

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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No. 1.

After Forty Years.

IT is now forty years ago at the coming Assembly since the Rev. Donald Macfarlane read his protest in the General Assembly of the Free Church. That protest was made by a man timid by nature in the face of an overwhelming opposition and as the majority of our readers have no remembrance of this event which has its own important place in the ecclesiastical annals of later Scottish church history we reprint the protest as follows:—"Whereas by the action of the General Assembly of 1892 in passing the Declaratory Act into a law of the Church, and by the said Act being retained in her constitution, the Church, in my opinion, ceases to be the true representative of the Free Church of Scotland; and whereas, by our ordination vows, we are bound by the most solemn obligations to assert, maintain, and defend the doctrines and constitution of the said Church, and to follow no divisive courses from the doctrine, worship, discipline, government, and exclusive jurisdiction of the same, I, the undersigned minister of the Free Church, in my own name, and in the name of all who may adhere to me, declare that, whatever I may subsequently do, neither my conscience nor my ordination vows allow me to act under what has now been made law in this Church.

I also protest against the despotic power exercised by a majority of the office-bearers of this Church in making changes in her creed and constitution, which are *ultra vires* of any majority in the face of any protesting minority; and I declare

that I claim my sacred and civil rights according to the terms of contract between me and the Free Church at my ordination, and in accordance with the creed and constitution of the Free Church in the year 1843.—(Signed) Donald Macfarlane, Minister at Raasay" (*Records of the Free Church Presbytery of Scotland*).

Such was the step that led to the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland which, in spite of lying prophets, false friends and enemies is still in existence. Boasting in our own attainments and achievements is always a dangerous thing especially where the honour and glory should be given to God and assuredly the Free Presbyterian Church has good reason after these forty years in the wilderness to give thanks to God for what He has done for her. At the outset the Church met with strenuous opposition from many of those who professed zeal for the principles and doctrines for which a stand was made. Her advent as an ecclesiastical body gave occasion to the leading ecclesiastics in the Free Church to pour contempt and scorn upon a movement that had so little of those advantages which the world reckons essential to usefulness and success. The Free Presbyterian leaders were not noted for their great learning, they had never figured as leaders in the church courts, in fact they were practically unknown except to those who valued spirituality more than learning and heavenly grace than the devious tactics of so many of the leaders in the church courts. Then, there were no men among us of wealth and social standing and this gave an opportunity for the false prophets to exercise their art. The movement was to perish through sheer weakness and want of men skilled as leaders. Now after forty years we are taking the liberty of erecting over the graves of the false prophets a stone with the legend: "Neither missed nor deeply regretted" and the text engraven at its foot:—"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. xviii. 22). Recently we have had occasion to read some

of these prophecies and in the light of what happened we need have no hesitation in saying that whoever guided them in the utterance of their prophecies it certainly was not the Lord. But, if this was the reception given to the movement by those who condescended to take any notice of it, it was received with joy and gladness by thousands who were groaning under the bondage of Principal Rainy's leadership in the Free Church—a leadership which was to split the Free Church into fragments and finally to smash his own followers on the rocks of the Union of 1900. There are still some living who remember those happy days but their number is decreasing year by year. The harmony, brotherly love and Christian unity that characterised the movement was more than an offset to the attacks made by enemies and former friends. The Spirit of God was present reviving His people and quickening sinners. The ministers—Revs. D. Macfarlane and D. Macdonald—and the students were listened to with eagerness. Some of the godliest of the men and women in the north of Scotland cast in their lot with the Free Presbyterian Church. We have been turning over the volumes of the Free Presbyterian Magazine to refresh our memories about some of the worthies who are long since at their rest and the impression made on our minds as we went over that list was to awaken memories of the sainted dead which we cherish as a precious privilege. They were taken away from the evil to come and the fragrance of their saintly lives still lingers behind. What a number there were and what fine specimens of Christians!

As the years passed the peace and unity were broken by controversy and the departure of some of her ministers to other denominations on various occasions. What strikes one in reviewing the past is the steadfastness of the people even when ministers whom they deeply respected cut their moorings and left their first love. These departures in many cases, caused real grief to their former brethren. Some of them were outstanding exponents of the Free Presbyterian position both by voice and pen; they were not, however, far-sighted enough to see that their words and letters were yet to be in strange

contrast with their after conduct. This is a subject, however, on which it gives us no pleasure to dwell. Alike in the breach in the Constitutionalist ranks in 1893 and the above we have, if we needed, abundant evidence of the fickleness of the human heart and the need of the grace of God to keep us. Strong words and sweeping statements are but poor things if the after profession belies them. If what happened to others, however, will make us feel more and more our need of the sustaining grace of God to keep us true to our profession then we have not passed through these things in vain.

In 1893 we had only two ministers but there were a considerable number of students, some of whom were ready for licence. These were licensed in due course by the first Presbytery of the Church—the Free Church Presbytery of Scotland. As time went on the number of our ministers increased and a steady supply of students came forward to fill the vacant charges. At the present time, notwithstanding the losses sustained by the departure of some of our ministers to other denominations (Church of Scotland and Free Church) and the loss of others by death we are stronger in numbers than at any time in our history. . We have extended our borders to U.S.A., Canada, Australia, South Africa and Palestine and though we have no settled ministers in some of these countries there is a Macedonian cry coming to the home church which we pray may one day be answered. It was pointed out by some of the Little Faiths among us that our cause would come to grief through lack of funds and that the more our ministers would increase the inevitable end would be hastened. But the facts of the case are all to the contrary; as the ministers increased the funds for their support increased and even in these times of sore financial depression and unemployment our people have most nobly given of their means though in the circumstances the funds of the Church are bound to be affected by difficulties that most classes have to face. Again, our people have generously given of their means in erecting places of worship and mansees. Certain sums have been mentioned as the amount thus contributed but

these, we believe, are well under the mark and even at the lowest computation it is remarkable the amount that has been given by a comparatively poor people. The Free Presbyterian Church has good reason to say that the Lord has made it very clear to them that the silver and the gold is His. In recounting all this we trust that none of our readers will think that there is too much boasting in what has been written. We feel no such spirit in putting the above on record but surely we ought to acknowledge the Lord's goodness to us as a church and should such a spirit rise within the heart of any of us let us be chastened by the words of Moses to Israel: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no. And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knowest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. viii. 2, 3) and again; "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied and all that thou hast is multiplied: then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Deut. viii. 11-14).

We have no reason to be proud of ourselves as Free Presbyterians but neither have we cause to be ashamed of the truths we stand for and if we, through grace, remain faithful to God He will not leave us in the future any more than He has done in the past. What is before us none can tell: we know what we have passed through in the forty years that are gone and surely every true Free Presbyterian must feel that there is real reason of gratitude for the way in which He has prospered a cause that had such a weak beginning.

A Sermon.

By the late Rev. D. MACFARLANE, DINGWALL.

Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee? O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

IN this chapter we have an account of Moses blessing the children of Israel before his death. With the exception of the tribe of Simeon he pronounces a blessing on each of the other tribes separately. After he had pronounced a blessing on each tribe he now in our text pronounces all the tribes as a whole blessed or happy. Moses spoke often to the people of Israel but these were his last words to them before he parted with them and what a happy parting it was. He parted with them blessing them as Christ, when leaving the world and His people, lifted up His hands and blessed them. When it is said that Moses blessed the children of Israel before his death two things are to be noted (1) He, as a prophet, declared the mind of God towards them with respect to their future course in the world and (2) He acquiesced in the Lord's goodwill to them and set his amen to it and having done so he parted with them to go to his eternal rest in heaven. In connection with his magnifying the people of Israel above all other people he magnifies their God above all other gods—"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun who rideth upon the heaven in thy help and in His excellency on the sky" (verse 26).

In speaking on this great subject one feels at a loss how to begin and how to end, but we shall endeavour to point out the following particulars:—Israel according to the flesh was a type of the true people of God, and it is in this sense we are to speak of them here and as the people of Israel were different from all the other nations in the world so the Lord's people are different from all other people—there is none like them for the following reasons: (1). Because of the object of their worship. They worship the only living and true God and Him only they serve. In this respect they are different from all

people who worship other gods. Such as those in heathen lands who worship idols; and those in the land of the gospel who worship an imaginary god and not the God of the Bible. There are many and the world is their god and others their belly is their god as is stated in Scripture. Whatever object is supreme in the minds of people that is their god but whatever god others may have those who are of the true Israel have the only living and true God as their God and by faith they are enabled to call Him their God. "O Lord thou art my God. I will exalt Thee and praise Thy name" (Is. xxv. 1). "This is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide even unto death" (Ps. xlviii. 14). (2). No people are like them because they are saved by the Lord. They found out that by nature they were lost and that they could not save themselves but the Lord saved them and they ascribe the glory of their salvation to Him as Moses does here: "A people saved by the Lord." They are saved from sin by Him whose name is Jesus because He shall save His people from their sins—saved from the guilt of sin, its dominion over them, and they shall ultimately be saved from its depravity and all the evils to which sin made them liable. Their sins are forgiven and they are now justified and there is no condemnation for them and this was done by Him of whom it is said: "Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of His heritage, He retaineth not His anger forever because He delighteth in mercy?" (Micah, vii. 18). There is no God like their God and there is no people like them. (3). There is none like them in respect of their heavenly Father. He is their Father and they are His children. Christ taught them how to pray. He gave them to address God as their Father—"Our Father who art in heaven." They are begotten of God and born again for without this they could not enter the kingdom of God. (4). There is none like them with regard to their rights. Christ is theirs and therefore all things are theirs—"whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours" (I. Cor. iii. 22).

The ministers of the gospel are theirs to teach them. The Bible is theirs and they do their utmost to protect it from those who try to rob them of that precious treasure as the Higher Critics try to do. It will grieve and wound them when they hear anyone running down the Bible and on account of their relation to one another it will grieve and wound them to hear anyone running down the Lord's people as many do in our day. Life is theirs, that is, they have a covenant right to the temporal mercies which God bestows upon them in this world and they have God's blessing with these mercies and although others may possess temporal mercies more abundantly than they, they have them with God's curse. Death is theirs also, as a means of taking them out of a world of sin and misery to the rest that remains to God's people in heaven. (5). There is none like them in regard to their mode of worship. They worship God according to the rule of His Word and not in any other way not appointed in His Word and we ought to attend to this in all parts of God's service. The mode of worship practised in the time of the Apostles is our pattern to follow and not the garnished innovations of men introduced into the Church in backsliding ages to suit the cravings of graceless men. (6). There is none like them in regard to their faith whose object is the Lord Jesus Christ and they do not expect to be saved in any other way. Oh, what a Saviour the Lord's people have in Christ the eternal Son of God, whose name is the only name given among men by whom we can be saved. Others may have a kind of faith but Christ is not its object and therefore it is not a saving faith. (7). There is none like them in respect of their knowledge for they are taught of God. Others may boast of their great attainments in learning but these know "the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent which is life eternal" (John xvii. 3). Although some of them have more of this knowledge than others, the knowledge of them all is of the same nature. (8). There is none like them in regard to their hope. It is a good hope through grace. This hope is never found in the natural heart but always found in the

new nature created by the Holy Spirit in those that are regenerated and born again and the Word of God is its warrant. Many hope to go to heaven whose hope shall be disappointed because it has not the Word of God for its warrant, it is the hope of the hypocrite that shall perish but the hope of God's people maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in their heart by the Holy Spirit. (9). There is none like them in their obedience to the divine law. They do not obey the law with a view to merit eternal life by their obedience but from the principle of love to God and under a sense of the great obligations under which they are to Him for saving them. They do not obey God's commandments for fear of punishment. Although there would be no eternal punishment they would be as careful as they are in keeping His commandments. Many are moved to a kind of obedience to God's law for fear of punishment but it is not that fear that actuates the Lord's people in their obedience but their love to God and to His law. (10). There is none like them as to how they are supported and kept from sinking in tribulations and trials in the world for underneath them are the everlasting arms of Jehovah. Were it not for that almighty power they would be crushed to death under their heavy burdens. Others rest upon their own strength but they rest upon the everlasting arms of the Lord. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Ps. xx. 7). However strong unbelief is and however mighty the temptations of Satan are they shall never be overcome by these enemies—as their days so shall their strength be. How is it that you believers have been kept for many years from sinking into utter despair by the manifold trials that met you since your conversion? Not by your own power or wisdom but by the power of your Lord and Saviour. The Church is built upon the rock Christ and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (11). There is none like them as to the certainty of their final victory over all their enemies for God is their shield to protect them and their sword to destroy their enemies. "For they got not the land

in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them" (Ps. xlv. 3). So long as the people of Israel adhered to the Lord and obeyed His Word they were told that "one of them would chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight" but when they forsook Him and turned to idolatry as few of their enemies would put them to flight however numerous they were. If we as a nation obeyed the Word of the Lord we would have Him as our shield and we would soon gain the victory over Germany and its Allies. The Lord is the shield of His people to protect them even when they do not see Him and are afraid of their numerous enemies. When the servant of Elisha saw the city compassed with an host of horses and chariots he was afraid and said: "Alas! my master how shall we do" for he did not see the host by which they were protected; but the prophet who saw it said to him: "Fear not for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them. At the prayer of his master the eyes of the servant were opened and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha (II. Kings vi. 15-17). Then his fear was removed and he trusted in the Lord. With regard to their victory over their enemies it is said in our text "that their enemies would be found liars unto them, and that they should tread upon their high places"—that is, their enemies would be disappointed and that the Lord's people would tread under their feet their high places—that is, their fortifications, however strongly they might be built. Satan their greatest enemy, except sin, shall be trodden under their feet at last the God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet shortly (Rom. xvi. 20). (12). There is none like them in respect of the spiritual food and drink on which their souls feed in their sojourn in the wilderness of this world. The people of Israel during the time they were in the wilderness received manna from heaven as the bread on which they lived and they were supplied with water to drink that came out of a rock. The manna was

a type of Christ, the true bread that came down from heaven, by which the Lord's people are fed and the rock was a type of Him also, and out of His fulness they drink the water of life; but before the water flowed out of the rock the rock was smitten at God's command. In like manner, before they could drink the water of life Christ was smitten by the rod of God's law and having suffered the death of the cross—"His flesh is meat indeed and His blood is drink indeed"—and this is the food and drink on which they live in this world. The only people that live on Christ are the happy people spoken of in our text, others live on husks the food of swine, the food which the prodigal desired to fill his belly with till he repented and returned to his father's house. (13). There is none like them in regard to the leader by whom they are led on their way to heaven. Their leader is the Lord Jesus Christ, the captain of their salvation. This is a glorious leader. Moses and Joshua led the people of Israel in the wilderness but Christ is an infinitely greater leader. He leads them by His Word and Spirit in the way in which they should go. He leads them in the narrow way that leads to life while all others who have not Christ as their leader walk in the broad way that leadeth unto destruction. He leads them in the right way and if they in any degree deviate from that way He will bring them back. They shall hear His voice saying: This is the way walk ye in it (Is. xxx. 21). (14). There is none like them as regards the source of their happiness. While others seek happiness in broken cisterns, they derive their happiness from God the fountain of living waters; so that they may say with the psalmist: "All my springs are in thee" (Ps. lxxxvii. 7). All who seek their happiness in God He will never fail them; whereas all other fountains shall run dry. So long as man stood in his state of innocency he was truly happy and God was the fountain of his happiness, but when he sinned he lost his happiness and he began to hew out broken cisterns expecting to get out of these cisterns the happiness he lost, but they were broken cisterns which could afford no happiness, but misery.

The Lord's people are by grace brought back to God again and they begin to taste of the happiness man had in God before he sinned and they feel so happy that they call upon others in the words of the psalmist: "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. xxxiv. 8). (15). There is none like them as to what is in store for them after they leave this world. Their happiness shall then be full. While on earth they received drops of happiness in the midst of sorrow but in heaven they drink out of the ocean from which these drops flowed and as a drop of the great ocean is the same in kind though not in degree as the ocean, they know on earth what heaven is, while others who are in the state of nature are ignorant of what it is.

In conclusion we have said at the outset that the subject of discourse was so great that one felt at a loss as to where to begin and where to end. In all the aspects in which we may view the Lord's people they may be said to be a happy people and that there is no other people in the world like them. Examine yourselves as to whether you are of the happy people of whom we have been speaking. You may be with them now but not of them. If you ask how shall we be of them? we answer that first of all you must be born again. This is the way that children are of the same family—they are born into the family. In the second place you must be united to Christ by faith. Christ is the head and the Church is His mystical body. There are many members in the body but it is only one body and the body is united to Christ as the head and if you are united to Christ by faith you are of the happy people spoken of in our text. If you are of them you are in sympathy with them so that you rejoice with those of them who rejoice and you mourn with such of them as mourn. If you are of them you renounced your own righteousness which is of the law—that you might be found in Christ by the righteousness which is through faith in Him, the righteousness which is of God by faith. If you are of them you make the Word of God the only rule of your faith and practice and you regulate your conduct by that rule going through the world. There are many

who are of them in profession who belie that profession by walking according to the course of this world, but if you are not of them you are still in a state of nature which is a state of sin and misery and if you continue in that state to the end of your life in the world you shall be separate from them for ever in eternity, but so long as you are left in the land of the living there is hope set before you in the gospel and a call to seek the Lord while He may be found and to call on His name while He is near. But if you disobey that call there is nothing left for you "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. x. 27). We shall finish by repeating our text: "Happy art thou O Israel, who is like unto thee? A people saved of the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread on their high places."

The Gospel Call.*

By Professor R. WATTS, D.D., LL.D.

I.

IT becomes my duty, young gentlemen, in accordance with the custom of the occasion, to address to you a few parting words. In determining the course of remark which I might most profitably pursue, I have thought it better to discuss a subject in which all classes of candidates for the ministry must have a common interest, than to draw up for each class an outline of study which it might be difficult to remember, and more difficult to carry out amid the legitimate recreations and varied engagements of the summer's vacation. With regard to vacation studies I shall speak but one word. Beware of allowing your

*The above is an address given to the divinity students of the Assembly's College, Belfast, in 1867. Dr. Watts occupied an eminent place as a Calvinistic theologian.—Editor.

minds to lie fallow, and equally beware of that close application which must unfit those of you who are to return for the hard work of the coming session.

Among the many subjects which force themselves upon our attention in connection with the closing exercises, I know of none more befitting than "the Gospel Call." It is eminently a practical subject. Upon the views which you entertain in regard to it will depend, to a very great extent, your success as ministers of Christ. It concerns the subject matter and form of your preaching. It is not simply a question in homiletics—a question in regard to the artistic structure of your sermons, but a question in regard to your theme itself. The question with which I would occupy your thoughts at present is not "*how* shall I cry?" but, "*what* shall I cry?" It does not necessarily follow from the fact that a man is out amid the moral desolations of our fallen world, lifting up his voice in the name of Christ as a Gospel herald, that he is therefore giving the Gospel call. One may possess, and wield with tremendous energy, a sharp sickle, and yet nought save ruin mark his pathway in the harvest field. It has pleased God to connect faith with hearing, but the hearing which is connected with faith, on the one hand, is, on the other, connected with the Word of God. If those to whom the herald comes are bound to judge of his doctrine, be assured it behoves the herald himself to see that his prophesying be according to the analogy of the faith. He who would avoid the anathema pronounced by the Apostle upon false teachers must take heed that he preach no other gospel than that which the Apostle preached.

1.

The first counsel I would offer you who are going forth to give the Gospel call, is that you clearly discriminate between the external and the internal call—between the call which the ambassador is commissioned to give, and the call which it is the office-work of the Holy Ghost to give. Bear in mind that you are not the only commissioners in this matter. He who commissions men, claims it as His prerogative that He has

authority to send the Holy Ghost to render the embassy of the human ambassadors successful. However important in the chain of instrumentalities the delivery of the message by the human ambassador may be, we must not magnify it at the enormous sacrifice of the glory and honour due to the Spirit of God. The great truth must be recognised, that it is His to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; His to regenerate the dead soul; His to impart the graces of faith and repentance; His to sanctify, and comfort, and assure the souls of God's people.

Besides the call which you are commissioned to give, there is, therefore, a call which no finite ambassador can give—a call which neither Paul nor Apollos could utter. Our Saviour refers to it as an evidence of His own high rank as the Son of God, that He had power to give this call. "The hour is coming, and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." The ground assigned for the claim thus advanced is most significant and conclusive, in regard to the nature of that power which is requisite to give the internal call—the call which raises the soul from the death sleep of sin. "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." He, therefore, who claims to be able to give this call, ought also to be able to assign a like reason for the advancing of such a claim. The claim implies the possession of life as God possesses life, and if valid, proves, as in the case of Christ, the Deity of Him who advances it.

This call you are just as incompetent to give as you are to give the call to which it is likened. You can no more quicken, by your voice, a dead soul, than you can blow the trump of God. This incompetency you need not be ashamed to confess. The Apostle of the Gentiles confessed it, acknowledging that neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. He tells the Corinthians that whilst he had planted and Apollos had watered, they were nevertheless the husbandry of another, even of God. To the

preacher, in other words, belongs the work of the sower and cultivator of the soil, but to God belongs that mysterious process by which the seed is made to germinate and yield the increase. To the same intent is that figurative representation of our Saviour's: "So is the Kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear." Connect with this reference to that process which is carried on in the bosom of the earth, independently of him who casts in the seed, what is taught in the Sermon on the Mount respecting the immediate agency of God, in what we are accustomed to call the operations of nature, and you will have the same distinction as that which the Apostle makes between the agency of the preacher and the agency of God. The grass and the lilies of the field spring from the bosom of the earth, but, as our Lord teaches in that sermon, they come not forth in their garniture of beauty by virtue of a power inherent in the soil or atmosphere, or in the added influences of the rains and the light of Heaven. They bear upon them the impress of a present all-directing intelligence, as if to furnish evidence of that presence, and rebuke those who refer everything to the operations of nature. There is a profuse variety of form, and tint, and shade irreconcilable with the theory that there is no agency at work save that of blind unintelligent forces. The exquisite skill and taste displayed proclaim the presence of an all-wise, beneficent, personal God. And thus, our Saviour teaches us, it is in the Kingdom of God. The sower of the Word scatters upon the wide field of the world—the wide field of our fallen race, the incorruptible seed of the Word. He may, and ought, with all the care and expectancy of a good husbandman, look night and day for the increase; but the increase cometh not of any thing in him. The Divine agency is as necessary to the germination of that incorruptible seed, as it is to the germination of the seed which the husbandman commits to the bosom of

the earth. From such representations the only conclusion is that drawn by the Apostle: "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

So prominent a place did this great truth hold in the mind of the Apostle Paul, that he never, in any instance, applies the terms, call, calling, called to designate the external call—the call which it is the work of the ambassador to give. These terms are by him in reality applied to that call which the Spirit of God gives—that call which is accompanied by the impartation of spiritual life. This call the Apostle ascribes to God, and refers to it as a proof of the wisdom and sovereignty of God, in the administration of the economy of grace. This call, he informs us, God had kept under His own control, not simply in regard to the providential direction of the ambassador, but in regard to the success of his embassy. He did take control of the ambassadors, determining their number, enduing them with the qualifications necessary to their work, appointing the time of their going forth, directing all their movements in the subdivisions of the great harvest-field; but, as if for the express purpose of preventing all concerned from glorying in man, He kept in His own power the only call which the Apostle dignifies with the name. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." The principles of the economy are illustrated in the administration of it. It is an economy of grace, and the administration is conducted so as to teach, that God is absolutely free in the selection of the vessels of mercy. Hence whilst the ambassador gives the call to all, without distinction of class or colour, or kindred, or tongue—to the unwise as well as to the wise—to the weak as well as to the mighty—to the base as well as to the noble—the Sovereign who sends him reserves to Himself the prerogative of giving efficiency to the message. It is because of this that the union of believers with Christ is not of man but of God. It is because of this that their faith does not stand in the wisdom of man but in the

power of God. It is because of this that all who come to Jesus are taught of the Father. It is because of this that human depravity and consequent inability present no insuperable barrier to the extension of the kingdom of our enthroned King.

And this leads me to remark that the distinction between an external and an internal, effectual call, is necessarily involved in what the sacred Scriptures teach respecting the natural estate of man. If, as the sacred Scriptures teach, men are, by nature, dead in sin; if they are universally possessed of carnal minds, which are enmity against God; if, in this natural estate, they cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot know them; if, whilst under the dominion of this all-enslaving power of a corrupt nature, they cannot please God, cannot come to Him, cannot see the kingdom of God, and are, moreover, under the thrall of a special bondage in which they are held by the god of this world, who darkens their minds lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them, and that this estate, with all its darkening, enslaving power, is penal, *i.e.*, not a mere unaccountable calamity or chastisement, but a righteous infliction of a righteous law—is it not manifest that no mere word or act of an ambassador can disenthral and liberate such slaves? Surely if such be a fair representation of the estate in which the ambassador finds the revolted province to which he is commissioned, there is need for a call which he cannot utter, and a power which he cannot exert. Oh, how the heart of the ambassador who is awake to the estate of man by nature must sink within him as he enters this valley of vision—a valley as wide as this wide world of sin—if he were not persuaded that the economy of grace embraced, besides the human instrument, the omnipotent agency of the Holy Ghost! What but despair must seize upon our missionaries abroad and our ministers at home if they had not, in their felt impotency to the task of resuscitation, the privilege which Ezekiel had of crying—"Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!"

Were it necessary, I might confirm all that has been thus far alleged in support of the doctrine of an inner as distinguished from an external call by reference to the experience of God's people. As if to emphasise and elucidate the great truth that it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, the Head of the Church has permitted His servants to give the external call to all appearance in vain. He has not tied the conversion of men to the utterance of the external call with the bond of an uniform and invariable sequence. He has permitted His servants to labour in tears—tears drawn forth by fruitless toils. They have cast the seed of the Word upon soil dry as the dust of a land stricken with famine, and from the Carmel heights of prayerful vigils, with ever-recurring disappointment, they have looked for years for the rising of even a little cloud which might forbode the coming rain. When at length the brazen hue of the heavens has softened into the mildness of mercy before the gathering clouds as they rolled up from the boundless sea of grace, and the life-giving showers began to descend upon the thirsty ground, what could the care-worn watchers, who have all along been uttering the external call in the ears of a listless or reluctant people, do but fall down in adoration before a sovereign God, exclaiming, as they fell—"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

The distinction in question, therefore, is beyond all controversy a scriptural one, and I have been thus particular in establishing it because of its importance. It is a distinction which cannot be repudiated without the repudiation of the fundamental doctrines and principles of the economy of redemption. My first counsel to you, therefore, is, as I have already intimated, that you recognise this distinction. Recognise it that you may be duly impressed with the inveterate depravity and helplessness of man by nature. Recognise it that you may be kept humble, and sensible of your dependence for success upon the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. Recognise it that you may be

preserved from despondency in times of spiritual deadness among the people of your charge. Recognise it that you may not ignore or invade the office-work of the Holy Spirit.

(To be continued.)

Letter of the late Mr. Alexander Gray, Lairg, to a friend.

LAIRG, Sutherlandshire, 6th October, 1908,—My dear friend,
I duly received your kind letter inviting me to your solemn assembly which is beginning this week. Well, however, much I would like to be with you I find now that it is out of the question that I can go at this time.

I find it more apparent the longer I live, that it is not in man who walketh to direct his steps. Should I go I could not leave until Friday, and I have (D.V.) to be in Dornoch on Tuesday a week to-day, and besides I have a bad cold though the weather has been so hot of late, but that is the worst kind of cold. I have little reason to complain when He is bearing with me yet, for it is very true, however, little I realise it that it is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed because His compassions fail not. I know you will be feeling your weakness but "in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." "He giveth power to the faint: and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." I trust that will be true concerning you at this time.

I had a letter the other day from a highly esteemed friend who was on the west coast of the country in which he said, "that the Lord has been nearer His people in solemn means this year than I have felt for many years past. This was specially true on the west side of the country." I am sure you would wish this would extend as far as you.

I believe very trying times are very near us, I fear clouds are gathering that will cause great bloodshed in the world and

that in judgment it will come to us for we as a nation and individuals are provoking the Most High to punish us for our sins. May the Lord keep His own as the apple of His eye as He promised to do.

I was at Dornoch on Saturday and was a while with worthy Angus Murray. He is wonderfully bright although very frail. His memory is gone as to earthly things but in spiritual things he is kept wonderfully. Yours sincerely, A. Gray.

Short Gleanings.

KNOWING CHRIST EXPERIMENTALLY.

The Lord Jesus has promised to manifest Himself to those who love Him and keep His commandments (John xiv, 21), and it is by these manifestations that we come to know Him experimentally and savingly. The Lord Himself has told us what Eternal Life is, that it is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent (John xvii, 3). If we know by divine teaching the only true God we shall fear and revere His Holy Name; and if we know Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, we shall love Him with a pure heart, fervently.—*J. C. Philpot.*

A GRACIOUS AND ALL-SUFFICIENT GOD.

There is no exception—no deviation—no qualifications; but one and all of the great cloud of witnesses declare as with one voice, that He is a kind and gracious and all-sufficient God. Moreover, whatever the depths through which they have been called to pass; however great their privations, or intense their sufferings; still, still the cry universally and uniformly is, "He hath done all things well."—*David Alfred Doudney, D.D.*

A heart without a gift is better than a gift without a heart.
—*William Secker.*

It is not falling into the water, but lying in the water that drowns.—*Thomas Brooks.*

Mr. John Morrison, Lochinver.

THE subject of this notice, much-liked by all, and dearly-loved at home, gave evidence from childhood of a tenderness of conscience not observable in other children. So marked was this trait of character, that he was never known to us to tell a lie or even twist his language in order to save himself out of an untoward situation. More than once, while a young child at school, he was severely set upon by a crowd of bigger boys, to force him to utter or repeat some bad language or swearing, that they could say later that he uttered such language. They absolutely failed in this attempt, though he was roughly and cruelly handled.

Being taught early, while not yet 3 years old, he could repeat the 23rd Psalm and the first chapter of Hebrews, and at four years he could read. At the age of seven, he was presented with a copy of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and this he read and re-read with great avidity. Visiting a house about two miles from his home he saw a very heavy volume lying in a bookcase. He looked at it. It was Bunyan's *Holy War*. He was offered the loan of it. He went to get it shortly afterwards, and while taking it home he had to rest several times at the roadside owing to its weight. These books he read with much relish. These, with the constant reading of the Bible from childhood, together with the discipline to which he was subjected at home, made a lasting impression on his child-mind, which appeared, however much he strove to the contrary, to have continued with him to the end.

As he grew up he made regular use of the theological books in his father's library. He read the whole of Wylie's *History of the Reformation in Europe* and the biographies and contentings of the Covenants. Endowed with an exceptionally retentive memory he had the history of the Church stored up therein to an extent that few could claim at his age—yet he himself made no such pretence. With the Word of God and confessional doctrine he was no less conversant. This is testified

to by his winning the Senior Bursary awarded under the late Sheriff McCulloch's Memorial Fund in the County of Sutherland when only twelve years old.

The Bible never failed to be his constant companion since childhood and this he was accustomed to read in the most secret and reserved manner. He defended the Scriptures out of which he was able to quote with ease in his arguments with College and University students. They were struck with surprise at his conservative views and his ability to make so facile a use of the Scriptures, with which he silenced them. He used to say he was always up against evolutionists and he could refute and combat their pernicious reasonings by the Scriptures while he made dexterous use of his other learning. He told once that the condition he laid down in arguing against these wild views was—"Do you believe the Bible is true and is the Word of God?" According as the reply was—negative or affirmative—would he or would he not engage in argument. This he did with great modesty and naturalness, which appeared to make a great appeal to his opponents. Affectation, which he was quick at detecting, he could not bear. It was usually to his mother he would tell these things of how effectually he silenced his opponents.

He always carried his Bible and had it under his pillow at home and from home he regularly read it. During his illness at home, the Bible was always beside him, and he read it morning and evening in the way of stated worship, and though one should come into his room while thus engaged, he would take no notice. At other times through the day, should he happen to be reading his Bible and any one disturbed him, he would immediately thrust it under his pillow. This was due to his natural sensitiveness.

On one or two occasions he betrayed in the presence of his mother the spiritual bent of his mind in the matters of eternity. "Mamma," he said, still retaining his childhood term of addressing her, of whom he was so intensely fond, "I think the glorified soul feels a want by its separation from the body until it is

re-united to it, at the resurrection." Then as if recollecting himself, he stopped short, and would say no more. This was owing to his extreme bashfulness in spiritual things. At another time, he remarked, "Mamma, this world is nothing but one huge hospital, and when we think of the infinity of God and the greatness of the Almighty, what are we all but a speck of dust in His Hand."

When he left home first at 13 years of age, he took with him that remarkable book of Dr. Hugh Martin's, "The Shadow of Calvary." He perused it with great delight and gained wonderful understanding of its contents. Other outstanding works he greatly relished were Dr. Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology* and Dr. A. A. Hodge on the Atonement. The latter volume, in fact, he had almost at his finger ends and took it with him to Switzerland. Calvin's Institutes was another work he liked much to read. But, however much all the productions of men appealed to him, he read hardly anything on the Sabbath but his Bible while he lay ill at home. All this appeared to be preparatory to his trying illness and sufferings during his last months in Leysin, when he could not, on account of increasing weakness, read but very little. He had a keen desire to get well, and it was under this impelling force that he made up his mind to go to Switzerland. He was in a good measure restored before he went to Switzerland in December, 1931, but when the drastic artificial treatment of the Swiss doctors was applied to him, it had the very opposite effect to what was intended. The whole system got poisoned and the heart began to give way gradually, until it finally and rather suddenly at last collapsed last day of April, 1932, and though it appears to us now the Lord did not intend restoring him, he was endeavouring in his letters home to put the best possible colour on his condition to relieve his family of as much anxiety as possible. In one of his letters home he said: "My trouble will be for the good of all concerned as I see it." In another, he remarked: "It was decreed in the past ages that I should be born, that I should live the active life I did,

that I should contract my present illness, that I should baffle doctors," etc.

On receiving the news from the Swiss doctors that his heart was rapidly failing and the circulation was getting bad, we were stricken with grief, which was increased by the consideration of the distance between us, precluding the probability of seeing him alive. It may be permissible to add the part of his parents' experience on the night on which the news of this turn for the worse took place in their beloved boy's case arrived. At 2 p.m. on Sabbath morning they, in their grief, went aside and apart to plead with the Lord on his behalf. They endeavoured to beseech the Most High to prepare him, and as it appeared to be the end, to take him to be with Himself for ever. The petition offered was that the Lord might be pleased to vouchsafe a special truth, fitted to fortify, strengthen and relieve grieved and anguished hearts, on which they could base an assured hope that it would be well with him for eternity. While thus engaged for some time, at last the truth flashed with unusual overpowering effect into their minds, though the one did not know that the other got it at about the same time—"Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise";—to the one it came in Gaelic and to the other in English. The effect on both was immediate and they felt wonderfully relieved and composed.

Many of the Lord's people who knew him personally got truths, some of them very remarkable, as bearing on his case, since he came home ill in 1930. Although some of them did not tell till after his death, from these truths they got they felt persuaded at the time he would not recover and that it would be well for him through eternity.

The following extracts are taken from letters sent after his death to his father by a young student from Cornwall who was in the same institution and with whom he had much talk on religious topics:—"I have," says this young man, "been struck by the manner in which he was enabled to draw spiritual strength

and courage from the Holy Scriptures, of which he was a constant student, and about which we have had many talks." In a second letter he wrote:—"Our conversation on religious topics ranged over a wide field and your son retained his intellectual vitality to a quite exceptional extent in one so ill. Some of these talks stand out in my mind. I well remember that one evening I found him eager to talk, and after discussing for some time the question of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, we passed on to the question of personal salvation, repentance and forgiveness. He was that evening somewhat weighed down by his sense of sin and unworthiness, but as we talked on he gave it as his opinion that faith was the great gift which was of paramount importance. At this point he was thinking deeply about the vital truths of the Christian religion. On another occasion he said he had been struck by the number of really good people whom he had met who suffered from T.B." "Just before he left here"—he was transferred shortly before he died to another institution—"he told me that he felt his religious interest quickened, and meant to keep reading about it. He seemed fully alive to its supreme importance and also he had found comfort and peace in it and more particularly in the parables of our Lord which deal with the salvation of sinners, such as the lost sheep and the prodigal son. This penitence was remarkably deep, and the idea of our Lord as Saviour was one on which he used to dwell, together with the thought of the joy of being numbered among the blessed. Twice he told me an anecdote which drove home this latter point. It was that of an old lady who declared that though only one soul should be saved she would strive to be that one. I am very sorry not to be able to quote his exact words, but you will understand we talked a great deal about religion. I have tried to give a faithful account of his experience, though it is sometimes given in general terms, a refuge in which he often modestly hid."

In a third letter he wrote in answer to queries: "I do not think your son regretted coming to Switzerland. It is much

harder for me to say how much he realized that he would not recover. I used to avoid the subject as much as possible, and did not feel it right to tell him my own opinion. It is quite certain, however, that he realized the need for spiritual preparation, and spent much time in it. During the last days he was here, I believe he had a deeper appreciation of things spiritual than he had ever had before. For my own part I am quite confident that he found our Saviour and that he will be led to the Father in His Kingdom. The spiritual experience of which you write must have been a great comfort to you and I hope it may continue to be so. God used his illness as a means of preparing him for eternity and of bringing him to a true knowledge of things heavenly, and in this respect his sufferings were not without fruit. Through the training he had received and the guidance of the Holy Spirit he was able to use his illness and weakness to draw near to his Heavenly Father. He longed for the riches of eternal life. In this longing he was a striking contrast to several others I have known who have not recovered and whose lack of spiritual insight into suffering was a sad spectacle." It is a year this month since he passed away aged 20 years.—M. M.

Searmon.

le C. H. SPURGEON.

(Continued from page 507.)

“Mar sin thug Daibhidh buaidh air an Philisteach le crann-tàbhail agus le cloich; agus bhuail e am Philisteach, agus mharbh se e; ach cha robh claidheamh ann an laimh Dhaibhidh” (I. Sam. xvii. 50).

Dh' fhaotainn da-rìreamh iomadach ni a' chomharrachadh a mach gu mionaideach a thaobh Dhaibhidh anns an robh e 'na shamhladh air ar Tighearna. Tha an eachdraidh so uile làn de nithean àraidh gu bhi 'gar lìonadh le puincean sàmhlachail anns an robh iad a' comh-fhreagradh. Ach tha aon ni àraidh

ann a bu mhat leam sibhse fìor-aire thoirt dà. 'Se an t-ainm a ghoirèar do Gholiath 's an Eabhra—chan e “curaidh,” mar tha sinn a' leughadh anns a' Bheurla; ach “fear-meadhoin” no “eadar-mheadhonair.” Ma chuireas sibh a' chuis uile gu réidh fa chomhair bhur n-inntinnean faodaidh sibh fhaicinn gu h-ealamh cho freagarrach agus a tha am facal a tha air a ghnàthachadh. Tha an sin sluagh àrmailt nam Philisteach air an dara taobh, agus tha slòigh armailt Israeil air an taobh eile. Tha gleann 'na laighe eatorra. Tha Goliath ag ràdh, “Seasaidh mise airson Philistia.” “Tha mise a' seasamh mar fhear-meadhoin.” “An àite an airm uile a bhi teachd gu pearsanta chum a' chath, tha mise 'gam thaisbeanadh fhéin airson mo chinneach mar “eadar-mheadhonair.” Taghaibh-se eadar-mheadhonair a thig air adhart chum gleac riumsa; an àite a' chath a bhi air a cur eadar an dà fheachd, thigeadh dithis dhaoine neach bho gach feachd agus deanadh iad a' choimhstri a tha eadarainn ann an gleac n' chéile, a chur an dara taobh.” Nis, 's ann air an dearbh bhonn a bha sin a chathaich an Tighearna Iosa Crìosd na batail airson a shluaigh. Thuit sinn uile gu léir mar a bha sinn air ar gabhail a stigh anns a' cheud Adhamh, tha ar slàinte nis air a ghabhail a stigh ann am foillseachadh neach eile—an dara h-Adhamh. 'S esan am fear-meadhoin, an t-aon eadar-mheadhonair eadar Dia agus daoine. 'Na ghràdh dhuinne agus 'na eud airson glòir Dhé, faodaidh sinn beachdachadh air a' tighinn a mach agus seasamh an teis-meadhoin an ùrlair a tha ag eadar-dhealachadh càmpan math agus uile eadar Dia agus an diabhl, agus a' seasamh fa chomhair an tì bha 'toirt an dùlain—tha e seasamh 'nar n' ainm agus 'nar n-àite, ma's e sinne da rìreamh a shlugh, airson gu'n cuireadh e crìoch air a' chomhstri air ar son-ne ni nach b'urrainn sinne gu bràth a dheanamh air ar son féin. Gu pearsanta bhitheamaid, gun agadh sam bith, air ar cur a dh' ionnsuidh an ruaig, ach tha a ghairdean-san gu leòir airson buaidh a thoirt a mach air ar son-ne, agus crìoch gu sìorruidh a chuir air a' chomhstri a bha eadar neamh agus ifrinn. Gabh sàr-bheachd air ceann-feadhna ar feachd

a' dol a mach a chum a' chath. Dhiùlt mac Iese na h-innealan-airm leis an d'iarr Saul e bhi air armachadh;—chuir e an elogad air a cheann, chuir e luireach-mhàileach air a chorp, agus bha e air tì an claidheamh a chuir air a leasraibh, ach thuirt e, chan urrainn mi dol leo so, oir cha do chleachd mi iad.” Agus air a' mhodh cheudna rinn mac Dhaibhidh na h-uile inneal talmhaidh a dhiùlfadh. Bha iad air ar Tigheama a ghlacadh le ainneat agus rìgh a dheanadh dheth, ach 's e thuirt e, “Chan' eil mo rioghachd-sa de'n t-saoghal so.” Leumadh claidhean gu leòir as an truail aig a ghairm-san. Chan e 'mhàin Peadar, a bha ro chabhagach le chlaidheamh gus a' chluas a chuir de Mhalchus, ach bha iomadach fear endmhor ann mar an ceudna bhiodh toileach gu leòir air Iosa o Nasaret a' leantuinn ann an laithean roimhe so; agus gu bitheanta ann an laithean bho'n àm sin, bha na h-Iudhaich a' leantuinn mealltairean a bha gairm gu robh ùghdarras acasan bho'n Tì as àirde airson an saoradh. Ach 's e thuirt Iosa, “Cuir do chlaidheamh a rìs na truail, oir iadsan uile a ghlacas an claidheamh, tuitidh iad leis a' chlaidheimh.” B'e aon de bhuairidhean an fhàsaich nach b'e 'mhàin gu'm biodh aige uile rioghachdan an domhain, ach gu'm biodh iad aige leis na meadhoinnean a chuireadh Satan fa chomhair. Feumaidh e tuiteam sìos agus aoradh a dheanadh do Shatan: feumaidh e na h-airm fheolmhor a ghnàthachadh a bhiodh co-ionann ri aoradh a dheanadh dhà. Cha bhiodh gnothach 'sam bith aig Iosa ris. Gus an latha an dingh, an cogadh mòr a tha aig Iosa Criosda ri cumhachdan an dorchadais, chan ann le claidheimh no le elogad ach le clachan mìne an t-sruth. Ach s'e searmonachadh sìmplidh an t-soisgeil agus lorg a' bhuachaille àrd-Cheann na h-Eaglais a bhi 'nar meadhoin—'s e so a leagas ìosal Goliath agus a leagas ìosal e a dh' ionnsuidh an latha mu dheireadh. 'S diomhain do'n Eaglais a bhi smuaineachadh gu'n toir i mach a' bhuaidh le saoihbreas, no le àrd-urram na le ùghdarras sìobhalta. Cha chuidich uachdranachd i. 'S ann ri cumhachd Dhé a mhàin a dh' fhaimas i sealltainn. “Chan ann le neart no le cumhachd ach le mo Spiorad-sa,” deir an

Tighearna. 'S e latha aoibhneach do'n eaglais 'nuair a dh'fhoghluimeas i an nì tha an sin. 'S e seamonachadh a' chrainn-cheusaidh a tha dhaibhsan a chaillear amaideach ach tha dhuinne chreideas ann an Crìosda, 'na chumhachd Dhé agus 'na ghliocas Dhé.

Faie mar sin ar gaisgeach glòirmhar a' dol a mach a dh'ionnsuidh a' chòmhraig leis na h-innealan a ròghnaich e féin, na dearbh nithean a chuireadh gliocas dhaoine suarach, do bhrìgh nach' eil iad cosmhuil ris an nì bhiodh feumail chum na h-obrach. Le neart mór agus cumhachd chaidh e mach, oir 's ann a chaidh e mach ann an ainm Dhé. "Tha thusa a' teachd a m' ionnsuidh-sa le claidheimh, le sleagh agus le sgéith; ach tha mise a' teachd a d' ionnsuidh-sa ann an ainm Tighearna nan sluagh," arsa Daibhidh. 'S ann mar sin mar an ceudna tha buaidh an t-soisgeil uile-chumhachdach. 'S e Crìosd iobairt-reitich Dhé. Chuir Dia suas e "gu bhi 'na iobairt-reitich air son ar peacaidhean." Tha Crìosd air a shuidheachadh le Dia, air ungadh le Dia, 's air a chur le Dia. Agus 's e an soisgeul teachdaireachd Dhé, agus a tha air a chompartachadh le Spiorad Dhé. 'S mar a bi e mar sin, tha e lag mar uisge—Feumaidh e failneachadh ach do bhrìgh gu'n do chuir an Tighearna e, gheall e gu'm beannaicheadh e e, agus faodaidh sinn a bhi làn-dearbhta anns a' chùis so gu'n toir e gu bhuil an nì mu'n do chuir e mach e.

Ri leantuinn.

Notes and Comments.

Events at Rome.—At the middle of March the Pope at the appointment of new Cardinals deplored the activities of Protestant missionaries in Italy, and even Rome itself, and called upon the Cardinals to "fight this new menace to the full." A week after this the British Prime Minister made it part of

his programme to visit the Pope and break the Sabbath by transacting affairs of State with Mussolini. At the time of writing we do not know what success Mr. Ramsay Maedonald in his hurried visits to Geneva, Rome and Paris had but we have no hesitation in saying that he is taking the wrong method if he desires to have God's blessing on his labours as a statesman. This is not the time for statesmen who are engulfed in the maelstrom of world wide depression to ignore the abiding laws of Heaven.

Bible League Quarterly.—This interesting and helpful quarterly which is issued by the Bible League, 45 Doughty Street, Bedford Row, London, has quite a number of interesting articles in the April-June issue such as The Revised Version of the New Testament; History of Christian Belief as to the Holy Scriptures; My Experience with Buchmanism, and The Great Pyramid. It has also reviews of A. J. Russell's "For Sinners Only" one of the Oxford Group books which has now reached a sale of over 107,000. The editor points out some of the serious defects of the book. For those who wish to keep in touch with the latest defences of the Bible they will find this Quarterly most useful.

"The Master Word of To-day."—These are the words of the Rev. James Lockhart, in his presidential address at Sheffield, in speaking on "The Free Churches (Non-Conformist Churches of England) and Some Immediate Tasks" used when speaking of Union. He rejoiced that the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists of England had appointed Committees to confer with each other. It is rather remarkable that in an age when vital godliness is at a low ebb though a kind of effervescent religiosity has taken its place that there should be such a demand for union among Christian denominations. This is a phenomenon that demands study as it seems to indicate a drift in religion in which that which gave it backbone is absent.

Fifty Glasgow Clubs Facing Close-Down.—The above cross-heading caught our eye in reading one of the Scottish

dailies the other week. On reading the paragraph we learned to our astonishment certain things we were not aware of. The writer said Glasgow's amateur clubs are facing a crisis as more than fifty of them may be forced to close down next season. Half the number of these clubs are connected with churches and the city assessor has made it plain that church halls used for other than a strictly religious purpose must be fully assessed. Most of the churches draw the line at paying the increased assessment hence the anxiety of the dramatic clubs. We wish the assessor all success and hope he will go the full length the law allows him in assessing these church halls where dramatic entertainments are held. It is almost incredible that there are so many dramatic clubs connected with churches in Glasgow but we take for granted that the newspaper writer knows what he is speaking about.

Blasphemy Bill.—The second reading of the Seditious and Blasphemous Teaching of Children Bill was taken in Parliament on 9th April. The measure makes it an offence for any person other than the parent to teach seditious or blasphemous matter to children under the age of sixteen, or to read to or sell to or distribute among such children any document containing such matter, or to make, publish, sell, distribute, or have in his possession for sale or distribution any document containing seditious or blasphemous matter for the purpose or with the intention of its being used for teaching such children, or being read to, sold to, or distributed among such children.

Mr. Maxton said he had serious views about the Bill. The only views which were to be prevented from being taught to children were the views which he held very genuinely and very sincerely, views which he thought offered the only chance of getting a really decent world for people to live in. The peoples of the world would have to be freed from their belief in supernatural religions. What was the trouble in getting a peaceful Ireland and a peaceful India? What was the trouble in every corner of the globe in getting settled civil conditions? There

were two things—the problem of the poverty-stricken mass and the few wealthy people, and the problem of the superstitious religions which divided nations into warring sects, Mohammedan and Hindu, Protestant and Catholic. The only teaching which he knew which got anywhere near to providing intelligent explanations and solutions of the world's troubles was the Marxist teaching. We presume Mr. Maxton classed Christianity among the supernatural religions which it was necessary to get rid of before his Marxist theories could have scope. If so Mr. Maxton and his confederates have undertaken a task over which Disaster is written in large letters before the conflict begins. The Second reading of the Bill was carried by 124 votes to 30.

Anglo-Scottish Conference at Lambeth.—The conferences between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland are being carried on in secret. During the first week in April one of these conferences was held at Lambeth. The conference decided to refer the matter once more to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland when an interim statement will be made to the Assembly. The movement towards Canterbury is an ominous one by a Church claiming to be in historic continuity with the Church of Scotland. Meantime we reserve further criticism until the report is presented to the General Assembly.

Shops Open on the Sabbath in the North.—At a meeting of the Inverness and North of Scotland Branch of the Lord's Day Observance Association it was reported by the hon. secretary (Mr. F. Beaton) that 94 shops were open on the Lord's Day in the six northern counties. The number was made up as follows:—Caithness, 5; Ross-shire, 7; Inverness-shire, 37; Nairnshire, 5; Morayshire, 40. Sutherland had the honourable distinction of having no shops open on the sacred day. The nationality of the Sabbath traders was given as follows:—Wick, 3 Italians. Thurso, 1 Italian; 1 Englishwoman. Tain, 1 Italian. Invergordon, 1 Italian. Alness, 2 Scots. Dingwall, 2 Italians; 1 Irishman. Beauly, 1 Italian. Inverness, 13

Italians; 15 Scots. Kingussie, 1 Italian. Fort William, 3 Italians; 3 Scots. Inverlochy, 1 Scot. Nairn, 1 Italian; 4 Scots. Forres, 2 Italians; 5 Scots. Findhorn, 1 Scot. Grantown-on-Spey, 1 Italian. Lossiemouth, 2 Italians; 8 Scots. Burghead, 2 Scots. Hopeman, 2 Scots. Elgin, 6 Italians; 1 British born of Italian parents, and 10 British subjects—a total of 38 Italians; 1 British born of Italian parents, and 55 British subjects, mostly natives of the Highlands.

Culloden Wishing Well.—At a meeting of the Traffic Commissioners for the Northern Area, held in the first week of April, a deputation from the Inverness Lord's Day Observance Association appeared before the Commissioners protesting against giving a licence to run buses to Culloden Well on the first Sabbath of May. The Commissioners granted the licence. Things have come to a pretty pass in the Highlands when buses must be run to encourage superstition on the Lord's Day. It is now many years since we first called attention to this frivolous practice and we were surprised to receive a strong criticism from an office-bearer in our Church asserting that no such practices were indulged in now-a-days. We trust that by this time our friend is convinced that we were writing with a fuller knowledge than he was willing to give us credit.

Church Notes.

Communions.—May—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Dumbarton; third, Edinburgh and Broadford. June—First Sabbath, Applecross and Coigach; second, Shieldaig; third, Helmsdale, Lochcarron, Glendale, and Dornoch; fourth, Gairloch and Inverness. July—First Sabbath, Raasay, Lairg, Thurso, and Beaulay; second, Tain, Staffin, and Tomatin; third, Daviot, Halkirk, Flashadder, and Rogart; fourth, Plockton, and Bracadale; fifth, North Uist. August—First Sabbath, Dingwall;

second, Portree; third, Laide, and Bonar-Bridge; fourth, Stornoway. 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.

Meeting of Synod.—The Synod meets (D.V.) at Inverness, on Tuesday, the 23rd day of May.

Death of Two Elders.—It is with sincere regret that we have to record again the removal of two of our elders—Mr. Donald MacCallum, Kames, who reached the great age of 95 and Captain Macintyre, Lochyside, Fort William. We hope to have fuller notices of these worthy men in a future issue. Meantime we extend our sincere sympathy to their relatives and the congregations in which they were office-bearers.

Deputy to Western Canada.—The Rev. Finlay Macleod, the Church's deputy to Western Canada, sailed from Glasgow on 14th April. We wish him the Lord's blessing on his labours among our people in Canada.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—M. G. A., of China Inland Mission, £10; R. W. A., 41 St. Vincent Place, Glasgow, £5; Mrs C., Hildon, Tillicoultry, per Rev. R. Mackenzie, £5; Miss M., Morness, Rogart, £25; Miss C. R., Cringletie, Peebles, £1; Mrs A. McP., Drinan, Ardentinn, 6s; Mrs P. C., Drimmin, 8s; N. & J., Skinidin, Skye, 8s; C. M. A., Skinidin, Skye, 2s; Anon, Tarbert, Argyll, 4s; J. C. M., Glenisla, £1; Mrs N., Fort William, Ontario, 14s; J. L., Stockton-on-Tees, £2; M. C., Braefoot, Strontian, 5s; Mrs D. McK., Forres, 10s; D. McL., Burnside, Aviemore, 8s; A. McL., Tofino, B.C., Canada, £1 4s.

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Bracadale, Skye, Congregation.—The General Treasurer acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of 10s for the first stone in Bracadale F.P. Church (Struan-side)—a poor woman's mite, Exodus 35-25, Ezra 1-3 (Dunvegan postmark).

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