

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
 AND
 MONTHLY RECORD

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

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

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The Month Abib.

Down through the ages of time, the history of many nations relates signal and striking events which shall never be forgotten by succeeding generations to the end of the world. Outside the pages of the Bible, we may instance at random (so to speak) the mighty Reformation which took place in Germany during the days of Martin Luther, which may be a fact of little interest to the most to-day; yet, the days of Luther will continue to be remembered as a period of time during which God wrought wonders for His Church by breaking many of the bands of popery and bringing Luther and others out into the liberty of justification by faith in Christ Jesus. But now to revert to Bible history: such a blessed period of time was "the month Abib."

Immediately preceding the announcement of the appointment of the passover to Israel, "The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you," (Exodus xii, 1, 2). Then there follows in the inspired record, the detailed instructions regarding the observance of the passover; the narrative of the actual celebration of it and of the destruction of all the first-born in the land of Egypt and the passing over the dwellings of the Israelites by the "destroyer" sent from the Lord. Thereafter we read of the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt. Later, in chapter xiii, 3, 4, we read of Moses reminding the Israelites of the day when they came out of Egypt, "Remember this day, in the which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place . . . This day came ye out in the month Abib."

Abib was the title of this memorable month during which the Lord commanded this great deliverance for Israel and was now the first month of the year to them; the memorial of the starting point of an entirely new era in their history as a nation. "Abib" means "ripe fruit"; and indeed Israel tasted the fruits of sweet, refreshing deliverance during this month. The month Abib was designed to recall to Israel from year to year, many trying, precious and blessed facts and experiences. Moses refers to two main matters which do embrace all the other wonderful and detailed events, under the divine supervision, during the month Abib.

One was, *That they came out of the house of bondage.* The Israelites as a people lived four hundred and thirty years in the land of Egypt; and

the miseries of slavery had increased to such an extent that conditions were practically unbearable when Moses and Aaron arrived on the scene, as men commissioned of the Lord to lead His people out of this hard bondage according to His promise. Ultimately, the month Abib arrived; God's time to favour His people came at last; and they came out of bondage, as a people distinguished and protected by the blood of the passover lamb, in the Lord's great mercy. They left behind tyrannical and hard-hearted Pharaoh, the cruel task-masters, the intensive brick-making, and the misery and shame of the land of Egypt. No man, woman or child was left behind. It was the coming out of a favoured nation and a peculiar people. "All the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." They came out to liberty and to be a people separate and apart from the heathen, with a view to worshipping, serving and honouring the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The other principal matter was, *That by strength of hand the Lord brought them out.* They were a weakened and impotent people prior to their coming out of the house of bondage, and truly they had no help of man at all against the powers of Pharaoh and his officers. We are told that "The children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them," (Exodus ii, 23-25). Here we see the beginnings of the activity of the strength of the Lord on their behalf. When God hears, looks upon them from His holy habitation, and has respect unto them, then Israel could humbly look for the exercising of divine and almighty strength to bring them out of bondage, and their oppressors had every reason to tremble. By the strength of His hand the Lord began working according to His own wisdom, to bring them out. This meant for the Egyptians, one terrible plague after another, and yet Pharaoh would not let Israel go. But the Lord finally weakened Pharaoh's hands, that he let go his wicked and stubborn hold upon the Israelites. "And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt . . . And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead," (Exodus xii, 29, 30). Here is the God of Israel in His holy indignation bringing to bear upon Israel's enemies, that strength which could have destroyed them all. Pharaoh and the Egyptians now feared that they would all soon be dead men. Little wonder that at last Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Rise up and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel . . ." (Exodus xii, 31). And so the "gates" of Egyptian bondage were opened by the Lord's strength, His hand, His work; and the children of Israel went forth as led by the Lord.

The month Abib, the first month of the year henceforward, to this so greatly blessed people, must always in future recall to remembrance, the passover, the deliverance and the strength of the Lord God of Israel. It also called for humility on the part of Israel and thanksgiving to "the Hope of Israel and Saviour thereof in time of trouble," (Jeremiah xiv, 8). And surely the month Abib speaks to the spiritual seed of Jacob now, regarding spiritual and saving deliverance from sin, through Christ Jesus

their passover sacrificed for them, and accomplished by the power of the Spirit of the Lord. Reader, have you had a month Abib in your soul's experience? And poor, sin-laden Britain would be rightly engaged at the beginning of a new year, if there were cries from our midst to the God of our fathers, for a "month Abib."

A Sermon.

Preached in Greenock, Second Sabbath of October, 1949,
by Rev. J. MACLEOD, Greenock.

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men," etc. (Ps. cvii, 8, 9).

THIS portion of the Word of God is a revelation of the joys, trials and afflictions of the Lord's people from the dawn of their regeneration to their last day in the wilderness of time. We are not told who was the Writer of the Psalm, but we are sure enough of the Author. The Holy Spirit was the Author, and His divine impress is on every line from the beginning of the Psalm to the last word in it. It is so designed by Him to suit every believer in all ages, at all times, and in every station and stage in the serious life of the godly. This Psalm will not grow old as long as there is a believer in the world. It is always green, fresh, and new in the experience of the humble believer. That is the way with the Word of God, always divine, spiritual, heavenly, saturated with the honey of gospel sweetness, pouring divine blessings, comforts, and sanctifying light on the path of the poor and needy. The Word of God does reveal to God's people their lost, ruined, and corrupt condition by nature, state and practice in the world. But it reveals to them infinitely more than that. It reveals to them the remedy than can heal all their diseases, and the Book of Psalms is full, and overflowing with the consolations of the gospel. Our great Scottish Reformer, John Knox, used to go through the Book of Psalms once a month. When the Holy Spirit shines through it into the soul, what riches, what light, strength, and comfort the believer derives from the Word of God. They may be passing through deep waters, without a ray of light till the blessed Spirit sends His divine rays into their poor souls, and that often happens through a passage of the Word as contained in the Book of Psalms. How can men (and we thoroughly believe, true believers), go to the muddy waters of man-made hymns instead of the pure, divine, and inspired Psalms, is really a puzzle which we cannot appreciate, nor understand. Men who believe in the Inspiration of the Bible in every chapter and verse of it! Custom and Tradition dies hard! The Roman and Greek Churches adopted the use of human hymns very early in their respective histories, which caused burning and bitter animosity among the people; and to this day in England, one branch will not sing the hymns that "Saint B." composed, and Mr. Over-righteous cannot tolerate the hymns composed by "Saint Just." All should agree to praise God by the use of the Psalms. That should not cause divisions and bitter feeling among God's Children.

(1) In the first place we may consider how we ought to praise God for His goodness. It is most evidently set forth in the Scriptures that we cannot add anything to the happiness, greatness, and majesty of God.

He is eternally happy, and eternally above and beyond the reach of His creatures. From everlasting to everlasting He is God. His praise is, to ascribe to Him the glory that belongs to Him. He has revealed infinite greatness, goodness, wisdom, power and glory in the creation of this world out of nothing. His mighty works are to be observed by all His rational creatures. It ought to be a mirror to us wherein we might behold His glory in mighty seas, high mountains, deep valleys, tiny flowers, creeping worms, swift eagles, the cautious wren, the growing herbs, the fading leaf—an endless variety of things in His creation to demand study, attention, admiration and soul submission to the Divine Goodness. Alas! our mental and spiritual blindness is such that we resemble more the brute creation than creatures that were created to glorify and enjoy Him. That does not alter the fact that we should seek the glory of God, and praise His name for His goodness.

We are spiritually blind. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." This new birth is from above. The Holy Spirit regenerates the soul. His divine power alone that can do it. It is a complete change. There is a change of state and of nature. We are the children of a fallen father. Adam sinned against God and lost his holiness, blessing and happiness. He could not praise God. Sin, guilt, shame and corruption closed his mouth, heart, mind and will to praise his Maker. He gave his ear to the devil, who tuned his heart to mutter his own hymns of hate! God in adorable wisdom provided a remedy, a Saviour to redeem sinners from that fearful condition. In the gospel we have that divine and glorious Saviour presented and offered to us without money or without price on our part. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor?" (Rom. xi). The Elect will praise God forever that in their low estate He thought of them, called them to life, to exercise faith, which was and is, His own gift, uniting them to the Lord Jesus Christ. "For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be glory for ever, Amen." The Holy Spirit calls, makes willing, and unfolds the love and mercy of God in Christ to the poor sinner. The gospel Table is set before them: "A feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," (Isa. xxv). The gospel marrow is most nourishing to the hungry soul. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," is wines on the lees well refined in the wisdom, love and mercy of God from eternity to eternity. "God so loved the world" is no empty sound in the ears of a poor soul brought out of the house of bondage, from being a slave of the devil to serve the living God. This is the "New Birth." "The conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God," (Heb. ix). This man does not require an Organist to play on the understanding, will, and affections of his soul. His tune is praise to God for His mercies that will endure for ever. He will praise God forever! The glory of redemption, love and mercy is with the whole heart, and mind, ascribed to Him. When he looks back and begins to see how near he was to a lost eternity while serving the devil, the flesh and the world: and at the same time as ignorant of God as an ass or mule; what cause of the deepest humility, and at the same time of the highest praise to Him

that observed, watched over him, took care of the poor wandering sheep! If this is not mercy, what is mercy? It is all mercy from the womb to the grave, and to all eternity. The goodness of God! The Formalist, Legalist, and Pharisee can never enjoy the gospel. They are outside. We must be inside the fold with the good Shepherd before we know the joyful sound of the gospel. The Covenant of grace is an absolute Covenant. It is an eternal Covenant. It is a glorious Covenant. It has no need of the Armenian props to strengthen and establish it. Christ did that with His own blood in heaven. "Oh that men would praise God" for this ever blessed Covenant! On the other hand, the blind cannot appreciate the beauty of colours. The Formalist leans on the staff of his own wisdom, powers of reason, and sings the praises of his own excellency, and is mighty pleased with his own great attainments. He lives off the gospel, but not on the gospel. He has a name to live and that satisfies him; and well he may sing his own hymns of praise, and if others will not admire his performances, he calls for fire to come down from heaven to destroy all opposition. He looks on the poor and needy in Zion with the fire of the murderer in his eye as the Pharisees looked on the Saviour of the poor. He was never poor, as he lives in the green pastures of his imagination, without God and without hope in the world!

(2) In the second place we may consider the next part of this verse: "and for His wonderful works to the children of men." All His works are wonderful, but the revelation He has given of Himself in Christ transcends all His other works. The Father elected His own Son to die for the ungodly. We who were far off, under the curse of the Law, helpless, hopeless, ruined, maimed, blind, dumb, deaf—as we are described in the parable of the prodigal son—feeding the swine of our own lusts. No thought could enter our minds that there was anything better than to feed the swine (the flesh), of our own lusts till the Spirit of God quickened us to consciousness of our lost condition. The spiritual darkness of the soul was like the inside of the grave—death and darkness reigning supreme. "God said let there be light, and there was light." If God had passed over us, we would have remained in that darkness forever! From spiritual darkness to utter darkness in a lost eternity. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," (I John iv). We had no hand in this business. See Titus iii to confirm and set your mind at ease on the glorious Rock of the Covenant. "And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb," (Rev. xxii). This vision revealed to John is the whole scheme of redemption "clear as crystal" from the fountain head—God. The gospel is the "water of life" to all that will savingly drink it by faith. "Open thy mouth wide," and the Spirit of God fills it to the entire satisfaction of your immortal being. Christ fills it. We need Christ in His finished work as our complete and perfect Saviour. His wonderful works to the children of men are to be seen in sending the gospel to our native island many hundreds of years ago. We see, read, study, and I hope we do appreciate at least to a certain extent the blessed Reformation, and the blessed fruits that followed that wonderful work of God to the shores of Britain, to the Highlands and Islands of the sea. Men of God raised, and sent to preach the gospel of love, mercy and peace to benighted savages in

Wales, Ireland, and down to the Island of Lewis, with the Bible in their hands, Christ in their own hearts, His blood in their consciences, and divine love in their souls, to declare His righteousness to naked self-destroyed souls! The harvest of souls Christ took from the British Isles for the last, near two thousand years, shall not be known till the great day! This was His wonderful works to the children of men. Paul preached Christ and Him crucified to a savage and hostile generation, facing death, privation, persecution, cold, hunger and nakedness, but His wonderful works were so great in his eyes that nothing mattered if Christ was made known to sinners of the lost ruined children of Adam. It was not fine studied essays that Paul preached. No! Such rubbish might feed swine, but not the poor of the Lord, or meet with the awakened conscience of a lost sinner like the jailer in Philippi. With Paul it was Christ or nothing! If Christ is not in the preaching, in His love, mercy, power, grace and salvation, there is nothing but death in the "pot." It was the work of God to send the gospel to our fathers while dreaming about a future that did not exist. He revealed Christ to them in His glorious robe of righteousness that could cover their own vile nakedness, heal their diseases, enlighten their souls, renew their will, to enable them to follow Jesus in the way. It was a day of gospel power, peace, and blessedness. We their children should not forget the wonderful works of God! It is base ingratitude on our part to forget His wonderful works in liberating us from the idolatry of Rome, that yoke of bondage, and slavery of the flesh.

Are we not eye witnesses of what happened in other Roman Catholic countries and idolatrous nations such as Russia, Turkey, the whole of Asia, Africa, Italy, Spain, France, Lower Canada and South America, that are at this very day wallowing in the mire of atheism, ignorance, murder, rape, with the Pope as king-priest over millions of this poor mob, and Stalin demanding obedience over the rest of the benighted millions of Asia and Eastern Europe! The Pope claims that some three hundred millions follow his path. Stalin claims some seven or eight hundred millions who follow his philosophy! What if the Pope and Stalin agree to co-operate to crush all opposition to the Vatican and the Kremlin? Who can tell? The Pope may change his policy at a moment's notice. He may direct all his followers to agree with Stalin if he sees that there is no alternative to retain his Triple Crown. The Protestants of Europe, U.S.A., Canada, South Africa, etc., may have to fight the combined forces of the Vatican, and Russia in Asia and Europe. The Lord reigns above all and over all. Let us not forget what the Lord did for us and our fathers in the past. He is the same to-day. He has not changed. May our prayer be, "May thy kingdom come." His Kingdom must come into the hearts and lives of all that shall be saved of the human race. Christ must reign over them as their Lord and God. The powers that oppose Christ and His people must perish. They will pass away like the flies that are born at sunrise and die at sunset. The wicked shall not last. We need not be over-burdened in our minds as to what commotions may take place in the world. If the devil's kingdom is divided into parties, sects and creeds, that is the surest sign of its final end and destruction. Satan must be cast out. It is the gospel in its divine power and life that does that. The seat of Satan in this world is the heart of man. When the strong man armed is defeated, overthrown, and cast out by the Word, Spirit, grace and love of God from his seat;

his power, kingdom and place is taken away. If ten million, or a hundred million men are brought under the yoke of the gospel, Satan loses his place and seat in every soul regenerated by the Spirit. It is by the power of the gospel that Satan must disappear for a long period in the future history of our poor race. It is the gospel that will destroy Romanism, Communism, and all who daringly and wickedly oppose the Lord Jesus. In recent times, Roman Catholic priests have been converted to the Protestant faith, and many of them are now preaching the gospel that once they knew not and despised. The Roman priests are leaving the Church of Rome in U.S.A., Canada, Italy, South America, in considerable numbers in recent years! That is a good sign. In England, many of the clergy of the Church of England would join Rome to-morrow, and the poor blinded hypocrites know, or should know, that the Roman Catholic priests in thousands do not believe one word of what they are made to say like prattling fools at the command of the Jesuits of the Vatican.

(To be continued.)

Noted English Dissenters—Oliver Heywood, B.D.

By REV. ARCHD. BEATON, Gairloch.

THIS witness for Christ had parents who were distinguished for piety and worth. He was born near Bolton in Lancashire in 1629. He set a special mark on the day of his baptism on its annual returns, to renew his baptismal covenant, and dedicated himself afresh to God. While still young he gave signs of tenderness of conscience and delight in divine things, with an earnest desire to be what he called "a good minister." This encouraged his parents to think of devoting him to the work of the ministry and they gave him a liberal education. After passing through the Grammar School, he passed on to Cambridge. His good father on leaving him at Cambridge, left him a paper containing these sensible injunctions which we think well worth quoting. "My son, labour above all things to make your peace with God, by humbling your soul evening and morning, and oftener, before Him that you may know that God hath begun a good work of grace in your heart. Be very frequent in reading the Scriptures, with knowledge and understanding, that you may be a good scribe, armed against temptations, and able to convince gainsayers. Labour to get every day some sanctified thoughts and spiritual meditations, which will be a heavenly life and walking with God; and write them in a book, and title it, *The Meditations of my Youth*. Take short notes of every sermon you hear, and write some fair over for your loving mother. Often remember how short and precious your time is, and that upon it depends eternity. As to society, keep a mean: neither too solitary, lest you be melancholy; nor too much desire company, lest you be drawn aside; and above all take heed of bad company, and seek out the good!"

After finishing his education he was ordained in 1652. His income while in his charge was but very small. After his ejection in 1662, he was often in distress: "yet providence so seasonably and abundantly appeared for him, that he was not only enabled to support the heavy expenses of fines and imprisonment, and much other hard usage, but he maintained two sons in academical learning." These two sons afterwards became

faithful ministers of Jesus Christ. Though he was very much persecuted after he was ejected—the details of which cannot be entered upon in this paper—he always continued to preach, in private houses and other places, as he got the opportunity. It is said that “some thousands were indebted to his ministry for deep and abiding impressions.” He was once sent for by a parish minister, evidently a profane young man, dying of consumption; who on Mr. Heywood’s arrival, “confessed with agony of conscience his dreadful sin, in taking upon him the ministry while he knew himself to be unconverted; begged him to pray for him, and earnestly asked him what repentance was.” Mr. Heywood gave him a good advice and was desired to come back again, “but before he could go, this clergyman died, without any evidence of obtaining mercy.”

In the life of this remarkable man, which was published *with Historical Sketches of the times in which he lived*, there are some anecdotes which may be of interest to our readers. Two of which we would like to relate without trespassing too much on our worthy Editor’s space, and they both are told relative to the remarkable interpositions of providence in favour of this man of God. On one special occasion our subject was reduced to great straits after the loss of his income, so that his children were in great need of food. He told his servant, who did not desert the family in their distress, to go to a certain shopkeeper and ask him to give her five shillings worth of what was most necessary for food, if he would be kind enough to give it, until he, her master, would be able to pay it. “The Lord,” he said, “give you good speed, and in the meantime we will offer up our requests to Him who feedeth the young ravens when they cry.” Martha, for that was her name, went but when she came to the shop her courage failed her, and she passed by the door again and again without going in to tell her errand. The shopkeeper, standing at the door, called her to him and asked if she was Mr. Heywood’s servant. When she told him she was, he said to her: “I am glad to see you, as some friends have given me five guineas for your master and I was just thinking how I could send it.” Upon this she burst into tears and told him her errand. He was much affected with the story, and told her to come to him if the like necessity should return. Having procured the necessary provisions, she hastened back, and on entering the house the children eagerly examined the basket, and the father on hearing the servant’s story said: “The Lord has not forgotten to be gracious; his word is true from the beginning: they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

The other anecdote is as follows:—When the spirit of persecution was so hot against this good man he was obliged to leave his home on horseback one winter’s morning, before it was light, like Abraham, “not knowing whither he went,” and without a copper in his pocket. Having committed himself to the Lord, he permitted the horse to go the way he would. Having gone all day without food, the horse, towards the evening, made his way to a farm house a little off the road. Mr. Heywood knocked at the door and asked the woman who answered, would she be kind enough to give himself and his horse shelter for the night, telling her that he only wished hay for the beast and liberty for himself to sit by her fireside. Upon calling her husband, they both kindly invited him to come in. The mistress soon prepared food for him to eat, at which he expressed his

concern, as he had no money to pay for it, but hoped God would reward them. They assured him that they did not expect any reward and that he was welcome to partake of the best they had. After some conversation, the master asked him where did he come from. He said he was born in Lancashire, but that his home was now near Halifax. "And do you know anything about Mr. Heywood who had been a minister near Halifax, but is now forbidden to preach," said the master. To which he replied: "There is a great deal of noise about that man; some speak well and some speak ill of him; for my own part I can say very little in his favour." "I believe," said the farmer, "he is of that sect which is everywhere spoken against; but pray, what makes you form such an indifferent opinion of him?" Mr. Heywood answered: "I know something of him, but as I do not choose to propagate an ill report of anyone, let us talk of some other subject." After keeping the farmer and his wife some time in suspense, he at length told them "that he was that poor outcast." All was then surprise and thankfulness to the Most High who brought him under their roof. The master of the house then said to him, "I have a few neighbours who love the gospel: if you will give us a word of exhortation, I will run and acquaint them. This is an obscure place, and as your coming here is not known, I hope we shall have no interruption." Mr. Heywood consented, and soon a small congregation gathered to whom he preached, to his own and their benefit. A small collection was then voluntarily made to help the outed minister on his way.

It appears from his diary, which he kept till five days of his death, that in one year, 1681, besides his Sabbath sermons, he preached one hundred and fifty times, kept fifty days of fasting and prayer, and nine of thanksgiving, and travelled 1400 miles between walking and riding, in serving Christ and the souls of men. His works, which are a number of volumes, are held in high estimation for sound theology and practical religion. He died in great peace and joy in 1702 at the age of 73 years.

Why do we go to Church?

By REV. JOHN COLQUHOUN, Glendale.

WE live in an age when a great many never enter a church from the beginning of the year to its end, but if those who do go were asked their reason for doing so, and if they were to answer honestly, it would be seen how varied were the motives people had for going to church. Without taking into account what may be true of Roman Catholics relative to priestly fear and a false sense of devotion, we shall confine our attention to the question as it relates to professed Protestants. Broadly speaking, there are two classes of people among church-goers; there are natural men who have never yet known what it is to be born again, and the Lord's people who have passed from death unto life. It is unspeakably solemn to think that these two classes are sitting side by side in the same building, hearing the same gospel, singing the same psalms, professing to worship the same God, and yet their reasons for coming together are as far apart as the North and South Poles.

The worldly man could give many a reason for coming to church. One may be that otherwise the Sabbath would be intolerable to him. This is

true where outward order is observed on the Sabbath, and where people have been taught from their childhood to abstain on that day from works that are lawful and necessary on other days. Where people realise that this is God's command, and believe that to act otherwise would be sinful, their natural consciences keep a check on them, but the period of inactivity which this entails causes them to feel the day long. In their experience the longest day of the week is the Sabbath, and they must do something to make it seem shorter. To walk to church and back will pass the time, and then, if they can get sleeping in their pew, they seem to count it less sinful than sleeping at home on that day. If they are not allowed to sleep in church they will spend the time of the services day-dreaming, or thinking of everything but the sermon to which they are professing to listen.

Others go to church in order to be counted respectable. They have neighbours who never go and they look upon them as heathen who are sure to be lost. While they are quite correct in judging that all who will continue to the end to neglect the means of grace will be lost, yet they forget that nowhere in the Bible is it said that the mere attendance on the means of grace will save a person. The Apostle James describes the mere hearer of the Word thus: "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was," (James i, 23, 24). Thus we see that the outward respectability of attending church will not profit one in any way.

Some go to church merely in order to see friends and acquaintances. Christ has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," (Matt. xviii, 20), and it should be the desire of all who go to His house to get His presence there. He is the Friend of sinners and He is the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," but alas! some who go to His house are more desirous of seeing frail, sinful mortals than they are of seeing Christ and holding converse with Him. What, it may be asked, have they to say to these friends and acquaintances? Do they ask them the searching and all-important question: What think ye of Christ? No, their talk will be of the world and of things that perish.

Again, there is a section who go to church out of curiosity. Their ear is open to catch some strange or unusual expression that may fall from the preacher's lips, and when they get any such thing it will amuse them and they make use of it among their fellow creatures as a matter to laugh at. While this ought to be a warning to preachers of the gospel to be so circumspect in their language that neither the Lord's people would be justly offended, nor the godless world get a handle against religion, yet such as go to church for the purpose of getting something to laugh at have already begun to sit in the seat of the scorner which has been aptly described as "the lowest stair to hell." Such will not scruple to criticise the preacher, forgetting that they are thus shutting the door of their hearts against Christ.

The whisperings of the natural conscience will, at times, make a sinner go to church. When he neglects the house of God there is something that tells him that he is not doing right, and he finds this "something" very troublesome. At his work during the week it follows him; at his own

fireside in the evening it whispers, "You should have been in church last Sabbath," or, on his bed on Sabbath morning it tells him that he is not in the path of duty. This causes the careless sinner to look about for means of silencing conscience, but nothing will silence the natural conscience but to do that, however imperfectly, the neglect of which he is accused of. Where, however, these strivings and warnings are not accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, the person who is the subject of them will be satisfied when he performs his duty, and prides himself on how punctiliously he performs his "good works," utterly forgetful that the Scriptures tell us that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," (Gal. ii, 16).

It is refreshing to turn from these sinful motives for going to church and consider the motives which the Lord's people have for going. The Psalmist says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," (Psalm xxvii, 4). We see here that he had a twofold end in view in going to God's house. He desired to *behold the beauty of the Lord*, and he also went in order to *inquire*. He desired to see the beauty of the Lord in His Word. Many think it not worth their while to go to God's house unless there is someone there who can preach, but 'the true child of God loves to go there in order to hear the Word read publicly, because he knows by experience that he may meet with Christ in the public reading of the Word, for Christ showed Himself to him in that way before. To the objection that he can read the Word for himself at home he replies that the promise is that where two or three are gathered together in His name He is there. The presence of Christ, therefore, does not depend on the presence of one who can preach, though preaching as a means of salvation is in no way to be despised. Often has the mere reading of God's Word in His own house been the means of awakening the careless and indifferent, releasing those who were under the spirit of bondage and giving them the spirit of adoption by which they were enabled to cry, Abba, Father, confirming the weak and causing the lame man to leap as an hart.

While the true Christian values the public reading of God's Word, he by no means despises the public preaching of the gospel. The Westminster Divines, who certainly valued the reading of God's Word, laid special emphasis in the Shorter Catechism on the preaching of that Word. In the preaching of the Word there is, broadly speaking, a declaration of man's lost and ruined condition by the Fall, Redemption through Christ, and Sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Here the beauty of the Lord is to be seen in looking upon sinners in their low estate, making provision to meet with their lost condition, and through that provision, causing them to appear before Himself at last without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Neither do they despise the other parts of public worship, such as prayer and the singing of God's praise. They are not uninterested in these exercises, and do not act as if they had nothing to do with them. The unregenerate may stare and look about them during prayer and have a closed mouth during the singing of God's praise, as if prayer and praise were merely the duties of those taking 'the lead in those exercises, but the case is different with the child of God. Every petition put up finds

a response in his soul, re-echoing the desire from which the petition arose. In the praises of the sanctuary when he is able to join skilfully in the singing, his mind is not so occupied with the music as to give a subordinate place to the exercise of soul which one should have in the singing of God's praise, and where the gift of joining skilfully is denied that part of worship is not lost, for it gives an uplift of soul which fits one better for the other parts of worship, and is therefore an aid to seeing the beauty of the Lord.

It has been noticed that the worldling goes to church in order to see friends and acquaintances, but that will not benefit him any. The child of God sees brethren and sisters in Christ when he goes to church, and can enter into Paul's experience at Appii Forum when he met the brethren, "he thanked God, and took courage." When the true Christian looks on a brother or sister in Christ, he can say that here is so much of Christ dwelling in this world; he can see in that person one for whom Christ died, and to whom the Holy Spirit applied the efficacy of Christ's finished work, and who thus has been made a new creature. Also he can see in him one who has the same faith, hope and love that he has himself, and who is a fellow-sufferer with him in his trials, temptations and fears, conquering these trials, temptations and fears only through Christ. In short, when he has grounds for looking upon a fellow-mortal as a true Christian he sees in him the beauty of the Lord, and this causes a union to which the world is a stranger. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," (Ruth i, 16).

The second motive that the Christian has in going to church is *to inquire*. In the Old Testament the expression, "to inquire of the Lord," is used in connection with seeking the mind of the Lord in any particular matter, and thus we see that the Psalmist in inquiring in the Lord's house, indicates that he was conscious of his needs. The Lord's people are a needy people and they come to Himself with their needs. They need light on the path of duty, for they know that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," (Jer. x, 23). They have problems to solve which no human being can solve for them; they have doubts and fears which clutch at their hearts and make them desolate; they have temptations and trials and other experiences which they cannot tell to their nearest and dearest, and these bring them at times to the verge of despair, but in God's house they often get all their difficulties met with and they leave in a happier frame of mind than when they went. In this, their experiences are similar to that of godly Asaph. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end," (Psalm lxxiii, 16, 17).

Those who inquire in God's house inquire for marks of grace on themselves. They see no marks on themselves; they mourn over a desperately wicked heart, they find within themselves a nature that hates God and holiness, and at their elbow they find a tempting devil. The question with them often is, "How can I be right for eternity and these things true of me?" In that condition they go to inquire in God's house and are brought to see in the reading and preaching of the Word the case of others who had similar experiences. It is made clear to them that the people who had these experiences are now on Mount Zion above, and that these very experiences showed them to be the Lord's people. Not only

is the similarity between the trials of these people and their own trials giving them hope, but the hatred of sin and everything connected with it manifested by the Lord's people, gives them hope for they have that hatred of sin themselves, though not to the extent which they would wish.

In their inquiring in God's house they are seeking fellowship with Christ. They cannot hold fellowship with the world for they and the world are diametrically opposed. Two cannot walk together unless they are agreed, and, therefore, because they and the world are not agreed they cannot have fellowship, but they and Christ are agreed. They agree with Him that they cannot do anything to save themselves, and they agree with Him that all the glory of their salvation belongs to Him. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake," (Psalm cxv, 1).

It is well for all who go to God's house with this twofold end in view. They show that a change has come over them, which has made a difference between them and the world. With the world it is a case of approaching God with flattering lips, but with the child of God there is sincerity, and he is bound to Christ, His Cause and means as he is bound to no one else. He is his all for time and eternity.

The late Mr. William Alexander MacSween, Elder and Missionary, Bracadale.

GOD is removing his people to their eternal rest throughout the Church, and that is a call to earnest prayer that He would raise up faithful witnesses to take their place.

Mr. MacSween, who was born at Strond, Harris, on the 12th July, 1872, passed to his eternal rest on the 6th August, 1949. Both his parents feared the Lord, and his father, Malcolm MacSween, was an elder in the Free Presbyterian congregation, South Harris, for some time. When very young he may have been influenced by the teaching of that great and godly man—John Morrison, the Harris blacksmith and Christian poet. Many, we believe, were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth through his ministrations. The beautiful poems on gracious experience and Gospel doctrines have edified and comforted those who have read them with spiritual understanding. Being reared in a Christian home, our friend would have heard of John Morrison's sayings, and that along with the godly example of his parents, would no doubt lead him to think of his soul's salvation. But it is the Holy Spirit alone who can enlighten sinners, and in early manhood He began to bring Mr. MacSween under soul concern. After some time under conviction of sin, he received Gospel liberty towards the end of the year 1904, just after the death of his father; the portion of Scripture which loosened his bonds being Isaiah liv, 10: "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." He used to speak of this time as a time of love.

After his marriage in 1902, he came later on to reside in Portree, whence he proceeded to Raasay in the prosecution of his trade of stonemason in the year 1910.

In August, 1911, he became a member in full communion in Portree congregation, and in 1915 he was asked by the Raasay Kirk Session to assist the late worthy and faithful Mr. Andrew Tallach, Missionary. From that time he began to take public services. Ordained an elder in the Raasay congregation in November, 1922, he was later on appointed part-time Missionary at Raasay.

When it was decided to build a new church there, he took the contract, and the present comfortable and commodious place of worship is a testimony to his skill as a builder.

In 1937 he retired and came to reside at Stein, Waternish. Latterly he resided with his son, Rev. M. MacSween, in Bracadale, where he continued to give valued assistance till his death. On his own initiative he greatly improved the surroundings of the Manse in Portnalong, spending time and labour on the work without charge, thus showing his unselfishness and practical interest in the welfare of the congregation.

He had his own share of trials and sorrows, being predeceased by his wife and three daughters. These afflictions he bore with great fortitude and submission to the Lord's will. They would have helped him to sit more and more loosely to the things of this world.

Mr. MacSween was gifted with a clear, musical voice and was a splendid precentor. On different occasions he led the praise at Communion services in Portree with great acceptance.

Knowing himself as a lost and ruined sinner by nature, and realising that only grace could save him, he walked humbly with God. Conscientious in all things, he abhorred what was evil and sought to do that which would be for the honour and glory of his Saviour.

His public and private exercises were edifying, and during his last illness he was much engaged in praising the Lord, showing that he was of the same spirit as the sweet Psalmist of Israel. At the same time he was impressed with the low condition into which sin had brought the soul of man and with the awfulness of going to a Christless eternity. The following Scriptures were often quoted by him:—Lamentations iii, 39: "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Philippians iv, 19: "But my God shall supply all your need," etc.; Psalm cxlvi, 3: "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" and very often Psalm xxi, 6: "For thou hast made Him most blessed for ever: Thou hast made Him exceeding glad with thy countenance." He was particularly happy with this portion.

Two nights before his death he sang the first three verses of Psalm 23 in Gaelic, precenting the lines very sweetly. At the end of verse 3 he said, "And so on, there is no end to it." On the morning he died, he called twice on the name of the Lord, and peacefully entered into rest, and the joy of his Lord.

To his son, daughter-in-law, and other relations, we extend our deepest sympathy in their heavy loss, and may the God of all consolation be with them and comfort them in their sorrow.—*D. M. M.*

The water of the saint's failings cast on the fire of God's love cannot quench it. "Whom He loves, He loves unto the end."—*Gurnall*.

The late Mrs. M. Matheson, Dingwall.

THE late Mrs. Mary Matheson, Carminish, Dingwall, died on the 23rd day of July, 1949, at the Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. She was in her sixty-seventh year at the time of her death. Her birthplace was the island of Scalpay, Harris, where her father laboured at the time as a Missionary. Over a long period of years before her end, she was far from being in a robust state of health. On quite a few occasions, her case was regarded as being beyond recovery. One of these was in the early years of her married life when the first child was born. Those with her then were remarking to one another in low tones that there was little or no hope of her recovery. She heard them, however, and told them that she had reason to believe that she had from the Lord the promise that she would not only be spared, but see her children's children. This promise was fulfilled to her. Her closing illness began when visiting her son, Ian, and his family at Strontian. It became essential to have her removed for adequate treatment to Inverness, but her condition proved, in the holy providence of the Lord, to be beyond all remedial measures, and she passed away on the morning of the day stated.

As to her spiritual experience at the time of her awakening to soul-concern, we regret that no information can be given. It is probable that those, as her father and mother, to whom she may have expressed her mind, are now passed away. Her father and mother were highly respecting God-fearing persons—the former being for many years, as was already indicated, a Missionary in the island of Scalpay, then in South Harris, and lastly, in the Glendale district of Skye. Mrs. Matheson, the subject of this notice, was gifted with no ordinary strength of character. This undoubtedly helped her in her prolonged condition of ill-health. She was often advised not to risk going so frequently from home to attend communions. Her love to the Saviour and to the habitation of His house constrained her, when at times it did not appear advisable for her to venture from home.

It would be unbecoming to conclude this notice without referring to the hospitality shown by her late husband, who passed to his rest in August, 1943, and herself, to friends of the cause of Christ, on Communion occasions and at other times. At Communion seasons, their home was full to overflowing. She complained in one of her last letters of her being unduly anxious to have things in good order when she should rather be earnest in seeking to have her mind taken up with the love of Christ. We remember her remarking to us, as she lay in an ambulance on the way to her last operation, that she had indeed her faults, but added, "I am not without hope in Himself." She had her own share of soul-trials. She was not ignorant of the enemy and his devices. The great Shepherd causes all things to work together for the good of His people, and presents them at last without blemish, before Him, in love. Her remains were interred beside those of her late husband. A large number of men and women who loved her in the Lord were present.

May the Lord bless the members of the bereaved family, as He did their worthy parents—and likewise the several relatives, that they also, through faith and patience, may inherit the promises.—*D. A. Macfarlane.*

Searmon.

Leis an Urr. TOMÁS HALIBURTON.

(Air a leantainn bho t.d. 157.)

(2) Gu bhi labhairt air an t-seorsa eil de dhaoine a dh'ainmich sinn. Tha dòchas agam gu'm bheil cuid an so air am bheil fadachd gu bhi faicinn Iosa Criosd a tighinn, "a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, a toirt sithidh air na tulaichibh," agus co dhiubh 's dàna leo ràdh, na nach dàna, gu'm fac iad roimh e 's an t-suidheachadh do-labhairt so, gidheadh leis an dàna a ràdh, nach sàsuich ni air bith iad, mar a faigh iad an sealladh so; gu'n d'fhàinig iad an so chum na crìche sin, agus a bha air a mhaduinn so, agus faodaidh e bhi, air àireamh làithean, na sheachduinean roimhe sin, ag ùrnuigh gu'm faigheadh iad 'an so an sealladh a bha fadachd orra air a shon, eadhon esan, ged a dh'fhaodas nach dàna leo fear an gràidh a ràdh ris, gidheadh bu toil leo gràdh a bhi aca dha, agus fhaicinn "a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, a toirt sithidh air na tulaichibh" a tha eatorra. Agus am bheil a leithid sin an so? An sin tha ar teachdaireachd ga'n ionnsuidh taitneach; tha sinn a tighinn an diugh ga'r gairm-se a bha leithid 'a dh'fhadachd oirbh air a shon. Eiribh, eiribh; thigibh agus faicibh; "Feuch tha e teachd, a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, a toirt sithidh air na tulaichibh."

1. Anam bhochd! faodaidh e bhi gu'n robh thu làn smuaintibh teagmhach. Ciod! an leig esan, is e'n Tì àrd agus uasal da'n àite còmhnuidh sìorruidheachd, mise dlùth dhà. Mise! an creutair peacach! Thig agus faic, O pheacaich, esan a tha fadachd ort air a shon, a leumnaich air a bheinn so, a toirt sithidh air an tulaich so, gu h-aidheil a tighinn thairis air na duilgheadasan so: thig a dh'ionnsuidh a Bhùird agus faic ged a tha Criosd àrd "gidheadh seallaidh e air an iorasal." Salm cxxxviii, 6. Cromaidh e, gu dearbh, 'n uair a ghabhas e moladh, 'n uair a chromas e a chluas a dh'eisdeachd t-ùrnuighean: ach an so tha e ceum ni's isle: tha e toileach suidh aig an aon Bhòrd riut: seadh, ma's cuireadh tu teagamh na choibhneas tha e toileach tighinn ceum ni's isle fhathas: cuireadh e thu aig a Bhòrd, agus ni e frithealadh dhuit. Faic e "a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, a toirt sithidh air na tulaichibh."

2. Faodaidh e bhi gu'n robh thu làn eagail roimh fhearg Dhé. Ciod e! an giùlain e aon bhuile air mo shon-sa? An creutair peacach, neo-choibhneil, eas-creidmheach a tha mi ann. O, chà dean e sin gu bràth. Air falbh, air falbh, O pheacaich, leis na smuaintean uamhrach agus eas-creidmheach sin. "Feuch tha e teachd, a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, a toirt sithidh air na tulaichibh. "Ghiùlain e fearg Dhé; agus ged a bhris sin a chorp, cha do ghabh e mì-mhisneachd, cha'n eil e faotainn oibheum annad; ni mo tha aithreachas air a thaobh an nì a ghabh e os laimh, ach tha e aoidheil an deigh dha sin uile bhi seachd; agus mar chomharradh air, dh'ullaich e cuirm air do shon, a chum agus gu'm bitheadh tù aoidheil aig cùimhneachadh air a bhròn-san.

3. Faodaidh e bhi, gu bheil eagal ort roimh na nàimhdean a tha seasamh sa'n t-slighe, an diabhul, 's an saoghal: ach na cuireadh na nithean sin dragh ort; tha esan, a shaltair air an neart, agus dha'n aithne sin gu maith, na sheasamh le cho beag eagail rompa-san air na bhuaidhean e, agus gu bheil e deanamh cuirm-ghràidh, agus a còmhachd bùird air do shon am fianuis do nàimhdean. Ann an so tha fianuis iongantach air

a chùmhachd: faic e a còmhach bùird, agus a cur sìos cuirm rioghail, agus a cumail a nàimhdean, a chum an amhladh neo-chriochnach, na'n luchd amhaire air a choibhneas anabarrach dhuit. Ann an so tha da-rìreadh sealladh gu bhi drùghadh air a chridhe.

4. Faodaidh e bhi, gu'n do smuaintich thu iomadh uair ann ad chridhe mar so, Cha bhitheadh teagamh agam nach tigeadh Criosd thairis air na h-uile ni mar bhitheadh mo mhì-choibhneas truagh fhein. An deigh dhomh bhi aig a Bhòrd agus cuirm a bhi agam de dh'ullachadh rioghail, dhearbha mi mi-fein a bhi tur neo-choibhneil; dhì-chùimhnich mi na h-uile a rinn e air mo shon agus thòisich mi air comhladar a chumail ri nàimhdean; agus tha eagal orm nach faigh e gu bràth, thairis air an t-solus, an gràdh agus a chomfhurtachd so a chaidh a dhì-chùimhneachadh. Gach uair a dh'amhairceas mi air, tha so ag amharc orm an clàr an aodainn. Na seas aig a so; tha aobhar agad da-rìreadh a bhi fodh nàire, ach cha'n eil aobhar agad a bhi fodh mhì-mhisneachd; oir, feuch, tha e tighinn gu h-aoidheil, a leumnaich air na beanntaibh, agus a toirt sìthidh 'air na tulaichibh a thog thù. Feuch, tha e teachd, cha'n ann a mhaoidheadh do mhì-choibhneas ort, ach a chum do chosnadh le deagh-ghean as ùr. Feuch, tha e teachd, cha'n ann le gruaim air son easaontais, ach le fiamh gàire. Tha e teachd, cha'n ann a chogadh na t-aghaidh, ach a dheanamh cuirm dhuit; cha'n ann a thoirt air falbh trècairean a fhuair thu, ach a thoirt dhuit feadhan ùr. Cha'n eil e togail a laimhe gu bhi bualadh càirdean mi-choibhneil, ach tha e sìneadh a mach a làmhnan le trècairean. Tha e labhairt riut, ach cha'n e, Imichibh 'uam a chàirdean mhì-choibhneil; ach tha e glaothaich, "Tha mi air teachd do m'lios, a phiuthar, a cheile; thionail mi mo mhirr maille ri'm spiosraidh; dh'ith mi mo chìr-mheala maille ri'm mhile; dh'ol mi m'fhion maille ri'm bhainne. Ithibh, a chàirdean, òlaibh, seadh, òlaibh gu pailte a luchd mo ghràidh," (Dàn. v, 1). Tha sinn a togail fianuis ann an ainm ar Tighearn coibhneil, ma dh'fhalbhas neach air bith bho Bhòrd, gun bhi air a làn-bheathachadh, nach eil iad air an cumhannachadh ann-san, ach na'n innibh fein. Cha'n eil iad air an lionadh do bhrìgh agus nach d'fhosgail iad am beul farsuinn gu leor.

(*Ri leantainn.*)

Notes and Comments.

Dumfriesshire Politicians Condemn Sabbath Desecration.

During November last there appeared in the daily press a surprising and most welcome statement, extracted from the Dumfriesshire Conservative Party's magazine, *Freedom*, condemning political speeches on the Sabbath, and placing on record, timely, serious and wise observations on the moral and spiritual aspects of the present crisis in the affairs of Britain to-day. The statement proceeds:—

"We believe that this period of crisis to the British people is not a material crisis, but is fundamentally a moral and spiritual crisis.

"We believe that until we return to a basis of government and conduct based on Christian doctrine and dogma, nothing but evil lies before us.

"We know that men who desecrate the day set aside for Christian worship and meditation by using it for party political purposes are unfit for any position, high or low, in the State."

It is a relief to read such a statement, although it is but as one single ray of light of a spiritual nature, in the realm of politics in Scotland to-day. We would rejoice to hear of other political and local organisations throughout the country, following the commendable example of those in Dumfriesshire, by the issuing of similar statements reminding all who have an interest in the civil well-being of their nation, to have primarily in view, the glory of God and the need of spiritual blessing throughout our beloved land.

Sir N. Cayzer and Politics on Sabbath.

Further to this subject, we were gratified to read a letter from Sir Nicholas Cayzer, which appeared in the London *Daily Telegraph* of 23rd November, 1949, in which he refers to the Conservative Party's reluctance to make speeches on Sabbath as the right attitude. His letter proceeds:—"It does seem to me, in these hard and difficult times, that there should be one day in the week when political activities cease. That God should have a place in our lives to-day was never more necessary, and surely Sunday should be for all a day of quiet and rest." Our readers will understand that we are not referring to these statements by politicians for the purpose of political propaganda in support of any party, but because of the moral issues connected therewith. It would be a great matter if Sir Nicholas Cayzer would make his convictions, expressed in his letter, known to as wide a circle of his political friends and acquaintances as possible, influencing them to refrain from and to protest against, all such sinful and God-dishonouring encroachments upon the sanctity of the Lord's Day. If men, eminent in the business and political world, with sincere moral and spiritual convictions, would raise their voices and lift their pens frequently and judiciously against present-day evils, we believe that many unthinking persons would be influenced to give serious consideration to their views.

Sir Laurence Dunne and Gambling.

Sir Laurence Dunne, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, gave evidence in London on the 17th November, 1949, before the Royal Commission on Betting, Lotteries and Gambling. He made, along with other statements, the following:—"I believe that gambling has assumed proportions which make it a social evil, which is probably still growing. Money and manpower are unproductively locked up, quite apart from moral and ethical considerations . . . It must be to the national benefit to discontinue football pool betting and to close all dog-tracks, whose only excuse for existence is to provide the public, and particularly the poorer classes, with practically infinite opportunities for betting . . . Gambling is a way of filling in time between crimes." These observations are from a man who is confronted with the pernicious evils of betting and gambling in the Court in which he sits as Magistrate. The Christian must abhor this evil, the business man ought to, and the heads of families indulge in it at the peril of ruining themselves and their children. Some with first-hand knowledge assert that gambling is a worse evil than drunkenness. Our national sins are many, and many of these are heinous sins. "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity," (Hosea xiv, 1).

Literary Notices.

"*The Roman Anti-Christ*," by Rev. F. S. Leahy, price 4d. per copy, and published by the National Union of Protestants, Howard Buildings, 26 Howard Street, Belfast. There is a sub-title to this publication, viz., "*A Study in II Thessalonians ii, 3-8.*" The author points out in his introduction: "In this little pamphlet we endeavour to present as concisely as possible, and in popular form, the Protestant interpretation of II Thess. ii, 3-8 . . . Our intention is to show that II Thess, ii, 3-8, applies point by point to the Papacy as centred in and represented by the Pope." We recommend the purchase of this pamphlet which undoubtedly makes interesting reading and is suitable for enclosing in letters to friends. In our opinion, the author has succeeded in his intention to publish a concise and informative study of this passage of the Word of God.

A Blessed Memory. A memoir of the late Charles James, by J. Raven; Messrs. C. J. Farncombe & Sons Ltd., 55 South End, Croydon, Surrey; 1s. 6d. post free; 12 copies, 17s. 3d. post free.

"In reading books," says the worthy John Flavel, "regard not so much the science as the savour." In this little biography of a Strict Baptist minister there are no pretensions to science, but rather a straight-forward account of some of the incidents in the life of this man. From the record of these events arises a savour which will be appreciated by those whose senses have been exercised to discern good and evil. At the age of 20, Charles James evidently underwent that great change apart from which there is no salvation. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," (John iii, 3). In his being awakened to a sense of his sin and misery, he was, as it were, condemned out of his own mouth. On being asked the question, "Can you pray?" he answered in the following words, "You might as soon ask the Devil to pray as me." His own words entered his conscience and the truth of his lost estate was realised. From his guilt and misery, he could find no deliverance until he was brought to the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. In the blood shed for the remission of the sins of many, he found, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, what could wash him and make him whiter than snow. The reality of Charles James' religion was proved by his separating himself from those who abode not in the doctrines of God's Word. Christ, His Word and His Cause occupied a pre-eminent place in his mind, and he carried his principles with him into his daily employment. Thus, when worldly advancement was offered him, he ultimately refused it on the ground that its responsibilities left him but with little time for spiritual employments. On his making this choice, his employer gave him a cottage rent free for life as a token of his esteem. Enabled by divine grace to obey the exhortation, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," he realised the fulfilment of the promise, "and all these things shall be added unto you," (Matt. vi, 33). He eventually became a preacher with the Strict Baptists in England and apparently did not run unsent.

The brochure is neatly printed and contains some letters written to Mr. Docter of Holland. An appreciative appendix is written by Mr. H. C. Carr. We think it is to be regretted that our English friends persist in

the use of the word "Sunday" instead of the more scriptural "Sabbath" or "Lord's Day." We trust this little memoir will find a ready sale among the readers of the *Magazine*.—*Donald Maclean.*

Church Notes.

Communion.

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, N. Uist. *March*—Second Sabbath, Ness and Portree; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie and N. Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Stoer, Portnalong and Achmore; second, Fort William and London; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick.

South African Mission: Appeal for Male Teacher.

The Foreign Missions Committee is anxious to obtain the services of a suitable man to labour in the Shangani Section of the Mission in Southern Rhodesia. As our people will know, the Rev. James Fraser is already there and supervises an extensive field of missionary and educational work. The Synod has in view the establishment of a Teacher Training Centre for native teachers in this area, and in order to carry this scheme into effect, a man with teaching qualifications is necessary. The fields here are white unto harvest and offer opportunities for Christian service of a most interesting and exceptional kind. We therefore send out this Appeal in the hope and with the prayer that it will find a response in the breast of some young man who may already possess these qualifications, or who may be prepared to study for them. The applicant would require to be a member in full communion with the Church. Applications are to be sent to the Convener, Rev. Jas. MacLeod, 59 Campbell Street, Greenock, who will supply any further information.—*Jas. A. Tallach, Clerk.*

The late Mr. Sam. Fraser, Dingwall.

We deeply regretted to hear of the death of Mr. S. Fraser, elder, Dingwall, on 28th November, 1949, after a period of illness. We extend sincere sympathy to the widow and all members of the family, remembering especially Rev. James Fraser, M.A., our Missionary out in Shangani, Africa, who is the son of the late Mr. Fraser. No doubt a fuller notice will appear in the *Magazine* (D.V.).—*Editor.*

Congregational Financial Statements.

Congregational Treasurers are reminded that their Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December, 1949, after being audited, are due to be sent to respective Presbyteries, through the Clerks, for examination.

Deacons' Court and Kirk-Session Records.

Deacons' Court and Kirk-Session Records from each Congregation should be presented to the Presbytery concerned, for examination, at the beginning of 1950, preferably at the same time as Financial Statements.

Magazine Subscription Forms.

This Form is once more printed in the *Magazine*, and should be filled in at once by every reader wishing the *Magazine* to be sent to them during

1950. When the Form, with the necessary money required, is sent to Mr. J. Grant, Treasurer, punctually, this greatly assists in having the Subscribers' List made up to date right at the beginning of the year. All those who are due subscriptions for 1949 should forward same now. Interested readers who can afford to do so might well purchase extra copies to give to others.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—Mr. A. B., 440 21 Avenue, Calgary, Alberta, £5 8/5; Three Sisters, Gisborne, £2; Miss C. R. Ridgeburn, 43 Bonhard Road, Scone, £3; Anon, 5/-; Mr. J. McL., 1570 Waldon Road, R.R.6, New Westminster, B.C., £3; Mrs. McL., School House, Drumnadrochit, £1.

Synod Proceedings Fund.—Mrs. C. McL., 2 Cruimer, per Rev. A. MacAskill, 8/6; Mrs. McA., Inverkirkaig, per Rev. A. MacAskill, 8/6.

Home Mission Fund.—“In loving memory of Andrew Patrick Walker,” Glasgow Postmark, £10; Miss M. H., Tobermory, 5/-; Anon, 5/-; Anon, per Rev. A. F. Mackay, £1.

Dominions and Colonial Missions Fund.—Mr. J. McL., 1570 Waldon Road, R.R.6, New Westminster, B.C., £2; Three Sisters, Gisborne, N.Z., £2.

Organisation Fund.—Mr. J. McL., 1570 Waldon Road, R.R.6, New Westminster, B.C., £1 14/-; Mr. J. McL., Drinishadder, Harris, £1 10/-.

Publication Fund.—Friend, Daviot, 10/-; From Sale of M. Catechisms, per Rev. W. Grant, £1 2/6; Mr. R. G. Toscaig, Applecross, 10/-; Trinitarian Bible Society, £1.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—Mr. A. B., 440 21 Avenue, Calgary, Alberta, £5 8/4; Three Sisters, Gisborne, £1; Miss M. H., Victoria Street, Tobermory, 10/-; A Friend, Edinburgh, £3; Mr. J. M., 3 Toekavaig, Sleat, £1; Mr. J. McL., 1570 Waldon Road, R.R.6, New Westminster, B.C., £3; Anon, 11/-; Mrs. L. McD., Callakille, Arrina, for Bibles, £2; Mrs. S., Little Urchany, Cawdor, 16/-; Anon, per Rev. A. F. Mackay, £1.

Magazine Fund.—Mr. John McInnes, P.O. Buildings, Broadford, 10/4; Mr. N. MacQuish, 4 Admiralty Cottages, Arrochar, 10/-; Mr. A. McLeod, Riverside, Clashnessie, 4/-.

F.P. Magazine Free Distribution Fund.—Miss C. Ross, 43 Bonhard Road, Scone, 10/-; Mrs. Mackenzie, Torbreck, Rogart, 10/-; Miss M. V. Fraser, Kirkintilloch, 10/-; Mr. W. Macdonald, Balintore, Fearn, 10/-; Mr. J. Scott, George Street, Stevenston, 11/-; Misses M. and G. McLean, Morar Lodge, Helensburgh, 6/-; Mrs. W. M. Finlayson, Queen Street, Dumoon, 4/-; A Friend, £1; Nurse M. McLean, Inverness, 5/-; Mr. J. Matheson, Inver, Fearn, 4/-; Mrs. Macdonald, 6 Moorlands, Breakish, 6/-; Mr. Lach. Ross, Bادهall, Scourie, 4/-; Mr. A. MacLeod, Box 10, Tofino, Vancouver Island, £2 10/-; Mr. Colin McLean, Duart, Ullapool, 4/-; Friend, Stornoway, 1/-.

The following lists have been sent in for publication:—

Fort William Mission House Repairs Fund.—Mr. A. Colquhoun, 6 Cameron Square, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following

donations:—W. C. B., England, £1; A Skye Friend, £1; Friend, Fort William, £1; F.P., Fort William, £1.

London Congregational Funds.—Rev. J. P. Macqueen acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—From Mrs. McL., George Street, Te Kuiti, New Zealand, £5; Miss C. McK., Killoch Park, Glasgow, £2; Mrs. C. M., 9 Swanwick Avenue, Toronto, o/a Communion expenses, 10/-; Mrs. C. McK., Reigate, o/a Communion expenses, £3.

Oban Congregation.—Mr. J. Martin, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges the following donations o/a Sustentation Fund:—Sister M. McD., £5; Miss C. McK., per Mr. J. Macdonald, £1.

Plockton Church Building Fund.—Mr. Alex. Gollan, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—Mrs. M., Toronto, £1; Miss I. C., Drimuin, 10/-; Mrs. B., Portree, £1; Wellwisher, Portree, £1; Mrs. M., £1; Miss M., 10/-; Alex. M., £1; M. McL., £1; Mrs. McN. £1; Mrs. K., 10/-; A. N., £1; Miss M., 2/- (all from Drumuie, Portree); Friend, Raasay, £1; Friend, N. Coast, Applecross, £1.

Portree Congregation.—Mr. D. Matheson, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £5 o/a Sustentation Fund, "In loving memory of a Mother."

Raasay Manse Building Fund.—Mr. E. MacRae, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Rev. D. McL., Portree, £3; Friend, Ullapool, £1; Friend, Lechmelm, £1; Friend, North Coast, Applecross, £1.

Shieldaig Congregation.—Mr. John Gordon, Treasurer, received with grateful thanks from the Executors of the late Alexander MacLeay, Ardheslaig, the sum of £60 for the Funds of the F.P. Church, Shieldaig.

South Harris Manse Building Fund.—Mr. Alex. MacLennan, Missionary, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—Collected at Rodel, per Mr. N. M. M., £9; Collected at Leverburgh, per Mr. J. M. L., Ferry Road, £12 15/-; Mr. A. M. L., Rodel, £3.

Tain Congregational Funds.—Mr. A. Robertson, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges a donation of £1 from Miss U.

Vatten Church Extension Fund.—Mr. J. Mackay, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—From M. Campbell, U.S.A., "In memory of my beloved Mother," £80; Fasach, £16 12/-; Glasphein and Ferrinquire, £14 10/-; Holmsdale and Hamara, £14; Milivaig and Waterstein, £10 11/-; Totaig and Borreraig, £13 1/-; Colbost and Skiniden, £6 4/-.

St. Jude's Congregation, Glasgow.—Mr. A. E. Alexander, 58 High Mains Avenue, Dumbarton, Treasurer, desires to acknowledge receipt of the following amounts:—Mrs. McK., Luss, £1; Mrs. Connel, £3; Friends of St. Jude's, by cheque, £12; E. Lamont, £5; Miss McL., Woodlands Drive, £5; N. Beaton, £1; Mrs. R., Springburn, £1 10/-; Miss McC., Renfrew, £2; A. McL., Paisley, £1; The Misses Jones, £4; J. McL., £2; Miss Munro, £2; Nurse McK., Redlands, per D. Graham, £1; Mrs. Mackenzie, Airdrie, "In memory of a loving Mother," £2.

South African Mission Clothing Fund (Northern Section).—Mrs. Mackay, F.P. Manse, Inverness, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—Daviot Thanksgiving Collection, £7 11/-; "Z," £7; Mrs. B., Mid Clyth, 5/-; Mrs. McA., Inverness, £6 6/-; Anon, £1; Applecross Prayer Meeting Collection, £18 2/4.