

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
 AND
 MONTHLY RECORD

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

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

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THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and MONTHLY RECORD.

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Strange but Successful Builders.

THE story of Nehemiah's life is one of the most interesting recorded in the later history of Judah. We have presented to us in the record left by the Holy Spirit the story of a man profoundly attached to the cause of God, a real patriot with the good of his country at heart, a man of prayer, and one who showed by his management of affairs in difficult situations that he was possessed of a calm and balanced judgment. He faced with courage and unflinching determination the powers arrayed against him, and successfully carried through a notable work demanding no ordinary skill in execution and quickness of decision at critical moments.

The story laid before us in the book of Nehemiah tells us that in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes grievous tidings reached the royal winter palace at Shushan from Jerusalem. The people of Judah were in affliction and the wall of Jerusalem was still broken down. The news, brought by Hanani, filled the heart of Nehemiah with sorrow. It was no feigned grief and he betook himself to prayer and the God who as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer was to move the heart of his royal master to help the cause Nehemiah had so much at heart. When he came into the royal presence the king noticed the sadness of his cupbearer's countenance and rightly attributed it to sadness of heart. On explaining the cause of his sorrow, the king asked what was his request and after prayer to God for guidance Nehemiah asked that he would be sent to

Jerusalem that he might build it. The request was granted, and, like the man of action he was, Nehemiah got letters of safe conduct to the governors beyond the river, and also a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the King's forest, for the supply of wood required for the building operations. So equipped Nehemiah set out for Jerusalem. The news of his mission on reaching the ears of Sanballat, the Horonite, and Tobiah, the Ammonite (two plausible but deceitful mischief-makers) they were grieved exceedingly "that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel." After taking a survey of the ruined and desolate city, he approached his fellow-countrymen and his words inspired them with a sense of their duty and moved them to action—"Let us rise up and build," they said. There were others, however, to whom this zeal and activity brought no pleasure, and Sanballat and Tobiah, with Geshem, the Arabian, whose dark but unsuccessful scheming was to cause considerable inconvenience and annoyance to Nehemiah, tried mockery, that common weapon so often resorted to by the emissaries of the devil—"They laughed us to scorn, and despised us." But if they thought that contempt would stop Nehemiah in the work he had at heart they had entirely mistaken the man. They then betook themselves to the devil's arsenal for another weapon and endeavoured by slander to turn Nehemiah aside from his purpose. With a clear conscience Nehemiah met the infamous charge of rebellion against Artaxerxes undismayed and replied:—"The God of Heaven He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." As the work proceeded the indignation of the mischief-makers increased, and they now resorted to contemptuous belittlement of the work which was being carried on so successfully—"Even that which they build," was Tobiah's sneering comment, "if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." The sting in this contemptuous reference to the work entered a buffeted heart, but again Nehemiah betook himself to the God whom he served:—"Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their

own head for they have provoked thee before the builders" (Neh. iv., 4, 5).

The more the work proceeded, the more did the anger of Sanballat, Tobiah, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites increase, until anger gave place to open hostility. The arduousness of the task and the tactics of the enemy at length wrought discouragement in the hearts of the men of Judah. But, if the task was difficult, God had raised up the right man for the occasion, and Nehemiah met his enemies by their own weapons and successfully baffled their design.

Nehemiah now saw that the work of building meant fighting as well, and if they did not fight the building would cease; accordingly he met the new situation by a counter plan that baffled his enemies and allowed the task on hand to be accomplished. From this time half of Nehemiah's servants wrought on the work and the other half were armed. The builders, the bearers of burdens, with one hand wrought on the work and "with the other hand held a weapon." Men of a pacific temperament, with eyes as blind as moles, might find much to criticise in such strange equipment but the situation demanded it and its success, in this case, was its justification.

All the efforts by Sanballat and Tobiah to hinder the good work of Nehemiah had failed. The mockery had given place to contempt, and contempt to open hostility but the work went on till the wall was set up. The next move on the part of Nehemiah's enemies was an invitation to meet with them. Nehemiah's reply is not lacking in definiteness, however discourteous it may have been regarded by Sanballat and his friends—"I am doing a great work," was his answer, "so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" But one invitation after another followed until four had been received and ignored. Then the fifth time an open letter was sent Nehemiah with the false charge saying that Nehemiah and the Jews purposed rebellion. Shenaiah also was used as a tool in this

dishonourable work. Again, Nehemiah prays to his God:—"My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear" (Nehem. vi., 14). Notwithstanding all the attempts made to discourage and intimidate Nehemiah the work went on until the wall was built and the gates set up. His method in meeting each new phase of the opposition attack reveals to us a man of remarkable resource and foresight; yet, he did not depend on these for success for if his life-story teaches one lesson more than another it is that from the day he appeared before his royal master in the palace of Shushan until he successfully built the walls with the gates and scattered the heathen Sabbath-breakers, he was a man who went with all his difficulties to God. He had in his heart a love for the cause of God which did not waver before contempt, slander or opposition. He did not hesitate when occasion demanded it to arm his followers with the very weapons his opponents used to overthrow the good work in which he was engaged. He did a noble work in Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit has seen meet to leave it on record what he met with, his manner of overcoming opposition and his remarkable success in the work for the instruction of the Church of Christ to the end of time.

A Gained World and a Lost Soul—The Profit?

By the Rev. CHARLES J. BROWN, EDINBURGH.

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—(Matt. xvi. 26).

IT may be all very well—perhaps it is all right and our duty—to devote ourselves to God, and lead a holy and heavenly life. But what is to become of our profits, our business, our interests? Such is the argument, in brief and in substance, by which so many among us are turning aside the edge of all appeals to them in behalf of the blessed God—

persuading themselves to prefer the world to their Maker, earth to heaven, sin to holiness, time to eternity. In the text, our Lord condescends to meet them on their own ground—on the ground of profits, of calculations, of self-interest—"What is a man *profited*?" He does not ask here how they will answer to God or to His law for a life of ungodliness and sin, but how they will answer for it to themselves, and their own interests and gains. It is a simple question of *profit*. He asks them to settle, "What is a man *profited*, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Three things demand our attention here: first, a case supposed—the whole world gained; second, another case supposed—the soul lost; and, third, the question, how stands the reckoning, the account, in the end and upon the whole?

I. First, we have a case supposed—the whole world gained. Of course, it is only a supposed case—one which was never realized in fact. No man ever yet bartered his soul for a world, or anything approaching it. Ah! it is for a very small part of a world, a mere shred of one, men lose their souls every day—for a very little show—a very little gain—a very little notice, applause—a very little satisfaction, delight. Alexander the Great's case was a rare one indeed; and even *his* regrets were but a kind of impassioned figure, when, after conquering the world (as they spoke of the world at that time)—some tolerable part of it, that is to say—he shed tears because he had not another world to conquer. But Christ will give this first side of the account the benefit of the supposition—the *whole* world gained. He puts this case, that what Satan once offered to *Him*, if He would fall down and worship him, He is able to make good, and does bestow on *you*—the world's accumulated whole wealth, pleasures, kingdoms, amusements, honours, together. Well; and the *profit*? Now, we will, if you please, and the more thoroughly to test the profit on this side of the account, leave out of view for the present the other side altogether—the soul, and the loss of it. We will try to forget eternity for a little. We will take the world's side of the

reckoning by itself, and suppose death to be the end of you, and of your very soul, and world, and all. And meanwhile you have gained it, according to the supposition—the whole of it.

But I think it is something very like a dream, a phantom, a shadow, you have got. For, first, how little a portion of this world of yours can you make any use of! And second, how intolerable the anxiety of keeping such a world, when you have gained it! And third, how little real inward satisfaction from it, supposing it kept ever so easily! And fourth, and above all, death hastens, at any moment to sweep it all away together.

1. *First*, I say, how little a portion of your world can you make use of! And if you will insist on using more, because it is your own, and you have a right to do with it as you will, then it is but a surfeit and a misery, not a satisfaction, an enjoyment. You call it your own, but to what purpose of *profit*, beyond a very little part of it? The only advantage of property, I suppose, is in reference to some use or account to which it can be turned. There is no limit to the mere *name* of property—the limits to its *use*, and especially on a man's self, are reached very soon indeed. Have you not noticed how some plain man, who has the charge of the pleasure-grounds of a great proprietor (especially if he happens to be a person of sense and piety), has a great deal more of the actual use of them, oftentimes, than the owner himself, who, perhaps, has ceased to care much for them, and prefers to live abroad, leaving his domains for the use and enjoyment of humbler dependants? How little a portion of your world can you make any use of!

2. But *second*, how intolerable the anxiety of keeping the rest,—keeping such a world when you have gained it! Ah, you are not the master of *it*. It is the master of *you*. It is the proprietor—you are the slave, held in the bondage daily of its thoughts and cares, difficulties, dangers, vexations. I can imagine you right glad to throw off the incumbrance of your world again, and have your gains reduced once more within very different dimensions.

3. But *third*, supposing you could keep such a world with perfect ease, yet, alas, how little real inward satisfaction from it! and that is *profit*. Oh, "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." That inner soul will not fill with outward things. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." That soul of yours will still be crying, "give, give,"—"who will show us any good?" Alexander's tears because he had not another world to conquer, have a great and enduring lesson for us here—even that what little happiness he had found, had been more in the excitement of the pursuit than in the thing pursued,—in the conquering than in the conquests. You remember these memorable words, "I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure . . . I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees; I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces; I gat me men singers, and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom"—my learning, science, philosophy—"remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from me; I withheld not my heart from any joy. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

4. But *the chief* and most affecting element on this side of the account remains. For, supposing you were able to use all your world together; and supposing you could keep it with perfect ease; and supposing it were fitted, in its own nature, to impart ever so much rest and satisfaction, yet, all the while, you are as the man set down to a feast of viands with a sword

suspended over his head by a single hair. For *death* hastens, at any moment to sweep all away together. And thus does it come to a very simple alternative, as regards this first side of the reckoning. For either we were right, and there never was much profit, much that was fitted to impart rest and satisfaction, in your gained world at the best, or we were somehow wrong, and there was a great deal. If we were right, and there was very little profit at the best, then it scarce needed even death to come and finish it. But if we were wrong,—if there was much in this supposed world fitted in its own nature to give you rest and satisfaction, yet the terrible certainty of death, in one view of it, and terrible uncertainty of it in another, come in to spoil and neutralize all. And this at least is beyond all possible dispute, that so soon as death *has* come, and inflicted its stroke, then all former profit, real or supposed, is at an end for ever—much as some man, who is a bankrupt now, is none the less so, none the less destitute of all, that he may have been a wealthy man once. All is gone now.

II. So that, on the whole, brethren, the loss on the *other* side of this great reckoning—for to that we must now pass—*would need to be a very small one*, if there is to be any profit on the entire great account. Ah, a small loss on the other side of it—the *soul lost*! Why, the only possible difficulty here is to make any approach to an estimate of the loss. For we have been leaving *eternity* purposely out of view as yet. But eternity is everything. Sixty or seventy years before eternity are nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. We can speak somewhat accurately and confidently of the profit, or no profit, on the world's side of the account. But how shall we now speak, secondly, of the soul lost, on the other? The first thing, if one would form any kind of estimate of what the loss of the soul is, would be to estimate if possible, to try to estimate, *the value of the soul itself*. Then should we approach at least to an idea of what the loss of it must be. Well, take these views, rapidly, of the worth, the value, of the soul.

1. First, it is *yourself*, my hearer. The soul is the man. That wondrous thing in you which thinks, and wills, and reasons, remembers, anticipates, rejoices, sorrows, is *you*, is the man. And accordingly our text, in the parallel passage of Luke, is thus expressed, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose *himself*?" For he who loses his soul, loses himself, loses all. The soul is the man. The soul shall survive the body—shall live when the body is mouldering in the grave. And although, indeed, the body shall be raised again, yet, in its re-union with the soul, it shall but follow the soul's character and destinies. As the soul is, such shall the body be for ever.

2. Or, the value of the soul might appear from this consideration, that it has nothing in the whole world like it, resembling it. If you would find the likeness of the soul, you must seek it in a far other world. God made the soul in His own glorious likeness. When He made the other creatures, He simply said, "let them be"—"let there be a firmament—let the waters be gathered together—let the dry land appear—let the earth bring forth abundantly." But when He made man, God said, "let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man"—*the soul*—"in His own image, in the image of God created He him." O that pearl, priceless gem—that soul with its capacities, its faculties of reason, and will, and memory, and conscience! A Christian poet sings—

"What is the thing of greatest price
The whole creation round,
That which was lost in paradise,
That which in Christ is found?
The soul of man—Jehovah's breath,
Which keeps two worlds at strife:
Hell moves beneath to work its death,
Heaven stoops to give it life."

3. But that is another standard to measure the worth of the soul by. The value of anything may be tested by the *price*

which one thoroughly acquainted with it will require for it, or will give for it, as the case might be. A price was once required, and once given, for the soul, by parties infallibly acquainted with its character and value. O see its worth in the ransom price which the eternal Father required, and the eternal Son gave, for its redemption. See it in the word of the Father, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd." See it in the agony, the bloody sweat and accursed death, of that fellow of the Lord of hosts. See it, when the Creator of all worlds became an infant of days—became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, a homeless wanderer on the earth which He made—yea, became "sin," and "a curse," that we might be redeemed from the curse of the law!

4. Or, the value of the soul comes solemnly out in the single fact of its immortality, its ever-enduring existence. Ah! that eternity which we left purposely out of view in looking at the first side of the account, is necessarily the grand determining element in the whole. The world, were it ever so profitable otherwise, is worthless from this one circumstance, that it passeth away, and the lust of it. But when the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up, the soul shall only have begun to live; and when millions of years more have passed, it shall be no nearer an end. But thus I am led to observe, that we have a simpler and more direct way of getting at some estimate of what the loss of the soul is.

For we know directly, however unable fully to realize, what the loss of the soul will involve. We know that the loss of it will involve, first, the loss of an eternal heaven, and, second, the incurring of an eternal hell! The loss of an eternal heaven. You sometimes say, I have lost such a thing—but it matters little—I can replace it—it is not of much consequence. Can you replace that everlasting kingdom? Can you replace those mansions in the Father's House? Can you replace that crown of life and of glory? Can you replace what these words tell of, "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither

shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes?"

And yet the loss of all this might be *borne*, at least, by those who have never known such a blessedness, and never even much desired it. But the loss of the soul, besides the forfeiture of an eternal heaven, is the incurring of an eternal hell! "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"—that is the loss of the soul. "Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power"—that is the loss of the soul. "The rich man died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence"—that is the loss of the soul. But "who knoweth the power of His anger?" What the loss of the soul is, will be fully known only to those who shall find it when the discovery shall come too late.

III. And now the question of our third and last head of discourse has been answered already—we do not need to enlarge on it—how stands the reckoning, the account, in the end and upon the whole? For, as to the one side of it, we have seen that the profit of a whole world gained, small enough even before death, is swept wholly away in the hour of it. And, as to the other side, we have seen that the loss here is beyond all possibility of calculation—the loss of ourselves—the loss of that which has its likeness only in the adorable God—which found its price only in the incarnation and death of His co-equal Son—the loss of our eternity—the loss of an eternal heaven—the incurring of an eternal hell! And, therefore, in place of enlarging on the question further, I would fain address myself

for a moment or two, in the way of affectionate expostulation, to those among us who are madly preferring the world to God—bartering a soul of such priceless value—incurring a loss so manifold and incalculable—not for a whole world, but for a miserable fragment of one—for a little gain, or show, or satisfaction—a little emolument, or applause, or sensual delight—for the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life. Beloved hearers, the folly were very greatly less if the salvation of the soul were either no longer within your reach, or very doubtfully, at least, and uncertainly within it. But it is the Saviour of the soul who speaks in the text—who is crying “ye will not come to me, that ye might have life”—“if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink”—“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We should but smile at an infant who, when you placed a little bit of polished copper before it, along with an old, hundred pound note, should prefer the bright copper. But you, with your eyes open, are preferring that worthless shining dust before unsearchable riches, before an everlasting kingdom! “Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord; for my people have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?” Oh, what arguments are here for plucking out the right eye—cutting off and casting away the right hand, that would come between you and the Saviour of the lost! What arguments are here for coming to Him even this day, casting yourselves down at His feet, laying the weight of your whole eternity upon Him, giving that soul of yours into His hand to be saved by Him in His own way, surrendering yourselves to His everlasting service! I doubt not, however, that there are among us who have already done this; and the whole subject will be found fraught with lessons for such of the highest value.

1. As, for example, what thanks do you owe to the grace which alone opened your eyes on the hollowness of the world, and the incomparable preciousness of the Lord Jesus! For no mere demonstrations of the world's emptiness shall ever persuade men to part with it, and with their sins, till the Holy Ghost has opened their hearts to the higher glory and excellency of the Saviour. Till then, having nothing better, they will cling to the earth as their all. It is the power of the new and nobler affection that alone shall expel the old and lower one. "By grace are ye saved," believers, "through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." And what a salvation! What a soul saved, and saved at such a cost! hell escaped, heaven gained! unsearchable riches! a pearl of even still greater price than the soul, found in the Saviour who redeemed it! And I think you have more real satisfaction now, in whatever even of the world you possess, than when you had nothing besides. You have heard of the poor godly woman who, in taking up her barley cake, thanked God for it as a very treasure from His hand, saying, "this, Lord, and heaven too!" Perhaps you do not now prosper less, possibly more, and I am sure more solidly and satisfactorily, even in your earthly calling. It is written at least, "seek first the kingdom of God; and all other things shall be added unto you"—"all things are yours, whether the *world*, or life, or death, or things *present*, or things to come; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." "How sweet," exclaims old Augustine in his Confessions, "did it at once become to me to want the sweetnesses of those toys! and what I feared to be parted from was now a joy to part with. For thou didst cast them forth from me, thou true and highest sweetness. Thou castedst them forth, and, for them, enteredst in thyself, sweeter than all pleasure." Thanks, thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!

2. But again, what lessons are here for you of Christian moderation in the use of the world—of using, as not abusing it—of asserting a holy superiority over it—of refusing to let

the earth you tread on become again your master—of declining all dishonourable shifts and artifices in your worldly business—diligent in it, indeed, on manifold accounts, but remembering ever that you have riches of a nobler kind laid up in the Lord Jesus, and kept secure for you by him, in the possession of which you can afford to forego whatsoever is contrary to His honour and will.

3. And thus, further, what materials of consolation are here for you under trials and losses in the world! For you might take the text conversely, and ask, what shall a man suffer much, if he lose the whole world, and gain his own soul? Certainly this may well sustain you under partial losses—however severe—of your substance. How memorable those words of the apostle, “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal!”

4. And once more, what arguments might be found here for giving, liberally and cheerfully, at all times, of your substance, whether for the relief of temporal distress, or for the advancement of the cause and kingdom of the Lord Jesus! It is not much, as we have seen, of the things of this world you *can* make use of on yourselves. But you can make much larger use of them for the benefit, temporal or spiritual, of those around you. And the more you use of them thus, the wealthier are you in the nobler and better riches—for “whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in nowise lose his reward”—“Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide for yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens which faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth”—“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in;

naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The Late Duncan MacKinnon, Missionary, Bracadale, Skye,

"**T**HE memory of the just is blessed," for precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints (Ps. cxvi. 15). The memory of the Christless sinner is forgotten (Eccles. ix. 5). This worthy man was born some seventy-eight years ago in the township of Ose, in the Parish of Bracadale, Skye. He was like the rest of the fallen race of Adam, born into this sinful and miserable world. He proved by his own conduct in the world the fact that he fell in Adam's first transgression. The Lord had mercy upon him, calling him by His Spirit and Word to repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was brought up by God-fearing parents. His father was a precious man of God, and from credible reports, his mother was also a humble pious woman. They began to sow the seed of God's Word in the fallow ground of the unregenerated minds of their children from their early infancy, believing that the Most High would make it grow in His own blessed time. "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up" (Deut. vi. 4-7).

The above injunction was enjoined upon the children of Israel under the Old Dispensation, and surely it is not less binding on parents, and others under the present Dispensation. This poor

bewildered generation ignore the Divine precepts of Jehovah with very few exceptions. But the people of God dare not ignore His precious precepts and we can readily believe that the parents of Duncan MacKinnon followed the precepts of God, in speaking often of His gracious dealings and loving kindnesses towards themselves in the presence of their children. It was a pleasure and a duty to do so. It is when the child is young and tender that he generally receives his lasting impressions. We do believe that the Holy Spirit is striving with the people of God from early childhood. They may break the bands, and cast all restraints from them for a season, until they are savingly called by the Holy Spirit to repentance and faith.

Duncan MacKinnon had early impressions, so much so that he began for a season to think within himself that he was really in a safe condition; because he could pray, weep, and rejoice alternately while he had no higher warrant for the feelings that passed through his mind than his own emotions. He knew not his own heart and corrupt nature at that time. He told us, on a certain occasion that at worship in his father's house, that his beloved father got such an unusual liberty of soul at a Throne of Grace which overwhelmed him in his mind, while listening to his father praying for mercy at a throne of Grace that, immediately after worship was over he betook himself to the barn, and began to pray, and to shed copious tears, far more so than his father, and that he concluded before he came out of the barn, that he had peace with God, whereas it was his own emotions. Oh! the craftiness of sin in the human heart for the precious man of God told us; "I would have been lost forever, if I had been left with the natural man's religious devotions." This early dew soon passed away, and he was back with his old companions as on former occasions. He felt that sin was more powerful than his religion, that he was not able to subdue his corrupt inclinations, so that his prayers and tears were given up for a time. The Lord did not give him up, but on the contrary, called him effectually, convincing him of his guilt, and of his responsibility which brought young Duncan so

low in mind and body, that he could not eat much, and his sleep to a large extent was also taken away, so that his physical strength, and energy became so exhausted, although he had a very strong frame, that he had to keep to his bed for a time, owing to the weakness of his body. He was now confronted with eternal realities, the law of God demanding obedience in thought, word, and action; and Justice calling for a speedy execution; "for the wages of sin is death," "Cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground." He was shorn naked of all self-righteousness, and found guilty before God. However, his bodily health and strength recovered somewhat, and he began to rise and to take a walk all alone to meditate moodily upon his lost condition before God, and an infinite Eternity. One evening, as he was returning home from his usual walk, and not far from his own home, a passage of the Word of God entered into his soul with such light, power, love and mercy, that Duncan stood gazing, with his whole being at the mercy that could be extended to the like of him. The portion of the Word was Ps. cxviii. 24, 25; "This is the day which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it, save now, I beseech Thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech Thee send now prosperity." It was the day of the Everlasting Gospel that dawned upon his soul and his sun rose, no more to go down. He was prospered with all the necessary graces of the Spirit of the Lord until he was called home to be forever with Christ.

We remember the evening we walked together over that same spot of the road. When we came up to it, our friend stood, and said; "Well, this is about the very place where I was standing," when the verses quoted above came with such power to his mind, that liberated him from the power of sin forever. Christ in His humiliation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and in His threefold offices was, by the Spirit of God made altogether lovely to his immortal soul, so that he could say with Zacharias "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring, from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of

death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Through Christ and Him crucified and by faith in His precious atonement, peace and reconciliation was the song of the soul, so that the trumpet, harp, organ, and the sounding cymbals of the immortal faculties praised the Lord for His mercy which endureth for ever.

Duncan was a man of prayer, and the hold the Word of God took of his spirit was evident from the very beginning of his public profession of Christ, to all of the Lord's people who had spiritual discernment, and was thus early embraced by them as one of the family of God, and received gladly with open hearts and arms into their affection, and love. He was a modest Christian, sagacious and humble, always ready to learn of the weakest of the flock, as well as from the strongest and most enlightened in the faith. The grace of discernment was so evident in him, that the Lord's people who knew him, and came in contact with him, considered him, not as a mere ordinary believer, but as one of those who had close fellowship with the Most High through His precious Word and that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High. Yet his judgment was so controlled by the Word of God, that he was not of the type of Christians that are ready to put everyone with whom they differ in the pillory.

The parish of Bracadale was blessed with excellent ministers of the New Testament. In this connection we would mention the names of Revs. John Fletcher and James Ross, both of whom were highly esteemed and loved by the Lord's people. They were looked to and believed to be the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. They fed the Lord's people on the finest of the wheat. It was not their practice to offer to the soul of the hungry, chaff instead of wheat. The blessed Spirit of the Lord was leading His faithful and upright servants on the green pastures of the Everlasting Gospel. It was their prayer, desire and aim, to lead the Lord's people to the same green pastures, as we have often heard from our late friend, how deeply indebted he was to these men in the Lord, and the loving

references he would make about them, and particularly about the Rev. James Ross, we could not but conclude that he was spiritually benefited for eternity from the preaching of the Gospel through them.

The Lord's people are not fed, comforted, encouraged, and strengthened by everyone who will speak to them in the name of Christ. The sheep know His voice and none but the Lord's people can know the voice of their Saviour through His sent servants, speaking through them by His Blessed Gospel. Others may be quite satisfied with mere lifeless sounds. The outward forms may satisfy the poor formalist; but lifeless forms shall never satisfy the living soul. When the precious servants of Christ were called to their Everlasting Rest, the Free Church of Scotland, about this period of her history began to lean heavily upon the mere outward forms, and the living began to groan under the ministry of men who became pastors, but the most of them could not differentiate between life and death. When Dr. Kennedy, the eminent Mr. Alexander MacColl of Lochalsh, and other excellent men, as well as those mentioned were taken Home to be forever with the Lord, a class of ministers sprang up in the Free Church, who considered their own pride and learning of more value, than the Gospel of Christ and the souls of men. However, the blessed servants of Christ that had entered upon their rest, warned the Lord's people, that they were leaving behind what to look for after their decease and therefore, they were forearmed, being forewarned, to meet the onslaught of the rising ministry in the Free Church. A universal declension began to permeate the Protestant Church, not only in Great Britain, but all over Europe, and in the United States of America, and in the British Colonies. Extraordinary innovations were introduced into the Protestant Church, foreign to the Reformed Church, and contrary to the Word of God. Rationalistic theories, Higher Critical opinions, and atheistic notions became quite fashionable in the pulpits of the Protestant Churches. The materialistic conception, and the carnal reasoning of the Professors in the various

religious seminaries, universities and minor institutions, began to bear fruit, so that young men rose, in the Church, that would not blush to preach publicly and write in their periodicals, and also in the public press, that they did not believe in the infallibility, inerrancy, authenticity and canonicity of the Word of God. The Protestant Church of England was hankering after Rome; the Lutheran Church had become so rationalistic, that a Unitarian, an open Atheist, or an Agnostic could mount her pulpits and preach to their people the figments of his own imagination. In the United States of America, a man in the name of Christ, professing to be His servant could act the comedian, and make their people laugh, and make merry as the Philistines did while sporting themselves at their concert before Samson. The Churches of Scotland were not to be behind the fashionable Continental and American modern Churches. However, there were barriers still extant in the Protestant Church of Scotland that would need be removed by the Ecclesiastical functionaries or by the Parliamentary politicians. But as the majority in Church and State were now bent on the ruin and the overthrow of the Protestant religion as it was known to John Knox, Alexander Henderson and others, what was to hinder them to cast down the bulwarks of Zion! They shouldered their axes and grinded them at the flinty stone of carnal reason and introduced their Declaratory Act, in order to change the practice of the Church, so that her Courts might be brought to conform with their unwarranted ideals. The external veneer would have to be perforce brushed aside in the Free Church of Scotland. In her supreme court this infamous Declaratory Act which was passed by a large majority in 1892 and ultimately became the finding of the said court. It gave free and full licence to her young ministry to preach, teach and practise according to their own individualistic inclinations. The old path was out of order. The Lord's people were groaning, weeping, and sighing under this terrible burden. What was to be done? Was there any more a prophet left among them? Yes, but where was he? When the late Rev.

D. MacFarlane stood alone against the modern mighty in Edinburgh, he protested against their evilly designed Declaratory Act, and was forced to dissociate with men who were either the prime actors and also with those who were too weak-kneed to follow his courageous example. The revered Rev. D. MacFarlane was one of the humblest Christian gentlemen that it was our privilege and pleasure to meet in this life. We are of the candid opinion that he loved retirement, but when he was, in the Providence of God, called to make a stand and to protest publicly against the innovations of men, it was because of his filial love to the glory of God, and the honour of Christ, and to the inspired Bible and the purity of doctrines and worship that was the supreme object before his mind, when he stood against the mighty alone. All the cavillings of would-be theologians and lawyers can never convert facts into fiction. Pilate would wash his foul hands and thus consider himself justified and say, that he was clean or, in his own estimation, innocent!

Men that were under the Declaratory Act and still are can never take away the guilt incurred, until they acknowledge in mercy their sins, and seek pardon through the blood of Christ. The Lord's people were relieved when they knew and heard that there was one man, at least—a public servant of Christ, found faithful, upright and sincere, who did not defile the garment of his public profession in protesting against the wiles of the enemy. “And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple, and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.” The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them” (Esther viii. 15-17).

The Lord's people rejoiced at the great deliverance of being saved from men that set up the gallows to destroy the Word of God in Scotland. Duncan MacKinnon was one of the first in the Parish of Bracadale to rise at a public service which was conducted by the then Rev. John R. MacKay, M.A., to thank the Most High that there were men left in the land who loved Christ, His honour, the Word of God, and the Gospel of His grace more than their own lives. From following the Free Presbyterian Church he never wavered, from the beginning until he was taken away to his Eternal Rest. He was perfectly satisfied that he was in the Church of his fathers, freed from the innovations of men and the infamous Declaratory Act. He knew that Mr. MacFarlane stood exactly on the same grounds as the men of 1843, as the Reformers of Scotland, prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ being the Head Corner-Stone. The men of discernment in Skye that feared God and eschewed evil banded themselves together and thus formed the Free Presbyterian Church, which was no other Church but that of their fathers with the simple alteration of a different official designation. Those that they left behind in the Declaratory Act Church were men of very little weight or discernment among the people. We may be permitted to mention the names of some of those excellent and pious men who could not possibly tolerate to subordinate their consciences, convictions, experience and intelligence under the feet of the Declaratory Act innovators. In this connection we would mention Alexander MacLennan, Rona; Alexander MacFarlane, Teacher, Raasay; Donald Gillies, Neil MacKinnon and Duncan Campbell, Portree; Norman Munro, Staffin; Peter MacLeod, Borge; Hector MacPherson, Broadford; Norman MacLeod, Glendale; John MacCaskill, Carbost, Bracadale and Duncan MacKinnon, Struan, Bracadale, men of understanding in the Word of God, pious, humble and highly intelligent. These were the men that followed Rev. D. MacFarlane's lead. Many more could be mentioned from among the people who were able, sincere, upright and pious men that rejoiced in the testimony raised by the servants of Christ, Messrs. MacFarlane and

Macdonald. In the Island of Lewis, Ross-shire, Harris, North Uist, in Caithness and Sutherlandshire, Glasgow and Edinburgh, in Ontario, Canada, the lay leaders were the salt of the earth and the light of the world, in their own day and in their different places of abode.

The youth of the Free Presbyterian Church can look back with delight that the ministers and men who raised the testimony for Christ's honour and glory, were men who proved by their life, walk and conversation, that they were in truth the servants of the living God. The future of the Free Presbyterian Church is to the utmost bounds of Christ's kingdom in the world. Her Gospel is the Gospel of Christ, her Saviour is mighty to save to the uttermost. Jew and Gentile is welcomed, invited and right gladly received provided either Jew or Gentile will humbly and sincerely accept Jesus Christ and Him Crucified as their Saviour from sin and the wrath which is to come.

We might say that Duncan MacKinnon was probably the youngest of the men mentioned above, who took a leading part in forming the Free Presbyterian Church in the Island of Skye, and he was the last of them to be taken away. When John MacCaskill, who was missionary of our Church in the Parish of Bracadale, was called from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, Duncan MacKinnon was asked by our Church to become missionary of our congregation in Bracadale. Although he never aimed at things that the blessed man considered too high to understand yet he was an able expositor of the Word of God. The first time we heard him speak to the "Question" in Portree (he was not known to us then personally) before he sat down, the impression he made upon our mind then, never left it. The awe and the reverence he had to the inspired Word; the grasp he had of Law and Gospel was very uncommon. It was edifying to listen to him for his words were few but well-considered and in scriptural order. The place he had in the minds of our people without soliciting it could be seen on the Friday of the Communion. On such occasions many a weary soul he was the happy instrument to console, in passing

through the wilderness where the Lord's people are often tried in their pilgrimage journey to the Promised Land above. His faithfulness and integrity of purpose left no room for doubt in the minds of the unconverted that here they had a man of God, who sought in earnest and in love the eternal salvation of their souls. The impressions he made upon the minds of our people who came in contact with him, shall not leave some of them as long as they are left in this world.

We have reason to believe that there were some who heard the Word of God through him and who will acknowledge him as the instrument through whom they heard the Word of God to their eternal benefit. His services among our people in the Parish of Bracadale are sadly missed by them, for he was loved by them, and highly respected, for his life, walk and conversation was consistent with his public profession and our people were conscious of the fact that they had a saintly, praying man in their midst while he was left among them.

When the people knew that the end was drawing near, and that the natural life of their beloved, faithful friend was ebbing out, they began to flock to the house to show their respect for him, but owing to his extreme weakness only a few of them could be admitted into the sickroom. But what struck us to be remarkable and characteristic of the faithful Christian man was that he would quote a passage of the Word of God suitable, in our opinion, to the condition and state of each individual, as he stood before him, by his bedside.

We were with him in his last illness until the precious soul left the tabernacle of clay. His mind, to the very last was on the Word of God, quoting passages, praising and praying. The last words we heard him utter were "Oh, let my soul praise Thee eternally." He asked us on one occasion how were the ministers in the Church. After we told him as far as was known to us, he began to pray that the Lord would bless them all, and protect them, as they were living in terrible dark days. On another occasion he asked us how the Church was we replied, "We have not heard anything new." "Oh," he said, "She

will pass through fiery trials yet;" but as he often said to us in private conversation, "the Free Presbyterian Church has a glorious future in this land and in other lands." I also heard him say that it was a token for good in these dark times that the Free Presbyterian Church was so ignored by those who had departed so deplorably from the Word of God.

He left a widow, five sons and five daughters to mourn his great loss but his eternal gain. He was married twice, and by the first wife he had one son and two daughters. His first wife died when she was comparatively young but her beloved husband had every reason to believe that she died in Christ, which was life eternal. A son died in Bedford, England, during the war. He was a promising young man and his dear father had every hope that his precious soul was reconciled to God through faith in the blood of Christ before he was called away to Eternity.

May the Lord raise up the sons and the daughters to witness for Christ in their own day and generation, and to seek a personal interest in the Redemption purchased by Him. Let them pray diligently and earnestly that the Holy Spirit may lead and guide them to Christ in the Word of God. Godly fathers and mothers shall be at Christ's right hand at the Great Day of Judgment and alas! if their sons and daughters are on the left hand on that Day.

The blank Duncan's death made for us will not be made up in time. The cause of Christ is weaker in Skye by his removal. His walk and conversation was so upright that it had a salutary influence over old and young in the Parish. His neighbours who might not agree with him, could not but respect him. His love for the Lord's Day was exemplary. His own conduct on that day was the best example—for actions speak much louder than mere empty words.

Our people in the Parish of Bracadale mourn his loss and showed their profound respect to their departed friend on the day that his mortal remains were committed to the dust. Our people from the various congregations of our Church in the

island showed also their love and respect to this precious man of God by the large concourse of them, that attended his funeral although the elements were very inclement at the time. He was laid to rest in the churchyard of Struan, Braacadale, till the Heavens be no more.

We would extend to the widow, sons and daughters, our heart-felt sympathy in their bereavement.—J. M.

Nadur an Duine 'na Staid Cheithir Fillte.

MU THRUAILLIDHEACHD NA TUIGSE.

(Continued from page 395.)

San dara àite, Tha do dhiadhachd uile, mu tha diadhachd idir agad, 'na saothair ehaillte, a thaobh fireanachaidh an lathair Dhé, no a thaobh eifeachd shlainteil sam bith dhuìt féin. Am bheil thu fathast ann ad staid naduir? Gu cinnteach ma tha, tha do dhleasdanas 'nam peacaibh, mar a dh' ainmicheadh an ceart uair. Nach biodh am fion is fearr neo-bhlasda ann an soitheach anns nach 'eil tlachd? Mar sin tha diadhachd an duine neo-iompaichte. Fuidh 'n lagh, cha d' rinn an t-eudach anns an robh feoil na h-iobhairt air a giulan, ge do bhean e ri nithibh eile, iadsan naomha; ach ma bhean esan a bha neo-ghlan ri ni sam bith, eo dhiubh coitichionn no naomh, rinn se e neo-ghlan: Eadhon mar sin cha'n urrainn do dhleasdanas t' anam truailidh a dheanamh naomh, ge do bhiodh iad annta féin, maith; ach tha do chridhe truailidh 'g an salachadh, agus 'g an deanamh neo-ghlan, Hag. ii. 12—14. Bu ghnàth leat t' oibre a roinn gu dà sheorsa, cuid maith, cuid ole; ach is eigin duit an àireamh a ris, agus an cur uile fuidh aon cheann, oir tha Dia a' sgrìobhadh om' uile, a mhain ole. Tha so bronach: Cha'n iongantach ge do chithear iadsan ag iarraidh deire anns an fhoghara, a ta filleadh an làmh gu codal an àm cur an t-sìl: ach is ro-bhocd an staid a bhi saothreachadh le muinntir eile san earrach, agus gidheadh gun a bheag r' a bhuain san fhoghara; agus is i so staid gach uile luchd aidmheil a ta beo agus a' bàsachadh 'nan staid nàdurra.

San àite mu dheireadh, Cha'n urrainn thusa thu féin a chuideachadh. Ciod is urrainn thu a dheanamh, a thoirt air falbh do pheacaidh, thusa a ta gu h-iomlan truailidh? Cha'n urrainn gu firinneach ach peacachadh. Ma thoisicheas duine nadurra air maothlachadh, air deur a' shileadh air son a pheacaidh, agus air ath-leasachadh, tha'n cridhe truailidh air ball a' deanamh greim, air a chuid is lugha, air toillteanas comh-fhreagarach do na rinneadh leis; rinn e moran e féin, tha e ann am barail, agus nach fheud Dia gun tuilleadh a dheanamh air a shon, air son na rinn e: Anns an àm cheudna, cha'n 'eil e deanamh ni sam bith ach peacadh; air chor as gur e an toillteanas comh-fhreagarach ris na rinneadh leis, an lobhar is eigin a bhi air a chur a mach as a' champ; an t-anam marbh is eigin a bhi air adhlacadh as an t-sealladh; agus am meall truailidh is eigin a bhi air a thilgeadh do'n t-slochd. Cionnus as urrainn dhuit duil a bhi agad thu féin a leigheas le aon ni as urrainn thu dheanamh? An nigh poll agus salachar a mach salachaireachd? Agus an glan thu mach peacadh le peacachadh? Ghabh Iob slighe chreadha g' a sgriobadh féin, a cheann gu'n robh a làmhnan co lan neasgaidean 'sa bha chorp: Is e so staid t'anama thruailidh-sa; nach feud a bhi air a leigheas ach le Iosa Crìosd, aig an robh "a neart air tiormachadh mar shoitheach creadha," Salm xxii. 15. Tha thu bochd gun amharus, ro thruagh agus bochd, Taisb. iii. 17. Cha'n 'eil dìon agad ach didein bhreug; cha'n 'eil ni agad air son t'anama ach luideagan salach; cha'n 'eil ni agad g'a bhiathadh ach plaosgan, nach urrainn sàsachadh. Thuilleadh air sin, fhuair thu a leithid do lot ann an leasraibh Adhaimh, as nach 'eil e fathast air a leigheas, air chor as gu bheil thu gun neart, (Rom. v. 6.) neo-chomasach air deanamh no air oibreachadh air do shon féin. Ni h-eadh a thuilleadh air so uile, cha'n urrainn dhuit urrad as iarraidh gu ceart, ach tha thu a' d' luidhe mar naoidhean ruisgte anns an achadh fhosgailte, Esec. xvi. 5.

Feum III. Tha mi ag earalachadh ort an fhirinn dhubhach so a chreidsinn. Mo thruaighe! tha e soilleir, gur beag a ta

i air a creidsinn anns an t-saoghal. Is tearc iad a ta fo churam gu'n caithe-beatha truailidh atharrachadh; ach tha iad ni 's teiree gu mor a ta 'g iarraidh an nadur atharrachadh! Cha'n 'eil fios aig a' chuid is mò do dhaoine ciod a ta iad, no ciod na spiorada d' am bheil iad: Tha iad mar an t-suil, a ta faicinn moran nithe, ach nach 'eil ga faicinn féin. Ach, gus an aithne dhuibh gach aon plaigh a' chridhe féin, cha'n 'eil earbsa air son 'ur leigheis. C' arson nach creid sibh e? Tha teisteanas soilleir an Sgrìobtuir agaibh air a shon; ach cha'n fhurasda libh a leithid sin do dhroch bharail a bhi agaibh oirbh féin. Mo thruaighe! is e sin nadur 'ur galair, Taisb. iii. 17. "Cha'n 'eil fhios agad gu bheil thu doirinneach, agus truagh agus bochd, agus dall, agus lomnochd." A Thighearna fosgail an suilean gu fhaicinn, mu'm faigh iad bàs dheth, agus ann an ifrinn gu tog iad an suilean, agus gu'm faic iad an ni nach faic iad a nis.

Co-dhunaidh mi a phunc chudthromach so, mu thruaillidheachd naduir an duine, le beagan fhocail air punc eile o'n bhonn teagaisg.

Teagasg, "Tha Dia a' tabhairt aire àraidh d' ar truailidheachd nadurra, no do pheacadh an naduir."

Air so tha e toirt teisteanas air dà dhoigh: *Sa cheud àite*, Le 'fhocal; mar anns a' bhonn teagaisg: "Chunnaic Dia gu'n robh uile bhreithneachadh smuaintean cridhe an duine a mhain ole an còmhnuidh," Faic Salm xiv. 2, 3. *San dara àite*, Le oibribh. Tha Dia a' sgrìobhadh a ro-aire dheth, agus a chorruich ris, mar ann am moran d'a oibribh, mar sin gu h-àraidh anns an dà obair so: (1.) Ann am bàs cloinn daoine 'nan naoidheantachd. Is iomadh truaighe d'an robh iad buailteach: Bhathadh iad anns an dìle; sgriosadh iad ann an Sodom le teine agus pronnasg; mharbhadh iad leis a' chlaidheamh, bhruthadh iad leis na elachan, agus tha iad do ghnàth a' faghail bàis nadurra! Ciod is fìor aobhar dha so; C' arson a tha'n Dia naomh mar so g'an dian-leantuinn? An ann air son peacadh am pàranta? Feudaidd sin a bhi 'na aobhar aig an Tighearna

gu tagar riu; ach is eigin gur e am peacadh féin is ceann-aobhair do'n bhinn a ta air a toirt a mach 'nan aghaidh; Oir, "an t-anam a chiontaicheas gheibh e sin bàs, arsa Dia," Esec. xviii. 4. An e am peacadh gnìomh féin? Cha'n 'eil sin aca. Ach mar a ni daoine air losgannaibh agus air nathraiche, a mharbhas iad aig a' cheud sealladh mu'm bheil iad a' deanamh aon choire, a chionn an nadur puinseanta ta annta; is ann mar sin a ta anns an ni so. (2.) Ann am breth nadurra cloinn thaghta Dhé. An uair a tha'n Tighearna gu an nadur atharrachadh, bheir e air peacadh an nàdur luidhe trom air an spioradaibh. 'Nuair a tha run air an truailidheachd a leigeadh a mach, sàthaidh e 'n seian domhain 'nam anamaibh, a' ruigheachd gu freumh a' pheacaidh, Rom. vii. 7, 8, 9. Tha'n fheoil, no truailidheachd an nàduir, air a lotadh, air dhi bhi air a ceusadh, co mhaith r'a h-an-tograibh agus a h-ana-miannaibh, Gal. v. 24.

Feum. Biodh againn uime sin, suil àraidh air truailidheachd agus air peacadh ar nàduir, tha Dia g'a fhaicinn. O gu'm faiceadh sinne mar an ceudna e, agus gu'm bitheadh peacadh do ghnàth 'nar fianuis! Ciod am feum a tha dhuinn beachd a ghabhail air peacanna eile, 'nuair a tha mathair-aobhair so a' pheacaidh as an t-sealladh? Tionndaidhibh 'ur suilean a stigh, gu peacadh 'ur nàduir. Tha aobhar eagail gu bheil aig moran ri tòiseachadh fathast ris an obair so; gu'n do dhruid iad an dorus, 'nuair tha an gaduiche mor fathast anns an tigh gun fhaotainn a mach. Is pune chudthromach so; agus 'na laimhseachadh,

I. A chum mothachaidh, dearbhaidh mi, euid do na nithibh anns nach 'eil daoine a' sealltuinn air peacadh an nàduir, d' am bheil an Tighearn a' toirt aire àraidh. (1.) Daoine a bhi ag amhare orra féin le mor-dhochas, mar nach bitheadh iad ann an cunnart pheacanna garbha. Ghabhadh iomadh gu h-ole, nam faigheadh iad a leithid do rabhadh as a thug Criosd d'a Abstoil, Lucas xxi. 34. "Thugaibh an aire dhuibh féin o gheocaireachd agus o mhisg." Nan smuainicheadh neach sam bith gu'm briseadh iadsan a mach ann an gràineileachdaibh

garbh, bhiodh iad ullamh air a ràdh, an cù mise? Thogadh e uabhar an cridheachan, ach cha ghluaisleadh e 'n eagal agus an ball-chrith, a chionn nach aithne dhoibh truailidheachadh an naduir. (2.) Easbhuidh anmhuinneachd ris a' mhuinntir a ta tuiteam. Tha moran anns a' chor sin a' tilgeadh dhiubh tim-chridhe iochdmhor a' Chrìosduidh; oir cha'n 'eil iad "a' toirt aire dhoibh féin, nach buairear iad mar an ceudna," Gal. vi. 1. Tha corruich dhaoine gu tric gus a' cheum a's airde an aghaidh lochdan dhaoine eile, 'nuair tha peacadh a' faotainn caidreamh suaimhneach 'nan uchd féin. Eadhon an duine maith Daibhidh, 'nuair a bha e féin anns a' chor bu mhiosa, 's ann a b' airde bha chorruich an aghaidh lochdan dhaoine eile. An fhad 'sa bha choguis 'na codal, fuidh a chionta, ann an cùis Uriah; tha Spiorad an Tighearna a' toirt fa 'near; "gu'n do las 'fhearg an aghaidh an duine gu mor," anns a' chosamlachd, 2 Sam. xii. 5. Agus, tha deadh aobhar a smuaineachadh, gur ann aig an àm sin, a bhuin e ris na h-Amonaich co an-ìochdmhor, mar tha e air chur sion rann 31. "Gan cur fuidh shàbhan, agus fuidh ehliathan iarunn, agus a' toirt orra dol tre àth nan clacha-creadha." Bheir gràs air daoine bhi eudmhor an aghaidh peacaidh ann an dream eile, co maith as annta féin; ach tha suilean a ta sealltuinn a steach air truailidheachd an nàduir, gan sgeudachadh le iochd agus truacantachd, agus 'gan lionadh le taingealachd do'n Tighearna, nach iad féin a ta air am fàgail gu bhi 'nan ball-amhaire tre laigse naduir. (3.) Tha àireamh mor do dhaoine, agus mu 's e 's gu bheil iad air an cumail a thrioblaidean ann an nithibh saoghalta, agus o bhriseadh a mach 'nan caithe-beatha agus giulan, aig nach 'eil fhios eiod e sin cridhe dubhach: Ma tha trioblaid a' teachd nan caraibh, do nach urrainn an cridheachan uaibhreach strìochdadh gu 'ghiulan; bithidh iad ullamh air a radh, o nach robh sinn air falbh: Ach cha'n 'eil truailidheachd an naduir a' leigeadh leo gu brath a bhi 'n geall air neamh. Ma tha ana-mianna a' briseadh a mach gu follaiseach, aig àm sam bith, tha'n sìth air a' milleadh; ach cha'n 'eil peacadh an nàduir aig àm sam bith 'g an deanamh, trom-chridheach. (4.) A bhi cur dàil an

aithreachais ann an dochas dol 'na cheann an deigh so. Tha'n amanna suidhichte aig moran air son aithreachais agus ath-leasachaidh: mar gu'm biodh a' leithid do cheannsal ac' air an ana-miannaibh, as gu feud iad ceadachadh dhoibh tuilleadh neart a ghlacadh agus gidheadh an ceannsachadh. Tha iad a' cur rompa an slighe leasachadh, gun suil ri Iosa Criosd, aonadh ris, agus neart uaithe: dearbhadh soilleir gu bheil iad 'nan coigriche dhoibh féin; agus mar sin tha iad air am fàgail dhoibh féin, agus tha'n ruinean sgiamhach a' seargadh: oir, mar nach 'eil iad a' faicinn an uireasbhuidh, cha'n 'eil iad a' faotainn an fheum do 'n drùchd o neamh gu'n uisgeachadh. (5.) Daoine bhi dol teann air buairidhean, agus ro-chinnteach asda féin nach tuit iad leo. Tha iad 'g an tilgeadh féin gu neo-eagallach ann an rathad buairidh, an earbsa gu'n tig iad as saor; ach nam biodh mothachadh aca air truailidheachd an naduir, bhitheadh iad air am faicill o dhol a steach ann am fonn an diabhuil: mar a bhiodh neach aig am biodh builg fhudair mu'n cuairt da, fuidh eagal dol far am bheil sradan teine ag eirigh air, eagal gu'm biodh e air a losgadh suas. Is maith a thig do Chriosduidhean a bhi gan cur féin an teagamh: "A Thighearn, am mise e?" Cha bhi iadsan aig am bheil eolas air ceilg an eridhe, ro earbsach as an cuimse féin. (6.) Aineolas air plàighibh a' chridhe. Is ni annasach eolas fhaotainn air plàighibh a' chridhe: tha cuid dhiubh, gu cinnteach sgrìobhta le litrichean co mor, as gu'm feud an neach a ruitheas an leughadh; ach tha cuid eile dhuibh ni's folaichte air chor as gur teare iad a dh' aithnicheas iad. Cia teare iad, d'am bheil aomadh a' chridhe gu mi-chreidimh, 'na uallach? Cha'n 'eil iad ga thoirt fa'near. Tha moran aig an robh mothachadh geur mu pheacanna eile, nach do mhothaich riamh am mi-chreidimh; ged is e sin am peacadh a ta gu h-àraidh air a shloinneadh a mach ann am fìor-mhothachadh, Eoin xvi. 8, 9. "Bheir e dearbh-shoilleireachd do'n t-saoghal mu pheacadh—do bhrìgh nach 'eil iad a' creidsinn annam-sa." An togradh so gu bhi cur ar fireantachd féin ar bonn, is luibh e a ta gu nadurra a' fàs suas ann an eridhe gach neach; ach is teare

iad air am bheil fallus ga spionadh a mach, tha e na luidhe am folach gun a bli air fhaotainn a mach. Tha aomadh a' chridhe gu slighe coimheangail nan oibre 'na phlàigh dhìomhair a' chridhe do mhoran: is e na tha do chruadal acasan, an cridhe fhaotainn gu dleasdanas; cha'n 'eil e idir 'na chruadal dhoibh an cridheachan a thabhairt o dhleasdanas agus os an ceann gu Iosa Crìosd. Cia co doillich sa ta e daoine a bhualadh a mach as am fireantachd féin! Gidheadh tha e ro chruaidh a dhearbhadh orra gu bheil iad a'leigeil taice sam bith orra! *San àite mu dheireadh*, Uabhar agus féin-bharail. Bheireadh sealladh do thruaillidheachd an nàduir, beachd iriosal do dhuine, agus bheireadh e a'rsan aig am bheil e, e féin a mheas, 'na cheann-feadhna nam peacach. Anns na saòrsannaibh a's mò air an ruigeadh e, bliththeadh e 'na luchd d'a chridhe, agus dh'fhloaicheadh e uabhar o 'shuilibh. 'Se easbhuidh lan irioslachadh a' ruigsinn a steach gu peacaidh an nàduir, truaigh moran do luchd-aidmheil, oir nì cladhachadh domhain eadar-dhealachadh mor eadar luchd-togail glie agus luchd-togail amaideach, Luc. vi. 48, 49.

II. Nochdaidh mi dhuibh cuid do nithibh, anns am bu choir dhuibh beachd araidh a ghabhail air peacadh 'ur nad-uir. (1.) Biodh suil àraidh agaibh air, 'nuair tha sibh ag iarraidh gu Iosa Crìosd. Am bheil sibh a' mothachadh feum sam bith agaibh air Crìosd, a tha 'g ur cur d'a ionnsuidh mar Leigh an anama? O na dìchuimhnichibh ur n-cucail, 'nuair a tha sibh an lathair an Leigh. Cha'n aithne dhoibhsan riamh fathast an ghnothuch gu Crìosd, nach deachaidh d'a ionnsuidh air son peacaidh an nàduir; a chum 'fhola thoirt air falbh a chionta agus a chum a Spioraid a bhriseadh a chumhachd. Ged chuireadh sibh ann an searbhalachd 'ur n-anama, 'na lathair rolla a ruigeadh gu neamh, d' ur peacanna dearmaid agus deanadais; gidheadh nam biodh peacadh 'ur nàduir a mach as, bithibh cinnteach, gu'n do dhìchuimhnich sibh a chuid a b' fhearr do'n ghnothuch a tha aig peacach bochd gu Leigh an anama. Ciod am feum a dheanadh e do mhuinntir Iericho, na soithiche uile bha 'nam baile chur an lathair Elisa làn do'n uisge bha ole, mur treoraicheadh iad a mach e dh' ionnsuidh

an tobair, a thilgeadh an t-salainn ann? 2 Rìgh ii. 19, 20, 21. Is furasda cleachda a dheanamh dheth. (2.) Biodh suil àraid agaibh air 'nur n-aithreachas, co dhiubh is ann 'na thoiseachadh no ann an dol air adhart; 'nur ceud aithreachas, agus ann an ath-nuadhachadh bhur n-aithreachas, an deigh sin. Ged tha duine gu tinn, cha'n 'eil eagal bàis da, mur buail an tinneas a chridhe: agus is co-beag a tha do eagal bàis a' pheacaidh, co-fhad 's nach beannar ri peacadh ar nàduir. Ach nam b' àill libh da rìreadh aithreachas a dheanamh, treoraichidh na sruthain a suas sibh a dh' ionnsuidh an tobair; agus deanaibh bron os ceann truailidheachd bhur nadur, mar aobhair gach uile pheacaidh, ann an cridhe, ann am beul, agus ann an caithe-beatha. Salm li. 4, 5. "A' t' aghaidh, a' t' aghaidh féin a mhain pheacaich mi, agus rinn mi an t-ole a' d' shealladh—Feuch, ann an euceart dhealbhadh mi, agus ann am peacadh ghabh mo mhathair mi 'na broinn." (4.) Biodh beachd àraidh agaibh air ann bhur féin-cheusadh, Gal. v. 24. "Agus iadsan as le Crìosd, cheus iad an fheoil." Is e freumh na seirbhe e, is eigin a bhi air a bhualadh, agus ris an éigin tuadh am féin-cheusaidh a bhi air a cur; no tha sinn a saothreachadh an dìomhain. Is dìomhain do dhaoine dol mu'n cuairt a ghlanadh nan sruthan, 'nuair nach 'eil iad aig saothair sam bith mu thimchioll an tobair shalaich: Is dìomhain an diadhachd, a bhi 'g oirpeachadh an caithe-beatha dheanamh da rìreadh maith, am feadh 'sa tha truailidheachd an nàduir a' cumail a seann neart, agus nach 'eil a cumhadh air a bhriseadh. *San àite mu dheireadh*, Tha sibh ri beachd a ghabhail air bhur n-imeachd lathail. Is eigin da-san le'm b' àill gluasad gu ceart, aon suil a bhi aige suas ri Iosa Crìosd; agus suil eile ris an taobh a stigh, ri truailidheachd a nàduir féin. Cha leoir, gu'n amhaire sinn mu'n cuairt duinn; is eigin duinn mar an ceudna amharc an taobh a stigh dhinn: is ann an sin a tha'm balla ni's laige: 's ann an sin a tha'n namhaid is mò a th' againn 'na luidhe; agus is ann an sin a tha aobhar air son faire agus bròin gach là.

Ri leanntuinn.

Notes and Comments.

The Ethics of Lying.—It is amazing how lightly most people regard lying. Many would not care to tell what is commonly called a deliberate, barefaced lie but while they draw the line here they light-heartedly add that there are circumstances which justify the telling of a lie. Now, if lying is a sin and the Scripture leaves us in no doubt about this, then no circumstances in which we are placed will be sufficient ground for telling a lie. Many may think this rather rigid ethics but when it is borne in mind that liars and whoremongers are linked together as those who are to be excluded from heaven it will be seen how strait is the ethical code of God. These remarks have been suggested by two articles which appeared some weeks ago in *The Christian* from the pen of T. Miller Neathy, M.A., M.D. Dr. Neathy lays his finger on the real crux of the matter when he says: "But lying is a breach of the moral law. 'Lying lips are an abomination' to the God of truth. Lying is forbidden *sans phrase*, and the 'vengeance of eternal fire' is denounced not merely against 'whosoever loveth' but against 'whosoever *maketh* a lie.' The plea of 'the lesser of two evils' logically makes the law of God 'of none effect.' It drives a coach and four clean through the Decalogue. Who shall say *what* are the circumstances that make lying or any other breach of God's law justifiable? Upon this baleful principle is built up the whole casuistical system that Pascal denounced with such brilliant invective in his *Provincial Letters*."

Do Circumstances Justify Lying?—Dr. Neathy puts the question and answers it by asking are there any circumstances in which we may be placed that will justify us in breaking God's law? If so, where are we to draw the line—if it is sin then we are not permitted to commit it however terrible the alternative may be by refusing and in putting the matter thus he is careful to point out that every sin is not equally heinous in the sight of God though all God's commands are equally binding. He sums up the matter thus and makes reference to his own

experience as a physician: "As has been already urged, a lie is not merely sinful, as being a breach of God's law. It is inherently vicious, because it is destructive of society which rests on credit. Even more is it fundamentally worthless, because it is destructive of itself. Nemesis does not suffer the lie to live. It is condemned in this very life. The present writer in his professional capacity has more than once found it a task of real difficulty to convince a patient of the genuineness of a favourable forecast in grave illness, because of the sick man's deep suspicion that medical men 'prophecy smooth things' to those doomed to die. The nemesis of the lie is that not only is the lie not believed, but even the truth itself is not believed. So rotten is a lie in the very bones of it."

A Right Decision.—It is gratifying to be able to report that the International Conference at Geneva has rejected the so-called Calendar Reform Proposals. These proposals meant the setting aside of the present Gregorian Calendar and the substitution in its place of a thirteen months Calendar with twenty-eight days each. By this arrangement it was proposed to have a blank day each year (two in Leap years) to make up the 365 days. This looks quite a good idea but it so happens that its adoption would mean the dislocation of the divinely appointed order of the Sabbath. If a Blank Day were introduced the sequence of the order of the Sabbath would be broken. The Lord's Day Observance Society entered a strong protest against the proposed change and were supported by other religious organizations. Unfortunately the reasons given by the International Conference, financial and economic, while not satisfactory from our standpoint, killed the proposal at Geneva. The matter is dealt with in an article which owing to pressure on our space is held over until next issue.

Gospel Book Mission to the Army and Navy.—We have received from Mr. Brider his Annual Report of the above Mission. Like many another good cause this Mission through death and owing to the financial state of the country is suffering severely in its funds. Mr. Brider endeavours to send sound literature

to our sailors and soldiers and it will be a thousand pities if he is handicapped in this praiseworthy work for lack of funds. Mr. Brider adds a personal word to the Report in which he says: "As my friends know, I do not possess any private means whatever, neither do I take anything from the Mission Funds, but am wholly dependent upon the Lord for any personal support." We are sure that those of our readers who can help will keep this useful Mission in view.

The South African Heresy Case.—Last year we commented on the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in retiring Prof. Du Plessis from his post in Stellenbosch Theological College. From the nature of the evidence as reported in the press of this country there could be no doubt but Prof. Du Plessis held heretical views on the early chapters of Genesis. A news-agency now reports that the case had been taken to the Supreme Court of Cape Colony and decided in favour of the Professor. It would be unwise with our limited information to say much on this case but it is on the face of it an extraordinary position if the civil court has given a decision that Professor Du Plessis can teach the views condemned by the Synod and yet remain a teacher of the Dutch Reformed Church. In this country the Disruption Fathers fought a noble battle maintaining that the civil court had no right to interfere with the Church's disciplinary jurisdiction over its members where there were no civil interests involved. When the Rev. John Macmillan was suspended from the ministry by the General Assembly and made an appeal to Caesar to have an interdict issued (though Lord Kinloch refused to do so) against the sentence of suspension he was summoned before the Assembly and asked if he had made such an appeal; on answering in the affirmative he was *deposed* from the ministry without more ado. He then brought an action against the General Assembly. The Free Church authorities advanced the plea that it was not within the jurisdiction of the civil court to deal with purely ecclesiastical offences. Macmillan, through a hint from the Lord President, dropped his original pleas and brought an action specifying malice against certain individuals.

Whether the poor man realised that he had a fair share of that ugly vice himself or not cannot now be known but he saw his headstrong course was leading him nowhere so he sent a flag of truce pleading for generous treatment but his request was treated with disdain and Macmillan retired into obscurity, a defeated man. Whatever may have been the issue had the case been fought out to the bitter end one cannot say; but one thing is certain that the Free Church leaders made it plain that the doctrine of the Church was that the civil courts had no jurisdiction to deal with purely ecclesiastical matters of discipline. They sternly set their faces against any of their members in such matters appealing to Caesar. In later times it has become quite fashionable to make such appeals and to consult lawyers on matters that strictly belong to the ecclesiastical courts by some who need instruction.

“The Truth of Christianity.”—This widely advertised and highly praised book from the pen of Lieut.-Colonel Turton, dealing with the evidences of Christianity, is not all that could be desired. It has now reached its eleventh edition and the fact that it has such a wide circulation calls for a warning to those who may purchase it in the belief that it is sound on all the great matters of the faith. This is not so, for the author accepts evolution. He, also, evidently holds the theory of pre-Adamite men. His doctrine of inspiration is also seriously at fault for he says: “Some Bible difficulties, as they are called, are fatal to the theory of verbal inspiration or that every word of the Bible is true. This is now held by scarcely anyone.” Then what can Col. Turton mean when he says: “Christ did not suffer in our stead; Christ did not bear man’s punishment” or again; “Christ did not strictly speaking bear man’s punishment, yet His sufferings and death procured man’s pardon; He suffered on our behalf but not in our stead.” In a book that deals with the *truth* of Christianity its omission of the doctrines of Ruin by the Fall, Redemption by Christ, and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is not only a very serious, but fatal defect.

Literary Notice.

DANCING : ANCIENT AND MODERN, by Rev. HERBERT LOCKYER, Minister of Leeds Road Baptist Church, Bradford. London : Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd., 29 Ludgate Hill, E.C.4. Boards, price, 2s. net.

This is the second edition, with additions, of a booklet which was reviewed in our columns when first issued. Mr. Lockyer, to whose work in bearing testimony against worldly practices in the Church we called attention in our last issue, has done excellent service in a good cause in issuing this new edition. Any of our readers who have friends who are possessed with the demon of dancing will find this booklet most useful. In his protest against teaching children dancing at school Mr. Lockyer deserves the thanks of all parents who set their faces against this insidious device to train their children in ways which they abhor. The devil has many excuses for leading people in wrong ways but surely one of the lamest ever he invented was to make the devotees of the dance believe that it was all in the interests of deportment that these exercises were indulged in. At page 15 line 5 from foot of page "Means" should read Malan; and at p. 16, line 11 from foot of page "Nagiangen" should read "Nazianzus."

Church Notes.

Communion.—February—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, Breasdale. March—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Portree, Ness and Tarbert (Harris); fourth, North Tolsta and Kinlochbervie. April—First Sabbath, Stoer; second, Lochgilphead; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow and Wick. May—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Dumbarton; third, Edinburgh. South African Mission—The following are the dates of the Communion:—Last Sabbath of March, June, September, and December. *Note.*—Notice of any additions to, or alteration of, the above dates of Communion should be sent to the Editor.

Collection for this Month.—The Collection for the Jewish and Foreign Missions' Fund is to be taken up this month.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

Mr. John Grant, Palmerston, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, General Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—

Sustentation Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £15; K. McK., Brooks, Alta., £1 3s 9d; Mrs N., Fort William, Ontario, 8s 10d; D. M., Fort William, Ontario, 4s 5d; Mrs C., Purley, Surrey, £1; Mrs E. L. L., Goose Point, Mich., U.S.A., 10s; Mrs McL., The Sheiling, Aviemore, £1; A. McP., Scotstown, Strontian, £1; Mrs H. C., Kingussie, 10s; P. S., Glenmazaren postmark, £1; A. McL., Achintoul, Invergordon, 5s; A. Wellwisher, Kyle postmark, £1; K. K., Montana (o/a St. Jude's) per Rev. N. Cameron, £1 10s; N. G., Parys, Transvaal, per Rev. N. Cameron, £2; B. K. T., per Rev. N. Cameron, £20.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' and Widows' Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £10.

College Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £10.

Colonial Missions Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £10; Nurse A. S., Edinburgh, per Mr. A. H. Pottinger, £1.

General Building Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £10.

Home Mission Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £15; X. B. L., Fearn, £5; J. H. McL., Vancouver, per Mr. Hugh MacKay, 11s 5d; N. G., Parys, Transvaal, per Rev. N. Cameron, £2; B. K. T., per Rev. N. Cameron, £10.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—A. McP., Daviot, £15; D. McR., Kilmodan, Glendarnel, £1; A. Friend, Lochinver, per Rev. M. Morrison, £2; R. A. M., Ardrishaig postmark, £1; D. McL., Achina, per Mr. Murdo MacKay, 10s; Portree Congregation, Books, &c., for Children of South African Mission, £4; Bedford Street, Glasgow—prayer meeting collection o/a South African Mission Clothing Fund, per Mr. A. Macdougall, £6 10s; Alex. McK., Drumbuie, per Rev. N. Cameron, £1.

Organization Fund.—A. McP., Daviot, £15.

Legacy Fund.—Received from the Executors of the late Mrs. Mary Warren Sangster,* Kingussie, the sum of £100 bequeathed to the Sustentation Fund, per Rev. N. Cameron.

Received from Mr. D. Henderson, Missionary (Executor), the sum of £11 12s being the Residue of the Estate of the late Miss Mary Campbell, Aberlour, and formerly of Gairloch, bequeathed to the Sustentation Fund.

The following lists have been sent in for publication:—

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Uig (Lewis) Manse Building Fund.—Mr. N. Mackay, 31 Valtos, Uig, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—Two Friends, Harris, £3; Anon, £1 1s; Nurse A. S., Edinburgh, £1; Dr. G., Miavaig, £3; Miss C. M., 27 Valtos, 5s; N. McL., Valtos, £1; M. McL., 14 Hacklete, 10s. The following per Rev. R. Macinnes, Mrs McL., Breakish, £1; Miss K. N., Breakish, 5s 6d; "Deut. 8," £2 3s 6d. Per General Treasurer, £1, from R. G., Toscaig, Applecross.

Rogart Church Building Fund.—Rev. F. MacLeod, Evelix, Dornoch, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—Mrs M., Rogart, £5; Mr S., Rogart, £3; Mr M., Spinningdale, £2; A. M., Ullapool, £1; Friends, The Mound, £5.

Halkirk Congregation.—Rev. William Grant, Halkirk, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of \$100 from "North America" (Anon.) for various Church Funds as stated.

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The Magazine.

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