

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**  
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**Another Stage in Life's Journey.**

**B**Y the time this issue of the Magazine is in the hands of most of our readers another year will well-nigh have run its course. The ending of a year and the beginning of another ought to be a time of reflexion for every serious minded person. We know what is past; we know not what is before us. A merciful Providence has veiled the future from our eyes. The lot appointed to each of us with its joys and sorrows is known to Him alone who has set a bound to our habitations that we cannot pass. To many the year on which we are entering will recall to their memory those vacant places which will no more be filled on earth. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, who were with us a year ago are gone and one feels with their departure as if the world had changed. But while Scripture does not forbid us to weep for the beloved dead, it exhorts us not to mourn as those who have no hope for those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. In the Church in general and in many of our readers' homes these vacant places are reminding us and them of the transitoriness of life and the duty of setting our own house in order.

It is solemn to think that at the very time these lines are being written there are thousands living who will not see the New Year. And what guarantee has any of us that we are not among that number. The young are looking forward to

this new stage in life's journey with eagerness and hope and while we would not desire to bring anything into their young lives which would mar the innocent joys of youth yet it is well that they should be reminded that life is not a fantastic dream. We wish them well—well, in the highest and truest sense. An interest in Christ as their Saviour in the days of their youth would be the beginning of a joy that will never have an end. The god of this world is dangling before their eyes the fleeting pleasures of time, promising them happiness in the enjoyment of the world and what it has to give. Let our young friends listen to the testimony of those who have drunk deeply of these wells and ponder well their testimony—vanity of vanities, all is vanity. In the mind of the writer there lingers the memory of words spoken by a Nathaniel-like Christian (Wemyss Mackay, Halkirk) close on forty years ago. In parting with him he said in words we have never forgotten—"There is none happy but who are in Christ." The words, so simple in themselves, yet uttered with such feeling, keep the memory of that parting at his gate ever fresh in our minds. We wish our young readers that this happiness may be theirs. May they seek that wisdom the merchandise of which is better than that of silver and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies and all the things we desire are not to be compared to her. "Length of days is in her right hand and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Provs. iii. 16, 17). The older we grow the more do we feel for the young people of our Church as they go out into the world and when they are suddenly faced with temptations and erroneous religious views of which they were entirely ignorant under the sheltering care of godly fathers and godly mothers in the homes of their childhood. Let them never be ashamed of that which is founded on the Word of God however few receive them. It has been a long cherished dream of ours that some day or other a small magazine would be published suitable for the young people of our Church

in which matters of special interest to them might be discussed but whether we shall ever see this dream realised remains to be seen.

There are among our readers, we have no doubt, quite a number whose thoughts are solemnly turned to the end of their earthly journey. They are being reminded in many ways that they are not to live always here. The years have passed over their heads without their knowledge and now they feel themselves within sight of the end. To some no feeling of regret will grip their heart for while they may not have full assurance of their salvation yet they hope they can say if only with faltering tongues—"I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II. Tim. i. 12). For them life has not been a barren wilderness eaten up at the end with infinite regrets; they had their struggles; the battle with sin, the flesh and the world, at times, seemed to go sore against them but they are within sight of the last enemy and the last conflict. They came into this world children of wrath and they are leaving it the heirs of the hope of eternal life through the kindness and love of God their Saviour. But what shall we say to those who have no right to entertain such a hope? How solemn it is when, as Dr. Macdonald puts it, Age and Ignorance and Death meet. Still He has not yet risen to shut the door forever and as the hours of opportunity are flying swifter than a weaver's shuttle it behoves the aged unconverted to cry to God to have mercy on them and pray that His blessed Spirit may teach them now to do so.

There are many of our readers who do not come within the categories of those we have mentioned as far as age is concerned and here again we have the two classes—the saved and the unsaved. Have the passing years any message for them? Many of them are still in the full vigour of youth, they are keen and eager, they are going to do great things. Those whose days are passing into the sere and yellow leaf cannot help at



times looking on with pleasure as they witness the zest with which youth tackles the obstacles that lie strewn across its path. This zest, if directed in right channels, is a God-given gift and may under His guidance prove an unspeakable blessing to His cause in the world. There are mighty problems facing the world to-day and those who are entering on the long drawn out battle line have a tremendous struggle before them but with grace in their hearts and zeal for the glory and truth of God and with full purpose to continue the conflict in His strength who knows what work may be done for His sake in these islands? But graceless warriors, however much they may lay about them with weapons of their own furbishing, will fail in the day of trial. Happy are those who have believed and who are equipped with the whole armour of God for they shall be valiant and do exploits in the name of their King and it shall not be said of them they failed when the Cause of truth needed help.

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### **“The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.”**

“The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.” (*Mark i. i.*).

By the late Prof. JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER, D.D., Princeton.

#### **I.**

**A**MONG the incidental disadvantages attending the inestimable privilege of early and life-long familiarity with the Word of God, is the habit of confounding things really distinct, and especially of overlooking the characteristic peculiarities of the sacred writers, which were not all destroyed by inspiration, and a due regard to which is often necessary to their just interpretation. In no part of the Bible is this error more common or injurious than in the Gospels, which the great majority even of devout and believing readers are too much in the habit of

regarding as precisely alike in plan and purpose, whereas no other books on the same subject could be more distinctly marked by individual peculiarities, some of which are of the most minute and unimportant nature in themselves, but for that very reason less likely to have been invented or contrived for any purposes of deception.

Many who have read the Gospels all their lives, would be surprised to hear that Matthew uses the word "then" more frequently than all the others put together—that Mark is almost equally exclusive in his use of "immediately"—that John alone has the double Amen, Amen—and a multitude of other minute differences equally unimportant in themselves, but equally demonstrative of individuality and independence in the several writers. The same thing is true as to other differences more important in themselves, and relating not to mere forms of expression, but to plan and method. Thus Matthew cites the prophecies, and points out their fulfilment so much more frequently than Mark and Luke, that his Gospel is by some regarded, not so much as history, as a historical argument, intended to show that Jesus was the Messiah of prophets. Mark is distinguished by his use of Latin words and explanation of Jewish customs, showing that he wrote immediately for Gentile readers; on the other hand, he frequently records the Aramaic or vernacular expressions used by Christ, with a Greek translation, such as *Talitha cumi*, *Ephphatha*, *Corban*, *Abba*, father. Another peculiarity of this Evangelist is, that to him we are indebted for almost all our knowledge of our Saviour's looks and gestures; as we are to Luke for many interesting glimpses of His devotional habits—such as His spending whole nights in prayer, His praying at His baptism, and before the choice of His apostles, and in other cases. John, besides the general differences, arising from the commonly admitted fact that he wrote to complete or supplement the others, dwells chiefly on our Lord's discourses, and relates His actions chiefly as connected with them. On the other hand, it is to him we owe our knowledge of the chronology

or dates of our Lord's ministry—it is he that enumerates the passovers and several other feasts included in that period, and thus shows us that His ministry or public life on earth continued for above three years.

These points of difference between the Gospels are selected out of many that might just as easily be given, in illustration of the general statement, that while all were equally inspired and all are perfectly harmonious, each writer has his own peculiarities, not only of expression, but of plan and method. This is a matter, not of learned criticism, but within the reach of every careful and attentive reader, and if properly noticed, would greatly tend, not only to elucidate the Gospels, but to make them interesting,—in other words, to aid both the understanding and the memory. A due regard to these peculiarities would lead to the correction of another error, far too prevalent in reference to this delightful part of the Scriptures,—that of regarding the four Gospels, not as complete histories, but as mere collections of materials, out of which we are to frame the history for ourselves; a mistake which has occasioned not only a vast waste of time and labour in attempts to reduce the four accounts to one continued narrative, but has also contributed directly to the disregard of those peculiarities which have been already mentioned as belonging to the several books, but which, of course, are overlooked and confounded in the process of condensing four books into one.

The simple truth appears to be, that God, for wise and holy purposes, which are only in part visible to us, or discovered by us, was pleased to put the life of Christ on record for the edification of His people, and the glory of His own name, not in one, but in four distinct accounts, each complete in itself, with reference to its own specific purpose, and the definite impression it was meant to make upon the reader's mind, yet all completing one another in relation to the general aggregate or sum total of the impression meant to be conveyed. In this

respect they have been likened to four portraits, or four landscapes, exhibiting one and the same object, but in different lights and from different points of view, yet all of course harmonious and consistent. As it would be absurd to cut up and amalgamate the paintings, so is it no less absurd to destroy the individuality of the Gospels by reducing them to one. They are, indeed, to be harmonized in order to elucidate their meaning, and exhibit their consistency, but not in such a way as to destroy their separate existence, or confound their individual peculiarities. No harmony can or ought to take the place of the original Gospels, which were meant to be read separately to the end of time, and with a careful observation of their several characteristics, even of such as in themselves may seem to be wholly unimportant.

Among these is the way in which they open, and the point from which they set out, in recording the biography of Jesus Christ. Matthew begins with His genealogy, and shows by a formal and authentic pedigree, perhaps extracted from official records, His descent from Abraham and David. This is not so much a part of his narrative as a documentary introduction to it, after which he sets out from the conception and nativity of the Saviour. Luke goes back to the previous conception and nativity of John the Baptist, His forerunner. John goes still further back, to teach the doctrine of his pre-existence; while Mark omits all this, plunging at once into the midst of his subject, and beginning with the official life or public ministry of Jesus; "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

These words admit of several constructions, each of which has something to recommend it, and none of which are utterly exclusive of each other; so that all of them may be allowed to suggest something to the mind of the reader.

The simplest construction, and the one most probably intended by the writer, is that which makes this a description of the whole book, or a statement of its subject. This is the beginning of the life of Christ, or here beginneth His recorded history. It

is equally grammatical, however, to connect the words with what follows, as a part of the same context; "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ was as it is written in the prophets;" or, "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ was John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness." These are not only positive constructions, but suggest important facts in the life of Christ, as will be afterwards particularly mentioned.

In the meantime I invite your attention to two topics, suggested by the words themselves, however they may be connected with what follows; one of which is really included in the other, or is a mere specification of it. The first and most general of these topics is *the gospel*; and the second and more specific, is *the beginning* of the gospel. Either of these would be sufficient by itself to furnish ample food for meditation and instruction, even if we merged the mere beginning in the whole, of which it is the part, or considered the whole only with respect to its beginning. I prefer, however, to present the two precisely as they lie together in the text, only giving the precedence to the general subject, and the second place to its specification. Or, in other words, first considering the gospel as a whole, and then the beginning of it in particular.

In carrying out this suggestion, it may be convenient to resolve each of these topics into two inquiries, under the general subject of the gospel: Considering first, What it is?—then, Whose it is?—Under the more specific head, Of the beginning of the gospel, asking first, Where it began of old And secondly, Where it begins now By this division and arrangement, I may hope to assist both your understandings and your memories in the brief examination which I now propose to make of this interesting passage, not as a matter of mere curious speculation, but as a source of instruction and improvement.

1. Our first theme, then, is the gospel; and our first inquiry, What it is?

This may seem to some too elementary a question, and to others too extensive; but I merely ask you to consider for a moment, and in quick succession, the elements really included in this most familiar term, which, like others of the same sort, often conveys very vague ideas even to the minds of those who most familiarly employ it. There are few kinds of knowledge, and religious knowledge is certainly not one of them, in which it is not often both agreeable and useful to go back to elementary ideas and first principles, and even to the simple definition of the most familiar terms. I do not scruple, then, to put the question both to you and to myself; *What is the gospel?* and to answer, in the first place:—

(1.) That the word, both in Greek and English, originally means good news, glad tidings,—a delightful phrase, expressing a delightful thing, awakening a thousand sweet and tender recollections. Who has never heard good news? Who cannot call to mind the thrill of joy which such intelligence once darted through him? To some the experience may be fresh, to others, faded; perhaps dimmed and neutralized by many an intervening alternation or vicissitude of bad news and of mournful tidings. Yet even in this case it is often possible to look back through these intervening changes, and to reproduce in some degree the exquisite delight occasioned at some distant period, by the reception of good news from some beloved object, perhaps far removed. This is an experience which can never grow obsolete. Increasing facilities of communication only multiply its causes and occasions. Even now, how many are rejoicing in glad tidings by the last arrival from some distant shore; how many anxiously, yet hopefully, expecting to receive them by the next! I appeal to these associations, not for any rhetorical or sentimental purpose, but simply to awaken the appropriate feeling which belongs to the very definition of the gospel—good news—good news—not in some abstruse or transcendental sense, but in the plain, homely, everyday sense of the same words, as employed in the dialect of common life. Why is it that the very terms

and phrases which inflame or agitate us in our ordinary parlance fall so lifeless on the ear and heart when uttered in connection with religion? Partly because our whole state of feeling on religious subjects is too cold and dead; partly because we wilfully divorce religious terms from their natural association, and treat them as belonging to another.

Gospel, I tell you, is good news in exactly the same sense that it was good news when you heard of the recovery or escape of a parent or child, a husband or a wife, a brother or a sister, from some fearful peril. Recall that feeling, and then use it to explain the phrase, good news, as a definition of the gospel. If you leave this out, your whole conception is a false one. Whatever else may yet be added, and it is much, this is the original, essential, fundamental notion. There can be no gospel without good news, though there may, in a restricted sense, be good news where there is, alas! no gospel.

(2.) Having settled this as the primary, elementary idea of the gospel, as glad tidings—just as the same words are used to signify good news from man to man—from house to house—from one place to another, such as burdens our mails and thrills along our telegraph wires,—let us now take another step, and add to this simple definition of the gospel, as a term of Scripture and religion, that it is good news from God to man—from heaven to earth—from the infinitely blessed and the infinitely holy to the lowest depths of human wretchedness and sin. It is not good news from America to Europe, or from the old world to the new; it is a voice from heaven, breaking through the silence or the discord of our natural condition. Oh, if we were half as sensible of this condition as we are of temporal anxieties, and fears, and wants— instead of listening coldly to this news from heaven, we should wait and watch for it, as eagerly as any mother now lies sleepless listening for the signal of a new arrival to relieve her fears and fill her cup to overflowing by glad tidings from her distant child. Oh, could the tumult of

this life cease to fill our ears even for a moment, we might hear another sound, to which we are now deaf—good news, good news from heaven—from heaven to earth—from God to man—to us—to you—to me—glad tidings. This is gospel, but is it the meaning of that word to you, my hearer?

(3.) Now let us make our definition more precise, by adding still another term. Good news, glad tidings, from the upper world, would be delightful if they related only to our natural necessities. If the voice of God were heard proclaiming peace instead of war, abundance in the place of want, and health for sickness—how might we rejoice, nay, how do we really rejoice in the sure though silent pledge of fruitful seasons and abundant harvests. But these, however free and entitled to our warmest thanks, can never meet our chief necessities—can never satisfy the soul. Its cravings are for spiritual good; its worst pains are the consciousness of guilt, remorse of conscience, and a fearful looking for of judgment. These may be smothered for a time but not for ever. Worldly prosperity may hide them from view, and drive them from the thoughts, just as the excitement of business or pleasure may distract the mind of the diseased and dying; but only to rush back again with tenfold anguish, when the momentary interruption shall have ceased. My hearers, no good news is good news in the highest sense, unless it reaches these necessities, supplies these wants, and remedies these evils. Without this, good news, even though sent from heaven, even though uttered by the voice of God, would be but like the good news of some half-forgotten social or political success, at which your heart has long since ceased to beat, your eye to sparkle, and your blood to boil.

With such experiences—and who is utterly without them?—no good news is good news to your sober judgment and your immortal soul—but good news in relation to your sins and your salvation, your future, your eternity. Oh, if the mask could now be taken from every heart, it would be seen that many who



appear engrossed with temporal and secular intelligence, are really longing for good news of a very different kind—for the glad tidings of forgiveness, reconciliation, safety—for the joyful news that God is not their enemy, that hell is not their portion, that they may be, that they are entitled to a share in that perpetual inheritance—that indefeasible possession which lies far beyond the changes, and panics, and convulsions of this present life. You must hear such news sooner or later, or be wretched; and such, such news you may hear now, in “the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.”

*(To be continued.)*

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## **“Things Which are Most Surely Believed Among Us.”**

*(Continued from page 324.)*

### **(3) THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN.**

**T**HIS is a doctrine against which the heart of the natural man rises in rebellion. It meets with tremendous opposition from graceless professors of religion and Modernists spurn it as something not to be mentioned in the hearing of enlightened men. But this doctrine is no more to be set aside than others simply because of the opposition it meets with. To the law and to the testimony we make our appeal and there we will find abundant evidence that the doctrine is clearly taught. By total depravity is meant an entire want of desire to seek God's glory, to love holiness, to submit to His will. The heart of man proclaims in a thousand ways its total alienation from God; no unrenewed man ever seeks after God or desires that He would be his portion. The apostasy from God is total. At the formation of our Church this doctrine came prominently to the fore in view of the erroneous teaching of the Declaratory Act on the subject and as we have dealt with the matter in the pages of the Magazine before we may be allowed to re-state

what was written then :—The objectionable clause (IV.) of the Declaratory Act which touches on the subject is as follows : “That in holding and teaching, according to the Confession of Faith, the corruption of man’s whole nature as fallen, this Church also maintains that there remain tokens of his greatness as created in the image of God; that he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty; that he is responsible for compliance with the moral law and with the gospel; and that, although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy.” For the sake of comparison, the Confessional statement on the total depravity of man may be quoted :—“From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions” (chap. vi., sec. iv.)—“Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto” (chap. ix., sec. iii.). These sections in the Confession teach as plainly as words can put it the scriptural doctrine of the total depravity of man. What, then, is really meant by this doctrine may now be asked? In reply we cannot do better than quote Dr. Charles Hodge on the subject :—“This universal depravity of men,” he says, “is no slight evil. The whole human race, by their apostasy from God, are totally depraved. By total depravity, is not meant that all men are equally wicked; nor that any man is as thoroughly corrupt as it is possible for a man to be; nor that men are destitute of all moral virtues. The Scriptures recognise the fact, which experience abundantly confirms, that men, to a greater or less degree, are honest in their dealings, kind in their feelings, and beneficent in their conduct. Even the heathen, the Apostle teaches us, do by nature the things of the law. They are more or less under the dominion

of conscience, which approves or disapproves their moral conduct. All this is perfectly consistent with the Scriptural doctrine of total depravity, which includes the entire absence of holiness; the want of due apprehensions of the divine perfections, and of our relation to God as our Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, Governor, and Redeemer. There is common to all men a total alienation of the soul from God, so that no unrenewed man either understands or seeks after God; no such man ever makes God his portion, or God's glory the end of his being. The apostasy from God is total or complete. All men worship and serve the creature rather than, and more than, the Creator. They are all, therefore, declared in Scripture to be spiritually dead. They are destitute of any principle of spiritual life" (*System. Theol.*, II. 233).

1. The Declaratory Act's statement, in speaking of man's fallen condition as "the corruption of man's whole nature," is open to objection, for though it is the truth so far, it is not the whole truth. The Confessional statement is much stronger and is in accordance with Scripture when it sets forth that "we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil." In other words, man's whole nature is not only corrupt, as the Declaratory Act sets forth, but is totally corrupt. It is possible to conceive of the whole nature being corrupt, but not totally so.

2. The Reformed theologians did not deny to man in asserting the doctrine of total depravity that he is in possession of virtues (*justitia civilis*) in a limited sense. But they were careful to point out that such virtues terminated on the creature and not on the Creator, and that while they met with approval from men as acts between man and man, yet there was in them a fatal defect towards God. The Declaratory Act here in its efforts to soften the statements of the Confession has not been careful enough in conserving the truth. For instance, to put such a statement as the following in an explanation of a creedal document:—"That he [man] possesses a knowledge of God and

of duty [and is] capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy," is evidence of the want of care if not worse, of the framers of the Declaratory Act. In their effort to safeguard the *justitia civilis* of the Reformed theologians, which is better and more clearly stated by Dr. Charles Hodge in the paragraph quoted above, they were not sufficiently careful to safeguard the doctrine of man's total depravity, and it is quite evident that their aim was to present a phase of this doctrine that would be more acceptable to the modern mind. To say that man "possesses" a knowledge of God is a statement open to grave misunderstanding. Fallen man certainly may have a natural knowledge of God and of His works in creation and providence, and these and the light of nature leave him inexcusable, "yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of His will which is necessary unto salvation" (chap. i., sec. 1). The Confessional teaching is further set forth in the words: "Works done by unregenerate men, although, for the matter of them, they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others; yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God; they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God. And yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God" (chap. xvi., sec. vii.). The Declaratory Act statement, therefore, that man possesses a knowledge of God and duty, and that he is capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy as it stands in the Declaratory Act without qualification or explanation is anti-Confessional and anti-Scriptural. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. liii. 3). All such actions, whatever they may be in men's eyes, are sinful in God's. The knowledge of God and Jesus Christ is life eternal, and to say that man possesses a knowledge of God without any qualifying statement is in the direct face of the teaching of Scripture.

Man is spoken of as being without God, and the Apostle in writing to the Corinthians says that the world by wisdom knew not God. The Declaratory Act framers, if they had been more careful theologians and guided more by the Scripture, would have inserted the qualifying word "natural" before knowledge, and should then have said "may possess" instead of "possesses."

3. The next statement in this Clause which demands our attention is:—"He [man] is responsible for compliance with the moral law and with the gospel, and that though unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God," etc. The opening words of this section are very suspicious in view of their relation to the words that follow. Man's responsibility, as would appear from these words, is based not so much upon God's authority, as on the power arising from his so-called knowledge of God and duty. According to the teaching of the Reformed theologians, man has a responsibility in keeping the law and obeying the gospel, but they never taught that his responsibility was founded on or limited by his ability. They made it quite clear that while man was utterly unable to do what was required of him, yet he was not relieved from his responsibility. It is this failure to conserve the doctrine that by the fall man "wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation" that led the framers of the Declaratory Act to say that man, "although unable without the aid of the Holy Spirit to return to God, he is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy." The doctrine of man's total inability is so clearly taught in the Scripture that it is unnecessary to dwell at great length on the subject, but merely to note in passing that such explicit statements as man being dead in trespasses and sins, and that Scripture nowhere affirms that man possesses any ability to return to God are convincing enough to any reasonable person. The Declaratory Act statement leans very heavily towards, if it is not out and out, Semi-pelagianism, as may be

seen from Dr. A. A. Hodge's definition of that heresy. He thus defines it:—“(a) Man's nature has been so far weakened by the fall that it cannot act aright in spiritual matters without divine assistance. (b) This weakened moral state which infants inherit from their parents is the cause of sin, but not in itself sin in the sense of deserving the wrath of God. (c) Man must strive to do his whole duty, when God meets him with co-operative grace, and renders his efforts successful. (d) Man is not responsible for the sins he commits until after he has enjoyed and abused the influences of grace” (*Outlines of Theology*, p. 338). From this definition of Semi-pelagianism it will be seen how closely in touch the Declaratory Act teaching is with some of the leading principles of the heresy. Its “co-operative grace” has its counterpart in the doctrine of the Declaratory Act, and the whole Clause was framed evidently with the intention of softening the Scriptural doctrines of man's total depravity and his inability to any spiritual good accompanying salvation. Over against the Declaratory Act teaching may be set the Confessional statement which has clear Scripture authority:—“When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, He freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by His grace alone enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good” (chap. ix., sec. iv.).

What Dr. Warfield says of the American attempt at the revision of the chapter on Effectual Calling may truthfully be said of the Clause under discussion:—“A certain shyness,” he says, “in treating of the subjective effects of sin is already traceable in the modification proposed for chap. vi., sec. 4, and xvi., sec. 7, as if the Committee were afraid the evil effects of sin might be over-stated . . . . Of similar import is the proposal to cast out of our Confession that ‘man by his fall into a state of sin hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation’ . . . . The question which the Church is asked to face by the proposition to make these two changes, when stripped of all confusing side-issues, is

simply and nothing less than this: whether she is prepared to remove her testimony to the essential Reformed doctrine that man is passive in the first moment of conversion, and whether she is willing to desert common Confessional Protestantism in its assertion of the inability of will of the sinner to all spiritual good" (*Pres. and Reformed Review*, III. 328).

(*To be continued.*)

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### Evil Surmisings.

AND what are evil surmisings? The apostle Paul classes them with pride, ignorance, envy, strife, railing, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and such like. This is placing them in bad company, where they properly belong. A "surmise" is a suspicion, an imagination that something may be wrong of which there is no evidence at all, or none which warrants the suspicion. An "evil surmise" is an injurious and unwarranted suspicion, which one person harbours toward another. He *may* be censurable, but there is no evidence that he is; and oft-times a little inquiry and a little charity would satisfy the surmiser that he has no ground of suspicion.

The observations of a pretty long life have satisfied me, that these evil surmisings are fraught with infinite mischief in neighbourhoods and larger communities. As such all persons ought to be put on their guard against indulging them, and the grievous wrong of cherishing them ought to be placed in its true light. It is a dictate of common justice, as well as of scripture, that in judging of other men's characters we should put the most favourable construction upon their actions which the circumstances of the case will allow. We all hold them bound to do so by us, and the golden rule binds us just as strong as it does them. Instead of giving place to evil surmisings, to injurious suspicions concerning others, we are religiously bound to exercise that charity of the *thirteenth* of Corinthians, which "hopeth all

things and believeth all things." It is often, if not always, as sinful and malignant to cherish suspicions against a man, as it is to speak evil of him without cause; as it is to slander him. The wrong, the mischief, is not the less because the venom works secretly. It may rankle as deeply in the heart of the surmiser, and in the end be as destructive of all confidence and good neighbourhood.

Mr. A., being of a jealous disposition, imagines that his neighbour, Mr. B., is not friendly to him. By putting things together which perhaps have no connection but in his evil surmisings, he persuades himself that Mr. B. is secretly trying to undermine or injure him and his family in some other way. The more he broods over it, the stronger do his suspicions become, till every word and action which can possibly be seized upon goes to confirm them. Mr. B. is undoubtedly his enemy, and not to be trusted.\* To be sure there is no evidence of it, but his evil surmisings have supplied the deficiency. Now if, instead of entertaining them, he would put the most favourable construction upon his neighbour's intentions, all his suspicions would perhaps be allayed at once. Or if not, by just going to him, and frankly asking for an explanation, he might be perfectly satisfied in five minutes.

So Mrs. C. imagines that Mrs. D. in the next house slights her, and purposely shuns her society, when such a thought never entered into the heart of Mrs. D. It is an evil surmising which ought never to have been given place to, "no, not for an hour." And so I might go on to the end of the alphabet. There is no estimating the evils which grow out of groundless suspicions, which often lurk in half the families of a populous neighbourhood. There are surmises and counter-surmises without number, which, where they are indulged, inevitably ripen into strife, evil speaking, and the indulgence of all those jealousies and evil passions which destroy the peace of society. So long as men are disposed to think well of one another, and look upon the



favourable side, they can hardly fail of dwelling together in harmony; but as soon as ever they "give place to the devil," by indulging in evil surmises, trouble and open discord are sure to follow. This is true, not only in the social relations of life, but in religion, in politics, and in all other relations. O, when will men be governed by the spirit of the gospel? When will their minds be imbued with that charity which "suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, which seeketh not her own, which believeth all things, hopeth all things, and never faileth?"

It is a righteous retribution, that evil surmisings torment those who indulge them as much as they wrong those towards whom they are indulged. I hold it impossible that any person can be happy, can enjoy a quiet and peaceful state of mind, who is jealous, who is suspicious of his neighbours, without proof. It is an uncomfortable feeling. It sours and irritates the temper. It stirs up the bile. The evil surmiser may not know what the matter is, but he really makes himself unhappy, and, till he learns to look upon others with charitable eye, he will be. "Can a man take coals of fire in his bosom and not be burned?"

And one thing more: a person who indulges himself in evil surmisings, who is suspicious of everybody, and ready to ascribe sinister designs and motives to his neighbours, lays himself open to the retort, which may have as much truth as severity in it, "You judge others by yourself." "How could you, without a particle of evidence, suspect me of such a thing, if you was not conscious of being chargeable with something equally dishonest or dishonourable yourself?"

As we would be judged by the golden rule, as we value the rights of others, and our own peace of mind, let us put all these *evil surmisings* far from us. The moment they tempt us to harbour them, let us chase them away. Evil surmising poisons the mind with the poison of hell and ought to be shunned as the devil.—*Christian Treasury*.

## A New Year Motto.

**Y**OU know our custom. We begin the year always with a motto. Ours for 1790 is, "Trust in Him at all times." Our bodies, and souls, and families, the Church, the State, at home and abroad, call for much trust in God. The word *trust* means to lean upon anything which you think will support you; and you will do it with more or less confidence, as you are persuaded it is able to keep you from falling. This is a beautiful idea of faith, as it respects the word of God—*our ground to lean upon*.

It may be done safely, it may be done happily, at all times. No case of sin or misery so desperate, but the word reaches it with a promise; and faith mixed with the promise brings deliverance from all sin (Rom. viii. 1-3), from all misery. If it continues, it does good (Rom. viii. 28), and, in the best time, a happy issue. Oh, what a blessing is there in this passage! You have been tried lately in this fire, and you will again, and soon. Read it over and over, digest it; you will find it a sovereign cordial in an hour of need.

The weakest believer has an almighty arm to lean upon in every trial, trouble, or temptation. He cannot fall, unless his faith fails (Isa. xxvi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. xii. 7-10). Strong in faith, strong in all. Our Jesus is able to save to the uttermost: you may cast safely all your sins, and all your cares, upon God. His almighty power is with you and for you. He said once, and we find it true to this day, "Fear not; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Who can tell the full meaning of this promise? However, leaning upon it, we may go with confidence through all the troubles of life, yea, through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil.

Oh, what a year would this be, if we could always bring these principles into practice, without doubt or wavering! For you see that in all cases, in all times, we are commanded to trust God in Christ, and in trusting we shall find, 1. Salvation; 2. The joys of it; and, 3. The security of it; the Lord's strength

being our keeper, and our sure refuge in life and death from all possible evil. These are some of our encouragements to set out in this new year with fresh spirits, that we may hold out, and go on from faith to faith. There is no temptation, enemy, danger, or corruption which should stop us. Nay, these are so many motives for depending on God's promised help; so that neither what we feel within, nor fear without, should make us withdraw our confidence.—*W. Romaine.*

### The Christian's Difficulties.

A good old Christian man was asked if he had much trouble with his temptations; this is what he said: "Indeed I have trouble with them, and this is what I have to do every day; I have two falcons to tame" (a falcon is a bird of prey like an eagle, but much smaller); "two hares to keep from running away; two hawks to manage; a serpent to confine; a lion to chain; and a sick man to tend and wait upon."

"Why, that can't be," said his friend, "no one could attend to all those things at once."

"Yes, indeed," said the old man, "it is just as I have said. The two falcons are my two eyes, which I must diligently guard lest they should look at something dangerous to my soul; the two hares are my feet, which I must hold back lest they should run into sinful ways; the two hawks are my two hands, which I must keep from 'picking and stealing,' and with which I must 'labour truly to get mine own living'; the serpent is my tongue, which I must keep from 'evil, lying, and slandering'; the lion is my heart, which I have to struggle with all the time, to keep from evil thoughts and feelings; and the sick man is my whole self, which always needs my watchfulness and care."—It would be good practice for every good Christian to consider himself in the same position as this dear old fellow, and try to master each temptation by lifting up his eyes to heaven and saying, "By Thy power, Lord." God would give us the victory.—*Extract from an American Paper.*

## **Trials of Thomas Boston at the Beginning of his Ettrick Ministry.**

*(Continued from p. 329).*

### II.

**T**HIS humour of deserting my ministry, and breaking off from under it, continued from time to time, without any notable stop, till the affairs of Closeburn\* brought it about nine years after. Since that time there has been a remarkable settling among them, in that point; howbeit, even since that time I have had as much of that treatment as will not suffer me to forget where I am. This deserting of my ministry was the more heavy to me, that ordinarily I knew nothing about it from any hand, till after a while that the parties were gone off, and confirmed in their way, and that few had any consideration of me, in hiring such into their service. This last continues in some measure to this day; though the occasion is not so much now, as before; insomuch that among the first servants my own elder son had, and that by advice or approbation of an elder or elders, was one who would have gone out of the house if I had come into it to visit the family.

Meanwhile Satan raged in stirring up to the sin of uncleanness; so that, by the spring 1709, besides several fornications, there were two adulteries in the parish discovered: and I had heavy work with both. These things often made me look, with a sorrowful heart, on the congregation, as in the case of the Church of Corinth, burnt up with the fire of division, and drenched in fleshly abominations.

My discouragements increase daily among this people, by reason of the divisive temper inflamed by the late fast, so that there are several of them whose faces I have not seen since that time. My circumstances are extremely heavy; they seem to have little desire for the gospel: the most weighty truths look as nauseous to them; though if anything relating to

\* The reference is to his call to Closeburn.—*Editor.*

the public fall in, they use to prick up their ears. Some have never come to the ordinances since I came, being led by mere laziness and profane neglect; besides those that were always dissenters from the Established Church. Those that come, many of them think nothing of staying away several Sabbaths; and when they come, they are generally very uncomfortable. My wonted exercise of conversing with exercised souls is gone; there is no converse but about the division; the practice of godliness is thereby stifled, and burnt up with the fire. The crown is fallen from my head, and I am brought very low. The approaching Sabbath, that sometimes was my delight, is now a terror to me; so that it is my business now, to get my forehead steeled against brass and iron. On Sabbath was fourteen days, I felt the sad effects of giving way to discouragement, and this put me on my guard. I have sometimes asked myself, whether, if I had known all that has befallen me here, I would have accepted the call, or not? and I cannot say I durst have refused. Two things are supporting to me: 1. My clearness as to my call from the Lord, which has not been perplexed by all that I have met with, but still remained as a ground of comfort. 2. An amazing conduct of Providence in preaching the Word, whereby I am guided in my ordinary to speak to their case. As, particularly, these two last Sabbaths it fell in my ordinary to lecture on the 7th and 8th chapters of the Revelation, where I had occasion to speak largely of schism and division, with the effects thereof. And in this very time Mr. Macmillan was preaching in the bounds. And in my ordinary sermons I find the same conduct of Providence. . . . .

In April I was a member of the General Assembly: and the Oath of Abjuration being then imposed by law on those in office in the civil government, there were applications made to ministers, by several persons whom it reached, for their judgment in the point of the lawfulness or unlawfulness thereof: and ministers on that occasion coming in to Edinburgh to the Assembly, it was earnestly desired that the Assembly might

consider that matter, and give their resolution of that case. But it was waived, and men were left to their own light. This was heavy to me; and thereupon I could not but observe the justice of the dispensations, whereby about four years after it was brought to ministers' own doors. While I was yet at Simprin, I had conversed with a minister from Ireland, who had left that country upon his scrupling to take it; and whereas a neighbouring minister in the English border having missed the time of taking that oath, and therefore shifting to preach in his own congregation till another occasion of it should offer, wrote to me to preach a day for him. I had no freedom to exchange pulpits for a day with him on that occasion, and so declined it. Now it was brought into Scotland by means of the Union as several other snares have been."—*Memoirs*.

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## A Covenanter and the Confession of Faith.

IN his *Traditions of the Covenanters*, Dr. Simpson relates an extraordinary deliverance of the persecuted of which the following is a summary:—During the "Killing Times" it happened that, in Dumfriesshire, a Covenanter, on a clear moonlight night, sat down behind a bush on a lonely moor to read a book. Engrossed with the volume in his hand, which tradition informs us was the Confession of Faith, he failed to observe the approach of a troop of dragoons led by the dreaded Claverhouse. They came directly to where the lone reader sat. When they were only a few yards away did he look up, and at the same moment he was seen by the dragoons. It is hard to tell who was the more startled, the devout reader at the sudden appearance of the enemy or the ruthless dragoons at finding one so strangely occupied. He was seized at once for who could he be but a rebel (so-called). Questioned by Claverhouse as to the way and distance to a farmhouse not far off, which he named, and where, that murderous wretch stated, a party

of Covenanters were that evening assembled at worship, he was commanded to lead the way and at the same time threatened with death should he attempt to escape. What could the poor man do? To refuse the brutal command meant instant death; to comply meant the betrayal of the Lord's persecuted people whom he loved as his own life. Dazed by the sudden and desperate turn of events, ere he was well aware he found himself leading the way to the farmhouse. What a tumult surged in his breast! How his spirit within him agonized in secret cries that the Lord would make a way of escape for His persecuted and hunted people who jeoparded their lives in worshipping Him according to His command (Heb. x. 25); how he groaned inwardly, had he but known before-hand that they were meeting there, O how gladly he would have joined them, but now to be their betrayer! With leaden feet and crushed heart he crossed the moor followed by the cruel dragoons, the clear moonlight making the night like day. But the Lord's "way is in the sea and His path in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known." As the party pressed onward, all unnoticed a black cloud rose above the horizon. Steadily it climbed and drew towards the moon. Just as the party are passing a stretch of the moor full of bushes, with startling suddenness the black cloud covers the moon, plunging the earth into darkness all the more profound because of the former light. Quick as lightning the Covenanter dashed in among the bushes. In the darkness some time elapsed ere the dragoons missed him. When they did Claverhouse gave command to search the bushes for him but all in vain. Enraged at being thus given the slip by the prisoner-guide he commanded his men to shoot at random into the bushes as they failed to capture him. This the dragoons did. Now the spot where all this took place was but a quarter of a mile from the farm-house where the assembled Covenanters were worshipping and they, hearing the noise feared that evil was on foot and hurriedly and quietly dispersed in the now-dark night. When Claverhouse arrived all was orderly and quiet at

the farm,—no stranger there.” What a chain of remarkable providences, and in so short a time, all for the trial and deliverance of the Lord’s people. “As for God His way is perfect.” “The Lord killeth and maketh alive; He bringeth down and lifteth up.” “For Thou wilt save the afflicted people but wilt bring down high looks.”—F. B.

## Nadur an Duine 'na Staid Cheithir Fillte.

(*Air a leantuinn bho t.-d., 354.*)

### CEANN I.

#### ATH-GHINEAMHUIN.

“Air dhuibh bhi air bhur n-ath-ghineamhuin, cha’n ann o shìol truailidh, ach neo-thruailidh, le focal an Dé bheo agus a mhaireas gu sìorruidh.” I PHEAD i. 23.

1. *Chor*, Tha mi fuidh amharus nach 'eil mi air m' ath-ghineamhuin, a chionn nach 'eil fios agam air a' cheart àm 'san robh mi air m' iompachadh; 's cha'n urrainn mi na ceuma fo leth a lorgachadh anns an robh e air a thoirt mu 'n cuairt. *Freagradh*, Ged tha e ro-thaitneach, a bhi comasach air cunntas a thoirt air tòiseachadh, agus air teachd air aghaidh obair an Tighearn' air ar n-anama, mar is urrainn cuid de naoimh gu soilleir a thabhairt, (gidheadh tha 'n seal air am bheil an Spiorad ag oibreachadh, fathast 'na dhiomhaireachd,) cha'n 'eil so gidheadh feumail gu bhi dearhadh fìor-ghràs. Is sona dha-san is urrainn a radh, anns a' chor so, mar a thubhairt an duine dall anns an t-soisgeul, air aon ni tha fhios agam, air dhomh a bhi dall gu bheil mi nis a' faicinn. Cosmhail ris, 'nuair a chi sinn lasraichean, tha fhios againn gu bheil teine; ged nach 'eil fios againn cionnus no e' uin' a thòisich e: Mar sin feudar frinn a' ghràis fhaicinn annainn; ged nach 'eil fhios againn cionnus no e' uin' a bha e air a dhortadh 'nar cridheachaibh. Ma's urrainn dhuit an t-atharrachadh gràsmhor, a ta air oibreachadh air t'anam a breithneachadh; mu dh' aithnicheas, tu gu bheil



t'intinn air a soillseachadh, do thoil air a h-aomadh gu aontachadh ri toil Dhé anns na h-uile nithibh, gu h-àraid ann an gabhail ri slighe na slàinte trid Fir-shaoraidh air a cheusadh: is ann an diombhain a ta thu cur trioblaid ort féin, agus a' diultadh, comhfhurtachd a ghabhail, a chionn nach 'eil fhios agad, cionnus no ciod an rathad 'san robh e air a thoirt mu 'n cuairt.

2. *Cor.* Nam bithinnse a' m' chreutair nuadh, cha b' urrainn peacadh buadhachadh a' m' aghaidh mar tha e deanamh. *Freag.* Ged nach fheud sinn cluasag a chur fuidh chealgairean, gu 'n ceann a shoerachadh oirre, eadhon iadsan a ta gabhail saorsa dhoibh féin 'dol air an aghaidh 'nam peacaidhean, agus a ta deanamh gràs Dhé freagarach d' an ana-mianna, a' luidhe sios gu toilichte ann an cuibhreach na h-aingidheachd, cosmhuil ri daoine aig am bheil tlachd ann an cuibhrichean òir; gidheadh is éiginn aideachadh, "gu 'n tuit am firean seachd uairean 'san là, agus feudaidh euceart buadhachadh an aghaidh clann Dhé." Ach, ma tha thu ag osnaich fuidh throm-uallach cuirp a' bhàis, truailidheachd do naduir, a' gabhail gràin diot féin air son peacaidh do chridhe agus do bheatha, a' deanamh strì chum t'ana-mianna a mharbhadh, a' teicheadh gach la gu fuil Chrìosd air son maitheanas, agus ag amharc r'a Siorad chum naomhachaidh, ged is éiginn duit a radh leis an t-Salmadair, thug eucearta buaidh orm; gidheadh feudaidh tu radh leis-san mar an ceudna, "m'èusaontais glanaidh tusa uam," Salm lxx. 3. Cha'n 'eil an nuadh chreutair fathast a' sealbhachadh an tighe 'na aonar, tha e chomhnuidh ann an droch coimhearsnachd, eadhon, fuigheall na truillidheachd, fuigheall an naduir thruailidh: tha iad sin a' strì ri chéile chum na buadha, "Tha 'n fheoil a' miannachadh an aghaidh an Spioraid, agus an Spiorad an aghaidh na feola," Gal. v. 17. Agus tha air uairibh truailidheachd a' buadhachadh, a' tabhairt leanabh Dhé ann am braighdeanas do lagh a' pheacaidh, Rom. vii. 23. Na tugadh uime sin an truailidheachd, a ta buadhachadh an taobh a stigh dhiot, ort a cho-dhunadh anns a' chor so nach aon de chlann Dhé thu; ach bi air t-irioslachadh leis, gu bhì nì's mó air

t' fhaicill, agus gu tart ni's durachdaiche bhi ort an-déigh fola Iosa Criosda agus Spioraid: Agus dearbhaidh a' cheart ghnè sin gu bheil bith gràis annad a ta 'g iarraidh am peacadh a ta buadhachadh cho tric a' t'aghaidh, a bhi air a sgrios.

3. *Cor.* Tha mi mothachadh gluasadan a' pheacaidh ann am chridhe ni 's déine, o na thòisich an Tighearn air oibreachadh air m' anam, na bha iad roimhe sin. An urrainn so a bhi co-sheasmhach ri atharrachadh air mo nadur? *Freag.* Is uamhasach cor mhóran, eadhon iad sin ris an do bhuin Dia gu comharraichte r' an anama, a chum an ath-leasachaidh, a thilg dhiubh gach uile cheangal, agus a dh' fhàs neo-gheamnuidh agus truailidh, mar gu 'm pilleadh an diabhul gu 'n eridheachan, le seachd spiorada ni 's miosa na e féin. 'S e na their mi ris a' mhuinntir sin, gu bheil an staid anabharr cunnartach: tha iad ann an cunnart peacachadh an aghaidh an Spioraid Naoimh; uime sin, gabhadh iad aithreachas mu'm bi e tuilleadh is anmoch. Ach, mur 'eil a' chùis mar so leibhse, ged tha truailidheachd 'ga gluasad féin ni's laidire na rinn i riamh roimhe, mar, gu'm biodh uile armailt ifrinn air éirigh a chumail greim teann, a thoirt air ais fogarraiche; a deir mi gu 'm feud na gluasada sin a bhi co-sheasmhach ri atharrachadh do nàduir. 'Nuair a ta bacadh gràis air tùs air a chur air truailidheachd, cha'n iongantach ge do dh' oibricheas an truailidheachd sin ni's beòthaile na rinn i riamh roimhe, a' cogadh an aghaidh lagh na h-inntinn, Rom. vii. 23. Feudaidh gun amharus gluasadan a' pheacaidh a bhi ni's déine, 'nuair a ta beatha nuadh air a tabhairt a steach gu thilgeadh a mach. Agus mar a ta a' ghrìan, 'nuair a ta i cur a gathan tre 'n uinneig, a' nochdadh nan caimein 'san tigh, agus an gluasadan, nach robh air fhaicinn roimhe; mar sin feudaidh solus a' ghràis gluasadan agus gnìomhara na truailidheachd a nochdadh air sheol eile na chunnaic an duine riamh roimhe iad, ged nach 'eil iad da rìreadh ag éiridh no ag oibreachadh ni's déine na rinn iad roimhe. Cha'n 'eil am peacadh gu tur marbh anns an anam ath-nuadhaichte, cha'n 'eil e ach a' bàsachadh; agus a' bàsachadh bas fadalach,

air dha bhi air a cheusadh; cha'n iongantach, ged a bhios geur chomhraig 'nuair a ta e tinn aig a chridhe, agus a ta 'm bàs aig an doras. Thuilleadh air so, feudaidh buairidhean a bhi ni 's lionmhoire, agus ni 's laidire, am feadh 's a ta Satan ri strì sibhse thabhairt air bhur n-ais, a ta air dol as, no bha e 'nuair a bha e 'mhain a' deanamh dìchioll air 'ur cumail; "An déidh dhuibh bhi air bhur soillseachadh, dh' fhuiling sibh gleachda mór fulangais," ars' an t-Abstol chum nan Eabhruidheach, caib. x. 32. "Ach na tilgibh uaibh bhur muinghinn," (r. 35). Cuimh-nichibh gu bheil a ghràs foghainteach air bhur son: Agus bruthaidh Dia na siothchainnt Satan fo 'ur cosaibh gu h-aithghearr. Cha robh Pharaoh agus a chuid Eiphteach riamh co-uamhasach do na h-Israelich, as a bha iad aig an Fhairge Ruaidh, an deidh dhoibh a bhi air an tabhairt a mach as an Eiphit; ach is ann an sin a bha 'n luchd-torachd ni bu dlùithe do leir sgrios, Ecsod. xiv. Na tugadh an cor so, uime sin, oirbh a' bhunait a thilgeadh; ach bithibh air bhur falmhachadh dhibh féin, agus bithidh laidir anns an Tighearn, agus ann an cumhachd a neart, agus thig sibh as le buaidh.

4. *Cor.* Ach, 'nuair a choimecasas mi mo gràdh do Dhia, ri m' ghràdh do chuid de sholasan cruthaichte, tha mi mothachadh cuisle m' aignidhean a' bualadh ni's laidire chum a' chreutair na chum a' Chruithear. Cionnus air an aobhar sin, is urrainn mise m' athair a ghairm dheth? Ni h-eadh, mo thruaighe! tha na tionndaidhean cridhe so an taobh a stigh dhiom, agus an teas aignidhean dha, a bh' agam air uairibh air falbh; air chor, as gu bheil mi fuidh eagal, nach robh anns a' ghràdh uile a bh' agam riamh do 'n Tighearna ach boilsge agus lasair a dh' aignidhean, a leithid 's a tha gu tric aig cealgairean? *Freag.* Cha'n fheudar aicheadh nach 'eil gràdh an t-saoghail so, 'nuair a ta e riaghladh 'san duine, 'na chomhara cinnteach air staid neo-iompaichte, 1 Eoin ii. 15. "Ma ghràdhaicheas neach air bith an saoghal, cha'n 'eil gràdh an Athar ann." Gidheadh cha'n iad do ghnath na h-aignidhean a's treise, a's gluasadaiche. Feudaidh aigne duine bhi ni 's mó air gluasad air cuid a dh'

uairibh le cuspair, air nach 'eil ach beag suim aige, no le cuspair, eile, d' am bheil mór-ghràdh aige; ceart mar a ni sruthan beag air uairibh tuilleadh fuaim na ni abhainn mhór. Tha neart ar n-aignidhean ri bhi air a thomhas le daingneachd agus le suidheachadh an fhreumh; chan ann le teas an gnìomhara. Saoileamaid gu bheil neach a' coinneachadh a charaid, a bha fada as an rioghachd, tha e mothachadh a ghaoil ni's déine d' a charaid anns an àm sin, d' a mhnaoi agus d'a chloinn féin; an' abair e air an aobhar sin, gu bheil tuilleadh gràdh aige d' a charaid no ta aige dhoibh-san? Gu cinnteach chan abbair. Eadhon mar sin, ged fheud an Criosduidh e féin fhaotainn air a ghluasad 'na ghràdh ni's mó do 'n chreutair no 'na ghràdh do Dhia; gidheadh chan fheudar air an aobhar sin a radh, gu bheil tuilleadh gràdh aige do 'n chreutair, na ta aige do Dhia, do bhrìgh gu bheil gràdh do Dhia do ghnath ni's daingean ann an eridhe gràsmhor, na gràdh de shòlas 'sam bith cruthaichte, mar a tha soilleir 'nuair a ta strì ag éirigh air a leithid de dhoigh, is gur éiginn dealachadh ris an dara aon diubh. Am b' àill leibh uime sin fios fhaotainn air bhuir staid, rachaidh a steach d' ur eridheachan féin agus an sin cuiribh an dithis anns a' mheidh, agus feuchaibh eò dhiubh, a chothromaicheas sìos an aon eile: Feòraich dìot féin, mar ann an lathair Dhé, eò dhiubh a dhealaicheadh tu ri Criosd air son a' chreutair, no ris a' chreutair air son Chriosda, nam bitheadh tu air t'fhàgail gu d' roghainn anns a' ghnothuch! Ma gheibh thu mach gu bheil do chridhe toileach dealachadh ris an ni as ionmhuinne leat anns an t-saoghal air son Chriosda, aig a ghairm, chan 'eil aobhar agad a cho-dhùnadh gu bheil thu gràdhachadh a' chreutair ni's mó na Dia; ach, air an laimh eile, gu bheil do ghràdh do Dhia ni's mó na do 'n chreutair, ged nach 'eil thu mothachadh gluasad cho dian ann an gràdh do Dhia, as a ta ann an gràdh do ni-eiginn cruthaichte, Mat. x. 37. "Ge b'e ghràdhacheas athair no mathair ni 's mó na mise, chan airidh orm e." Luc. xiv. 26. "Ma thig neach air bith do m' ionnsuidhse, agus nach fuathaich e 'athair, agus a mhathair,

chan 'eil e'n comas da bhi 'na dheisciobul domhsa." O na Scriobtuir sin air an coimeas ri chéile, feudaidh sinn fhaicinn gu bheil esan a dh' fhuathaicheas ('se sin, a ta ullamh gu dealachadh ri) athair agus mathair air son Chriosda, ann an meas ar Tighearn, 'na neach a ta 'g an gràdhachadh ni 's lugha na esan; agus nach neach e a ta gràdhachadh athar agus mathar ni 's mó na esan. Thuilleadh air so, tha sibh ri thoirt fainear, gu bheil gràdh dà fhillte do Chriosd. (1.) Tha gradh mothachail dha, a ta air a mbothachadh mar shaighead anns a' chridhe, agus a' deanamh tinneas gràidh naoimh 'san anam, ag éirigh an dara cuid o easbhuidh sòlais, mar ann an cor na ceile, Dàn-Shol. v. 8. "Cuiream mar fhiachaibh oirbh, a nigheana Ierusalem, ma gheibh sibh fear mo ghraidh, gu 'n innis sibh dha, mar a ta mi tinn le gràdh!" no air an làimh eile o'n lànaehd a ta ann, mar anns a' chor sin, Dàn-Shol. ii. 5. "Cumaibh suas mi le cornaibh, sgapaibh ubhlan mu 'm thimechioll, oir a ta mi tinn le gràdh." Tha na teasan aignidhean so gu gnathaichte ann am muinntir a ta air an ùr iompachadh, a ta toirt orra "seinn ann an làithibh an òige," Hos. ii. 15. Am feadh 'sa tha faobhar teine air an iompachan òg, tha e ag amhare air muinntir eile, a ta air am meas 'nan naoimh, agus nach 'eil a' faicinn annta a leithidh de ghné agus do bhedthalachd ris féin, tha e ullamh air an coireachadh, agus tha e smuain-eachadh gu bheil ni 's lugha de dhiadhachd anns ann an t-saoghal. no da rìreadh a ta ann. Ach 'nuair a ta chupan féin a' teachd gu soerachadh fuidh bheul, agus a tha e faotainn sin ann féin, a thug air amharus a bhi aige mu mhuinntir eile, tha e ni 's mó air irioslachadh, agus tha e mothachadh an tuilleadh feum air teachd gach là gu fuil Chriosda air son maitheanaís, agus gu Spiorad Chriosd air son naomhachaidh; agus mar so fàsaidh e sìos ann an irioslachd, ann am féin-ghràin agus ann am féin-aicheadh. (2.) Tha gràdh reusanta do Chriosd, a ta as eugmhais nan gluasad inntinn sin a bha air am mothachadh anns a' cheud chor, 'ga dhearbhadh féin le meas dleasdaneach do ùghdarras agus àithne Dhé. 'Nuair a ta aig neach a leithid de ghràdh do

Chriosd, ged tha e dh'easbhuidh nan gluasad dian do ghràdh, gidheadh tha e da rìreadh faicilleach roimh' oibheum a thabhairt do Dhia gràsmhor; a' deanamh dìchioll air imeachd 'na lathair chum gach uile thoileachadh; agus tha doilgheas air aig a chridhe, air son an nì sin a ta mi-thaitneach dha, 1 Eoin v. 5. "Oir is e so gràdh Dhé, sinn a choimhead àitheanta." A nis, ged nach 'eil an gràdh mothachail sin a' mairsinn do ghnath maille ribh, gidheadh chan 'eil aobhar agaibh a mheas gur ceum cealgach e, am feadh a ta 'n gràdh reusanta a mairsinn maille ribh, nì 's mó na tha aig mnaoi fhìrinnich agus ionmhuinn, air teagamh a chur 'na gràdh g'a fear-posda, 'nuair a ta a teas-ghràdh air traoghadh.

*Ri leantainn.*

## Literary Notices.

LIFE AND SERMONS of the late Rev. J. R. ANDERSON, Minister of the Gospel, Glasgow, 1834-59. Edited by H. P. Pitt, Trowbridge. Price, 2s.

This volume contains 11 sermons with an interesting sketch of Mr. Anderson's life by the Editor, Mr. Pitt, in which he acknowledges his indebtedness to the late Rev. N. Cameron's preface to the Life and Diary of Mr. Anderson. In a letter to us his grandson, Mr. R. Wodrow Anderson, 29 St. Vincent Place, Glasgow, says: "We are selling the book at 2s. post free which is really just cost price, but I would be glad to let friends in the Highlands, who are not possessed of much of this world's goods, have a copy at a reduced figure."

THE TIGER TAMED, by R. H. BOYD. Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Bothwell Street. Price, 2s.

This is one of the most interesting missionaries' books that has come our way of late. It contains brief sketches of Indian converts in whom the grace of God shone forth with remarkable brightness. It tells of the devoted labours of the pioneer

missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church (Revs. James Glasgow and Alexander Kerr) who in the face of heart-breaking opposition and persecution saw some of the fruits of their labours in Gujarat. Mr. Boyd has a deft pen and his sketches of some of the triumphs of the Cross read like a romance. One meets with Dhanjibhai of whom the old worthies in the old Free Church days took so warmly to their hearts when he preached in the north of Scotland. The book takes its title from a sketch of one of the wild Kolis whose savage and terrorising career was brought to an end through his conversion. This took place as recently as 1900.

GOLDEN TREASURE: TALKS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE, by the late Mrs. E. A. HOUGHTON. London: R. B. Taylor, 23 Bedford Street, Strand, W.C.2. Price, 2s. 6d.

We have read these beautiful and edifying talks with unfeigned pleasure. They are written in simple language and fragrant with the gracious teaching of the Holy Spirit. They are as free from that sentimental religiosity that so mars the productions of so many books written for the young as any book we have read for long. There is here no vapid sentimentalism nor Arminian poison to drug the minds of the young. Man's utter ruin by the fall and his utter helplessness on the one hand and God's all-sufficient provision in Christ and the Spirit's divine work are set forth with refreshing clearness. If one might be allowed to offer a word of criticism it is in connection with the use of the pagan word "Sunday" for the Sabbath. Our English friends have been so accustomed to the use of it that the word does not appear so out of place to them as it does to some of us. In saying this we do not mean to say that the authoress does not inculcate careful observance of the Lord's Day for this she does on every available opportunity that comes her way. Those who are in search of interesting, solid, and Scriptural reading for the young cannot do better than purchase the book.

## Notes and Comments.

**Activities of Roman Catholic Church in Erection of Buildings.**—Throughout the country magnificent schools and places of worship are being erected by Roman Catholics. Where is the money coming from? No doubt a considerable part from Protestant ratepayers who are quietly paying the education rate assessed under the notorious 1918 Education (Scotland) Act. Last month a new place of worship was opened at Mallaig. In a cavity in the foundation stone there was placed an inscription written in Gaelic and Latin. The inscription as translated into English reads: "To promote the worship of Almighty God and to meet the convenience of the people of "Blessed Morar" faithful to the gospel of Christ since its first acceptance amongst them . . . . dedicated at the pious instance of an outstanding patron to the Scottish Apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick." By way of comment we unhesitatingly deny that the building was erected to promote the worship of Almighty God neither is it the case in receiving the Romish faith that the people of "blessed Morar" received the gospel of Christ. And how, we ask, does the Church of Rome claim Patrick?

**Mr. Brider's Gospel Book Mission to the Army and Navy.**—Mr. Brider has sent us his annual report and in reading it one feels that Mr. Brider has uphill work in carrying on this excellent Mission. Many of those who used to contribute liberally of their means are no longer here. Added to this Mr. Brider has been stricken with a dangerous and weakening illness but as his strength returned a little he took up his beloved work again. Mr. Brider, as we have mentioned before has no private means and is entirely dependent upon gifts from friends as he does not take anything from the funds contributed to the Mission. We are sure our readers interested in this work will not forget our friend and his Mission.



**The Greek Church.**—In connection with Princess Marina's marriage and the ceremony according to the Greek Church conducted in the private chapel in Buckingham Palace after the ceremony in Westminster Abbey we have been asked what the Greek Church really stands for. This is rather a big question to be answered in a short space. Generally speaking it may be said that while the Greek Church rejects the supremacy of the Pope it is very corrupt in doctrine and unscriptural in practice. It holds that original sin is not voluntary and therefore not true sin; infants are guiltless; the human will takes the initiative in regeneration but needs divine assistance (Semi-Pelagianism); that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and not from the Son, etc.

It is regrettable that the young Princess, at this important step in her life, should have given this public recognition to the Greek Church. In saying this we are not forgetful, of course, of the glaring corruptions of the Church of England but the ceremony in the chapel of Buckingham Palace seemed to say that the marriage, though duly solemnised in accordance with English law, was not altogether complete without being also solemnised in accordance with the rites of the Greek Church.

**The Clarsach (Harp) in the Church.**—Is the clarsach to have a place in the instrumental music of the Church? If one is to believe the statements of an article which appeared recently in a Glasgow weekly it is eminently suited for such a purpose. It has been used on more than one occasion in churches by a lady who was interviewed by a correspondent of the foregoing paper. The lady has a sub-conscious feeling that clarsach playing in divine worship is out of keeping with the fitness of things but soothes her conscience by quoting the words of the 98th Psalm—"Sing unto the Lord with harp." It would be as appropriate to quote Ps. 150, 4 in proof of the scripturalness of dancing in New Testament worship as to quote Ps. 98 in defence of clarsach playing in the church. The New Testament Church has passed from these instruments

and a return to them is indicative of a retrograde movement that has carnality written broadly across it. No one can forecast where the urge behind this resuscitation of Celtic culture will lead its votaries.

**Martyrs or Traitors?**—The Protestant Truth Society (31 Cannon Street, London, E.C.4) has published a very useful pamphlet under the above title. It deals with the question as to whether the Roman Catholics put to death in Queen Elizabeth's reign were martyrs for their faith or traitors to the commonwealth of England. The writer, Mr. A. W. Martin, has no difficulty in showing that these Roman Catholics were put to death as traitors to their Queen. The price of the pamphlet is two pence.

**Sabbath Delivery of Parcels.**—The public press announced that it was the intention of the Post Office authorities in Scotland to arrange for a delivery of parcels and packets in the large towns on Sabbath, 23rd December, as an experiment. This is one of the devil's experiments with which, as a generation we are constantly being treated. Surely the Post Office authorities cannot advance even the worked-to-death plea—necessity—to cover this new attack on the sanctity of the Lord's Day. Are there not thousands of educated and intelligent men among the unemployed who would be only too glad to get a job on the 24th to push through the heavy mails? It is encouraging to know that this attempt to introduce the thin edge of the wedge has met with strong protests from certain quarters.

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## 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 Communion should be sent to the Editor.

**Ordination of Rev. D. J. Macaskill.**—The Outer Isles Presbytery met within the Church at Finsbay, South Harris, on 12th December, to ordain and induct the Rev. Donald John Macaskill, M.A., to the pastoral charge of the South Harris congregation. The Rev. R. Macinnes, Moderator, presided and preached an able and appropriate sermon from Mark i. 16-18. He afterwards addressed to Mr. Macaskill the Questions put to probationers and ministers on their induction and ordination to a pastoral charge, which were answered satisfactorily by Mr. Macaskill. The Formula was then signed by him in presence of the congregation. Mr. Macaskill was thereafter ordained by solemn prayer and by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery and by the authority of the Head of the Church and in the name of the Presbytery inducted pastor of the South Harris congregation. The newly inducted pastor was then suitably addressed by the Rev. M. Gillies, and the congregation by Rev. D. R. Macdonald. The call was very harmonious and practically unanimous being signed by 47 members and 495 adherents.

We trust that prosperous days of the gospel are before our friends in South Harris. We wish them the blessing of the Lord, and pray that Mr. Macaskill will be abundantly used for the comforting of the Lord's people and may the adorable Head give him many souls for his hire.—*M. Gillies, Clerk of the Outer Isles Presbytery.*

**Church History Books.**—Friends are asked to kindly remit, before the end of February, to Rev. W. Grant, Halkirk, money received by the sale of our Church History books.

They are specially requested not to return *unsold copies* until further instructions are given regarding these. Payment should be made direct to Mr. F. Beaton, 11 Greig Street, Inverness, of money received by the sale of copies of the Confession of Faith.—*W. Grant.*

## **Acknowledgment of Donations.**

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

**Sustentation Fund.**—K. McK., Brooks, Alta., Canada, £2 0s 10d; M. G., Aviemore, 14s; J. W., Blacksboat, Morayshire, 10s; Mrs N., Fort William, Ontario, 12s 3d; Anon, Kyle, £1; Wellwisher, Portree (o/a Raasay), £1.

**Jewish and Foreign Missions.**—A. R. McL., Scourie, 12s 6d; Anon, Kilmarnock, £1; G. B., Achnacone, Glencoe, 6s; S. McL., Strathcanard, 6s 3d; M. McC., Kames, o/a E. Radasi's expenses, £1; Friend, Lochinver, £1; A. S., Glendessary, Spean Bridge, 10s; Anon, Stornoway, £1; Miss M. G., Aviemore, 6s; Interested, Inverness, 10s; K. M., Dingwall, £2. Rev. N. McIntyre acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—A Friend, Skye, £2; Mancunian, £2; Strontian, £1.

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