

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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PRINTED BY N. ADSHEAD & SON, 11 UNION STREET
AND 34-36 CADOGAN STREET, GLASGOW.

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. XXXVIII.

March, 1934.

No. 11.

The Second Coming of our Lord.

II.

(Continued from page 405.)

IN general terms the Pre-millennarian position may be stated as follows: Christ is to come before the Millennium "when with (some of) His glorified saints He will reign in person on the throne of David at Jerusalem for a thousand years over a world of men yet in the flesh, eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, under this mysterious sway" (Brown's *Second Advent*, p. 6—6th edit.). It is to be borne in mind that this is only a general statement of the Pre-millennarian position. Pre-millennarians are far from agreed on many points for instance they are not at one as to the saints who will reign with Christ. Principal Brown, whose book *Christ's Second Coming: Will it be Pre-millennial?** did more than any other work to stem the tide of pre-millennarianism in Scotland, has emphasised the fact that the controversy raised by modern Pre-millennarians has had at anyrate one good result in awakening the Church's attention to the Scripture doctrine of our Lord's Second Coming. "Pre-millennialists have done the Church a real service," he says, "by

*"A peerless post-millennial work" is Rev. J. F. Silver's tribute to it in his *The Lord's Return* (1915). This is high praise from a Pre-millennarian. He further describes Dr. Brown "as the strongest post-millennial writer in the English speaking world" (*Ibid.* p. 29).

calling attention to the place which the Second Advent holds in the Word of God and the scheme of divine truth. If the controversy which they have raised should issue in a fresh and impartial inquiry into this branch of it, I, for one, instead of regretting, shall rejoice in the agitation of it. When they dilate upon the prominence given to this doctrine in Scripture, and the practical uses which are made of it, they touch a chord in the heart of every simple lover of his Lord, and carry conviction to all who tremble at His Word; so much so, that I am persuaded nine-tenths of all who have embraced the pre-millennial view of the Second Advent, have done so on the supposition that no other view of it will admit of an unfettered and unmodified use of the Scripture language on the subject But the *fact* of the scriptural prominence of this doctrine, and their *inference* from this as to the *time* and *objects* of it, must not be confounded. On the former we are cordially at one with them; on the latter, we are directly at issue with them. With them we affirm, that the Redeemer's Second Appearing is the very Pole Star of the Church. That it is so held forth in the New Testament, is beyond dispute. Let any one do himself the justice to collect and arrange the evidence on the subject, and he will be surprised—if the study be new to him—at once of the copiousness, the variety, and the conclusiveness of it" (*Second Advent*, p. 14). It is not our purpose to give a historical survey of Pre-millennarianism or Chiliasm (from Greek *chilias*, a thousand) as it was known in the early Church neither do we intend to touch upon the Adventist views of the Russellites and the Seventh Day Adventists. We are to confine ourselves to the positions taken up by leading and recognised Pre-millennarian writers and to touch upon modern Dispensationalism. It is almost incredible to think of the volume of Pre-millennarian literature that is pouring from the press both in this country and America. Weekly and monthly religious periodicals advocate its claims. It has captured to a large extent the

evangelicalism of the English speaking races. The Fundamentalists* of America have made Pre-millennarianism one of the planks in their manifesto against Modernism which, of course, has no place for the doctrine of the Second Coming. In this country Pre-millennarianism has a prominent place in the teaching of the Plymouth Brethren and both in their books and periodicals it is strongly represented and advocated. In England such religious weeklies as *The Christian*, *Life of Faith*, *Christian Herald*, etc., all set forth Pre-millennarian doctrine. Even many who hold firmly to the doctrines of sovereign grace are Pre-millennarians. Their organ is *Watching and Waiting* (London) and in their Statement of Doctrinal Belief of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony it is affirmed concerning our Lord's Return: "His Return we expect as Pre-millennial." In Scotland Pre-millennarianism never had much of a hold except among the Plymouth Brethren but there is no doubt that it is growing. Even the undoubted influence of the Bonars, who were Pre-millennarians, did little in the dissemination of these views. This may, to a large extent, have been due to Principal Brown's *Second Advent* which is the classic work on the Post-millennarian view as opposed to the Pre-millennarian. At this point reference may be made to an American book—*The Lord's Return* by Rev. Jesse Forest Silver—the third edition of which appeared in 1915. Mr. Silver has diligently ransacked the whole range of theological literature from Apostolic times to the present and finds Pre-millennarianism where it was never found before. Unfortunately the statements quoted are not as carefully weighed as one would wish in such a work. Some of the statements quoted appear to us to say nothing more than that the writers believed in the Lord's Return which, of course, is quite in keeping with the view held by Post-millennarians.

*It is to be borne in mind that a large body of conservative Presbyterians and others do not subscribe to this tenet which has such an important place in the manifesto of those who are generally known as Fundamentalists in America.

The main passage upon which the Pre-millennarian doctrine rests is Rev. xx. 1-10. As it is of importance in this discussion we quote it in full so that the words may be before our readers—"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

The brief summary of the Pre-millennarian position given at the beginning of this article may now be somewhat extended as some of these positions will come in for criticism. We fall back on Dr. Masselink's presentation of them which is as

follows: "1. A literal interpretation of prophecy, making the thousand years of Revelation 20 to refer to the millennial reign of Christ [on earth]. 2. At Christ's coming the millennial reign begins. Christ then establishes an external earthly dominion which shall last a thousand years. 3. The seat of His government shall be in Jerusalem from where He will rule the Church. 4. The resurrection of the godly dead takes place at the return of Christ. This is considered to be the first resurrection mentioned in Revelation 20. 5. During this period of a thousand years the Jews will enjoy special pre-eminence and honours above the Gentile Christians. 6. The whole period is represented as a time of great prosperity and blessedness. Israel shall be instrumental in bringing about a great conversion. The season of great refreshing spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles will be realised. 7. After the thousand years are finished the rest of the dead shall rise. This is considered to be the second resurrection mentioned in Revelation 20. Christ will then judge the world. This in turn is followed by the consummation of the Church and the end of the world" (*Why Thousand Years?*, p. 15).

Before proceeding to a criticism of the Pre-millennarian position the question as to the correct interpretation of prophecy is to be decided. Must all prophecy be interpreted in a literal or is it allowable to interpret it in a spiritual way? The literalism of the Pre-millennarians would require that David in his own person would reign over the earth in the days to come and that Elijah was to appear in person. It was in this way the Jews interpreted the Messiah's First Coming and it would be foolish in view of the tremendous blunder they made to apply this principle of interpretation to the statements regarding His Second Coming. Take for instance the Primeval Promise: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii. 15). No one would ever dream of interpreting this promise literally. A rigid literal interpretation of the Messianic prophecies would soon

lead us into deep waters. The principle of the spiritual interpretation of the prophecies is one, we believe, which is rightly founded on God's Word. Later on we shall see that the literal interpretation of Revelation xx. is untenable and thus renders the Pre-millennarian position likewise untenable.

(To be continued.)

Notes of a Sermon.

By Dr. JOHN OWEN.*

“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price” (Isa. lv. 1).

THIS Evangelical Prophet here invites poor and empty souls to Christ. “*Ho, every one that thirsteth;*” that is, that hath a mind to come to Christ, that longeth after Him, that is weary without Him, that is greedy of Christ, as the parched ground is for rain. “*Come to the waters;*” that is, believe in the Lord Christ, and by faith draw out of His fountain; so it is interpreted John vi. 36. By “*water,*” “*wine,*” and “*milk,*” you are to understand all that which is in Christ that is either necessary for our life, or our refreshing and comfort. Whatsoever the soul thirsteth after and can spiritually drink, whatsoever the soul hungers after and can spiritually eat, is meant by His water, wine, and milk. Therefore, we hear of a longing and thirsting after Christ (John vii. 37). “*He that hath no money;*” that is, he that is not worth a farthing in his spiritual state, that hath no grace at all, let him buy wine and milk without money and without price; let him come with the bare and naked arm of faith. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire” (Rev. iii. 18). “*How am I able?*” thou sayest; “*I am poor.*” But remember it is without money.

*Given in the *Gospel Magazine* for 1800, and said there to have been preached at Oxford about 1656. The MS. from which it is taken is said to be “the original MS.”

The doctrine that I shall speak to at this time is, that God is very willing and earnest that every poor, empty, thirsty soul, should come in and partake of all the fulness of Jesus Christ. This appears from the text. God's willingness appears, 1. From that particle "*Ho!*" which is a proclaiming particle, which notes not only a desire in God that they should come, but that He would have them all know how His bowels yearn after them. Or it may be a particle expressing pity; as if God should say, "I pity poor souls that will not come in." Something looks this way in that which follows, "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread?" 2. It appears from the invitation he makes here. Though the way had been open, yet the trembling soul might have been afraid to come; but when the great Master of the feast invites every one, why should we be afraid to come? 3. This appears from the reiteration of this "*come,*" "*come.*" This divine rhetoric and importunity of God doth not speak but to great purpose. 4. It may be demonstrated by these insinuations of what they are like to have. When a man would prevail with a friend to come, sometimes he intimates what entertainment he should have. God tells them that all the doctrines of the gospel, all that is in Christ, they shall have. (a) Here is "*water,*" which in sandy countries is a sweet thing to travellers. Darius, when he was pursued by Alexander, what abundance of sweetness doth he express to find in muddy water! and David, "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem!" Dost thou thirst after Christ? Come in. What water is to a man that is thirsty, that will I be to the weary soul. (b) Here is "*wine,*" which is that which doth make merry the heart of man (Eccles. x. 19). It is good for one that is ready to perish (Prov. xxxi. 6). Whatever wine is to any man, that Christ is to a thirsty soul. (c) "*Milk,*" which is a sweet thing (Cant. iv. 11). Milk in those countries was sweeter than what it is in ours. Come unto Christ, and thou shalt have that which shall comfort thy soul. 5. It appears from the removing of all the impediments

which keep the soul from Christ. The greatest is a man's own unworthiness—that they have nothing to make them acceptable. God saith, Be not afraid to come; though thou hast nothing at all to purchase these treasures, thou shalt be welcome without money. The 6th reason is, God's own heart and bowels—He will have mercy because He will have mercy; He is earnest with poor souls, because He will be so; He delights in mercy to poor souls. Men are earnest in doing what they delight in; God is never better pleased than when He is showing mercy to poor sinners; He is full of mercy. When a woman's breast is full of milk, she is in pain till it be drawn forth; God is full of mercy, and never takes more delight than when men draw it from Him!

Is God willing and earnest to have poor sinners come to Christ? Then do thou, who art a poor, empty, thirsty soul, satisfy the longings (as I may speak) of God. The ways to the place of refuge were to be paved, that there might be nothing at all to hinder a guilty soul from fleeing thither. I shall endeavour to remove all doubts in the way to Christ, by answering those *objections that have been in mine own heart, and are in the hearts of others.*

1st Objection.—“*I am willing to come to Christ, but I have been a great sinner; and is the Lord earnest with such a one as I am?*” Answer.—Art thou a great sinner? here is a reason why thou shouldest come to Christ, but no reason why thou shouldest not come. The glorified saints in heaven, when they came first to Christ, were sinners as thou art. The Lord tells us that it was His design in coming into the world to look after such (Matt. ix. 13). Though thou art an ungodly wretch, yet Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. v. 6-8). A man that was good to the public many of the Romans would dare to die for; but for one that was morally honest for his own good, very few would die for him; and for a wicked man none would dare to die. But here God's love is commended, that whilst you were sinners Christ died for you. Art thou an enemy? Such may be reconciled (Rom. v. 10). Art thou rebellious?

(Ps. lxxviii. 18). Hast thou committed great sins? This should be so far from framing an argument against thee, that it will rather prove an argument for thee. "*O Lord, pardon mine iniquity,*" saith David. Why? because it is little? no; "*because it is great.*" Suppose thy sins, O trembling soul, were as the sand of the sea for multitude, God that delights in mercy hath a sea to cast all thy sins into (Mic. vii. 19).

2nd Objection.—"*But my sins are so great that God will not pardon them.*" Answer.—Let them study that place, Exod. xxxiv. 7. He doth multiply words to stop the mouth of a poor doubting soul. Lawyers multiply words that they might take away all scruples. Let thy offences be what they will—iniquities, transgressions, and sins; why, God pardons iniquity, transgression, and sin.

3rd Objection.—"*But God never pardoned such a sinner as I am, therefore I cannot believe that God is willing that I should come in.*" Answer.—I could give thee a catalogue of as great, if not greater sinners than thou art that have been pardoned. Read the life of Manasseh, II. Kings xxi. 1-18. Peruse that catalogue, I. Cor. vi. 9-11: "*Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified.*" Paul was a persecutor, a blasphemer, but he obtained mercy. Suppose thou hadst all the sins of all in this city—nay, of all this nation—nay, of all the world, excepting that against the Holy Ghost, yet thou hast no more sins than Christ died for. Paul did say he was the worst of sinners, I. Tim. i. 15. "*Aye,*" say you, "*but not such a sinner as I.*" Yes, the *chiefest* of sinners; and can you be greater than the greatest sinner?

4th Objection.—"*But they are so great that God cannot pardon me.*" Answer.—God's thoughts are not as your thoughts.

5th Objection.—"*I have sinned against the Holy Ghost.*" Answer.—Dost thou thirst after these waters? thou art not one that has sinned this sin. It is a sin against clear light (Matt. xii. 24-31).

6th Objection.—"*I would fain come to Christ, but I have not that humiliation; I am not fitted for Christ; and is God*

willing that I should come in to these waters? I am a poor, empty creature, and may such a one as I am come, that have nothing?" Answer.—Art thou empty? Come to Christ that thou mayest be filled. We must not stay for grace, but must go to Christ that we may have grace. "Buy of me gold." When? when poor, and blind, and naked, and miserable. When a prince would marry a beggar, and is earnest, and beseeches her to take him for all her poverty, would it not be folly to say, "I will stay till I have better clothes?" Christ doth, as it were, open the heavens, and beseeches us to match with Him; and wilt thou say, "I will stay till I have a little grace?" No; go to Christ that thou mayest have grace. Yea, God has said, "Come, without money and without price;" that is, without a spiritual price.

7th Objection.—"I would fain come in, but I know I must not live in this and that sin; but my corruptions are so strong, that I know I shall fall into sin; and must such a one as I come in?" Answer.—Thou must part with thy right hand and thy right eye if thou dost come to Christ, but thou canst not leave these till thou dost believe. It would have been folly in many to have said, "I will get myself rid of one or two of my devils, and then go to Christ."

8th Objection.—"When God makes this proclamation, I know not whether he means me or no." Answer.—Why not thee, dost thou think? Art thou a poor empty soul, and wouldst fain come to Christ, why not thee? Doth he not say, "every one?" If a prince shall set forth a proclamation for every one, were it not folly for me to say, "I know not whether he means me?" Or, when a man is ready to be drowned, and another throws out a cord unto him, were it not the highest folly to say, "I know not whether he throws it to me?" Or, when Ebed-melech let the cord down to Jeremiah in the dungeon, had it not been folly in him to say, "I know not whether thou meanest me?"

9th Objection.—Saith a soul, "I am not able to come; why do you bid me come, I am dead?" Answer.—It is true, all the angels in heaven are not able to make one soul come to

these waters; it must be the same power that raised Christ from the dead that must make thee come. Perhaps, while I am speaking to thy ear, God may speak to thy heart: "Arise, Lazarus, and come forth." But let me tell thee, thou that wouldst fain come to Christ, and nothing else will satisfy thee, thou art a blessed man. Blessed are those that hunger. Didst thou ever know indeed, man, to hunger?

10th Objection.—"*I am willing to come to these waters, but after I had thought I had believed and drank of this water, I have sinned again; I have run back to my sins. I have sinned against all that light God had set up in my soul; and though I thought I had come in, yet I am as I was before. Will the Lord be willing that such an apostate as I should come in?*"

Answer.—Is it thus with thee? Thy condition is very lamentable. Relapses, as in bodily, so in the diseases of the soul, are very dangerous. But yet this should not hinder thee from coming to these waters. Hast thou multiplied sins? God can multiply pardon. Have thy sins abounded? The grace of God will superabound. Judah abused God's mercies; yet, after she had played the harlot with many lovers, God bids her "return again to me." God speaks this to every soul here. Though thy lusts have often carried thee from Christ, "Yet return again to me," saith the Lord. Christ commands men to pardon unto seventy times seven; and canst thou think that the Father of mercies, who naturally begets mercy, will not look towards thee? Peter denies Christ with an oath: Christ melts him with His kind looks. Lest he should despond, after His resurrection He bids them tell *Peter*, "I am risen"—take a special care of him. Luke xv. 20: Here you may see how the heart of God stands affected towards those that have played the prodigal and ran from their Father's house. "When he was a great way off, his father ran." He did not cast him off. Thou that hast run, it may be, to thy harlot, to the swine, be not afraid to turn back again to thy father's house. (a) The father of the prodigal saw his son. (b) He saw him afar off. When a Christian has considered that it was better with him while he was in his Father's

house, God sees him afar off. He sees thee now thou art willing to return. When he was *a great way off* He saw him. It had been mercy to have entertained him when he had come home. (c) He had compassion on him. What! after he had been with the harlots? Yes. (d) He ran towards him. It had been mercy to have walked to have met him. (e) He falls upon his neck and kisses him. After he had kissed his harlots, and been among the swine, He kissed him. Mercy is not squeamish or nice. It is remarkable in Esau (Gen. xxxiii. 4) that he runs to Jacob and embraces him, and kisses him, though he had threatened to kill him; but it is more remarkable that after a prodigal hath been weltering in his blood, the Father of mercies should kiss and embrace him.

Calling a Minister.

IN the Presbyterian Church the main steps in calling and induction of a minister are of a very solemn nature. Obligations are entered into by minister and people that are of a binding nature and ought always to be regarded as such. The minister is asked: "Do you promise to submit yourself willingly and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, unto the admonitions of the brethren of this Presbytery, and to be subject to them, and all other Presbyteries and superior judicatories of this Church, where God in His providence will cast your lot; and that, according to your power, you shall maintain the unity and peace of this Church against error and schism, notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise, and that you shall follow no divisive courses from the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church?" The unconscionable answering of this solemn question has often been commented on and rightly condemned as a trifling with solemn things. The thoughtless way in which a Call is signed by some, if one is to judge of their after actions, has not, however, been so often commented on. In

the Free Presbyterian Church the privilege of electing and calling a minister belongs to members in full communion. It is usual for the kirk-session to bring forward the name or names of ministers upon whom they have decided. But the communicants' right of choosing their minister is not thereby usurped for they are at liberty to bring forward the name of any minister they think suitable for the charge at the congregational meeting called for the election of a minister and full liberty is to be given them to do so. The interim-moderator's duty is to see that this privilege be not in any way denied to the communicants. If they feel that their rights are in any way interfered with they may have recourse to the Presbytery. When the communicants, thus exercising their privilege, have given a call to a minister they do so by signing their names to the following: "We, the undersigned Elders, Deacons, and Members of the Free Presbyterian Church congregation at . . . , desirous of promoting the glory of God and the good of the Church, being destitute of a fixed pastor, and being assured by good information and our own experience, of the ministerial abilities, piety, literature and prudence, as also of the suitableness to our capacities of the gifts of you, Mr. . . . , preacher of the gospel, have agreed to invite, call, and entreat, like as we, by these presents, do heartily invite, call, and entreat you to undertake the office of pastor among us, and the charge of our souls; and further, upon your accepting this our Call, *promise you all dutiful respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord.*"* Adherents sign a "concurrence to the Call" declaring "their hearty concurrence in the Call addressed by the members of the said congregation to Mr. . . . to be their pastor." The obligations thus entered into, one would think, are of a sufficiently binding nature as not to be undertaken by anyone who had not the intention of carrying them out to the full. The light-hearted breach of promises solemnly and voluntarily

*Attention is directed to the "Address to Congregations about to call a Minister" printed on another page.—Editor.

undertaken brings it within the category of sins forbidden in the ninth commandment—"breach of lawful promises" (*Larger Catechism*). Some time ago we heard one of our ministers remark in public that after being settled in his charge he discovered that there was a considerable number who signed his call who were not darkening the place of worship from one Sabbath to another. On his pastoral visits he asked one of these why he was not attending the means of grace. "Well, sir," was his answer, "I used to attend the prayer meetings and the service on the Sabbath but I took ill and was confined to bed for some time. When I got better I did not go out and the habit of staying in grew on me until at last when I would make up my mind to go out I thought the people would say that a change for the better had come over me and I stayed in." "How long have you been neglecting the means of grace?" asked the minister. "Fourteen years," was the answer. The devil certainly had found in this man material of a very pliable nature. Another of our ministers told us that when the congregation were shaking hands with him at his induction one man gave him a specially hearty shake and said: "Until death do us part." The minister remarked that the man attended the services about three months and then forsook his congregation altogether. No doubt, these are exceptionable cases and it would be most unjust to place others who are not fulfilling the promises they made in the same category but it is necessary to remind all who are failing in their duty in fulfilling promises that it is with God and not man they have to do in the end. No compulsion is used to make a man sign a call or concurrence with a call. It is a voluntary act, an obligation solemnly entered into and not to be treated as a scrap of paper when the name is adhibited to the Call. Further, every minister has a right to expect that those who promised him "all dutiful respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord" that they would implement their promise. Our people, we believe, as a general rule, are faithful attenders on the means of grace but there are not

wanting signs that the spirit of non-attendance on these means which is a characteristic of the age is infecting some of them and that the flimsiest excuses imaginable are advanced for non-attendance—excuses which they would be ashamed to advance for non-attendance at business or work.

The rules in connection with signing calls will be set forth in a future issue of the Magazine.

Address to Congregations about to call a Minister.*

BELOVED BRETHREN,—In your present solemn circumstances, as a Congregation about to choose a pastor, we feel constrained to address to you a few words of counsel and exhortation, earnestly praying that the Divine Head of the Church may own and bless the endeavour, towards promoting the harmonious settlement of a faithful and acceptable pastor among you.

We affectionately remind you first of all that the ministry is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, which He has been pleased to bestow on His Church, and to continue with her, for her increase and edification, until all His people “come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” The giving of pastors and teachers to the Church as her permanent instructors and rulers is spoken of by the Apostle as a distinguishing prerogative of the exalted Saviour; so that each faithful minister must be regarded as sent by Jesus into the world to carry forward upon earth, under Him, the grand design for which He Himself was sent into the world by the Father. It is this which stamps the office of the ministry with its most peculiar sacredness and

*This address was drawn up by the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1863 and instructions were given that it was to be used in every case of vacancy in a congregation.—Editor.

responsibility. This it is which makes the election of a pastor by a Christian congregation at once a precious privilege, whereof none may lawfully deprive them, and a weighty and responsible trust, which they have need to see that they do not sinfully neglect or abuse.

Enjoying then, as *you* do, this privilege, and having this trust reposed in you, it is required of you that you be found faithful to the Lord, as those who have one day to give an account of their stewardship in this matter to Him. Whatever means, accordingly, you may adopt, or whomsoever you may see fit to consult in regard to the selection of a pastor, we exhort and beseech you, under a profound sense of responsibility to the Lord, *to abound in prayer to Him for grace and guidance*, that you may be directed to a pastor according to His own heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding, and long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. We would that you felt the full weight of the responsibility which attaches to you in the choice of a minister; for the want of this on the part of any congregation will lead to the restraining of prayer before God, and, in all probability, to the adoption of means for attaining the end, which the Head of the Church cannot regard with favour, nor crown with a blessing. "Them that honour me," it is written, "I will honour." It was in answer to the prayer of the devout Cornelius, that Peter was sent to acquaint him with the gospel message. It would seem to have partly been in answer to the pleadings of the devout company by the river-side in Macedonia, that the apostle of the Gentiles was sent to preach Christ for the first time on European ground. If you are to obtain that most desirable of blessings, a minister who will faithfully break the bread of life among you, you must persevere in pleading with the Lord in this behalf, assured that your pleading will not be in vain. Besides obtaining for you, at His hands, a pastor "who will take the oversight of the flock, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind," and who will, like the Apostle, teach publicly, and from house to house,

testifying to all repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ—such believing and united prayer will be attended with the most beneficial results—

1. In the way of engendering a right feeling among you, and leading you to see eye to eye, in the choice of a minister. For, while we have great reason to bless the Lord for the degree of harmony that has generally prevailed in cases of settlement during the last twenty years, we cannot hide from ourselves the fact that there have been instances also of very painful and unseemly strife and division in congregations. The Church, as such, knows nothing of, and will not concern herself with, parties in the calling of a minister. The congregation must agree among themselves in a matter which so nearly concerns them, and not come with their divisions to the Church Courts, to transfer them from their own shoulders to theirs. Not, of course, that the Courts of the Church are at all indifferent to the welfare of the congregations, or unwilling to take their fair share of responsibility in the adjustment of any differences that may arise. But this, after all, must rather be in the way of counselling the congregation to cultivate a brotherly spirit among themselves, than by any active interference, ordinarily at least, in their differences. We long to be instrumental, however, rather in preventing the *rise* of disputes in our congregations, than in healing them after they have arisen; and it is in the hope of promoting that spirit of unanimity, brotherly kindness, and mutual, loving forbearance, which is so becoming in the Church of Christ, that we thus exhort you to united prayer, convinced as we are that it is only through the outpouring upon you of the Spirit of all grace, in answer to prayer, that you are likely to join as with one heart and hand in the calling of a man to be over you in the Lord in holy things. Met with one accord to pray the Lord for a minister—seeking of Him so precious a gift, alike in secret prayer, and in the prayers of the family and the church, we doubt not that you will feel yourselves so knit together in the bonds of the gospel of peace,

that your hearts shall readily unite on the man whom, in these circumstances, you cannot but regard as sent by the Lord in answer to your prayers. Such is one of the beneficial results which may be expected to attend united prayer for a pastor. We only mention another :

2. It will prepare you to welcome the minister of your choice when he comes among you, as commissioned by the Lord with a message from Him to your souls. It will predispose you to wait on his ministry, in no captious and critical, but in a humble and teachable frame of mind, such as shall constrain him to feel that, like Cornelius of old, you are all present before God, to hear all things that are commanded him of God. And it will tend greatly to foster a spirit of habitual prayer among you, such as, above all things else, will strengthen the hands and gladden the heart of the pastor you have thus received from the Lord, and give both to him and you reason to hope for a copious shower of blessing, that shall make your congregation as a field which the Lord hath blessed. While your pastor watches for your souls as one that must give account, you, abounding in prayer for him, and bearing him much on your hearts before the Lord, will thus esteem him the more highly in love for his work's sake, and live in unbroken peace among yourselves.

Finally, and in one word, it were well to bear in solemn remembrance those times of which the apostle speaks, "when men will not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own lusts, shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." Assuredly, in the days we live in, a loud call is addressed to every follower of Christ, whether he look to the interests of his own soul, or to those of the Church at large, to see well to it that, in the choice of a minister, he "try the spirits, whether they be of God," and long for such a pastor only, as, besides being manifestly devoted to the Lord, and to the winning of precious souls, will faithfully also and fearlessly maintain the time-honoured and scriptural principles and practices of our beloved Church, as set forth in our Standards—

cordially attached to its doctrine, worship, government, and discipline, and so likely to prove himself, in the hand of the Lord, worthy of his calling in a Church, which has been signally honoured of him to contend for those crown rights of the Redeemer, which were so nobly vindicated by our martyred forefathers.

And now, dear brethren, we commend you to "Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." And "unto the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Ralph Erskine.*

I.

IN order to our forming a just and instructive estimate of a preacher, we must distinguish between his popularity and his usefulness in the highest sense which this word can bear. . . .

The fact to which we now wish to draw more special attention is, that Ralph Erskine was not simply an eminent preacher, but one whose gospel, in a remarkable manner, came to men "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Wherever he went, a reviving influence appeared to go with him, "God causing him to triumph in every place." There is in one part of his Memoir an itinerary from which it appears that wherever he preached in a lengthened circuit, there were great meltings and searchings of heart and the nucleus of a flourishing church was formed; while on the slopes of the Lomond Hills near to his brother's church at Portmoak, and in the wide sphere of his own stated ministry at Dunfermline, especially on great sacramental solemnities when numbers travelled on foot over a distance of seventy miles "to keep the solemn feasts," he and his associates were favoured

*This article from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson, forms a preface to two volumes of selections from the writings of Ralph Erskine—"The Beauties of Ralph Erskine."

with a succession of pentecosts. Far beyond the range of his living voice, he did good by his printed sermons at the time, and there are facts to prove that, after the lapse of more than a century, their sweet odour and vitalizing power have not been spent. It is well known that the devout author of "*Theron and Aspasio*" preferred his writings above all other uninspired productions, as the companion and solace of his dying hours; Whitefield owned himself indebted to them for a more clear and evangelical theology; while, in later times, the strong-minded Andrew Fuller acknowledged that they had awakened him to conviction and moved him even to tears. And at this hour, as we are able to testify from personal observation, his sermons are purchased and read with avidity by the Dutch peasant, and are serving to keep alive on many a family hearth in Holland the fire of evangelical life, when it has become extinguished in the pulpit. The body of the dead prophet let down into the grave of a dead church, causes the dry and mouldering bones to live.

Now, it is a question of much practical interest, especially to ministers of the gospel—Can we discover any prominent qualities in the character and ministry of Mr. Erskine which account for this success? It is superfluous to explain that in proposing this question we acknowledge as one of our most settled convictions the operation of the Holy Spirit as an agency at work in every case in which a human soul is "born unto God." But then, in entire harmony with this belief, we assert that there is more of adaptation in some of the human instruments employed by the Divine Spirit than in others, and that where certain conditions of character and habits of ministerial life are given, this higher form and more abundant measure of success usually accompanies them. And an inquiry conducted on this principle respecting the secret of Ralph Erskine's success, as one who was singularly "wise in winning souls," may perhaps suggest to some who are bearing the heavy burden of the sacred office in our own days, what have hitherto been their deficiencies and what should now be their aims.

1. If we are to account for the effects of Mr. Erskine's ministry, as one in which the highest ends of the pastorate were gained, we must begin at his study and mark his diligent preparation on week-days, for the full and faithful delivery of his message when he went forth with it, on Sabbath mornings, to his pulpit. He lighted up the temple with the pure "beaten oil," and to the end of his pastorate he appears to have abridged nothing of his studious labours. He never fell into the mistake which has betrayed multitudes into indolence, if not sunk them into contempt, of imagining that it was an easy thing to speak with simplicity. In the case of men like Whitefield and Wesley, who spent much of their time in itinerating, and whose parish was almost literally a kingdom, less of this continuous preparation was needed; but in a settled pastorate it is essential, if we would not be despised. Mr. Erskine's hearers were not long in discovering that what he gave them was the ripened fruit of much thought, and they gathered around him in growing multitudes with the confidence that they would not be "sent empty away."

2. Nor was the work of this great preacher in his study a mere intellectual exercise. He sought in frequent prayer other aids than those which mere lexicons or commentaries could yield him. It is not merely, as applied to him, a strong metaphor but a literal fact, that he often read his Bible on his knees. When there seemed decay in his own spiritual life or in that of his people, whole days were set apart by him for secret fasting and prayer, while there was much earnest pleading not only for divine illumination in his study, but for a blessing on his message when he bore it forth, with shining countenance, to his people. Few things are more interesting in his correspondence than the evidence it affords of the devout spirit with which his work in the pulpit was anticipated, and the united and earnest longings expressed by himself and his brethren, when some sacramental festival was in prospect, for showers of blessing. We quote a portion of a prayer which was found as a memorandum in one of his note-books, and which, though afterwards offered in the public assembly on a day of

humiliation preparatory to the Lord's Supper had evidently been part of his "Cardiphonia" ere he passed from his closet to the sanctuary:—

"Alas! we live amid many dark and dismal days of wrath, wherein God is frowning upon our mother-church, and frowning on all her children. O may we have one glorious day of the Son of man amongst all our gloomy days. May the Sun of Righteousness range the clouds and dart a beam of light upon this assembly. O for a thick shower of heavenly influences to make a glorious communion in this place! Does not the dry ground of our hearts need such a shower, especially on a humiliation-day? We come to set our parched and withered souls under the drop of thy ordinances. Lord, if we have a *Bochim* on the fast-day, may we not expect a *Bethel* on the feast-day? A shower of influences would make a shower of tears among us. Lord, come and thunder out of Sinai upon the dead and obstinate hearts that are here, to prepare them for coming to Mount Zion, the city of the living God. Lord, take thy bow in thine hand, and shoot off the arrows of conviction to pierce the heart of the enemies of the King. Our time will soon be at an end—our praying time, our preaching time, our hearing time, our communion time will soon be at an end. Death will in a little cut our breath, and send us to eternity, and part us and ordinances for ever. If we be not joined to the Lord in ordinances now, then in a little, God and we must part for ever and ever; but if God and we meet together graciously in time, then we shall meet together gloriously in eternity. O send forth thy light and thy truth; let them lead us to thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

3. And when Mr. Erskine ascended his pulpit, it was indeed to preach "the gospel." He did not tarry always in what Dr. Arnold happily termed "the outer courts" of the temple of truth, but delighted to conduct his hearers inward to the sight of those great central doctrines which reflect with broadest disc the glory of God, and which he knew to be God's power

to the salvation of every one that believed them. He sought for variety and freshness to his preaching, not in novelties that were outside the Christian doctrine and foreign to it, but in those exhaustless riches which were contained in the gospel itself. His gospel was "full-orbed," and therefore eminently Christ-exalting; and because Christ was lifted up in it, he drew multitudes unto it. By other expedients he might perhaps have gathered crowds around him, but he knew that it was only by this means that he could hope that souls should be saved. "Go on, dear brother," we find him writing on one occasion to Whitefield; "go on in asserting and publishing the doctrine of grace reigning through His righteousness unto eternal life; for this, and only this gospel, will be the organ of omnipotency and the power of God to the salvation of sinners."

We can imagine the surprise and holy jealousy for the honour of inspired truth with which he would have heard some men in our times propose to impart greater efficiency to their ministry by means of symbolism in ecclesiastical architecture, or by a kind of poetical and vague mysticism, by which the imagination is entertained and dazzled, rather than the conscience roused and the affections moved. With what eloquence would he have denounced as treachery to Christ and unfaithfulness to souls, that so called "gospel of progress" which casts a thick veil over the cross of Christ, and adorns truth with chaplets of flowers only that it may lead it forth to sacrifice! He would readily have admitted, indeed, that as ages advance and more of accumulated learning and experience are brought to bear upon the Bible, many parts of it will come to be better understood, the gospel will be seen in new adaptations and effects, according to the varying circumstances of men, and in such new relations and connections as may give to it all the effect of novelty; while in its increasing influence over individual minds and in its gradual leavening and blessing of the human race, he would have rejoiced to think of it as the "gospel of progress." But in every degree in which progress meant transmutation he would have recoiled from every suggestion of novelty with the cry,

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ." He knew that beneath all the external and superficial varieties in man's condition, there ever lie the great wants of guilt, and sin, and unhappiness, which are common to the race, and that man no more needs another gospel than the human eye requires another sun. He had found it, in the experience of a most successful ministry, to be God's lever by which he moves the world. And just as Paul preached "Christ crucified" alike to the voluptuaries of Corinth, to the proud reasoners of Athens, and to the idolaters of Ephesus—alike to Lydia in the oratory, to the jailer in the prison, and to Agrippa on the judgment-seat—so, whatever the changing forms of opinion or the new phases of society, he put his confidence in this as the great healing power and the new life of the world. What is the finest music at the top of the dungeon, or the most beautiful and fragrant flowers dropped down to the poor prisoner who is struggling and sinking far beneath in the miry clay? If you would really show him kindness provide him with a rope and with strong hands that shall pull him up and set his feet upon the solid rock amid sunlight and liberty. In this light did the wants of man and the gospel of the grace of God relatively present themselves to Mr. Erskine's mind, and so he "preached Christ crucified."

(To be continued.)

Donald Macleod, Elder, Raasay.

DONALD MACLEOD (familiarily known as *Domhnall Bàn*) was born at Holman, Raasay and brought up at Dryharbour, Rona. Donald was the oldest of a family of nine, three sons and six daughters. Very early in life he proved that he was a fallen son of Adam and lived carelessly and quite unconcernedly about his soul's everlasting interests. He got married when quite a young man at the age of 28 years and was blessed in the providence of God with a large family of five sons and

three daughters. One of the sons (Alexander) died in Glasgow at the end of the Great War. Although Donald was not without hope regarding Alexander's soul's salvation, yet he and his family felt it a very severe blow in providence, but bore it both in patience and submission—the worthy man using the words of Job: “Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” At what age he was awakened to a realisation of his lost condition as a sinner before God we are not able to say, but it was sometime after he was married; when at the East Coast fishing he met with an accident by which he sustained a broken leg. The view Donald got of himself as a sinner before God was both real and deep. He was for a long time without rest, without sleep, and without peace, and could not even partake of any food, owing to the view he got of himself as a hell-deserving sinner before God. But in the Lord's good time, Donald's sadness was turned to dancing, and his sackcloth loos'd and he was girded with gladness by the Holy Spirit revealing Jesus Christ as an everlasting Saviour to his soul in the promise of the Word as it is in Hebrews, xiii. 5:—“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” There is no doubt but that Donald was a God-fearing man, and one would not be long in his company when he would feel that he loved the Lord, His Word, His people, and His cause. He was often at private prayer and like some others of the Lord's people left the marks of his knees on the hills and rocks of the Island of Rona pouring out his complaints before the Lord. When the Declaratory Act was passed, Donald had no doubt as to which party he would follow. He loved the Free Presbyterian Church, and prayed much for her prosperity. Donald had his own share of the troubles that afflict the just during his pilgrimage in the world. The inward corrupt nature in himself, and sin in the world around him gave him much sorrow. He had many sore temptations from the Adversary, but the Lord always gave him the victory through His Word, which Satan cannot withstand.

He suffered much on his death-bed; and on one occasion when asked by a friend if he had much pain, Donald's reply was; "It is nothing to what was suffered for me;" meaning what Christ suffered in his room and stead. Shortly before the end he was very weak and spoke very little but, we believe, his anchor was firmly fastened within the vail, and that being so, he was safe for an endless eternity. The last portion of Scripture he asked to be read to him was the 69th Psalm from the beginning. He passed away on the 12th March, 1933, at the age of 76 years. His mortal remains were laid to rest in the Old Cemetery, Raasay, to await the Second Coming of the Lord to judge the quick and the dead on the last day. He will then stand in his place.

"Then are they glad, because at rest
And quiet now they be:
So to the haven he them brings,
Which they desir'd to see,"

(Metrical Psalm cvii. 30.)

We desire to express our sincere sympathy with the widow and each member of the family in their bereavement. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon them!—John Nicolson.

Thoir Urram do d' Athair agus do d' Mhathair leis an Urramach Tomas Watson.

I.

[Bha na leanas air a sgrìobhadh leis an Urramach Tomas Watson a bha 'na mhinistear ann an Lunnainn. Chaidh a chuir a mach as a cho-thional anns a bhliadna, 1662, airson a dhìlseachd air taobh aobhar Dhé. 'Se duine urramach prìseil a bha ann an Tomas Watson, diadhaidh, iriosal agus fòghluimte, chan ann a mhàin le fòghlum litireil, ach leis an fhòghlum nach urrainn fuil no feòil a thoirt seachad; 'se sin ri ràdh leis an Spiorad Naomh, tre fhocal Dhé. Tha a' chuid so dheth na sgrìobhaidhean aige air a chòigeamh àithne Exod. xx. 12. "Thoir urram do d' athair agus do d' mhàthair chum agus gu m bi do laithean buan anns an fhearann tha an Tighearna do Dhia toirt dhuit"—Seumas MacLeoid.]

AIR dhomh bhi deiseil do chiad chlàr an lagha a mhineachadh, tha mi a nis dol a dh' ionnsaigh an dara clàr. Faodaidh na h-àithntean a bhi air an samhlachadh ri fàradh Iacoib; a'

cheud chlàr mar mhullach an fhàraidh a ruigheachd gu neamh, 's e sin thaobh Dhé; an dara clàr mar bhonn an fhàraidh a a' socrachadh air an talamh a thaobh uachdarain agus iochdarain. Leis a' cheud chlàr, tha sinn a' gluasad gu cràbhach a thaobh Dhé; agus a thaobh an dara clàr tha sinn ag gluasad gu cràbhach a thaobh dhaoine. Chan urrainn an duine a bhi gu math a thaobh a' cheud chlàr a tha ole a thaobh an dara clàr, "Thoir urram do d' athair agus do d' mhàthair," ann so an toiseach tha àithne "thoir urram;" 'san dara àite, an reuson co-cheangailte ris a sin, a chum agus gu' m bi do laithean buan anns an fhearann a tha an Tighearna do Dhia toirt dhuit.

I. An àithne—thoir urram do d' athair. Ceisd: Cò e a tha air a chiallachadh an so le "athair?" Freagradh: Tha an t-ainm athair air a ghabhail a stigh am móran de rathadan mar neach a bhuineas do eolas-riaghlaidh, daoine aosmhor, daoine ann an inbhe gu spioradail, duine crionna agus athair a thaobh na feòla.

1. An t-athair a bhuineas do eolas-riaghlaidh no an t-uachdaran. Is esan athair a dhùthaich; buinidh dha bhi 'na fhear cumail suas air stuamachd, agus 'na fear smachdachaidh air an ole, 'na athair do' n bhantrach agus do' n dilleachdan; b' amhlaidh mar sin a bha Iob 'na athair mar an Caib. xxix., 16. "Bha mi am athair do na bochdaibh; agus a' chùis nach b' aithne dhomh, rannsaich mi mach." Agus mar tha breitheamhan talmhaidh nan athraichean, agus gu h-àraidh an rìgh, a tha 'na cheann air na h-uachdarain, a tha 'na athair a bhuineas do eolas-riaghlaidh, (Political father), tha e air a shuidheachadh mar a tha ghrian am measg nan reultan as lugha. Abraidh an Sgriobtuir ri rìghrean—"athraichean." Isa. xlix, 23—"Agus bithidh rìghrean 'nan oideachan-altruim dhuit." Is coir dhaibh an iochdarain altrum ann an diadhachd, le reachdan agus laghannan matha, agus an arach ann an sìth agus ann an saoihbheas. Is amhluidh sin bha Daibhidh, Hesechia, Iosidh, Constantine, agus Theodosius 'nan oideachan-altruim do' n t-sluagh. Is sona an sluagh aig am bheil a leithid de oideachan-altruim a tha thoirt a leithid de chomhfhurtachan sòlasach

do 'n cloinn. Feumaidh urram a bhi air a thoirt do 'n leithid sin de athraichean; oir (1). Tha an t-àite a bhuineas dhaibh ag agradh urram. Shuidhich Dia a leithid sin de athraichean riaghlaidh air son gu'n gleidheadh iad riaghailt agus co-chòrdadh anns an rioghachd, agus gu bacadh a chuir air troimh-chéile a dh' fhaodadh eirigh anns an stàid (Breith. xvii. 6). An uair nach robh rìgh an Israel rinn gach fear a' ni sin a bha ceart 'na shùilean féin (Gnath. xxx. 27). (2). Shuidhich Dia rìghrean ann an ionadan-àrda ehum agus gu'n deanadh iad ceartas mar a tha claidheamh 'nan laimh, a chomharrachadh a mach an cumhachd, is amhlaidh sin a tha slait-shuaicheantas 'nan laimh 'na h-shamhladh air ceartas. Tha e air a ràdh mu Mhareus Aurelius an t-Iompaire, gu'n do chuir e air leth aon uair a' thìde gus an cluinneadh e gearan an dream a bha air an sàruchadh. Tha rìghrean a' suidheachadh breitheamhan mar cheruban mu n rìgh-chaithir air son a bhi comh-roinn ceartas. Tha urram ri thoirt do no h-athraichean—riaghlaidh so—"thoir urram do' n rìgh" (I. Pead. ii. 17). Agus tha an t-urram so ri bhi air a thaisbeanadh ann a bhi toirt urram dhaibh 'nam pearsachan agus gu sìobhalta a' striochdadh do 'n laghannan co fada agus a tha an laghannan a' còrdadh agus co-shìnte ri lagh Dhé. Feumar a bhi ag urnuigh air son rìghrean' oir is e sin pairt de 'n urram that sinn a toirt dhaibh, I. Tim. ii. 1, 2. "Tha mi ag iarraidh uime sin roimh na h-uile nithean gu'n deanar athchuinge, urnuighean, eader-ghuidhe, agus breth-buidheachais air son na h-uile dhaoine air son rìghrean agus air son na h-uile tha ann an ùghdarras ehum gu'n caith sinn ar beatha gu foisneach agus gu sìochail anns an uile dhiadhaich agus chiataich." Feumaidh sinn a bhi ag urnuigh air son rìghrean, gu' n deanadh urram a chuir orra ehum agus gu'm biodh iad 'nam beannaich agus mar an iochdarain, gu'm bitheraimaid a' sealbhachadh comhfhurtan sìosgeul na sìthe, agus sìth an t-soisgeil. Dé cho sona agus a bha rioghachadh Numa Pompilius 'n uair a bha na claidhean air an tionndadh gu coltair agus an uair a rinn an seilean a fhead ann an eilogad-einn an t-saighdeir!

2. Tha an seann athair a tha urramach air son seann aois, aig am bheil a chiabhan liatha air an samhlachadh ri fluraichean geala na craoibh almoìn. *Ecles. x. ii., 5.*

Tha athraichean ann air son an aois aig am bheil preasan na h-aois air am bathais agus air am bheil strìochan na seann aois ri fhaicinn air an gruaidh. Tha urram ri thoirt do na h-athraichean sin. *Lev. xix., 32.* “An lathair a chinn léith eiridh tu suas agus bheir thu urram do ghnais an duine aosda, agus bi eagal do Dhe ort, is mise an Tighearna.” Tha urram àraidh ri thoirt do na h-athraichean a tha ’nan athraichean chan e mhàin ann an aois, ach ann an diadhachd, aig am bheil an anaman fo bhlath na diadhachd ’n uair a bhios an cuirp a’ enàmh as. ’Se sealladh beannaichte a tha ann ri fhaicinn, earrach nan gras ann am foghar na seann aois-faicinn daoine cromadh a’ dh’ionnsuidh na h-uaigh gidheadh a’ gleidheadh fàile cùbhraidh an aideachaidh. ’S iad sin na daoine aig am bheil an cinn léith air an crùnadh le fireantachd agus a tha airidh air an tuilleadh urram; ’s tha urram ri thoirt dhaibh, chan ann a mhàin mar sheann innealan maiseach ach mar an ceudna mar eiseimpleire an air diadhachd. Ma chi thusa seann duine air am bheil eagal Dhe aig am bheil gràs a’ dealrachadh a mach an uair a tha grian na beatha nadurra dol fodha, O thoir onoir dha mar athair le bhi toirt urram dha agus a’ leantuinn eiseimpleir.

3. Tha athraichean spioradail ann mar a tha aodhairean agus teachdairean. Is iad sin innealan na h-ath-bhreith. *I. Cor. iv., 15.* Oir ged bhiodh deich mìle luchd-teagaisg agaibh ann an Crìosd, gidheadh chan ’eil agaibh mòran athraichean; oir ann an Iosa Crìosd, ghin mise sibh troimh ’n t-soisgeil. The urram ri bhi air a thoirt do na h-athraichean spioradail (1) a thaobh an dreuchd; ge b’e air bith ciamar tha am pearsachan, tha an dreuchd urramach. Is iad teachdairean Tighnearna nan sluagh. Tha iad nan luchd-foillsichidh air Dia féin (*II. Cor. v. 20*) “A nis is teachdairean sinne air son Chrìosd.”

Bha Iosa Crìosd de’n ghairm a bha so, bha obair agus ùghdarras air a son aige bho neamh (*Eoin viii. 18*), agus tha so a’ crùnadh

gairm dreuchd na ministrealachd le urram. (2) Is còir urram a thoirt do na ministearan sin a tha nan aithraichean spioradail, air sgath an obrach: tha iad a' teachd mar choluman le meanglan a' chroinn—ola nam beul, tha iad a' searmonachadh “deagh sgeòil na h-sithe:” is e an obair anaman a theàrnadh. Chan 'eil aig dreuchdan eile ach gnothach a dheanamh ri anaman dhaoine. Is e an obair, braighdean spioradail ath-cheannach, a thionndadh dhaoine o chumhachd Shatain gu Dia” Gn. 26, 18. Is e an obair solus a thoirt dhaibhsan a tha 'nan suidhe ann an sgaile a' bhais agus thoirt orra soillseachadh mar reultan ann an rioghachd neimh. Feumar urram a thoirt do na h-aithraichean spioradail sin air sgath an oibre agus is còir an urram so a' nochdadh an tri rathadan. (1). An a bhi toirt urram dhaibh (I. Tes. v. 12, 13).

Agus guidheamaid oirbh, a bhraithre, aithne bhi agaibh air an dream a tha saothrachadh 'n ur measg agus a tha os ur ceann 'san Tighearn agus a tha 'g ur comhlairleachadh. Agus meas mór a bhi agaibh dhiùbh ann an gradh air son an oibre. Bithibh sìochail 'n ur measg féin. Feumaidh mi aideachadh gu robh caithe-beatha maslach cuid de mhinistirean 'na aobhar oilbheim glé mhór agus rinn iad tareuis air iobairt an Tighearna (I. Sam. ii. 17). Ann an cuid de àitean de' n tir. B'éiginn do' n lobhar, a réir an lagha, a bhilean a bhi air an còmhach; bu choir do leithid a dhaoine agus a tha 'nan ainglean a réir an dreuchd, ach 'nan lobhair 'nan caithe-beatha am bilean a chòmhdach agus a bhi 'nan tosd. Ged nach 'eil cuid toltinneach air urram, gidheadh is còir urram a thoirt do na h-aithraichean spioradail tha dileas agus gur e gnìomh an caithe-beatha a bhi toirt anaman gu Crìosd. Thug Obadiah urram do' n fhaidh Eliah. I. Rìgh. xviii. 16. Carson a mheas Dia treubh Lebhi mar an ceud-ghin? Air. iii. 13. Carson a thug e òrdugh gu'n iarradh am Prionnsa comhairle o Dhia tre 'n t-shagart? Air. xxvii. 21. Carson a nochd an Tighearna le miorbhuil slat Aaroin fo bhlàth, gu'n do thagh e treubh Lebhi gu bhi 'nam ministirean 'na lathair? Carson a ghairm Crìosd a chuid abстал 'nan solus do' n t-saoghal?

Carson a their e ri uile mhinisteirean “feuch tha mi maille ribh gu deireadh an t-saoghail?” Direach air son gu'm biodh urram air a thoirt do na h-aithraichean spioradail sin. Anns an t-seann aimsir rinn na h-Eiphitich roghainn de na righrean o mheasg nan sagart. Is fhada bho 'n dream aig am bheil smuaintean aotrom mu 'n dream aig am bheil ughdarras anns an t-seirbhis naomha, agus tha frithealadh an lathair an Tighearna, an t-urram so a thaisbeanadh do na h-aithraichean spioradail. “Biodh aithne agaibh orrasan,” arsa an t-Abstol, a tha ri saothrachadh 'nur measg.” Is leoir le cuid aithne a bhi aca air anmhuinneachd mhinistearan agus gairdeachas a dheanamh 'n uair tha 'sam bith aca 'nan aghaidh, ach cha ghabh iad eòlas orra ann an seadh an abstoil, air eagal gum biodh aca ris an tuilleadh urram a thoirt dhaibh. Gu cinnteach, mur biodh a' mhinistrealachd ann, cha bhiodh fionlios ann, 'se bhiodh ann fásach; mur biodh a' mhinistrealachd cha bhiodh araon órdugh a' bhaistidh no na suipearach agaibh-bhiodh sibh mur luchd-àichaidh; “'s ann tre éisdeachd thig creidimh; agus ciamar a chluinneas iad gun searmonaiche (Rom. x. 14). (2). Thugaibh urram do na ministearan, na h-aithrichean spioradail, ann a bhi a 'tagradh air an son, ann a bhi sguabadh air falbh na sgainnealan agus cùl-chàineadh a tha gu mi-eucorach air an eur as an leth, I. Tim. v. 19. Bha rìgh Constantine toirt urram mór do'n mhinistrealachd-chuir e dìon orra; cha leughadh e na casaidean naimhdeil a tha air an toirt d' a ionnsuidh 'nan aghaidh, ach 'sann a chuireadh a iad anns an teine. Am bheil na ministearan a fosgladh am beoil ann an urnuigh ri Dis air do snon-sa agus am fosgladh am beoil ann an urnuigh ri Dia air do shon-sa agus am iad a saothrachadh air son thusa a ghleidhadh o dhol a dh 'ifrinn gu'm buineadh a dhuitsa bhi saothrachadh air son iadsan a saothrachadh air son t-anam-sa theàrnadh, bhuineadh e dhuitsa an cliu a choimhead. (3). Thoir urram dhaibh ann a bhi géilleadh dha' n teagasg. 'Se so an t-urram as mótha as urrainn dhuit a chuir ùmhlachd do 'n teagasg. Tha an neach sin a toirt urram do'n mhinistrealachd a tha, chan e mhàin 'na fhear

éisdeachd ach 'na fhear leantuinn an fhocail. Mar tha eas-umhlachd cur masladh as leth na mhinistrealachd, tha ùmhlachd ag cur urram orra. Tha an t-abstail ag rádh gur e na Tsalonianaich a chrùn, I. Tes. 2, 19.

Ciod crùn ar n-aobhneis? Nach e sibhse. 'Se e sluagh sin a tha soirbheachail, crùn a' mhinistair. An uair a tha cruth-atharradh air a dheanamh leis an Spiorad Naomh tha an gnìomh deanta, ach 'nuair a thig an sluagh a dh' éisdeachd an fhocail gu h-uabhbheach, agus a bhios iad air an irioslachadh, tha iad a tighinn gu talmhaidh, ach tha iad a' falbh gu spioradail, tha iad a' tighinn mar thàinig Naaman a dh' ionnsuidh Iordain 'na lobhair, ach tha iad a' falbh air an leigheas; tha so 'na onair do' n mhinistrealachd, II. Cor. 3, 1, "am bheil feum againn, mar aig dream àraidh, air litrichean molaidh?" Ged a dh' fheumadh ministearan eile litrichean-molaidh, gidheadh chan fheumadh Pòl a' h-aon oir, an uair a chluinneadh daoine ùmhlachd nan Corintianach air oibreachdh annta le searmonachadh an abstail, bu leòir so 'na theisteanas dhà, gu' n do bheannaich Dia a shaothair. Bha na Corintianaich 'nan onair mor gu leòir dhàsan-b' iadsan a theisteanas. Chan urrainn dhuibh onair as mó a thoirt do bhur n-athraichean spioradail, na bli a' soirbheachadh fo 'm ministrealachd agus a' beathachadh air na searmonan e shearmonaicheas iad.

Ri leantuinn.

Literary Notices.

SMALL BOOKS FOR THE CHILDREN.—Messes. John Ritchie, publishers, Kilmarnock, are issuing a series of booklets on Bible Animals and Birds at the remarkably cheap price of one penny. These booklets are well illustrated and call attention to what the Bible says about animals and birds mentioned in the sacred volume. Those in search of interesting reading for young children might find here something to meet their needs.

THE KING'S HIGHWAY by C. H. SPURGEON. Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis. Price, 1s. net.

This excellently produced and printed book of a few of the sermons of the famous Baptist preacher, C. H. Spurgeon, is a marvel of cheapness. The book contains seven sermons in Spurgeon's simple, attractive style. In this, the centenary of his birth, a number of the publishing houses are issuing some of his sermons and books and thus keeping his memory fresh and green.

Cumha do'n Urramach Niall Camshron le Niall Mac Phail. Glasgow: 27a Cadogan Street. Price 6d.

We have received a copy of the above from Mr. Macphail. The Lament reads well in Gaelic. It has a foreword by the Rev. James Macleod, Greenock, and an English translation by a friend. The Lament will make its appeal to many in the Church who can read Gaelic, especially to the St. Jude's congregation.

Notes and Comments.

Facts Contradicting Statements.—One hears time and again statements made which have such an air of probability that they are accepted by unthinking persons as if they were based on the solid rock of truth. But a careful examination of these statements often reveals that they are the fruit of ignorance and made by those who are greater simpletons than they get credit for. Take for instance the statement that Calvinism, because of its inculcation of the sovereignty of God, has enslaved the minds of men and destroyed the impulse of human effort. The whole facts of history give the lie to that statement for the nations that accepted Calvinistic teaching were foremost in the fight for civil and religious liberty. Again, it has been said the Bible, especially the Old Testament, because of its records of certain sins, etc., is not a suitable book to improve the morals of the people, especially, the young. Ask

the missionaries faced with the awful degradations of heathenism if that monstrous lie is true and they will tell you the Bible ever had a heavenly, uplifting effect upon those who received it. It is quite common now-a-days to say that those who seek to keep to God's laws are intolerant. Recently an Inverness hotel keeper expressed his fear of "the monster of intolerance." Who have been the most intolerant in the history of our country? Was it those who feared God or those who cared nothing for Him? History has answered that question with no uncertain voice. Believers in the sanctity of the Lord's Day have been described as kill-joys, apostles of gloom, and men who are out to crush all enjoyment in life. Let the real facts speak. Who are doing most to kill real joy and crush it out of human lives? Is it not those whose chief joys are like the crackling of thorns under a pot—whose greatest joys leave only useless ashes behind? Is this the joy of those who fear the Lord and seek to keep His commandments?

The Bible.—Some time ago Lord Raglan attacked the Old Testament as a book that should not be taught as it would familiarise people with acts of cruelty and inculcate lust for blood. Dr. Neatby answered him effectively in *The Christian*. "Many years ago," says Dr. Neatby, "Miss Gordon Cumming wrote a book entitled *At Home in Fiji*. In this she said: 'It is only forty years since the missionaries landed, and already they have won over to the new religion of peace and love upwards of a hundred thousand ferocious cannibals.' And what was the mighty weapon in their miracle-working hands? The Bible. Not a truncated or expurgated Bible, but *the Bible*. In the autobiography of Dr. John G. Paton, the Apostle of the New Hebrides, a book that may be commended to any who doubt the beneficent power of the Bible and the Christian faith, there is an unforgettable passage in which Dr. Paton describes his first communion service on Aniwa, the island that he won for Christ: 'At the moment when I put the bread and wine into those dark hands, once stained with the blood of cannibalism, but now stretched out to receive and

partake the emblems and seals of the Redeemer's love, I had a foretaste of the joy of glory that well-nigh broke my heart to pieces.' And the instrument of his mighty achievement in changing violent and bloody cannibals into kind and gentle Christians was *the Bible*, whole and undivided. Lord Raglan may make his mind easy. The Bible will do the children no harm. It will never be a will-o'-the-wisp to turn aside the rising generation into the bogs of ruthless violence and the lust of blood; but it will be, as for nineteen centuries it has been, a lamp to the feet and a light to the path, guiding them into those paths of righteous peace that shine more and more unto the perfect day."

An Extraordinary Decision. — This decision recently announced by the Traffic Commissioners gives permission to bus companies to run excursions on the Sabbath. All the northern counties, viz., Nairn, Inverness, Ross, Sutherland and Caithness, sent in objections to the running of these buses on the Lord's Day. It is true that Caithness weakened its position by saying that they were willing to allow local companies to run excursions on the Sabbath but they objected to outside companies invading the County with excursionists on the Lord's Day. Mr. Riches, in announcing the decision of the Commissioners, must surely have felt the need for his apologia for the decision of the Commissioners that the services of the excursion Sabbath buses were "desirable or necessary in the public interest." The County Councils have the right of appeal to the Minister of Transport. The decision from that quarter may be taken for granted but that, we trust, will not be the end of the matter.

A Criticism of the foregoing Decision from an Unexpected Quarter.—There are important questions involved in the decision of the Traffic Commissioners. From an unexpected quarter—the *Evening News* (Glasgow)—we cull the following comments: "It would be difficult to say just how far the official objections represented majority opinion among the people of these counties, but the assumption must be that the objectors

did speak for the bulk of their constituents. If so, we have here a case in which an unwelcome invasion is being thrust upon a considerable section of the community by force of an alien law; one in which external opinion is backed by the force of that law; and one by which the civil law overrides scruples essentially religious. . . . The objectors may still appeal to the Minister of Transport, but the validity of the religious objection is no more likely to be recognised in that quarter than by the Commissioners on the spot.

We may think what we please about what is called Sabbatarianism, but we cannot deny that the objectors are left with a grievance. The Act speaks of 'public interest,' but are the public interests of the five counties not as great as those of the 'Sunday' invaders? And must religion always bow to the law?" We quote this comment not because we regard the general attitude of the *Evening News* on the Sabbath question as praiseworthy but to show that in circles not recognised as strictly Sabbatarian there is the recognition that conscientious religious opinions are being over-ridden with a high hand.

Roman Catholic Population in Scotland.—The *Spectator* (Dec. 22, 1933) gives a conspicuous place, says the *Bulwark*, to an article on the Roman Church in Scotland, by T. B. Simpson. He points out that the population of Scotland to-day is about 4½ millions, and that the Roman Catholics, according to the estimate of their Archbishop Mackintosh, of Glasgow, number between 550,000 and 600,000. Scotland, of course, is predominantly Presbyterian by profession. The Church of Scotland has 1,280,514 communicants, 370,125 Sabbath School pupils, and 2720 charges. But the Romanist population in the industrial centres is growing. In all Scotland there are between 700 and 800 priests. In Glasgow and neighbourhood, the *Spectator* remarks, the names of priests tell their own tale, there being "numerous Bradys, Boyles, Doyleys, Kellys, Murphys, Sweeneys, with O's and Me's of every variety." There are in Scotland 450 chapels, 273 missions, 88 religious houses, and 219 congregational schools. There were 13,705

confirmations in 1930, 19,249 in 1931, of which 9,341 took place in the Glasgow archiepiscopate. We trust the prophecy of the writer in the *Spectator* will fail of fulfilment, where he says: "In another generation it is anticipated that (Roman) Catholic voters will actually be in the majority in Glasgow."

Scottish Protestant Ratepayers Helping the Church of Rome.—Mr. Daniel Barker, J.P., ex-Provost of Stirling, who has kept himself well informed on the Scottish Education question, has written to the *Glasgow Herald* (Jan. 17) on the unfairness of the Scottish Education Act of 1918. He says the Roman Catholic schools before this Act received grants from the National Exchequer which very often enabled the schools to be run practically free of cost to the Roman Catholic authorities. "I have had correspondence," Mr. Barker writes, "with the Secretary of State for Scotland on this very point. In order to compare the expenditure made by voluntary school managers prior to the passing of the 1918 Act with the expenditure made by Education Authorities as a result of the transfer to them of the voluntary schools, I asked him to give me a note of the amount expended on teachers' salaries (which form the largest part of educational expenditure), and this is the information I obtained:—'The total expenditure on salaries of teachers in voluntary schools conducted under the day-school code in 1918 was £335,052. It may be taken that, roughly, £300,000 will represent the proportion applicable to Roman Catholic schools. The teachers' salary bill for the year ending March 31, 1932, for the transferred Roman Catholic schools, is estimated approximately at £822,000.' Now, it is from these and other figures that it is ascertained that the sum of £2,500,000 is spent annually in carrying out the conditions of Section 18 of the Act. It is mounting up to such an extent that out of an annual grant of £6,000,000 the whole will soon be swallowed up by the Roman Catholic demands." Mr. Barker says that "the Roman Catholic teachers, previous to 1918, were on starvation wages, and most of the Roman Catholic schools were in a condition of slumdom. Yet, when the Education Authorities

had to purchase these schools they were compelled to pay most exorbitant prices, while huge rents had to be paid for such schools as were leased." Section 18 of the 1918 Education Act must be repealed, Mr. Barker maintains, "if Scotland is to regain her nationality." He adds an interesting piece of information about the Churches and the 1918 Act: "I wrote," he says, "to the Clerks of the Assemblies in Edinburgh, asking for information as to what action the Assemblies in 1918 took regarding Section 18 when the Bill was before the country, and I received a reply stating that no action was mentioned in the Assembly records as having been taken either by the Church of Scotland or by the United Free Church of Scotland." In 1918, of course, the Great War swallowed up other interests, but the neglect of the Churches in the matter of that Act is being smartly paid for, and to get relief now will be like removing a mountain. Nevertheless, justice and fair play demand legislative remedy.—*Bulwark.*

Church Notes.

Communions.—March—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Portree and Ness; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie and North Tolsta. April—First Sabbath, Stoer, Portnalong; second, Lochgilphead; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick. May—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Dumbarton; third, Edinburgh. June—First Sabbath, Applecross, Tarbert (Harris), Coigach; second, Shildaig; third, Helmsdale, Lochcarron, Glendale and Dornoch; fourth, Gairloch and Inverness.

To Conveners of Standing Committees of the Synod.—Conveners are reminded that by last Synod's finding these reports are to be in the hands of the Clerk of Synod not less than one calendar month before meeting of Synod so that they may be printed and issued with the agenda.

To Whom it may concern.—Our General Treasurer has suggested that a reminder be inserted in the Magazine that acknowledgments of contributions, etc., to congregational funds

are *not*, according to a Synod finding, to be inserted in the Magazine. This is considered necessary in view of the fact that of late this rule is being overlooked. The Synod's finding does not apply to anonymous contributions to congregational funds nor to money received for congregational building funds.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—Mrs. C. F., Kirkbuddo, Forfar, 15s; Mrs H. N., Fort William, Ontario, 11s 7d; A Perthshire Adherent, £1; Miss M. G., Aviemore, 12s.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—Mrs McD., Westminster, Orange Free State, South Africa, 16s; A Perthshire Adherent, 15s; J. McL., Loon River, Sask., Canada, 11s 6d; Miss M. G., Aviemore, 8s; "M," Lochinver, £1; Anon, Comrie, £1; A Friend, Gairloch, 14s; B. K. T., £2; Mrs C., Maryhill, Glasgow, per Mr D. Young, 8 Ardgowan Terrace, £1; Anon, Lochinver postmark, 10s; Vancouver Congregation, 1st Collection of the year, £10; Vancouver Sabbath School, £10, per Mr Hugh Mackay.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' and Widows' and Orphans' Fund.—A Perthshire Adherent, 5s.

College Fund.—A Perthshire Adherent, 5s.

General Building Fund.—Mrs I. M., Dalchreichart, Glenmoriston, 10s.

Home Mission Fund.—Perthshire Adherent, 5s.

Colonial Mission.—Perthshire Adherent, 5s.

Organisation Fund.—Perthshire Adherent, 5s; Mr H. Mackay, Vancouver—balance of Deputy's expenses, £40.

Winnipeg Church Fund.—Rev. E. M., Inverness, 10s.

The following lists have been sent in for publication:—

Applecross Manse Building Fund.—Mr John MacAulay, Missionary, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Two Well-wishers, Glasgow, £1; J. McL., Vancouver, \$5; Collecting Card, Staffin Congregation, £12 13s. The following per Mr M. Gillanders:—Rev. D. M. M., Portree, £1; Friend, Skye, 10s; A. G., Dingwall, 10s; Collecting Card, per Miss Gordon, Innes Street, Inverness, £3 1s.

Islivig and Breanish (Stornoway) Mission House Fund.—Rev. R. McInnes, Uig, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following

donations:—Mrs M. M., Applecross, 10s; Miss M. McL., Glenmoriston, 10s.

Tallisker (Skye) Manse Building Fund.—Mr James R. MacRae, Carbost, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following—Mrs McD., Portree, 10s; Mrs M., Portree, 4s; J. McL., 6 Fiscovaig, 10s, per Mr J. McIntyre.

Uig (Stornoway) Manse Building Fund.—Rev. R. McInnes, Uig, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Mrs McD., Stoney Field, £2; Mrs K. McL., 18 Breasclete, 10s; N. M., 37 Breasclete, 10s.

Wick Manse Purchase Fund.—Rev. R. R. Sinclair, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Friend, Stornoway, 5s; Collecting Card, per Mr Jas. Adamson, Helmsdale, £3 3s 6d.

South African Mission—Clothing Fund.—Mrs Miller, 7 West Banks Terrace, Wick, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—A. M., Inverness, 2s 6d; Isaiah, 58-7, 5s; Eccles, 9-10, 5s; M. A. McP., for little boy who led blind woman to Mission, 5s.

The Magazine.

3s 9d Subscriptions.—M. Gillanders, Applecross; J. McLeod, Loon River, Saskatoon; Grigor Kemp, East Brae, Cullicudden; E. Ross, Viewhill, Milton, Kildary; Miss Mary R. McLeod, 24 Queensberry Street, Boston; J. MacKenzie, Ronti, Casper, Wyoming; Miss E. Mackay, 116 High Street, Grantown; Miss J. MacKinnon, School House, St. Fillans; Rev. D. R. Macdonald, F. P. Manse, Tarbert, Harris.

Other Subscriptions.—J. Thomson, 3 Skigersta, Ness, 4s 9d; A. S. Hunter, Killen, Avoch, 10s; Capt. D. McIsaac, 18 Cardigan Terrace, Newcastle, 4s; Mrs Fraser, Kirkbuddo, Forfar, 5s; Miss M. Martin, Scarista School, S. Harris, 7s 6d; Mrs Begg, Tiumpan Head Lighthouse, Portnaguran, 10s; John Morrison, 7 Habost, Ness, 8s; Mrs N. Macdonald, 7 Skigersta, Ness, 5s; H. Vertican, 8 Ellesmere Avenue, Sutton Ings, Hull, 5s; Donald Livingstone, Milton, Applecross, 5s; Mrs Ross, Blairbuie, Achiltibuie, 7s 6d; Don. Livingstone, Milton, Applecross, 5s; Miss B. McLeod, 71 Pinckney Street, Boston, 16s 3d; J. Ross, 1174 Dominion Street, Winnipeg, 3s 10d; Ken. McLeod, The Gardens, Raasay, 10s; Mrs Campbell, per J. R. Paterson, Altnacealgach, 10s; Mrs H. McKenzie, Linnie Rannoch, Ullapool, 7s; Miss E. Stewart, Linnie Rannoch, Ullapool, 7s; Miss M. MacKinnon, Gillin, Waternish, 7s 6d; Mrs Macdougall, Madresfield, Westminster, Orange Free State, South Africa, 4s.

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