

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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Printed by
 N. Adshead & Son, 34-36 Cadogan Street, Glasgow.

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VOL. LV.

January, 1951.

No. 9

Some Scriptural Directions.

WE have now entered upon the second half of the twentieth century, in this New Year, 1951, and the Lord's people will undoubtedly have their own thoughts as they contemplate the future in reference to time and the eternal world. As long as they are in "the earthly house of this tabernacle" they cannot avoid much concern regarding their precious souls and preparation for the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." They love Jerusalem, the Church and Cause of Christ, and would fain see much needed times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord and by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel. Yet when "the ways of Zion do mourn," they mourn that the godly man ceaseth, that the faithful are disappearing from among men, and that few truly converted men and women are stepping into the breaches on the walls of Zion. And as they look out upon the nation and the widespread departures from true religion and morality, they entertain fears as to what this New Year itself may disclose of manifestations of the divine anger. We intend not to emphasise unduly the burdensome and discouraging aspects of the exercised believer's thoughts and outlook in these trying times; but rather to indicate some scriptural directions, which may prove profitable at the outset of the year and during the days to come.

Then let the Lord's people emulate the disciples and pray to Him to increase their faith. Jesus tenderly reproved His disciples on one occasion by addressing them thus, "O, ye of little faith"; and surely He who reproves after this manner, and having a divine and loving interest in His people, is willing to bless them with an enlargement of their faith which has as its especial object, Christ Himself in the fulness and glory of His person, sufferings and mediatorial offices, as exalted Prophet, Priest and King. Increased and enlivened faith by the operations of the Holy Spirit through the truth, in the soul, will mean clearer, deeper and more spiritual views of the glory and preciousness of Jesus, with the accompanying satisfaction and comfort

so helpful to the believer's hope of being with Christ in glory one day. On the other hand, as faith may be increased, so will a sense of one's nothingness, sinfulness and unworthiness in the presence of the Lord of glory and in the light of sovereign and free grace; and this will tend, under the divine blessing, to a meek and humble spirit so essential, so valuable, to the pilgrim on this earth seeking a better country, even an heavenly.

The matter of *secret prayer should be given renewed and most serious consideration*. Jesus gives counsel and encouragement regarding this in His sermon on the Mount, when He says, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. vi, 6). Prayer and more prayer, especially secret prayer, is needed to-day for the Church and the nation at large. Those who profess to be followers of the Redeemer should examine themselves now, as to their personal need of an abundant bestowal upon their souls, of "the Spirit of grace and of supplications," that there may be a fervent seeking after deliverance from formality, laxity and actual neglect with respect to secret prayer. What need there is to importunately plead with the Hearer of prayer now and in the immediate future to visit our souls, families and the public services in the tabernacles of His grace, with the wonderful, converting and comforting power of the Spirit of truth and grace. "Brethren, pray for us," the messengers of Christ and preachers of the Gospel, writes Paul; and "Pray one for another," he exhorts the children of God; and his own heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was, that they might be saved. Pray in time of trouble, pray over small and great problems, pray for the prosperity and defence of the Cause of the Lord Jesus Christ in face of the present-day activities of Satan, and pray for the nation, etc. And let it be remembered that, "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Further, *the minds of believers should be increasingly influenced by the glorious fact that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"* (Rev. xix, 6). The times are perilous in many ways. The heathen rage, rulers take counsel together against the Lord and His anointed, the kingdoms are moved, the Church of God is harassed from many quarters, the devil is busy and going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and trouble is on every hand. The earthly minded see a world in chaos and confusion without the hand of any supreme controller. But the believer must view the scene in the light of the divine government of the world, inasmuch as God is King of all the earth and the judge of men, and His throne is established of old. He ruleth in the Kingdom of men and puts down one and setteth up another, and as to His enemies, "He shall have them in derision" (Ps. ii, 4). He is great in Zion, the strength, the song and salvation of His saints; and well

might they "be still," rejoice and take courage that their God is as a wall of fire round about His Church and the glory in the midst thereof. All the purposes and counsels of His heart shall be unfolded and fulfilled, albeit in the process, dark clouds encompass His throne and His doings. Believers should therefore look up to their governing God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and thereafter upon the world, its turmoil, distresses and dangers, and thus perceive that men, devils, and all that takes place are under the hand of Him who ruleth ever by His power.

And lastly, *the Church must continue to proclaim the Word of the truth of the Gospel of Christ*, by preaching and through her witness. Fallen, guilty, condemned, hell-deserving sinners, "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death," need the Gospel—of Christ crucified, of grace, of salvation, and He has commissioned and commanded His Church to preach and teach it. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi, 15), says Christ. This must be the same gospel doctrine declared by the Head of the Church Himself and by His apostles. To add to or take from the doctrines of grace is a betrayal of the gospel. Sinners are to be warned that they are on the broad way to hell and everlasting destruction; and those same sinners are to be called to repent of their sins and to behold the crucified Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world, and that, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii, 25).

And now, May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the divine blessing in providence be experienced by our readers at home and abroad, during the days to come, according to the will of God.

New Year's Day Lecture.

By REV. JAMES MACLEOD, Greenock, on 2nd January, 1950.

"I have given them thy Word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xii, 14).

WE are gathered together to-day (the second day of this New Year 1950). It is a great cause of thankfulness to the Lord that we are spared to see the beginning of another year. When we look back at the last year, we must admit that we were unprofitable servants, and if God should mark our sins, and transgressions against us, this is not the place we would be in at this present moment! What cause of deep thankfulness to God that we are not in hell. We complain, some times with sound and valid cause and reasons; but our complaints are mere trifles when you think of a lost world! Now friends, let us reflect, prayerfully, and most seriously, about our future—for we have a future, an eternal future. You hear some saying, "Spending eternity"; eternity is eternity. We must make use of the means that God has set at our disposal. It is your duty to attend on the means of

grace as rational human beings. We may have ten thousand different excuses for not attending the public worship of God, but that is our place (Rom. x, 17). The lamentable pity in our day is that people will not bother to come to the church. What is wrong? Is it the fault of the people, or of the preachers? We ministers are ready to blame the people, but the people have as much right to blame the ministers. The fact of the matter is that ministers and people are not free of blame: and the ministers should take the larger share of the blame, for it was with them that the first signs of declensions began from the truth of God in this land. In Germany, soon after the death of Luther, some "Protestant pastors" engaged in the service of the Cardinal of Lorraine, to destroy the Reformed religion, and were actually in the pay of the Cardinal! In Britain, the canker worm began to shew itself in the colleges among the most brilliant young scholars of the nation. The same calamity took place in Germany, Holland, France, and in the United States of America. It was in the schools. It was not among the common people that the great declensions and schisms began in the Christian Church, but among the learned, nobility and churchmen, which degenerated into what is known as Romanism, and to-day Protestantism has degenerated into what is popularly called "Modernism," or militant atheism. You must bear in mind that many of the so-called scholars in the Protestant kingdoms are atheists. They, of course, blankly refuse to admit that, but notwithstanding their strong objections, they are confirmed atheists. They do not believe that the Bible is a divine revelation from God, and given us under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They do not. They do not believe that Jesus Christ was anything but a mere man, as the Communists believe; and in fact, if the truth is told, few Protestant ministers believe in the doctrines of the Virgin Birth of our Lord. We have ample proof for this statement. We could quote dozens of statements made in recent times by men who are very prominent in the religious world, who do not believe in the supernatural birth of Christ. What are such men but infidels, and atheists? Can we wonder that the people do not attend the church, and wander in their minds when they occasionally do attend, as they have no confidence in the preachers, what they say, as they know not what the next move may be. The natural and reasonable confidence of the people has been so ruined by the conduct of professors and ministers that the poor people are in a fog, not knowing what to do, whether to go to church or remain at home on the Lord's day! I was recently refreshing my mind on the case of Prof. William Robertson Smith in the Free Church Assembly. What a bedlam! It was that case that broke up the Free Church into fragments. The confidence of the people was shattered by the conduct of the ministers. Smith was a brilliant scholar. He went to Germany to finish off his education, and while there was thoroughly doped by German Rationalists. His "higher and destructive criticism" of the Word of God brought into that Church theories about the Revelation of God to man, which finally ruined the Church. "Clever young men" in the service of the Church are a menace to the people of God instead of being useful to the Church, and only a hindrance, and pain to the godly. We are only a small branch of the Protestant Church, and how often we have been stung by "clever young men" for the last fifty years! It was the "brilliant scholars" that ruined the Church in Germany, England, and Scotland. Voltaire and Charles Darwin were only two of the many that attacked the Church of God. It

is said the Church should raise up men, educate them and train them thoroughly to meet the challenge of the atheist, infidel, and the Modernist. The Church cannot do that, for the simple reason you cannot meet the Liar, as he is armed with lies to repel truth. If he could be convinced by truth, that would be quite easy, but the Liar shall not be convinced by the force of truth, till God touch his vile conscience with a dart from the divine quiver from His holy law, and that will silence him forever. The believer can repel the devil with the Word of God, but not so the blind bairn of Satan! The Protestant churches of Europe, America, and England were waiting to see what decision the Free Church should come to in the case mentioned above. The godly must have been painfully disappointed when Assembly after Assembly shewed such large minorities, and on one occasion, a majority in defence of Robertson Smith's theories! The dams were broken, the floods poured over the land; the Declaratory Act of 1892 was the result, and the flood is still rising; godlessness, immorality, idolatry, and a deadly formalism, which is rank poison to the souls of men. The Bible is judged as an ordinary, or common book of literature. "The book of Genesis is out of joint," so the critics say, as its history does not square with the conclusions of science. The Declaratory Act was really an "Enabling Act," that is to say, an Act to relieve ministers, elders, and members to believe what they liked, and what would suit them at the time. If it would suit the member to attend the dance hall better than the Communion Table, well, he or she had liberty to do so. It ceased to be "what saith the Lord," but what saith the present time. The binding authority of the Bible over life, walk, conversation, Kirk-Session, pulpit, college, Assemblies, was a thing of the past. "We must live according to the times." Well, if you do, at the end of the road is hell. The just lives by faith and not according to the times.

The Roman Catholic Church has her Canon Law, the Mohammedan his Koran, but the Protestant Church is forced to the witchery of the "World Council of Churches"! What madness! This is the last resort-Council of despair. Who are the people behind the "World Council of Churches"? The "Modernists," who do not believe the Bible, nor accept the doctrines of the Holy Spirit concerning the fall of mankind in Adam, nor in the Person of Christ, etc. What are they aiming at? This Council aims at stemming Communism. Is this another case of the kettle calling the pot black? It seems so. The miserable Communists are doing the work of the devil in the name of a fellow (dead long ago), Karl Marx. This famous "Council" is doing the work of the devil in the name of the gospel, and the Christ that they boldly deny. Hypocrites pretend that they are "doing God service," whereas they are serving the devil. When men do the work of the devil in the name of God, that is the greatest sin, and that is what they are doing.

There is another "Council" called the "United Nations Organisation." It is a bric-a-brac of a thing, like the old "League of Nations," which was one of the most useless Leagues that was ever invented by supposedly wise men. "But who is their father?" Who authorised this League? It was born in despair, and it will die in extreme darkness! "U.N.O." and the "World Council of Churches" are twin brothers. The good "brothers" are to put the world right, and keep it on an even keel in order to avoid wars and international commotions in the world! This

is another attempt at building a "modern" Babel to escape the storms, tempests, and introduce peace, harmony and good-will among men without any reference to God, gospel, or divine principles—for a hereafter is not in the calculations of the "modern builders"! "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision" (Ps. ii, 4). The Pope has a "holy year" for the faithful to collect as much money as he can from the dollar countries, as his pomp and pride must be supported with silver and gold. The world is reeling like a drunken man between Communism, Popery, U.N.O., Modernism, and the "World Council of Churches." The people are bewildered and have lost heart in all nations, not knowing whom to believe, follow, or own as leaders! It is a dreadful state of affairs.

The picture is dreadfully black! Yet, according to "the election of grace," God has a remnant in this nation, and in other nations, who love His blessed name. They were given the Word of God, and they prize that Word above everything else in this world. It is the very Word of God to their souls. They were given the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. It is the Bible that the Holy Spirit gives to the child of God. "I have given them thy Word." Had they not His Word before the coming of the Lord into this world? Yes, as many have it to-day in the letter, but it is another thing to get that Word from the Lord. The Pharisees had the Word as written by Moses, prophets, and in the Psalms. Did they understand it? They did not. The Lord gives it to the understanding heart and life. The men on their way to Emmaus knew the Scriptures well enough as far as the letter of the Word was concerned; the law, and the prophets were taught in their homes and synagogues, but they were blind to the spiritual understanding of the Word of God till He opened their understanding. That is true of men. They may have Bibles, and plenty of head knowledge of the Word, but more is required. Some very wicked men know the letter very well. They can quote the Word of God to their own destruction. Does that mean that they know the Word of God? No, it must be given, and given by the Author of life and the Saviour of the lost. Paul had the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Luther, Calvin, Knox, etc., had both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Were they understanding the Word of God before that moment came, "I have given them thy Word"? When the Lord gives His Word to poor sinners, He puts it into the heart, understanding, and conscience. He compares it to seed falling into good ground. When it falls there, by the blessed Spirit quickening, watering, and blessing it every moment it brings forth fruit. There are many, many million Bibles in over one thousand languages in this age, but is it not as clear as daylight that notwithstanding, till that same Word is given by the Spirit of God to the souls of men, that millions will go to hell with Bible in hand, words of Scriptures in their mouths, and their souls bound up in the grave clothes of spiritual death? It was quite easy for such men to give up the Word of God, as happened in Scotland sixty years ago, in Germany, and in England. It happened to the Jews when they set their carnal traditions before the written Word of God.

When the Holy Spirit gives the Word, the hatred of men is immediately roused in opposition to them who believe it to the glory of God, and are grounded and settled in the truth of God as it is in Jesus. The seed of truth is hated by the world, and would have its confessors destroyed if

they had the power to do so. When our fathers stood in defence of God's Word in this land: first, at the Reformation, the powers of the world, as it was represented by the Roman Catholic Church, took immediate steps to destroy, murder, and burn the men and women who believed the Word of God. When Andrew Melville stood against the arbitrary measures of that arch-hypocrite, King James the Sixth, he was first imprisoned, then banished his native land. Melville was the first man in his nation, the finest scholar, the ablest divine, and King and Government had not a better friend within the realm. Melville had the Word of God, and because of that he was hated by the world, as he was not of the world, and could not sacrifice the truth of God for king or country! "I have given them thy Word." When our fathers stood against the mitre bishops of England in the Assembly of 1638, it was in defence of the crown rights of Jesus Christ. When they were forced to withdraw and separate from the corruptions of the Erastian principles and practices of the Established Church in 1843, it was in defence of the crown rights of the Lord Jesus Christ to reign, rule, and govern His Church by His Word and Spirit. To say, as some said, that the fathers of 1843 did not hold "Establishment principles" when they separated from a corrupt Establishment, was false. It was said by men who were traducing the memory of the godly ministers who had to part with so much in order to conserve and maintain what they vowed to defend at their ordination. Jesuitically-minded men can twist not only the words of men, but the very Word of God. In 1893, it was in defence of the Word of God that the fathers of the Free Presbyterian Church stood. In the Robertson Smith case mentioned above, the wreckers made it quite clear that not only had they departed from "Establishment principles," but were prepared to depart from the Word of God in hundreds long before 1892. In the Robertson Smith case, on one occasion they had seven of a majority, which implied of course that hundreds of ministers and elders were quite prepared to accept Professor Smith's destructive criticism of the inspired, unerring Word of God! This was the "Declaratory Act" in the making from 1876 to 1892. Who was able to stand up, confute, challenge, and repel German rationalism? There was at least one man in May, 1893, willing and able to stand in public defence of God's Word in the Assembly of the Free Church—that was the Rev. Donald MacFarlane, minister of Raasay. He tabled a protest in defence of the Word of God, constitution and ordination vows, and by his protest, renounced and repudiated that Assembly for all time coming. He there and then by his protest separated from the corrupt Free Church. It was not for a name, money, or property. He had no money or property. The house he was in at the time (which the then Free Church wrongly claimed as their property), the Declaratory Act party evicted him out of it. The pious Rev. Donald Macdonald, Shieldaig, Lochcarron, Ross-shire, was also evicted. "I have given them thy Word, and the world has hated them."

Now, my dear young friends, you are in a Church as pure, and Scriptural as this nation has ever known. It is for you to maintain this Church pure and to stand in defence of the Word of God, Establishment principles, Reformation attainments, and the Confession of Faith; for if you depart from its high, and Scriptural attainments you will suffer loss. Let not husbands, or wives, or any other person (under no consideration whatsoever)

cause you to separate from the Church of your fathers. You must be "born again" although Free Presbyterians, for the purest Church on earth will not save your soul if not united to Jesus Christ. The world will hate you, and try to take you away from your Church. It is the work of the devil to separate poor sinners from the Word of God. Are you not eye-witnesses of the awful condition of the people of Scotland to-day? That is what our fathers knew would happen to the people of this land the day that they would sacrifice the truth of God to the lies of atheists and infidels. The churches of this land are very corrupt. The life and practice of the people unfolds year by year that the Word of God is not their rule of life.

You have been told that the Synod of your Church changed the Constitution, departed from it, and introduced practices into the Courts alien to the usual procedure in Presbyterian Synods and Assemblies. The Pharisees charged our Lord, saying, "Behold, a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber." Was that a proof that He was either "gluttonous, or a wine-bibber"? It is as false as it is vicious to say that our Synod changed, altered, or departed from the Constitution, or Confession of Faith of the Reformed Church of Scotland in the least degree. When men tried to prove that assertion, and began to say that we had changed and altered the Constitution, and put their own interpretation on the Confession of Faith and Church procedure, they found themselves in an inextricable bog. Every man or woman who separated from the Free Presbyterian Church for the last fifty years gathered any amount of plausible excuses to cover their own retreat and palliate their gnawing consciences.

We are not, and never were against union and communion with God's people in this nation or elsewhere. What our fathers were opposed to was union with religious bodies that were not adhering to the Word of God in practice as well as in profession and Church government. We may have the finest and the most Scriptural Constitution in the world, but if our practice is contrary to our legislative enactments, what is the value of our Constitution? It is sheer mockery! We are not against union, but we cannot sacrifice the Word of God for the sake of union. The discipline of the Word of God is as essential to the good order and government of the Church as "the sinews are to the human body"—so said Calvin. The gospel of the grace of God in the Free Presbyterian Church is a bondage to those who claim liberty and freedom, in order to walk according to the course of this world. "Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection" (Acts xvii). Again, we read in Acts vi, "Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines . . . disputing with Stephen." The devil brought the Libertines to the front in the days of Calvin, and of course they demanded church privileges and freedom to pollute the Church of God with the sins of the flesh, as you may find in Gal. v, 19, 20, 21. There is more need of the Testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church to-day in this poor benighted land than even in 1893! "I have given them thy Word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of this world, even as I am not of this world."

Justification.

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

(Continued from page 165.)

3. Observe, "the sinner *that believeth*." For there is manifestly a third new principle required, in order that this justification by sovereign grace through imputed righteousness may take effect, may actually take effect in each separate instance. The whole world is not justified *en masse*, simply because there is a source of justification in the grace of God and a ground of justification in the suretyship of Christ. Personally and individually, one by one, each for himself, must sinful men come under the operation of these principles if they are to enjoy actual justification before God. And what, it may be asked, is actual justification before God. And what, it may be asked, is it that brings one and not another, that brings some and not all; what is it that brings any into contact or connection with the grace which is the origin of this privilege, or the righteousness which is the foundation of it? Evidently there is necessity for some third new principle, not requisite, and indeed inadmissible, in the justification of the holy and unfallen. It is the principle of Faith:—Faith, by which, as an act and habit of the heart, the sinner appeals to the grace of God; by which, as by a mental spiritual instrument, the sinner appropriates the righteousness of Christ.

And it is evident that this personal and appropriating faith on the sinner's part is required on God's part not by a mere arbitrary decree, any more than his own act of grace is a mere arbitrary and groundless deliverance. In the very nature of the case faith is requisite in order that this justification by grace may actually take effect. For it must take effect and terminate in the sinner's own conscience. It must so transpire and be enacted there, as that he may be free from guilt in his conscience—free from all sentence, prosecution, and condemnation there. But a justification thus taking effect in the inmost spiritual being of an intelligent responsible subject of the divine government—the first condition and commencement of his intelligent friendship with God—cannot possibly accomplish its own design, save where it is understood and acquiesced in, where it is embraced and rested on, where it is intelligently appreciated, appealed to, and appropriated by the individual. But to do this is the very office of faith. Without faith therefore it is impossible to be justified before God, impossible to please God, or to be pleasing and accepted in His sight. Without faith, transferring the soul and all its confidence to the new foundation laid in Zion, to the atoning, accepted substitute, it is impossible to have any personal interest in the new righteousness of justification. Without faith confiding in the grace and free promise of God, it is impossible to lean on the new righteousness which is itself the provision and the gift of grace. Without faith, the sinner stands alone, and aloof from the Lord our righteousness; and not being in him as the Lord *his* righteousness, the imputation of righteousness to such an one on God's part would be a mere fiction or mistake; he remains, therefore, destitute of righteousness, unjustified, condemned. So indispensable is faith as a means of bringing the sinner into the grace of justification, and under the ministration or imputation of its righteousness.

Here, then, is the *third* principle introduced, namely, Faith; securing the connection of the individual with the ground of justification, which is the righteousness of Christ, and with the source of justification, which is the grace of God.

Here we may pause with advantage, and notice in the light of these remarks the different senses in which Holy Scripture attributes our justification to three different causes—distinct yet conspiring—distinct and therefore conspiring.

(1) In the first place, we are said to be justified by the grace of God, as in Romans iii, 24: "Being justified freely by his grace." For being, as sinners, under the righteous wrath of God, our justification in such circumstances must be an act of eminent and singular, of free and unfettered grace. Its very origin must be in grace. Its very possibility, its very idea or conception, pre-supposes grace. We are justified by grace as the *originating* cause.

(2) In the second place, we are said to be justified by the righteousness or obedience of Christ, including of course, his death, as the most eminent act of his obedience, as in Romans v, 19: "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." For, being destitute of all righteousness ourselves, and justice demanding a perfect satisfaction and impregnable title ere it remit the sentence of death, and confer the reward of life, and Jesus in our room bearing the curse, and bringing in the righteousness to which God has regard in justifying us, we are thus justified by the righteousness of Christ as the *procuring* cause.

(3) And, thirdly, we are said to be justified by faith, as in Romans v, 1: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," or in Gal. ii, 16: "A man is justified by the faith of Jesus Christ," and the reason is that faith as an instrument embraces and pleads the righteousness of Christ, and appeals and gives glory to the grace of God. We are justified by faith, as the *instrumental* cause.

Thus do these three causes—the originating cause, the procuring cause, the instrumental cause—conspire, each in its own place, and for its own end, to put us in possession of a merciful and holy, a pleadable and sure justification. We attribute all to the grace of God alone, as its source. We rest all on the righteousness of Christ alone, as the sure and sufficient ground. We hold all in actual possession by faith, and faith alone.

Thus much for the sketch we proposed to give of the three principles inevitably introduced into justification, if it is to be the justification of one worthy of death.

(To be continued.)

Thomas Boston, of Ettrick.

By REV. D. BEATON.

(Continued from page 169.)

It was in 1712 that Boston commenced the writing of the *Fourfold State*, and it is scarcely needful to say that it is as the author of this book that he is most widely known. Probably no theological book ever exercised such a mighty influence on the religious life of Scotland, and the sphere

of its influence was not confined to Scotland alone, as Dr. Andrew Thomson in his *Thomas Boston of Ettrick: His Life and Times* informs us. "In a paper," he says, "of much ability and interest on 'Religious Thought in Wales,' which was not long since read by Principal Edwards at a great meeting of the Presbyterian Alliance in London, it was stated that if you entered the house of a rustic elder or leader of the private societies fifty years ago, you would uniformly find that he had a small and very select library. Among other books you would be sure to lay your hand on translations into Welsh of Boston's *Fourfold State*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Owen's *Person of Christ* and *Mortification of Sin in Believers* and others. It is also true that in our British colonies at the present day, especially where the Scottish element abounds in the population, the *Fourfold State* continues to be sought after and read, and we have received testimony from natives that it is extensively sold and circulated on the misty coasts of Labrador." The *Fourfold State* has passed through many editions, and it is interesting to observe that the London Religious Tract Society issues the work.

It was in 1711 his friend Dr. Trotter proposed to his beloved pastor that he should print some of his sermons. Boston received the proposal at first with astonishment, but after some consideration he shewed the notes of a certain series of sermons dealing with man's fourfold state to his friend. Dr. Trotter was greatly pleased with them. Boston now went with the matter to his great Counsellor. "I spent most of this day (January 16)," he says, "in prayer and meditation for light in this matter: and after all I found that I had rational grounds to oblige me to make an essay; but could not find such a lively sense of the call of God thereto as I desired. I observed, that the papers being kept up so long after I was made to wait for their return, was of a piece with the Lord's ordinary way with me, to bring matters first very low before they rise. One told me she observed that these sermons had more influence on the people of their neighbourhood, than any before or since. I found myself this night convinced, that they might be useful to many in regard of the room the Lord has given me in people's affections; and this went nearest to the raising in my heart such a lively sense of the command or call of God, as might help me to believe, that He would be with me in the work; which is the thing I want."¹⁴ This was only one of many such appeals for guidance in this matter. Boston was earnestly seeking God's glory, and he could honestly say, "I can appeal to God that it is not a name for myself I seek. The Lord knows that I could be content to lose name or credit amongst men, so that the sermons are useful to poor souls." The work was actually begun on January 29, 1712, when, "after prayer and getting my heart composed," he says, "to a dependence on the Lord, I began to write out my sermons." The book was finished on the 9th March, 1713, but was not printed until 1720. It was well nigh strangled in its birth, for one of the civic dignitaries of Edinburgh, who had assisted in the negotiations for procuring a publisher, offered his services as proof-reader. But when the proofs reached the author at Ettrick, he found that not only were printer's errors corrected, but important changes were made in the body of the work. This vexatious delay, however, was at last overcome and the book went forth to the world, entitled *Human Nature in its*

14. *Memoirs*, p. 256.

Fourfold State of Primitive Integrity, Entire Depravity, Begun Recovery, and Consummate Happiness or Misery. The work consists of sermons preached at Simprin, which were recast in 1708 and 1709 and preached again at Ettrick. The book immediately found a public. It had the qualification of a book that was to last—it made no appeal to a passing fancy, but dealt with those mighty problems that must ever have an interest for men and women who realise the momentousness of life. Its theology is the theology of the Bible as interpreted by the great Dutch divines and the Marrowmen. The ring of the federal theology and the full and free offer of Christ so much in evidence in the Marrow theology may all be traced in this religious classic. Its teaching has been beautifully described by one when he says: “Boston took the bewildered child of trespass familiarly by the hand and descending to the level of his untutored capacity gave him a clear and consecutive view of the innocence from which he had fallen, the misery in which he was involved, the economy of restoration under which he was situated, and the hope which, by submitting to that economy, he might warrantably entertain. His eye as he wrote was upon the awkward sinner, that he might arouse him from his dangerous lethargy; upon the anxious inquirer, that he might guide his steps into the right way; and upon the young convert, that he might guard him against devious paths and perilous delays. He never failed to show the bearing of Christian doctrine upon the conscience, the affections and the life and to mingle with the light of systematic arrangement beseeching tenderness and practical appeal.”

In the spring of 1713 he borrowed a copy of Cross's *Taghmicall Art* from a neighbour, and “had I known then,” he says, “what was in the womb of that step of Providence, I had surely marked the day of my borrowing that book as one of the happiest days of my life.” This book set him to the study of the Hebrew accents, and it may be safely said that no Scottish minister ever studied this intricate subject with greater zeal and with more abounding prayer. In his *Memoirs* he tells us the story of his struggles and how he failed to get his work on the accents published. To him it was the great work of his life. His enthusiasm brought him into correspondence with some of the great continental scholars of the day. Among those who took a friendly interest in his work were Sir Robert Ellys and the Dutch scholars Schultens, Gronovius and Loftus. Boston translated his essay into Latin, but he died without seeing his hopes realized in its publication. In 1738—six years after his death—it was published at Amsterdam with the title *Tractatus Stigmologicus*. The main contention of the essay was to prove the divine authority of the accents. “It is something to know,” says Mr. Morrison in his introduction to the *Memoirs*, “and it is worthy of remembrance that the evangelical minister of Ettrick, whose works were treasured by the cottar and the herd, was welcomed as an equal by the finest Hebrew scholars in the world.”¹⁵

In 1714 the famous Simson case began to agitate the peace of the church. Simson was professor of divinity at Glasgow. He was charged with teaching Arminianism, but the Assembly, after inquiring into the charges, allowed him to escape with a gentle reprimand. Boston was ill at ease with the Laodicean methods of the Assembly, and predicted further trouble from the same source. Nine years later Boston's fears were realized,

15. *Memoirs*, p. 34.

for now Simson was charged with Arianism. The charges, it is true, were difficult to prove, but they were sufficiently well substantiated to move the Assembly to pass sentence of perpetual suspension. Boston felt this to be trifling with a great issue, so he rose in his place in the Assembly "with an air of great majesty," says an eye witness, "that I shall never forget," and, addressing the Moderator: "Moderator! I cannot help thinking that the cause of Jesus Christ as to the great and essential point of His supreme Deity is at the bar of the Assembly requiring justice; and as I am shortly to answer at His bar for all that I say or do, I cannot give my assent to the decision of this act. On the contrary, I find myself obliged to offer a protest against it. And therefore, in my own name, and in the name of all that shall adhere to me, and if none here will, for myself alone, I crave leave to enter my dissent against the decision of this act." "Sir," said the Moderator, a very grave, solemn man, "will you tear out the bowels of your mother?" "If that were the tendency of this," was Boston's reply, "rather would I take and tear it into a thousand pieces." Boston did not persist in recording his protest, so the Simson case came to an end.

In 1716 a call came to him from Closeburn, and the event is memorable for the remarkable effect it had on the people of Ettrick. All of a sudden they seemed to have realized that a prophet had been among them all these years, and to show their anxiety at the prospect of losing their pastor a fast day was appointed in which they might plead with the Head of the Church not to remove His servant from them. It was the beginning of better days. A remarkable change came over the people and the seed that was sown with tears was now beginning to bear fruit.

The next great controversy in which Boston took a part was that which raged round the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*. It was during his Simprin pastorate that he came across a copy of the first part of the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*. It was the means of clearing up some difficulties he had in preaching the gospel. Nothing was heard of the book for years until, while the Assembly was discussing the Auchterarder Creed, as it was called—"I believe it is not orthodox and sound to teach that we forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ." Boston communicated to a fellow member of Assembly the great help he had received through reading the *Marrow*. Ultimately the book came into the hands of James Hög of Carnock, who published it. It was severely attacked by Principal Hadow of St. Andrews; so began the Marrow Controversy. Boston was condemned along with the other Marrowmen by the Assembly. In 1721 Boston's two friends, Gabriel Wilson and Henry Davidson, suggested that he should write notes on the *Marrow of Modern Divinity*. These were finished in the following spring, but, owing to his respect for church authority, they were not published until 1726. They went forth to the world under the name of Philalethes Ireneus, and had in view the confutation of Hadow's *Antinomianism of the Marrow Detected*. Boston has left on record that he was much addicted to peace and averse to controversy, but once engaged therein he was "set to go through with it." It must have cost his sensitive spirit a great deal of pain those bitter contentions in the church courts.

Boston was now turning his face towards the setting sun, and he was not without warnings his course would soon be over. In the last decade he preached to his people a series of sermons on Affliction. These were

subsequently published under the title *The Crook in the Lot*, being mainly founded on Eccles. vii, 13: "Consider the work of the Lord: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?" Many a sorrowing pilgrim has read these precious pages and felt the burden that was so heavy to bear lifted off the shoulders. Boston was a true son of consolation. The angel of death often visited his home and the tender-hearted father bowed his head in submission when the dread messenger entered in. How tender a heart he had may be gathered from the following narrative in his *Memoirs*: "When the child was laid in the coffin, his mother kissed his dust. I only lifted the cloth off his face, looked on it, and covered it again, in confidence of seeing that body rise a glorious body. When the nails were driving, I was moved, for I had not kissed that precious dust which I believe was united to Jesus Christ, as if I had despised it. I would fain have caused draw the nail again, but because of one that was present I resented and violented myself." During the closing years of his life he had another great trial through the mental weakness of his wife. With eagerness the devoted husband watched for any returning gleam that might tell that the night was past. "Now we were," he says, "with our broken ship within sight of the shore and I was like one stretching out his hand and crying, Help forward! Help forward! But behold in a little after the storm arose anew and the ship was beaten into the main ocean out of sight of land again." But if the latter years of her life were thus darkened Boston recalled the years when she was the joy and light of his home, and he has left on record as fine a tribute as ever a husband paid to a wife. This is how he describes her: "A woman of great worth, whom I therefore passionately loved and inwardly honoured. A stately, beautiful and comely personage, truly pious, and fearing the Lord; of an evenly temper, patient in our common tribulations and under her personal distresses. A woman of bright natural parts, an uncommon stock of prudence; of a quick and lively apprehension in things she applied herself to; great presence of mind in surprising incidents; sagacious and acute in discerning the qualities of persons, and therefore not easily imposed upon; modest and grave in her deportment but naturally cheerful; wise and affable in conversation, having a good faculty at speaking, and expressing herself with assurance; endowed with singular dexterity in dictating letters; being a pattern of frugality, and wise management of household affairs; therefore entirely committed to her; well fitted for, and careful of, the virtuous education of her children; remarkably useful to the country side, both in the Merse and in the Forest through her skill in physic and surgery which in many cases, a peculiar blessing appeared to be commanded upon from heaven; and finally a crown to me in my public station and appearances. During the time we have lived together hitherto, we have passed through a sea of trouble, as yet not seeing the shore but afar off. I have sometimes been likely to be removed from her; she having little continued health, except the first six weeks, her death had oftentimes stared us in the face and hundreds of arrows had pierced my heart on that score; and sometimes I have gone with a trembling heart to the pulpit, laying my account with being called out of it, to see her expire. And now for the third part of the time we have lived together, namely ten years complete, she has been under a particular racking distress; and for several of these years, fixed to her bed; in the which furnace the grace

of God in her hath been brightened, her parts continued to a wonder and her beauty which formerly was wont, upon her recoveries, to leave no vestige of the illness she had been under, doth as yet now and then show some vestiges of itself.¹⁶

Boston's labours were now nearing an end. Weakly in body and haunted often by melancholy, he persevered in the pursuit of his duties. When one looks over the record of that life, so full of noble purpose persisted in to the end, seeking the highest interests of the people committed to him, the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," come involuntarily to the lips.

Many of Boston's works were published posthumously, and though not so popular as the *Fourfold State* and the *Crook in the Lot*, yet there is a freshness in the treatment of the subjects that make Boston's sermons readable to the present day. An edition of his collected works was published in 1854 under the editorial care of Rev. Samuel MacMillan. This edition, which consists of twelve volumes, does not contain what Boston himself regarded as his *magnum opus*, the *Tractatus Stigmologicus*.

Boston did not live to see the Secession of 1733, having passed away peacefully on May 20, 1732. It is difficult to estimate Boston's place as a theologian, his fame as a preacher and pastor seems to have obscured to a certain extent what belongs to him in other departments. But it is not claiming too much for him when we say that he was the Turretine of Scottish Theology. Not that his system was modelled after that of Turretine, for he was more under the influence of Witsius, but the same clear sententious treatment of doctrines characteristic of Turretine was also characteristic of Boston. In his *Memoirs*¹⁷ he gives a pen picture of himself remarkable for its fidelity. In it he tells us: "I was not of quick apprehension; but had a gift of application; and things being once discovered, I was no more wavering in them . . . My talent lay in doing things by a close application, with pains and labour." Boston was only 56 years when he finished his course, and, reviewing his life two years before his death, he sums up his impressions in the concluding sentences of his *Memoirs*: "Upon the whole, I bless my God in Jesus Christ, that ever He made me a Christian, and took an early dealing with my soul; that ever He made me a minister of the Gospel, and gave me some insight into the doctrine of His grace; that ever He gave me the blessed Bible, and brought me acquainted with the originals and especially with the Hebrew text. The world hath all along been a step-dame to me; and wheresoever I would have attempted to nestle in it, there was a thorn of uneasiness laid for me. Man is born crying, lives complaining and dies disappointed from that quarter. 'All is vanity and vexation of spirit—I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord'." Such is the language of a pilgrim journeying on to a better country with the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem already in sight, and as we read the expressions of gratitude ending with the mournful plaint, our thoughts turn to that life of noble endeavour, chequered as it was with so many sorrows, and feel constrained, in the words of Carlyle,¹⁸ to say: "Here is a Life-battle right nobly done.

16. *Memoirs*, p. 157.

17. *Memoirs*, p. 474, 5.

18. *Oliver Cromwell* V, p. 155. London, 1894.

Seest thou not,

The storm is changed into a calm,
At His command and will;
So that the waves which raged before
Now quiet are and still!
Then are they glad,—because at rest
And quiet now they be;
So to the haven He them brings
Which they desire to see.

We part now with one of the most intensely human and lovable Scottish pastors of the eighteenth century and pay our tribute of respect in the halting rhyme but noble appreciation of Ralph Erskine.

The great, the grave, judicious Boston's gone
Who once like Athanasius bold, stood, firm, alone.
Whose golden pen to future times will bear
His name till in the clouds his Lord appear.

Wick, Scotland.

Noted English Dissenters—Thomas Tregoss.

By REV. ARCH. BEATON, Gairloch.

THOMAS TREGOSS was born at St. Ives, near Land's End. He was a descendant of John Tregoss, who was made a Baron by William the Conqueror. Both of the parents of this Dissenter were pious and ardent puritans, and they were careful to train their son in the doctrine of God's Word.

As a young lad, our subject heard a sermon on the words of Hosea vi, 4: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." This sermon struck great terror into his conscience, but alas! the effects of it soon vanished away, and he himself discovered that he was not then converted. His mind was, however, very early inclined to the ministry of the Word, and though at first he appeared to his teachers and tutors to be of a dull capacity, yet afterwards he made good progress in his education. By the time he finished his university career, he possessed "such a seriousness of spirit" and "such ministerial gifts," that the people of his native town, upon hearing him preach, invited him to settle among them as their minister. He at first "modestly refused"; but on their continuing to plead with him, he at length yielded and, after spending some time among them, he was set apart to the pastoral office on the 17th August, 1657. Here he continued his ministry for two years.

During the first year he was at St. Ives, he witnessed a remarkable providence. This town in those days, it seems, depended on the pilchard fishing. The summer was near at an end but no pilchards appeared, and the inhabitants were distressed. Mr. Tregoss advised them to keep a day of humiliation and prayer. They accordingly did so, and the very next day there appeared great shoals of fish, and were caught in large quantities. The following summer, the fishing began well, and on a certain Saturday, the fishermen, having taken a large number of pilchards, were busy in drying their nets on the Sabbath. For this their minister reproved

them severely, telling them that they provoked the Lord to withdraw His blessing, and it happened accordingly. There was no more fish that season. This should be a warning to any of our readers who may think that they can have gain by working or trading on the Lord's Day. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

It was in 1659 that he left St. Ives and was settled in the combined charge of Milor and Mabe. From this charge he was ejected by the iniquitous Act of Uniformity. He did not, however, cease to preach, but continued to hold services for his people in his own house. He was soon reported and tried and cast into prison for three months. On his release, he removed to the house of Baron of Kigilliach, in another part of the country, where he kept up his meetings on the Lord's Day, to which many flocked. It was here that the following remarkable incident happened, which is better told in the words of Dr. Edmund Calamy, his biographer. "On January 1st, 1665, he was led to preach on Luke xii, 47, when he showed what a dangerous thing it is to sin against knowledge. When the duties of the day were over, the Lord brought his own sins to his remembrance, and one above the rest, in such a manner as led him to conclude that he had never been thoroughly converted; and that text, Heb. xii, 17, occasioned him inexpressible terror. He applied himself earnestly to prayer, but for five weeks he was kept under the spirit of bondage, till he met with a passage in a good book, relating to the love of God in Christ, which was the means of affording him consolation; and on the following Sabbath he experienced the delightful exercise of repentance and evangelical faith, in contemplating the promises of the Gospel, and the sufferings of Christ; after which he was carried on in the discharge of duties with more enlargement and affection than ever. From this period, he dated his conversion: for though, for a considerable time, his conversation was irreproachable, his labours in the ministry indefatigable, and his zeal for non-conformity ardent, he now looked upon all his former good deeds as sins, and as a combined series of formality and hypocrisy, notwithstanding all that his friends urged to the contrary. He lamented the condition of the Church, that so many were made ministers in it, before they were real Christians, and expressed his fears that not a few who, in the esteem of men, pass for good and able ministers, will at last, when they come to be 'weighed in the balance, be found wanting.' He was the more confirmed in his apprehensions concerning himself by this circumstance. That notwithstanding all his labours in the ministry for some years, he could not say that God had made him the instrument of conversion to one soul; whereas afterwards he had many seals to his ministry." In comparing this remarkable incident to the first part of his life, I am afraid it is difficult now to come to any definite conclusion in the matter relative to the time of his conversion. Even in his own day, when he held that this was the time of his conversion, "his friends urged to the contrary." The least, however, that can be said about this incident is that it wrought a great change in his life and ministry.

During the few years that remained, he continued an "outed minister," preaching the gospel of God's grace to his fellow sinners in private houses and barns as opportunities were given in God's providence. His own parish, Mabe, enjoyed much of his services, and sometimes he got the use of the church there. He was often cast into prison and was confined for periods of months there. He suffered a good deal from the hands of a

wicked man in the parish of Mabe, who is known as Justice Robinson, as also did other Dissenters at that time. The tragic death of this man gave Thomas Tregoss a short respite. The story is told in the life of another Dissenter. Robinson charged this Dissenter, a Mr. Sherwood, with preaching from a "rebellious text." "Sir," replied Mr. Sherwood, "I know man is a rebel against the Creator, but I never knew that the Creator could be a rebel against his creature." In answer to this, Robinson cried out: "I say, Sir, it was a rebellious text." On this Sherwood addressed Robinson in these words: "Sir, if you die the common death of all men, God never spake by me." Sherwood was then sent to prison and Robinson returned home. A few days after, Robinson had his bowels torn out by a bull and he died. It is said: "This strange providence brought to mind what had passed at Sessions" a few days before, and the Dissenters had some peace for a time.

Though his age is not mentioned, it appears that he had not been more than fourteen years in the ministry. The shortness of his life in this world may account for these words in his dying speech: "I have been but a young branch, and you see the Lord is cutting me down this morning."

Acts of the Apostles, Chapter xxvii.

By REV. D. J. MACASKILL, M.A., North Uist.

THE Apostle Paul had appealed to the highest civil court in the Roman Empire, and therefore it was necessary for him to journey to Rome. He had made three missionary journeys, so it was nothing new for him to travel. He claimed all his rights as a Roman citizen who had been born free. Others had to buy their citizenship, but he had not. He looked forward eagerly to visit the young church of God in the Metropolis, which included the saints of Caesar's household. All roads led to Rome as the centre of European civilisation and government. The far-seeing Apostle knew that if the Gospel got a firm foothold in the capital it would be carried throughout the known world in all directions, even as far west as Spain and Britain. Egypt was the granary of Rome. So the centurion who was in charge of Paul found a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy with a cargo of wheat. The blessed Apostle was useful to his Master even on board ship and among strange company. He was not ashamed to say "the grace" before them all. When all had lost their courage, both soldiers and sailors, he was the most manly of all the souls on board. The Roman soldiers were not cowards, and the sailors may have weathered many a storm, but now they abandoned hope.

Neither sun nor stars were visible, and they had lost their course, so they did not know where they were. This is an experience of many on their voyage to the shores of eternity. The whole human race is on a voyage from which they will not return. We might say that the devil is the master of the ship as long as the soul is unchanged. The crew that he has to assist him is an ungodly crew, the lusts of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life. They are sure to make shipwreck of the immortal soul sooner or later unless God the Holy Ghost will intervene. The course that is followed is the course of this world.

There is a correct course given us in the Scriptures, but men are careless about it. There is also a compass given, which is the Word of God; that tells the youngest child when he goes wrong. When Christ as the glorious Captain of salvation comes into the soul, what a transformation takes place. He now takes the wheel from the devil, the former master, and steers Himself, directly contrary to the former evil course, against both wind and tide. The crew that He takes with Him are a heavenly crew, the graces of the Spirit, "love and joy and peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." The Apostle Peter gives us a list of them in his Second Epistle, chapter i.

What happens to the old crew now? They are put in irons as mutineers, and are to be hanged when the vessel reaches port. They will struggle and strive to get their old place back again, but their power is broken for ever. It is said of them, "Lest my people forget, do not destroy them." At sea there is great danger to everyone unless a proper watch is kept. We are commanded to watch unto prayer, to pray without ceasing. There are many hidden dangers and submerged rocks to be avoided. We read of some who made shipwreck of the faith and a good conscience. Demas forsook Paul and the gospel, having loved this present world. Judas made shipwreck for eternity.

The Lord's people will often be afraid that the billows will go over their heads, and that they will never see the haven which they desired to see, but the more the winds rage, the more will they enjoy eternal rest after the storms of this life are over for ever. They have their anchor within the vale, sure and steadfast, whereas the wicked will be drowned in destruction as was Pharaoh. Jonah went down to the roots of the mountains. The waters went over him, but he was not drowned. He cried as it were out of the belly of hell, "I will look again to thy holy temple." Many a time the Christian will reel and stagger like one drunk. At their wit's end they be. They cry to the Lord and He them saves from their distress (Ps. cvii). Every day draws us nearer to the eternal shore, but how shall we get safely ashore ought to be the great question for us as rational and immortal beings.

When a ship is holed, all hands are ordered to the pumps. There are many holes in the soul of man, through which corruption can come in. It was through the eye that Satan entered the heart of man at first. John Bunyan tells us of Eye Gate and Ear Gate and Mouth Gate. Gluttons and drunkards let sin in by Mouth Gate. The Psalmist prayed with regard to his eyes and mouth and feet, that they would be kept. "Keep thou my heart and eye from viewing vanity, and in thy good and holy way be pleased to quicken me." "Set thou a watch before my mouth, keep of my lips the door." Peter wept bitterly by the grace of holy repentance.

The Lord's people go from strength to strength until they appear in Zion. The means of grace in private and in public are the ports at which they call until they reach the heavenly harbour. Paul's ship had a cargo of grain which they had to throw overboard to save their lives. The soul taught from above has to throw over the side many an evil way in order to be saved. The only cargo they wanted once was what would satisfy their carnal appetite, the dance and vain song and card-playing, but now they seek a heavenly cargo, wines on the lees well-refined, honey from the rock, the finest of the wheat. Instead of novel reading, it is the Word of God they desire.

By the telescope of faith they see Heaven and hell and the Day of Judgment, but the unbeliever cannot see these things, nor believe that they exist, until he finds himself in the eternal world. In experience, the Christian mounts to Heaven at times, and goes down to the depths again. "Their soul within them melts with trouble and with pain." Some of Paul's fellow travellers swam ashore. We took nothing into the world and can carry nothing out of it. Some went ashore on broken pieces of the ship. The earthly house of this tabernacle must be broken in pieces, but if we had one promise from the Holy Ghost, we could rest our never-dying souls on it (Ps. xciii).

Am Crìosduidh Agus an t-Aingidh.

Leis an Urr. AINDREA GRAY.

O! BEACHDAICHIBH air na cothromun neo-chriochnach, bith-bhuan, agus neo-chaochlaidheach a tha aca-san a tha toirt an cridheachan do Chrìosd. Tha sinn a meas na'n searmonaicheadh uile ainglean neamh le cheile air beannachdan do-labhairt nan naomh ann an gloir gu'n crìochnaicheadh gach aon aca am briathran le so, "Is e aoibhneas do-labhairt a tha air a bhuileachadh orra-san a tha air an gabhail a stigh do'n bheatha bheannaicht' so." Tha coig nithean a tha neo-chaochlaidheach do'n Chrìosduidh agus coig nithean a tha neo-chaochlaidheach do'n aingidh. Tha so neo-chaochlaidheach do na naomh; (1) Bithidh an co-chomunn ri Dia neo-chaochlaidheach, oir an deigh dhoibh a dhol do neamh bithidh iad daonnan fodh mhothachadh beannaicht' air làthaireachd Chrìosd. (2) Bithidh gràdh neo-chaochlaidheach aca. Tha gràdh a Chrìosduidh, am feadh a tha e'n so, coltach ris a ghealaich, buailteach do thrioblaidean agus do dh'atharraichidhean, ach an deigh sin, 'n uair a bhitheas iad ann an neamh, bithidh an gràdh neo-chaochlaidheach. (3) Ann an sin bithidh an naomhachd neo-chaochlaidheach. Aon uair agus gun cuir iad orra trusgan fireantachd Chrìosd seinnidh iad an sin an t-dran sin, "O bhais! e'àit am bheil do ghat? agus O uaigh! e'àit am bheil do bhuaidh?" (4) Bithidh a mholadh air Dia neo-chaochlaidheach. O! ciod e'n sealladh taitneach a bhitheas ann a bhi faicinn anamaibh nam firean air an deanamh foirfe le clàrsaichean nan làmhnan a seinn nan dràn thaitneach sin gu ro-mhìlis, Aleluia Dha-san a tha na shuidh air an rìgh-chathair, agus do'n Uan a tha beo gu bràth? Bithidh an teanga mar pheann fir-sgrìobhaidh dheis. Cha'n eil an gearrain aig Maois air aithris air neamh, *Is duine mi a tha mall an cainnt*; ni motha bhitheas Ieremiah a nis a gearrain, "Feuch cha'n aithne dhomh labhairt, oir is leanabh mi." (5) Bithidh am miannaibh as deigh Dhe an sin neo-chaochlaidheach. Tha'n Crìosduidh am feadh a tha e'n so aig amaibh a miannachadh an deigh Dhe agus an uine ghearr a miannachadh an deigh a chuid iodhalan, ach 'n uair a gheibh e suas do neamh bithidh a mhiannaibh as deigh Dhe neo-chaochlaidheach.

Agus air an laimh eil, tha coig nithean neo-chaochlaidheach ann an crannchur an aingidh, agus ann an crannchur gach neach nach toir a chridhe do Chrìosd. (1) Bithidh an dealachadh ri Dia neo-chaochlaidheach. Aon uair 's gu'n teid iad sìos do'n t-slochd, cha bhi dèchas tighinn a nìos a ris. O! nach smuainticheadh sibh air so, ciod a ghe beatha bhitheas ann a bhi fodh sgaradh sìorruidh bho làthaireachd Chrìosd? O! na'm b'aithne dhuibh Crìosd agus nan creideadh sibh ciod e'n cuspair a tha E ann, dhùnnadh

sibh ris. (2) Bithidh bròn neo-chaochlaidheach aig an aingidh. O! buinidh dha bhi duilich 'n uair a bhitheas dioghaltas Dhe a fàsgadh an smior a mach as a chnàmhan, agus 'n uair a bhitheas e gu siorruidh air a dhùnadh a stigh do na lasraichean uamhasach so, agus a mach asda gun saorsa a bhi ann. (3) Aig an aingidh bithidh fuath neo-chaochlaidheach an aghaidh Dhe agus Dia ann am fuath neo-chaochlaidheach na aghaidh, agus cha'n eil truaigh is motha ann do neach air bith na Criosd a bhi ann am fuath neo-chaochlaidheach na aghaidh. (4) Sibhse a tha na'r coigrich air Dia, peacaichidh sibh gu neo-chaochlaidheach. Cha sguir sibh gu bràth de pheacachadh, agus cha sguir sibh gu bràth de bhi air bhur pianadh. Air an dà nì so bithidh siorruidheachd air a caitheamh. (5) Bithidh bhur cùram anns an taobh a stigh agus bhur pian coguis neo-chaochlaidheach. Cha bhàsaich a chnuimh sin gu bràth, ach bithidh i gu siorruidh a cagnadh bhur coguis.—*Eadar-theangaichte le Iain Mac a' Chombaich.*

Notes and Comments.

The Festival of Britain (Sunday Opening) Bill.

The debate on the second reading of the Festival of Britain (Sunday Opening) Bill took place in the House of Commons on Thursday, the 23rd November. Mr. Herbert Morrison moved the second reading of the Bill, which was introduced by the Government to legalise the opening of all sections of this Exhibition in 1951, on the Lord's Day. Mr. J. L. Orr-Ewing (Weston-super-Mare), Conservative, moved the rejection of the Bill. His amendment was defeated, 364 voting for the Bill and 128 for his amendment. Later, on Tuesday, the 28th November, 1950, a free vote was taken at the Committee stage, on the question of the Fun Fair at Battersea Park being allowed to open on the Lord's Day during the Exhibition. Mr. Thomas (Cardiff, W.), Labour, moved an amendment: that the Fun Fair be not opened on the Lord's Day. His amendment was carried by 389 to 134. For this partial success in preventing legalised Sabbath desecration, we ought to be grateful. The Government, and particular members thereof, including the Prime Minister, Mr. Herbert Morrison and Sir Hartley Shawcross, the Attorney General, has incurred a serious burden of guilt in legislating for the transgression of God's holy law. God will in no wise clear the guilty. Space in this issue forbids our writing fuller notes on this question in general. This we may do later (D.V.).

Church Notes.

Communions.

January—Fourth Sabbath, Inverness. *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 N. Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Portnalong and Breasclete; second, Fort William; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick.

Rev. Dr. R. MacDonald's Return from Canada.

Rev. Dr. R. MacDonald, formerly of our African Mission, returned safely to Scotland, in the kind providence of God, at the end of last October, after labouring in Canada for over a year as the Church's deputy. He held services in Winnipeg and other places, but especially in Vancouver. May the Lord cause spiritual blessings to follow his labours in the Gospel of Christ, in the experience of precious souls.

Festival of Britain and Sabbath Opening.

The Northern Presbytery of the Church sent the following wire to Sir David Robertson, M.P. for Caithness and Sutherland, and to Captain John MacLeod, M.P. for Ross and Cromarty:—

"The Northern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Halkirk, on 13th November, 1950, desire that you oppose any Bill which would permit the opening on the Lord's Day, of any section whatsoever, of the Festival of Britain Exhibition, 1951; inasmuch as the Court consider such opening would be a national violation of the Fourth Commandment."

The following replies have been received:—

House of Commons, London, S.W.1.
14th November, 1950.

Dear Mr. Sinclair,

I have received your telegram of to-day's date. I personally would sooner that the Festival of Britain would not open at all on Sundays and that may be the decision of the House of Commons when the Bill comes up for decision . . . I should resolutely oppose the opening of the amusement park on Sundays, and I earnestly hope that whatever happens in the House of Commons, that decision will be taken.

I will keep a very careful watch on the debate and vote according to the dictates of my conscience.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID ROBERTSON.

House of Commons, London, S.W.1,
18th November, 1950.

Dear Mr. Sinclair,

Thank you for your telegram of 14th November in connection with the Festival of Britain.

You can be sure that I will do what I think right for the sanctity of the Sabbath day, when the Bill comes forward.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MACLEOD.

Church Publications.

The Publications Committee intimate that the publications, *A Father's Letter to His Son*, and *A Time to Dance*, may be sold at 1d. per copy, 1/- per dozen (1/2 post free).

The Wonderful Conversion of Three Highland Girls remains at 6d. per copy, 5/6 per dozen (post free); and *The Mother's Catechism* at 2d. (by post, 3d.), or 12 copies, 2/- (post free).

These should be obtainable in all congregations.—W. GRANT, *Convener*.

Congregational Financial Statements.

Congregational Treasurers are expected to have their Financial Statements drawn up and audited, and then presented to their respective Presbyteries, as soon as convenient after the 31st December, 1950.

Kirk Session and Deacons' Court Records.

Kirk Session and Deacons' Court records are now due for presentation to and examination by the respective Presbyteries of the Church, to coincide with examination of Financial Statements.

Magazine Subscribers' Form.

Readers of the Magazine will have noticed the Subscribers' Form included again in our December issue. Will all those wishing copies of the Church magazines please fill in the form as required *at once*, and forward same, with the necessary subscription, to Mr. John Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness. This is now necessary to ensure that those desiring one or other, or both, of the Church magazines, shall receive same during 1951. Will subscribers please notify, as soon as possible, Mr. John Grant, when a change of address occurs.—*Editor*.

Acknowledgement of Donations.

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

Sustentation Fund.—Miss I. C., Cedar Cottage, Drimnin, Oban, £1; Mr. Wm. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, Ontario, £3.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' and Widows' and Orphans' Fund.—Mr. W. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, £2.

Organisation Fund.—Mr. W. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, £2.

Publication Fund.—From Sale of Tracts, per Mr. Thos. MacRae, St. Jude's, £6 10/-; Miss F. M. Shaw, Grafton, Australia, 10/-; Anon, o/a The Inheritance Publishing Company, £1.

Jewish and Foreign Missions.—A Widow's Legacy, Glasgow postmark, o/a Shangani Extension Fund, £24; J. McD., 3 Lockavaig, Sleat, Skye, £1; Mr. Wm. R., 96 Waverley Street, Ottawa, Ontario, £2; Anon, Inverness-shire postmark, o/a Shangani Mission, £5; Mr. M. McL., Stanley Cottage, Brora, £1; Mr. R. Fraser, 6937 S. Stewart Avenue, Chicago, U.S.A., £10.

School Equipment for African Mission.—Rev. W. Grant gratefully acknowledges £1 from Mr. C., Dunoon, for purchases. (Supplies for next shipment should be sent to Mr. J. Gillies, St. Jude's, 278 West George Street, Glasgow.)

Free Distribution Fund.—Mr. L. Ross, Badcall, Scourie, Lairg, 18/-; Miss G. Fletcher, Bellanoch Br., Lochgilphead, 4/-; Misses Alexander, Worthing, Sussex, 4/-; A Friend, Skye, 4/-; A Friend, Stornoway, £1 10/-; Mr. N. McIsaac, Kyles, Bayhead, 10/-; Mrs. MacPherson, Tokomaru Bay, New Zealand, 5/-; Mrs. G. Mathison, Maropie, R. D. Dargaville, New Zealand, 5/-; Miss M. Mackay, Bunessan, Mull, 3/4; Mr. R. Fraser, 6937 S. Stewart Avenue, Chicago, 5/-; Mr. A. McLeod, Crona View, Clashnessie, Lairg, 14/-.

The following lists sent in for publication:—

Applecross Church Repairs Fund.—Rev. J. A. Macdonald acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—Mr. McG., Kirn, 10/-; Mr. N. McC., Arrochar, £1; Mr. Murdo Macdonald, Milton, £50.

Dornoch Congregation.—Mr. Geo. Grant, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £1 o/a Sustentation Fund, from Miss E. R., Backies, Golspie.

Edinburgh Manse Purchase Fund.—Mr. Hugh MacDougall, Hon. Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—Mr. J. McD., 3 Tockavaig, Sleat, Skye, per Mr. J. Grant, £1; Friend, £5, and Friend, 10/-, per Mr. James Mackay; Mrs. McC., £2; Friend, £2.

Fort William Mission House Repairs Fund.—Mr. A. Colquhoun, 6 Cameron Square, acknowledges with grateful thanks a donation of £1 and £1 o/a Sustentation Fund, from N. C., The Bungalow, “In memory of a beloved Mother.”

Glendale Congregation.—Mr. A. MacLean, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £5 from A Friend, Glendale, o/a Sustentation Fund.

Greenock Congregation.—Mr. R. MacLeod, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—Mr. A. M., £1, for Foreign Missions Fund; A Friend, Applecross, £1, for Bibles for S.A. Mission, per Rev. Jas. McLeod.

London Congregational Funds.—Rev. J. P. Macqueen acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of £4 from A Reigate Friend.

Plockton Church Building Fund.—Mr. A. Gollan, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges the following donations:—From A Friend, £1; A Friend of the Cause, North Tolsta, 10/-.

Raasay Manse Building Fund.—Mr. E. MacRae, Treasurer, acknowledges with sincere thanks a donation of 10/- from A Friend, N. Coast, Applecross, per E. M. S.

Ness Manse Building Fund.—Mr. D. Mackay, Treasurer, 52 Cross, Skigersta, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations:—A Friend, Cliff, Uig, £1; Mr. and Mrs. M. McL., 116 Edgemoor, Ness, £1.

Uig Church Building Fund.—Mr. D. Matheson, 9 Aird Uig, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—Mr. A. McK., Student, £1; Anon, £1, per Mr. M. McLennan; A Friend, per Mr. M. McLeod, Islavig, £2.

St. Jude's South African Mission Clothing Fund.—The Committee acknowledge with grateful thanks the following donations:—Nurse Friend, £1; Mrs. J. S., £1; Miss C. M., Edinburgh, £5; Miss B. D., Lochgilphead, £1 12/-; Proverbs xix, 17, £1 17/4; Interested, £1 2/6.

South African Mission Clothing Fund—Northern District.—Mrs. Mackay, F.P. Manse, Inverness, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following:—Dresser Tin, £3 2/6; A Friend, 10/-; Miss M. McK., Stephen's Brae, Inverness, 10/-; Mrs. McA., Inverness, £6 10/-.

St. Jude's, Glasgow.—Mr. A. E. Alexander, 58 High Mains Avenue, Dumbarton, desires to acknowledge the following amounts received:—Per Rev. D. J. Matheson, from Friend, £30 for Sustentation Fund, and £20 for the Congregational Fund; Mrs. MacKenzie, Airdrie, £2; Anon, £1; J. MacLeod, £10; Miss Munro, £1; Anon, 10/-; Nurse MacIver, £2; Mrs. MacAskill, per Mr. Nicolson, £2; Miss Kate Gillies, £4; Mrs. Ferguson, per J. G., 10/-; Mrs. Livingstone, per J. G., £1; A. MacLennan, Paisley, £1; Mrs. Connell, £3.