and shield, giving thee grace and preparing thee for glory, and withholding no good thing from thee. Even in the wilderness a table is spread for thee in the presence of thine enemies; and, seated around that table, thou shalt experience a foretaste of thy holy joy, when thou shalt see the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off—when the wicked shall cease from troubling, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever.

There are first, however, one or two points to be clearly apprehended and fixed in your minds. This consolation is addressed only to true Christians. It is to "Jerusalem" that the admonition "not to fear" is addressed; it is to "Zion" that it is said, "Let not thy hands be slack." No encouragement is therefore given here to open transgressors or persistent backsliders. "Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" No encouragement is given to incorrigible hypocrites: "The sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites." No disguise can intercept the clear glance of Him who "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men." The encouragement is addressed only to such as have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the

Gospel—who thus stand in the same relation to God, spiritually, in which the ancient Zion stood temporally. They are His peculiar people—rescued from the spiritual Egypt, joined with Him in solemn covenant, and destined to dwell for ever in the Jerusalem above, “the mother of us all.”

All the more necessary is it to make this clear distinction, because none is so prone to take to themselves the promises of the Gospel as those to whom they clearly do not belong. The natural blindness and foolish selfishness of man is strikingly illustrated in this. Just as the man who has evidently no righteousness at all is most prone to seek heaven as a reward of his obedience, so the man who has evidently no fear of God before his eyes is most prone to appropriate to himself the promises of the Gospel. “Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked,” standing in need of all things. No! stand back, thou profane, from the sacred table; but still know that for you the Master calleth. His language is, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”

But not only is the text specially addressed to the people of God—it is spoken upon the supposition that they shall often be overwhelmed with anxiety—that they shall “fear,” and that “their hands shall be slack.” No greater mistake can exist than that of supposing that a Christian’s life is a period of continual sunshine. It is more like one of the days of this world—sometimes fair, sometimes cloudy, the clouds returning after the rain. The rainbow in the cloud is an evidence that there shall be no deluge; but certainly not that there shall be no rain. Such is the power of unbelief, even in the best—so many are the trials, temptations, and sins, to which all believers are exposed—that it will generally be found that those who have least cause for fear are most frequently under its dominion. David speaks of his heart as “overwhelmed and in perplexity.” He tells us that he “looked on his right hand and beheld”: “refuge failed him, no man cared for his soul.” Listen at the door of the closet of the daughter of Sion: “Zion saith, the Lord hath forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me.” The Church is represented as now enjoying all delight—again, in deep despondency; as going about the streets

of the city, and saying, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth! O thou whom my soul loveth, tell me where thou feedest, and where thou causest thy flock to lie down at noon. I opened to my beloved, but He was gone. My soul failed when He spake; I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called, but He gave no answer. Oh, that I were as in months past, when His candle shined upon my head. Such is the varying experience of the true members of the Christian Church. And if there is a time more than any other when Christians are apt to falter, it is when, amidst the solemnities of a Communion table, they take the cup of salvation, and eat the children's bread. Now to those in such circumstances this admonition may most appropriately be addressed, "Ye are weak, of yesterday, crushed before the moth; but the Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty. Ye are sinful dust and ashes; but the Lord is a Saviour to the uttermost. All obstacles have been removed by Him. All the claims of justice satisfied, grace now reigns through His righteousness to the eternal life of the chief of sinners. Ye are sorrowful, but He rests in His love, which is, like Himself, eternal and unchangeable; and rejoices over you, even with singing."

This brings me to the main object of this discourse, viz., to illustrate the grounds of confidence which all Christians may have in the unchanging love of their Almighty Redeemer. The whole scope of revelation is fitted to impress this truth upon our minds, as well as the whole past dealings of God with His people; from which it appears that, insignificant and guilty as they are, there has been nothing too great for the Holy One and the Just to give, or to suffer on their behalf. Let us illustrate this.

I. What are the marks of love?

Our love towards an object may be known by the direction of our thoughts; for, on the beloved object our thoughts chiefly dwell. Time and space are annihilated, and the distance only increases the flame. So the thoughts of Christ are turned towards His people, and have been from eternity: Before the depths were formed, when there were no fountains abounding with water, He was set up from everlasting, and rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and His delights were with the children of men. During all the Old Testament economy, His thoughts were constantly towards His people, when, as the Angel of the covenant, He accompanied the Israelites in all their wanderings; and when

His Spirit, by the prophets, foretold His coming and sufferings, and the glory that should follow. When the appointed time of His advent came, His thoughts were upon His Church. He saw that there was no man; He wondered that there was no intercessor. "I know the thoughts I have towards you—thoughts of peace, and not of evil." "Save from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of Me; to do Thy will I delight, O God; yea, Thy law is within my heart." I will go to yon distant world, and take the form of a servant, and pay the price, that these may go free. His thoughts were towards His Church, when on earth He went about continually doing good—gathering in the lost sheep of the House of Israel; when He said, "I ascend to my Father and your Father—to my God and your God;" when, in prayer, He cried, "Now, I am no more in the world, but these are in the world; and I come to thee, Holy Father: keep, through thine own name, those that thou hast given me, for they are thine." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." In the regions of heaven, His thoughts are still upon His people. There, He is preparing for them mansions of blessedness; thence is He continually sending the Holy Spirit to sanctify them, His angels to guard them, and making all the events of Providence to work together for their good. His unceasing occupation is to present their prayers, in the golden censer full of incense, perfumed with His infinite merits; whilst, throughout eternity, His thoughts will be on His redeemed and glorified Church. "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Our love towards an object may be manifested by our anxiety in regard to its welfare. "Deal gently," said David, "with the young man Absalom for my sake;" proving how intensely he loved that young man, wicked as he was. And so Christ overrules all events, and gives charge to His servants, the angels, that excel in glory and strength: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Not only so, but He gives solemn charge even to wicked men: "Touch not mine anointed, do my prophets no harm." He even charges Satan, binding him like waves of the sea, and saying, "Hitherto shalt thou

come, but no farther." Satan himself was convinced of this in the case of Job: "Hast thou not hedged him about, and all that he hath?" Nay, we find God threatening those who meddle with His saints: "It were better that a milestone were hanged about his neck, and be cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." We find Him, in the days of old, making the sun and moon stand still in the firmament for them; the sea stand up as an heap, that the ransomed of the Lord should pass over. The solid rock gave forth streams of water, and great laws of nature were reversed. We find Christ identifying Himself with His people. "He that receiveth you, receiveth me." "He that giveth a cup of cold water to a disciple shall in no wise lose his reward." "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

Love may be known by the extent of suffering which we are willing to undergo for the person beloved. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for a friend. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; "but God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and it seemed but a day, for the love he had for her; although the dews were upon him by night, and the sun by day. Now, Christ hath endured inconceivable agony for His Church. We may apply to Him the language of the prophet, "Behold, and see, all ye that pass by, if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger." He suffered in His body, which was agonised and nailed to the accursed tree; in His soul, which was exceeding sorrowful and sore amazed; and if we will come and see where He bled, hear His groans, and behold the place where the Lord lay after shedding that blood, every drop of which was infinitely precious, we must be convinced that there never was love like His. When Christ was about to be betrayed, He said to those who came to take Him "If, therefore, ye seek me let these go their way"—a statement which will apply to His whole Church. Cast me, like Jonah, into the sea, that all the rest may be saved; nail me to the accursed tree, spend your malice on me; I am willing to tread the winepress alone, and that of the people there shall be none with me—only let these go. Thus Christ stood between His Church and danger—He acted as the conductor upon which the

lightning of Divine vengeance might break and exhaust itself, that they might be untouched. He drank the bitter cup, that they might not taste it; He was wounded, that we might be healed; He bore away the curse, that we might carry away the blessing. There was no sorrow like His, nor any love to compare with it—I have loved thee, and given myself for thee. Hence the Apostle tries to measure this love, but his line is too short; he cannot find its height, and depth, and breadth, and length. He tries to speak of it, but language fails—it is unspeakable. He tries to know its extent, but the human mind, sustained by inspiration, breaks down in the attempt. "It passeth knowledge." Only, he infallibly concludes that the greatest evidence has been given of boundless love, and that God, who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up to the death for us, is, with Him also freely pleased to give us all things.

Our love is discerned by the prominence given to the object beloved. Solomon made a seat for his mother at his right hand. All men have some object on which they dwell with satisfaction—their wealth, their talents, their honours, their beauty. Now Christ regards the Church as the object of His chief love. That Church is His treasure. She is called "Hephzibah," for the Lord delighteth in her; she is Christ's inheritance, as it is written, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." In her he sees the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. Her glory is the joy set before Him, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame. I gave Egypt for thy ransom—Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Nay, He has built a stately palace for this Church, of which this world, with its bright canopy of sun, moon, and stars, is only the porch. He gives that Church all the advantages of time and all the blessedness of eternity, so that we may well exclaim, "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the Shield of thine help, and the Sword of thine excellency! All thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

II. Consider, again, this love, and the relationships implied in it. If we come more closely to it, and examine into the nature of this love, the statement in the text will become more clear and wonderful. God is called, in the text, "thy God"; and He is said to be "in the midst of us," and to "rejoice over us, with singing." In other words, there is a close relationship between

God and His people; He is their God, in a more peculiar sense than He was the God of the ancient Israelites. As He tabernacled of old amongst the Jews, so He dwells in them, and walks in them, and they are temples of the Holy Ghost. Nay, as the eagle fluttereth over her nest, carrieth her young upon her wings, so our Saviour God watches over His people, and rejoiceth to do them good.

Consider the names by which He is called. He is our Surety—that implies singular love. He has paid our debts hundreds of years before they were contracted—cast them behind His back, and into the depths of the sea, so that they shall never rise in remembrance against us. He is our Mediator. It was love that induced Him to undertake our otherwise desperate cause, and to stand between us and the offended majesty, justice, and truth of heaven. He is our Advocate—not a hired intercessor, who may not care for the success of his client, or a poor fallible, earthly pleader; but one whose infinite wisdom, power, and love are spontaneously put forth in our defence, and are always prevalent. He is our Captain. Shall the Captain not love His soldiers, and feel a deep interest in their success and victory? He is our Head. Shall the Head say of any of the members of the body, I have no need of thee? No man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it. He is the King of saints. Their hearts are His throne, and love is the very sceptre by which He rules them. In a word, all the names of Christ in relation to His people prove that He rejoices over them, with singing. On the other hand, consider the names by which they are called. They are His friends. “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth.” It is in this capacity that we sit at His table, and hear the invitation, Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. His is not the hollow friendship of this world, which changes like the varying sky; but Christ is “a friend that sticketh closer than a brother,” and is especially “a brother born for adversity.” When even the dearest friends on earth forget and forsake us, we have a sure refuge in Him. “When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.” We are called His children—“being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” We all know how strong a love is implied in the joy of parents. Yet this is the favourite image. Man, the prodigal son;

God, eyeing him with pity amidst all his folly; hailing the first symptoms of his return, and saying, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. It was meet that we should make merry and rejoice, for this my son was dead, and is alive again—he was lost, and is found." How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? Is Ephraim a dear son, is he a pleasant child? We are the spouse of Christ. Thou shalt say, my Maker is my Husband, the Lord of Hosts is His name. All the splendours of Eastern imagery are lavished on this glorious bride. She is perfumed with myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces. King's daughters are amongst her honourable women: on the right hand doth stand the queen, in gold of Ophir. O daughter, hearken and regard; forsake thy father's house and thine own people: so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him. Thou art beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem. Who is this that looketh forth as the morning—fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners. No greater mark of love can be imagined than this. He passes by all others, and chooses her to the most exalted place of honour, to the most endeared relationship. We are His house. Christ, as a Son in His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Now, every idea of happiness centres around our own home; humble though it may be, still it is ours, and all the objects of our most familiar and dearest affections are there. And so, when Christ called the Church His house, framed of living stones, in which are many vessels of gold and silver, but all meet for the Master's use—He intended to intimate the intense and peculiar love with which He regards His people. We are His sheep. The Shepherd defends His sheep, even at the risk of His own life, as David did against the lion and the bear. He knows them all by their names—He makes them to lie down at noon in the green pastures and beside the still waters. This great Shepherd of Israel, who slumbereth not nor sleepeth, drives away the wolves and birds of prey, gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them in His bosom, and gently leads those that are with young. His sheep know His voice and follow Him, and will not follow a stranger; and He gives them eternal life, and they shall never perish, nor shall any be able to pluck them out of His hand. He is the Good Shep-

herd: the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. Above all, we are His jewels. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." Men chiefly value their jewels, and place them in the strongest hold of their dwelling-places. The jewels of a kingdom are especially precious. They are placed in a tower of safety, railed round with iron. And, as we look at them through the iron grating, the armed guards stand round to protect them from danger. When the ambassadors and princes of other lands assemble, and a grand display is to be made of the wealth and glory of a kingdom, these jewels are brought forth, and exhibited to dazzle the foreign eyes. So, in the vast dominions of the King of kings, His redeemed children are His jewels—more precious than the topaz of Ethiopia or the fine wedge of Ophir. They are now hedged round, and all that they have. You may look on them, but, without Divine permission, you dare not touch them. Their place of defence is the munition of rocks; and when, at length, all the principalities and powers of darkness, and the kings of all lands are assembled with the mighty crowds of the judgment day, these shall be brought forth, as the trophies of His power and wonders of His kingdom—enemies made friends—souls once defiled and debased, but now elevated and made radiant as sons of the morning. Meantime is the statement true, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The love of Christ is centred upon those who are His jewels.

III. Consider what Christ has already done for His people.

They are His by choice. He chose them from eternity. I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. We must look back, through a long flight of ages, to a period before the earth was made, before the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy; and think of Christ, from the depths of eternity, choosing His people, and determining to secure their salvation. He saw us in ruin, and even then He passed by and said unto us, Live: yea, he said unto us, Live. His time was a time of love. These were the bosom thoughts of God towards His people, this the love of that glorious sovereignty, out of which the whole plan of salvation arose. Love called the world into being, that it might be a theatre of redeeming grace: love triumphs over all difficulties, and the eternity of the future is only the full

development of what was fixed and resolved upon in the eternity that is past.

They are His purchase. We love what is ours, especially what we have obtained with difficulty, especially what we have lost and then obtained again, as the poor woman rejoiced over her lost piece of money when found—as the shepherd rejoiced over his recovered sheep—as the father over the returning prodigal. Now, all we like sheep had gone astray, and are brought back with an unspeakable price—even the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.

Let us put the merits of the case thus:—The people of God were cast out and condemned. A days-man arose, but conditions must be fulfilled—He must die that we might live; He must endure the curse, if we were to inherit the blessing—endure the punishment of sin, if we were to live and reign. In a word, He must buy us, or we cannot be His. He accepts the terms, finishes transgression brings in an everlasting righteousness, offers it to us, sends ambassadors to urge it upon our acceptance, sends the Holy Spirit to change our hearts. When it is accepted, the rebels are set free—the debtors bring their books, and the pen of heaven is run through their debts, and thus God now sees no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. There is enough in reality, but in them, clothed with Christ's righteousness, the Father sees none. They are accepted in the beloved, and these clothed and justified ones all the Trinity behold with a pleasant countenance—whilst Christ sees in them of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied. Nay, strange though it may seem, the great delight of Christ is here; He taketh pleasure in His people, and will beautify the meek with His salvation; He delights to see you, to be with you, to converse with you—but for you the world would be only fit for the fire. "Let me see thy face, let me hear thy voice: For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

We are His by a new creation. David asks, "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? shall they rise and praise thee?" The question is answered in the experience of every Christian. For by him ye are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. At the omnipotent command of Jesus, Lazarus comes forth, casts off his grave clothes, and sings for joy. Man reckons it a great work to raise the sick, greater to raise the dying, a still greater to raise the actually dead—and it is the greatest of all to raise a soul "dead in trespasses and sins." But the

Almighty voice which called the universe into existence and said, "Let there be light, and there was light," can burst the barriers which shroud in darkness an immortal spirit, can lift up the everlasting doors of the human soul that the King of glory may enter in, can make the spiritual lunatic come to himself, and appear clothed and in his right mind—in a word, can make a new creation rise from the ruins of the Fall, radiant in new life and in the prospect of a blessed immortality. As God said of the first creation, it is all very good; so He regards with especial affection this new and wonderful workmanship, and "rejoices over it with singing."

We are His by covenant. We were by baptism solemnly devoted to Him, and we have now devoted ourselves. On the day when we received the truth in the love of it, our language was, "Come, let us join ourselves unto the Lord in the perpetual covenant, that shall not be forgotten." Of old, there was a solemn dedication of the Jews to God—Moses sprinkled the book and the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you"; and they said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do." And year after year, as they observed the Passover, their language was, "God is the Lord, who hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar." Here are we—thine, O David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse; what wilt thou have us to do? We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Thus we have avouched the Lord to be our God. Like wandering sheep, we have returned to the eternal fold. The meaning of our communion is, that this God shall be our God for ever and ever. Let us rest assured that He never said to any of the seed of Jacob, "Seek my face in vain." "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "This is as the waters of Noah unto me, saith the Lord; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth in judgment against thee shall I condemn." Affliction may depress, sorrows may cloud our prospects, difficulties may perplex, but, amidst them all, "look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

We are aware that, notwithstanding all these powerful reasons, such is the insidious influence of unbelief, so many swarms of "vain thoughts" not only enter, but

"lodge" in our minds., and we find God in His blessed Word seeking to drive them out. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God." They are assured that a price is paid "double," though their sins have been of the deepest dye. But this is not enough. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord? Hast thou not known that our God will abundantly pardon all who truly repent? And if any are ready to object that no man, no king, ever acted thus, God says, "My ways are not your ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts." Again: "He shall dwell on high," like the eagle, beyond the reach of assault; "his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks." But the hesitating soul may say, We may be starved there. No: your "bread shall be given." But, still, it may be argued, there is no water on the top of the rock. Yes: your "water shall be sure." Nor shall that be all: "You shall see the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off." It is added: There shall be a place of broad rivers and streams. But the hesitating soul may say, Ships may carry enemies. But this may not be: "no galley with oars nor gallant ship shall pass thereby." So, again, the Apostle says, He hath blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us. This is not enough—He hath taken it out of the way. Perhaps it may be found and read. Not at all: He hath nailed it to the cross. Nay, God not only gives His Son and His promise, but His oath: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." He heaps mountains on mountains of eternal strength; He lays heaven and earth at pledge, as it were, all to convince us. For the Word of God is a pillar of heaven, and the oath of God an eternal seal, which all creation cannot break—all to convince our doubting souls.

Above all, we have the whole past experience of the Christian Church to prove the truth of the text. We find Jacob using this argument from experience: "The God that led me and fed me all my life long until this day." When David fled from Saul, and came to the high priest, he asked for a weapon with which to defend himself. The answer was: "There is none but the sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest." "Give it to me," said David, "for there is none like it"; it is the trophy of past success and the pledge of future triumph. Thou hast been my helper, therefore will I put my trust under the shadow of thy wings. "They that know thy

name shall put their trust in thee." Why? "For thou hast not forsaken them that trust in thee." "Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them." "To Him that divided the sea, and smote great kings, for His mercy endureth for ever," is the song of David. Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?

As often as the Passover was celebrated, it was part of the duty of him who presided to detail the wonders of the love of God, beginning with Abraham, and going on to the bondage of Egypt and Israel's marvellous deliverance. And so, when we observe our New Testament Passover, we should look back over the past eternity—and, especially the six thousand years of the Christian Church—think of the millions who have drank at this fountain of redeeming love, an exceeding great multitude, which no man can number, all in glory, all singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, all monuments of eternal love. Do you doubt the Saviour's promise? Here He exposes anew the symbols of His death. Yonder are the trophies of His blessed triumph, whilst with one voice the ransomed in heaven exclaim, thou has redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every people, and kindred, and tongue, and nation.

In conclusion, the subject of our discourse is well fitted, under the power of the Spirit of God, to give an overwhelming sense of our own unworthiness, and to cast down all pride. Our language should be, We are ashamed and confounded, and will never open our mouths any more, since God is pacified towards us, notwithstanding all that we have done. It is fitted to banish all formality in worship, all unthankfulness, unfruitfulness, and hatred. "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Let us seek, whilst clothed with humility and hating all sin, to be filled with love and joy. We may well say, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." Why do ye, sons of a King, go mourning from day to day? Let us join in the glorious anthem of the Psalms: Praise Him, ye sun and moon; praise Him, ye stars of light; praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, for He spake, and ye were created. Who remembered us in our low estate; for His mercy endureth for ever. And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever. "And now, blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."

God is Able.

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you"
"My God shall supply all your need."

ANOTHER year is entered with woes and cares unknown;
Some fainting souls ask sadly "Lord, how can they be borne?"
The burden now is heavy, and giving so much pain,
That one more sorrow added would break our hearts in twain.

List! hark! across life's desert, comes floating this glad sound,
"Be strong" for "God is able to make all grace abound
Toward you" weak and tried ones, and He will bring you through
Your daily cross is balanced, by succour, sure and true.

All grace is stored in Jesus and you must prove each day
"Without me ye can nothing do" or bear, or think, or say:
Therefore this invitation "On Him cast all your care,
He careth for you" hourly, will all your burdens bear.

He knows that secret trouble, He knows that pricking thorn;
He knows that sharp temptation by which your hearts are torn,
"He remembereth we are dust, He knoweth well our frame,"
He too was tried and tempted, when here on earth, as man.

So He full well is able to give that special grace
For which you pant and pray whene'er you seek His face,
ALL grace, your God is able, is willing, to bestow,
"Not one good thing will fail you," while you dwell here below.

Then graciously He addeth another stedfast word,
"God shall supply your every need by Jesus Christ our Lord,
According to His riches laid up in glory's store"
He will forgive the sinful, He will relieve the poor.

He is the God of wisdom, of comfort, peace and power,
He is the God of patience, of love, of hope, and "More
Than we can ask or think, abundantly He gives"
Abounding grace to every one, who in His Name believes.

Each great and precious promise you read at night or morn,
The God who made the promise is able to perform:
No case howe'er peculiar, no trial so fierce or great,
To grace so free, so powerful, a barrier can create.

With such a sweet assurance, then face the coming year
With Christian faith and courage, and Trust instead of Fear,
Knowing naught can befall you, unknown to that dear Friend
Whose Word abides for ever, whose love will never end.

EMILY POUNDS.

History of the Shorter Catechism.

(Continued from p. 305.)

ACCORDING to the instructions of Parliament the Catechism was issued with the cumbrous title: "The Grounds and Principles of Religion Contained in a Shorter Catechism, etc." Fortunately the public curtailed the long title, and with a fine sense of the fitness of things gave the name to the Catechism which it retains to this day. On the 25th September, 1648, Parliament ordered the Shorter Catechism to be printed and published under the care of the Clerks of the Assembly. A copy of this issue is in the Library of Edinburgh University, and was the only copy Mr Carruthers saw in all the libraries he had consulted.

It has been pointed out that the key to the method followed by the Committee in the preparation of the Catechisms is to be found in the motion of Mr Vines adopted by the Assembly on 14th January, 1646-7, that the Committee, in preparing drafts of two Catechisms, should have an eye to the Confession of Faith, and to the manner of the Catechism already begun (Carruthers' "Shorter Catechism," p. 33.)

A careful study of the Confession and Catechisms will reveal that the Divines kept a constant eye on the Confession. The chapter on Good Works (xvi.) is omitted in the Catechisms, though references to the doctrine are to be found. There are no references to the following chapters in the Catechisms: Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience (xx.); Of Lawful Oaths and Vows (xxii.); Of the Civil Magistrate (xxiii.); Of Marriage and Divorce (xxiv.); Of the Communion of Saints (xxvi.); Of Church Censures (xxx.); Of Synods and Councils (xxxi.)

The Shorter Catechism follows the order of the Larger Catechism except that Faith and Repentance are dealt with in the Shorter Catechism in the second division: "What duty God requires of man." While in the Larger Catechism the subjects are dealt with under the first division: "What man is to believe concerning God." Mr Carruthers in noting this difference says in doing so that the Shorter Catechism gives Faith and Repentance their more logical place. This does not do justice to the Divines, as it implies that the order adopted by them in the Larger Catechism was less logical than that adopted

in the Shorter. The explanation of the difference is to be found in the fact which has been recognised by many of the great Puritan Divines and by their distinguished successors in Scotland that Faith and Repentance are looked at from a two-fold standpoint. Both are gifts from God, and the Larger Catechism stresses this point, while the Shorter Catechism emphasises the fact that there is a duty required of man to believe and repent. This is clearly brought out in the Larger Catechism's answer to "What is justifying faith?"—"Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and His righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation." The Shorter Catechism on the other hand in its Answer to "What is faith in Jesus Christ?" answers: "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel." In the Larger Catechism faith is viewed more in connection with justification, which is an act of God's free grace, and the manner in which this faith is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit is the point stressed by the Larger Catechism, while in the Shorter it is the believer's duty that is stressed—"Whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation," though, of course, the Divines are careful to conserve the truth that this faith in Christ is "a saving grace." The Westminster doctrine therefore repudiates what is commonly called "duty-faith," but on the other hand, while stressing the fact that faith is the gift of God, it also, in accordance with Scripture teaching, stresses the fact that it is man's duty to believe and repent, and though he has no power to do so, yet he is under obligation to believe and repent as truly as he is bound to love God, though in his present state he cannot and will never do so unless the Almighty Spirit of God work in him.

We have now finished our short historical sketch of one of the most famous Catechisms ever compiled. Many attempts have been made in the land of its adoption—Scotland—to supplant it by substitutes, but all these efforts have hitherto failed, and though it is not

taught in Scotland as it used to be, still in many homes and in our schools it is instilling into the minds of the young the great scriptural truths it so admirably summarises. This series of articles may fitly conclude with a quotation from Mr Carruthers, to whom we are indebted for much of the information conveyed to our readers. "Nowhere else," says Mr Carruthers, "can be found so plain and simple, yet so complete, a statement of Scripture doctrine as it was understood by Augustine and Calvin, by Knox and Usher, and by Chalmers and Hodge, as in this Shorter Catechism. This has been recognised on every hand. The Baptists early adopted it, modifying the statement as to paedobaptism to suit their creed. Charles Spurgeon prepared, some years ago, such an edition. Even John Wesley, altering its statements as to the decrees of God, sin, and election, printed it for the use of his followers. In earlier days it was commonly used by the Congregationalists, and has not, we believe, fallen entirely into disuse among them" (The Shorter Catechism, p. 37).

Christian in the Valley of Humiliation Meets Apollyon.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

BUT now in this Valley of Humiliation poor Christian was hard put to it; for he had gone but a little way before he espied a foul fiend coming over the field to meet him. His name is Apollyon. Then did Christian begin to be afraid, and to cast in his mind whether to go back or to stand his ground. But he considered again that he had no armour for his back; and therefore thought that to turn the back to him might give him greater advantage with ease to pierce him with his darts. Therefore he resolved to venture and stand his ground; for, thought he, had I no more in my eye than the saving of my life, it would be the best way to stand. So he went on and Apollyon met him. Now the monster was hideous to behold. He was clothed with scales, like a fish (and they are his pride); he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion. When he came up

to Christian he beheld him with a disdainful countenance and began to question him—

Apollyon — Whence come you and whither are you bound? Christian—I am come from the City of Destruction, which is the place of all evil, and I am going to the City of Zion.

Apollyon—By this I perceive that thou art one of my subjects; for all that country is mine, and I am the prince and god of it. How is it, then, that thou hast run away from thy King? Were it not that I hope thou mayest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground. Christian—I was indeed born in your dominions; but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on; “for the wages of sin is death.” Therefore, when I was come to years, I did, as other considerate persons do, look out if perhaps I might mend myself.

Apollyon—There is no prince that will thus lightly lose his subjects, neither will I as yet lose thee; but since thou complainest of the service and wages, be content to go back; what our country will afford I do here promise to give thee. Christian—But I have let myself to another, even to the King of princes; and how can I with fairness go back with thee?

Apollyon—Thou has done in this according to the proverb. “Change a bad for a worse”: but it is ordinary for those who have professed themselves his servants, after a while to give him the slip, and return again to me. Do thou so too, and all shall be well. Christian—I have given him my faith, and sworn my allegiance to him: how then can I go back from this, and not be hanged as a traitor?

Apollyon—Thou didst the same to me, and yet I am willing to pass by all, if now thou wilt yet turn again and go back. Christian—What I promised thee was in my nonage; and besides, I count that the Prince under whose banner now I stand is able to absolve me; yea, and to pardon also what I did as to my compliance with thee: and, besides, O thou destroying Apollyon, to speak truth, I like his service, his wages, his servants, his government, his company, and country, better than thine: and therefore leave off to persuade me further; I am his servant, and I will follow him.

Apollyon—Consider again, when thou art in cold blood, what thou art like to meet with in the way that thou goest. Thou knowest that, for the most part, his

servants came to an ill end, because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful death? And besides, thou countest his service better than mine, whereas he never came yet from the place where he is to deliver any that served him out of my hands: but, as for me, how many times, as all the world very well knows, have I delivered, either by power or fraud, those that have faithfully served me, from him and his, though taken by them: and so I will deliver thee. Christian—His forbearing at present to deliver them is on purpose to try their love, whether they will cleave to him to the end: and, as for the ill end thou sayest they come to, that is most glorious in their account: for, for present deliverance, they do not much expect it; for they stay for their glory, and then they shall have it, when their Prince comes in his and the glory of the angels.

Apollyon—Thou hast already been unfaithful in thy service to him, and how dost thou think to receive wages of him? Christian—Wherein, O Apollyon, have I been unfaithful to him? Apollyon—Thou didst faint at first setting out, when thou wast almost choked in the gulf of Despond; thou didst attempt wrong ways to be rid of thy burden, whereas thou shouldst have stayed till thy Prince had taken it off: thou didst sinfully sleep, and lose thy choice things: thou wast also almost persuaded to go back at the sight of the lions: and when thou talkest of thy journey, and of what thou hast heard and seen, thou art inwardly desirous of vain-glory in all that thou sayest or doest. Christian—All this is true, and much more which thou has left out: but the Prince, whom I serve and honour, is merciful and ready to forgive. But besides, these infirmities possessed me in thy country: for there I sucked them in, and I have groaned under them, being sorry for them, and have obtained pardon of my Prince.

Then Apollyon broke out into a grievous rage, saying, I am an enemy to this Prince: I hate his person, his laws, and people. I am come out on purpose to withstand thee. Christian—Apollyon, beware what you do; for I am in the king's highway, the way of holiness; therefore take heed to yourself.

Then Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way, and said, I am void of fear in this matter; prepare thyself to die; for I swear by my inferna'

den that thou shalt go no further: here will I spill thy soul. And with that he threw a flaming dart at his breast; but Christian had a shield in his hand, with which he caught it, and so prevented the danger of that.

Then did Christian draw; for he saw it was time to bestir him: and Apollyon as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that Christian could do to avoid it, Apollyon wounded him in his head, his hand, and foot. This made Christian give a little back: Apollyon, therefore, followed his work amain, and Christian again took courage. and resisted as manfully as he could. This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till Christian was almost quite spent; for you must know, that Christian, by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker.

Then Apollyon, espying his opportunity, began to gather up close to Christian, and wrestling with him, gave him a dreadful fall; and with that Christian's sword flew out of his hand. Then said Apollyon, I am sure of thee now: and with that he had almost pressed him to death; so that Christian began to despair of life. But, as God would have it, while Apollyon was fetching his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, Christian nimbly stretched out his hand for his sword, and caught it, saying, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy! when I fall, I shall arise"; and with that he gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back as one who had received his mortal wound. Christian perceiving that made at him again, saying, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us"; and with that Apollyon spread forth his dragon's wings and sped him away, that Christian saw him no more.

In this combat no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard, as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon made all the time of the fight; he spake like a dragon: and, on the other side, what sighs and groans burst from Christian's heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look, till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword; then indeed he did smile and look upward! but it was the dreadfullest fight that ever I saw.

So when the battle was over, Christian said, I will here give thanks to him that hath delivered me out of

the mouth of the lion, to him that did help me against Apollyon. And he did; saying,

"Great Beelzebub, the captain of this fiend,
Design'd my ruin; therefore to this end
He sent him harness'd out; and he with rage
That hellish was did fiercely me engage.
But blessed Michael helped me, and I
By dint of sword did quickly make him fly:
Therefore to him let me give lasting praise,
And thanks, and bless his holy name always."

Then there came to him an hand with some of the leaves of the tree of life, the which Christian took, and applied to the wounds that he had received in the battle, and was healed immediately. He also sat down in that place to eat bread, and to drink of that bottle that was given him a little before: so being refreshed, he addressed himself to his journey with his sword drawn in his hand; for he said, I know not but some other enemy may be at hand. But he met with no other affront from Apollyon quite through the valley.—"Pilgrim's Progress."

No Boasting

We are under a law for justification which excludes all boasting (Romans iii. 27). So that while we have joy enough in Another, yet we always have cause of humiliation in ourselves. The Gospel will teach a man to feel sin and believe righteousness at the same time. Faith will carry heaven in one hand and hell in the other; showing the one deserved, and the other purchased. A man may see enough of his own sin and folly to bring a hell of punishment: and these must needs produce very diverse, yea, contrary effects in the soul. Self-condemnation then, which men in these depths cannot but abound with, is in the disposition of the covenant of grace, no way inconsistent with, nor unsuited to justification, and the enjoyment of peace in the issue of it. David was never more humbled for sin than when Nathan told him it was forgiven; and there may be a view of hell, as deserved, which may let the soul know itself freed from as to the issue.—

Dr Owen

Bartimeus An Dall.

IX.

(Air a leantainn).

Is urrainn do'n Chrìosduidh suidhidh ann an tigh Dhé agus tlachd a ghabhail ann an uile fhirinnibh fhocail. Feudaidh e gu tric ni a chluinntinn tha aig an àm a tabhairt pian dha. Cha'n ann coslach ris an leabhran a thug an t-aingeal do dh'Eoin, feudaidh e bhi searb, agus mi thaitneach 'sa bheul, sin ra radh, anns an eiseachd; gidheadh air dha bhi air a mheasgachadh le creidimh, bithidh e treghràs milis agus fallain ann am beachd-smuaineachadh air (Taisbean x. 9). Eadhon ann an tairneanach beinn Shinai cluinnidh e guth a Dhia coimhcheangail (Exod. xx. 2), agus islichidh se e fein ann an irioslachd naomh. Mu tha cliù Dhé air a thabhairt ri aghaidh mar theine dian-loisgeach (Eabh xii. 29) a' deanamh dioghaltais, aidichidh e gur e sin a thoillteanas fein (Salm li. 4), agus am feadh is tha e ag ardmholadh a ghras ard-thighearnail a shaor e bho fheirg, tha e deanamh broin air son luchd-eusaontais, tha e a gul air an son, ag urnuigh air an son; agus an uair a sgaoileas an coimhthional, chithear na ghnuis, agus na ghiulan, ni tha beantuinn ri cridhe nam peacach, a 'tabhairt dhoibh mothachadh air an cunnart, agus iomaguin chaoimh sluaigh Dhé mu'n timchioll.

Nach dealaichte o so cleachdadh moran do luchd-aideachaidh! Feudaidh iad bhi codalach ni's leoir 'nuair tha am focal air a shearmonachadh, ach cho luath is tha am beannachd air a thabhairt, bithidh iad beothail ni's leoir. Nach sgiobalta a dh'fhalbhas iad o'n eaglais! Agus le cainnt amaidich, le diomhanas, is le eutromas, theid iad chum an dachaidhean, suidhidh iad aig am buird, agus cumaidh iad conaltradh baoth ri'n clann, agus ri'n cairdean neo-iompaichte. Ah! feudaidh aig a bhord 'ud gu'n do thoisich comhrag air son na siorruidheachd ann an anam eiginne; feudaidh gu'm bheil Spioraid Dhé, agus cumhachdan an dorchadais ris an stri mu dheireadh, agus gu'n cuir am baoth-shugradh ud a chuis gu taobh air son an anam a thuiteam ann an eu-dòchas, agus fadheoidh ann an ifrinn. Nach eagalach an fhirinn sin! Feudaidh neach le gaireachduinn eutroim, an Spiorad naomh agus dearbhadh peacaidh fhuadach air falbh, agus a choguis chaidh a dhùsgadh a chur na codal, is anamaibh luachmhor chur a dh'ionnsuidh sgrios.

III. Tha so tabhairt chum mo chuimhne doigh eile anns am feud sibh iarraidh air peacaich bhi nan tosd—*le bhi mi-churamach ann an tabhairt fa'near toiseachadh curam anna.*

Am faiceadh tu mar bu choir dhuit faire a'dheanamh? Thig leam chum an t-seomair far am bheil naoidhean ri uchd bais. Chaidh teachdaire na chabhaig a dh'iarraidh leigh, ach cha'n 'eil e idir a tighinn. Faic mar tha suilean na mathair chaoimh air an suidheachadh air an leanabh ann an spairn graidh agus eagail; cionnus tha i a cromadh ann an àmhghar an lathair cathair na tracair, agus a'tagradh mar rinn bean Shirophenicia aig cosaibh Iosa; cionnus tha i ag eiridh gu h-obann agus dol a dh'ionnsuidh no h-uinneig a dh'amharc air son an leigh; cionnus aig gach fuaim ni rothan charbadan, tha i air chrith le dian-dhùrachd, agus mar tha tinneas aig a cridhe 'nuair tha an fhuaim a bàsachadh gun duine a'tighinn: cionnus theid i gu grad g'a choinneachadh aig a theachd; agus an sin nuair tha e a min-rannsachadh nadur na trioblaid, mar a dh'fheitheas i ag amharc na ghnais a' gabhail misnich, ma chi i e bhi dòchasach, agus ullamh gu bàsachadh ma chi i a ghnais air a dorchachadh le eagal.

O, a dheisciobuil Iosa, tha do leanabh, do bhrathair, caraid eiginn ro ghradhach leat tinn gu bàs siorruidh, agus c'ait am bheil an fheitheamh so air son an lighiche mhoir? C'ait am bheil do ghul, d'fhaduidheachd, d'urnuigh? Ah! 'nuair thainig esan (is gradh a chridhe ga ghluasad) am fagus do'n anam, agus a dhuisg se e a mach bho a chodal bàsmhor, agus a chuir e an cèill ioc shlaintean tha air an orduchadh le a ghràs àrduachdranach, cha bhi sibhse eadhon 'nar n'aithrichean no 'nar màthraichean altruim (Isa. xlix. 23) ann an giulan air aghaidh obair ghràs-mhoir an Tighearna, chum na h-anamabh gràdhach sin a shaoradh o'n bhàs shiorruidh.

IV. Ach tha ni's miosa na so ann. Tha pàrantan aideachail gu tric a dealbhadh nithibh do'n cloinn tha calg-dhireach ann an aghaidh obair an Spioraid.

Deanadh aon eiseimpleir air an ni tha mi ciallachadh a mhineachadh. Aig an aoradh mhaidne tha sibh ag iarraidh air an Tighearna 'ur clann iompachadh eadhon air an ath Shabaid fhocal a chur le cumhachd chum an cridhe. Bu choir dhuibh so a dheanamh agus tha mi toirt creideas dhuibh air son a bhi ga dheanamh. Ach mu'n d'téid an latha seachad a geilleadh de shruth saoghaltachd truailidh tha mu'n cuairt dhuibh, no do dh'iarrtusaibh 'ur cloinne neo-iompaichte, tha sibh a suidheachadh cuideachd-dhànnsa bhi agaibh 'nar tigh air an t-seachduin a's déigh sin, agus tha

sibh a cur a mach chuiridhean. Their sibh ri 'ur coguis cha'n 'eil e ach air son na cloinne a mhain, agus cha bhi sinn ach stuama; ach a dh' aindeoin gach oidhirp cha'n 'eil coguis a moladh a ghnìomh. Ach rachadh sin seachad. Ach saoil gu'n dean Dia 'ur n-urnuigh a fhreagairt air an t-Sàbaid, agus tha aon de'n chloinn sin a gul fuidh'n t-searmoin, agus a tighinn dhachaidh fo smuairin, agus ann an trioblaid; ciod e an staid anns an urrainn sibhse bhi? Air a chuid a's lugha, nach cuir e tomhas de dh' imcheist oirbh? Nach bi sibh duilich gu'n d'thainig an ni, aig an àm ud, agus cha'n ann aig àm eile. Nach smuainich sibh e bhi neo-dheiseil, 'nuair bha suil agaibh gu'm biodh 'ur nighean co maiseach san dannsa air Di-luain, gu'm biodh i fuidh dhearbhadh peacaidh, a teicheadh bho fhearg Dhè; agus a gul mar so air an t-Sàbaid. Air an laimh eile nach bi eagal oirbh gu'n dean cuthach na mire ud, an Spiorad a mhùchadh (I. Tess. v. 19), agus an cridhe a cruadhachadh gu brath (Eabh iii. 13)? Agus a thuilleadh air so uile nach d'thigeadh na dearbhaidhean ud oirbh gun suil a bhi riu, agus nach cuireadh iad goimh péin chum 'ur cridhe. Am b'urrainn dhuibh a bhi mar bhuineadh dhuibh a bhi, ghnath a sealltuinn ann an creidimh air son freagrachd d'ar n'urnuigh agus ullamh air Dia a mholadh le cridhe gun ghò, agus a dhol a dh' ionnsuidh an uaignidheis leis a chusbair ghràdhaichte so, do dheoir a mheasgachadh le dheoirsan, araon ag asluchadh trocair ò Chrìosd.

Ach cionnus is urrainn dhomh luaidh a dheanamh air na h-uile rathad 'sam feud luchd-aideachaidh Chrìosd iarraidh air anamaibh trioblaideach a bhi nan tosd. Leis na tha agaibh do shaoghaltachd inntinn, is do chumadh ris an t-saoghal; leis na h-uile dearbhachd tha sibh a tabhairt air gu'm bheil sibh a smuaineachadh tuilleadh mu'n t-saoghal-sa mo mu'n t-saoghal ri teachd; gu'n caith sibh tuilleadh, gu'n fulaing sibh tuilleadh; gu'n dean sibh oidhirp ni's mò air son crìochan talmhaidh na air son Chrìosd agus aobhair; leis gach ni dhiubh sin tha sibh 'nar cip-thuislidh ann an rathad pheacach a theachd gu Chrìosd.

Is iad sin mar an ceudna nithibh nach urrainn sibh fholach. Cha leoir aig amaibh gu'm faicear 'ur gnais gruamach, agus gu'n cluinnear agaibh focalan do chainnt na diadhaidheachd, is aideachadh air gu'm bheil sinn uile teachd garr. Cha leoir a h-aon do na nithibh sin. Tha eadhon 'ur clann bheag agus 'ur seirbhisich, co mi-thoslach, is tha 'ur cleachdadh ri 'ar n'aideachadh.

Nach bronach an t-saoghaltachd so ann an luchd-aideachaidhan teachd garr ann an cumaidheachd ri Chrìosd! Is e so an smal is mò air an t-soisgeul, an argumaid is treise aig luchd, Dia-aicheadh, am bacadh is mò air obair Dhé, agus an

ni is cinntiche gu stad a thur air saoirbheachadh. Air son an aobhair so chomhdaich an Tighearna nighean Shioin le neul na chorruich. Air son an aobhair so tha a silghean ri bron, tha a geatachan fàs, tha a sagairt ag osnaich, tha a maighdeanan fo amhghar, agus tha ise ann an seirbhe; am feadh tha a naimhdibh ri toibheum, agus na h-uile tha gabhail seashadh a bualadh am bás rithe; tha iad a deanamh tàir oirre, agus a crathadh an cinn ri nighean Ierusalem!

Dh'iarraidh'n a nis rabhadh a thabhairt ann an treibhdhineas do na h-uile, ciod 'sam bith an ainm is an suidheachadh tha ciontach ann an rathad 'sam bith do dh'iarraidh air peacaich fuireach nan tosd. Tha sibh a cur an aghaidh obair Dhia, agus bithibh air 'ur faicill roimh a laimh chumhachdaich. Ma tha sibh de dh'aireamh a shluaigh, agus gu'm bheil sibh a cur an aghaidh obair ach cha'n ann 'gar deoin, teagaisgidh e dhuibh leusonaibh feumail le guth a shlaite (Micah vi. 9; Salm cxix, 67, 71.) Feudaidd e bhi duillich am foghlum, ach cha ghabhar sin a sheachnadh (Eabh xii. 11; Gnathfhocal iii. 12; Taisbean iii. 10.) Cha cheadaich e gu'm fanadh tu fo'n pheacadh ud (Eabh xii. 10.) Ach mur 'eil sibh de dh'aireamh a shluaigh, fairichidh sibh a dhioghaltas. Tha sibh a tuiteam air a chloich oisne shiorruidh, agus brisear sibh; agus mar sguir sibh gu luath, cur an agaidh na muinntir leis an àill togail oirre, agus mar toisich sibh fein air togail an sin thig latha 'san tuit a chlach ud oirbh, agus 'san dean i min luaithne dhibh (Mata xxi. 44.) Cha'n 'eil crìoch ni's cianaile aig muinntir 'sam bith, na tha aca-san a three-raicheas daoine chum peacachadh no chumas anamaibh o Chrìosd. Is leoir e gu'n rachhadh duin' e fein do dh'ifrinn. Ach mu tha mi gu dhol ann, racham ann leam fein. Na guilaineam mo luchd-pianaidd leam ann. Bithidh a théinntean teth gu leoir, agus a thruaighean tròm gu leoir, gu'n anamaibh a rinn mi mhilleadh a bhi, ann chum mo thruaighean a mheudachadh le dioghaltas gun tròcair, air dhoibh bhi air an lasadh suas le feirg troimh an amhghar siorruidh fein. Mu tha mi rùnachhadh gu'm bàsaich mi, deanam mar rinn Ahitophel, cuiream mo thigh an ordugh, agus bàsaicheam leam fein (2 Sam. xvii. 23) agus cha'n ann mar Shamson a glacadh puist an teampuill an ghlaicibh, agus a slaodadh muinntir eile sìos maille rium, mi, fein a tuiteam fuidhpe, agus air m'adhlacadh 'san léir-sgrìos a's doimhne (Breitheamhna xvi. 30).

Dh'iarraidh'n a nis dà ni a radh ri peacaich air an dùsgadh. *Am bheil e a cur 'nar a' aghaidh 'sna dòighean ud?* Mu thuiteas sibhse air ais, cha bhi so na leithsgeul dhuibh. Feudaidd peacadh aon duine bhi na bhuaireadh is na mhea-

dhon sgrios do dhuin' eile, ath cha bhi e chaoidh na leithsgeul dha. Bhuaire Satan Eubha, agus bhuaire ise Adhamh, ach bha an triuir mallaichte (Gen. iii. 12—19.) Bha eadhon na cinnich comasach air a radh, “Cuidichidh na diathan iadsan, a chuidicheas iad fein;” agus feudaidh sinn a bhi cinnteach gu'n cuidich Crìosd na h'uile anam tha ann am firinn ga iarraidh. Cha dubhairt Dia riamh ri siol Iacoib, “Iarraibh mi an diomhain?” Iarraibh, deir Chriosd, agus gheibh sibh (Mata vii. 7, 8.) 'Nuair a ghairmeas Dia anam as an Eiphit, bithidh seann luchd-sàruchaidh, agus naimhdeann nuadh, muir dhomhain, agus fàsach làn ulfhartaich 'san t-slighe, ach **ma** bhitheas an t-anam sin misneachail, ithidh e do thoradh luachmhor tir Chanaain (Iosh v. 11, 12.) Cha do chaill aon chuid an sluagh taghta, no anam taghta cath riamh ach tre ghealltairachd, no tre pheacadh. Oir mairidh a throcair gu sìorruidh; tha sin air aithris sé uairean fichead san t-Salm tha cuir an céill saoradh, agus buaidh Israel (Salm cxxxvi.) Aig crìoch gach ìomraidh air cunnartan agus cathan tha e stad gu chur an céill, gu'm mair a throcair gu sìorruidh. An dubhairt Dia ribh, Iarraibh m'aghaidh? agus an do fhreagair 'ur cridhe, D'aghaidh, a Thighearna, iarraidh sinn (Salm xxvii. 3, 10; Eabh xiii. 5), uime sin ged a champaicheadh feachd ad' aghaidh, cha'n 'eil aobhar eagail aig d'anam. Ged a threigeadh d'athair is do mhathair thu, **cha'n fhag is cha treig** Dia do shlaint' thu a chaoidh. Mar sin feith air an Tighearna; bi misneachail, agus neartaichidh esan do chridhe. Feith tha mi ag radh air an Tighearna (Salm xxvii. 14).

Am bheileir a cur mar so a'd aghaidh? Dean mar rinn Bartimeus. “Dh'èigh e ni bu mhò” tha Mata ag radh, “morán ni bu mhò,” no “is ann ni's mò,” deir Marc, agus Lucas. Nach 'eil sin tapaidh! Mar is mò tha iad cur 'na aghaidh 'sann is mò do dhùrachd tha esan a taisbeanadh. Eigh thusa mar a rinn esan. Tha an t-àm dhuit eigheach, 'nuair a philleadh daoine' air ais thu ò Chriosd, tha an t-àm dhuit do neart uil' a chur an cleachdadh, 'nuair tha an namhaid a cur a neart fein an cleachdadh. Faic! cha'n 'eil ach aon slighe ann; tha an ceam aimhlean; tha an namhaid a tarruing am fagus. A nis anam mar iarradh tu bhi caillte, bi fearail (1 Cor. xvi. 23.) Gabh thugad, sgiath is claidheamh, agus bi treun 'sa chomhrag. Feumaidh tu bhi air do shaoradh a nis, no bhi caillte gu sìorruidh. Eigh ri Crìosd, agus sin thu fein chum na nithibh tha romhad. Agus am feadh is tha thu a cleachdadh na h-uile dìchioll cuimh-nich a ghnath nach 'eil doigh air son thu a dh'fhaotoinn na buaidh, ach tre eigh a chreidimh, “Tosa mhic Dhaibhidh. dean trocair orm!”

Ri leantainn.

The Late Mr James Dawson, Elder, Oban.

ON Thursday, the 29th day of November, the mortal remains of the late Capt. James Dawson, who passed away shortly after midnight on the previous Monday, were laid to rest in Pennyfuir Cemetery. He was surrounded in his closing days by his children and his children's children, who took every possible care of their aged parent. To them we extend our deep sympathy.

As an account of his seafaring life appears elsewhere, it is unnecessary to refer in detail to it. For the greater part of his days he belonged to those who go down to the sea in ships. These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. We may here note that he was dismissed his post as master of a yacht for objecting to meet friends of the owner at some port on the Lord's Day. There was previously an agreement between them not to cruise on the Sabbath Day. He was, however, ordered to weigh anchor and proceed, and as it seemed to Dawson to involve neither necessity nor mercy, he refused. He consequently lost that berth. At intervals he found it necessary to look for work ashore, turning his hand to whatever he could do, for the support of himself and his family. Latterly he was master of a yacht on Loch Etive, and there he strained his heart while handling her, along with others. This was really the beginning of his end. He never recovered from that strain, although able for a considerable time after returning to Oban to move about and attend the house of God. A shock some time ago brought down still more the tabernacle of his body, and another, quite recently, made it evident that he was soon to leave the garments of mortality behind him in the river of death. The days of his earthly pilgrimage were eighty-five years.

Another of the older members and elders of the Free Presbyterian Church has thus passed away to his eternal rest. We are unable to say much as to his conversion, but it is believed that the Holy Spirit awakened him to a sense of his lost condition when, one day, he was lying on a hillside in Cowal and saw an explosion occur before his eyes in a powder factory. It was cer-

tainly clear that he had experimental knowledge of his own depravity, of his own inability to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and, above all, that he got that knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ which it is eternal life to have. Psalm 25 and Psalm 84 were particularly precious to him. These were no doubt blessed to him by the Holy Spirit. The former is penitential, and if one characteristic may be emphasised more than another, it is retrospective. The other glories in the gracious presence of God in His temple and is especially prospective. The believer is blessed with the mercy and favour of God now, but that is the pledge and earnest of more to follow. God's altar is none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven to those in whose hearts are His ways. They are as sparrows, often feeling lonely on the housetops, but their nest is at God's altar. They brood over a portion of God's Word and bring forth praises and thanksgivings and intercessions. Every one exercised in this way eventually appears in the eternal Zion before God.

Owing to his peculiar circumstances in Providence, the late Captain was frequently far from the public means of grace, but, whenever possible, he certainly was a regular attender. He knew that the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. He was in this an example to his family and to all who knew him. The Lord said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment." Our late friend sought to walk in these footsteps of the flock, and so to purchase to himself a good degree. He had no dubiety as to his connection with the cause for which this Church stands. He trod on no slippery ground as regards scriptural views of the love of God, or the atonement of Christ, or the work of the Holy Spirit, and the worship and government of the Kingdom of Christ in the world. He knew what it was to groan over a body of sin and death. Yet he could doubtless say, by the grace of God, "Thou knowest all things—Thou knowest that I love Thee." He voiced no murmur, and showed no complaining spirit in his closing illness, despite much weakness and pain. Death has now ended troubles and trials for him. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day

and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—D. A. MacF.

John Bunyan.

(Continued from p. 297).

BUNYAN was not yet of the deep morass, but he was upheld by precious promises of Scripture coming to him, but these would be followed by the thought of Esau's sad case and that of the falling away of those mentioned in Hebs. vi., etc. For two and a half years he struggled on ever and again the thought being present with him that he had sinned the unpardonable sin. Then he put to himself the question: "Whether it be impossible that any who have committed this sin could receive comfort from God through Christ as he was time and again getting?" And he concluded they could not. Then the passages of Scripture in Hebrews suddenly appeared different. "I found their visage changed," he says, "for they looked not so grimly on me as before I thought they did." As these passages have often been to others as they were to Bunyan full of terror we will give at full length from "Grace Abounding" what they now had become to him. "And, first, I came to the sixth of Hebrews," he says, "yet trembling for fear it should strike me; which when I had considered, I found that the falling there intended was falling quite away; that is, as I conceived, a falling from, and an absolute denying of the gospel of remission of sins by Christ; for from them the Apostle begins his argument, ver. 1-3. Secondly, I found this falling away must be openly, even in the view of the world, even so as 'to put Christ to an open shame.' Thirdly, I found that those he there intended were for ever shut up of God, both in blindness, hardness, and impenitency: it is impossible they should be renewed again unto repentance. By all these particulars I found, to God's everlasting praise, my sin was not the sin in this place intended. First, I confessed I was fallen, but not fallen away, that is, from the profession of faith in Jesus unto eternal life. Secondly, I confessed that I had put Jesus Christ to shame by my sin, but not to open shame: I did not deny Him before men, nor con-

demn Him as a fruitless one before the world. Thirdly, nor did I find that God had shut me up, or denied me to come, though I had found it hard work indeed to come to Him by sorrow and repentance. Blessed be God for unsearchable grace!

“Then I considered that in the tenth of the Hebrews, and found that the wilful sin there mentioned is not every wilful sin, but that which doth throw off Christ, and then His commandments too. Secondly, that must also be done openly, before two or three witnesses, to answer that of the law. Thirdly, this sin cannot be committed but with great despite done to the Spirit of grace; despising both the dissuasions from that sin, and the persuasions to the contrary. But the Lord knows, though this my sin was devilish, yet it did not amount to these.

“And as touching that in the twelfth of the Hebrews, about Esau’s selling his birthright, though this was that which killed me and stood like a spear against me; yet now I did consider, first, that his was not a hasty thought against the continual labour of his mind, but a thought consented to and put in practice likewise, and that too after some deliberation. Secondly, it was a public and open action, even before his brother, if not before many more; this made his sin of a far more heinous nature than otherwise it would have been. Thirdly, he continued to slight his birthright: ‘He did eat and drink and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright.’ Yea, twenty years after, he was found to despise it still: ‘And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.’”

“Now, as touching this, that Esau sought a place of repentance, thus I thought:—First, this was not for the birthright, but for the blessing; this is clear from the Apostle, and is distinguished by Esau himself: ‘He took away my birthright (that is, formerly); and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing.’ Secondly, now, this being thus considered, I came again to the Apostle, to see what might be the mind of God in a New Testament style and sense concerning Esau’s sin; and, so far as I conceive, this was the mind of God—That the birthright signified regeneration, and the blessing the eternal inheritance; for so the Apostle seems to hint: ‘Lest there be any profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright’; as if he should say, lest there be any person amongst you that shall cast off all those blessed beginnings of God that at present are upon him,

in order to a new birth, lest they become as Esau, even be rejected afterwards when they would inherit the blessing. For many there are who, in the day of grace and mercy, despise those things which are indeed the birthright to heaven, who yet, when the deciding day appears, will cry as loud as Esau, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' but then, as Esau would not repent, no more will God the Father, but will say, I have blessed these, yea and they shall be blessed; but as for you, depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

(To be continued).

The Big Task with Small Salary Preferred.

IN the Christian economy it is not according to the will of the Lord or the teaching of the New Testament that a man should enter the ministry for "a living," or that one should be put into it by his relatives or friends with the object of securing for him a livelihood. In its issue of June 6th, 1928, "The Life of Faith" prints a letter from Mr P. Lumb, of Filey, giving a quite recent true story of what we consider a very genuine call to the ministry, exercised in no mercenary spirit:—

The Standard Oil Company wanted a manager for a new sphere of operations in China. A committee met to discuss the matter. The chairman insisted that no one must be appointed who had not four qualifications—he must have been thoroughly trained; he must have given proof of his ability to lead; he must be under thirty years of age, and must know the Chinese language. A member of the committee declared that he knew a man possessing all these qualifications, adding that he was already in China, and living in the very city where the company proposed to establish its local headquarters. He was twenty-eight years old, held three university degrees, and had won the full confidence of the Chinese people. Someone asked how much salary this young man was getting. "£120 per year," was the answer. The Chairman said—"There must be something wrong." The young man's friend replied: "There is, but the wrong is not with the man of whom I speak; he is a missionary, and that is all he gets."

After a thorough questioning, the Chairman said that the committee man must go to China and offer the post to his friend at £2000 per year, or, if that was not enough, £2500, or even £3000. The agent crossed the ocean, found his friend, and made the offer. The young missionary declined. The offer of £3000 made no difference. Finally, the agent asked: "What salary will you take?" The missionary replied: "That is not the question. The salary is magnificent, but the job you offer me is too small. True, I get small pay, but I have a big job. I thank you for the confidence expressed in your offer, but I feel that I should be a fool to give up preaching the Gospel to souls in order to sell oil."—"Monthly Record of the Protestant Evangelical Mission.")

Notes and Comments.

The Prospective Union.—The adjourned meetings of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church were held at Edinburgh on 21st November. In the Church of Scotland Assembly the motion for the rejection of the scheme received only 7 votes. Two of the dissentients afterwards lodged a dissent, which was signed by Rev. Dr A. Gordon Mitchell, Killearn, and Rev. E. E. Williamson, Shurrery, Caithness. In the United Free Assembly the opposition was led by the Rev. James Barr, Socialist M.P. for Motherwell. His amendment was seconded by Mr A. Forrester-Paton, Alloa. On a show of hands 39 voted for the amendment. We have no sympathy with the reasons advanced by the out-and-out voluntary dissentients for refusing to enter the Union, but we must admit that they have consistency and force of argument on their side. The erstwhile hot Voluntaries who, under Principal Rainy, were out to smash the Church of Scotland cut rather a sorry figure as the once fierce Voluntary lion goes timely to the matrimonial altar with the Established lamb.

West Highland Transport Scheme and the Sabbath.—When the Western Highlands and Islands (Transport Services) Bill was under discussion in Parliament Mr Mackenzie Livingstone moved an amendment to the effect that the services by sea, air, or land which the Bill provided for should not be carried out on the Sabbath.

In this he was seconded by Mr Ian Macpherson. Sir John Gilmour, replying, made reference to the resolution passed by the Commission of the Free Church General Assembly, and said that such a provision as was indicated by the amendment was not in accordance with precedent in laying down an absolute restriction of Sabbath services. He did not doubt but that the new company would respect the religious feelings of the people as did the old. The Rev. James Barr had fair words about the duty of conserving the Sabbath rest, mingled with words which were neither wise nor witty, but opposed the amendment. When Mr Mackenzie Livingstone pressed for a division the Socialist member for Motherwell laid aside his good manners and charged him with doing this for political purposes, and characterised it as "the meanest thing he had ever known." There were days in Scotland when better things would have been expected from a minister. The amendment was rejected by 26 votes to 2.

"The Thoughts of God."—The well-known scientist, Prof. J. A. Fleming, the inventor of the thermionic valve, in a paper read to the Victoria Institute, had a few interesting things to say, from which it is evident that he is out of sympathy with so many of his unbelieving fellow-scientists. "At every stage of the investigation into atomic architecture," said Prof. Fleming, "one was as clearly met with evidence of purpose and design as one was in the case of the most complicated chronometer or wireless receiver. One could not invoke, as an explanation of their origin, any process, such as a struggle for existence, as there were no intermediate types. The 88 kinds of atoms known were separate or distinct. They were like coins struck in a mint, and each bore the impress of the image of their maker in the attributes they possessed. Matter was in a state of flux, and it had become increasingly clear that matter could be converted into Radiation. The sun wasted away at the rate of 250 million tons a minute to supply the heat and light it sent out, but no one need be afraid that it would not last out our time since its mass was about 2000 billion billion tons. Matter in the form of chemical atoms consisted of localised energy, and matter and radiation were interconvertible terms because they were essentially of the same nature. Without energy there would be no events or phenomena in the external world. The nearest approach one could make to an interpretation of it was that it was the result of the ever

acting will of a Divine Mind present at all times and in all places. What we called the laws of Nature were, as Oersted had said, only the Thoughts of God."

Church Notes.

Communions.—January—Last Sabbath, Inverness. February—First Sabbath, Dingwall. South African Mission—The following are the dates of the Communions:—Last Sabbath of March, June, September, and December. Note.—Notice of any additions to, or alterations of, the above list should be sent to the Editor.

Appeal from Staffin Congregation.—The congregation of Staffin, Skye, feel compelled, owing to their present church becoming unsafe in stormy weather and inconvenient for public worship, to appeal to kind friends throughout the Church to help them to erect a new and suitable building. The church in use is a corrugated iron one of many years' standing, now becoming weak and dangerous through exposure to repeated and severe storms. Contributions may be sent to Mr James Maciver, National Bank, Portree, or Mr A. Mackay, missionary, Staffin. The Western Presbytery cordially endorse this appeal.—(Signed), D. R. Macdonald, moderator; D. M. Macdonald, clerk.

Death of Mr Malcolm Macdonald, Elder, Dusary, North Uist.—It is with deep regret we learn that Mr Malcolm Macdonald has passed away. He was an elder in our Bayhead congregation since 1893. By his removal a blank has been made in our Church, and particularly in the Bayhead congregation. A fuller notice will (D.V.) appear later on. Meantime we extend our sympathy towards his widow and family, and also to the congregation, which has lost a worthy office-bearer.

Death of Mr Norman Mackay, Missionary.—It is with sincere regret we have received news of the passing away of Mr Norman Mackay. Mr Mackay, who had been ailing for years, was an elder in St Jude's congregation, and on retiring from work he was appointed as a lay missionary in North Tolsta. A fuller notice will (D.V.) appear later on. Meantime we extend our sincere sympathy to his widow.

Rev. James A. Tallach's Letter of Withdrawal and Apology.—At 216 West Regent Street, Glasgow, on 14th August 1928, the Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church met and was constituted. Inter alia:—A letter was submitted from the Rev. James A. Tallach, Winnipeg, in which he desired to withdraw from the attitude he took up in his letter of 7th March, 1928, to the Presbytery regarding the Synod's resolution anent Sabbath travelling by trains and tramcars. He also wished to apologise for terms used in that letter which might give offence. He expressed himself as ready to fall in wholeheartedly with the Synod's finding re the above resolution. The Presbytery had much pleasure in accepting Mr Tallach's withdrawal and apology, and was pleased that he was now in absolute agreement with the Synod's resolution on the Sabbath question.—Neil Macintyre, Clerk.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

John Grant, Palmerston Villa, Millburn Road, Inverness, General Treasurer, acknowledges, with thanks, the following donations:—

SUSTENTATION FUND.—Free Presbyterian, Alberta, Canada (75 dollars), £15 8s; Mrs H. C., Kingussie, 10s; R. McL., Unapool, 10s; A. M., 710 Main Street, Saskatoon, 10s; D. C., Carr-Bridge, £1; R. C., Druidale, Kyle, £1; Mrs M. McL., Aviemore, £1; Miss C. M. Watson, California, per Rev. N. Cameron, £1 13s 6d; "Abrach," per do., £2 10s.

COLLEGE FUND.—A. L. D., per N. Cameron, 5s.

GENERAL BUILDING FUND.—A. M., 710 Main Street, Saskatoon, 10s.

HOME MISSION FUND.—M. McC., Glendale, per Rev. N. Cameron, £1; B. K. T., 20s (not 10s as stated in December issue).

JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.—Anon., 5s; Interested, 10s; Anon., Bonar-Bridge, o/a Mrs Radasi, 10s; Miss M. McC., Kames, in aid of Rev. Dr Macdonald's expenses to S. Africa, £1; Do., in aid of Rev. D. Urquhart's expenses to Palestine, £1. Rev. N. Cameron acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—Miss M. Macleod, Scourie, 5s; "Abrach," £2 10s; a Well-Wisher, £5; M. McC., Glendale, £3; A. McD., Glasgow, 5s; Sincere Friend, £1; Miss C. M. Watson, California, £1 13s 6d; Mrs Thomson, per Mrs K. Macaskill, 4s; Mrs C., Thornhill, per D. Y., £1; A. L. D., 5s; A. L., 5s.

THE LATE REV. D. MACFARLANE'S MEMORIAL FUND.—Year 1893, Gairloch, £2; Strond Congregation, per Mr John Macleod, Missionary, £1 7s; Anon., Broadford, £1; M. M., Diabalg, per Miss Mary Macbeath, 2s; Mrs B. Mackenzie, The Cottage, Stoer, Lairg, 5s; Mrs Finlayson, H.M. Prison, Peterhead, per Mr Kenneth Matheson, 10s; William Matheson, Maryburgh, per do., 5s; Miss Morrison, West End, Beauly, £1; D. Mackenzie, Dumballoch, Beauly,

10s; Glasgow Friend (Anon.), 10s; G. Fraser, Edinburgh, per Mr A. H. Pottinger, 5s. Rev. N. Cameron, Glasgow, thankfully acknowledges the following:—Miss J. F. Glasgow, 5s; M. McC., Glendale, £1; A. L. D., 5s; A. L., 5s; a Free Presbyterian, 10s; Miss M. M., Tishbury, 10s. Total contributions to the above fund as at this date amounts to £78 4s 3d.

The following lists have been sent in for publication:—

BONAR-BRIDGE CHURCH BUILDING FUND.—Rev. D. J. Matheson, Laing, acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—Mr McG., Corriekinloch, £1; A. McL., Clashmore, Lochinver, 10s; Collecting Card, Shinness, per Mr Andrew Ross, £3 10s.

EDINBURGH CHURCH PURCHASE FUND.—Rev. N. Macintyre desires to acknowledge, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—Lady Friend, Lowestoft, £1; Lady Friend, Waternish, £1; A. L. D., per Rev. N. Cameron, 5s. Mr Arch. Maclean, 16 Marchmont Crescent, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following:—Friend, Kirkcaldy, £2; Miss M. McK., Toronto, per Mr James Mackay, £1.

NEWCASTLE CHURCH PURCHASE FUND.—Mr F. Bentley, 35 Buston Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne, acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—Deacons' Court of Oban F.P. Church, per Rev. D. A. Macfarlane, £4; Collected by F.P. Friends in Braes, Portree, £1 2s 6d; Collecting Card, per Mr William Sim, Inverness, £4 10s; Collecting Card, per Miss L. Maclean, Balmore, North Uist, £2 12s 6d. Per Dr and Mrs Forsyth, Easington, Co. Durham, £9; A. V., Morpeth, Northumberland, 5s; Mrs F., Walker-on-Tyne, 5s; A. F., Stratherrick, £1; Mrs McK., Newcastle, 12s 6d.

TALLISKER CHURCH BUILDING FUND.—Mr John Macintyre, Carbost, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following:—Miss M., 3 Bolton Drive, Mount Florida, Glasgow, per Mr D. Morrison, Portnalong, £5 3s; Mr A. Nicolson, Struan House, Struan, acknowledges, with sincere thanks—A Friend of the Cause, Struan, £1.

The Magazine.

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FREE DISTRIBUTION.—D. Gillies, Kirksyde Ave., Kirkintilloch, 2s; Nurse Murray, Bellahouston Hospital, per Mr A. Mackay, Glasgow, 5s; a Friend, per Miss E. Grant, Evelix, Dornoch, 4s. Total contributions to Free Distribution for year to date, £9 13s 9d.