

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
 AND
 MONTHLY RECORD

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

"Thou hast given a witness to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."—Ps. lx. 6.

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Church Authority.

II.

(Continued from p. 285.)

IN our previous article we discussed the Church's power exercised in regard to creeds and confessions of faith. We come now to discuss the Church's authority or power as exercised in regard to ordinances. It has been given, says Dr. Bannerman, to the Church to keep up the public worship of God in the Christian society, *according to the method which He Himself has prescribed*, to administer the outward means of grace which He makes effectual by His Spirit to the edification of the body of believers, to order and dispense that external provision for gathering and perfecting the visible society of His people in this world which He has appointed for their present good (*Church of Christ*, I. 322, 323). In dealing with the subject of the administration of Church power with respect to ordinances many points of interest arise.

1. Let us begin with the public worship of God viewed in its general aspect. From what source is the duty of public religious worship derived? Is it merely a human institution that has been agreed upon by a few men, or a company of men, for purposes which they consider beneficial to their fellow-men or has it higher authority? When we turn to the Bible we will find that there has been a Church under both dispensations, the

members of which have been distinguished from the rest of the world by the faith which they held in common.

This association together with the profession of a common faith was not a mere arbitrary or human arrangement. It was an arrangement constituted by divine authority and regulated by His divine commands. After man's disastrous fall it remained with God to say whether He would ever permit man to approach in the way of worship. It was not left to the worshipper to formulate the terms on which God would be worshipped. That was a prerogative belonging to Him alone and He kept it in His own hands. So from the earliest ages we find not only man's obligation to worship God emphasised but the manner in which He is to be approached carefully prescribed and regulated by divine instructions.

It is true that the institutions of public worship have varied from age to age under different dispensations but it was always God that appointed these variations; they were not the outcome of commands given by Abraham, Moses or others. When we come to the New Testament God has not renounced His right and allowed men to decide whether they should worship Him in public or not nor has He left it with men to say the manner in which He ought to be worshipped. Public worship is a standing and perpetual ordinance of God and is regulated by divine appointment as Samuel Rutherford in his *Divine Right of Church Government* clearly points out.

The Westminster Divines in their chapter on Religious Worship say: "But the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation or any *other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture* (chap xxi. sec. i). The Church's authority is, therefore, so limited that it is not to go beyond what is prescribed in God's Word. And here it may be noted that there is a vast difference between the two leading principles recognised respectively by Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Episcopalians maintain that

what is *not condemned in God's Word* is allowable in worship with the restriction that it is not contrary to Scripture:* while Presbyterians maintain that what is *commanded* (*Matt. xxviii. 20*) in God's Word is only allowable in God's worship. It has, therefore, been the contention of our Church that the Church in her General Assemblies had no right to sanction, instrumental music and hymns, in public worship. Nor has the Church the right to sanction holy days as religious festivals because these were not commanded by God's Word.

The various parts of public worship set forth in the Confession of Faith are prayer; "the reading of the Scriptures with godly fear; the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence; singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ; are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God: besides religious oaths, and vows, solemn fastings, and thanksgivings upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner (chap. xxi. sec. 5). All these elements are part of a public ordinance and not of a private one. They are to be enjoyed by professing Christians in communion with one another.

It is because public worship does not rest for its authority on men but on God that it becomes a serious matter to withdraw from attendance on the public means of grace where His Word is purely preached, His ordinances scripturally administered and His worship conducted in accordance with the divine rule laid down in Scripture without reasons which will stand the test of God's Word. If God intended that men might worship in private to the neglect of public worship that was being conducted according to His Word He would have made it plain to us. It is to guard against this that the Westminster Divines enter the caveat

"The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authorities in controversies of faith and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written" (*Article, xx*).

in connection with the "public assemblies which are not carelessly or wilfully to be neglected or forsaken, when God, by His Word or providence, calleth thereunto" (chap. xxi. sec. vi). In the *Directory for Public Worship* the Divines likewise exhort the people to attend public worship and not absent themselves "from the public ordinances through negligence, or upon pretence of private meetings."

In regard to the exercise of Church power about the public worship of God our subordinate standards speak with no uncertain voice. In their chapter on "Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience" the Divines say: "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything *contrary to His Word*, or *beside it*, in matters of faith and worship: so that to believe such doctrines or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience and reason also" (chap. xx. sec. ii). The Larger Catechism in answer to the question: "What are the sins forbidden in the Second Commandment?" answers: ". . . . All superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, *adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others*, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent of any pretence whatsoever" (*Larger Catechism*, Quest. 109). The Shorter Catechism teaches that the Second Commandment "forbiddeth the worship of God by images, or *any other way not appointed in His Word*." Dr. Bannerman summarises the teaching of our standards on this point as follows: "The Church has no authority in regulating the manner, appointing the form, or dictating the observances of worship, beside or beyond what the Scripture declares on these points—the Bible containing the only directory for determining these matters and the Church having no discretion to add or to alter what is there fixed" (*Church of Christ* I. 337, 338).

Exceeding Great and Precious Promises.

BY REV. D. BEATON, OBAN.

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises”
—(II Pet. i. 4).

WHEN the Lord announced to Peter that Satan had desired to have him that he might sift him as wheat his gracious Master told him that he had prayed for him that his faith might not fail and He exhorted him to strengthen his brethren after his conversion. In passing through this unforgettable experience Peter learned with tears the danger of self-confidence and self-sufficiency and when he wrote the two epistles which go under his name it will be found that there is much in them to strengthen the household of faith not only among the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia but among God's people scattered throughout the world down through all the ages. In the words of the text the Apostle is directing attention to the promises of God and describes them as exceeding great and precious. *Precious* is a favourite word with Peter. He speaks of the precious blood, the precious Saviour, precious faith and in this verse precious promises. All these, however valueless to the world, were precious to the Apostle. In dealing with this portion of God's Word let us consider I. The Promiser. II. The Promises. III. The description of the Promises—exceeding great and precious. IV. Those for whom the Promises are given.

I. *The Promiser.* The value of a promise depends to a great extent on the character of the person promising and on the resources that he has at his command to make his promise or promises good. If past experience prove that the man cannot be relied on or that, however willing, he was to fulfil his promises yet that, owing to want of resources, he utterly failed, one's confidence in the fulfilment of the promise if not completely undermined would at least be shaken. No such misgiving need disturb the minds of those to whom God's exceeding great and precious promises have been given. His character and His

resources alike are pledges for the fulfilment of His promises. (1) He is the God that cannot lie. The truth of God is a pledge to His people that all His promises will be fulfilled. Joined with His truth is the immutability of His character—He changes not. We may change but he abides faithful. This union of truth and immutability are brought out in the words which the Lord put into the mouth of Balaam: "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall he not make it God?" (Nums. xxiii. 19). (2) His resources are inexhaustible; so no failure of the promise need be anticipated from this quarter. The greatness of the promise or the seeming impossibility of its fulfilment need not stagger the believer. For if faith is in lively exercise it will be said of him as it was said of the Father of the Faithful—"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith giving glory to God and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform" (Roms. iv. 20, 21). The fulfilment of the promise seemed an utter impossibility but faith in living exercise sees no impossibility when God is the Promiser and Worker. (3) But not only are the illimitable resources of God to be taken into account but also His omnipotent power. Obstacles great and formidable may stand blocking the way and the believer is too ready Zerubbabel-like to look at the mighty mountain and to think of his own power only. He sees in the removal of the mountain something that is far too great a task for human power. But it is not by human might nor power, such as Zerubbabel possessed, but by the Spirit of the Lord the obstacle is to be removed. (4) Not only have we God's truth pledged for the fulfilment of His promises but He has given His oath that His promises will be fulfilled as is clearly brought out by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews—"Wherein God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge

to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebs. vi. 17, 18). (5) God has also given the assurance of the fulfilment of His promises in Christ, promises which looked like they would never be fulfilled and the fact they were fulfilled in the most unexpected and extraordinary ways is an earnest that all His, as yet unfulfilled, promises will be fulfilled in His own appointed time. All His promises are yea and amen in Christ. (6) As the omniscient God He knows all things, the strength of the opposition that bars the way to the fulfilment of His promises, all the obstacles standing in the way and He has His plans all ready. He is not like men who may find it necessary to review or revise their plans owing to the emergencies of circumstances unanticipated and which completely upset their plans.

It will thus be seen that those for whom the promises are intended need have no feeling of fear that God will not fulfil what He has promised. As the God of truth He cannot lie and His faithfulness is pledged that His promises will not remain unfulfilled. Happy are the people who have such a God as this.

II. *The Promises.* The divine promises may be divided into two great classes: 1. Those made to the Church and 2. those made to the individual believer. The promises made to the Church are exceeding great and precious but for the present we intend to confine attention to the promises made to the individual believer. These promises are scattered throughout God's Word like the stars in the firmament of heaven and as the stars the darker the night the brighter they shine. The believer has his dark nights—doubts as to his state, fears as to the future, and perplexities in the mysterious unfoldings of God's providence—but, if by faith, the promises of God shine out how different do all things then appear. In regard to the Promises there are certain things connected with them which may be noticed in passing. (1) *Their number.* How many are the promises scattered up and down the Word of God! From the primeval promise until the last written in the Bible surely there are sufficient to meet the needs of God's great family scattered throughout the wide world. It would be an encouragement to

faith, if in reading the Bible, these promises were carefully noted and meditated upon. If God's people were what they should be they would search for these precious gems with an earnestness that would excel that of those who search for the precious stones of the earth but alas! how negligent we are and, if for a season, we begin the search we are so ready to give it up as if we were searching for only some common thing. (2) *Their variety.* The people who are being prepared for Heaven by the Holy Ghost are a people who are passing through a varied experience. Some are beset with fears; doubts track the footsteps of others; some meet with trying temptations; others are overwhelmed with trials. The infinitely wise God knows what is best suited to prepare His people for the inheritance of the saints in light. What would suit one may not suit another. Hence the Lord's promises are of a very varied nature so that whatever may be the plight of His people they may find when the Holy Spirit applies the promise that which they stand in need of. God's children are beset with many fears and how many are the promises to meet their case! "Fear not" meets us time and again in His Word. Then they are a people called upon to pass through troubles and tribulations and to meet this how many precious promises there are to meet their case! "Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. l. 15). We have the words of one who called upon his God in the day of trouble and enshrined his experience forever in the beautiful acknowledgment—"I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not" (Lamentations, iii. 55-57). Time would fail to speak of the varied experiences for which there are promises in God's Word and when these are applied by the Holy Spirit they are "exceeding great and precious." (3) *Their suitability.* God knew from all eternity the plights in which His people would be. Some are sorely tempted; others are not called upon to pass through such trying temptations. To the former the words:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. x. 13) are precious. It is when Need and the Promise meet that the preciousness of the promise is realised and appreciated.

III. *The description of the Promises*—exceeding great and precious. In this description the *exceeding greatness* of the promises is first mentioned and secondly their *preciousness*. It is in keeping with the character of the Promiser that His promises should be exceeding great. Perhaps the best way of setting forth this truth is to turn our attention to some of the promises that were made to Abraham and David. (1) *Promise to Abraham*. When Abraham received the call from God to leave his own country and kindred, God promised that He would make of him a great nation and bless him and make his name great and that he would be a blessing. He further said: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 2, 3). This promise was renewed after Lot separated from him—"Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered" (Gen. xiii. 14-16). These were wonderful words yet all that Abraham possessed of the land of Canaan was a *grave*. But the most wonderful thing in the promise is more clearly brought out in the renewal of the promise after Abraham's trial of faith—"By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing thee I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy

seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 16-18). Is the promise limited to Abraham's natural seed? No doubt the promise takes them in so far as they were to possess the land but the promise is much more far-reaching than that. It is not to "seeds" as of many but to "seed" as of one that the promise has its highest fulfilment. The natural seed of Abraham can be numbered but who shall number the seed of Him in whom all the nations of the earth are to be blessed. They are a multitude which no man can number. So this promise is an exceeding great promise. (2) So in like manner is the promise made to David—"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4). Was the promise limited to David's natural seed? Surely not; the promise pointed to Him who, while David's seed according to the flesh, was David's Lord. This, again, was surely an exceeding great promise. Other illustrations might be called from God's Word as illustrative of the exceeding greatness of God's promises.

2. But they are not only exceeding great they are also precious. Anything precious is something we set value upon—something that can never be replaced—something that money cannot buy. Now there is nothing in this world that can take the place of the promises of God for those for whom they are intended. They bring comfort which the world cannot give and cheer the drooping spirits of those that are ready to faint. All the world's wealth cannot buy this comfort and so God's promises are precious. They are precious also because they have respect to the exceeding riches of God's grace and to the goodly inheritance that is awaiting God's redeemed. How precious is the promise!: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee" (Is. liv. 10).

IV. *Those for whom the Promises are given.* These are described by Peter as those who "have obtained like precious

faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. i. 1). The exceeding great and precious promises then are not for all and sundry; in other words they are intended for the household of faith. And while it is true that the Father hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings—which include the promises—in heavenly places in Christ yet this does not say that they are always in need of all the promises at all times. Some of the exceeding great and precious promises may be nothing to them but words until they are in need. It is when the Holy Spirit directs the needy to some special promise that it becomes instinct with life and becomes very precious. It is also to be borne in mind that while the promises are so precious and so abundant God's people cannot take them and receive the encouragement from them whenever they please. It is the Holy Spirit that directs them to the promise and applies it. However, they have this encouragement that God has richly provided for their needs in this world and in the world to come. There are promises that have respect to their happy state in eternity such as "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephes. ii. 7). We close with the words of the Beloved Disciple: "This is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life" (I John, ii. 25). God's people, therefore, can look forward to the full enjoyment of life that shall never end which precious gift God bestowed upon them in the day of their effectual calling.

Should Christians Observe Christmas and Easter?

BY THE REV. W. A. AITKEN,

Reformed Presbyterian Church, North America.

IN 1925 the Reformed Presbyterian Synod declared:—

"The religious observance of Christmas, Easter or of Lenten fast and self-denials has always been discountenanced by our Church" (*Minutes of Synod*, p. 93). In view of the fact that

Christmas and Easter are now so generally observed by other denominations, we may well ask why has the Reformed Presbyterian Church sought to maintain an attitude of protest against these observances?

The Scriptures make it plain that the Word of God is to be the guide of the Church in instituting her ordinances of worship. "What is not commanded in the Word of God is forbidden." This is the Scriptural law of worship. Israel was severely chastened when she added to or diminished from the ordinances of worship which God had appointed. Speaking in his day, John Owen, the great British theologian declared that a disregard for the Scriptural law of worship "lies at the bottom of all the confusion, blood, persecution, and wars that have for so long a season spread themselves over the face of the Christian world."

For the religious observance of Christmas and Easter there is no divine authority whatsoever. The Spirit has inspired a silence in regard to the date of Christ's birth. No such custom as the Christmas idea was found in the early centuries of the Christian Church. The same may be said in regard to Easter. The only memorial of the resurrection that has divine authority behind it, is the observance of the Christian Sabbath. Believers have no more authority for the observance of Christmas and Easter than Jeroboam had for setting up altars and groves at Bethel. When the service of worship was opened at Bethel, the prophet of the Lord was present to testify against it as a rival to the worship which God had appointed at Jerusalem. In observing Christmas and Easter, believers are walking in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

The Israelites were commanded to destroy the heathen altars and groves and in no case transform them for the worship of Jehovah. But the Church of Rome has always followed the policy of adapting heathen ritual for the service of Christ. She claims the power to pour the spiritual meaning of Christianity into the religious festivals and ceremonies of Pagan peoples.

December 25th was the date of the greatest of all feasts among sun-worshippers. It celebrated the winter solstice, the birth of the new sun. Rome adapted this Pagan service into her ritual and said that on this date the Church would observe mass and partake of a festival in celebration of the birth of Christ.

In like manner, Easter, a feast observed by Pagans to celebrate the return of Spring, was adopted by the Church of Rome and devoted to the celebration of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Rome purposed that, by thus decking herself in the garment of Paganism, she would popularise Christianity and sweep the heathen into her fold. It is true that by this union the offence of the cross is made to cease, but the knowledge of the way of life in Christ is thereby made to become obscure. The joining of Christianity with Paganism in the common observance of certain festival days as memorials of leading events in these two opposite religions has resulted in profound and endless confusion.

When Jeroboam set up the altar at Bethel he not only separated the ten tribes from the divinely-appointed place of worship, but he also divorced them from the saving principles of truth underlying Israel's religion. He did not arrange for the observance of the Passover Feast, which embodied the basic principles of the Jew's religion, but chose the popular feast celebrating the ingathering of the harvest. He changed the time of the feast from the seventh to the eighth month, but was careful to hold it at the time of the full moon, that its gladdening light might rest upon the service. He cast out the Levites from acting as priests and appointed priests from the other tribes in Israel. He used the groves and high places for worship. And he brought in heathen priests.

A similar course is followed by Churches that observe Christmas and Easter. In these services divine authority and provision is set aside to give place to that which is of human origin. In spite of any efforts to the contrary, these religious observances result in celebrations which are made attractive by the sensualistic elements that enter into them, and call attention to the

events in the life of Christ in such a way as to leave these events unassociated with the saving principles which underlie Christian faith. In these observances we note : (1) If Psalm-singers decide to join in the religious observance of Christmas, one of the first acts is to cast out the Psalter, for there are no Christmas songs in it, and the hymn-book, with songs of human composition brought in. (2) Congregational singing, the right of each believer to join in the service of praise, must go, and the singing be left to a select group with voices trained to furnish a musical festival in the celebration. During the "Dark Ages," the singing in religious celebrations was monopolised and commercialised by professional choristers. Congregational singing was unknown. It took the Reformation to restore this gospel privilege to the people. (3) Pageantry takes the place of the preaching of the Word. Church plays of the nativity of Christ were introduced by the Church of Rome in the eighth century. She also developed Passion plays for the Easter celebration. This pageantry, like the picture and images of the Church of Rome, is full of fascination for the carnal mind, but fails to reveal the saving principles of the Gospel that underlie these great events. Pageantry is popular to-day in Modernistic Churches, because Modernism ignores the underlying principles of the Christian faith. The making known to the world of the doctrines essential to salvation, such as original sin, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the vicarious atonement, repentance unto life, and saving faith, depends not upon pageantry, but upon the use of God's appointed means—the preaching of the Word. (4) Giving according to man's inclination takes the place of that which has the approval of God's Word. Unbelievers, as well as believers, go to great lengths in giving gifts at these seasons. But, some may ask, what about the gifts of unbelievers? And is the "community tree" acceptable unto God? In response, we ask, will God have respect to the persons and gifts of people who reject the gift of His Son? The Scripture says that unto Cain and his offering God had not respect.

When King Saul substituted a sacrifice for obedience to God's command, he was severely rebuked. God had commanded him to wipe out a heathen tribe and to utterly destroy their substance. But Saul saved the best of the substance as "an offering unto the Lord." This unfaithfulness and presumption cost him his crown. And the Spirit of the Lord departed from him. His fate stands as a permanent warning to God's people. In the face of the increasing evidence of lack of power and the sense of the loss of the Spirit's presence in the Church to-day, should we not be anxious to know if she has been unfaithful in doing the thing which God had commanded her to do, and presumptuous in doing the thing which He had not commanded. According to the direction of the Great Commission, the Church is commanded to go forth with the gospel, which is the sword of the Spirit, and destroy the heathen religion, together with all the religious festivals attending it. The command is, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Nothing is said in the commission about sparing the best of the Pagan festivals and transforming them to the glory of God. Will not the Church experience a new consciousness of divine power and the presence of God's Spirit resting upon her when she returns to the faithful preaching of the gospel and the zealous maintenance of her God-given memorials, and discontinues the religious services that have been derived from the heathen, and which she has presumptuously sought to transform and present as an "offering unto the Lord?"

(5) In the Easter celebration, the resurrection of Christ is linked with the vernal rejuvenescence of earth. By this Satanic device, Nature is exalted to a level with grace in revealing the character of God, while the supernatural is brought down to a level with the natural. The result is that Christianity loses its significance and power. Development in this line may be gradual, but it is inevitable. When the Easter service is introduced into the Church, the pulpit is supplied with an abundance of flowers for the occasion. These are made the basis for at least a short service. Like Modernism, the flowers give a message concerning

the goodness of God, but are silent concerning sin, the atonement, and the supernatural in the resurrection of Christ, and other saving principles of the gospel. Complaints may be heard that the Easter message given in the distinctively Modernistic pulpit has had to do entirely with the flowers. In the open-air services held on the high places, the popular theme is "the resurrection of nature." In the famous Easter service on Mt. Rubidoux in California, the reading of the poem, "God of the Open Air," for many years has taken the place of a sermon. The heart of this poem is found in these lines, a prayer by the author :

"By the faith that the wild flowers show, when they bloom
unbidden;
 By the strength of the tree, that clings to its deep foundation;
 By the courage of a bird's light wings on a long migration;
 (Wonderful spirit of trust that abides in Nature's breast!)
teach me to confide, and live my life and rest."

The spirit of this poem is such as tends to devitalise Christianity and develop Paganism. It leads to the deifying of nature, and idolatry. Wherein is the fascination in the religious exercises of the Christmas and Easter celebrations? Why are they regarded with such fondness by the world? What is there in these services that so inflames the minds of those who join in them? Is it the manner of religion that is born of the Spirit, or is it the spurious type that is born of the flesh?

Is it not the fascination in these services, for the most part, to be found in the popularity of the type of religion that accompanies them, and the sensualistic elements that enter into them, and furnish a festival to the sensibilities of the natural man? Many have been led to realise that, in yielding to the fascinations of the colourful and sensational programmes of these religious celebrations, they have been enticed, and have yielded to the solicitations of the Scarlet Woman, and have been guilty of a season of spiritual fornication. Participation in these unauthorised and unwarranted Church festivals does not increase respect for the authority of Christ, but rather tends to diminish it. It does not increase respect for the ordinances of Christ's

appointment, but it does create a passion for religious services of man's device.

After Israel started to walk in the ways of Jeroboam, her history was summed up in three words, apostacy, idolatry, captivity. To-day we see a Protestantism that is walking in the way of the Church of Rome. We see a Protestantism that has lost its protest and is in bondage. In bondage to the belief that "the glorious gospel of Christ is played out, and that its original power is gone, and it needs for its success to be supplemented by arts of man's device." In bondage to the observance of "days, and months and seasons." In bondage to a sensualistic type of worship, and to emotionalism. In bondage to a growing lack of conviction or courage in standing in defence of the great principles of the gospel that secured for the world the Protestant Reformation. In bondage to an unbelief that is leading in the way of the lost tribes toward Babylon. Let us hope that the reactionary groups of to-day are the heralds of a coming great reformation. Although lightly esteemed in the eyes of the large apostate Protestant bodies, these small groups are striving not only to proclaim a sound gospel, but also to purge the Christian worship of the gross corruptions that have come into it. As a pastor of one of the groups expressed it: "The Christmas services in the Churches to-day represent the *unknown* Christ. If the world is to be saved there must be the preaching of the saving principles of the gospel." On the bill-board of another of these groups was the sermon topic, "Christmas of Romish and Pagan Origin." The expression of another church worker was: "Not Santa Claus But Satan's Claws."—*Old Paths*.

Directions for Christian Conduct.*

WORTHY and dearly beloved in the Lord, grace, mercy, and peace be unto you. I received your letter. I wish that I could satisfy your desire in drawing up, and framing

*This is a letter by Samuel Rutherford to John Fleming, a Leith Bailie.

for you, a Christian directory. But the learned have done it before me, more judiciously than I can; especially Mr. Rogers, Greenham, and Perkins. Notwithstanding, I shall show you what I would have been at myself; howbeit I came always short of my purpose.

1. That hours of the day, less or more time, for the Word and prayer, be given to God; not sparing the twelfth hour, or mid-day, howbeit it should then be the shorter time. 2. In the midst of worldly employments, there should be some thoughts of sin, death, judgment and eternity, with at least a word or two of ejaculatory prayer to God. 3. To beware of wandering of heart in private prayers. 4. Not to grudge, howbeit ye come from prayer without sense of joy. Downcasting, sense of guiltiness, and hunger, are often best for us. 5. That the Lord's Day, from morning to night, be spent either in private or public worship. 6. That words be observed, wandering and idle thoughts be avoided, sudden anger and desire of revenge, even of such as persecute the truth, be guarded against; for we often mix our zeal with our wild-fire. 7. That known, discovered, and revealed sins, that are against the conscience, be eschewed, as most dangerous preparatives to hardness of heart. 8. That in dealing with men, faith and truth in covenants and trafficking be regarded, that we deal with all men in sincerity; that conscience be made of idle and lying words; and that our carriage be such, as that they who see it may speak honourably of our sweet Master and profession. 9. I have been much challenged—(1) For not referring all to God as the last end; that I do not eat, drink, sleep, journey, speak, and think for God. (2) That I have not benefited by good company; and that I left not some word of conviction, even upon natural and wicked men, as by reproving swearing in them; or because of being a silent witness to their loose carriage; and because I intended not in all companies to do good. (3) That the woes and calamities of the kirk, and of particular professors have not moved me. (4) That at the reading of the life of David, Paul and the like, when it humbled me, I (coming so far short of their holiness) laboured

not to imitate them, afar off at least, according to the measure of God's grace. (5) That unrepented sins of youth were not looked to, and lamented for. (6) That sudden stirrings of pride, lust, revenge, love of honours, were not resisted and mourned for. (7) That my charity was cold. (8) That the experiences I had of God's hearing me, in this and the other particular being gathered, yet in a new trouble I had always (once at least) my faith to seek, as if I were to begin at A, B, C again. (8) That I have not more boldly contradicted the enemies speaking against the truth, either in public church meetings, or at tables, or ordinary conference. (10) That in great troubles I have received false reports of Christ's love, and misbelieved Him in His chastening; whereas the event hath said, "All was in merey." (11) Nothing more moveth me, and weighteth my soul, than that I could never from my heart, in my prosperity, so wrestle in prayer with God, nor be so dead to the world, so hungry and sick of love for Christ, so heavenly-minded, as when ten stone-weight of a heavy cross was upon me. (12) That the cross extorted vows of new obedience, which ease hath blown away, as chaff before the wind. (13) That practice was so short and narrow, and light so long and broad. (14) That death hath not been often meditated upon. (15) That I have not been careful of gaining others to Christ. (16) That my grace and gifts bring forth little or no thankfulness.

There are some things, also, whereby I have been helped, as :—

(1) I have been benefited by riding alone a long journey, in giving that time to prayer. (2) By abstinence, and giving days to God. (3) By praying for others; for by making an errand to God for them, I have often gotten something for myself. (4) I have been really confirmed, in many particulars, that God heareth prayers; and, therefore, I used to pray for anything, of little importance soever. (5) He enabled me to make no question, that this mocked way, which is nicknamed, is the only way to heaven.

Sir, these and many other occurrences in your life, should be looked into, and (1) Thoughts of Atheism should be watched

over, as, "If there be a God in heaven?" which will trouble and assault the best at some times. (2) Growth in grace should be cared for above all things; and falling from our first love mourned for. (3) Conscience made of praying for the enemies who are blinded.

Sir, I thank you most kindly for the care of my brother, and of me also. I hope it is laid up for you, and remembered in heaven. I am still ashamed with Christ's kindness to such a sinner as I am. He hath left a fire in my heart, that hell cannot cast water on, to quench or extinguish it. Help me to praise, and pray for me, for ye have a prisoner's blessing and prayers. Remember my love to your wife. Grace be with you. Yours in Christ Jesus. S. R.

The Rev. Rowland Hill.

REV. ROWLAND HILL, one of the celebrated evangelical preachers of England was born at Hawkstone Park, Shropshire, 23rd August, 1744, and died at London 11th April, 1833. He was educated at Eton and St. John's College, Cambridge, where he came under the influence of the Methodists. His zeal in preaching the gospel accompanied as it was with a dash of eccentricity soon made him a marked figure. For preaching in the open air in and around Cambridge without licence he was opposed by the authorities and frequently assaulted by mobs. He was refused ordination by six bishops but finally he was ordained by the Bishop of Bath and Wells to the curacy of Kingston, Somersetshire. Not only did he meet with opposition from outsiders but his own father, Sir Rowland Hill, Bart., strongly opposed him and forbade him preaching near his residence. A pious sister, however, and his brother, afterwards Sir John Hill, who were like-minded with him gave him their support. When his father died, Rowland, was heir to the baronetcy and estate but he renounced these on behalf of his brother, John. From a legacy left him by his father he built Surrey Chapel, London, in 1783. Here he preached to immense audiences till his death. Attached to the Chapel there

were thirteen Sabbath Schools with an enrolment of 3000 children. Rowland Hill visited Scotland and Ireland and wherever he went he drew immense crowds. His eccentricities, no doubt, have not been lessened in the telling but behind them all there was a deep seriousness in preaching the everlasting gospel. "I may," he said on one occasion in answer to a charge made against his style of preaching, "sometimes forget my subject but I never forget my object in preaching." The incident referred to in the verses succeeding this sketch occurred according to report while he was preaching in the open air in Moorfields, London, where a vast concourse of people had gathered. His text was Song of Solomon, i. 5: "I am black but comely." While discoursing on these words it so happened that Lady Ann Erskine in a coach corresponding with her high position passed the way. Seeing the multitude she asked one of her attendants the cause of such crowds. She was informed that it was to hear Rowland Hill. Pausing in his discourse and raising his voice the impassioned preacher said: "My brethren, I am going to hold an auction and I crave your attention." Then to their amazement he announced that it was a Lady that was to be put up for sale and that there were three bidders for her soul—the world, the devil, and the Lord Jesus. Lady Ann never forgot the preacher's appeal so strangely and unexpectedly made. She afterwards was associated with the worthy Lady Huntingdon in her religious enterprises.

The Three Bidders.*

Will you listen, friends, for a moment,
While a story I unfold;
A marvellous tale of a wonderful sale
Of a noble lady of old:—
How hand and heart, at an auction mart,
Soul and body, she was sold.

*An incident in the life of Rev. Rowland Hill. The poet takes certain liberties in describing the incident and allows his imagination a little too much play perhaps but the gist of what took place is told in an interesting way.

'Twas in the broad king's highway,
Near a century ago,
That a preacher stood,—though of noble blood,
Telling the fallen and low
Of a Saviour's love, and a home above,
And a peace that they all might know.

All crowded around to listen;
They wept at the wond'rous love,
That could wash their sin, and receive them
In His spotless mansions above:—
While slow through the crowd, a lady proud
In her gilded chariot drove.

"Make room," cried the haughty outrider,
"You are closing the king's highway;
My lady is late, and their Majesties wait,
Give way, good people, I pray."
The preacher heard, his soul was stirred,
And he cried to the rider, "Nay."

His eye like lightning flashes;
His voice like a trumpet rings.
"Your grand fête days, and your fashions' and ways
Are all but perishing things.
'Tis the king's highway, but I hold it to-day
In the name of the King of kings."

Then,—bending his gaze on the lady,
And marking her soft eye fall,—
"And now in His name, a sale I proclaim,
And bids for this fair lady call.
Who will purchase the whole—her body and soul,
Coronet, jewels, and all?"

“I see already three bidders,—
 The World steps up as the first,
‘I will give her my treasures, and all the pleasures
 For which my votaries thirst;
She shall dance each day more joyous and gay,
 With a quiet grave at the worst.’

“But out spake *the Devil*, boldly :
 ‘The kingdoms of earth are mine.
Fair lady, thy name, with an envied fame,
 On their brightest tablets shall shine;
Only give me thy soul, and I give thee the whole,
 Their glory and wealth to be thine.’

“And pray what hast Thou to offer,
 Thou *Man of Sorrows* unknown?
And He gently said, ‘My blood I have shed,
 To purchase her for mine own.
To conquer the grave, and her soul to save,
 I trod the winepress alone.

“I will give her My cross of suffering,
 My cup of sorrow, to share;
But with endless love, in My home above,
 All shall be righted there :
She shall walk in light, in a robe of white,
 And a radiant crown shall wear.”

“Thou hast heard the terms, fair lady,
 That each hath offered for thee.
Which wilt thou choose, and which wilt thou lose,
 This life, or the life to be?
The fable was mine, but the choice is yet thine,
 Sweet lady, which of the three?”

She took from her hands the jewels,
The coronet from her brow;
"Lord Jesus," she said, as she bowed her head,
"The highest bidder art Thou,
Thou gav'st for my sake Thy life, and
I take Thy offer—and take it now."

"Amen," said the noble preacher;
And the people wept aloud.
Years have rolled on—and they all have gone
Who formed that awe-struck crowd.
Lady and throng have been swept along
On the wind like a morning cloud.

But the Saviour has claimed His purchase,
And around His radiant seat,
A mightier throng, in a joyful song,
The wond'rous story repeat;
And a form more fair is bending there,
Laying her crown at His feet.

The Three Pictures, or How a Prodigal was Warned.

I WAS a young fellow at the time, and I had been living a racketty life for some six months on the Continent. With no one to check me in my folly, a full purse, and an indulgent mother at home in England who was continually advising me in her letter to see the world before I returned to settle down on my estate. What wonder that I plunged into the wildest dissipation. I drank, I gambled, and surrounded by company of the most doubtful kind I ran fast down the road to ruin. When one afternoon I strolled into a picture gallery in a quaint old town on the Rhine. My attention was at once arrested by three remarkable pictures.

THE FIRST PICTURE.

The first depicted a young man dressed in the fashion of the day sauntering leisurely along but with his eyes fixed on a hand that beckoned him to follow. The careless gaiety which was expressed in his face, and the pleasure with which he seemed to be obeying the call was depicted by a masterly hand. Flowers bloomed in his path, and bright sunshine seemed to beam all around him.

THE SECOND PICTURE.

The second picture was of a more sombre line. Again, the young man stands out as the centre figure, but his face is weary and downcast, trouble and anxiety is stamped upon his brow, and he is looking back irresolutely, as if wishing to retrace his steps. A slender cord is cast around him which the same hand as before is slowly but surely drawing along. He seems to feel its pressure and to be hesitating whether he will break it and escape, but the energy and strength before depicted in his figure seems to be deserting him, and apparently he is being led along with little or no resistance on his part. Black ominous clouds overhead are rolling up, the flowers are withering at his feet, and as I looked I gave an involuntary sigh of pity, before I turned to the third and last picture to learn his unhappy fate.

THE THIRD PICTURE.

Here he is again but the scene is so intensely painful and so lifelike in its depiction, that I shuddered as I looked! On the brink of a most awful precipice he stands, the horror of ruin stares him in the face. All the languor and vacillation of purpose has vanished now; he is struggling with all the strength of a man fighting for dear life, his head and shoulders thrown back, his heels planted firmly on a tuft of grass perilously near the edge and his hands attempting in vain to loosen the hold of a massive chain which binds him firmly in its grip. Below is depicted in all his satanic joy at a soul's destruction the Evil One himself. In both hands he is holding the end of the chain which he appears to be dragging with the greatest ease and complacency.

I felt as I looked that escape was impossible and that the young man with his haggard and despairing face and bloodshot eyes was now realising the awfulness of his doom. "What a fool to let himself be conquered," I muttered, "if only he had broken away before." And then my own course of folly flashed across me, and I saw as I had never seen before that I was being led by an invisible hand to my destruction.

And now, friend, a word or two to you from one who has sinned and suffered, but through the help of God has escaped from the Devil's power before it was too late.

Think over these Three Pictures and ask yourself the question : Where am I standing now? am I being enticed? or am I being drawn? or am I being dragged? And if you are led as I was to real anxiety about your fate, go straight in your helplessness to the only One that can free you, and He who is willing and is able to subdue all things unto Himself will deliver you and save you from the awful fate which the artist so feebly tried to depict in his last picture.

Our Lips.

HOW sinful is it to employ our lips for any but the Lord!

Yet, how sadly reluctant are we to employ them for Him! Surely the day, when perhaps we have been fluent in worldly conversation, and yet have neglected our opportunities for speaking a word for Him, must be considered a lost day! Is there not much cause for watchfulness, prayer, and self-denial, lest by our silence we should be ashamed of Him, whom by every obligation we are bound to confess? If our inability to bear a testimony for our Lord is not painful to us, (*Jer. xx. 9*), we have the greatest reason to suspect, if not the sincerity, at least the strength of our attachment to His precious Name; and we can do no better than turn into our closets with the prayer of contrition:—"Enter not into judgment with thy servant O Lord"—*Bridges on Psalm cxix.*

In Trust with God.

The busy spider deftly spins
Its silken thread, and confident
To fix it, floats it to the breezes.
It gains a site, then firmly pins
The quiv'ring, slender filament,
And weaves itself such web as pleases.

Thus hopefully, embark, should we,
Into life's toil in trust with God,
For Him who bids us pray, and working,
So we, by faith, shall stronger be,
With ready feet, all gospel-shod,
And never e'en a thought of shirking.

O, falter not in lone distress
Dear son of toil, but cast anew
Your floating thread of hope's endeavor.
The breathings of His righteousness,
Will bear it to an anchor true,
And God acclaim you then the victor.

The soul that lies at anchor may
Have, oftentimes, disquietude,
But these disorders tend to deepen
The soul's reliance, day to day,
And build the heart in rectitude;
Such striving doth the task but sweeten.

This world with treasures manifold,
And pleasures that allure, becomes
Distasteful, at one glimpse of Jesus.
He takes our sins and gives the gold
Of truth, His mansions as our homes,
And grants His peace to make us joyous.

Donald Clark, Valencia, U.S.A.

Some Short Obituaries : Rogart.

DAVID was praying: "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." This has been true in the experience of the Church of God at various periods of her history in the world, namely, that the godly were taken away; their places were left empty, and none to witness for the truth, and against evil. It is our own experience to a large extent as congregations, and as a Church. The late John MacLennan, Elder, Rogart, passed away some time ago, to his everlasting rest we believe. We are not able to trace how the Lord began to reveal to him that he was a lost, ruined sinner, and that there was but one name given among men by which he could be saved. That he was led by this path-way until, in some measure, he could say that the name Jesus was sweet to his soul, he gave ample evidence by a humble dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. He was twice elected to the office of the Eldership. The last time he said: "If I can be of any use to the cause of Christ I am willing to be ordained." He was left for some years doing what he could for the cause of Christ, and when the time came in which he must leave this world, he was not without the hope of experiencing the fulfilment of the prayer: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John xvii. 24).

To his widow and family, left to mourn his loss, we tender our sympathy, and pray that they all may be persuaded to flee to the only refuge to shelter them for an endless eternity.

Mrs. Murray, Muie, who also ended her course in Rogart some time ago, was a true witness for the Lord Jesus Christ in the parish. Her humility was real, and her soul often thirsted for the living water. When she listened to the gospel on the Lord's Day it was evident that her need as a poor sinner sent her to God's house. To her family, who mourn her loss, we would lovingly plead to make choice of the God of their parents, and to know him as their God and Saviour.

Mrs. MacMaster was a sister to Mrs. Murray, and her end came more recently. Mrs. MacMaster passed through a deep law work before she got her feet on the Rock, and a new song in her mouth. She could understand experimental preaching, and the preacher would have no doubt but there were some in the audience who were with him in every step he traced by which the Master led the flock. For some time before her end came, she was longing to be away, and to be with Christ. She was not, however, without fears, and, thus, she was kept unspotted until she came to the river, and passed over to join the great company who have already received the crown and praise their Redeemer forever. We mourn her and others from our midst, but they have fulness of joy. She was tenderly nursed by her niece, Mrs. Macleod, Achillic, Rogart, during her last illness, and to her and the other relations whom she loved, and for whom she prayed, we extend our heartfelt sympathy.

There were others who passed away from our midst who witnessed publicly for Christ: some for a few years, and others for a longer period. They have gone to receive their reward, and may we get grace in a day when the witnesses are few to be faithful to the truth even unto death.—*F. M.*

A' Choinneamh-cheist ann an Geàrr-loch.

(AN 9MH LA DE OCTOBER, 1936).*

Thug Coinnchach Mac A' Phearsain seachad faecal na ceiste bho Phil. i. 29: "Oir thiodhlaiceadh dhuibhse airson Chrìosd, chan e 'mhain creidsinn ann, ach mar an ceudna fulang air a shon." Bha comharraidhean air an iarradh orra-san tha creidsinn is a' fulang eadardhealaichte riù-san tha 'g aideachadh so, 's tha tur-aineolach air an nì sin.

Dh'fhosgail an t-Urr. F. Macleòid a' cheist. Leugh e o'n 15 rann de'n chaibdeil. Tha Pòl, thubhairt e, a sgrìobhadh a dh'ionnsuidh na h-caglais' ann am Philipi, a thàinig gu bhi 'creidsinn an t-soisgeil, is a treigsinn na h-uile nì 's a robh iad

*Chan 'eil an so ach, 's a chumantas, aithris aithghearr air na thubhairt na bràithrean, is cha mhór gu'n cluinnear cuid dhiubh idir.

a dèanamh bun uair-éigin. Bha e soilleir gu leòir do mhuinntir Philipi nach robh na daoine so a thàinig gu bhi dèanamh fianuis air taobh Chrìosd 's an t-saoghal mar bha iad roimhe. Canaidh an saoghal—Ge b'e air bith gu de seòrsa creidimh a th' aca, nach 'eil e gu deifir, gu'n coinnich iad uile ann an nèamh. Chan 'eil an saoghal ag amhare ach air an taobh a mach. 'S e bha 'n so nì a thòisich a stigh. Mar a tha e soilleir 'thaobh Lidia agus fear-coimhead a' phrìosain. Thòisich e ann an dearbhadh orra bhi 'an dorchadas, agus an toirt a dh'ionnsuidh an t-soluis. Bha 'n creutair mar so gun ghuth gu bheil a leithid do nì ri creidimh ann. B'e Dia, an Spiorad Naomh a' tighinn tre 'n fhocal,—ann an searmonachadh lagh' is soisgeil,—a thàinig do bhuadhan 'n anam. Tha cuid a 'faighinn dùsgaidhean uamhasach, mar fhear-coimhid a' phrìosain, ach tha na-h-uile a' faghail a mach gu 'n do pheacaich iad an aghaidh Dhé. Fhaic thusa, gu de mar a dhuisgeas e 'n spiorad bha marbh. 'S e 'cheist a nis, eiamar is urrainn e bhi air a shaoradh o bhi caillte? Thàinig iad so gu bhi creidsinn ann an Crìosd. Chan 'eil rathad gu dol as ach aon rathad. Dh'aithnich iad so brìgh an t-soisgeil 'na sgeula mhór aoibhneach dhaibh. An là 'thàinig creidimh,—(chan ann o dhuine tha creidimh, 's e tiodhlaic Dhé e),—bha Crìosd fa chomhair an anam 's an t-soisgeul. Tha iad a nis a dùnadh a stigh ris airson saorsa is fireantachd, is tha comharraidhean air 'fhaicinn orra. Mur b'e 'n t-saorsa sin, cha robh rathad eile air am faodadh iad 'bhi air an cur saor. Thiodhlaiceadh dhuibhse 'creidsinn is fulang, dh'fheumadh an sgeula so 'bhi air an cur an ceil leò.

'S e guidhe sluagh Dhé an so an diugh, gu'm biodh na h-uile air an tèarnadh. Mar an ceudna, tha iad a' fulang air a shon. Fhaic, tha creidimh air a dhèanamh aithnichte an sin, mar tha iomradh againn an *Heb.* xi., le bhi leantuinn Dhé 's na fulangasan ris robh aca ri coinneachadh. Tha na fulangasan an diugh a' tighinn fo 'n dearbh thaobhan o'm b' abhaist dhaibh. Tha comharraidhean air an iarradh orra-san a fhuair seilbh air a chreidimh so 'nan cridheachan, agus a fhuair 'bhi fulang air a shon, eadardhealaichte riù-san aig a' bheil creidimh nach e 'n

creidimh so, agus do bhrìgh sin nach fhulaing dhaibh fulang airson Chrìosd.

Iain Macamhlaidh.—Tha iad so a' fulang airson cliù Chrìosd, C'ait' bheil a chliù? 'S an fhìrinn. Ann an dearbhadh peacaidh air anam, tha Dia 'toirt dhachaidh crìoch a' chruthachaidh, e'arson a fhuair e bith. 'Fhad 's a bha Adhamh a' cumail ri spioradalachd an lagha, 'n a' umhlachd, bha e 'glòrachadh Dhé. 'S e suim an lagha gu'n gradhaich thu an Tighearn do Dhia le t-uile chridhe, agus le t-uile anam, is le t-uile neart, is le t-uile inntinn, agus do choimhearsnach mar thu fhéin. Gu de cho beag 's tha sin a' cur dragh air a chreutair ged tha sinn 's an t-solus as mò, gus am fosglair a shùilean gu bhi faicinn binn a' dhitidh. 'Bheil doigh 's an cur e stigh tagair airson 'bhi 'ga fhìreanachadh fhéin? 'S e so a nis suidheachadh a' chreutair nach 'eil fhios aige air gu de rathad air an cur e a smuaintean. Fhaic, tra théid cor caillte 'thoirt dhachaidh air, théid e gu 'bhi air a' dhoigh 's an t-sean chumhnant, gu'n coisinn e fabhoir tre na h-urnuighean is aoradh aige fhéin. Bha Pòl fo fheirg is fo mhallachd is a meas gu robh e 'toirt barrachd air neach d'a shinnsearan, leis cho diadhaidh 's a bha e. Tra thàinig àm Dhé a dh'fheuchainn dha spioradalachd an lagha, thuit na dochasan aige mar thuit tùr Bhàbeil,—ma thuit e—chan'eil fhios agamsa. Chunnaic e cho beag 's a bha de eolas air a ghlòir, air a ghràdh a bhuineadh do Dhia. Chunnaic e spiorad a' naimhdeas ann fhéin. Tha 'shuidheachadh a nis mar chogadh dà rioghachd 'n 'aghaidh a chéile. Chan ann an cainnt tha rioghachd Dhé. Fhaic v. 29. Tha creidimh air a dhearbhadh, có leis? Le bhi fulang. Dh' innis Crìosd gu'm faigheadh iad oilbheum ann. Faicibh na h-Eabhruidhich is Daniel,—an fhurnais an sin air a teasachadh seachd uairean, a dhèanamh an nì cinn-teach. Tha so ri fhaicinn 's an urram a chuireas Dia orra tha dìleas,—gur mò saoihbheas masladh 'fhulang maille ri sluagh Dhé na sòlas a' pheacaidh a mhealtuinn rè seal. Thoir an sgrìobhtair uaith so 's chan 'eil nì aca. Chan 'eil sinn a' tuigsinn na sochairean tha sinn a' mealtuinn. Tha iad so a' meas gach nì na 'chall airson gu'm bi 'aobhar air a chumail suas. Chan

'eil meadhon tèarnaidh eile ann. Seall thusa, cho beag 's a tha 's an t-saoghal an diugh 'tha 'cur suim air meadhonan nan gràs. Tha mòran 's an aideachadh de naimhdeas. 'S e luchd-aideachaidh gun ghràs feadhainn bu dorra ris a choinnich mi riamh.

D. Friseil, Strathpheofharain. Ann an v. 27, tha Pòl ag ràdh, Caithibh 'ur beatha gu eubhaidh do shoisgeul Chrìosd. Tha sin a' gabhail a stigh 'bhi creidsinn agus a' fulang. Tha sin a ris, ann an tomhas mòr, air a bhonntachadh air bhi ceusadh na feòla maille r'a h-an-togradh 's a h-anamiannaibh. Ma bhios neach gu coguiseach a ceusadh na feòla, chan fhad' bhios e air fhagail 'san uaigneas. Tha cuid nach mòr nach d' rinn iad àr-a-mach an aghaidh Chrìosd mu'n d'fhàinig iad gus an fhollais, ach 's treise Dia 'tha 'chomhnuidh shuas na fuaim nan uisgean garbh. "Is sibhse m'fhianuiscan, deir an Tighearn, eadhon m' òglach a roghnuich mi; a chum gu'n aithnich agus gu'n creid sibh mi; agus gu'n tuig sibh gur mi esan:" Cha las e coinneil gu bhi 'ga chur fo shoitheach. 'S éiginn dhaibh 'bhi mar bhaile air sleibh nach gabh 'fholach. Tha suilean clann an dorchadais orra is tha iad a' dèanamh gairdeachais tra chì iad aon de chloinn Dhé a' tighinn gearr. Bithidh Dia a' dèanamh slat-smachdachaidh de 'n aingidh gu bhi 'smachdachadh a shluagh fhéin. "Saor m'anam bochd, a Dhé." Tha iad so a' fulang airson Chrìosd,—'s e so nì nach gabh 'bhi air a dhèanamh aig aon àm, 's an déidh sin 'bhi coiteas e. Feumaidh an cath eadar feòil is spiorad 'bhi air a 'chur gus am bi bàs air a shlùigeadh suas le buaidh, mar an cogadh eadar tigh Shaul is tigh Dhaibhidh. Bha tigh Dhaibhidh a sior-dhol as treise 's na h-uile bàtail bha e 'cur. Roghnaicheadh clann Israeil cur as d'an naimhdean, ach tha iad so a foghlum nach tilg iad a mach an naimhdean ann an aon là. Tre iomadh buaireadh bi 'n oighreachd aca-san.

Iain Mac'ill'fhinnein, Diabaig. Chunnaic iad màise Chrìosd. Thàinig focal an Tighearn gu bhi 'gan dìteadh. Thàinig orra 'bhi 'gabhail r'an cliù,—sgrios iad iad fhéin. "Oir is ann le gràs a ta sibh air bhuir tèarnadh, tre chreidimh; agus sin chan ann uaibh féin; is e tiodhlac Dhé e." Dh'aithnich iad so gu'm feumadh iad 'bhi 'ga leantuinn, mar tha e 'g ràdh, "Tha mo chaoraich-sa 'g eisdeachd ri m' ghuth, agus is aithne dhomh iad,

agus leanaidh iad mi.” Tha iad a meas le Maois gu mò saobh-reas masladh Chrìosd na ionmhas na h-Eìphit. Cha bhi mise 'eur éis air na braithrean.

D. Mathanach, o'n Phlòc, (Missionary). Dh'fhoghlum iad so nach 'eil credimh aca, nach robh aca ach peacadh is nithean gràineil. Dhearbh e orra 'n eucomas. Tha iad a' faicinn diomhanas sgrìobhta air gach nì, 's an là 's an d'fhuair iad' bhi 'creidsinn ann an Crìosd. 'N uair 'fhuair iad 'bhi 'socrachadh air, an sin thòisich iad 'bhi fulang bho na nithean a tha stigh. 'S iad naimhdean duine muinntir a thighe fhéin,—as-creidimh, féineilachd, truailidheachd an nàduir ag éiridh suas,—a' fulang do bhrìgh gu bheil Crìosd mar an aon bhonn dochais. Bithidh e air aithneachadh orra 'nan caithe-beatha 's an t-saoghal gu bheil glòir Dhé aca 's an amharc a nis. Tha iad ag iarraidh 'bhi dileas, ach 'g am faotainn fhéin fad o sin, ach 's e nàduir gràis gu'm bi iad dileas. Tha iad a' fulang bho 'n diabhlul. Lean an namhaid eucorach le tòir gheur m' anam boehd. Bithidh iad a' fulang o'n t-saoghal. Faodaidh e 'bhi gur e luchd-àideachaidh gun ghràs na naimhdean as mò tha aig Crìosd 's an t-saoghal. Bithidh iad a' fulang bho cheilg an cridheachan. Chan urrainn iad 'bhi 'g earbs' asda fhéin. Dh'fhuiling cuid dhiubh bàs airson Chrìosd. “'S urrainn mi na h-uile nì a dhèanamh tre Chrìosd a neartaicheas mi.” Mar as fhaide tha iad 's an t-saoghal, 's ann as mò tha feum aca air gràs 's a chleachdadh. Tha iad a faghail so a mach.

D. Macrath, Inbhirnis. 'S e tìodhlae iongantach so. Bha e air a thìodhlacadh orra. Bha Crìosd air a thoirt dhaibh 's a chumhnant shìorruilh ma's d'fhuair iad 'bhi creidsinn ann. Tha Crìosd dhaibh na h-uile is anns na h-uile. Fhuair iad dochas tre ghràs. Fhuair iad so a mach gu bheil suil an namhaid orra airson an ribeadh. Tha e 'n toir orra. Tha iad 'ga ghràdhachadh-'s an a thug aon-ghin Mhic féin, chum as ge be neach a chreideas ann, nach sgriosar e, ach gu'm bi a' bheatha shìorruidh aige. Cha dealaich iad o' n chreidimh so a' dh'aindeòin saoghal is feòil.

Ri leantuinn.

Nadur an Duine 'na Staid Cheithir Fillte.

AN T-AONADH DIOMHAIR EADAR CRIOSD AGUS
CREIDMHICH.

(*Air a leantuinn bho t.d., p. 312.*)

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

Tha sùil aige so ri bhi criathradh mìn-chlacha luachmhor o mheasg meall de dhuslach agus de ghaineamh; ged thuiteas a' ghainmheach agus an duslach air an talamh, ged bhios iad air an séideadh air falbh leis a' ghaoith, agus air an saltairt fo chosaibh; gidheadh cha tuit urrad agus clach bheag air an talamh 's cho cuimseach a tha 'n criathar, agus curam an fhir-chriathraidh. Chan 'eil nì as luaith a thuiteas air an talamh na clach; gidheadh ma tha luchd-aidmheil a' chreidimh 'nan clachaibh beò, air an togail air Criosd, an àrd-chlach-oisinn, ged tha iad 'nan clachaibh beaga, cha tuit iad a dh'-ionnsuidh na talmhainn, ciod air bith an doinionn a bhuaileas orra, Faic 1 *Phead.* ii. 4, 5, 6. Tha na h-uile siol maith a ta ann an eaglais Chrìosd, de 'n ghnè so: is clachan iad, a thaobh an daingeannachd; agus is clachan beò iad, a thaobh an beòthalachd. Ma bhios daoine 'nan Criosd-aidhean daingean, bunaiteach, cha bhi iad mar mhol, air an luasgadh chuige agus uaithe leis a h-uile gaoith; air dhoibh urrad de 'n bheòthalachd a bhi aca 's nach 'eil a bheag 's am bith de 'n chloich annta. Agus ma tha iad 'nan Criosdaidhean beòthail, aig am bheil an spioraid 'g am brosnuchadh, mar a rinn spiorad Phoil. "N uair a chunnaic e am baile làn iodhol-aoraidh," *Gnìomh.* xvii. 16. cha luigh iad cosmhuil ri clachan, gu bhi air an tionndadh thairis, a null agus a nall, gu bhi air an gearradh agus air an snaigheadh, a reir miannan dhaoine, air dhoibh urrad de'n chloich a bhi annta, as nach fàg nì 's am bith de 'n bheòthalachd aca.

Tha tigh ar Dé-ne 'na thigh mór, anns am bheil chan e 'mhàin soithichean òir, ach mar an ceudna talmhainn, 2 *Tim.* ii. 27. Tha iad araon ullamh air salachar a ghlacadh; agus uime sin, an uair tha Dia a' tabhairt trioblaid air an eaglais, tha sùil aige riù araon. A thaobh nan soithichean òir, chan 'eil iad air an

sgrios, ach air an glanadh le deuchainn theinntich ann an amhuinn na trioblaid, mar a ghlanas òr-chearda an òr, *Isa.* i. 25. "Agus pillidh mi mò làmh ort, agus glanaidh mi nait do shalachar." Ach thig milleadh air na soithichean crèadha, bithidh iad air am briseadh 'nam bloighdibh, mar shoitheach criadhaidh, rann 28. "Agus bithidh claidh no briseadh do luchd-eusaontais, agus pheacaich, maraon." Tha shùil aig ris an lagh sin, a bhi airson briseadh shoithichean crèadha, 'n uair a bha iad neo-ghlan; am feadh a bha soithichean fiodha, agus mar an ceudna soithichean òir a mhàin air an glanadh, *Lebh.* xv. 12.

'S i 'n naoitheamh sochair cumuail suas no taice. Ma tha thusa ann ad ghéig air do shuidheachadh ann an Criosd, giùlainidh an fhrèumh thu. Leigidh an creideach a thaice air Criosd, mar leigeas bean lag air turus, a taice air am fear gràdhach, *Dan Shol.* viii. 5. Taicidh se e féin ris mar a nì seann duine fann air a bhata, *Isa.* l. 10. Leagaidh se e féin air, mar a leagas neach eallach nach urrainn dha ghiùlan bhàrr a dhroma féin air neach eile a ta comasach air a ghiùlan, *Salm* xxii. 8. Tha iomadh cudthrom an crochadh ris na geugan a ta ann an Criosd an *Fhìor-fhìonain* agus 'gan cumail sìos, ach tha fios agaibh, ciod air bith cudthrom a ta 'n crochadh 'air geugaibh, gu 'n giùlain an stoc an t-iomlan; giùlainidh e a' gheug, agus an cudthrom a ta oirre mar an ceudna.

Ri leantuinne.

Literary Notices.

WHY BE AN APE? OBSERVATIONS ON EVOLUTION BY A LONDON JOURNALIST: London: Marshall, Morgan, Scott, Ltd. Price 2s. 6d.

Mr. Newman Watts (A London Journalist) has given us another book which will be very useful in combating the teaching of Evolution. The author has the journalistic skill of presenting points in such a way as to appeal to the general reader. His book, therefore, will influence those who would turn away from the more recondite works on the subject. Thorough-going

Evolution is a tremendous menace to the Christian faith and unfortunately it has found its way into our schools, universities, and theological colleges. A generation is rising who are being taught Evolution as if it were one of the most assured facts of science rejected only by those who are far behind the men who have made such mighty strides in scientific knowledge in recent times. A perusal of this book will show that the less boasting of the triumph of the Evolutionary theory the better. In speaking of the Genesis account of Creation as we have it in our Bibles Mr. Watts says: "We cannot, therefore, be too sure that we have the account exactly as was originally given." That is a rather dangerous admission to make for if carried out in other books of the Bible it would be playing into the hands of the enemy. The title is not the happiest that might have been chosen for such a useful and interesting book.

Notes and Comments.

Dr. Christie on the Return of the Jews to Palestine.—

Dr. Christie has continued his illuminating articles in the *British Weekly* on the Jewish situation in Palestine. In a recent article he deals with the Restoration of Israel to Palestine and asserts that the Old Testament prophecies have been already fulfilled in the return of the Jews (1) under Zerubbabel; (2) under Ezra and Nehemiah). The New Testament, though it has great promises for the Jews (Roms. ix-xi), has not a single reference to a literal or material return. This view was maintained also by such eminent divines, among others, as Dr. A. A. Hodge (*Outlines of Theology*, new and revised edit. pp. 572, 573), Principal Fairbairn (*Typology of Scripture*, I, 495; *Prophecy*, p. 241). Pre-millennarians, without exception as far as we know, hold the doctrine of a literal Return. At the same time, this view is not confined to them for Dr. David Brown, one of Scotland's most distinguished Post-Millennarian writers, held that the Scriptures taught a literal Return to Palestine. In reference to the recent influx of Jews into Palestine, Dr. Christie

says: "But what of the present return? We have been in closest touch with it from the first. No one expected greater things, or a more glorious fulfilment, materially and spiritually, than we did, but we must confess to disappointment. We looked for righteousness and behold a cry. As the years have passed by we have seen that Political Zionism cares little for righteousness and seeks unceasingly only 'material prosperity for the Jewish world.' Whenever possible the claims and rights of others are ignored and must yield to 'Jewish interests.' If in any sense there is to be a return to Palestine, the fulfilment is not yet. But one thing it is. It is an attempt 'to force God's hand' and also to force the hands of the British Government."

The Pope and Fascism.—There can be no doubt, in the struggle going on in Europe between Communism and Fascism, that the Pope's sympathies are with the Fascists. Communism of the thorough-going type is atheistic and antagonistic to all religion, whether it be true or false. Fascism pays a kind of lip service to religion but whether it is in sympathy with the religion of our Lord as set forth in the New Testament is another question. Soviet Russia with its thorough-going state atheism is decidedly showing its sympathy with the Spanish Government party and at the time of writing this note it is threatening to intervene in the bloody struggle going on in Spain by helping that party. The Pope's sympathies on the other hand, are decidedly on the side of General Franco and the insurgents who are thorough-going Fascists. Though Fascism and Communism are political movements it must not be forgotten that both are antagonistic to the religion of the New Testament and in the mighty struggle foreshadowed by these movements we are faced with a world menace.

A New Form of Sabbath Desecration.—In the military display becoming so common in connection with what is termed "Armistice Sunday" Satan has astutely invented a new form of Sabbath desecration. Of course, he gives it a finer name than that. The military display—the skirling of pipes, the pomp and

pageantry of war in peace-time—the gathering of the idle crowds, are all done in memory of the men who died. So gullible are men that they swallow this as if it were the truth and sad to say many of the professed ministers of the gospel join in the display. To raise a voice against such practices is regarded by multitudes as due to lack of patriotism and want of appreciation of the sacrifices made by the men who never returned. That, of course, is a lie of the devil. Not only is the peace of the Sabbath broken by these military displays but the sale of poppies, in some towns is carried on—all in the name of patriotism.

Church Notes.

Communions.—*January*—Last Sabbath, Inverness. 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, General Treasurer, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness.

Meeting of Synod.—The Synod met at Inverness on Tuesday, 17th November. We hope to have a report (D.V.) in the January issue.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—Miss J. C., Pineview, Carr Bridge, £1; Miss M. D., The Birches, Kingussie, 10s.

Home Mission Fund.—Miss M. H., Tobermory, Mull, 10s.

Organisation Fund.—Winnipeg Congregation per Mr A. B. Steedman o/a Rev. D. McLeod's expenses, £9 16s.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—Mrs M., The Poles, Dornoch, £10; A Wellwisher, Lochinver Postmark, £1; Miss J. C., Pineview, Carr Bridge, 10s; Miss M. H., Tobermory, Mull, 10s; Anon., £1; A Friend, £1.

South African Mission—Well Sinking Fund.—Anon., £1; MacL., Struth, 4s.

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Dingwall Church Building Fund.—Mr S. Fraser, Timarn House, Strathpeffer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—Friend, Dingwall, 10s; Friend, Oban, £1; Two Friends, Tomatin, 10s; Two Friends, Ullapool, £2; Friend of the Cause, £1. Per Mr K. Mathison—Friends, Inverness, £1 1s; Miss M. M., Evanton, £1; Miss M. M., Glasgow, £1.

Edinburgh Congregational Funds.—Mr A. H. Pottinger, 19 Montpelier, Edinburgh, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £1 o/a Sustentation Fund from M. M., Stornoway, per Rev. N. McIntyre.

Greenock Manse Purchase Fund.—Rev. Jas. McLeod, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—M. M., Glasgow Postmark, £1; Mrs. M., Glasgow, 10s; Miss M. McP., Glasgow, 10s.

Uig (Lewis) Manse Building Fund.—Rev. M. Gillies, Stornoway, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—From Friends in Skye and Mainland, £5; Friend, Wick, £5; Friend, Thurso, £1. M. Malcolm MacLennan, Treasurer, Cliff, Uig, gratefully acknowledges the following:—Mrs McD., Lundale, Uig, 7s; A Friend, 5s; Anonymous, £1; J. D., Tomatin, 10s.

London Church Building Fund.—Dr M. Tallach, 216 Peckham Rye, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £1 from A Friend, London.

Daviot Church Building Fund.—Mr. A. MacBean, Tordarroch, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of 10s from A Friend, Inverness, per Mr J. Grant.

Wick Manse Purchase Fund.—Rev. R. R. Sinclair acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—A Friend, Wick, 10s; Anon., Wick, £1; D. T., 10s.

South African Mission—Clothing Fund.—Mrs Miller, 7 West Banks Terrace, Wick, acknowledges with sincere thanks:—300 yards material from friends in London Mission per Miss Sansum; 52 cuts wool from Fladda friends per Miss MacLeod; £7 4s from friends in Edinburgh per Mrs McIntyre; £1 from Miss M. McC., Kames.

The Magazine.

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