

THE Free Presbyterian Magazine

AND MONTHLY RECORD

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

“Thou has given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.”—Ps. lx. 4.

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Free Presbyterian Magazine
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"Disappoint our Fears."

THESE words were almost a constant petition in the public prayers of the late worthy Mr. George Forrest, Brucefield, Ontario, whom some of the earlier deputies to Canada had the privilege of meeting. The wider our experience and the older we grow the more do these words of this worthy man gain in meaning and applicability to the varying situations in which we so often find ourselves on life's great journey. Especially do they make an appeal to us in the situation in which we find ourselves as a nation. The Allied Nations are in deadly grips with their Enemies and while that which thousands anticipated has not been realised yet there is a dread gnawing at the hearts of multitudes that the future may realise their worst fears. It is well to remember in this connection that it is a general experience that anticipated calamities have generally not materialised along the lines anticipated and it is well this is so. In mercy the Omniscient One has placed a veil between our eyes and the events of the future so that we might not be altogether unmanned for duty when called to face staggering events. Now, of all the multitudes who are finding themselves in the situation we have described there are many who, because of the gracious favour of heaven, can fall back on promises and covenant engagements that assure them all is well. For this people God has pledged His faithfulness and truth that it will be well with them in the day of great trouble—"We know that *all things* work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Roms. viii. 28) and again

—"When thou passest through the waters *I* will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For *I* am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour" (Is. xliii. 2, 3). Is not all this pledged in words enshrined in heavenly beauty?—"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 . . . In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come near thee" (Is. liv. 10, 14).

It is a remarkable fact that there is no emotion of a distracting or distressing nature which is countered with so many promises to rob it of its benumbing and paralysing effects. One has only to consult a concordance to find the verification of this statement. Let him run his eye down over the passages of Scripture under the heading—"Fear not"—and if we are not mistaken he will be greatly surprised at how often such promises are given or exhortations addressed to those who were in need of them. How often were these words "fear not" on the lips of the Saviour while He tabernacled among men: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. x. 28)—"Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. x. 31)—"And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke v. 10)—"But when Jesus heard it, He answered him [Jairus], saying, Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Luke viii. 50)—"Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke xii. 32). Again, when He rose from the dead He said to John lying at His feet as one dead overcome with the vision of His Saviour in His glorified state, "Fear not; *I* am the first and the last; *I* am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, *I* am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 17, 18). Who will ever be able to tell all the "fears" which were stilled

by our Lord's gracious words not only at the time they were uttered but to the present day and how many fears they will yet still until He comes again in the clouds of Heaven?

Fear entered into the world early in the history of our race and is incident to man in his fallen state. The first record of "fear" is found in the words: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was *afraid*, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Gen. iii. 10). It was thus sin which brought "fear" into the world and it has followed the committal of sin to a lesser or greater degree ever since. None is exempt from "fear." True, some are not so subject to it as others and may not feel its paralysing effect to the same degree but none is altogether beyond the field of its operations. It is an emotion which Satan has used with tremendous effect. Peter, mindful of his own unforgettable experience, thus warns others: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I. Pet. v. 8). Before it the natural boldness of Peter fled and he became an easy prey to the devil.

The "fears" of which we have been speaking are to be distinguished from what is described in Scripture as "the fear" of the Lord. This "fear" is highly commendable and is described as "the beginning of wisdom," "clean," "enduring forever," "hates evil," "a fountain of life." It belongs to the children of God and is of a filial nature.

Among the many "fears" which harass the children of men there are some which are of a purely imaginary nature. The fact that they are imaginary does not make them any the less easy to be borne, especially by those of a strongly imaginative nature, who often are not only a trouble to themselves but to others. To fears of this kind the best antidote is the application of a little common sense. There are other fears, however, which require a more powerful remedy. Among these may be mentioned those fears which harass the Lord's people as to their spiritual state. Some have had to pass through distressing

experiences ere they got deliverance. Others, again, like Bunyan's Mr. Fearing are distressed with worrying thoughts that they will never see the Face of Him who was hanged on the tree for them. They spend much time looking within and things there they find are far from what they should be. They then conclude that the work of grace was never really begun or things would not be as they are. Discoveries are made which they never expected to make—no progress seems to be made in the life of holiness and they begin to write hard things against themselves. Ministers find it difficult to bring relief to such cases but it sometimes happens in the preaching of the Word a message comes to the distressed and sets them free. Some of the old divines were divinely taught masters in solving the problems that presented themselves to the minds of the Lord's people and awakened fears in their hearts.

Sometimes these fears arose from anticipated trials which they never met and difficulties they were never called upon to solve. We are told that the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration "Feared as they entered into the cloud" (Luke, ix. 34). It was natural that it should be so. Have not we, ourselves, at some time or other in entering a dark cloud in God's providential dealing "feared" as we entered into it? What was behind the blackness which was filling our heart with nameless dread? Who could tell? Perhaps we would be crushed never to rise again. Perhaps we would meet what would try our faith, hope and love and what if it should happen what we thought was faith, hope and love would fail in the day of trial? These thoughts may at times hold the mind and heart captive. But let us never forget there was never a cloud the entrance into which had less reason to create fear than this one. It was while in that cloud they heard the voice saying: "This is my beloved Son: hear Him."

Many of the fears experienced by the Lord's people arise from their limited knowledge and their misunderstanding of the divine purposes. Such were some of the fears experienced by

Jacob, Joseph, David, etc. But though the clouds were dark yet, as Cowper so well puts it, they "are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings" on their heads. We cannot hide from ourselves that dark clouds are over our heads. A blind kind of optimism will not meet the situation. Happy are those who can sing from the heart:

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place
In generations all,
Before thou ever hadst brought forth
The mountains great or small.—

—Ps. xc. 1-2 (*Metrical Version*).

Sermon.

By the late Rev. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall.

"Though the fig tree shall not blossom neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls. Yet, will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. III. 17, 18).

II.

(Continued from p. 330.)

III. *The source of the Prophet's comfort.* "O Lord"—He is the great source whence flows all comfort to His people. He is most happy in Himself—His happiness is underived. As He is self-existent He is self-happy. All His intelligent creatures He created in a happy condition. They derived their happiness from Him, as they derived their being. He endowed them with a nature capable of rejoicing—Himself being the infinite fountain whose streams did gladden their hearts, and caused the cup of their joy to overflow. They were all perfectly happy in His fellowship and communion; but alas! the bond of communion was broken on the part of some of the angels, and on the part of all men (all men of ordinary generation). The river of God's joy ceased to flow to them—sin interrupted its happy course—

they became miserable. Fallen angels shall be miserable for ever, but multitudes of men shall be comforted; for the Lord is again the source of their comfort. And how is He the source of their comfort? The Lord is the source of the comfort of men, even His elect people, inasmuch as He is the God of their salvation. In no other sense could they look to Him for comfort. Fallen angels can never dare apply to the Lord for the least drop of comfort, and why? Just for the simple but awful reason that He is not the God of their salvation. "For verily He (Christ) took not on Him the nature of angels, but the *seed of Abraham*." Oh, let the much-favoured seed of Abraham be comforted, and let them rejoice; for the Lord is the God of their salvation. And how is He the God of their salvation? (1) He is the God of the salvation of His people inasmuch as He provided salvation for them. He invented the glorious scheme of redemption in the counsels of eternity. On the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Christ thus came into the world, and wrought out everlasting redemption for His people by the obedience of His life, and the sufferings of His death. "It is finished," He cried on the cross as He gave up the ghost. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (2) The Lord is the God of the salvation of His people inasmuch as He has chosen them unto salvation. So we read in Ephesians i. 4: "According as He hath chosen us in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world." They were no better than other sinners, yet God was pleased to choose them in Christ unto salvation. (3) The Lord is the God of the salvation of His people inasmuch as He made known to them His salvation in the work of the gospel. In the Old Testament dispensation Christ was set forth in types—the sacrificial law was a shadow of Him who was to come, and in the New Testament dispensation we have a clear revelation of the salvation—Christ came as the Son of Man to seek and to save that which was lost. (4) The Lord is the God of the

salvation of His people inasmuch as He called them effectually by His Holy Spirit to participate in their salvation. He applied His salvation to them—He saved them. They are in a state of salvation. They are His redeemed people. (5) He is the God of their salvation inasmuch as He will purify them from all sin. "Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy and plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all their iniquities." This is that great source of the comfort of God's people—"The Lord, the God of their salvation." To this source they may apply in every time of need, and they shall receive out of His fulness. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it" is His own faithful promise.

Having already shown that the Lord is the source of the comfort of His people, and the manner in which He is so, let us now inquire what is in Him to comfort them in whatever circumstances they may be. The fact that He is the God of their salvation is a matter of unspeakable comfort to them. This is the great theme of believers on earth, and will be their great theme in heaven. They meditate thereon with delight, and their meditation breaks forth into praise to the Lord. "My soul doth magnify the Lord—my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and His Father—to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." The fulness of blessings which is in God for His people is immeasurable and unsearchable by any finite being. This infinite, and the Apostle tells us that it pleased Him, the Father, that this fulness should dwell in Christ. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand as the Surety and Covenant-Head of His people. In Him the fulness dwells. Let us notice some of the special blessings comprised in His fulness, and as we do so, Oh, let us pray that we may receive therefrom so that we may be comforted, and rejoice. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

(1) Then there is in Christ a fulness of Love. We have already noticed that believers who rejoice love God, but the fact

of their loving Him is founded upon the great fact that He loved them first. So the Apostle, John, says: "We love Him because He loved us first." The great love whereby the Father loved His people dwells in Christ, as the Apostle says: "The love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." From God's love flows the salvation of His people. His love towards them is unchangeable as it is infinite. Their circumstances in this world may, and do change, but God's love never changes. This is like Himself—"the same yesterday, to-day and for ever." In all the changes to which they are subject in this world of sin, trouble, disappointment, and sorrow, they are the objects of God's special and continual love. Hence a great cause for the Prophet in his time of trouble to say: "I will rejoice in the Lord"—hence also a great cause for all God's children in similar trials to take comfort to themselves, in the Lord, and to rejoice in Him. "Thy love is better than wine." (2) There is a fulness of life in Christ. "In Him was life." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "I am the true bread that came down from heaven which if a man eat thereof he shall never die." There is a fulness of eternal life in Christ. He gives that life to His people. If the bread that perishes fail then He makes up the loss by giving them a double portion of the true and everlasting bread. No wonder, then, though His people who feed on this bread say: "Although the fields yield no meat, yet will I rejoice in the Lord." Do we truly hunger for this bread? "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," saith the Lord. The more you eat of this bread of life the more you hunger for it, and the more you hunger for it the more liberally Christ will give to you. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (3) There is a fulness of the Holy Spirit in Christ. The Father gave unto Him the Spirit without measure. He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. The Spirit is in a special manner the "Comforter" of God's people. They receive the Spirit out of Christ's fulness. He is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life,

and comforting their souls in the time of distress and sorrow. He takes of all the things of Christ's, and shows these great and glorious things to them. When He does so—breathing upon their souls with His quickening and refreshing influences—they can in the midst of worldly troubles and discomforts say with David: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and wine increased." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (4) There is a fulness of merit in Christ. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." That merit is imputed to God's believing people; and, therefore, there is not to them, even now, any condemnation. They are accepted in Christ the Beloved and by whatever judgment God may visit the earth for the iniquity of its inhabitants they shall escape unpunished if God wills it. As the Israelites escaped the doom of the first-born of the Egyptians who had been slain by the Destroying Angel so shall they escape the punishment of sin (God beholds them sprinkled with the blood of His own Lamb). Not only so, but they shall have everlasting life, yea, all blessings temporal and spiritual for the sake of the merit of Christ. What ground of comfort! What cause for rejoicing! "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright." (5) There is a fulness of sympathy in Christ. In all their affliction He was afflicted—therefore He is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He was afflicted with poverty—uneasiness and discomfort. He was afflicted and oppressed with sin—for sin not His own. He trembled at God's judgment. The Prophet says: "Rottenness entered into my bones" when he heard the voice of God, but Christ says: (when the Father spoke: "Awake, O sword . . . smite the Shepherd") "All my bones are out of joint—my heart is melted within me like wax—I am poured out like water." He was afflicted with temptation, enmity of men and devils, persecution, and the hiding of His Father's countenance. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" To this great Sympathiser the Prophet looked when he said: "I will rejoice in the Lord." (6) There is a fulness of power

in Christ. He is not only able and willing to sympathise with His people but also able and willing to succour and help them in every time of need: "Why sayest thou O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Christ travelleth in the greatness of His strength—mighty to save. His people lean upon His almighty arm. They are kept by His power through faith unto salvation.

In conclusion, mark (1) the uncertainty of all things here below. To-day we may be in the height of affluence, to-morrow in the depth of poverty. In a moment all our earthly comforts may be snatched from us, or we may be removed far hence from them. Tonight our soul may be required of us. Are we prepared to appear as naked spirits before the bar of the great and terrible God? (2) Behold the great evil of sin—the cause of all miseries—temporal and eternal. Hate it—turn from it, and seek deliverance from it. Note (3) the immutable righteousness of God—His hatred of sin; and that though hand join in hand the wicked shall not go unpunished. (4) Behold the marvellous Love of God in revealing Himself as the God of salvation to a lost world. "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill toward men." He is the God of salvation. As such He invites sinners to Him from one end of the earth to the other that He might bless them with His salvation: "Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, and there is no Saviour besides me." Oh, do we look to God by faith in Christ—do we accept of His free salvation? We are by nature lost—we need the salvation which He has prepared before the face of all men. Nothing can satisfy our immortal souls till we come to Christ, and receive Him as our portion. Oh, ye that seek your happiness in the world—in its uncertain riches, in its pleasures, vanities, and sins—"Why do we spend

money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me," God says, "and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Oh, incline your ear to this gracious invitation—harden not your hearts. Tremble at your ruined condition—cry to God: "Lord save, we perish." How terrible to fall into the hands of God refusing this salvation! Better that you had never been born than to appear at His judgment-seat unconverted. If you do so appear before Him you will dread His presence. "Rocks, fall on us, and mountain hide us from the presence of Him that sitteth upon the throne" shall be your hopeless prayer! Turn now, and live. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Finally, ye that are God's much favoured ones, rejoice, "Again, I say, rejoice." But rejoice with trembling. You are nothing the worse of trembling—nothing the worse, but the better, for it prepares you for rejoicing. "But to this man, says the Lord, will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Ye tremble, and ye rejoice. Ye trembled when God's Spirit convinced you of your lost and undone condition, but ye rejoiced in the gracious arms of your Saviour, who plucked you as brands out of the burning. Ye tremble still at the deep-rooted sinfulness of your depraved and deceitful hearts, at your great shortcomings—coldness, deadness, but ye rejoice when Christ pours on you the oil of gladness to calm down the raging sea of your corruption, saying: "Peace, be still." Ye rejoice that ye are perfect in Him—the source and object of your rejoicing—your all in all. Ye tremble and rejoice on your way to heaven when you shall receive fulness of joy—pleasures for evermore. All your rejoicings on earth are but small foretastes of the fulness in heaven—a few drops out of the great ocean above—the earnest of your glorious inheritance. Meanwhile, "Seek that your joy may be full." Show forth your gratitude to God by serving Him with your soul, body, and spirit. Soon all your tremblings shall cease—all your tears shall be dried up: "For the ransomed of the Lord shall return,

and come to Zion with song and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Then you will sing with indescribable raptures of joy unspeakable and full of glory the blessed song you have through grace learned on earth: "Though the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation"—World without end, Amen.

A Letter from One Christian Soldier to Another.

I.

MY Dear Friend, What a change you must have experienced when you left civil life to join the army. So many influences of a gracious nature have been left behind and having no expectation of making up this great loss you must be miserable indeed at times. In this I feel great sympathy for you. On the other hand I rejoice in the fact that you are a saved man, for as such you have all the blessings of the saved and none of the evils of the unsaved. If you will look for a moment at some of these blessings you will soon see that they far outweigh all the trials awaiting you.

What a tremendous advantage you have over many of your fellow-soldiers. I mean of those among them who are unconverted. Come what may, life or death, war or peace; nothing within the wide compass of your lot can cancel the obligations undertaken by your Redeemer on your behalf. War can, and will, find weaknesses in many things, but it cannot so much as test your security as a saved man. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Your salvation is *in the Lord*, or otherwise you have none at all. Being in the Lord

it persists through all changing circumstances; either it is *everlasting* or it lasts not for a moment. Your salvation in the Lord admits of no degrees in its security. In the Lord it is final—absolute. Whatever changes your new life may bring, and I know that they will be very great, yet nothing can arise to question the permanency of your justification. *That* belongs to the past things which God has done. He did it in a moment, and, in His love and faithfulness, it was done forever. Another blessing which you enjoy is the assurance that the Lord is to go with you. Often, in the past you may have thought with pleasure on the words: “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” but what depths of meaning these words are to yield to you *now*. Do you ever think that it was worth while being in places of stress and danger just for the sake of getting His presence? It was after the War that a fellow-soldier put this question to me. A strange question it seems to you *now*, but you are on the way to a surprising solution of it. “Certainly I will be with thee.” He never intended that you should go through this alone; His purpose to be present with you and His purpose to set these trials before you are wrapped up in one loving intention. You cannot have peculiar troubles without His peculiar presence. Whether in the crowded billet or in midst of the numerous and pressing distractions of the battle-field you may fully expect to get great, clear, and frequent visitations from Jesus. Even when you have to divide your interest and attention between many things and persons, your soul will find periods of great aloneness when you will lift up your eyes and “see none save Jesus only.”

I am not writing mystically. I write of sober fact and experience. A Person who is able to overcome every physical hinderance, and who desires to approach your soul directly and intimately has said: “Certainly I will be with thee.” Count on your meeting with Him in unlikely places. Credit Him with the most literal fulfilment of His Word. While you strap on your accoutrements, sling your rifle over your shoulder and step out “not knowing whether you go,” swing out with confidence.

His Word is passed; His mind is made up. In strange ways and unexpected places He will make good His promise to you. Another assurance you will find in Romans, chapter 8, verse 28, where we are given to know that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Many of the "all things" spoken of in this verse appear to be quite contrary to our well-being. But among the different agencies at work in organising a war we must not lose sight of the fact that the special line set out for each of God's people by the human agent is directed, after all, by the Lord Himself and I feel sure that He has something to teach you in the army; something which you could not learn at a prayer-meeting or in the warm circle of your own family.

Lessons taught on the battle-field are perhaps higher than any taught elsewhere. When I look at some of the things taught to us in the last war, I have no doubt but that all things were working together for the good of us who believed. I know that you pray for a blessing upon all that God sends into your lot, but do not be content to regard this blessing as some hazy, nebulous and elusive thing. He has definite things; things of outstanding importance for your spiritual welfare to teach you. Otherwise your loving Lord would not have set these hardships in your way Heavenwards. For instance, in the last war, he taught us to feel a great love and pity for our fellow-sinners. We hardly knew what they were like before, as most of our friends were of God's people. As we understood their religious background, or perhaps lack of such, we became much less censorious and much more tender. Sin was still the awful thing that it will always be, but more than ever, we were given to look on the sinner through the tears shed over Jerusalem. Our need of Christian fellowship taught us another good lesson. We came to value grace wherever it was to be found irrespective of denomination. Our views of the Church of Christ drew nearer to our creed. The Church became really Catholic (in the true sense) to us and we became less parochial in our outlook.

And how many of us who were timid and ready before to shirk responsibility, grew up under army conditions to be manly and independent. We found our feet; many of us for the first time in our lives. Responsibility became a joy to us.—*A Seaforth.*

(*To be continued.*)

Rationing.

IN these days the term "rationing" is familiar to all, when so much is written and spoken regarding Government plans for allowing but a limited and stated weight of certain foods to each person throughout the Nation. This is far from being a modern method of food control in times of national adversity; for we read in Leviticus xxvi. 26: "And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight; and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied." These words were spoken by the Lord to Israel in indicating how matters would fare with them should He be compelled to walk contrary to them, rationing of bread would be experienced.

Let us touch some steps leading to this particular circumstance, as set forth in the afore-mentioned chapter in Leviticus. At the outset, there is the serious fact of the nation walking contrary to God, by living in opposition to His revealed will for their spiritual and eternal good—"And if ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins" (verses 23-24). The iniquities and sins of the people in our own land have for many years now testified against us that we are chargeable with walking contrary to the Most High. Israel was threatened with the sword, the judgment of war, as a punishment for their sins—"And I will bring a sword upon you and shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant"—verse 25. And what is Britain that she should escape the punishment

threatened against others for ungodliness? We are not avoiding the rod, for we are involved in war to-day.

Miseries varied and severe come with war—"And when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you"—verse 25. No definite type of pestilence is here mentioned, as that was unnecessary, inasmuch as any pestilence which the Lord might permit would be afflictive enough in addition to the suffering endured in the ordinary course of war. And when thought is given on these lines to our national adversities to-day, we are confronted with the pestilence or menace of the ruthless German submarine and mine activities. Our merchant ships and those of neutral countries, bringing large quantities of food to our shores, are being sunk quite frequently and this means fewer ships to sail the seas and less of certain foods available to the inhabitants of this Island. The shortage is not in any way serious as yet, but there it is. As already stated, Israel in walking contrary to God would experience a shortage of the staff of life—"Ten women shall break your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver your bread again by weight." Flour would be so scarce that the baking of bread for ten households could be done in one oven instead of the ten separate family ovens; and the carefulness in allocating to each household their appropriate share would require the bread to be weighed out in ten separate portions. Here we have rationing in these ancient times as the outcome of sin and as a token and evidence of divine displeasure against Israel. It is intended that rationing of certain foods (not *bread*, we should be thankful) be put into operation in our own country in these times of war and emergency. Food Control offices have been established and Ration Books have been issued to every individual, with the end in view that we receive weekly, a limited and stated weight of beef, butter, bacon and sugar. As time goes on under war conditions, this may well be extended to other commodities. Such a state of affairs has not come upon so highly favoured a Nation without special significance and with a message of its own to every household and individual. God is declaring even by our

Ration Books that He is walking contrary to us because of our national sins. Let us, young and old, hear and repent and turn to the infinite fullness of grace and truth which resides in the divine Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you."—*R. R. S.*

A Soldier's Letter of Appreciation and Appeal.*

WE hope you will find a corner in the Magazine for this short letter written solely to indicate our appreciation of Rev. J. P. Macqueen's services to us while in barracks "Somewhere in England." When we left home, and some of us did so for the first time, we felt we were turning our back on the preached gospel, not knowing when we would hear it again. The Lord was kind to us. A friend at home communicated with Rev. J. P. Macqueen, London, and told him our whereabouts, and asked him to visit us. This Mr. Macqueen did the first opportunity he had. During his first visit he did not keep a service but he indicated that he would give us a weekly sermon if we could procure a place to gather in. The Lord opened the way; we managed to procure the Strict Baptist Chapel for the services, and the Strict Baptists themselves attended also, so this very fact prevented any of the services being held in Gaelic. We did not like to offend them, as they pled with us to have the services in a language all could understand. We are greatly

*The writer of this letter, who is well-known to the people of our Gairloch congregation may rest assured that the praying people of our Church are following her sons who are on service with their prayers continually and if those who would like to have some of our ministers conduct services for them would write us we are sure an effort would be made to get in touch with them and have their requests attended to. It is gratifying to know that Rev. J. P. Macqueen was able to conduct these services which were so much appreciated. May we also tender our sincere thanks to the English friends who showed such kindness to our lads.—*Editor.*

indebted to those in charge of this little congregation of Strict Baptists who gave us the use of their Chapel. They were also very kind in inviting us to their hospitable homes. Some of us have to say that Mr. Macqueen's visits and weekly sermons were our only happy moments in barracks. The horror of swearing companions and the hardships of the Sabbath were for the moment forgotten as we listened to the gospel we used to hear. We hope that the word preached will be blessed to all of us who attended those services. Now that we have been shifted to another part it is not easy for Mr. Macqueen to follow us and apart from that we may be sent soon to an unknown destination from which some of us may never return. We do hope that the Free Presbyterian Church will in the future make an endeavour to follow her sons with the gospel not only to the training centres but to the foreign field. None but the isolated know what it is to be deprived of the gospel, and especially in such trying circumstances. On my own behalf and on behalf of my comrades.—*A Gairloch 4th Seaforth.*

The Necessity of Christ's Satisfaction.*

By FRANCIS TURRETIN.

(Continued from p. 341.)

XI. Although indeed the term satisfaction, positively taken as far as the word is concerned, is unwritten, however, the equivalent of it in meaning often occurs in the Scriptures. For words having the same significance are found both in the Old Testament and in the New. In the Old Testament indeed *padhah* and *pidhyon*, Exod. xiii. 13, Psal. xlix. 7, 8, *kaphar* and *kaphar*, Exod. xxi. 30, Levit. xvi. 30, whence *dies kaphrim*, because on it a solemn propitiation for the people was customary; in the new Testament *lutron*, *antilutron*, *apolutrosis*, *time*, *hilasmos*, *lutroun*, *apolutroun*, *eksagorázein* and similar words which plainly denote it as will be seen in the appropriate

place, not to mention various phrases from which it is undeniably proved as will appear from what follows.

XII. But concerning this satisfaction three questions can be especially asked. 1. Was it necessary that Christ should suffer for us? 2. Did He render a true and proper satisfaction? 3. Did He perform all the things that were demanded of Him perfectly and absolutely? In the *first* the mind is bent to the question of necessity, in the *second* the enquiry is concerning truth, in the *third* the matter of perfection is considered. For concerning these three points the greatest controversies are accustomed to take place both in the case of the Socinians and the Papists. We are now on the point indeed of dealing with that first head. 1. We are placing before us the point at issue and the opinion of the different parties. 2. We shall confirm the true and orthodox opinion constructively. 3. We shall confute the principal arguments of our opponents by a destructive criticism.

XIII. Although the question does not seem involved, certain points, however, must be disposed of as undisputed and foreign to the subject. The question is not do sins deserve and are liable to punishment, for both are admitted; every sin deserves punishment. For although something may be inconsistent with a supreme rule, this is an eternal law. It is utterly impossible that God should not be displeased, and so should not bind the sinner to suffer the penalty. For he who displeases God deserves to be rejected by that very God. But concerning this there is a controversy, are sins punishable that God ought and wishes actually to punish always in accordance with His justice? 2. It is not disputed whether He actually punishes or ought to punish certain sins or not. For our adversaries acknowledge that it is impossible for God to allow unpunished the sins of the impenitent and contumacious. But does He punish all at all times so that He suffers none to pass unavenged? 3. It is not within the bounds of the controversy properly to discuss whether God is able, as a result of His supreme right to the creature and His ab-

solute power to pardon sin without a satisfaction. Nor are we of those who desire to put limits to the Almighty. Nor is it our part to define to what extent that infinite and sovereign power which He has in regard to the creature may be extended. But the question is concerning the right of moderating His virtues and ordained power, according to which He is not only able to act but wishes to act and acts in this matter especially. Finally it is not the question, ought Christ to do and suffer something, by which He might obtain pardon, according to the act of acceptance of the injured party, freely and at the prayer of another. For our adversaries grant that. But ought He to make satisfaction meritoriously, entirely and in very deed, not omitting anything which strictly ought to be rendered, but doing and suffering whatever was demanded for our salvation?

XIV. Whence the form of the question arises easy and explicit. Is no sin able to be passed by unpunished by God, acting in accordance with His right to moderate His moral perfections, and was the satisfaction of Christ so indispensable for us to such an extent that without it neither remission of sins, nor external salvation could be obtained? On the part of God was it not only convenient and fitting but also necessary that Christ should render a full and perfect satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf, in order to accomplish the work of our redemption? The Papists deny it indirectly. They labour by guile in their answers to undermine the foundations. The Socinians openly and without disguise attack it.

XV. Socinus has framed the contrary proposition here and there in his book concerning Servetus, and in his lectures. "I think," he said, "and I consider it is the orthodox doctrine that Jesus Christ was our Saviour on account of the fact that He announced to us the way of eternal salvation. He confirmed it in His own person and the example of His life, and showed it clearly by His rising from the dead. He is able to give eternal life to those who have faith in Him, but that He made satisfaction to divine justice, according to which we deserved to be damned as sinners for our sin, or that there was any need that

He should, I deny" (*Liber, de Serva. c. Idem statuit Cateches. Racoviensis, Ostorodii Instit., Smalzius contra Franzius, Crellius contra Grotium, Volkeli* against all).

XVI. The opinion of the orthodox indeed is unvarying, that Christ made a true and perfect satisfaction to divine justice for all our sins, and it was so absolutely necessary that He should make satisfaction, that without it there would neither be any remission of sins nor would any ray of hope shine forth of salvation and immortality.

XVI. Here, however, we are not able sufficiently to be amazed that there are several disciples of Luther, and among them Gerhardus in the part concerning Justification c. xxxvi., who wish an occasion given to the new Photinians of this their blasphemous error by reason of the doctrine of our Churches concerning the decree of election. "For," he says, "if the elect are to be saved by the absolute will of God in regard to eternal life, then sins are also pardoned to them by the absolute will of God, or they could be pardoned, and so there is no need of the satisfaction or merit of Christ." Those could have easily proved by the same manner of reasoning that there was no need of faith or repentance. The accusation is most malicious, and is refuted sufficiently by the fact that as we contend for the absolute decree of election, so we strive with all our strength for the real satisfaction of Christ against those monstrous doctrines. Indeed the absolute decree concerning the end does not prejudice the setting up of means, although they are more subordinate, for He who foreordained salvation for us from eternity from His own good pleasure was unwilling, however, that it should be conferred in time unless satisfaction meanwhile had been given. He who loved us with a love of benevolence so that He was willing to give it in Christ and Christ to us, did not love us with a love of beneficence except in Him and on account of Him, whence we are said to be elected in Christ, Eph. i. 4., not as the meritorious and procuring cause of election, but as the foundation for its execution and first consequence as the means of carrying it out.—*Translated from the Latin by Rev. D. J. Macaskill, M.A.*

(*To be continued.*)

A Refuge in Times of Trouble.

THE Word of God tells us that "man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble," and that he is "born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." All this is the result of the sin of our first parents in Eden, for it opened the flood-gates of trouble and as the Shorter Catechism so clearly puts it, made us "liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." While this is true in a general way, it is also true that particular sins are followed by special forms of trouble. At the present time we, as a nation, are involved in a war of such a nature that no one can say what the end of it will be, or what new troubles may appear as it proceeds, but that new troubles will appear seems certain because we are not acknowledging God's hand in this, or His justice in bringing troubles upon us for our particular sins, yea, we are, nationally, breaking out in new forms of transgression against God's Law, and thus treasuring up to ourselves, "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God."

The Lord's people in this nation will have their own share of these troubles which are the result of national sin, for though much against their will, they are as citizens of this Empire sharing in her guilt. This is a cause of great sorrow for them, and it will constrain them to send many an appeal to the Throne of God. However, in the midst of all their troubles they are not without comfort, for a being "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," they can say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." They may see again, as they have seen in former troubles, men in high places, who thought their positions impregnable, and boasted in their strength, cast down and fleeing from the scene of conflict in order to preserve life and liberty; the boundaries of nations altered in a way that the most far-seeing person could not have predicted, new conditions imposed upon the vanquished, and more of

perishing worldly glory heaped upon the victors, but in the midst of it all their God remains unchanged.

Such troubles may bring many personal afflictions to God's people. When war breaks out, if they are not directly involved in it themselves, there are others in whom they are interested who are. Who can describe the bitter anguish of a godly parent's heart over one or more sons who are in the fighting line or in other positions of extreme danger, when he cannot entertain a hope that it is well with their souls, or the distressing sorrows of a minister of the gospel over the young men of his congregation who have listened with apparent indifference to his most solemn warnings, and who are now beyond the reach of his voice, perhaps, in the case of some of them, never to hear that voice again in this world. These troubles are often increased by most subtle forms of Satan's temptations which will cause the true Christian many tossings in the silent watches of the night. God reveals Himself as a refuge to such when He says, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones."

The national troubles may, and often do, open the flood-gates of oppression for God's people. When a nation, as in the case of our own at this time, is facing a cruel and unscrupulous foe the tendency is, under cover of the necessity of using every weapon of offence and defence, to totally disregard the claims of God's Law and an enlightened conscience. Thus we find that men, with whom no fault can be found except in regard to the Law of their God, are asked to do work, especially on the Sabbath Day, which neither the Law of God nor their own consciences approve of. When they make it clear that the ruling principle in their lives is, that they ought to obey God rather than men, they will find that some men, invested with a little brief authority, will victimise and insult them in a way inconsistent with the best traditions of this nation, and would make their lives unbearable

for them were it not that it is written, "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble."

At this critical time the Lord's people have troubles in connection with the good of Zion. Whatever may be said about us as a nation as far as our backsliding condition is concerned, we still retain the name of Christian and have many of the Characteristics of a Christian State. We have been honoured by God, as instruments for advancing the Cause of Christ in many ways, especially among the heathen. This cannot be said of our enemies. They are doing their utmost to blot out the Christian religion from off the face of the earth so that the present conflict resolves itself into a conflict between Christian and non-Christian. The Lord's people will often be asking themselves the question, "What would the state of affairs be if Germany would win?" The answer to that question is to be found in the concentration camps and in the barbarous tortures meted out in Germany to every one who, in his opinions, will differ a shade from the opinions held by Herr Hitler. In their perplexity the Lord's people can look only in one direction, and that is to God. They are encouraged to do so by what He has done in the past when His people were in great danger. They call to remembrance His deliverance at the Red Sea. "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians. And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea." Bearing in mind His mercies in the past they are encouraged to pray, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon." To such He will manifest Himself as their refuge, and they get a sweet view of Him as the Omnipotent God when He will say to their enemies, "Be-

cause thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest."

It is a great comfort to the true Christian, in the midst of troubles, to have a refuge that will not fail him, and to be assured that in that refuge "all is well." On the other hand, what a dismal world it would be for him were it not that it is written, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, destroy them." The God who is His people's refuge knows their troubles and dangers, and all the infirmities with which they are compassed, and exhorts them not to fear on account of these things "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."—*J. C.*

The late Finlay Macdonald, Elder, Ardheslaig, Sheildaig.

SEVERAL circumstances have occasioned that no notice has been taken in our Church Magazine of the death of Mr. Finlay Macdonald, who departed this life in 1936. The death took place while the minister of the congregation, Rev. D. MacLeod, was away in Canada as the Church's Deputy. Shortly after Mr. MacLeod's return he himself was called away to his everlasting rest with the result that no one took up his pen to write an account of the life of this godly man.

As one who knew Finlay, as he was familiarly called by friends, since the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church, I have been appealed to by some friends to write a sketch of his life for our church Magazine. While I agreed to this request I am quite conscious of my inability to do justice to his memory. An account of the lives of many eminently pious men and women have appeared in our Magazine and we feel that the name of Finlay

Macdonald is worthy of having a place among that great crowd of witnesses. Personally we find it both pleasant and profitable to read and re-read the lives of these men and women who were pillars in our Church.

The times in which we live are ominous and alarming. The Lord has risen to shake terribly the earth with His righteous judgments for the sins of nations. We read: "When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Is. xxvi. 9). But alas! there are no signs that we as a nation are learning righteousness though His judgments are so heavily upon us. The Lord has been removing from our midst, from the evil to come, His own people who wrestled at a throne of grace for poor sinners and for our beloved land. It was from these devastating judgments which have overtaken us that Finlay Macdonald was taken away to his everlasting rest.

It was more than once remarked in our magazine that while the Cedars of Libanon were numerous the cutting down of one did not affect the view of the landscape but when they were few the blank was very discernible even when *one* was removed. The removal of the subject of this notice has left a wide breach not only in the Sheildaig congregation but throughout the whole Church especially on the West Coast.

Finlay was born in 1860 at Ardheslaig where he lived all his life. His parents, especially his mother, were godly people. He possessed very acute mental powers which he used in advancing the interests of Christ's cause and in opposing and exposing the evil designs of the enemies of God's truth. He also took an active part in public affairs being a Parish Councillor for many years and a member of the School-Board and later of the Education Authority.

It is difficult to say when the Lord dealt with him savingly but it must have been when he was young. He used to visit Inverness in connection with his trade (he was a shoemaker) in the days of Dr. Mackay, Free North Church, and one would

infer from his great love and respect to the Doctor that he was the means in the hand of the Spirit in bringing him from darkness to light. He also held Mr. MacColl, Lochalsh, Dr. Kennedy and Mr. Macdonald in the highest estimation. A very remarkable incident took place in his experience on one occasion. When a young man he fell into great darkness regarding his interest in Christ. He decided to go to the Gairloch Communion and prayed that if the words "verily, verily, I say unto thee, etc." (John, iii. 3) would be given out as the "Question" on Friday he would take that as an indication he had grace. On Friday Dr. Kennedy presided. A portion of Scriptures was given out but not the one Finlay looked for. This greatly distressed him. The Doctor, however, rose and said that the passage was a very difficult one and asked the man who gave it out if he would have any objection if he himself (the Doctor) would give out a passage. The man replied: "No! No! No!" The Doctor then gave out the words of John, iii. 3. This very wonderful answer to his prayer had such effect on Finlay that it caused his nose to bleed. When referring to that occasion to friends he would add that he would never advise any one to do what he did. The above shows that his conversion must have taken place early in life. Dr. Kennedy died in 1884 and Finlay would be then 24 years and this event must have taken place some years before the Doctor died.

He and his brother Angus were ordained Elders in the congregation years before the Separation of 1893 took place. As proof of the respect in which he was held as an Office-bearer he was appointed as representative elder by the Presbytery of Lochcarron to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. The late Rev. D. Macdonald was greatly attached to Finlay's brother, Angus, and another young man, Duncan Mackenzie. They both died young. Mr. Macdonald expressed the desire to be buried between them in the churchyard of Applecross. That request was carried out as can be seen in Mr. Macfarlane's life of Mr. Macdonald.

When Rev. Donald Macdonald took his noble stand in defence of God's Word and conscience, Finlay encouraged and supported him. It was not a leap in the dark he took nor blindly followed a man whom he revered, but because he had an intelligent grasp of the doctrines and principles which he solemnly vowed at his ordination to assert, maintain and defend, and which he now saw were trampled under foot by the Rainy party in the Free Church.

He was a very useful member in our church courts being well versed in church law and procedure. He was of an uncompromising nature and would hold by his opinions in face of all opposition unless he was convinced that he was wrong. He was for some years before his death part-time missionary for the North Coast of Applecross, and when at home held a meeting on Sabbath evening at Ardheslaig. In the absence of the minister he invariably took the services at Sheildaig. The death of his only child (a daughter) was a severe blow to him and to his wife but we believe they both sought to be submissive to the will of Him who gave and took away.

To his widow, who was in every respect a real helpmeet for him and to his two sisters we tender our sincere sympathy. Our prayer is that the Lord will be a husband to the widow and the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother to the sisters. May the Lord raise up in the Sheildaig congregation men and women who would take the place of Finlay Macdonald and stand faithful to God's Word in this day of blasphemy and rebuke.—*N. M.*

Short Gleanings.

SEEKING EVIDENCE OF GUILT.

At a private conference where marks of grace were being discussed an old elder present said, that as he was now far advanced in years, he would like much to see in himself more evidence of humility. "Evidence of humility!" broke in Dr. Duncan, who was one of the party, "you had better be looking

for evidence of guilt." The worthy old man was startled. The thrust came from a keen-sighted onlooker for it was Dr. Duncan's purpose to bring out the difference between wishing to be humble and wishing to have the satisfaction of knowing it.

Christ's Second Advent.—I believe we shall find English believers much of one mind with the early believers in their views of such truths as justification by faith; our need of sanctification by the work of the Spirit. But in our view of the Second Advent, in our system it is a star of the fifteenth magnitude, while in theirs it was of the first. The Church has not dealt fairly with the prophecies of the Old Testament; refusing to see there are two personal advents—one to carry the cross, one to wear the crown. I have long felt it one of the greatest shortcomings of the Church of Christ that we do not preach enough about this advent of Christ, and that private believers do not think enough about it. None of us live on it, work from it, take comfort in it, as much as God intended us to do.—*Bishop Ryle.*

Faith in God's Word.—Truly, faith in God's Word is a wonderful and a mighty principle; it is the most acceptable service the heart of man can render. We cannot look into the Book of Life and see whether our names are there, but we can look into the Word of God, and if we can honestly say we have received that Word, we do rest our souls upon the promises contained in it, and upon Him whose Word it is, then we have the first and all-sufficient evidence of our relationship to God. It is by the Word of God so kept that "we grow up into Him in all things."—*Marcus Rainsford.*

Notes and Comments.

Twenty-Nine Thousand Too Many.—According to latest statistics published in the *Irish Jesuit Directory and Year Book* for 1940 there are 29,000 members of the Jesuit Society in the world to-day. England has 507 Jesuit priests and 145 brothers, and Ireland has 200 and 56 respectively. What a menace to these countries is such a number of these dangerous plotters.

Even Roman Catholic countries found them to be such and expelled them but they have full scope in Britain.

Seventy Per Cent. of the World's Population at War.

—The Year 1940 came in with fifteen hundred millions of the earth's population at war; only six hundred millions are at peace, such as it is, and millions of these may yet be dragged in. The nations at war are Japan, China, Finland, Russia, Germany, France and her Colonies, Great Britain and her Dominions and Colonies. These figures are staggering but when one takes into account the populations of Russia, Germany, France and her Colonies, China and the British Empire they are not so incredible. It is a sad state of things and not without a solemn message that such a condition of things should exist under the boasted triumphs of 20th century civilization.

Danger of Making the Maginot Line our God.

While it is the duty of our rulers to put forth every effort to make our defences as strong as possible there is a danger we should overlook our surest and strongest defence—the Lord Almighty. The God-fearing kings of old when in straits laid their case first of all before the Lord imploring His help and secondly, being men with practical minds, they set about making preparations as if everything depended on their own efforts. Our present danger, as a nation, however, is to leave God out of account and put our trust in the powerful fortifications of the famous Maginot line which, after all, has not been put to the supreme test. Great stress is laid in certain quarters on the powerful tanks possessed by our Allies. All this is to the good but, keeping in view the altered condition of things brought about by mechanization and the mighty armies that now go to war, the words of the Psalmist have still their warning: "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety; neither shall he deliver any by his great strength" (Ps. xxx. 16, 17). May we have grace given us to face the future with this song on our lips: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God" (Ps. xx. 7).

The Calamities in Turkey.—It is a rare occurrence that such calamities as have recently fallen on the Turkish nation has overtaken any part of the world. The devastation caused by the earthquake in Anatolia was followed by intense cold and blizzards and in other parts by floods in which thousands lost their lives and thousands more were rendered homeless. Earthquakes are said, by those who have had the experience, to be one of the most terrifying that men can pass through. One commentator on the Turkish disaster has well said: "Before such a calamity as that which has fallen on the Turkish nation mankind is mute. Floods and famine claim multitudes of victims in China, but these are catastrophies which, given sufficient enterprise, foresight and ingenuity can avert. But against earthquake there is no defence. How awful it is when, in addition to the horror of the quaking earth, the icy blizzard is loosed on the victims." As we hear of these unspeakably solemn devastations may we give heed to the warning words of the Lord Jesus: "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things. I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye they were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell ye, Nay: but, *except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*" (Luke, xiii. 2-5).

Is this the Way Christ's Birth Should be Honoured?

—Our readers are well aware that in the best days of Presbyterianism in Scotland Christmas was not observed. Scotland is rapidly changing in this as, also, in other religious matters and following in the train of the religious customs of her more powerful southern neighbour. The observance of Christmas as a religious festival is increasing more and more in our country and religious services on Christmas are quite common in Presbyterian churches. The following quotation is taken from an article in the *Radio Times* by the Director of religious Broad-

casting, the Rev. J. W. Welch, in which one gets an idea of how successfully the devil has contrived things by mixing religion with paganism in modern England: "The Church," he says, "which has never despised pagan festivals, chose to celebrate the birth of its Founder on December 25, as that was the day of the great pagan mid-winter festival. Traces of that festival still survive, in the use of mistletoe and the burning of the Yule log which defied the darkness of the long winter. The early Christians felt that the birth of Christ was like the return of the sun to a dark world. Small wonder that Christmas Day became a day of thanksgiving, praise, rejoicing, and gaiety, and that the songs and plays written for Christmas should reflect these feelings!" We have no idea what Mr. Welch's religious beliefs are but we have no hesitation in giving a direct denial to any statement which implies that the true Church of Christ "never despised pagan festivals." Even though God *commanded* that the birth of Christ should be remembered, which He did not, would it be seemly to commemorate it with such a medley as "thanksgiving, praise, rejoicing, gaiety, and songs and plays." Surely this is a sad travesty of what purports to be a religious festival. After all, however, it is a case of reversion to original type and is in keeping with its pagan origin which has never been denied. It is interesting to note that while there were deliveries of letters on Sabbath the day before Christmas in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there was no delivery in Scotland.

Foolish Move by President Roosevelt.—"The news," says the *English Churchman*, "that President Roosevelt has appointed a personal representative to confer with the Pope as to the prospect of peace measures, will not surprise those who know how powerful are the influences which Rome has brought to bear in Washington in recent years. An evening London paper sees in the appointment of Mr. Myron Taylor ('a millionaire friend of Mr. Roosevelt') to fill the position indicated, the influence of Mr. Kennedy, the Roman Catholic U.S.A. Ambassador to England, and states that 'on his return home Mr. Kennedy made

strong representations to the President on the need of such efforts.' The Editorial comment of the Roman Catholic *Universe* is illuminating. It speaks of the significance of the appointment, and adds—'It is curious to recall that in December, 1914, a very similar decision was taken by the British Government, in appointing a British Envoy to the Vatican to attend to British interests there during the war. The appointment was only intended to be temporary, and it arose directly out of problems concerning the treatment and exchange of prisoners and the need for better representation of British policy at the Vatican.' Up to the present the United States have had no diplomatic representation at the Papal Court. It seems likely that the step now being taken will involve President Roosevelt in the supposed necessity for a permanent arrangement similar to that into which the British Government allowed itself to be led in spite of its own protestations as to the temporary nature of the proceedings in 1914. The lure of the Papacy is too much for the undiscerning simplicity of modern statesmen."

Letters to Christian Soldiers.—In this issue we print the first of these letters from one Christian soldier to another. The writer does not wish his identity to be made known, but we are sure these letters will be read not only by those for whom they are intended but by most of our readers. The writer served in the Seaforth's during the last War and like so many had his own miraculous escapes. The Christian soldier has his religion severely tested in the Army, but where the root of the matter is it will come through the ordeal to the glory of Him who gave the needed grace for the day of trial. Hundreds of our lads will have to face the fire of merciless and mocking criticism by men who have no fear of God before their eyes; men to whom foul language and blasphemy is considered quite in keeping with a soldier's life. All such experiences will be a trying test to many who have faced such an ordeal for the first time. May grace be given to them to stand faithfully by the truth as set forth in the Scriptures. We are sure the Lord's people are

remembering our young men in their dangers and temptations at a throne of grace and let them be encouraged at the thought that the Lord's people are praying for them continually in public and in private.

Prof. Karl Barth.—No theologian has been more cried up than Prof. Barth in modern times. Our suspicions of his orthodoxy were first aroused by the class of religious press that was engaged in this work and after a careful reading of his works translated into English we were confirmed in our suspicions especially in his attitude to the Bible. Knowing as we did these views we have more than once warned our readers against swallowing his teaching as if it was the purest Calvinism. He has been hailed in certain quarters as the Calvin of the 20th century but what of Calvinism is in his writings will be found as well stated, if not better, in the writings of the great Reformer himself so that admirers of Calvinism may find all they need there as far as a clear statement of Calvinism is concerned. The following quotation from the *Bible League Quarterly* (January-March) gives an idea of his attitude to the Scriptures: "In his book, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, a sufficient ground for our warning is afforded in the author's statement: 'The Bible is the literary monument of an ancient racial religion, and of a Hellenistic cultus religion of the Near East. A human document like any other, it can lay no prior dogmatic claim to special attention and consideration. It is clear that intelligent and fruitful of the Bible begins when the judgment as to its human, its historical and psychological character has been made and put to us.' To say the least in regard to these astounding words, they show that Barth has not yet been brought to the condition and position of the man described by the Lord in Isaiah, lxi. 2: 'To this man will I look, to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.' And with regard to his theorising it is written: 'To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them' (Isaiah, viii. 20)." Let our readers, especially

young men in training colleges and universities, in reading in the religious press laudatory articles on Barth and The Theology of Orisis be not misled by them. A theology that rests not on an infallible Bible is built on sand.

The Blind Leading the Blind.—We do not know whether many of our readers see the *British Weekly* or not but whether they do or not does not matter for the purpose we have in view in writing this note. This widely circulated religious weekly has as one of its features a Correspondence Column presided over by Prof. Findlay and if one wishes to get an idea of how far some modern theologians have drifted from the old moorings they have only to read Prof. Findlay's answers to his correspondents. Recently in answer to one of these correspondents he writes: "To assert that every statement in the Bible is literally and absolutely true is to put Moses on a level with Jesus." Surely Prof. Findlay failed to remember our Lord's words: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me; but if ye believe not his writing, how shall ye believe my words?" (John, v. 46, 47).

Death of Mr. Brider.—We regret to announce the death of Mr. Brider, Bristol, who was doing such useful work in sending sound literature to the troops. During and since the last War small parcels of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* were sent for distribution to Mr. Brider and time and again he sent letters of appreciation. For some time Mr. Brider was carrying on his work under a serious handicap owing to failing health. Now the Lord has pleased to remove him from his work here below—a work which he carried on with consecrated devotion.

Entertaining the Men of the Armed Forces.—There are many reasons why those who are facing dangers on our behalf should receive the best entertainment that can be given them. But we do not include within the compass of "best entertainment," dances, the inanities of the music hall, theatrical performances and the displays of the cinema. These are poor entertainment for men who may soon be standing before the

Judge of the whole earth. We would seek to take occasion also to utter an emphatic protest against the heartless levity which has taken possession of quite a number of the actors and artistes in the theatrical and cinema world in commandeering the Lord's Day for their entertainments. How empty will all these appear when entertainers and entertained appear before God. May wisdom be given to the men of the Fighting Forces to seek after more lasting pleasures than the frothy and fleeting pleasures the world is offering them. We wish our defenders well and may they seek those pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore.

Sermons of Rev. Jonathan Rankin Anderson.—Will friends having M.S. volumes of Mr. Anderson's sermons kindly loan same (with a view to publication) to Mr. H. B. Pitt, 4 Clarendon Road, Trowbridge, Wilts.

Church Notes.

Communion.—*February*: First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway. *March*: First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Portree and Ness; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie; fifth, North Tolsta. *April*: First Sabbath, Portnalong, Achmore and Stoer.

London Communion.—In connection with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper on Sabbath, the 24th March, the following services have been arranged (D.V.) to be conducted by the Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick; and the Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale, Isle of Skye, at Eccleston Hall, Eccleston Street, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1:—*Thursday*, 21st March, 7 p.m. (English). *Friday*, 22nd March, 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic), 7 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting). *Saturday*, 23rd March, 3.30 p.m. and 7 p.m. *Sabbath*, 24th March, 11 a.m. (English), 3.45 p.m. (Gaelic) and 7 p.m. (English). *Monday*, 25th March, 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic) and 7 p.m. (English).

Request for a Day of National Humiliation by the Outer Isles Presbytery.—The following request has been sent to the Prime Minister, the Scottish Secretary, The Secretary of

State for War, The Home Secretary and the M.P. for the Outer Isles :—"I am instructed by the Outer Isles Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Bayhead, North Uist, on the 22nd of November, 1939, humbly and respectfully to draw your attention to the need of publicly seeking the aid of the Almighty, against the forces of evil and tyranny, which are arrayed against us, and which threaten our liberties, civil and religious, now that we are engaged as a nation in a life and death struggle for existence. We may point out in this connection that during the last War, when the Allies were almost in despair, a prayer meeting was held by responsible members of the Government at St. Margaret's Chapel, Westminster. Ever since the tide began to turn against the German invaders, evidently on account of our rulers and magistrates humbling themselves to seek Heaven's protection. At the present juncture in our national history we require more than an arm of flesh to overcome the enemy.

While we seek divine interposition on our behalf we must remember that our national sins are many and grievous : to instance a few, the neglect of divine worship and the proposal to open cinemas on the Lord's Day for the entertainment of the troops, which is certainly not a work of necessity and mercy, as well as many other breaches of the Fourth Commandment. By honouring God's laws in the past, our beloved country has been more highly favoured than any other in the history of the World. We conceive it to be our duty as a Court of Christ's Church, to impress upon you, and, through you, upon Parliament, to have a day appointed by His Majesty for humiliation and prayer, with confession of national sins, a practice of God-honouring kings and nations in the past. We are aware that one Lord's Day has already been appointed for such a purpose but we would humbly submit that a special occasion would be more seemly than a day already dedicated to the worship of God. By the authority of the Outer Isles Presbytery.—*Donald J. Macaskill, Moderator.*"

Free Copies of the Magazine for the Men in the Fighting Forces.—The Magazine Committee have decided to send free copies of the Magazine to the men in the fighting forces as was done in the last War. They are making an appeal for funds to finance this undertaking. Any money sent for this purpose to Mr. John Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, will be acknowledged in the Magazine. Already an opportunity of placing a copy each month on 600 ships has been agreed to by the responsible authorities. The responsibilities have also given permission to send copies to the Army and to the Air Force.

Collection for February.—The Special Collection appointed by the Synod for this month is for Aged and Infirm Ministers', Widows' and Orphans' Fund.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—For the Cause of Christ (being the 10th part), Ps. lxvi. 13, 14, £5 7s 1d; from the Committee of the F.P. Congregation, Dunoon, per Mr. Norman Shaw, £3; Anon., Argyllshire, 3s 6d; A. F., Chalmers Street, Ardrishaig, £1; D. M. McL., Architect, Des Moines, Iowa, £3; Mrs C. F., Whig Street, Kirkbuddo, 15s; J. McL., 2438 Quebec Street, Vancouver, £1.

Legacy Fund.—Received with grateful thanks from the Executors of the late Mr Donald Fraser, Elder, Strathpeffer, the sum of £100, bequeathed, in terms of his will, to the South African Mission.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—D. M. McL., Architect, Des Moines, Iowa, U.S.A., £2; "Canadian Free Presbyterian," per Rev. Jas. MacLeod, £1 2s 4d; Miss J. A., 20 Victoria Square, Bristol, 15s; J. McD., 3 Tockavaig, Sleat, Skye, 10s; Friend, Breakish, per Mr Alex. Gollan, £1; Stornoway Sabbath School Mission Box, per Mr N. McLeod, £5 5s; Mrs D. McD., Callakille, Arrina, 2s 6d; A. F., Chalmers Street, Ardrishaig, 10s; Jas. McL., 2438 Quebec Street, Vancouver, 16s; Rod. C., Briar Hill Avenue, Toronto, £10; Rev. N. McIntyre acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—M. B., London, 10s; Friend, Skye, £1 1s; M. M. & Son, Glendale, £5; A Friend, London, £5 5s; M. M., London, £1; Mrs MacC., Kilmartin, £1 10s.

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Applecross Manse Building Fund.—Mr M. Gillanders acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of 10s from Friend, Drumbeg, per Rev. A. MacAskill.

Fort William Church Purchase Fund.—Mr Alex. Rankin, Mamore Cottage, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—A Friend, Lochalsh, 10s; Friend, Fort William, 10s; Friend, Oban, 20s.

Greenock Manse Purchase Fund.—Rev. Jas. MacLeod acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—From Breasclete Congregation, £6 12s 6d; Friend, Stirling, 10s.

Correction.—Acknowledgment of £1 o/a Sustentation Fund in December Magazine should read as from "Nurse L. M."

Halkirk Congregational Funds.—Rev. Wm. Grant acknowledges with thanks a donation of 10s for the Church Heating expenses from "A Friend, Inverness-shire."

London Congregational Funds.—Rev. J. P. Macqueen acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—A Friend, Vancouver, 5 dollars, Mr J. R. M., Bank of Montreal, Forest, Ontario, 10s.

London Church Building Fund.—Dr M. G. Tallach, Camberwell, S.E.5, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of £3 from M. M. and friends, London.

Lochbroom Congregation.—Mr J. A. MacLean, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £15 on behalf of the Sustentation Fund from the late Mr M. K. Macdonald and Mrs Macdonald, Opoho, New Zealand.

Portnalong Mission House.—Mr D. Morrison, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of £1 from "A Friend, Eunord," also £1 on behalf of the Sustentation Fund, per Mr D. MacSween, Missionary.

Raasay Manse Building Fund.—Mr E. MacRae, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—From "Two Friends, Strathpeffer," per Miss M. A. Tallach, £5; Friend, Skye, 10s.

St. Jude's Congregation, Glasgow.—The Honorary Treasurer begs to acknowledge with sincere thanks receipt of the following donations. **Sustentation Fund.**—Friend, per Rev. R. Mackenzie, £3; Anon., per J. Livingstone, £3; Miss McD., Ledaig, Connel, 17s; **Jewish and Foreign Missions.**—Friend, per Rev. R. Mackenzie, £3; Anon., per J. Livingstone, £1; Miss McD., Ledaig, Connel, 10s.

South African Mission Schools.—Miss Nicolson, 7 Southpark Terrace, Glasgow, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Friend, Lochcarron, £2; Miss L., Harmingers, £1; Mr K. M., Dingwall, £1; Miss J. S., Tara, Ontario, £2 4s 9d; Mr D., Halkirk, per Miss J. Grant, 5s.

South African Mission.—Clothing Fund.—Mrs Miller, 7 West Bank Terrace, Wick, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of 6s from R. McK., Glen Urquhart Road, Inverness, per Mr J. Grant.

St. Jude's South African Clothing Fund.—The Committee acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—1 Parcel Clothing, 120 yards Material, 4 lbs. Wool, and cash donations, £6 13s 6d. The Treasurer also gratefully acknowledges the following donations:—Miss C. McK., Manchester, 10s; Miss L. McD., Glasgow, 5s; Miss N. McK., Glasgow, 10s; Miss E. Y., Clydebank, 13s; parcel knitted garments and 3s from Miss C. M., Glasgow. The Committee also acknowledges with sincere thanks contributions amounting to £6 18s, and the following direct donations per Treasurer:—Mrs MacS., Barlinnie, 5s; Mrs Y., Glasgow, 10s; B. C., Glasgow, 10s; M. M., Glasgow, 10s.

The Magazine.

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