

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.

CONTENTS

	page
Festival of Britain (Sunday Opening) Bill ...	207
Justification ...	209
Notes of Sermon Preached at Zenka, Africa ...	212
A Case of Conscience regarding Answered Prayer	214
The Eleventh Hour ...	218
The late Mr. John Munro ...	219
The late Mr. John Macuish, South Harris ...	221
Comhnadh an Spioraid ann an Urnuigh ...	222
Notes and Comments ...	223
Literary Notices ...	226
Church Notes ...	228
Acknowledgment of Donations ...	229

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THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
AND MONTHLY RECORD.

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Festival of Britain (Sunday Opening) Bill.

In our last issue we recorded briefly the results in the voting in the House of Commons on the Festival of Britain (Sunday Opening) Bill. Our readers will remember that Parliament, in November last, agreed by a majority that the Festival as a whole should be open on the Lord's Day; but by an amendment it was agreed that the Amusement Park, at Battersea, should not be open on that day. The facts of the debate are generally known to our readers, yet we deem it proper to put on record some particular observations on the whole matter.

(1) The Government introduced this Bill to protect the Festival against existing laws forbidding such opening. The *North Star*, Dingwall, in a leader, states, "Here is a Government seeking to provide for this Festival a particular license dispensing with Sabbath Observance Laws . . . It cannot be a pleasant thought (for the common man) to realise that this is the modern way of overcoming matters of law." This, of course, is nothing else but legislation against the Moral Law. What daring action!

(2) Mr. Herbert Morrison, President of the Council, admitted that the desire to open the Amusement Park was to obtain money to secure the financial success of the Festival. The *Daily Mail*, in a leader, stated, "The Government are not pleading any principle in this matter. They are not even running a charity show. They want a Sunday fun fair in order to make money." So the Government would dispense with the Sabbath of the Lord in Britain for so many pieces of silver. Judas betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. This spirit has actuated the Government. Let members of the Government involved beware of consequences. On this point, a leading article in the *Inverness Courier* for December 1st, 1950, states, ". . . The British Government showed

itself to be, in the main, more concerned with possible material benefits than with the observation of the Christian principles of which it is the guardian." We would take this opportunity of stating that the leading articles of this Northern paper, the *Inverness Courier*, are consistently of a high order and never fail, when necessary, to emphasise in no uncertain terms, moral issues from the standpoint of the Scriptures. This is most commendable.

(3) This Bill has brought the vital question of the Sabbath law more prominently before the nation as a whole than anything else for many years. God has His own purpose in permitting this. The question may have been buried out of sight for millions of our people since many years. Now they have been reminded of it in this manner in providence. The question arises, are we as a nation to persevere as Sabbath breakers? If so—what then? God always punishes transgression unrepented of.

(4) Some Members of Parliament spoke much against the Sabbath, and one even called for drastic action against the Lord's Day Observance Association. This attack savoured of persecution in the bud. The Christian lover of truth lives in perilous times. Other Members spoke commendably well against encroachment by the Government, upon the divinely appointed Day of Rest. We should be thankful that there are such men who are not afraid to speak, when necessary, on religious and moral questions.

(5) The Festival will be opened this summer and is intended to publicise Britain to the world. It will bear the stigma of a nation forgetting her Sabbaths. The unjustifiable expense of millions of pounds incurred even now, will mount up later. And more than likely the Festival will be a colossal failure financially.

(6) The time for such a Festival has been ill-conceived. The international tension, the war in Korea with its disasters, and the abundant preparations for war on every hand, make it clear to the sober-minded, that 1951 is no time for festivities. "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (Eccles. ii, 11). Truly it is high time for Britain to return to a penitential remembrance of the Sabbath Day to keep it holy!

(7) The Government in particular and the House of Commons by the voice of a majority (apart from the Fun Fair amendment) have taken upon themselves the heavy responsibility and guilt before the divine Law-giver and Judge of men and nations, of setting a wicked and unworthy example before our nation. The Most High will not be mocked; and whatsoever men or Governments sow, they shall also reap. "For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. vi, 8).

Justification.

Article in *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, July, 1880.

(Continued from page 192.)

II. And now, secondly—which may now be comparatively a brief work—let us consider how each of these three principles necessarily excludes the presence and influence of “works.” Nay, rather, let us show—from Scripture, of course, our only source of knowledge—how the introduction of works, even in any measure, must subvert at once the grace of God as the origin, the righteousness of Christ as the ground, and the exercise of faith as the instrument, of our justification. So that by works (1) the grace of God is frustrated, (2) the death of Christ made in vain, (3) faith itself made void.

(1) If you introduce the element of works at all, in any measure, into the question of your acceptance with God, and the ground of your peace with God, you immediately fetter and thereby frustrate the grace of God. From this—from frustrating the grace of God—from such guilt, Paul shrunk back affrighted. “I do not frustrate the grace of God,” said he. It is as with a cry of agony that he flees affrighted, from such guilt. And how that fearful guilt may be incurred, he shows us by resting our acceptance on our own obedience, or expecting righteousness or justification to come by the law. “I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain” (Gal. ii, 21). And again, in warning the Galatians against resting anything of their acceptance with God upon the law, or imagining circumcision necessary to their justification, he cries out to them with peculiar solemnity in one of those passages in which, Luther said, Paul thundered rather than spake: “I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of none effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. v, 3, 4).

“Ye are fallen from grace”—“Ye have frustrated grace.”

And let it be remarked, we “fall from grace”—we “frustrate grace”—not merely by excluding it altogether, but by admitting works to any rivalry or co-ordinating share of influence with it, even in the least degree. For if it is of works at all, it is no more grace. For, argues our apostle, “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not”—to him who in this matter, and for this end, absolutely worketh not, worketh nothing, abstains from working, obtrudes or introduces no works at all—but simply “believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans iv, 4, 5). Otherwise righteousness could not be imputed to him. He could not be justified. It is his entire cessation in this matter from all works that can alone admit the action of grace. To trust in works and distrust grace are more than conjoined. Self-righteousness and unbelieving dislike or suspicion of grace are indeed identical.

Let me appeal to those whom it may concern, and ask them to examine their own hearts. Why is it that you do not take your entire and trustful and hearty appeal to the free, unfettered, sovereign grace of God? Why is it that you are not content and delighted that God should be altogether sovereign in showing mercy? Why do you feel as if something grated

harshly on your ear, or your heart or hopes, when the voice of the gracious Lord is heard, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion"? Why should *that* give you pain, or give you pause? It would not do so if you felt that you have not, and can never have, any righteousness of your own. You imagine that God, in declaring he will have mercy on you simply and only if he pleases, is overlooking and dishonouring some claim which you possess upon his mercy, some hold upon his pity which your goodness or repentance or anxieties and prayers have given you. Oh! if you would believe it, sovereign, free mercy is much more large and unbounded—much more safe and sufficient—in its perfect freedom, which you never can bring under restraint to you, than all your fancied claim could be, though it were ten thousand times stronger than your fondest imagination can conceive. Free grace is unsearchably rich. It hath multitudes of tender mercies; and it *acteth* "according to the multitude of its tender mercies." Free grace, in virtue of being utterly unfettered and free, is precisely the grace that can omnipotently and all freely move and sway, in answer to your need; the helm, answering in the darkest night and the utmost tempest—"though the waters roar and are troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Free grace, most sovereign, acting on the lead, and following second to no claim or work or righteousness of yours, following second to no power in earth or hell or heaven, owning no power higher than itself, but triumphing in the absolute and independent power of its own sweet royal will, reigning on its throne—its "throne of grace"—at which let no sin-stained soul ever dare to unfold his offensive claim of right, and no contrite sinner ever dread to tell his tale of woe in deep and full confession—free grace, most sovereign is that alone that can suffice for you, for it is that of which alone it can be said, "Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded." Why will you not leave the grace of God to be free and independent, royal and sovereign indeed? Why will you produce any worth or works of yours, and wield them as an instrument to arrest and constrain and fasten down this grace of God? Why will you seek to tie up the hands of love? Why not acquiesce in the free and sovereign reign of grace?

Even *sin* hath reigned: "Sin hath reigned unto death." Sin hath reigned with your own consent. It hath spurned control and brooked no interference with the freedom of its reign. Sin, in you, hath had the field unhindered, to itself. This is the real ground for any anxieties anent death and eternity and God. Sin hath reigned; and you have allowed it. And will you not allow Grace to reign?—to reign over you, and in you, and for you, unto your salvation and eternal life? Will you not allow it to reign, and by its own free and kingly and unhampered and triumphant action, it may justify you freely, and make you also free and kingly and unhampered and triumphant in the liberty wherewith Christ by free grace makes his people free? Your self-righteousnesses are but chains you forge wherewith to bind this king a captive for your service. Will he stoop to the infinite degradation? No: he will sit free on his own royal seat, his "throne of grace," and acting from thence, he will save in his sovereign reign and pleasure, or not at all. If you yield not to the reign of grace, you are a slave beneath the reign of sin, and sin shall reign over you unto the second death. Why, then, will you not shake off every dependence on your own righteousness and works? Say not that you have really done so, unless

you be content to rest on sovereign grace; and unless, being content and really resting, you find in that rest and that contentment some of the repose of soul which rest and contentment are sure to bring.

But if not yet content with sovereign grace alone, it is because you have not yet resigned every other hope; because you cling to something you have done, or still expect to have power (or even help from God) to do; because you desire to have something of your own by which to secure your salvation yourself, by which to tie and bind the Lord and his mercy. You cannot bear the thought of leaving God free; with all its absurdity, you would rather lay some train that would *necessitate* and *force* the action of grace. And then it would be grace no more: its very nature would be subverted, and its action frustrated. "But," says Paul, "I do not frustrate the grace of God."

(2) The introduction of works equally overthrows the suretyship of Christ. In that case Christ is made of none effect to you. Christ is dead in vain!

What an impeachment of the righteousness and wisdom of God! to pursue any line of action, thought, or feeling, which if right, must naturally tend to show that Christ is dead in vain, fruitlessly, uselessly, unnecessarily! But it by some works or worth of yours you can entitle yourself to the justifying grace of God, then God himself cannot be justified in requiring the satisfaction and atonement of Christ to vindicate his grace in justifying you. He, in that case, demanded a sacrifice and subjected his own Son to suffering which you undertake to prove might have been dispensed with. Away with the vain and blasphemous attempt! But how away with it? Only if, resigning every rag of righteousness, every plea and claim, we (in the first place) justify God in thus condemning us—and this we do when we say from the heart, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest"; and if (in the second place) we justify God in calling in the death of his Son as the only ground of our justification, and this we do when we flee to Christ as our refuge, counting *all* things but loss that we may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ—the righteousness which is of God by faith.

(3) For, thirdly, as resting on our own works subverts justification, both as originating in the grace of God, and as founded on the suretyship of Christ, so thereby also is "Faith made void"; for "if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise," to which faith looks, "is made of none effect" (Romans iv, 14). And the reason is, that faith leaning in any measure on our works—looking to a promise suspended or conditional on our righteousness—a fallible, faltering, failing condition—faith in that case, falters and fails too. Let faith rest on sovereign, unconditional grace, on a righteousness already finished and eternal, on a promise not suspended on any condition, but absolute; then "it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed" (Romans iv, 16). And thus, faith, claiming God's free love, in Christ's sure and perfect work, on the warrant of God's absolute, unfailing word, abides fully "persuaded that what God hath promised he is able

also to perform; and therefore it is imputed to us for righteousness" (Romans iv, 20, 21). Every reason for suspicion of insecurity is cleared away—every gate by which danger might enter is closed; the glory shines forth as belonging wholly to the Lord; the covenant stands impregnable as the everlasting and blessed home of our weary and waiting souls: and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Notes of Sermon Preached at Zenka, Africa.

By MR. PETROS MZAMO, Student, in October, 1950.

(Translated from Sindebele.)

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.
Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii, 20).

WHEN word is sent to us that someone is coming to visit us, we all recognise that preparation on our part is called for, and the more important the visitor, the greater the preparation. In 1946, a message was sent to the rulers of our country that the King of Britain was to visit Rhodesia in 1947. At once great preparations were made for the reception of our King and his family, both by Europeans and Africans. Night and day these preparations went on, and they occupied not only people's hands but their minds. The minds of those responsible were taken up with nothing else and their conversation was all about the coming of the King.

In this verse of Revelation, Christ sends us a strong assurance that He is coming and, since He is the King of Kings, surely our preparations for His coming should be very great. The King of Britain let us know the time of his coming, but the King of Heaven has not told us exactly when He will come so that we may be diligent in making ready and that we may remain watching and praying. The coming of Christ will be like the coming of the Flood in the time of Noah. Many will be found unprepared.

When a guest comes upon us suddenly and finds us with our house unswept and everything lying about in disorder, we feel deeply ashamed. When I accompany the Missionary on his visits to the kraals in this district, I often see people caught unawares. The children are sometimes dirty, the yard around the kraal is littered with rubbish, and there is a strong smell of beer in the huts. When people are caught unprepared in this way, they are always very much ashamed. They do not feel at ease in the presence of the Missionary and usually keep silent. How much greater will be our shame if Christ at His coming finds us unprepared, unwashed, and with all the marks of indulgence of sin upon us!

A person who has committed a crime against the laws of his country may escape the police for a time, and perhaps hide himself in a lonely spot where police are seldom seen. He may live there at ease and at peace with himself and others, but let it just be whispered that a policeman is approaching, and his peace of mind is shattered. His one thought now is how to avoid the police, and he begins making plans to escape. He

cannot enjoy his food or his sleep, because he feels guilty and lives in constant fear of discovery and arrest. How much greater will be the dread of those whom Christ at His coming will find in their sins, showing clearly that sin which cost Him so much is sweet to them!

Jesus warns us that He is not only coming but that He is coming quickly. This means that there is need for haste in our preparations for His coming. How then can we prepare for the speedy coming of Christ? Here are some of the things necessary to true preparation:—

(1) The New Birth. We must like David, ask God to search and try us and show us that our hearts are in very truth a fountain of sin. We must know that all the sins committed by eye, hand, foot and ear come from that wicked fountain and that we are always sinning whether we speak or whether we keep silent. If God shows us this, then we will realise that we can never be ready for Christ's coming without a new heart, and we will understand Christ's own words, "Ye must be born again." We cannot put our own hearts right, so let us humbly ask God to give us a new heart.

(2) We must receive the Bible as God's own Word, and honour it as His. Those who do this have passed from death unto life.

(3) We must seek the teaching of the Holy Spirit; otherwise we shall be as ignorant of Christ and of His coming as the wild beasts of the forest.

(4) We must learn to hate sin. If we find joy in the sins of others and can find it in our hearts to laugh at the folly of the drunkard, for example, we shall be ashamed at the coming of Christ. Sin must be hated in our hearts, in our homes, in our districts, and wherever we come across it.

(5) Love to Christ is another requirement. If we love a person we will always remember him and never forget his name. A person whom we truly love may awaken us up suddenly in the middle of the night, but we shall not be alarmed as we would if a stranger did this. We know his voice and that voice removes fear and gives confidence. So it will be in the case of those who truly love the Lord Jesus. He may come to them suddenly, but they will recognise His voice and they will not be afraid. His love planted in their hearts by the Holy Spirit has prepared them for His coming.

There must be haste and diligence in preparing for the coming of Jesus. All Christ's commands are for to-day, not to-morrow. He says, "Surely I come quickly." The word "surely" adds great force to His warning. It assures us that there can be no doubt about His coming and no doubt as to the suddenness of that coming. Let us then be done with talk of preparing to-morrow. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

Christ's announcement receives an answer. It is, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." From whom does this answer come? It comes from those who have discovered the filthiness of their hearts and have had them washed with the hyssop of which David speaks in Psalm li. They have been born again and are now the children of God. They once belonged to this world but now they find no satisfaction in it and they are looking for a better country. They rejoice at the good news that Christ is coming and with all their hearts they answer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

I once read a story which comes from China. A certain man had been brought to court time and again for stealing. Once again he was brought before the magistrate for the same offence. The magistrate, who was tired of dealing with this man's offences, decided to give the poor man a test. "You are to take a vessel filled to the brim with oil and carry it along all the streets of the town and then come back to me. Police will guard you as you walk along the streets, and if they report that you have spilled one drop of oil you will be put to death. If, however, you succeed in this test, you will be set free." The thief carried out the test successfully and was conducted back to the magistrate. The magistrate then questioned him about the people and things which he had seen in the streets. "I saw nothing," the man replied. "What! do you mean to tell me that you did not see any of the people who throng the streets nor any of the shops or carriages?" "I saw nothing," repeated the man, "I looked neither to left nor right, but only to the vessel of oil, for my life depended on keeping it straight." "You did well in so doing," said the magistrate, who was a Christian, "and you will do better still if in your walk through life you begin to look to Jesus and to Jesus only. If you look only to Him and walk in His narrow way, you will never again be brought to this court." God's true people are like the man carrying the vessel of oil. They pay little heed to the world around them; they are looking forward, looking to Jesus, and looking for His coming. That is why they can say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." They are His elect people looking for the coming of Him who chose them and called them from darkness to light.

A Case of Conscience regarding Answered Prayer.*

When a person has received a temporal mercy, which he prayed for, how shall he know whether it is granted in answer to prayer, and comes to him as a covenant blessing?

It ought to be the concern of every person, that has any regard for his own soul, to see that his temporal mercies come to him with a divine blessing. Such a pious concern as this excited a friend to put this question to me; and, seeing the importance of it, I have therefore ventured to take it under consideration, and shall do these three things:—1. State the question itself. 2. Give a solution to it. 3. Make an improvement of it.

I. *As for the question itself*, I conceive it to stand in the following light. A person who hopes he has experienced the love of God in a covenant way, is earnestly desirous to receive every mercy, as coming from the hand of a covenant God, with love in his heart, with a smile in his countenance, and with the addition of his blessing. The gracious soul is supposed to have been in earnest with God, for a particular, important favour of divine providence; the consequence of which has been, that God has been pleased to grant him the mercy he requested. He is therefore ready to hope that it comes in answer to prayer, and desires that his heart may be affected with it, not only as a providential favour, but likewise as an instance and token of God's especial love. But he is desirous to know how he shall be assured that it comes as a token of the divine acceptance; and

* From *Cases of Conscience*, by S. Pike and S. Hayward; London, May, 1775.

would be glad to be certified, whether he may venture to look upon the present providential favour in this encouraging light. He knows it is the very mercy he has prayed for; he knows likewise, it is such a favour as calls for special gratitude, and his conscience tells him that his soul was enlarged in prayer for it. These things then he is well assured of: but at the same time he sees he cannot from hence positively conclude, that the favour is sent in answer to prayer; and if it be, he cannot from hence be certain that it comes with a divine blessing. For he is ready to suspect, that he has been too eager in his supplications for a temporal blessing; that he has laid too great a stress upon it; and therefore fears, though it may be granted, it may be given to him not in love, but in anger. He is therefore very desirous to know in what manner, and upon what plan, he may judge in this affair; whether the favour comes in anger, or in love; and whether he may humbly depend upon a divine blessing, to make it turn out for his real and spiritual good. And doubtless nothing would be matter of greater joy and pleasure to a gracious soul, than to have reason to conclude, that a divine blessing will attend the providential mercy received; and, on the other hand, nothing can be a greater damp to a serious mind, than to have a prevailing suspicion, that what is granted will rather prove a snare and stumbling-block, than a covenant blessing. This is the question: but to amplify it a little, I would endeavour to make it familiar by an instance or two. You know that every Christian prays that God would give him day by day his necessary food. Now this temporal favour is what God gives unto those that do not pray for it, and have no sense of their dependence upon him for it: neither can we be sure that our daily provision is sanctified to us, merely because we pray for it, and God gives it. Again, perhaps in some special cases we pray for a deliverance out of some great trouble, as for the granting of some important favour in providence; and since it does not immediately follow, that these special mercies granted will be attended with a divine blessing, the question still remains, How shall we know whether they come in covenant love? I would therefore now proceed,

II. *To give a solution to this serious and experimental question.* And here let it be observed, that *three* or *four* things are previously necessary to assure us that what we receive comes to us in a covenant way.

1. *The person praying must be one in covenant with God.* One who is destitute of saving blessings may be so far led into the knowledge of divine providence, as to be stirred up to pray for a temporal mercy; yea, and to be thankful for it, when he has received it: and yet this cannot assure him that it will be really blessed to him. God may hear the cries, and answer the requests, of an unregenerate person; and yet, after all, there is still a curse upon *his basket and store*: for we know, that, as to unrenewed persons, their very prosperity is cursed. Thus God heard *Ahab*, when he humbled himself; and yet it does not appear that he was ever savingly renewed. Thus the mariners in *Jonah's* ship prayed every one to his god, and the Lord answered their request; but we have no reason to think that their deliverance came as a covenant blessing to them. Let not any therefore presume to infer that they are interested in God's special love, merely because he answers their prayers with respect to temporal favours. But if thou art a person in covenant, and hast an interest in the blessings of grace, thou hast then the more reason to hope that what

is granted comes with a blessing. *For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. viii, 28. No temporal mercy can come as a covenant blessing to a person who is destitute of saving grace, unless it be made a means of bringing him to Christ; but it may be granted as such to one who is already in Christ by vital union to him.

2. *The mercy prayed for must be such as is lawful for us to ask at the hands of God.* Sometimes the desires of the children of men, nay, and of the children of God too, are so wild and irregular, that they seek after what would rather be hurtful than helpful to them; and if we were allowed to choose for ourselves in all temporal cases, we should many a time make a wretched choice; yea, and if God was to answer such requests, he would do it, not in love, but in anger. Thus we find the Israelites asked flesh for their lusts, and he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls, Ps. cvi, 15.

3. *The views of the mind in asking the blessing must likewise be lawful.* Perhaps we may desire a particular favour in order to gratify our pride, to indulge our lusts, or to be at a greater liberty to enjoy ourselves, without bringing any glory to God. Now when a person prays for a temporal favour with such views, he has no reason to expect it will be granted him; or, if granted, that it will be a blessing to him. For it is a mocking of God to ask a temporal favour with such a view: and it would be rather a mercy than a judgment, for God to deny such a request, James iv, 3. *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume it upon your lusts.* We should therefore look well to our aims and ends in praying for a providential mercy, if we hope to have it granted in love.

4. *The methods taken to obtain the mercy sought should likewise be lawful.* For however valuable the favour may be in itself; yet, if it be obtained in an unlawful manner, we have no reason to expect the divine blessing upon it. It is true, God may, and sometimes does, bring good out of evil, as in the case of Jacob's obtaining his father's blessing by fraud. But this must be no pattern to us: nor can we expect that God should smile upon unlawful means; and though they should prove successful, it is a thousand to one but what is obtained becomes a *snare, a trap, a stumbling-block, and a recompense to us*, Rom. xi, 9.

These four things, I say, must be previously supposed; otherwise we can have no reason to think that the mercy received will be a real blessing to us. And I farther apprehend, that supposing we are right in these four particulars, yet these of themselves are not sufficient to ascertain the present important point. For some other thoughts must be added, in order to give us ground to conclude that what we receive comes in a covenant way.

Are you then earnestly desirous to know whether a special temporal mercy comes with a divine smile and blessing? I must beg you to make the following inquiries.

1. Inquire whether you have prayed for it as a covenant blessing. If our hearts are right with God, and our minds in a proper frame, when engaged in the duty of prayer, we do not ask for any mercy whatsoever, but with a higher view than as a temporal favour. We seek such a mercy, that God may be glorified, that our souls may be endeared to him, that we may be rendered more capable to honour him by what he gives us. We desire to receive it from Christ, not only as King of providence, but

likewise as King of grace. We are willing to forego the mercy, if God sees it will not be for his glory and our good to grant it; and we dread the thoughts of receiving any favour merely as a temporal one. It is in the nature of true prayer in such a case to look abundantly above and beyond the mercy sought, however desirable it may be to flesh and blood. *True prayer* teaches us to seek such a favour as a branch of the covenant; as a mercy that would subserve the glory of God's name and our spiritual good. We desire that the Father may be glorified in it, not only as a God of providence, but as a God of grace. We desire that the Son may be glorified by it, as a fruit of his redeeming love and grace. We desire that the Holy Spirit may be glorified in it, by making it effectual for quickening, humbling, and endearing purposes. Now, if these are our real views in seeking after a temporal mercy, we have the highest reason to think, that when it is granted, it comes from a covenant of God, attended with the blessing of Christ, and the influences of his Spirit.

2. Inquire whether you received it as a covenant blessing. When it came into your hands, or when it was bestowed upon your persons or families, be solicitous to observe with what frame of spirit you received it. Was it merely as a temporal favour? Was it merely with thankfulness, because God had been so good to you, as thereby to increase your substance, your family, or reputation? If this was all, you have reason to fear, that it has not come in a covenant channel. But if, on the contrary, you have been made to see something of the connexion between temporal mercies and spiritual blessings, and have received the present mercy as a token of God's love; and, if in its reception, it made such an impression upon your souls, as endeared your hearts to a God of grace, and stirred up your desires to spend and employ it for God in Christ; this is a happy token, that God has granted it as a real blessing.

3. Inquire whether you enjoy it as a covenant blessing. Now you have the mercy, doubtless you rejoice in it, and are thankful for it; but how do you enjoy it? Oh, there is a great deal of difference between the enjoyment that a believer has of a mercy when in a right frame, and that enjoyment of it which others have. Unrenewed persons can taste a natural sweetness in a temporal mercy, and can enjoy it with a natural pleasure; but the believer in a right frame can take a spiritual pleasure, and taste a spiritual sweetness in the enjoyment of it. It is the real desire of a true believer, in the want of all things to enjoy all in God, and in the fulness of all things to enjoy God in all.

4. Inquire whether you endeavour to improve the mercy as a covenant blessing. You have now got what you prayed for; and what do you desire now to do with it? Are you for making the best of it only in a natural way, and upon carnal principles? Or, are you for improving it in a way of gratitude to the God of grace, who has freely given you his Son, and has in him, and with him, freely given you this and every other mercy you are partakers of?

If you can conscientiously and seriously give an answer in the affirmative to the foregoing questions upon a close examination, you may then with the utmost certainty conclude, that what you have received comes to you in a covenant way, and will be blessed to you and yours to answer the most desirable and spiritual purposes.

The Eleventh Hour.*

SOME years since, a gentleman, well known for his liberality and zeal, was passing through an obscure alley in London, on the Sabbath morning, distributing religious tracts as he went along. A woman with whom he left one of the little publications, informed him that she had a lodger in an apartment of the house who appeared to be very ill, and who she thought would feel pleased and grateful if the gentleman would pay him a visit. He instantly complied with the request, and was introduced to a room almost destitute of furniture, where, upon a miserable bed, he perceived the ruins of a fine young man, in the last stage of emaciation and decay.

The gentleman, with his accustomed kindness and fidelity, entered into conversation with him, and was pleased to discover that the unhappy sufferer was not only fully prepared to receive his instructions, but that he appeared to be truly impressed with the character of his state, acquainted with the system of salvation through the crucified Saviour, and manifesting those dispositions of repentance and of faith, which are so essential to the safety of the soul. He confessed he had been brought up in respectability, that he had received a religious education, that he had fallen a victim to the multiform seductions of vice, that he had abandoned his parental home, that his constitution had been ruined by excess, and that his present condition had resulted from his own depravity. He then proceeded in broken language, and with exhausted strength, to describe how in his misery, like the prodigal son in the parable, he had come to himself; how all the impressions of early life had been revived by an influence from above; how earnestly and penitently he had cast himself before the throne of grace; how hope had animated him while dwelling upon the love and mediation of the Redeemer, and how, at last, he was enabled to indulge in some expectations of final forgiveness and acceptance beyond the grave. When the gentleman kindly inquired if he could do anything for him, the young man with considerable hesitation, but yet with absorbing earnestness, said, "I hope I have obtained the forgiveness of God, would that I could receive that of my father!" The gentleman, whose feelings was very strongly excited, offered his services, and inquired the parent's address; and it was with some astonishment that he heard the name of an individual whom he knew to be occupying a situation of respectability and reputation.

As the situation of the young man admitted of no delay, he immediately repaired to the residence of the father, whom he found at home, and to whom he was introduced. Some embarrassment followed. At length the gentleman said, "I believe, sir, you have a son?" The old man became violently affected, burst into a flood of tears, and sufficiently exemplified how much the conduct of his child had agonised his heart. The gentleman, after some delay, proceeded, with as much caution as he could exercise, to narrate the circumstance which had transpired in the morning, and concluded by offering his services to conduct the parent to an interview with his erring but penitent child. A silent assent having been given, they proceeded to the house where the young man was lodging. They soon arrived at the place.

* Scottish Tract Magazine, 1843-45.

The gentleman first entered the apartment. The young man, when he saw him, faintly smiled with pleasure; and then, looking further, he perceived the grey hairs and well-known countenance of his father. With all his remaining strength, he uttered the most pathetic entreaties for forgiveness. The whole affection of his father was aroused; and according to the description of the parable before quoted, he ran, took his son in his arms, and gave him the most endearing assurances that he was pardoned. The young man had put his arms round the neck of his father, who suddenly felt the filial embrace relaxed; he looked through his tears, and found that he held the corpse of his child! The effort and emotion had proved too much for his strength, and his spirit had fled to the presence of its God.

The late Mr. John Munro.

THE late Mr. John Munro passed to his rest at the home of his son-in-law, at Cononbank, Kirkhill, in March, 1950, at the ripe age of about ninety years. He was born in Achmore, Lochbroom in 1860, and, according to the information kindly supplied for our few notes, came under the saving influence of the truth while still a young man. One of the godly men of his native district rebuked him for some reason. This was evidently blessed to him. The dealings of the Lord with him ended in a clear break from the world. He became a member in the Free Church before the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892. Rev. Mr. MacMillan was then the Free Church minister in Ullapool. When the creed and constitution of the Free Church was changed by the above Act becoming law in the Church, both John Munro and his late wife had no doubt as to what they should do. He was away from home, at work, at that period, and decided to cast in his lot with those who stood by the supreme and subordinate standards. He did not know his wife's mind at the time. She acted exactly as he did without knowing his mind until later on. They never regretted the step which was taken in this matter.

He was, in the course of time, ordained a deacon in the congregation of Ullapool and, later on, in 1929, became an elder in the same. The friend who supplied these particulars informed us that Mr. Munro was a man who had the courage of his convictions, as is shown by the following incident.

Shortly after the Separation in 1893, when the late Rev. Alex. Macrae—then a student—was conducting services for the Free Presbyterian Church in Ullapool, John Munro and two other men came by boat to convey Mr. Macrae to Scorraig. Going up the road from the pier, they saw Mr. MacMillan approaching, and John's companions proposed to turn aside to avoid a meeting. John refused. Mr. MacMillan asked them why they were in Ullapool, and was told. He began to show them that they acted wrongly, and finished by saying, "John Maciver, Scorraig, is a very wise man, but I am wiser." John immediately replied, "The truth says, 'For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth'" (II Cor. x, 18).

We desire to insert a brief account of the wife of this worthy man. She passed away in Daviot about ten years before her husband. She belonged to Strathcaniard, Lochbroom, where she was born in 1867. She underwent a saving change while very young, during a sermon preached by the late Rev. Mr. Urquhart, of Hope Street Free Church, Glasgow. This was at the Communion season at Aultbea. Mr. Urquhart remarked at the time that he believed that two would be taken out of the kingdom of sin and Satan before the close of the solemn season. She was one of them. After this, she was in service at Mugasdale Lodge, near Laide, where those occupying the Lodge were much given to dances and such entertainments. This worried her, as her employment made it needful for her to cater for them. Prayer was her resort, and the Hearer of prayer did not fail her on these trying occasions. Several times the arrangements were upset in ways unaccountable to the promoters of the balls. After the last Communion which she attended in Laide, she said that she believed it to be her last on earth. The words were strongly before her mind which led her to this conclusion, "I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the Kingdom of God." She, with the late Mr. Munro, came in October, 1940, to live with their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Macleod, of Daviot, where she passed away after being resident there for three months. She was seventy-two years of age at the time of her death.

Mr. Munro lived for about ten years longer. He died on the 7th March, 1950. On the night before the end, his daughter said to him that she hoped he would get some sleep. He answered, "What would be good would be to be with Christ." John Munro at his death went to be with Christ.

Little need be added to these notes, which were kindly supplied by Mr. Duncan Mackay, one of the sons-in-law. John Munro was a most earnest and diligent servant of Christ. He had ample reason to stay at home latterly owing to frailty and stomach weakness, had he wished to do so, but if at all possible, was most attentive at the public means of salvation and at Communion. It was a cause of regret to us often that he would not attempt to speak in public in English, either in prayer or at a fellowship meeting. It was a privilege to have him engage in prayer indeed. He died at Cononbank, Kirkhill, and the funeral took place at Laide. We miss him much from our midst, and desire that the grace of saving faith and the anointing of the Holy Spirit may richly rest on those who nursed him tenderly to the end, and upon the several members pertaining to the family of these godly parents.—*D. A. MacF.*

You take it hard that you are not answered, and that Christ's door is not opened at your first knock. David must knock: "Oh, my God, I cry by day, and Thou hearest not, and in the night season I am not silent" (Ps. xxii, 2). The Lord's Church: "And when I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer" (Lam. iii, 8). Sweet Jesus, the heir of all, prayed with tears and strong cries: once, "Oh, my Father!" again, "Oh, my Father!" and the third time, "Oh, my Father!" ere he was heard. Wait on, die praying, faint not.—*Rutherford.*

The late Mr. John Macuish, South Harris.

IN the October issue of the Magazine, there was a notice of the death of the above, and also of the decease of Mr. Charles Sutherland. Both in the east and in the west, the pillars are being taken away by the Lord. This is cause for mourning, although we hope with regard to them that the days of their mourning are ended for ever. Mr. Macuish had a very godly mother. She was well known at Communion seasons in Lewis. She left a good example for all her family to follow. There were not many such mothers in Israel as she was. The upkeep of the Cause of Christ was her chief concern. The subject of this obituary said to the writer on one occasion, when welcoming him to the house, that he never saw a frown on his father's or his mother's face to the Lord's people. He did not have a smooth passage through this world, but it is to be hoped all was for his good.

He married twice and lost both wives as well as some of his children in tragic circumstances, and the shocks which he had sustained shattered his nervous system. Being very industrious and intelligent, he learnt his trade as a baker in Stornoway, and set up a good business at Kintulavaig, but could not carry on owing to his afflictions. However, he recognised the Lord's hand, and if he had promised himself a paradise down here, he found there was no such for him beneath the stars. His one ambition now was to be a missionary of the Cross as long as he lived. He had been out in Canada and was known to our Church people there. He served at Stoer and Raasay and at Uist for short periods, but most of his labours were in his native island. It could not be said of him that he was lazy or negligent of the House of God. In rain and wind, he would be seen walking miles. He thought nothing of walking to Leverburgh after preaching at Sheilabost and at Finsbay. He would rebuke sinners very sternly and for this he was well hated. When the prisoners of war came back from Germany there was a lot of dancing going on against which he testified and was much grieved at the carelessness of the young. An invitation to a dance was once pinned on his gate. As a precentor, he was lively and edifying. In prayer he was interesting and vehement. He had a loud, clear voice and on Fridays at Communion seasons he was listened to by all. He hated flattery and double dealing. Anything he had to say to a person, he would say to the person's face and not behind one's back. Every person gave him credit for honesty and truthfulness. He was not perfect, but we hope he is perfect now.

Towards the end of his life, he did not feel well, but conscientiously went to Northton, as there was no one else to open the House of God there. He advised his family, and said he had good hope for himself. The prophecy of Isaiah was precious to him. We believe that he has now gone to his rest, and is enjoying the inheritance of the saints in light. "Then are they glad because at rest and quiet now they be. So to the haven He them brings that they desired to see." At the comparatively early age of 66, he was taken away from the vineyard down below. It is cause for alarm when so many of those who were useful are taken away from the evil to come. May the Lord repair the breaches on the walls of Zion. It could be said of the deceased that he was a loyal Free Presbyterian, and he did what he could to uphold the Cause of Christ when it was weak in the land. We would express our deepest sympathy with those whom he left behind to mourn his loss.—*D. I. Macaskill.*

Comhnadh an Spioraid ann an Urnuigh.

Leis an URR. UILLEAM GURNALL.

'S i cheisd, Ciod an comhnadh a bheir Spiorad Dhe do'n Chriosduidh, thairis air neach eil, ann an urnuigh? Tha'n comhnadh a bheir Spiorad Dhe do'n Chriosduidh thairis air neach eil ann an urnuigh, a luidh domhain; tha e air a chàradh air an duine an leth a stigh, agus air an taobh a stigh de'n dleasdanas. Uime sin faodaidh neach aithne a bhi aig am bheil, na nach eil, e fein ag urnuigh 's an Spiorad, ach cha'n urrain e breith eho furasd a thoirt sa chùis so air neach eil. A nis tha'n comhnadh sònraicht so air a dheanamh suas de thrì nithean.

(1) Tha'n Spiorad a deanamh gnìomh beothachaidh air an anam, a chum a bhi gluasad nan aignidhean. Cha robh riamh urnuigh fhormeil air a deanamh leis an Spiorad Naomh; 'n uair a thig E 's e àm beatha a bhitheas ann; leumaidh aignidhean a Chriosduidh na bhròileach aig a ghuth-san mar a leum an naoidhean air siubhal Elisabet aig fàilteachadh Mhuire, na mar a ghluaiseas na teudan fodh laimh an fhir-chiuil agus a labhras iad gu h-òrdail, mar sin tha aignidhean an neach aig am bheil gràs 'n uair a bheanas an Spiorad riubh gu diomhair. Tha E gluasad eagal a Chriosduidh, ga lionadh le mothachadh air mòrachd Dhe, a neo-nidheachd agus a dhìblidheachd fein, air a leithid a dhoigh agus gu'n toir e air urram a thoirt do'n Mhòrachd Dhiachaidh ris am bheil e labhairt, agus gach iarratus a chur suas le crith naomh air a spiorad. B'e so an t-eagal a bh'air spiorad Abrahaim 'n uair, ann a bhi tagradh air son Shodoim, a chuir e'n ceil an nì mòr a ghabe e air fein ann a bhi labhairt ris an Tighearn, agus gun ann fein ach duslach agus luathre. The E gluasad aignidhean a Chriosduidh gu bròn; le anail dhiadhaidh tha E togail neoil na'm peacaidhean a chaidh seachad aig an anam ghràsmhor, agus 'n uair a chòmhdaicheas e'n t-anam ann am beachd-smuainteachadh le cuimh-neachadh duilich orra, an sin ann an urnuigh leaghaidh e an neul, agus leaghaidh e'n cridhe le frasaibh tlàth de bhròn soisgeulach, air a leithid de dhoigh agus gu'm bi an Criosduidh ag osnaich agus a gearain, a gul agus a bròn, mar leanabh air a smachdachadh, ged a the e faicinn na slait air a leigeadh a làmhnan Athar Neamhaidh, agus nach eil eagal feirg bh'uaith air an son. Tha'n t-abstol ag innse dhuinn gu bheil na gearainibh agus na h-osnaidhibh a tha'n Spiorad a comhnadh a Chriosduidh thuige na nithibh a tha "do-labhairt" (Rom. viii, 26), 's e sin leis a Chriosduidh fein, air bhi dha eu-comasach a bhròn anns an taobh a stigh eadar-theangachadh gu briathran tha e air a cho-eigneachadh a chur do no fàitheanas leis a ghuth thosdach so, gidheadh is e guth e a tha gu maith air a thuigsinn an sin, agus a tha gle cheolmhor an cluais Dhe. A dh'aon fhocal, tha E gluasad suas aignidhean a tha freagarach air son gach pàirt de dh'urnuigh, a deanamh an anam ghràsmhor comasach air peacadh aideachadh le cridhe goirt; a bhi tagradh air son trèdair agus gràs le mothachadh anns an taobh a stigh air fheuman; agus Dia a nholadh le cridhe air a chur am farsuingeachd agus air a ghiulain suas air sgiathaibh gràidh agus aoibhneis. Faodaidh cealgaire innleachdan a sgaoladh a mach ann a bhi cur bhriathran an eagar a cheile, gidheadh cha'n eil ach urnuigh mheallt a dh'easbhuidh an nì sin a bheireadh beath agus neart dhi, oir 's e Spiorad Dhe a mhàin a bheir sin dhi.

(Ri leantainn.)

Notes and Comments.

Voluntary Euthanasia Rejected in House of Lords.

On Tuesday, 28th November, 1950, Lord Chorley, Vice-President of the Voluntary Euthanasia Legislation Society, opened a debate on a proposal to make it legal to put to death at their own request people suffering from painful, incurable disease. He claimed that a considerable volume of public opinion was in favour of "mercy killing." The Synod, in May, 1950, passed a resolution condemning the principle of Voluntary Euthanasia and calling upon Members of Parliament to oppose any attempt to introduce legislation to legalise such unchristian and wicked procedure. We commented also in these columns on the subject. Now the attempt to introduce the matter in the House of Lords has taken place and, we are relieved to state, failed to find adequate support. The press gave a satisfactory report of the debate. Lord Denman, President of the above Society, supported the motion and said that there were Members on both sides of the House on the list of supporters. The Archbishop of York strongly opposed the motion and stated that he had probably visited as many dying and incurable people as anyone in the House excepting doctors. It was not through lack of sympathy that he found himself in opposition. This is an important expression of opposition to the enthusiasts for euthanasia, as they claim to have charitable and sympathetic consideration for their suffering fellow beings. If ever there was false clarity, it is exercised by them. The Archbishop further said, "What about the feeble-minded and hopelessly crippled? Germany placed her feet on the slippery slope, and eventually applied it to large numbers of people." Lord Horder, extra physician to the King, opposed the motion also, and among other things, declared, "Although the phrase 'incurable disease' fell glibly from the lips, it was a fact that the disease which was incurable to-day was cured next year. Doctors had never possessed so many means of relieving pain. Lord Ovidale, speaking as a surgeon, recalled a case where a patient was pronounced incurable by a team of doctors. He had the pleasure, 12 months afterwards, of certifying him as fit for light work. In his opinion, euthanasia was an admission of failure and a counsel of despair. Lord Haden-Guest said, "I feel a sense of outrage that this has been brought forward. Euthanasia was a horrible idea, and I hope the House will reject it utterly." Viscount St. Davids thought it would open the doors to those who did in fact commit murder. The Lord Chancellor, Viscount Jowitt, for the Government, the legal profession, and for himself, also spoke with a sense of responsibility. He said, "You are dealing here with human life, and I believe in the sanctity of human life. The doctrine of 'putting people out' would have most serious consequences on the criminal law. I hope I shall never live to see it introduced into this country." Lord Chorley withdrew his motion and the debate concluded. We should be thankful to God that there are still men of rank, intellect and moral back-bone to oppose and reject such a diabolical and unscriptural proposal. May it never be heard of again in the House of Lords or the House of Commons. As a footnote we may state that in October, 1950, it was made public that the World Medical Association voted in New York to condemn "mercy killing" (euthanasia). A resolution declared that euthanasia was "contrary to the public interest and to medical principles as well as to natural and civil rights."

A Correction.

In the issue December 8th, 1950, of the *Christian*, a widely read periodical, it was recorded, under the heading, "Approach to Union," that "The Free Presbyterian Church Assembly has made a request to the Free Church of Scotland for the establishment of closer relations," etc. This should have read, "The Free Presbyterian Church of Australia." This Church has no connection with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose supreme Court is the Synod.

Princess Margaret and Protestant Protests.

The *Daily Mail* of 9th December, 1950, published a review of "The Royal Family," a new biography just then published. The headlines to this review were: "Princess Wrote of 'Fanatics'—After Visit to the Pope." The reviewer refers to the fact that the Princess wrote of her visit to the Pope when she was on her Italian holiday tour, thus: "The visit was furiously denounced by some of those small groups of Protestant fanatics in England and Scotland who think that religious differences preclude ordinary social courtesy." It was exceedingly bad taste, to say the least of it, on the part of the author of the biography, Mr. Dermot Morrah, to have included this insulting and uncalled-for quotation from the pen of the young Princess. For Her Royal Highness to write thus of sincere Protestant subjects of this Protestant Realm, over which her father, His Majesty the King, reigns, was the action of one lacking even a modicum of appreciation of her own position, as a member of the Royal Family, substantially supported by grants from the Exchequer of a professedly Protestant State. Her father's throne is founded on Protestant principles whereby the Pope is disowned. The true Protestants of Scotland and England are no fanatics, but among the most loyal supporters of the Throne, which Throne is viewed by the Pope as that which ought to be subservient to his *fanatical* and utterly false claim to wield not only universal spiritual power, but temporal authority also over all kings, princes and civil powers wherever such exist. It is the Pope who is the real fanatic, and Princess Margaret would know that to her cost if he had in reality the power he claims for himself. The Pope is anti-Christ; and the enemy of Protestant Britain, the Protestant Throne, and Protestants everywhere. Protestants are heretics worthy to be burned in the view of the Pope. Princess Margaret, as a nominal Protestant, was a heretic when she visited the Pope, even although she was attired in black for the deplorable occasion. Let Princess Margaret learn that it is the Pope who is a fanatic, and one all the time.

A New Substitute for the Gospel.

Rev. Harold Cockburn, of the Church of Scotland, Dumfries, has been reported in the press as a minister who preaches "visual sermons." He engages a large cinema for his purpose. Last November, on the Lord's Day, his theme was, Paul and Silas and the conversion of the jailor. He was assisted by amateur actors, made use of costumes, spotlights, music and all other means associated with a stage production. Mr. Cockburn is convinced that this new technique will be needed when television comes. He says, "The time is past when people can concentrate for even 20 minutes on words alone." Mr. Cockburn states that of course the preaching of the Word must hold the central place. And so on. O! how we are

drifting faster and faster away from the example of the Lord Jesus Christ and the pattern of the Apostles as to how the glad tidings and doctrines of the Gospel are to be brought before a sin-benighted world! The short 20 minutes read sermon has been the rule in many Scottish pulpits for many years now. The people would not listen to longer discourses in most quarters. And now Mr. Cockburn is discovering that the spiritually dead people of Scotland are becoming ten times tired of the dead, dry essays read as substitutes for the full gospel of God's grace. Therefore something must be done. That something is not a return to a faithful, full and evangelical preaching of the Gospel of Christ, to unconverted men and women, having in view their conversion by the power of the Holy Spirit. That something is an ultra modern step forward into the realm of the world to find and employ worldly men and means, to present pictorially stories from the Bible. What will the next step be by such worldly wise ministers? A declaration that there is no necessity for any preaching of the Word of God at all, not even for 20 minutes. The devil leads gradually, but surely, those who are his dupes, to ultimately abandon any regard at all for the preaching of the Word. "Preach the Word," writes Paul to Timothy—not, "Play-act the Word." The flood of iniquity and worldliness rolls in upon the visible Church of Christ to-day. When will the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against it? The Lord knows the answer to this.

A Yearning for D.D.s.

Recently we read in a professedly evangelical denominational magazine a lamentation and bemoaning of the tardiness of our Scottish Universities in recognising the outstandingly brilliant scholarship of one of that denomination's theological professors, having negligently left it to a Canadian University to bestow the much-coveted reward of the honorary academic distinction of a doctorate in divinity. When one considers the sacrifice of principle involved in coquetting with powerful Modernist denominations that have it in their power to commend candidates, from professedly evangelical churches, for honorary academic distinctions, such as D.D.s, one feels that such professedly evangelical ministers are as irresponsibly flippant and indifferent, in selling their fidelity to principle for a mere mess of academic pottage, as truant schoolboys chasing a will o' the wisp. Breaking off relationship with, and financial support of, the National Bible Society of Scotland, once it broke its own constitutional rules relative to the publication, exclusively, in English, of the Authorised Version of the Bible, is very much the same as breaking off ecclesiastical relationship with the Modernist Church of Scotland, yet this simple duty is not to be expected of professed evangelicals who yearn for such academic display. May one be permitted to remind all such of what Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said about Billy Bray in this connection:—"Many orators and doctors in divinity look very small by the side of Billy Bray, if we estimate ministers by their results in being instrumental in converting immortal souls, and they will look smaller still when the souls thus saved by poor humble speakers shall shine forth like stars, and their own rhetorical fame and boasted learning shall be as darkness." Such as thus vaingloriously yearn for academic distinctions, at the expense of fidelity to principle, are generally ecclesiastical advocates and leaders in blurring and obliterating the eternal distinction between truth and falsehood.—*J. P. MacQueen.*

Literary Notices.

The Churches in Scotland To-day, by Dr. John Highet, Lecturer in Sociology at Glasgow University. Price 15/-. Publishers, Jackson, Son & Company, Glasgow.

This book contains a great deal of useful information and data regarding all Churches and religious organisations in Glasgow and Scotland. The historical sketches of each denomination is of necessity brief and may be thought unsatisfactory by some. The first chapter gives a survey of the Principles, Government and Strength of the Presbyterian, Episcopal, Roman Catholic and Independent Churches, and also of all other religious organisations. There are interesting references to the democratic character of the Presbyterian form of Church government. The author, for instance, points out regarding the Moderator of a General Assembly, "He is not 'head' of the Church. It is not correct even to style him 'Moderator of (for example) the Church of Scotland': the sole permissible designation is 'Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,' and so in the case of the other denominations *mutatis mutandis*." The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is cited as one of the six Presbyterian Churches in Scotland and fourth in the author's chronological list, being placed after the United Original Secession Church and before the present Free Church. The doctrinal standpoint of the Church of Scotland and the view it takes of Scripture are said to be liberal, which observation is only too true. Dr. Highet writes:—"The Church recognises 'liberty of opinion in points (of doctrine) which do not enter into the substance of the Faith.'" And indeed this liberty of opinion has long since developed into license to hold and teach opinions contrary to the doctrine and substance of the Christian Faith within the Church of Scotland. It is recorded that "the Free Presbyterian Church came into existence in 1893, formed by a group within the then Free Church, who, on the passing by that Church in 1892 of its Declaratory Act, felt bound in conscience to sever connection. In its doctrinal standpoint, the Free Presbyterian Church is said to manifest "an outlook perhaps even more austere and conservative than that of the Free Church." The author thus describes an observable difference between these two Churches; and so it seems that opinion outwith the Free Presbyterian Church and the Free Church recognises that these two Churches are not so identical as some would aver. With this opinion we, of course, agree, although we would use words other than "austere" and "conservative" to describe the difference indicated. Several pages are devoted to outlining the history of the Free Church, and it is stated that after the Union of 1900, the present Free Church later "repealed the 1892 Act"; that is the Declaratory Act. This statement supports the contention of the Free Presbyterian Church that the present Free Church were *under* this infamous Act until it was repealed.

Brief outlines are given also of the principles, statistics, etc., of other Protestant Churches, and the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholics aged 20 and over are estimated to number: 472,000 in Scotland and 185,565 in the city of Glasgow; the Roman Catholic population, as is well known, being densest in the Clyde Valley area, "no doubt owing to a large extent to the concentration there of the descendants of Irish immigrants."

Dr. Highet has a chapter on "The Retreat from Religion," in which he does not appear to recognise the dangerous extent to which Scotland has become irreligious. He measures matters largely by numbers in Church membership. This is an unwise rule to go by to-day, inasmuch as membership in so many cases has no relationship to conversion or the true practice of the Christian religion. Then in a chapter on "The Gospel in Action," the multifarious organisations, especially of the Church of Scotland, are dealt with, such as "The Open Door," "Christian Commandoes," "Film Society," and "Iona Community," etc. A criticism of the Iona Community, made by Rev. William Grant, in the Free Presbyterian Church Synod, in May, 1948, is given correctly, although apparently not acceptable to Dr. Highet. In his chapter, "The Mind of the Church," the author writes on a wide range of subjects wherein the convictions of all the denominations in Scotland are expressed on such as Sabbath Observance, Betting, Temperance, Sales of Work, Raffling, etc. The last chapter on "The Situation in 1949-50," gives a very brief summary of up-to-date information upon matters already dealt with. The Glasgow "Christian Commandoes" Campaign during 1950 is said to have been supported by the Church of Scotland, the Episcopal Church, the Free Church, the United Free Church, and several other denominations. "The aim of the enterprise is not only to 'take the Gospel to the churchless but to revitalise the life of the individual congregation'." We remark in passing that Dr. Highet finds no place here or indeed throughout his book, for any reference in a particular way to the Holy Spirit, His office and work in the Church of Christ in the world. The Churches in Scotland to-day, after all that may possibly be recorded regarding them, need a day of power, the power exercised by God, the Holy Ghost. Spiritual death reigns in Scotland to-day; and Pentecost came not only by the preaching of what was the pure Gospel of Christ, but also by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in abundant measure, according to the promise of the Father.

From Darkness to Light, by Miss Norah E. Hersee. Price, 3d. per copy, post 1d.; 12 for 3/., post free; 50 for 10/6. To be obtained from the authoress, 15 St. George's Road, Worthing.

This is a little pamphlet of eight pages, telling in simple words and in a concise manner, without any effort to enlarge, the narrative of the authoress's abandonment of the Protestant religion, her entry into a convent in 1932, experiences as a nun, removal from the convent on account of ill-health, and her ultimate conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Her father was a Church of England clergyman, and in her home the Word of God was read. But Miss Hersee came under the influence of the Anglo-Catholic faith and later joined the Church of Rome. This was a great grief to her parents. She entered a convent, and after the white veil of the novice was placed on her head, prior to other ceremonies and mass, she tells what followed:—"The following morning I was sent for by the Mistress of Novices. After kneeling by her side, I was handed a whip and a bracelet which she informed me I wore on my left arm above the elbow. I found this was a very painful procedure as there were small spikes all along the inside of the bracelet . . . And the whip, I was to use at the times stated by her, beating myself an ordered number of times." The narrative ultimately tells of her being persuaded to hear a sermon by a pastor in Worthing. She writes:—"In His infinite mercy, He showed me

I was a sinner in His sight, and as I saw Christ as my only Saviour, I came to His feet in sorrow and contrition." One drawback in the pamphlet is, that Miss Hersee gives no dates in her most revealing and interesting story. We wrote to her about this and she replied saying, "I entered the convent in 1932, leaving after 2½ years; that would be about the middle of 1935. Had I once received my black veil, I could not have left." She asks in her letter that she be prayed for, "That God, if it is His will, will strengthen me physically as my health is not too good, due in the main to all I went through in the convent." We are strongly under the impression that Miss Hersee could have written a great deal more than she has done, worth reading, as to her being brought "from darkness to light."

Church Notes.

Communions.

February—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness and Portree; third, Finsbay and Lochinver; fourth, Kinlochbervie, London, and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Portnalong and Breasclete; second, Fort William; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick.

London F.P. Communion Services.

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, London Congregation, Eccleston Hall, Eccleston Street, Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1. In connection with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper on Sabbath 25th March, the following services have been arranged (D.V.), to be conducted by the Rev. Alexander Macaskill, Lochinver, and the Rev. Malcolm MacSween, M.A., Portnalong:—Thursday, 22nd March, 7 p.m.; Friday, 23rd March, 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic), and 7 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting); Saturday, 24th March, 3.30 p.m., and 6.30 p.m. (Prayer Meeting); Sabbath, 25th March, 11 a.m., 3.45 p.m. (Gaelic), and 7 p.m.; Monday, 26th March, 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic), and 7 p.m.

Services are held every Sabbath at 11 a.m., 3.45 p.m. (Gaelic), and 7 p.m. Weekly Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7 p.m.

The late Mr. Neil Nicolson, Stornoway.

We regret exceedingly to have received the sad news of the death of Mr. Neil Nicolson, elder, Stornoway. Rev. D. Campbell states that this worthy, God-fearing office-bearer died on Sabbath, the 7th day of January, 1951. Mr. Nicolson feared the Lord above many and was a faithful and loyal friend of the Free Presbyterian Church. The Outer Isles Presbytery and the congregations within its bounds, have sustained several sad losses recently, in the removal by death of gracious and useful men. May the Most High heal the breaches. Later (D.V.) there will be an obituary published of Mr. Nicolson. Meantime, we extend deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, and also to the Stornoway congregation.—*Editor*.

Binding of Monthly Magazines.

The Publications Committee has received an estimate for binding our Church Monthly Magazine, but it is necessary to ascertain approximately the total number of volumes required to be done.

If we have 500 volumes (of 12 months each) the cost will be 2/6 per volume. (If 24 months to one volume, 3/- per volume.)

Will friends please send a post-card to the undersigned giving the number of complete volumes they wish to have bound, and await further directions. No Magazines are to be sent meantime, but they should be in correct and complete order ready for binding.

W. GRANT (Halkirk), *Convener*.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—T. M. MacMorran, Sask., Canada, £5; A Friend in Perthshire, £4; Surgeon-Lt. MacS., Donibristle, £4; Mr. J. C., 48 St. John's Road, Wembley, £2 10/-; A. M., o/a Beaully Congregation, £3; I. McK., Dundonnell, £1 10/-; Mrs. C. F., Insh Manse, Kincraig, £1; R. H. C., Stevenston, 10/-; Mrs. W. M., Dalhalvaig, 10/-; Mr. A. C., Broallan, Beaully, £1; Miss J. M. S., Ardenlea, Ardrishaig, 10/-; A Friend, Applecross, £1; A Friend of the Cause, 10/-; Misses M. and J. MacNicol, Lochgilphead, £1; Mr. J. Fraser, Carnoch, Ardgour, £2.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—A Friend, Ross-shire, £10; Mr. T. M. MacMorran, Sask., Canada, £5; I. McK., Dundonnell, 10/-; G. McK., Farlary, Rogart, £3; From Two F.P.s, £2; M. N. McK., Geocrab, Harris, £5; Mrs. C. F., Insh Manse, Kincraig, 14/-; R. H. C., Stevenston, 10/-; Mrs. M. S., Little Urchany, Cawdor, £1; Miss L. C., Broallan, Beaully, 10/-; Mission Box in Assynt, per Mrs. McK., £2; Mr. J. McL., Kerracher, Lairg, £1; Mr. A. H. C., 19 Seorraig, Dundonnell, £3; Mrs. W. M., Dalhalvaig, 10/-; Mr. R. P., Badachro, £1; Miss M. M., Salisbury Road, Edinburgh, 10/-; Mrs. H. McK., Breakachy, Beaully, £1 10/-; Friend, £1; A Friend, Applecross, £1; Interested in the Cause, £5; Psalm cxxxvi, second version, 1st and 2nd verses, £2; Mr. D. MacK., 7 Diabaig, £1; Misses Murray, Halkirk, 10/-; Mrs. M. Hunter, Killen, 5/-; Staffin Prayer Meeting Collection, £1 10/-; Misses M. and J. MacNicol, Lochgilphead, £1.

Home Mission Fund.—I. M. K., Dundonnell, 10/-; G., Dundee, £5, on behalf of Lochgilphead Congregation; A Friend, Applecross, £1; Misses M. and J. MacNicol, Lochgilphead, £1.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' and Widows' and Orphans' Fund.—Mr. T. M. MacMorran, Sask., Canada, £4; A Friend of the Cause, 10/-.

Organisation Fund.—Mr. T. M. MacMorran, Sask., Canada, £3 3/-.

College Fund.—M. MacL., 1 Inverarish, Raasay, 10/-.

Free Distribution Fund.—A Friend, Torridon, £1; Miss M. Stewart, Kyle, 10/-; Mr. R. Gillanders, Toscaig, 10/-; S.-Lt. E. MacSween, Donibristle, £1 10/-; Miss M. Munro, Salisbury Road, Edinburgh, 4/-; Miss R. MacLean, South Uist, 5/-; Mr. A. MacKenzie, Brackloch, Lochinver, 10/-; Mrs. Forsyth, Jordanhill, 10/-; Miss R. Ross, Geocrab, 10/-; Mrs. M. Campbell, Tigh-na-Mara, Shildaig, 10/-; Mr. J. Mathieson, Tanera Cottage, Inver, 4/-; Mr. K. MacLennan, Tigh-na-Mara, Shildaig, 4/-; Miss M. J. MacLean, Morar Lodge, Helensburgh, 6/-; Mrs. J. Murray, 29

Keith Street, Stornoway, 4/-; Miss S. A. Urquhart, Balblair, 8/-; Miss M. V. Fraser, Kirkintilloch, 10/-; Mrs. Forgie, Slamannan, £1; Mrs. J. MacDonald, 6 Moorlands, Breakish, 6/-; Mrs. Dunbar, Firrhill, Edinburgh, 4/-; Mr. C. Robertson, Breakish, 4/-; Mrs. Finlayson, Dunoon, 4/-; Mr. J. MacDonald, 3 Tockavaig, Sleat, 3/-.

Publications Fund.—Sale of Mothers' Catechisms, per Rev. W. Grant, 10/-; Mrs. B. T. Badfern, Aultbea, £2, for Trinitarian Bible Society.

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