

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
 AND
 MONTHLY RECORD

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

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

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THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and MONTHLY RECORD.

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Building the Walls of Jerusalem.

IN an earlier issue of the Magazine (vol. xxxvi. 401) we have called attention to Nehemiah's great and successful work in building the wall of Jerusalem but as the inspired narrative contains many points fitted for instruction we make no apology for returning to the discussion of a subject that must always be of interest to the Church of Christ. In doing so we purpose to call attention i. to the character of the man who, under divine encouragement, was entrusted with the work and who was honoured in seeing it successfully carried through; ii. to the opposition with which Nehemiah was faced and iii. to the success with which he carried through the work.

i. The man entrusted with the work of building the wall was Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. At the time the account of his work begins he was cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, the Persian king. News had been brought to Nehemiah by his brother, Hanani, of the "great affliction" of the remnant left in Jerusalem after the captivity. He was also told that "the wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire." The news caused him great sadness—he sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven. This sadness was noticed by the king and he was quick enough to discern that it was "sadness of heart." His sorrow for the low state of the Lord's cause had gone much deeper than the tip of his tongue or the point of his pen as is so often the case with many of us. Nehemiah

was not indifferent to what should become of that cause. In his approaches to God he confessed the sins of his people and pled for them—"these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand." He did not spend his time saying that it was no wonder that things were as they were—the love that was in his heart to the Lord's cause kept him from fault finding—his innermost desire was to see it raised from the ruins that met his eye. This feature of his character of betaking himself to God in his sorrow, difficulties, and perplexities is one of the outstanding characteristics of this God-fearing and courageous Jew. Joined to this he had a very wholesome practical outlook on things. It is not often the two are so prominently combined as we have them in Nehemiah. Some good men are conspicuous by their prayerfulness but may be sadly lacking in a practical outlook. Others again may have this outlook but are lacking in prayerfulness. When the two are joined together they make handsome yoke-fellows in God's work. The three features of Nehemiah's character, love to the Lord's cause, prayerfulness, and his practical outlook, all went to equip him for the arduous task that lay before him in building the wall of Jerusalem and setting up the gates. The broken wall caused Nehemiah grief and he set about to repair the wall. Jerusalem without its wall was exposed to every wanderer that might come the way and the people in the city were liable to be attacked and maltreated by such intruders. Nehemiah's purpose was to build the wall so that those whom God had redeemed by His great power (Neh. i. 10) might be protected. The wall was not only necessary to protect those who were within but it acted as a barrier to the inroads of those who were without who had no part or lot in the Holy City. The gates were set up so that those who desired to enter in might present their credentials and those who were discontented could walk out. The gates were as necessary as the wall and Nehemiah saw to it that the work was not left unfinished until the wall and gates were set up. This is an

interesting part of our subject and has far reaching applications but we cannot dwell on it further at present.

ii. Opposition to the building of the wall. As long as the wall was in ruins there was no opposition and likely there would be none though it lay in that state for three or four hundred years but the moment intelligence of building reached the ears of those who had no love to the Lord's cause a determined and bitter opposition manifested itself. Why is it that whenever work is being done in strengthening or extending God's cause in this world there is such formidable opposition? Perhaps that will never be fully revealed until the secrets of all men's hearts are revealed on the Great Day. What was their motive in attacking God's cause? Well in this case we are told that when Sanballat and Tobiah heard that there was a man come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel it "grieved them exceedingly." Their sorrow was of a very different kind from Nehemiah's. When at length the work was undertaken the enemies increased in number and they laughed Nehemiah and the builders to scorn and circulated lies insinuating that they intended to rebel. Nehemiah was quick enough to see through their thinly disguised attempts and laid his finger unerringly on the plague-spot in the heart of the enemies of God's cause—"ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem." As the work proceeded the wrath of the enemies increased in intensity and they then resorted to mockery. The part of the scoffer in Satan's army is an important one—they are his standard-bearers, or to use a modern term, the shock troops of the devil and there is more hope for the most abandoned than for them. Opposition to God's cause is bad enough but when it comes to scoffing and mockery a stage is reached that must give peculiar delight to the devils in hell. The enemies next tried the favourite plan of detractors of belittling the work that was done—the wall was so slender that even a fox walking on it would break it down. It was quite strong enough, however, to keep out of Jerusalem such foxes as Sanballat, Tobiah,

Geshem and the Ashdodites. Christ's cause never stood high in the estimation of the world and it need not be wondered at when it is belittled by men. The enemies next made up their minds, by a secret plot, to use force against the builders but in this they were circumvented and the builders continued the work now with a sword by their side and a trowel in their hands. Strange builders! but nevertheless properly equipped for the work they had to do. When the enemies failed in this plot they cunningly asked Nehemiah to have a conference with them in the plain of Ono. Nehemiah's reply was short and to the point: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease, whilst I leave it and come down to you?" This rebuff was followed on the part of the enemies by lying charges (Neh. vi. 5-7). It is impossible to forestall Satan for truth is nothing to him and the unfortunate thing is that sometimes the lie is so cleverly camouflaged that it is swallowed without the slightest hesitation. It is a dangerous thing when the professing Church so far forgets her mission in the world as to leave her work and hold a conference with the world.

iii. The success with which Nehemiah carried through the work. The opposition we have seen was of a formidable nature; it did not cease in a day; neither was it confined to one quarter; neither did the enemies hesitate to use mockery and falsehood to further their unholy purpose but in all their efforts they failed and Nehemiah could say after they had done their very worst—"so the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul." Nehemiah, who so courageously went on with the work, was not beyond feeling the jibes and the sneers of his enemies but he came with his trials to God. At first thought one might think that one repulse of the enemies would have disheartened them but it was not so. How often it happens that it is God's people that are discouraged and cast down while the enemies of His cause hold their heads high as if all is going well with them but the day is coming as surely as it did

in Jerusalem of old that the wall will be built and all the efforts of Christ's enemies will be frustrated. The story of Nehemiah is of lasting interest to Christ's Church. Many are too ready to come to the conclusion that trials and difficulties connected with His cause are sure signs of Heaven's displeasure and manifest tokens of His judgments. That is an opinion that may, at times, be very seriously at fault for not once or twice in the Church's history has it happened that the Church in bearing its testimony against the world has awakened its latent enmity to a white heat.

The thoughts embodied in the foregoing were suggested to our mind in the experience through which our Church recently passed in the press. It is evident from the attacks made upon us that a favourite idol of the world was badly hit and the world was determined to defend its idol however careless of the weapons it would use.

The increasing Observance of Christmas in Scotland.*

YEAR after year Presbyterian Scotland is gradually but surely adopting the customs and the religious festival days of her more powerful neighbour in the South. Some of these customs may be innocent enough, but it is quite different with others, such as a loose view of the sanctity of the Lord's Day. Alongside this there is an extraordinary readiness on the part of Presbyterians to adopt such festival days as Christmas and Easter. These have a place in the Church calendar, and are more or less devoutly observed by many, but by the great bulk these days are set aside for pleasure and amusement. Presbyterian Scotland at the First and the Second Reformations set

*In view of the increasing observance of Christmas in Scotland we are reprinting this article which appeared in vol. xxxii. p. 291 of the Magazine.—*Editor.*

its face sternly against the observance of these so-called holy days.

In the First Book of Discipline the Scottish Reformers, under the first head of Doctrine, say:—"Seeing that Jesus Christ is He whom the Father has commanded only to be heard, and followed of His sheep, we urge it necessary that the Evangel be truly and openly preached in every Kirk and Assembly of this Realm; and all doctrine repugnant to the same be utterly suppressed as damnable to man's salvation." They then state what they mean by preaching this Evangel and what they understand by the contrary doctrine, viz.:—"Whatsoever men, by laws, counsels, or constitutions, have imposed upon the consciences of men, without the expressed commandment of God's Word; such as the vows of chastity . . . keeping of holy days of certain saints commanded by man, such as be all those that the Papists have invented, as the Feasts (as they term them) of Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany, Purification, and other fond feasts of Our Lady" (Knox's Works, II., 185-6). At their 17th session the famous Glasgow Assembly (1638) confirmed this view, and decreed that these Feasts "be utterly abolished, because they are neither commanded nor warranted by Scripture." In their Act reference is made to Assembly decisions on these Festivals (Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, p. 19). In 1566 (25th December) the General Assembly, while giving its approval to the Second Helvetic Confession, disapproved of "days dedicated to Christ." In the letter sent to Beza it is not only said that such festivals as Christmas, Circumcision, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, that they "at the present time obtain no place among us," but that they "dare not religiously celebrate any other feast day than what the divine oracles have prescribed." In the Directory for Public Worship, in the Appendix touching Days and Places for Public Worship, it is laid down as a rule:—"There is no day commanded in Scripture to be kept holy under the Gospel but the Lord's Day,

which is the Christian Sabbath. Festival days, vulgarly called Holy-days, having no warrant in the Word of God, are not to be continued." The General Assembly in 1645 passed a stringent "Act for censuring the observers of Yule-day and other superstitious days, especially if they be scholars," giving as their reason "the manifold abuses, profanity and superstitions," committed on these days. So great was the opposition to the observance of Christmas in Scotland in the eighteenth century that when a law was passed in Queen Anne's time repealing a law which forbade the Court of Session a "Yule vacance," it raised quite a storm of indignation.

We believe our forefathers acted rightly in this matter. And those who are again introducing the observance of Christmas into Scotland have neither Scripture nor history on their side. One will search the New Testament in vain for a command to keep the birthday of the Lord Jesus Christ sacred. It was certainly a momentous day for the world, but His advent, wonderful though it was, would not have saved sinners. It is His death and resurrection that brought everlasting hope to sinners, and the Church of God has her holy day in the Christian Sabbath as commemorative of His resurrection from the dead. If God asked men to observe Christmas and Easter they would flout His command just as they are doing the Sabbath, but because He has not asked them to do so they become a law unto themselves. The manner in which Christmas is observed in England, with its religious services, followed too often by revelry and the observance of customs handed down from pagan times, ought to make serious-minded Scottish Presbyterians ponder as to whether such a way of observing this Church festival commends itself to them as in accordance with the fitness of things.

Dr. Maclean, Bishop of Caithness and Moray (now Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church), an authority on the early Church festivals, says that Christmas was probably unknown until nearly A.D. 300. That admission by a Scottish Episcopalian

prelate is of great significance. This opinion is confirmed by Professor Kirsopp Lake in his article in Hasting's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (III., 601). As to the two dates, 25th December and 6th January, on which Christmas was observed, Duchesne suggests that the former date was observed by the Western or Latin Church, while the latter was observed by the Eastern or Greek Church. Why was the 25th December chosen as the date for this festival? Sir William Ramsay has shown that the birth of the Redeemer could scarcely be on the 25th December, as it was not a time suitable for the shepherds to be out with their flocks in the fields. Apart from this, the Gospels throw no light on the day or month of the Redeemer's birth. Why, then, was the 25th December fixed on? Professor Kirsopp Lake quite candidly admits that it was owing to the Church wishing to distract the attention of Christians from the old heathen festivals that December 25th, the *dies natalis solis invicti* (birthday of the unconquerable sun) was fixed on. Our author, while making this admission, maintains that the commonly accepted view that Christmas was intended to replace the Roman "Saturnalia" is not tenable. This feast was celebrated on 17th-24th December. Some of the customs are thus described:—"Gambling with dice, at other times illegal, was now permitted and practised. All classes exchanged gifts, the commonest being wax tapers and clay dolls. These dolls were especially given to children." It must, therefore, be conceded that if the "Saturnalia" were not replaced by Christmas, that it certainly took over with its observance a great deal of the pagan tomfoolery that characterised the "Saturnalia." This accounts for many of the customs observed at Christmas. Many of the other customs observed in England and now followed in Scotland are traceable to distinctly pagan Norse influences.

The observance of Christmas as a religious festival, then, has (1) no warrant from Scripture. (2) There is no warrant for the 25th December being the birthday of the Redeemer. (3) Its observance was not known until the fourth century.

(4) It replaced a heathen festival and retains in many of its customs its connection with the day following the Roman "Saturnalia." Why Presbyterians should be so keen to observe such a day, therefore, can only be accounted for on the ground that men are always determined to add something in religious observances that God never asked for nor commanded.

The Progress of Grace in the Soul.

BY THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

[The following extract is from the Rev. John Newton's letter, written in reply to a friend, who had asked his views of a progressive work of grace, in the several stages of a believer's experience. Newton bases his views on Mark IV, 28, dividing his exposition into three parts, (1) Grace in the Blade, which he also terms "A," (2) Grace in the Ear, which he calls "B," and (3) Grace in the full corn or "C." The following are his views on the second stage.—J. P. M.]

Grace in the Ear. Mark IV, 28.

"**T**HE manner of the Lord's work in the hearts of His people is not easily traced, though the fact is certain, and the evidence demonstrable from Scripture. In attempting to explain it, we can only speak in general, and are at a loss to form such a description as shall take in the immense variety of cases which occur in the experience of believers. I have already attempted such a general delineation of a young convert, under the character of 'A,' and am now to speak of him by the name of 'B.'

This state I suppose to commence when the soul, after an interchange of hopes and fears, according to the different frames it passes through, is brought to rest in Jesus, by a spiritual apprehension of His complete suitableness and sufficiency, as the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of all who trust in Him, and is enabled, by an appropriating faith, to say, 'He is mine, and I am His,' There are various degrees of this persuasion: it is of a growing nature, and is capable of increase so long as we remain in this world. I call it assurance, when

it arises from a simple view of the grace and glory of the Saviour, independent of our sensible frames and feelings, so as to enable us to answer all objections from unbelief and Satan with the Apostle's words, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again; Who is even at the right hand of God; Who also maketh intercession for us.' (Rom. viii, 34.) This, in my judgment, does not belong to the essence of faith, so that 'B' should be deemed more truly a believer than 'A,' but to the establishment of faith. And now faith is stronger, it has more to grapple with. I think the characteristic of the state of 'A' is desire, and of 'B' is conflict. Not that 'B's' desires have subsided, or that 'A' was a stranger to conflict; but as there was a sensible eagerness and keenness in 'A's' desires, which, perhaps, is seldom known to be equally strong afterwards, so there are usually trials and exercises in 'B's' experience, something different in their kind and sharper in their measure than what 'A' was exposed to, or indeed had strength to endure. 'A,' like Israel, has been delivered from Egypt by a great power and a stretched-out arm,—has been pursued and terrified by many enemies,—has given himself up for lost again and again. He has at last seen his enemies destroyed, and has sung the song of Moses and the Lamb upon the banks of the Red Sea. Then he commences 'B.' Perhaps, like Israel, he thinks his difficulties are at an end, and expects to go on rejoicing till he enters the promised land. But, alas! his difficulties are in a manner but beginning: he has a wilderness before him, of which he is not aware. The Lord is now about to suit his dispensations to humble and to prove him, and to show him what is in his heart, that He may do him good at the latter end, and that all the glory may redound to His own free grace.

Since the Lord hates and abhors sin, and teaches His people whom He loves to hate it likewise, it might seem desirable (and all things are equally easy to Him) that at the same time they are delivered from the guilt and reigning power of sin, they

should likewise be perfectly freed from the defilement of indwelling sin, and be made fully conformable to Him at once. His wisdom has, however, appointed otherwise. But from the above premises of His hatred of sin, and His love to His people, I think we may certainly conclude that He would not suffer sin to remain in them, if He did not purpose to overrule it for the fuller manifestation of the glory of His grace and wisdom, and for the making of His salvation more precious to their souls. It is however His command, and therefore their duty: yea, further, from the new nature He has given them, it is their desire to watch and strive against sin; and to propose the mortification of the whole body of sin, and the advancement of sanctification in their hearts, as their great and constant aim, to which they are to have an habitual persevering regard. Upon this plan 'B' sets out. The knowledge of our acceptance with God and of our everlasting security in Christ, has in itself the same tendency upon earth as it will have in Heaven, and would, in proportion to the degree of evidence and clearness, produce the same effects, of continual love, joy, peace, gratitude and praise if there was nothing to counteract it. But 'B' is not all spirit. A depraved nature still cleaves to him, and he has the seeds of every natural corruption yet remaining in his heart. He lives likewise in a world that is full of snares, and occasions suited to draw forth those corruptions; and he is surrounded by invisible spiritual enemies, the extent of whose power and subtlety he is yet to learn by painful experience. 'B' knows, in general, the nature of his Christian warfare, and sees his right to live upon Jesus for righteousness and strength. He is not unwilling to endure hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; and believes that though he may be sore thrust at, that he may fall, the Lord will be his stay. He knows that his heart is 'deceitful and desperately wicked'; but he does not, he cannot know at first, the full meaning of that expression. Yet it is for the Lord's glory, and will in the end make His grace and love still more precious, that 'B' should find new and mortifying proofs of an

evil nature as he goes on, such as he could not once have believed, had they been foretold to him, as in the case of Peter, (Mark xiv, 29) and, in effect, the abominations of the heart do not appear in their full strength and aggravation, but in the case of one who, like 'B,' has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and rejoiced in His salvation. The exceeding sinfulness of sin is manifested, not so much by its breaking through the restraints of threatenings and commands, as by its being capable of acting against light and against love. Thus it was with Hezekiah. He had been a faithful and zealous servant of the Lord for many years; but I suppose he knew more of God and of himself in the time of his sickness than he had ever done before. The Lord, who had signally defended him from Sennacherib, was pleased likewise to raise him from the borders of the grave by a miracle, and prolonged the time of his life in answer to prayer. It is plain from the song which he penned upon his recovery, that he was greatly affected by the mercies he had received; yet still there was something in his heart, which he knew not, and which it was for the Lord's glory he should be made sensible of, and therefore He was pleased to leave him to himself. It is the only instance in which he is said to have been left to himself, and the only instance in which his conduct is condemned. I apprehend that in the state of 'B,' that is, for a season after we have known the Lord, we have usually the most sensible and distressing experience of our evil natures. I do not say that it should be necessary that we should be left to fall into gross outward sin, in order to know what is in our hearts; though I believe many have thus fallen, whose hearts, under a former sense of redeeming love, have been as truly set against sin as the hearts of others who have been preserved from such outward falls. The Lord makes some of His children examples and warnings to others, as He pleases. They who are spared, and whose worst deviations are only known to the Lord and themselves, have great reason to be thankful. I am sure I have; the merciful Lord has not suffered me to make any considerable

blot in my profession during the time I have been numbered amongst His people. But I have nothing to boast herein. It has not been owing to my wisdom, watchfulness, or spirituality, though in the main He has not suffered me to live in the neglect of His appointed means. But I hope to go softly all my days under the remembrance of many things, for which I have as great cause to be abased before Him, as if I had been left to sin grievously in the sight of men. Yet, with respect to my acceptance in the Beloved, I know not if I have had a doubt of a quarter of an hour's continuance for many years past. But, oh! the multiplied instances of stupidity, ingratitude, impatience, and rebellion, to which my conscience has been witness! and, as every heart knows its own bitterness, I have generally heard the like complaints from others of the Lord's people with whom I have conversed, even from those who have appeared to be eminently gracious and spiritual. 'B' does not meet with these things perhaps at first, nor every day. The Lord appoints occasions and turns in life which try our spirits. There are peculiar seasons when temptations are suited to our frames, tempers, and situations; and there are times when He is pleased to withdraw, and to permit Satan's approach, that we may feel how vile we are in ourselves. We are prone to spiritual pride, to self-dependence, to vain confidence, to creature attachments, and to a train of evils. The Lord often discovers to us one sinful disposition by exposing us to another. He sometimes shows us what He can do for us and in us; and at other times how little we can do, and how unable we are to stand without Him. By a variety of these exercises, through the overruling and edifying influences of the Holy Spirit, 'B' is trained up in a growing knowledge of himself and of the Lord. He learns to be more distrustful of his own heart, and to suspect a snare in every step he takes. The dark and disconsolate hours which he has brought upon himself in times past, make him doubly prize the light of God's countenance, and teach him to dread whatever might grieve the Spirit of God, and cause Him to withdraw again.

The repeated and multiplied pardons which he has received, increase his admiration of, and his sense of obligations to, the rich sovereign abounding mercy of the Covenant. Much has been forgiven him; therefore he loves much, and therefore he knows how to forgive and to pity others. He does not call evil good or good evil; but his own experience teaches him tenderness and forbearance. He experiences a spirit of meekness towards those who are overtaken in a fault; and his attempts to restore such are according to the pattern of the Lord's dealings with himself. In a word, 'B's' character, in my judgment, is complete, and he becomes a 'C' when the habitable frame of his heart answers to Ezekiel, chap. xvi, 63: 'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, (to boast, complain, or censure) because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.'

Conversion of a Digger of Wells in the Sahara.*

MAMADON KEITA was a well-digger in the Sahara. He heard the gospel for the first time in Timbuctoo. He was a Malinke, a fetishist, at first, and his father, a fiery old warrior, was a man of blood, who would kill on the slightest provocation. He once paid a big price for a number of talismans to a Moslem teacher, and, in order to possess himself of all the talismans, that no one might buy similar ones, he waylaid the Moslem and killed him. Later when the French forces occupied his town, he refused to submit with the others. For this he was thrown into prison and was shot for his obstinacy.

After the shooting of his father, Mamadon and his mother removed to live elsewhere. There he went to a Government

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Editor.

school and learned to read French. He got work as a conductor on a train, but quickly tired of the job, ran off, and became a foreman of a well-digging outfit in the desert. He worked along the dangerous edge of the Sahara, digging wells and cleaning out others that had caved in. He also learned brick-making and laying, and by means of both he was able to earn a good living, and still does.

Working with Moslems he sought to know about God. Though he threw away his fetishes, he never could accept Islam. He learned white men's ways, and some of their wisdom, but he had never heard of Christ the only Saviour. It was in Timbuctoo he first heard the gospel from two itinerant missionaries who spoke only Arabic. This language he did not know at the time, hence he did not learn much. They gave him a copy of the French New Testament which he could not understand, but he accepted it as a religious book read by Europeans.

Returning to the desert and to his well-digging occupation years passed before he again heard anything about the Christian religion. Missionaries eventually came to Timbuctoo, men of God. He had come back to do some well-digging, and was at work round Timbuctoo. With others he dropped into an evening service. "The Holy Spirit must have been present," said Mamadon after, for he was much impressed, and remained behind to inquire further. These are his own words about that evening experience:—

"When I entered that room I stood and listened for a few moments and then I sat down. Something within seemed to tell me that these men had the truth for which I had groped so long. I do not remember the actual words of the speaker, but he invited anyone interested to stay behind. I remained, and was determined to learn more of these truths. Next day I went again and found the preacher busy making a cupboard. When he saw me he threw down his tools and invited me into the house. I thought it unusual for a European to show so much interest in an African, and could not understand this.

We talked and read the Bible for about an hour, but my mind was dull and brutish, and I could not grasp the truth. When I left he gave me a Testament, advised me to read it daily, promised to pray for me, and invited me to come back.

"In a few days I left for Araouan to dig wells in the desert for the use of the salt caravan, and I went to say good-bye to the missionary. He gave me a whole Bible and prayed for me on the spot. This was a new experience. I had never heard anyone pray and talk to God like that. I had heard Moslems say prayers, but they did not pray as he did. During six months I spent hours daily reading the Bible and praying for light. I desired to know the truth and the desire became a craving that nothing would satisfy.

"From then on the Bible became a sacred thing, the very Word of God, and His message for me. While reading it, some passage would lighten my darkness, and seemed to speak to me direct. I would read it to the men working with me, but it scared them, and they said they wanted to hear nothing but the Koran. They said all desert brigands were Moslems, and that, if they fell into the hands of a band while at work, Moslems would be spared, and those who had the Christian's book would be killed. I was thus cut off from human friendship. Only the fact that I was the chief, and had charge of the food supplies, prevented them from ignoring me altogether. The inner voice which I now know to be the Spirit of God, led me on, and I accepted the truth revealed. When the French asked me after that about my religion, as they always do, I said: 'I am a Christian.'

I returned again to Timbuctoo. From there I was sent to Gao, and only a mingled feeling of shame on account of my past wicked life kept me from going straight to the Missionaries' house. I spent my mid-day rest hours studying the Bible and in meditation and prayer. A year afterwards Christ was revealed to me by the missionaries' help, and I saw Him as the central figure of God's Word. I saw Him as my Saviour, and His presence in the person of the Holy Spirit as Comforter. At

last my highest hopes were realized, my heart was satisfied, and I was saved. I now praise God daily for bringing me thus to Himself." This was Mamadon Keita's story of his conversion.

Mamadon Keita has no thought of being anything but a well-digger and bricklayer, and earning his bread by the sweat of his face. He now lives a clean Christian life, and witnesses to one and all who cross his path of God's Great Salvation. He has a passion for the souls of his fellows. He has already led three others to Christ, and a number more are under deep conviction of sin as the result of his testimony. I met Mamadon while on my way to Menaka in the Sahara in July, 1929. He was returning to Ansongo after some work for the Government. The officer at Menaka showed me some of his work and spoke well of him and of his life during his stay there. (Dugald Campbell's *Wanderings in Widest Africa*).

The King is held in the Galleries.

By REV. EBENEZER ERSKINE.

(Continued from page 303.)

THE fourth thing was the application of the doctrine; and the first use is of information. Is it so that Zion's King is sometimes held in the galleries of gospel ordinances? Then, 1. See hence the happiness and dignity of the saints of God beyond the rest of the world. We reckon that person highly honoured, who is admitted to the king's presence-chamber, and to walk with him in His galleries. This honour have all the saints, either in a greater or lesser degree; truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And, therefore, I may infer that they are the excellent ones in the earth, and more excellent than their neighbour. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable. 2. See hence why the saints put such a value and estimate on gospel-ordinances. David everywhere declares his esteem of them;

I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth. He would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of his God, than dwell in the tents of sin. Why, what is the matter? The plain matter is this, they are the galleries where Zion's King doth walk, and manifest His glory unto His subjects: Ps. xxvii. 4. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord. I pass other uses and go on to a second use of this doctrine, and that is by way of trial and examination. My friends, you have been in the galleries of the King of Zion; but that is not enough; and therefore let me ask—have you been in the galleries with the King? and have you been holding the King in the galleries? There are many poor ignorant creatures, who, if they get a token and win to* a communion table, think all is right and clear between God and them, like the whore, Prov. vii. 14. Peace-offerings are with me; this day I have paid my vows. But, O sirs, remember folk may win in to the outer galleries of ordinances and never win in to the inner gallery of communion with the Lord Jesus. For your trial as to this matter, I shall only propose a few questions to you. Question 1. What did you hear in the galleries? What said the King unto you? For, as I told you, the galleries of ordinances are the place of audience where the King of Zion converses with His people. And, readily, if He hath spoken with you, you will remember what He said; for He speaks as never man spake, He has the tongue of the learned, and His words are as goads and as nails fastened in a sure place. The spouse, we find, had been in the chamber of presence, and in the banqueting house; she tells that the King spake with her, and she remembers what He said, Cant. ii. 10. My Beloved spake, and said unto me, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. So then, did the King speak with you in the galleries? Did He speak a word of conviction,

*Get to.

or a word of comfort, a word of peace, or a word of consolation? or whatever it be. Question. How shall I know that it was His voice, and not the voice of a stranger? Answer. The sheep of Christ have a natural instinct whereby they know His voice; it has a different sound from the voice of a stranger; and if you be the sheep of Christ, you will know it better than I can tell you it by words. When He speaks, He makes the heart to burn; and you will be ready to say with the disciples—Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us, in the galleries? His words have kindled a flame of love that many waters cannot quench, a flame of zeal for His glory; a flame of holy joy, so that you will be ready to say with David, God hath spoken in His holiness, I will rejoice. When He speaks, He makes the soul to speak, whose lips were formerly closed; for His voice makes the lips of those that are asleep to speak. If He has said—Seek ye My face, your souls have echoed—Thy face, Lord, will I seek. If He has said—Come, thy soul has answered, behold, I come unto Thee, for Thou art the Lord my God. If He has spoken peace to you, this day in the galleries, you will be concerned not to return again unto folly; you have been made to say with Ephraim—What have I to do any more with idols?

(To be continued.)

History of the South African Mission.

(Continued from page 224.)

What must have encouraged Mr. Radasi greatly in the early years of his work, too, was the addition of a number of Fingoes to the Mission. These men had been sent north by Mr. Cecil Rhodes, and some of them were already preachers of the glorious gospel. They gladly accepted all the standards of the Free Presbyterian Church on their admission, and have since stood faithfully by them. About the same time quite a number of

Matabele from Koco joined, and thus a mission could be and was set up in that place. The following are the stations under Ingwenya Mission at the present day* :—Ingwenya Head Station where *isiXosa* is preached; as the Fingoes are now only a handful here it is expected that *isiZulu* will soon be the medium; Cameron Station, seven miles from Ingwenya on the Fingo Location, where Mr. James Nombembe, the elder in charge preaches *isiXosa*; Que Que, a hundred and twenty miles from Ingwenya on a Farm, where Mr. George Hlazo, elder, preaches *isiZulu*; Lebeni, five miles from Ingwenya, on Gravesend Farm, where Mr. John Dwabengwa, elder, preaches *isiZulu*; Induba, five miles from Ingwenya, on a Farm, where Mr. Elijah Sijowanna, elder, preaches *isiZulu*; Morven, nine miles from Ingwenya, on a Farm, where Mr. Elijah Sandlanna, elder, preaches *isiZulu*; Mennels Farm, sixteen miles from Ingwenya, where Mr. Thomas Amazwi, deacon, is in charge under Mr. Dwabengwa, elder, the language again is *isiZulu*; Stephen's Farm, twelve miles from Ingwenya, under Mr. Amos Ngombane, deacon, who is under Mr. Sijowanna, elder, the language again being *isiZulu*; Queen's Kraal, fifty miles from Ingwenya, where Mr. Miki, deacon, speaks *isiZulu*; Murray Farm, twelve miles from Ingwenya, where Mr. Philimon who has been a member for five years speaks *isiZulu*; Mpengesi's Kraal, six miles from Ingwenya on the Fingoe Location, where Mr. Robert Somkenewe speaks *isiXosa*; Mbroho's Kraal, (occasional), where Mr. John Ntamo speaks *isiZulu*, and Inkai, on the Shanghai Reserve, ninety miles from Ingwenya, where Mr. John Ndiyamabombo, elder and paid missionary, speaks *isiZulu*.

Needless to say the mission work in the Dark Continent touched the hearts of not a few friends connected with the Church at home and abroad in civilised countries. The substantial and welcome donations of friends in Australia were forthcoming annually, whilst a few Sabbath Schools in Scotland regularly sent their collections to this foreign field. Other friends sent monetary gifts privately and still do. A Clothing Fund, too,

*This was written two years ago.—*Editor*.

was early inaugurated and to-day we have a number of ladies collecting materials which they forward to Mrs. Miller, Wick. From there the bundles are despatched to South Africa.

The visits to the Mission by the Church's deputies, Rev. J. R. Mackay in 1909, Rev. N. Cameron (accompanied by Mr. Angus Fraser) in 1921, and the Rev. R. Mackenzie in 1929, greatly cheered the friends at the Mission.

During the lifetime of Mr. Radasi the mission stations grew in necessary equipment of buildings etc., as did our Church at home, out of nothing. The expenditure for the first twenty-seven years of our Mission amounts roughly to only ten thousand pounds. Yet to-day an annual sum of nearly double the past yearly average is fully necessary for the upkeep of the stations. Though in 1925 they could collect the sum of thirty-two pounds in the year, yet going back say to 1911 all that could be gathered was the small pittance of seven pound notes. The number of preaching stations and schools alone is nearly double to-day what they were when Mr. Radasi died.

As to the school work one might imagine that at first there would be quite a rush by young and old for admission. The popular idea, on the contrary, was that they should be paid to attend school. Were they not losing their wages through their entailed absence from manual labour? Another difficulty was that many, in order to attend school regularly, would have to leave home and settle beside the Mission, building their huts and providing their own food. Then of those who were near at hand some might attend at one period of the day who could not attend at another so that both day and evening teaching had to be taken up. As a rule the men were much keener than their wives on education.

In connection with the growth of the school population a few figures may be quoted. In 1910 the roll was at 70, in 1919 at over 100; in 1922, 320 for over five schools; in 1924, 365; in 1925, 366; in 1927, 401; in 1930, 478, and the latest returns show a roll of about 500 for eight schools. These schools have had

to be staffed in the cheapest manner, and the struggle to do even this is most interesting. Mr. Radasi would open a school and when his pupils had arrived at a certain stage of advancement they were sent either to a Kraal School to teach others or to Lovedale for a three year course of instruction in order to become fully qualified by certificate. Of course while in these training institutions they usually required monetary assistance from the Church. The schools are inspected by inspectors who act under a Director of Education, and these, though, as a rule, praising the work done very highly have always been more or less the compelling force to better staffing. The present situation with regard to staffing is this. One of the schools has been for a few years paid the grant usually paid to Central Schools though it was not really such for it was only within the past year that the status of this school was raised. This necessitated the appointment of a white teacher, and one who would be qualified to give instruction in practical subjects like Woodwork, Agriculture, and Domestic Science. A hundred acres of land was promised by the government if agriculture were taught. After an unsuccessful attempt had been made to secure a suitably qualified male teacher in Scotland a female teacher was advertised for and the successful applicant was Miss Nicolson, M.A., who possesses a Scottish Training College certificate with a Domestic Science endorsement. In June, 1933, she sailed for Africa with her mother, and the raising of the status of the school at Ingwenya was really the first fruit of her going out. At present there is a Boarding and a Central School at Ingwenya, and Kraal Schools at Lebeni, Induba, Morven, Bembesi (Cameron School), Murray Farm, and Inkai, Shangani.

Kafir reading is first taught in the schools and then when a pupil is able to read his Kafir Bible he is presented with one by the Church. This he is expected to read later himself to his people at home. In this way the gospel is spread throughout a wide area which might not otherwise be reached. The fruit of this method, too, has now shown itself. After the Kafir comes

the reading of the English Bible and English Bibles are distributed on the same terms. Arithmetic, Geography, and Writing have their places in the schools, and to these subjects, thanks to the Rev. J. Tallach, Mrs. Tallach, and Mrs. Macdonald housewifery, cookery, laundry, needlework, and basketry have been added. In connection with the industrial subjects it might be noted that the inspector first mentioned their absence in 1910.

The schools, like our missions, have not been without their opposition. It is clear proof and a high testimonial that the Truth is sounded in them. On one occasion the Methodists took away one of our teachers, and thus shamefully broke their promise to the teacher's parent. One is not surprised to hear that they promised to make him a minister. On another occasion the Shangani teacher had the thatch of his roof destroyed during the night by the heathen. At another period two opposition schools were set up the one a mile and the other half a mile from our school but both had to close for want of pupils.

In the medical department of the work three stages are to be noted. In the capacity of doctor Mr. Radasi felt his weakness keenly. On one occasion he wrote to Scotland for a medicine book as fever was very common in the wet season. He had no training in this country in medicine and he regretted this. Mr. Tallach knew more, having attended medical classes in London. He went to Africa equipped with his knowledge and his medicine chest, and since then the Church has kept up the supply of medicine regularly. To encourage medical missionaries, as they would in the case of a white teacher also, the Government was willing to pay a large part of a medical missionary's salary. Two years after completing his medical course Dr. Macdonald went out to Africa but not before taking a special course in tropical diseases at London University. Then after examination in books prescribed in divinity he was ordained by the Southern Presbytery at Glasgow on the 15th August, 1928. On 28th September, he set sail for the Dark Continent. On his arrival there he had a hospital and dispensary built, and in

one year no fewer than two thousand patients consulted him. In his work he met chiefly with tuberculosis, malnutrition, and skin diseases. Sometimes as many as seven lay in hospital and few had to be sent past the Mission for treatment. After the holding of a school clinic the teachers carried out his instructions. It should be mentioned at the start that the Church was greatly indebted to Mr. Reid, Chemist, Wick, who for many years supplied medicine, etc., at cost price; and the Synod recognizing its indebtedness tendered its thanks to Mr. Reid.

Flattery.

FLATTERY leads one to suppose that we cherish in regard to him a better opinion than we do in point of fact. It consists in praising him to his face beyond our estimate of his merits. It puts soft words in his ear. Its motive is generally sinister and selfish. It is a wilful deception. The book of God refers to it as a vice. "A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet." "A flattering mouth worketh ruin." "Therefore meddle not with him who flattereth with his lips."

As a general fact, we believe that a mind weak enough to desire flattery, will be found both weak and bad enough to be injured by it. True, there are circumstances in which it is highly proper to express to our neighbour our favourable opinion. Sometimes he needs it for the support and encouragement of his heart. It may also be the artless tribute of genuine affection. But there are no cases in which we are justified in the sin of flattery. It is always a contemptible falsehood, justly odious in the eyes of all sensible people. It is no mark of sense, and no proof of friendship. Those who practise it, are quite likely to backbite on one side and flatter on the other. It is, moreover, an exceedingly nauseous vice, requiring on the part of the flattered very strong nerves, or a great amount of folly to relish it.

Even the civilities of courtesy may be carried so far as to make them really offensive—a species of *acted* flattery. This is not common; yet it is the fault of some persons. They are in perfect raptures when they see you, and, judging from external manifestations, sad when you leave them. On the outside they have more kindness than one knows what to do with. Supposing this necessary to politeness, they woefully overact the matter; they act out ten times as much feeling as they really possess. Judge not of their real views or feelings towards you by this excessive parade; for bear in mind that no small part of it is nothing but parade. It is hollow. Rap on it for any practical purpose, and it will be found to be so. It is either an educated misfortune, or a vicious foolery—never a genuine politeness. If one does not wish to see another, he will do the latter a favour not to “die of a rose in aromatic pain;” and if he does wish to see him, then nature’s simple and unsophisticated expression of the fact will be abundantly sufficient. Anything that goes beyond this is useless, and generally deceptive.—*Evangelist*.

Bunyan Struggling with his Sins.

A WHILE after, these terrible dreams did leave me, which also I soon forgot, for my pleasures did quickly cut off the remembrance of them as if they had never been. Wherefore with more greediness, according to the strength of nature, I did not loose the reins of my lust and delighted in all transgressions against the law of God; so that, until I came to the state of marriage, I was the very ringleader in all manner of vice and ungodliness. Such prevalency had the lusts of the flesh on my poor soul, that had not a miracle of precious grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke of eternal justice, but also laid myself open to the stroke of those laws which bring some to disgrace and shame before the face of the world. In these days the thoughts of religion were very

grievous to me. I could neither endure it myself, nor that any other should; so that, when I have seen some read in those books that concerned Christian piety, it would be as it were a prison to me. Then I said unto God, "Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." I was now void of all good consideration. Heaven and Hell were both out of sight and mind; and, as for saving and damning, they were least in my thoughts. "O Lord, thou knowest my life, and my ways are not hid from Thee." But this I will remember, that though I could myself sin with the greatest delight and ease, yet even then if I had at anytime seen wicked things by those who professed goodness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once above all the rest, when I was in the height of vanity, yet hearing one to swear that was reckoned for a religious man, it had a great stroke upon my spirit that it made my heart ache.—*Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.*

The late Norman Morrison, Skigersta, Ness, Lewis.

THOUGH an account of this worthy elder is long overdue, it is not too late to send a notice of him to the Magazine. Norman Morrison was born in Ness some time about the year 1859 and he lived without any true hope for eternity till he was about 50 years of age. He was a talented man and composed many secular songs in the days of his ignorance. He even used Scripture themes to exercise his poetic talent and his finished effort would be so conformable to the Word that, as he would say, "The plane could not take a shaving off it."

In the year 1910, it pleased the Lord in His sovereignty to awaken Norman Morrison to a knowledge of himself as a sinner and he spent that year as one of the doves of the valleys upon the mountains, bemoaning his own iniquity. The means God used to bring home his guilt upon him was his witnessing one very nearly related to him going forward on

a communion Sabbath in Ness to make her first public witness for Christ. The servant sent to loosen our friend's bonds, under the hand of the Holy Spirit, was the late Rev. Donald Graham, Shieldaig. Mr. Graham preached a sermon in Lionel, Ness, on John iii., 16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have ever-lasting life." God's peace came into the heart of Norman Morrison that day so that he walked in the joy and comfort of it for many days, and it kept his heart and mind to the end of the journey.

It is both unscriptural and dangerous for those who have reason to conclude that Christ has become precious to them as a Saviour, to put off making a public profession of their faith in Christ and obedience to Him. Norman Morrison, or the "Bard" as he was commonly styled, found it so to his cost. He had allowed the opportunity to pass and no sooner was it passed than his guilt for neglected duty took possession of him. That awful Scripture: "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you" (Acts, iii., 14) brought gall and wormwood into his spirit, and his only relief was to make a solemn vow, that if he were spared to see another communion season, he would venture on the path of duty.

He was duly elected to the eldership but it was only after much persuasion and delay that he consented to take office. He adorned the office while he was spared in it and earned the obedience and respect of old and young. We did our best to persuade him to undertake the duties of a missionary, after the decease of our revered friend, Mr. Malcolm Macleod, but without success. Though a man of great gifts and of fluent expression, which made him excel in public prayer and speaking, he had a humble view of his own ability and grace, which caused him to court retirement.

He suffered a long illness on his death-bed, but the Lord's mercies were abundant during his last days on earth so that

he "went through the river singing." He exhorted his family to follow God's truth and to seek a personal interest in the Saviour, and continued in prayer for them and for the Redeemer's cause on earth till he fell asleep. He passed away to be with Christ on the 5th November, 1932. May his example and faith be followed by his family at home and abroad who are left to mourn his loss.—*Malcolm Gillies.*

Short Gleanings.

FROM DAVID BRAINERD.

1. I felt insatiable longings after God this day. I wondered how poor souls live that have no God. The world, with all its enjoyments, quite vanished. I longed exceedingly to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Oh, my weary soul longs to arrive at my Father's house!

2. Oh, how divinely sweet it is to come into the secret of His presence, and abide in His pavilion!

3. None knows but those who feel it, what the soul endures when shut out from the sensible presence of God. It is more bitter than death!

4. I exhorted the people to love one another, and not to set up their own frames as a standard to try all their brethren by.

5. Filling up our time *with* and *for* God is the way to rise up and lie down in peace.

6. Oh, how dark it looked to think of being unholy for ever! This I could not endure.

7. There are many with whom I can talk *about* religion; but alas! I find few with whom I can talk *religion itself*.

8. I longed to spend the little inch of time I have in the world more for God. My soul, my very soul, longed for the ingathering of the poor heathen. I was tenderly affected toward all the world, longing that every sinner might be saved, and could not have entertained any bitterness towards the worst enemy living.

9. My soul was drawn out for the interest of Zion, and comforted with the lively hope of the appearing of the kingdom of the great Redeemer. These were sweet moments! I felt almost loth to go to bed, and grieved that sleep was necessary.

10. If I cannot behold the excellencies of God as to cause me to rejoice in Him for what He is *in Himself*, I have no solid foundation for joy. To rejoice only because I apprehend I have an interest in Christ, and shall be finally saved, is a poor mean business indeed.

11. My soul centred in God as my only portion; and I felt that I should be for ever unhappy if He did not reign.

12. I viewed the infinite excellency of God till my soul even broke with longings that He should be glorified. I thought of dignity in heaven; but instantly the thought returned, "I do not go to heaven to get honour, but to give all possible glory and praise." Oh, how I longed that God should be glorified on earth also! Oh, I was made for eternity, if God might be glorified!

13. I was born on a Sabbath-day; I was new-born on a Sabbath-day; and I hope I shall die on a Sabbath-day. I long for the time. Oh, why is His chariot so long in coming!

14. O that His kingdom might come; that all might love and glorify Him for what He is in Himself, and that the blessed Redeemer might see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied! Oh, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen!

He that willingly takes from my good name, unwillingly adds to my reward.—*Thomas Brooks*.

To begin a sin, is to lay the foundation for a continuance; this continuance is the mother of custom, and impudence at last the issue.—*John Bunyan*.

Zeal to a Christian is like a high wind filling the sails of a ship, which unless it be ballasted with discretion, doth but the sooner overturn it.—*George Swinnock*.

Nadur an Duine 'na Staid Cheithir Fillte.

(*Air a leantuinm bho t.d., 271.*)

AN T-AONADH DIOMHAIR EADAR CRIOSD AGUS CREIDMHICH.

Is mise an fhìonain, sibhse na geugan.—Eoin xv. 5.

MAR THA NA GEUGAN AIR AN TABHAIRT A MACH AS AN STOC NADUIR,
AGUS AIR AN SUIDHEACHADH ANNS AN STOC SPIORADAIL.

IV. Tha mi ri nochdadh mar a tha na geugan air an gearradh o 'n stoc nàduir, eadhon an ceud Adhamh, agus air an suidheachadh anns an Fhìonain fhìor, an Tighearn Iosa Criosd. Buidheachas do 'n Treabhach, 's cha'n ann do 'n ghéig, gu bheil i air a gearradh o'n stoc nàduir, agus gu bheil i air a suidheachadh ann an stoc nuadh. Tha 'm peacach, 'na theachd o 'n cheud stoc gun làmh 'sam bith 's a' ghnìomh, 's cha mhó tha comas, no toil aige teachd o 'n stoc sin dheth féin; ach dlùth-leanaidh e ris, gus an dèan cumhachd neo-ehriochnach a thoirt air tuiteam dheth, *Eoin v. 43.* “Cha'n urrainn neach air bith teachd a m' ionnsuidhse, mur tarruing an t-Athair a chuir uaithe mise, e.” Agus, caib. v. 40. “Cha tig sibh a m' ionnsuidhse chum gu faigheadh sibh beatha.” 'S iad na geugan suidhichte treabhachas Dhé, *1 Cor. iii. 9.* “Suidheachadh an Tighearna.” *Isa. lxi. 3.* 'S iad na meadhonan gnàthaichte d' am bheil e deanamh feum anns an obair so searmonachadh an fhocail, *1 Cor. iii. 9.* “Is comh-luchd oibre do Dhia sinne.” Ach tha eifeachd na h-obair so gu h-iomlan uaithe-san, eiod air bith mar tha talann agus diadhachd a mhinistear, rann 7. “Cha'n ann 'san tì a shuidhicheas no 'san tì a dh' uisgicheas, a tha brìgh 'sam bith; ach ann an Dia a tha toirt an fhàis.” Shearmonaich an t-abstol do na h-Iudhaich, gidheadh dh' fhan a' chuid mhór de 'n t-sluagh sin ann an neo-ehreidinn, *Rom. ix. 16.* “Cò a chreid ar n-aithris-ne?” Seadh, a deir Criosd e féin, a labhair, mar nach do labhair duine riamh, a thaobh

buaidh a shearmonachaidh féin, “Shaothraich mi gu dìomhain, air son neo-ni chaith mi mo neart,” *Isa. xlix. 4.* Feudaidd na geugan bhí air an sgathadh le searmonachadh an fhocail; ach cha teid am buille gu bràth trompa, gus am bi e air a thoirt dhachaidh le làimh uile-chumhachdaich. Gidheadh, is e rathad gnàthaichte Dhé,” Le amaideachd an t-searmonachaidh iadsan a thearnadh a ta creidsinn, 1 Cor. i. 21.

Tha gearradh dheth na géige o n’ stoc nàduir, air a dhèanamh le sgian-sgathaidh an lagha, ann an làimh Spioraid Dhé, *Gal. ii. 19*, “Oir a ta mise tre ’n lagh, marbh do ’n lagh.” Is ann le bann coimheangail nan oibre mar a thubhairt mi roimhe, a tha sinn air ar ceangal ri ’r stoc nàduir; agus air an aobhar sin, mar tha bean a ta neo-thoileach a bhí air a cur air falbh, a’ tagar agus a’ greimeachadh ris a’ cheangal-posaidh: mar sin tha daoine dèanamh ri coimheangal nan oibre: tha iad a’ greimeachadh ris, cosmhuil ris an duine a ghreimich ris an luing le làmhaidh; agus an uair a bha aon làmh air a gearradh dheth, ghreimich e leis an làmh eile; agus an uair a bha iad araon air an gearradh dheth, ghreimich e le fhiacla! Chith-eas so, o bheachd soilleir de obair an Tighearn’ air daoine, ’nan tabhairt a mach as an t-seann stoc; a nochdas mi a nis anns na nithibh fa leth a leanas.

Air tùs, ’N uair tha Spiorad an Tighearn’ a’ teachd a bhuntainn ri neach, eum a thabhairt gu Crìosd, tha e ’ga fhaotainn ann an cor Laodicea, ann an codal suaimhneach na seasgaireachd, a’ brúadar mu nèamh, agus mu dheadh-ghean Dhé, ged tha iad làn de pheacadh an aghaidh aon naoimh Israeil. “Cha ’n ’eil fhios agad gu bheil thu doruinneach, agus truagh agus bochd, agus dall, agus lomnochd,” *Taib. iii. 17.* Agus air an aobhar sin tha e boilsgeadh a steach dearsaidhean soluis air an anam dhorecha: agus a’ nochdadh do ’n duine gu bheil e ’na dhuine caillte, mur tionndaidh e duilleag nuadh, agus mur gabh e gu slighe nuadh ’na chaithe-beatha. Mar so,

le Spiorad an Tighearn' a bhi aig oibreachadh mar spiorad daorsa, tha cuirt chionta air a cur suas ann an uchd an duine; far am bheil e air a ghlacadh, air a dhìtheadh, agus a bhinn air a toirt a mach, air son briseadh lagha Dhé, a' faotainn "dearbh-shoilleireachd mu pheacadh agus mu bhreiteanas," *Eoin xvi. 8.* Agus a nis cha'n urrainn dhà ni 's faide codal gu soerach 'na roimh-chaithe beatha. 'S e so a' cheud bhuille tha gheug a' faotainn, a chum a gearradh dheth.

'S an dara àit', Air a so tha 'n duine a' tràigsinn a shligh-ean mi-naomha 's an robh e siubhal; a bhreugan, a mhiannan, a bhriseadh-Sàbaid, a ghadachd, agus an leithide sin de chleachdana; ged tha iad taitneach dhà, mar shuil dheis, is fèarr leis dealachadh riu no 'anam a sgrios. Tha 'n long an cunnart dol fuidhe, agus uime sin, tilgidh e mhaoin a mach, a chum as nach caillear e féin. Agus a nis tòisichidh e air e féin a bheannachadh 'na chridhe, agus air amharc le h-aoibhneas air a choinbaran air son nèimh; an barail gu bheil e féin 'na sheirbhiseach na 's fèarr do Dhia na móran eile, *Luc. xviii. 11.* "A Dhé tha mi toirt buidheachdais duit nach 'eil mi mar a ta daoine' eile, 'nan luchd foireigin, eucorach, adhaltrannach." Ach tha e gu luath a' faotainn buill' eile le tuagh an lagha, a' nochdadh dhà gur esan e mhàin a ta dèanamh na tha sgriobhta ann an leabhar an lagha, a 's urrainn bhi air a theàrnadh leis; gu bheil an sèorsa naomhachd a th' aige tuilleadh is gann gu dhion o dhoinn feirge Dhé: Agus mar so, ged bha a pheacaidh dèanadais a mhàin trom air roimhe; tha pheacaidh dearmaid a nis a' teachd a stigh air a smuainte, ann an co-chuideachd ri mallachdan agus dioghaltais an lagha: agus tha gach aon de na deich àitheanta a' cur a mach tàirnein-each feirge 'na aghaidh, air son dearmad a dhèanamh air dleasnais a bha air an agradh air.

'S an treas àit', A nis tha e tionndadh gu fìor-chaithe-beatha naomha. Chan e 'mhàin nach 'eil e mi-naomh, ach tha e coimh-lionadh dleasnais chràbhaidh; tha e 'g urnuigh, ag iarraidh eolais air cinn a' chreidimh, a' coimhead là an Tighearna, agus

cosmhuil ri Herod, tha e dèanamh mòran de nithean, agus ag eisdeachd shearmoine gu toileach : ann an aon fhocal, tha co-fhreagradh mòr 'na ghiulan o 'n taobh a mach, ri riaghailt dà chlàr an lagha. Agus a nis tha caochladh cho mòr air an duine, is nach urrainn a choimhearsnaich gun aire thoirt dhà. Uaithe so tha e gu h-aoibhneach air a ghabhail a steach le daoine diadhaidh d' an comunn mar neach a ta 'g urnuigh, agus is urrainn dhà co-labhairt riu mu nithean diadhaidh : seadh, agus mu fhaireachdain anama, nithean air nach 'eil cuid eòlach. Agus tha 'n deadh bharailsan uime, a' daingneachadh a dheadh bharail uime féin. Tha 'n ceum so 's an diadhachd millteach de mhóran, nach teid gu bràth ceum ni 's faide : ach ann an so tha 'n Tighearn a' toirt buill' eile do 'n ghéig thaghta; Leumaidh a' choguis an eudan an duine, air son cuid de cheuma mearachdach 'na chaithe-beatha; dearmad air dleasnas àraid, no bhi ciontach de pheacadh àraid, a ta 'na mhasladh air a chaithe-beatha : agus an sin tha claidheamh lasarach an lagha 'ga nochdadh féin a rìs os a cheann; agus tha'm mallachd a' seirm 'na chluasaibh, a chionn nach 'eil e a buannachadh anns na h-uile nithibh a ta sgriobhta ann an leabhar an lagha, chum an dèanamh, *Gal. iii. 10.*

'S a' cheathramh àite, Air an aobhar so, is éiginn dà leigheas eile iarraidh air son a thinneis; tha e dol dh' ionnsuidh Dhé, ag aidicheadh a' pheacaidh, ag iarraidh maitheanas air a shon, a' gealltainn faire dhèanamh 'na aghaidh 's an àm ri teachd, agus mar sin tha e faotainn fois, agus tha e smuaineachadh gu 'm feud e gu maith fois a ghabhail, do bhrìgh gu bheil an Sgriobtur ag ràdh, "Ma dh' aidicheas sinn ar peacanna, tha ean fìrinneach, agus ceart chum ar peacanna a mhaitheadh dhuinn," 1 *Eoin i. 9.* gun a bhi toirt fainear gu bheil e glacadh greim air sochair a bhuineas dhoibhsan a mhàin a ta air an suidheachadh ann an Crìosd, agus a ta fàidh a choimheangal nan gràs, agus nach urrainn dhoibhsan a ta 'nan geugan a' fàs air an t-seann stoc fathast a thagar : agus ann an so, air uairibh tha geallannan agus bòidean air an dèanamh an aghaidh ar

leithide so agus sin de pheacaidh, agus a' ceangal gu 'n leithide so agus sin de dhleasnais àraidh. Mar so tha mórán a' dol air an aghaidh fad an uile làithean, gun eòlas aca air diadhachd 's am bith eile ach a bhi coimh-lionadh dleasnais agus ag aideachadh, agus a' guidhe air son maitheanais air son an ni 's am bheil iad a' teachd goirid; a' gealltainn sonas sìorruidh dhoibh féin, ged tha iad 'nan tur-choigrich do Chrìosd; ann an so tha mórán de'n mhuinntir thaghta air an tilgeadh sìos leònta, agus mórán de mhuinntir thilgte air am marbhadh; an uair nach 'eil lota a h-aon diubh domhain gu leòir, gu 'n gearradh o 'n stoc nàdurra. Ach tha Spiorad an Tighearn' a' toirt fathast buille eile do'n ghéig a ta ri bhi air a gearradh dheth, a' nochdadh dhà, nach 'eil e fathast, ach naomh o'n taobh a mach, agus tha e foillseachadh dhà nan ana-mianna gràineil a ta chomhnuidh 'na chridhe, do nach d' thug e aire roimhe, *Rom. vii. 9.* "Air teachd de'n àithne, dh' ath-bheòthaich am peacadh, agus fhuair mise bàs." An sin tha e facinn a chridhe 'na òtrach de mhiannaibh ifrionnail, air a lionadh le sannt, uabhar, mì-run, salchaireachd, agus an leithide sin. A nis, cho luath as a tha dorsa seomraiche iomhaigheachd féin mar so air am fosgladh dha, agus a ta e faicinn ciod a ta iad a' dèanamh 's an dorchas, tha dhiadhachd o'n taobh a mach, air a séideadh air falbh mar ni nach seas, agus tha e fòghlum nuadh bharail 's an diadhachd: eadhon, "Nach Iudhach esan a tha mar sin o'n leth muigh," *Rom. ii. 28.*

'S a' chuigeamh àite, Uaith so tha e dol ni 's faide, eadhon gu diadhachd an taobh a stigh; a' dol gu h-obair ni's beòthail na rinn e riamh, a' dèanamh bròin os ceann peacaidh a chridhe, agus a' dèanamh strì ris na droch luibhean a chumail fòdha, a ta e faotainn a' fàs anns an lios sin a bha air a dhi-chuimhneachadh. Tha e saothreachadh gu 'ardan agus a droch nàdur a cheannsachadh, agus a smuainte neo-ghlan fhogradh air falbh; tha e 'g urnuigh ni's dùrachdaiche, ag eisdeachd gu furachair, agus a' dèanamh spairn gu chridhe fhaotainn eudmhor anns na h-uile dleasnas diadhaidh a tha e coimh-lionadh; agus

mar so tha e teachd gu smuaineachadh gu bheil e féin, cha'n e mhàin 'na Chrìosdaidh o'n taobh a mach, ach o'n taobh a stigh mar an ceudna. Na gabh iongantas dheth so, oir cha'n 'eil ni 's am bith ann os ceann cumhachd nàduir no nithean air am feud neach ruigheachd a ta fuidh ghluasadan cumhachdach coimheangail nan oibre: air an aobhar sin that buille ni's doimhne fathast air a thabhairt; tha'n lagh a' sparradh dhachaidh air coguis an duine, gu'n robh e 'na chiontach o'n bhroinn; gu 'n d' thainig e do'n t-saoghal 'na chreutair ciontach; agus gu 'n robh e, ann an àm aineolais, agus eadhon o na chaidh a shuilean fhosgladh, ciontach de iomadh peacadh gnìomh, a bha aon chuid gu leir gun a bhi air am faicinn leis, no gun bhròn gu leòir a dhèanamh air an son: (Oir tha lotan spioradail, nach 'eil air an leigheas le fuil Chrìosd, ach a tha air an leigheas gu faoin air sheol éiginn eile, gu h-ullamh air an cur as an riaghailt, agus cho ullamh a' briseadh a mach a rìs). Agus air an aobhar sin, tha'n lagh 'ga ghlacadh air sgornan ag ràdh: "Ioc dhomh na bheil agam ort?"

'S an t-seathamh àite, An sin their am peacach 'na chridhe, "Dèan foighidin rium, agus iocaidh mi dhuit an t-iomlan:" agus mar sin theid e air obair, a dhèanamh suas sìth ris an Dia d' an d' thug e oilbheum, agus gu rēite dhèanamh air son a pheacanna; ath-nuadhaichidh e aithreachas a leithid 's a tha e; giulainidh e gu foighidneach na trioblaidean a chuirear air, seadh, buinidh, e gu cruaidh ris féin, aicheadhaidh e dhà féin comhfhurtachdan laghail, ni e osnaich throm dhomhain, ni e bròn searbh, glaothaidh e le deòir air son maitheanais, gus an oibrich e chridhe gu barail gu 'n d' fhuair se e; air dhà mar so dioladh a dhèanamh air son na chaidh seachad, agus a' cur roimhe a bhi 'na sheirbhiseach maith do Dhia, agus gu cumail air aghaidh ann an ùmhlachd o 'n taobh a mach agus o 'n taobh a steach 's an àm ri teachd: ach is éiginn gu 'n teid a bhuille fathast ni's dluithe do 'n chridhe, mu 'n tuit a gheug dheth; nochdaidh an Tighearn dhà, ann an sgathan an lagha, mar a tha e peacachadh anns gach ni a ta e deanamh,

eadhon an uair a tha e dèanamh mar is fèarr is urrainn dà; agus uime sin tha 'n fhuaim uamhasach a' pilleadh g'a chluasaibh, *Gal. iii. 10.* "Is malluichte gach neach nach buanaich anns na h-uile nithibh a ta sgrìobhta ann an leabhar an lagha, chum an dèanamh—'N uair a thraisg agus a ghuil sibh, a deir an Tighearn, an do thraisg sibh idir air mo shonsa, eadhon air mo shonsa?" An dèan uisge salach eudach glan? An diol thu air son aon pheacadh le peacadh eile? Nach deachaidh bhur smuaintean air seacharan 'na leithid so de dhleasnas? Nach robh bhur n-aignidhean fuar ann an dleasnas eile? Nach d' thug bhur cridhe sealladh striopachail air a leithid so de iodhol? Agus nach d' eirich e ann am braise de mhi-fhoighidin fuidh leithid so de thrioblaid? "An gabh mise sin a 'r laimh? Mallaichte gu robh am mealltair a dh' iobras ni truailidh do 'n Tighearn," *Mal. i. 13.* Agus mar so tha e air teachd gu bhi cho fada air a ghèarradh dheth, as gu bheil e faicinn nach 'eil e comasach air agartasan an lagha choimhlionadh.

Ri leanntuinn.

Literary Notice.

THE LURE OF ROME.—The Protestant Truth Society's Sixpenny Library of pamphlets dealing with the Roman question receives a valuable addition by the publication of this timely pamphlet. John Bond, the author, has resided for many years in Rome, and speaks with an intimate first-hand knowledge of the spirit and practice of the Vatican to-day. His panoramic view of Rome reveals facts that people cannot afford to ignore. It constitutes both a witness and a warning, showing how those who are drawn into the vortex with the Roman-Catholic system are frequently disillusioned, and the extracts from the diary of one such are exceedingly valuable. A copy of this excellent pamphlet may be had from the Protestant Truth Society, 31 Cannon Street, London, E.C.4, for 7d. post free.

Notes and Comments.

Observance of Christmas.—In an article reprinted in this issue our readers will find stated the attitude of Presbyterian Scotland formerly to this festival. We call the attention of the young of our Church specially to it not that we believe that any of them are ready to fall in with the religious observance of Christmas but they may be ready to follow their companions in indulging in many of the accompaniments observed at this particular date. Even though it could be shown from Scripture and history that this festival was observed from apostolic times in commemoration of the Saviour's birth are the dancing and frivolity that characterise so many of the functions on 25th December a fit way of remembering an event of such transcendent interest? What a spectacle of mockery must such gatherings be to the angels who announced "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Scotland has been characterised by some foolish, and we say it advisedly, ignorant writers in the press as a benighted land because she so long refused to observe this festival but the facts of history run strongly in face of such a judgment. Her brightest religious days were when her serious minded sons and daughters had nothing to do with such observances and customs as are now becoming common on the 25th of December.

Very Strange.—While the Dornoch case has been attracting the widest attention and pressmen have been busy in the dull season in giving it the widest publicity leading men of the Church of Scotland have also been giving their opinion on dancing. Some of these say they see nothing wrong in it and in view of this we need not think it strange if the following report is true which we cull from one of the dailies:—Mr. Duncan Mackinnon, a Glasgow divinity student, was ordained and inducted at Bressay (Shetland). "The service was followed by social evening and dance." The flood is pouring in when a dance is held on the night of an ordination. The latter is far too tame for those that must mix worldly pleasure with the things

of God. The Roman Catholic priest was present at the social meeting as reported in the Shetland papers—*Shetland News* and *Shetland Times*.

“Beginning at Moses.”—This is an interesting pamphlet issued by Mr. William Wileman. It deals with some of the views advanced by the Higher Critics and shows how contrary they are to the statements in Scripture. He says: “I ask why should preachers publicly read from Moffatt’s paraphrase, or Weymouth’s, or the Twentieth Century New Testament, instead of from the Scriptures of Truth. This unwise practice has wrought immense mischief.” We heartily agree with this statement. The pamphlet may be had from the author, 41 Marlborough Road, Wimbledon Park, London, S.W.19. Price, one penny.

Church Notes.

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

Collection for December.—The Collection for this month is for the General Church Building Fund. Congregational Treasurers whose buildings are not clear of debt, and who wish to participate in the allocation from the General Building Fund are requested to state the amount of their debt to Mr. John Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness.

Church’s Deputy to Canada.—The Rev. D. Macleod, Shieldaig, sailed by the “*Letitia*” from Glasgow on the 15th November for Quebec. We trust his labours may be blessed and that God’s people will remember him in their prayers.—*F. Macleod*, Convener of Canadian and Colonial Mission Committee.

Meeting of Synod.—While we are going to press a *pro re nata* meeting has been called. We hope to have a report in our January issue.

Misprint.—In our last issue “kine,” p. 319, line 12 from top of page, should have read “hire.”

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—Miss J. C., Carr Bridge, £1; Mrs A. McL., Crianlarich, 5s; R. McL., Arrina, o/a Applecross, £2; Friend, Abroad, £2 10s; Miss C. F., Inverness, 10s; Mrs H. N., Fort William, Ontario, \$3; K. C., Post Office, Soay, £1.

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Organisation Fund.—Received from Winnipeg Congregation, per Mr A. B. Steedman, the sum of £10, balance of Rev. J. P. Macqueen's travelling expenses.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—Friend, Inverness, £5; Friend, Abroad, £2 10s; Friend, U.S.A., £4; Mrs C. M., Simcoe, Ontario, 12s; T. M., Charles St., Lowell, Mass., £1; Miss J. C., Carr-Bridge, 10s; Anon., Kilmarnock, £1; Miss H., Tobermory, Mull, 10s; D. McA., Leys Drive, Inverness, £3 for Hospital and School requirements and £2 for Rev. J. Tallach. Rev. D. A. Macfarlane, Dingwall, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of \$100 (£20 1s 6d) from “North America.”

Legacy Fund.—Received with grateful thanks from the Rev. D. R. Macdonald, F.P. Manse, Tarbert, the sum of £50 for the credit of the North Harris Congregation, in memory of the late Mrs Macdonald, F.P. Manse, Tarbert. Mrs Macdonald having expressed the desire to pay over a sum to the Funds of the Church.

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The Magazine.

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