

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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Luther—From Darkness to Light.

THE Word of God is clear and emphatic in its statements of the absolute sovereignty of God in the salvation of sinners. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "He hath mercy in whom he will have mercy and whom he will be hardeneth." "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." These and many other portions of similar import are solemn, fundamental and precious truths—truths that speak with a voice of loud and distinct protest against the "gospel of man's will" so popular in some religious circles to-day. But not only in the statements of Scripture is this truth prominent: every sinner saved by grace is an evidence of and a witness to this same truth, a truth which while it gives all the glory to God as the God of Salvation, utterly humbles the sinner, and the sinner thus saved would not have it otherwise. "Not unto us, Lord, not to us, but do thou glory take unto thy name, even for thy truth, and for thy mercy's sake." "That, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Not that every case of genuine conversion carries with it equally conclusive evidence of electing grace; the Lord deals differently with different individuals, and in all his dealings His wisdom is never at fault. In some instances, the evidence of divine grace according to election is so overwhelming as to be beyond question.

As we examine it we can only conclude, "This is the work of God; it can be none else," and having come to that conclusion, we thank God and take courage, for what God did in the case of one sinner he can, and doubtless will, do in the case of a countless number. Relating to himself, the Apostle Paul says, "Who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious: but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." The Apostle was not only called to salvation in a very remarkable way, but he was destined for great and important work in the service of his Lord. The exceeding abundance of grace in his calling was designed by the Lord with this labour and service in view. "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might

show forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." When the Lord's purpose has in view the doing of a great work, the provision of suitable men to carry it out is part of that very purpose, and when the set time comes the manner of the Lord's calling these men is such as to suitably prepare and adequately equip them for the work. So far as his piety and usefulness are concerned the man, however renowned he may become, is only and altogether what grace makes him, that in all things God alone—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—may be glorified.

The foregoing thoughts were suggested when reading an account of Luther's conversion in a recently published biography of the German Reformer. The account centres in a quotation from Luther himself as he looks back upon his experiences and records them many years after they had taken place. As a record of sovereign grace and unmerited mercy effectually operating unto salvation in the soul of a sinner it is most interesting, and it is well fitted to be helpful to others who may be encountering similar difficulties in their spiritual struggle towards gospel light and liberty.

Some time in the year 1513, when Martin Luther was 30 years of age, his soul experienced that great change which brought him out of darkness into the saving light of the Gospel; a change which was of incalculable importance to himself; and, for many in Europe, was as the dawn of a new day, rich in blessing. Luther was then Professor of Theology in the University of Wittenberg, in Germany, serving the Pope with the greatest devotion, and committed in his thinking and teaching to the whole Romish system of religion—if such an inextricable mixture of superstition, idolatry, and self-righteousness can be called a system! But devoted though he was to his Church, the German monk was not happy. Long before this, and in spite of himself, serious doubts concerning his eternal salvation had begun to trouble his mind. A visit to Rome three years previously, and the many evidences of religious corruption which he saw and heard while there, had greatly increased these doubts. There was no remedy prescribed by his Church he did not resort to, but all was of no avail. The agony of his soul increased until it was all but unbearable.

His father-confessor, Dr. Staupitz, a much older man and one who had been of considerable help to the young monk, had often counselled him to "Wait on God: He will help you." Long had Luther acted upon this advice, but a stage had now been reached where the anguish of his soul made it impossible for him to wait longer—the issue must be settled. It so happened, in the merciful providence of God, that just at that time Luther was preparing lectures for his students. As he sat in his cell in the monastery connected with the University he was faced with the interpretation of verse 17 in the first chapter of Romans: "For therein (in the Gospel) is the righteousness of God

revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." Bringing all that he knew of the Romish system of religion to bear upon the interpretation of this, to him, crucial passage, he was left more baffled and confused than ever. At that time the word righteousness had for him but one meaning—the just judgment of God which gave to everyone his deserts and, consequently, the question he was now faced with was, "How can Paul call the gospel itself 'righteousness'? If it were correct to do so then the gospel itself condemned the sinner; for did not righteousness always mean that God dealt with every man according to his deserts?"

In recalling those days many years afterwards Luther thus describes the experience: "I was seized with a marvellous burning desire to understand what Paul said in his epistle to the Romans, but there was one passage that stood in my way, and it was in the first chapter. It read: 'The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel' (v. 17). I hated that phrase, 'The righteousness of God' because, as was then usual among scholars, I understood it in the sense of a righteousness that gives 'each one his due'; it meant that the righteous God simply punished sinful and wicked men. But I felt that, even if I lived blamelessly as a monk, I was still a sinner in God's sight; and I had a very uneasy conscience. I felt that I had and could have no certainty of finding reconciliation by any atonement which it lay in my power to make. I had, therefore, no liking for a righteous God who punished sinners: rather, I hated him; and if not with silent blaspheming, at least in many a rebellious mood I complained against Him in a dreadful way, and said, 'Was it not enough that poor sinners should be lost to all eternity on account of original sin, and that they should be punished with all sorts of pains and penalties by the Mosaic Law and the Ten Commandments? Whereas now, God must use the gospel to pile up punishments and threaten us with His righteousness and wrath!' I raged against it all with a wounded and confused conscience, and I was constantly coming into collision with that phrase of Paul's and thirsting eagerly to know what he meant by it."

To the child-like spirit of true faith there is nothing so simple and straightforward as the gospel: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,' but when instead of faith we bring to it, as Luther did, our superstitious beliefs, our self-righteousness, our stubborn pride, what can we expect but confusion, frustration, and the agony of despair? Romanists are by no means the only people to land themselves in this difficulty; apart from the grace of God it is the common heritage of mankind the world over. Truly a cursed heritage! But as we see in Luther's case, the delusions of a false and subtle creed to which, up unto now, he had been passionately devoted, instead of solving his difficulties as he had fondly hoped, rather increased them beyond measure.

What do we see here but an awful proof of the madness sin has brought into the heart of every man; that in the most momentous crisis of a sinner's life, when the issues of eternal life and death hang trembling in the balance, the greatest obstacle between his soul and the peace he so vehemently thirsts for is the evil combination of a godless ignorance and a stubborn self-righteous pride in his own heart.

But to return to Luther in his monk's cell. He sat for long pondering over the words which had arrested his attention. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written the just shall live by faith," and quite suddenly, as so often happens, the light of the glorious gospel breaks in upon his soul! By a study of the verse in relation to the context he is led by the Holy Spirit to associate in his mind the ideas of suretyship and substitution in Christ with the righteousness revealed in the gospel. The righteousness Paul speaks of here is not the righteousness of God which condemns the sinner but the substitutionary righteousness of Christ, the sinner's surety, imputed to every sinner who believes, unto justification and eternal life. Simply by believing in Christ the sinner is put into possession of the righteousness of God *as if it were his own*.

As the glory of this gospel found its way into the heart of Luther he could hardly contain himself for the relief and joy it brought. "It seemed to me," he says, "as if I had been born again and as if I had entered paradise through newly opened doors. All at once the Bible began to speak in quite a different way to me. The very phrase 'the righteousness of God,' which I had hated before, was the one that I now loved the best of all. That is how that passage of Paul's became to me the gateway to paradise." Is it any wonder that on until his death in 1546 "Justification by Faith" became the chief theme of his new song, the cornerstone of his theology, and the substance of the gospel he preached? And thence, under God, it came to be the theme of the whole Reformation movement, a movement which through the ministry of John Knox brought such light and joy to so many in our own beloved country.

Sermon.

By the REV. F. MACDONALD, M.A., Tolsta.

"And he came hither unto a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the Word of the Lord came unto him, and he said unto him, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?'" (I Kings xix. 9).

THE Apostle James, in commending the duty and illustrating the efficacy of prayer, adduces the example of Elijah. He tells us that Elijah prayed earnestly and it rained not. Now in so doing he anticipates an objection likely to be raised by his readers. He sees at once that they are going to say, "O but that was Elijah, one of the

most outstanding of the Lord's prophets." By arguing in this way, the Apostle's information about Elijah would tend more to discourage than to encourage them, so now, to meet their objection, James assures them that Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are. Such an assurance would encourage them to pray. While it would also save them from a very common error, viz., from entertaining mistaken ideas regarding the piety and character of the Old Testament saints.

They were great giants, undoubtedly, but they had their struggles, their failings, and their fits of depression as surely as others. We can raise them too far above the level of human infirmity; further than the Word of God permits us to do, and thus give a place to saint worship with its attendant evils. Now, if ever any man seemed to rise above the infirmities of human nature, it was Elijah. He appears to tower above the ordinary believer in faith and courage until we are filled with shame and fear for ourselves, and our faith. Yet we read of his being weary of life and desiring death, of fleeing by a sudden access of terror from the threat of Jezebel, and of his magnifying himself in prayer as being the sole remaining witness for God in Israel when the Lord had preserved a faithful remnant who had not bowed the knee to Baal. These facts bear out the truth of the Apostle's assertion, while in no way depreciating the character of the prophet who appears again in the glory of Mount Tabor. The gracious rebuke in the above words presents Elijah as indeed a man of like passions with us; and it is to the consideration of these words I now invite your attention. In attempting to do so we desire, as enabled, to notice two things:—First, *Elijah's sin*; second, *Elijah's chastisement*.

I.(a) It goes without saying that this great prophet excelled in faith. By the prayer of faith he closed the windows of heaven; by faith he hid for many days by the brook Cherith, not succumbing to the pressure of an ever growing and protracted trial while there; by faith he taxed the faith of the widow of Zarahphtha and sojourned with her for a season; by faith he brought her son from the dead; and by that same faith he stood alone on Mount Carmel against hundreds of the prophets of Baal. It was no ordinary faith that insisted, in time of terrible drought, on flooding the sacrifice with water and subsequently in bringing down first, fire, then rain from the long-dried heavens. That Elijah had great faith, who will deny?

(b) In the wake of such a faith comes, as we would expect, courage. A dauntless man is this Tisbite. The fear of his God has all but swallowed up the fear of man, so that the prince and the peasant alike received from him the same stern, personal rebuke for their sins when that was called for. When he and the king meet, it is Ahab who cowers and quails before the prophet, not Elijah before Ahab. Obadiah might indeed have spared his gracious solicitude for this fearless prophet who had no intention of ever fleeing from the face of mortal man. Courage Elijah certainly possessed, a valour sufficient to inspire the

hearts of his fellow sinners and stir them up to action. Now you may be on the point of asking, but what have Elijah's faith and courage then to do with Elijah's sin? I answer, they have much to do with his present condition, and sin as inferred and expressed in the question before us, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" It is the prophet's faith that now falters. It is hardly credible but it is true; for the time being it is unbelief which has the upper hand. Where is the faith of Carmel now? Where the courage of other days? Unbelief prepares the way for the sin of cowardice so that before the flush of victory has had time to subside we find Elijah fleeing for his life from the face of the blood-thirsty Jezebel.

It was not at the most vulnerable point of his harness that this dart was aimed but at the least vulnerable. O, that we would learn how vain it is for us to spend untiring energy in keeping constant vigil over the sin which does so easily beset us, if we fail to guard zealously the graces in which we think we excel. How often have the saints of God been overcome, not where they were weak but where they were strong. Think of Job, of Moses, of Elijah. Satan is a subtle foe and is more than a match for any of Adam's sons. The price of safety is constant and universal vigilance. To gain even a temporary victory over the faith and fearlessness of Elijah must have given the arch-enemy special satisfaction. He could now use such a defeat to attempt to prove that Elijah's faith and courage were a mere facade and thus endeavour to weaken Elijah's authority as the prophet of God and to intimidate others from following him. Let us realise, then, that the greatest as well as the least are but weakness itself apart from entire dependence upon God. Our past fidelity or courage are no guarantee that we shall always overcome. If left to ourselves for any length of time, we shall prove to ourselves and to others that it is not in him that walketh to direct his steps.

(c) Now, if it was sinful on the part of the prophet to flee from the mere threat of a devil-possessed woman, it was as sinful to evade the obvious path of duty. In so doing he forsook the promise of God and exposed himself to manifold dangers. Whatever trials and persecutions may be encountered on that path, we may solace ourselves with the conviction that the divine help and protection are ours. Yet that was exactly what Elijah did, and that too at a very crucial point in his own and Israel's history; he fled from the path of duty as surely as he fled from Jezebel. Let us all seek to lay this lesson to heart. It is vain for us to expect the blessing or the protection of God unless we are found in the way of duty. If finally delivered, as all God's children shall be, it will only be brought about by the gracious intervention of divine love, and that by way of chastisement.

(d) Again, Elijah failed sadly in not following up the signal victory granted to him on Mount Carmel. His conduct in fleeing to hide was further aggravated by the fact that he needed not to question whether the Lord was on his side, for the Lord had just given a

public and solemn proof that He was with Elijah in a very special sense. It was evidently Elijah's duty, having gained a foothold, to fight it out to a victorious end against Jezebel's idolatrous government. He certainly made sure of some of the prophets of Baal, but his subsequent conduct almost turned his triumph into defeat. Alas for Elijah, but such a sin is far more common than we realise. To every believer the Lord grants a great victory over the power of sin, corruption and lust in the day of his first espousals to the King of Sion, but how few realise the need of following up that initial victory by living a life of continual victory! How many must rather confess that they have sat down elated with the joy of such a triumph over spiritual wickedness in high places instead of seeking grace to use that conquest to the utmost of their ability. Does not the eager earnestness with which we sought the peace of justification exceed our desire for sanctification? Are we as anxious that sin should be destroyed as that it should be pardoned? If we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live and that we must bear in mind in connection with our spiritual warfare. How often in the history of nations have we seen a glorious victory turned into an inglorious defeat by failure on the part of the victors to make good their triumph. A great statesman is known to have said that to win the peace was as important as to have won the war; and is it not so? Let us then seek the grace to make good our gains in our spiritual warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. Let us seek to emulate David who could protest thus:—

Mine en'mies I pursued have,

And did them overtake;

Nor did I turn again till I

An end of them did make.

I wounded them—they could not rise;

They at my feet did fall.

Thou girdest me with strength for war:

My foes then brought'st down all.

It is only by grace we can improve the grace we receive.

(e) Once more, the man of God sinned against the faithful remnant in Israel. Their eyes were turned upon Elijah; their hearts rose or fell according as he triumphed or faltered. What of the good widow who in faith gave him her last morsel? What of the servant of God who feared the Lord from his youth up, and had jeopardised his life and position for the love he had to the prophets of the Lord? What of the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal? Has Elijah forgotten Obadiah and the widow of Zarephtha? What a lesson is here, especially for those who are public leaders in the Church! How doubly incumbent it is upon them that they be strong in faith, giving glory to God; that they disappoint not the hopes of the remnant in Israel. If the standard-bearer falls, what can the

righteous do? If those who champion the Cause of Christ fall a prey to the fear of man, and forget their obligations, what will become of the weaker ones? It should be remembered that not only our gifts but our graces are given us to be used in His service and to edify one another. Why was Elijah blessed with such a faith and such a courage? Was it merely for the comfort of his own soul? Verily, no; Elijah should have considered the far-reaching consequences of his yielding to the pressure of the hour. Such a flight on his part, if made public, could not fail to tell sadly upon the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Shall we venture then to charge Elijah with the sin of giving place to *self*, that monster that assumes so many forms? Is not self-pity indulged in just another form of self-love, and at this stage of Elijah's experience, is he not swallowed up in himself?

A stage has been reached where it is I, I, I all the time; my feelings, my fears, my zeal, and so on until he actually said, "And I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." Beware of self-pity, dear friend. Beware of it mixing with your sorrow for sin, for it can poison the tears of penitence; beware of it when you think you are being persecuted without cause, for it can blind you to think that you are being persecuted for righteousness' sake. It is a deadly monster often assuming the form of an angel of light. Oh, bring your self-pity and your self-comfort and your self-pleasing to the cross of Jesus. There and there only will you see, not only the awful guilt and ugliness of such a sin, but on the other hand, the glory of self-denial. The just and holy claims of God, the tender claims of a weeping mother, the cries of the penitent, the madness and ignorance of those who gloated in His agony—all these the Christ of God thought of and prayed over in His hour of greatest sorrow. Can you find the least trace of pity for Himself there? And having looked at Him, can you now cherish such a thing in your own breast? Can you justify it within hearing of Gethsemane's groans, and within sight of Calvary's agony?

O, then, let us indeed seek self-loathing in the dust of self-abasement, while we pray earnestly to be saved from self-pity.

To sum up, then, we find there is more in Elijah's flight than mere infirmity. Some explain the prophet's flight in a psychological way, as more or less the nervous reaction of the strain and glory of Mount Carmel. Now, while we do not overlook what was physical, we feel that there were other causes at work here. Could such a one as Elijah fail to escape the onslaughts of Satan? Never. Thus we find our worthy prophet made the special target of the devil. Self, unbelief, cowardice and lack of patience all manifest themselves as the great adversary strikes at Elijah, until the ever-gracious, ever-living God of Elijah comes to the rescue of His truly faithful though despondent servant. And how does he come to the weary prophet? He comes with the word of gracious rebuke. This leads us, in the second place, to consider as designed *Elijah's chastisement*.

(a) Internal. In yielding to the temptation of this crisis—how Elijah exposed himself to that uneasiness and fretfulness of spirit which constitutes in itself a good part of his chastisement on this occasion. Being conscious of the fact that he had fled from the face of Jezebel and from the honourable path of duty, he left himself open to the accusations of his own conscience; and still more to the suggestions of his wily enemy. Satan had now ready access to his imagination and could reduce him to a state of despondency and nervous tension. That was in itself a sore chastisement for one who was wont to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man. How often may our darkness and despondency be a chastisement for our sloth and remissness in duty. Some always think of chastisement as something external, something that all can see, but such an idea is erroneous. And what of judgment also? How ready we are to confine our thoughts of judgment to what is external and future rather than to what is immediate and internal. To be left to oneself is a terrible judgment and is but the harbinger of that eternal and irrevocable judgment which shall be the portion of all who die out of Christ.

(b) By his sin Elijah lost the spirit and power of prayer. He still prays but what a difference. There is undoubtedly no lack of earnestness but it is no longer the earnestness of grace. It is not now the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man, the inwrought prayer of the Holy Spirit, but the prayer of the flesh. Both the object and the manner of his supplications are fleshly. What is it that he seeks so earnestly? It is freedom from the ills and trials of life, but who could not pray for that? Have we not heard such a prayer from the lips of the unregenerate? Is that the prayer that the Spirit would indite? Would it not be more like the prophet to plead for pardon and ask the Lord to over-rule his weakness and folly to the good of His cause? Yet no such prayer is heard. Again, there is no reference to the divine will in this request. Compare it with the thought-provoking, solemnising cry of Gethsemane and you will see its terrible deficiency. Surely then it is no small part of the divine displeasure with Elijah that he lost the true spirit and power of prayer and was left to plead in vain for such an inglorious deliverance. O, if the Lord had granted Elijah such a request as he asked for, he would have lost the honour of being carried to heaven in the chariot of fire. In looking back, we are sure that Elijah would praise his God for what He denied him as well as for what He had given him. What a mercy it is that the Lord does refuse to answer such prayers on the part of His erring people. Elijah was by no means the only one who erred on that score. Let us then search diligently into the nature of our petitions and let us implore continually the grace and direction of the Holy Spirit who is the only author of true, spiritual prayer. Let us remember what praise is due to Him who gave us neither according to our deserts nor our desires but according to His own infinite wisdom and love.

(c) A third chastisement Elijah had to bear was that he lost the hearts of the King and the people alike: the very thing that lay so near his heart. It was with this in view that he had dared to pray for three years of drought. To be instrumental in bringing Israel to repentance was the desire of his heart, but now he was doing the very thing that would defeat his objective, in fleeing from his post and desiring a speedy removal by death. Evidently the man of God had lost heart, but his conduct could not fail to encourage his enemies, while it would also damp the spirits of any half-hearted, undecided friends. Elijah's conduct now was enough to obliterate any temporary impression made by the happenings on Mount Carmel. Surely that was a sore part of the good man's chastisement on this occasion.

(d) Still further, we see the prophet seeking to wash his hands of a service which he so often felt to be a foretaste of heaven upon earth. O what blessed hours had Elijah already enjoyed in the service of His Lord and Master. Could he not say in his own measure that it was his meat and drink to do the will of his God, and could he not attest that his yoke was easy and his burden light? Did Elijah envy the greatest and most prosperous of men? I trow not. To be permitted to labour, to speak, and even to suffer for his Lord was esteemed by him the greatest honour that could be bestowed upon any mortal man. But now he has lost sight of the glory of suffering for the Lord and wishes to die. O, what a chastisement.

(e) The last but by no means the least of his chastisements was the Lord's own rebuke by word of mouth. The angel of the Lord is commissioned to minister to Elijah. How gently the Lord deals with his dear servant. How considerately he prepares for Elijah's physical needs, in allowing him to sleep undisturbed, and then in bidding him to eat of a meal prepared by an angel, in the solitude of the wilderness. Truly He knoweth our frame and He remembereth that we are dust. Arise and eat for the journey is too great for thee, said the angel to the prophet. And he arose and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God. It was then that the word of the Lord came to him, and He said unto him, what doest thou here, Elijah? The words are graciously tempered by what went before and they are in part explained by what followed. Elijah had been in danger of judging precipitately of his success or failure. In that connection he had looked for much from the storm and fire of Carmel, but the Lord now teaches him a much needed lesson by appearing in the still small voice rather than in the earthquake or the fire. The immediate obedience of the prophet shows us that he took to heart the implications of the rebuke and the encouraging disclosure made to him. To be hiding in the desert was no place for the least, let alone for the greatest of God's servants.

It was indeed no time for fleeing and abandoning his post of honour. It was rather the time for immediate and well organised action. Ah, the Lord knows how to administer the rebuke. How

effective are these few almost gentle words, What doest thou here, Elijah? The same One as said to Peter, Lovest thou me? knew what would go home to the soul of that great prophet and enable him to finish his course with joy in spite of Jezebel's rage and all the malice of hell. Elijah has work to do yet. Soon he will be transported to heaven in a chariot of fire to be for ever with the Lord, but until that moment he must tread the lowly path of duty, performing the will of the Lord.

We may be ready to think that the rebuke administered to the prophet on this occasion was very mild and hardly proportionate to his error, but it was no milder than the Lord's rebuke to Peter, and who will suggest that Peter's sin was trifling? No, this rebuke given to Elijah was the very best that could be given. It is not for us to say how the Lord should chastise His own; He knows what rod to use, and He knows how and when to use it. The Lord does not dispute Elijah's plea for his conduct; He simply passes it over in silence and instructs him with regard to his present duty. The rebuke is reiterated by the still small voice and what does it mean? Go back to your work, Elijah; go back to death if need be. Why should such an one as you flee from Jezebel? Is this, then, the place for one who professes to be so jealous and so zealous for the Lord God of Hosts?

The implications of the rebuke are manifold indeed. Now then, go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus with this assurance that I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed the knee unto Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him. O Elijah, you are not alone after all, and with thy God there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, Say, then, to Jezebel, O man of God, in the words of thy fellow servant: Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God? Mine eyes shall behold her, now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

And what became of Jezebel's threat? We hear no more about it but we find the Tishbite once more challenging the covetous Ahab for his sins with his wonted boldness, and prophesying that the dogs should eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. He has indeed risen again for the Lord had been a light unto him and the Lord had executed judgment for him. With holy propriety could Elijah now sing:

“My soul He doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for His own name's sake.”

Southern Presbytery's Tribute to the late Rev. John Tallach, Oban.

THE Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland would put on record its deep sense of the great loss sustained through the sudden removal of the late Rev. John Tallach, Oban.

Though he had been in failing health for a number of years, yet the end was somewhat unexpected (being only ill from Friday to the following Sabbath), and the sad news came as a great shock to relatives, friends, and to the Church as a whole, at home and abroad.

Mr. Tallach was born in Dornoch, Sutherland, in 1890, and was privileged above many in that he was brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. While still a young man about 21 years of age he removed to Tain, where he was employed in business. It was while here that he came under the power of the truth in a saving way. Having experienced the blessedness of gospel peace in his own soul, his mind became greatly exercised with thoughts of missionary work. Later he communicated these thoughts to the late Rev. D. Beaton, Wick, and expressed a desire to labour in the foreign field. By that time the Free Presbyterian Mission, at Ingwenya, Southern Rhodesia, was well established under the direction of the Rev. J. B. Radasi, and Mr. Beaton informed Mr. Tallach that the Synod had been discussing the advisability of sending out an ordained missionary from home to assist in the work. However, the 1914-18 war intervened, and Mr. Tallach joined the 4th Seaforths and served with them in France until the cessation of hostilities.

On demobilisation in 1919 Mr. Tallach felt called of God to the ministry of the gospel and his heart more firmly than ever set on labour in the mission field. He was accepted as a student of the Church with a view to foreign mission work.

After studying at Glasgow University, and after a course of divinity at Wick, he was licensed as a preacher of the gospel, and ordained to our Ingwenya Mission in South Africa in 1924, where he laboured for 22 years.

Just at the time he arrived in Africa, Rev. John Radasi, our former missionary there, had passed away, we believe, to be for ever with the Lord.

It must have been a very trying experience for Mr. Tallach to have found himself in a strange land without friends and amongst a people of language strange. However, he was able by divine help to overcome those difficulties, and the following year he was married to one who proved a real helpmeet—a daughter of the late Rev. J. S. Sinclair.

In 1946 he felt that his health was giving way and that it would be wiser if a younger man would take over the work at Ingwenya. In September of that year he came back to Scotland, and two years later

he was inducted to the Oban congregation, where he laboured acceptably until his death.

His congregation mourns the loss of a pastor who had their everlasting welfare at heart—one who was always ready to help and to sympathise. His brethren feel the cause of Christ is much the poorer by his death, but they believe what the Apostle Paul had to say concerning himself was applicable to Mr. Tallach, viz.: “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

The Presbytery would express their profound sympathy with his bereaved widow and family in their great loss, and also with his brothers and sisters.

May the God of all grace be a source of consolation to them all.—
D. J. MATHESON, *Clerk of Presbytery.*

Letter from Luther.

THE following letter was written by Luther shortly after his conversion to instruct and encourage a brother monk who was in great darkness but whose soul was struggling towards gospel light. It may be useful to some:—

“Now, I should like to know how you are in your heart, whether you have grown to think but little of your own righteousness, and have learned how to rejoice and believe in the righteousness of Christ. To-day, then, is a great temptation to pride, especially among those who are straining all their powers to be righteous and good. They do not understand the righteousness of God which is given in such abundance in Christ, and without charge. They are struggling to do so much good on their own account in order to possess virtues and merits enough to make them believe they can face God. Yet that is just what cannot be done. When you were here you, too, were suffering from this delusion, nay, I may well say mad idea, of trusting in yourself. So was I. Even at the present time I am still continuing the struggle and am not yet through. Therefore, my dear brother, turn to Christ and Him crucified. Learn to sing His praises and distrusting your own self, say to Him, ‘Lord Jesus, Thou art my righteousness and I am Thy sin; Thou hast taken mine on Thyself and given me what is Thine; Thou hast accepted what Thou art not and given me what I was not.’ Be careful not to strive continually after such a purity that you may no longer seem to be a sinner. Christ lives among sinners. That is why He descended from heaven where He lived among the righteous, in order that He might Himself live where sinners were. Meditate without ceasing on His love and then you will experience the most gratifying comfort. Had we been meant to gain peace of heart through our own strivings and strugglings, what was the need of Christ to die? It follows that only in Him and with

the most desperation about your own self and your works will you find peace. Nay, you will also learn from His very self that, just as He has accepted you and made your sins His own, so also He has made His righteousness your own in addition."

"The Strong Man Armed."

(Luke xi, 21, 22.)

By REV. JAMES MACLEOD, Greenock.

(Continued from page 297.)

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness mighty to save" (Isa. lxiii. 1). "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions" (Pro. viii. 12). "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. vii. 14). "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. i. 23). "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30). "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people" (Luke xxiv. 19).

He came to destroy the works of the devil. He came to redeem sinners from death. It was necessary that He should glorify God in our nature, exalt the law that we profaned, and satisfy the claims of holy justice. How could this be accomplished unless He took bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, a true body, and a reasonable soul? In the person of Emmanuel, we have God with us. "The Father and I are one" is an intimation to us that He is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. That He is able to glorify God in our nature: destroy the works of the devil: and redeem His people from the lost, ruined, cursed condition that their God-dishonouring rebellion brought upon them. Satan had to be cast out of his stronghold, and all his malicious weapons taken from him. Emmanuel was able and willing to do all this glorious work. "And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause Him to draw near, and He shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged His heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD" (Jer. xxx. 21). It was by death the devil conquered the soul. It was by life the soul was to be redeemed. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). These words were uttered shortly before He actually suffered on the cross. He glorified God in our nature as the Surety of His people. He was the Lamb of God for His people. The Lamb without blemish. He prepared Himself for the sacrifice that eternal justice demanded of the Surety.

That meant that He would have to die. He willingly submitted to the will of God. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps. xl. 8.) He was tempted by the devil. He was persecuted by wicked men. He had the solemn and painful sense of being deserted—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring. O my God, I cry in the daytime but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent" (Ps. xxii. 1-2). Here we have He of whom it was written, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys" (Song. ii. 1). Tender, loving, merciful, gracious, holy, and the perfume of eternal love pouring forth in His gracious word to His troubled disciples on the eve of His offering Himself up to God "for a sweet smelling savour." The offended justice of God had to be satisfied. The elect of God were under debt to justice that they could not pay. The Surety alone was able and willing to pay their debt by His own life. His infinite love to His own eternal justice, to the glory of God, and to His people whom He came to redeem. The purpose of God was to save the elect with an everlasting salvation. This could not be done till eternal justice was satisfied. Justice demanded the death of the sinner. God was offended by the sin of Adam, and his children. Christ alone could render satisfaction to offended justice and glorify God as the Surety of His people. He took their law place.

It was as God with us that he could satisfy justice and glorify God. If He had been a mere man that would not satisfy justice, neither could He say, "I have glorified thee upon the earth." For poor, blind sinners who see nothing in Christ but a man are lost; and if they continue in that state of mind will be lost for ever. The Modernist is a lost man. He may be called a "Doctor of Divinity," but if not changed in his state and nature by the grace of God he is lost! When the proud Pharisee addressed Him "as good master" he was rebuked for his hypocrisy. If Christ had been a mere man He could not "be good," hence the sharp rebuke. Satan verily thought He was another son of Adam but when his head was crushed on the cross of Calvary his power over the elect of God was forever gone. "Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great and He shall divide the spoil with the strong because He has poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. liii. 12). In infinite love He prayed on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). When all the powers of darkness assailed Him, the world attacked Him, the heavens darkened before Him, a deep sense of desertion filled His righteous soul (Ps. xxii. 1), and His soul made an offering for sin; there He stood alone (of the people were none with Him), they all forsook Him, and fled: the highest angel in heaven had to stand aside, for our High

Priest was to enter into heaven (into the holiest of all) with His own blood there to appear in the presence of God for us.

"For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24). When the High Priest came out alive on the great day of atonement in Israel the people knew then that God accepted their sacrifice. We read of Zacharias (the father of John the Baptist), "And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them and remained speechless" (Luke i. 22). When Christ rose from the dead on the third day the angel's message was, "Come and see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see Him" (Matt. xxviii. 6-7). From the throne of heaven He declared unto them the will and purpose of God towards all that shall be saved of the human race to the end of time. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. xxviii. 19-20). "The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." No wonder! By His death He had destroyed him that had the power of death—the devil. As Dr. Owen puts it so powerfully when he says that His death was the death of death! "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (I John iii. 8).

From the womb of the virgin mother to the cross of Calvary; and from there to the immediate presence of God with His own precious blood, "having obtained eternal redemption for us." His resurrection from the dead according to the Scripture is the evidence to all believers that they were accepted in the Person of their beloved Saviour. "Blessed be God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter i. 3). Here we have a full-orbed gospel of the glorious love, mercy, and wisdom of our God! God glorified, the law honoured, justice satisfied, the power of the devil over all the elect of God destroyed, an empty grave, a risen Saviour! "Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in a rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job xix. 23-27).

Third: "He divideth the spoils."

Christ promised his tried and bewildered disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John xiv. 18). Ever near, ever loving, and engaged in the salvation of His people, He would not leave them in a cold dead world without comfort, light, knowledge, and divine fellowship. His own personal presence was to be removed from them. The Holy Spirit was to come and make His holy abode in their heart, and reveal to them what they did not understand. He was to begin at Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. From the Genesis of creation to the Amen of the book of Revelation! We read in another part that the spoils of war were to be divided. Regarding King David after he recovered the people that the Amalekites took away, and took all the spoil from them, he returned to the place where the two hundred were that were so faint that they stayed by the brook Besor, and when David came near the people he saluted them; but all the wicked men, and men of Belial were determined that they would not get of the spoil, only their wives, and children. "Then said David, ye shall not do so my brethren, with that which the Lord has given us, who has preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff; they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day" (I Sam. xxx.; see Ps. lxxviii. 12). The spoils of war! "And having spoiled principalities, and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. ii. 15).

It is for Christ's sake that the Holy Spirit comes to awaken the dead. The sinner is dead to God, but serving the devil as the prodigal son was while he was away from his father's house. The sinner must be called to life by the creating power of the Holy Spirit. When awakened by the Holy Spirit he finds the truth of God verified in his soul, and conscience that he is lost, and under the wrath and curse of God in his soul, mind, person, eating, drinking, and in all he ever did: like the woman of Samaria. Like David, Paul, Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah, James, Peter, and the beloved John. The "strong man" was in the palace till the Spirit of God poured divine light into the dark dungeons of the soul and also life. What a sight! The peace of death was broken forever. The alarm of war was sounded. The law of God thundering death, the wrath of God in the conscience, and the curse of God on the person! The peace of death gone for ever! He knows now "that there is no peace saith my God to the wicked" (Psalms 1) with all its high and dreadful imprecations against the wicked is his lot. How his life had been spent in the service of the devil! Living in the world without God. His former joy and pleasures turned into gall and wormwood. Bitterness of death in his soul. No place on earth, no company, not even the brute creation, fit for him. Heaven closed against him. Hell wide open to receive his guilty soul. The

eternal grave of the wicked! No God, no hope! No light, all darkness. Trembling at the thought of meeting God. All the threatenings of the Bible his lot! "This is thy lot, the portion of thy measure from me, saith the LORD, because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood" (Jer. xiii. 25). The lie of the devil, "Ye shall be as gods," had to be put out by the truth of God.

Many, yea, millions think that the devil is out when he is lying snugly and coiled up like a sleeping serpent in their souls! Much religion in the mouth and the devil in possession of the palace. Satan is not concerned about tongue religion. It suits him well for his malicious objective is to keep the poor sinner fast asleep like the foolish virgins. When the Holy Spirit takes possession no peace and no quarter is given. The devil must go. Satan is a burglar. He had no authority or right to enter into the soul from the beginning, and verily the Holy Spirit will show no mercy, nor tenderness, to the murderer and malicious thief. The lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life must be burnt up. The high look, the proud head must also come down. He hears that the "companion of fools shall be destroyed." The old company must be left behind. When the Holy Spirit declares "that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God," all false and sinful thoughts of being saved by his own reformation and efforts perish. When the commandment came sin revived, and I died! Sin revived in his memory, conscience, will, affections, and what a sight of a ruined life. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." When the time to favour is come, they will hear such words as these, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes" (Hosea xiii. 14).

When Christ is revealed to the soul as the conqueror of the devil, hell, death, and as the only Mediator between the soul and God, what peace, love, mercy, light and divine consolation takes possession of it! What they saw in Christ in that day no tongue can tell. The peace of God in the soul through the blood of the Lamb of God. The conscience singing of mercy and judgment. In Christ they saw that God was forever glorified in their salvation. Under the conviction of sin they could not see this, but now it is made clear to them that God is glorified in the finished work of Christ, and has infinite pleasure in saving them for Christ's sake. This humbles them in the dust before the Lord. They are like little children looking up and drinking in the milk of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit feeds them as a nurse feedeth the infant baby. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" is to them the wine on the lees, well refined" (Isa. xxv. 6). "I rejoiced at thy Word as one that findeth great spoil" (Ps. cxix. 162). It was the most wonderful spoil that any sinner (unexpectedly) received in the providence of God.

Christ received gifts for men. The gift of eternal life. He paid the price of their redemption in His own blood. Faith is the gift of God. Faith is the hand that receives, and the Holy Spirit unites the soul to Christ. It is by faith they do stand. It is all of grace, free grace, sovereign grace, promised grace; and in every time of need, grace, and more grace! "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost: which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus iii. 5-7). The believer is an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus in all the blessings of the covenant of grace. As the spouse shares all that her husband has, so the people of God, being united by faith to Christ, share the spoils that Christ their Saviour gained for them by His blood.

The modern teaching that salvation is by works, social works, kindness, politeness, total abstaining will not keep poor sinners for one moment from hell. No doubt the foolish virgins were very polite, genteel, and possibly moral in public, if not in private, but when the call of death came all was lost in a moment! The poor believer is wholly dependent upon Christ—His blood, priesthood, kingship, merits, love, and mercy from the moment he was cut away for ever from a broken covenant; and taken in through the blood and mercy of God into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The devil can never regain his former seat in the soul, but he will try as Pharaoh attempted to take the children of Israel back to Egypt. Let no self-confidence, pride, and "I am a professing man (or woman)," a preacher, a Church member of long standing, so am not afraid of falling now"—any of these weapons will bring you down to most painful experience. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD." "But the just shall live by faith" (Hab. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38).

We have noticed that Christ alone can save sinners from the power of darkness, from the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life. The modern teaching is opposed to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The covenant made with Adam was forever lost in the fall of Adam. The covenant of grace is an eternal covenant ordered in all things and sure. We say that the covenant of grace is eternal, as we read in Galatians, third chapter, "And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying in thee shall all nations be blessed." It was the same "gospel" that saved Paul, that saved Abraham—different administration, the same Spirit. Abel had the gospel in the type: the Apostle John in the fulfilment of the promise, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii. 15). There is only one covenant of grace; it being called the "New

Covenant" signifies only the different mode under which it is administered. And the "New Covenant" under the present dispensation and administration is the eternal covenant of grace.

It was through the blood of the covenant that Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Paul, Peter, and Mary Magdalene were reconciled, justified, adopted and sanctified. You are to look to Christ alone for salvation and safety for time and eternity. Seek light, grace, and mercy through Jesus Christ. When in danger of falling into the snares of the devil, and when the world casts but its well sugared baits to lead you into the path of the destroyer, seek to be kept and guided. Pray much, and pray earnestly, but do not lean on your prayers. Do not listen to flatterers that preach and teach that you need not be afraid, "that God is merciful, and that your heavenly Father will take care of you."

Christ will purge and sanctify His people as if they never had sinned against God. They will be pure and holy at last. The once ruined soul will be as pure as if it had never sinned through the blood of Christ—no spot, or wrinkle will be left on any of them. While in this world corruption and depravity meet them in almost all things, but that is for a little while. The days of their mourning shall be ended in a moment. They were reconciled through His blood. They are sanctified through His blood. Their faith, hope, duties, yea, all their religion is through the blood of the Lamb. It was so with Moses, David, Paul, the Martyrs, the Reformers, and all believers, and will remain so to the end of time.

"What I say unto you I say unto all, watch."

The late Mrs. Catherine Bain, Strath, Gairloch.

No one can read the history of Jesus in the gospels without perceiving how, in the days of His earthly ministry, He had among His most honoured followers devout women not a few, whose rich gifts He did not despise, and whose devoted love He did not reject. Who was it that complained of the expenditure of a very precious box of ointment? It was the disciples, but the woman poured it freely on His head as a testimony of her affection, and the approval and reward of the deed, as declared by the Saviour, was: "Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

The congregation of Gairloch has had its noble band of women witnesses, who with all the tenderness of their nature, and the full consciousness of the place assigned to them in the Church on earth, served Christ with zeal and devotion. To this band, who now enjoy the pleasures that are at God's right hand, the subject of this sketch may be added.

Mrs. Bain was born at Strath, Gairloch, and died there in March, 1955, when well into the 90th year of her age. Her mother was an outstanding witness on the side of Christ and His Cause in 1893, and stood firmly with those who formed the Free Presbyterian Church, when the Creed and Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland was changed by the passing of the Declaratory Act. She died in the year 1905. Her biographer says of her: Once pardon of sin was sealed upon her soul by the Holy Spirit, her concern then was that the rich possession she herself had received might be bestowed on her children.

Our deceased friend was then a child of many prayers, and was brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

In the providence of God she was married at the age of 21, and had a family of six daughters and one son. After her marriage she spent 60 years of her life in Isle Horridale, a small island in Gairloch, where about five families lived, who got their living, mostly, from the fishing industry of other days. That industry as carried on in those days is now extinct. In process of time one after another of the families removed from the island, so our friend, very reluctantly, had to remove also, and take up house in Strath, where she spent the last ten years of her life.

Mrs. Bain had her share of the afflictions of this life. She lost her only son, who was serving in the R.N.R., through enemy action in 1916, when he was drowned off the Shetland Islands, and what was mortal of him lies buried in the Island of Yell. A cloud then came over her mind, which lasted for about 18 years. She was always upright in her moral character and led a consistent life as becometh the gospel in her outward walk and conduct before she was thus visited. But outward consistency is not regeneration of itself. During this period of her life she was confined mostly to her home, and when she did come to the house of God she would be hanging on someone's arm and her head and face almost covered with a large scarf or shawl. Her mind during this trying period was not unoccupied with spiritual matters: one would not be long in her presence till he would hear her whisper some petition or quote a portion of scripture; though she did not want to speak much to her fellow-creatures she did not lack conversation with heaven. This hot "furnace" was, evidently, Christ's workshop on her case: "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

It was then that God began to discover his choice by working in the faculties of her soul. Affliction of itself does not work for good, but as sanctified and accompanied by the Spirit of God. If the affliction of itself, and by itself, would do it, it would do so always, but we see by experience it does not. We see often the same affliction that makes one humble makes another fretful and rebellious. The day of deliverance came, the dark cloud was lifted and she was like a prisoner set free. The Lord's people will thank God in eternity for

many things that are now very unpleasant to them in this world. It was then she came to the Kirk Session to be admitted to full membership. They admitted her. This was in the year 1934. She then began to attend the means of grace far and near, and distance was no obstacle. If any would remonstrate with her for taking too much out of her body in walking long distances she would invariably say, "I was a long time a prisoner and now that I am free I must make use of every opportunity." She became a prominent figure at communions in many places. She was in London twice at communions. She crossed the Minch several times, and attended the communions near hand regularly. She was very courageous and would travel alone anywhere, even to old age when her friends would be very concerned about her.

Mrs. Bain was a fixed and grounded Christian woman, not like those spoken of by the Apostle: "Carried about with every wind of doctrine," but like a house built upon a rock. A good Free Presbyterian who understood what her Church stood for, and had a good recollection of its contendings at the beginning and since. She kept to the principles of God's word; sanctified every Sabbath, attended regularly on the public means of grace on Sabbath and weekday, performed family and secret duties as becometh a Christian professing to follow the Lamb. She was a reader of good books, and being blessed with a good memory, what she read she retained. She had such a memory that she could with ease repeat to children long stretches of the poetry she learned in school and would say a better selection of poetry was given to children then than to-day. But what she delighted most of all to "hide in her heart" was the word of God, of which she had a great store and could go before a reader, in a whisper, as her habit was, in almost any chapter or Psalm. She was naturally bright and her native wit was noticeable to all who came in contact with her.

She was very charitable, open-hearted and open-handed as far as her means could afford. She would only seek occasions to show kindness to others. She was physically strong, tall and erect, and a very nimble walker, so much so that no one would say she was bordering on 90 years. She often said, "When I stop going about outside I will be finished with this world," and so it turned out. The illness which ended her life in this world was of about eight weeks' duration. It started like a turn of depression, but physical troubles set in and she gradually went down, and her end came on 1st March, 1955. During her illness her mind was very much exercised in the truth. The 67th Psalm in English and the 34th Psalm in Gaelic were often on her lips, with other portions of the Scriptures. She was also given to prayer, one would hear her petitions offered to God lying on her bed. A petition she often had during her illness was, "Wash me and take me," which was answered. If one happened to encourage her about getting better she would say, "I will never get better." It is our loss when the Church on earth is bereaved of such excellent persons, but

we must not mourn as those who have no hope, for our friend was "washed and taken" in answer to her own prayer. She left six daughters to mourn her loss, also three sisters, one older and two younger than herself, to whom our sympathy goes out.—A. B.

The late Mrs. Hugh Henderson, Glasgow.

Mrs. Henderson was born in Sanna, Ardnamurchan, Argyllshire, in the year 1869, and lived for 86 years in the world, having passed away to her everlasting rest, we believe, on the 20th March last year. The village of Sanna is now practically deserted, though in her childhood days there were quite a few families, perhaps as many as 20, in that township. When a young woman she came to Glasgow, and she attended the means of grace regularly whenever she was free to do so. Attendance at the means of grace with the desire in the soul to see Jesus will not be in vain. He never said to any of the seed of Jacob seek ye my face in vain. It was very apparent that the word read and preached was greatly valued by her, and early in life she received saving knowledge of Him who declares, "I love them that love me and those that seek me early shall find me."

Before the Free Presbyterian Church was formed she was a member in full communion in the Free Church, but being a woman of spiritual discernment she had no hesitation, when the testimony was raised in Scotland for the truth of God in 1893, to cast in her lot with those who thought that they could not be true to the Word of God or to their own conscience if they remained any longer in the Declaratory Act Free Church.

Mrs. Henderson remained a loyal follower of Christ for well over 60 years, and no one could be very long in her company without knowing that it was the things that pertained to God and to the soul's eternal welfare which were her chief delight. She was not without her own share of sorrows and trials. None of God's people can be exempt from tribulation. "In this world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

In 1910 a young daughter was removed by death just after a few days' illness. This was a very heavy trial but the Lord who rules and overrules used this sore dispensation as the means whereby her husband, who had formerly lived a good moral life, got soul acquaintance with Him who does all things well. That he had undergone a saving change at that time he proved by his love for the things of God, and by his consistent walk and conversation for over 20 years thereafter, when he was taken home, we believe, to be for ever with the Lord. He was a deacon of St. Jude's congregation for some years, and an obituary written by the Rev. N. Cameron appeared in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* of February, 1931.

No doubt her husband's conversion gave her such joy at this time that her grief in losing a loving daughter was, to some extent at least, alleviated.

Mrs. Henderson was one of "the excellent of the earth," and we feel much the poorer by her removal to the eternal world where she is free from sin and suffering—"there the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest."

To the sons—one of whom is an office-bearer in St. Jude's—to the daughter and to the relations we extend our heartfelt sympathy. May they know the blessedness of those who are enabled by grace "to follow Christ through good report and evil report."—*D. J. Matheson.*

Searmonan.

LEIS AN URR. TEARLACH C. MAC AN TCISICH, D.D.

(*Air a leantuinm bho t.d. 309.*)

Is aithne dhuinne gu'm bheil gràs so a Mhic Shiorruidh ard-uach-daranail; cha do bhean e ris na h-ainglean a thuit; ach gur e h-ann mar an ceudna gràs fìor-ghlan, agus gràdh a tha barraichte ann am fìor-ghloine, is aithne dhuinn. Leum e mach bho dhoimhneachd gun ghrùnd ann am broilleach Mhic Dhé, agus chrìochnaich e ann an gràs taghaidh air cuibhrionn de theaghlach ceannairceach agus truaille Adhamh. Aon uair agus gun do luidh e orra, bha uamhas an suidheachadh air a thoirt fodh chomhair a sheallaidh; an slochd, an slochd uamhasach anns an robh iad nan luidh, agus an t-siorruidheachd dhorch agus fhadalach a dh'ionnsuidh an robh iad a dol. Ghlaodh E air son an saorsa, agus mhiannaich E gu durachdach i. Tha'n sealladh so air gràs, agus gràs a mhain, mar a tha e deanamh gnothuch ris a mhuinntir shaorta, a cur thuige Mac Dhé gu bhi tighinn 's an eadrui-ginn air son an saoradh, faodaidh e bhi, tuilleadh 'us dealrach air son nan naomh anns an t-saoghal so, air chor agus gu'm bi iad ag iarraidh fuasgladh bho'n t-sealladh so, le bhi beachd-smuainteachadh gu h-àraidh, air a ghlòir a tha, tre'n fhoillseachadh so, aig iomlanachdaibh na Diadhachd. Agus, gidheadh, am feadh a dh'fheumas rùn agus crìoch an fhoillseachaidh so, gu h-àraidh, crìochnachadh ann an Dia, tha e, dha'n a cuspairean air son am bheil e, 'n a thròcair agus 'n a ghràs fìor-ghlan agus neo-mheasgaichte.

Ach cia mar a b'urrainn an tròcair agus an gràs so cleachd-fhao-tainn? Ann an so tha ceannair; cia mar a b'urrainn i bhi air a maitheadh? Ann an so tha ciont; cia mar a b'urrainn i bhi air a toirt air falbh? Ann an so tha truailidheachd—truailidheachd iomlan agus a sior fhàs ni's dorecha; cia mar a b'urrainn i bhi air tighinn am fagus dhith? Cia mar a b'urrainn i bhi air tighinn thairis oirre? An robh a cheartas a dol a chur a chlàidheamh 's an truail, agus a dol a thar-ruig air ais a chòirichean? Bha so eu-comasach; oir c'àit an sin am

bitheadh glòir na Diadhachd, fìor-ghloine na Diadhachd, fìrinn na Diadhachd, agus neo-chaochluidheachd na Diadhachd? C'ait am bitheadh barrantas air tearuinnteachd agus beannachd iochdarain dhileas riaghladh na Diadhachd? C'ait am bitheadh ceartas fulungasaibh na'n spioradan caillte? Cia mar a b'urrainn a rithisd an Dia neo-chriochnach naomh pilltean a dh'ionnsuidh an teampuill bho'n a dh'fhògradh E? Cia mar a b'urrainn E amharc ris an anam a dh'fhògair E, agus a ghabh a stigh a dh'ionnsuidh a rìgh-chathair an neach is o àrd-nàmhaid-san? Cia mar a b'urrainn E tighinn a mach ga ionnsuidh ach a chùim a bhi ga chaitheamh as? Na ma bha gràs ag iarraidh e bhi air athnuadhachadh, agus ma b'urrainn gràs uile-chùmhaichdach a leithid de dh'obair mhiorbhuileach a smuainteachadh, gidheadh c'ait an robh barrantas air urram agus fìor-ghloine na Diadhachd ann a bhi ga ghnìomhachadh? Uime sin, mar a bitheadh ceartas air a riarachadh, agus urram na Diadhachd air a cumail suas, bha e eucomasach gu'm bitheadh tràceair a faotainn cleachdadh a thaobh nan ceannairceach, na gu'm b'urrainn cùmhaichd neo-chriochnach a dhol a mach, air bonn an riarachaidh so, gu bhi ga'n deanamh réidh agus ga'n cosnadh. Ach co bh'uaithe bha'n riarachadh so ri iarraidh ach bho'n a ciontaich? Agus, ma's ann bh'uatha-san, cia mar a dh' iocadh iad e ach ann am bhi fulung dioghaltas teine siorruidh? Cha'n eil a leithid sin de smuaintean ri bhi air an dealachadh ris an ni air am bheil sinn a beachd-smuainteachadh; "Gràs ar Tighearna Iosa Criosd." Na'm bitheadh e air innse do na seraphim agus do na cerubim, agus do uile shloigh na'n aingeal, an deigh dhoibh a bhi na'n suil-fhianuisibh air am bràithrean ceannairceach a bhi air an tilgeadh a mach, agus air an ceangal ann an slabruidhean siorruidh, gu'm bitheadh tràceair air a sònraichadh a thaobh buidhean eile de luchd-brath, agus gun ni bhi air innse dhoibh mu'n innleachd a bha air a deilbh gu bhi toirt mu'n cuairt na h-obair so, ann an rathad urramach agus buadhach, nach bitheadh an ni sin dhoibh uile gu leir dorecha, agus na ni nach gabhadh a thuigsinn? Oidheirpicheadh-mid, uime sin, ann an so, a bhi toirt moladh agus a gabhail iongantais, a thaobh a ghliocais Dhiadhaidh, nach gabh a bhi air a rannsachadh, agus gu h-araidh gràs neo-chriochnach: "rinneadh bochd E."

(*R'a leantuinn.*)

Notes and Comments.

Week-end Dancing.

In factories where girls are employed on a large scale it has been found that the accident rate has considerably increased of late years. From observations made it appears that by far the highest percentage of accidents occur on Mondays. By those who have studied the matter this is attributed to the fact that the girls are over-tired on Monday after spending the week-end at parties and dances. There will, no

doubt, be honourable exceptions in every factory, but we take it that these girls may be taken as a fair sample of factory workers in the large cities throughout the country. We are not so much concerned with the accidents, although that is a matter serious enough. What we are concerned with is the revealing information concerning the conduct of these girls on the Sabbath Day. Rightly used, the Lord's Day is a day of rest, of refreshment, and of recuperation to body, mind and spirit, and many can sincerely thank the Lord that they find it so. To these the weekly day of rest is something eagerly looked forward to when, within the bounds of necessity and mercy, earthly labours may be laid aside and the opportunity taken advantage of for the restful enjoyment of things spiritual and heavenly, and when it is past it provides food for pleasant and profitable reflection. How terribly sad is the conduct of these young people who, instead of sanctifying the Day of Rest, weary themselves in the vanities and pleasures of gross Sabbath desecration. How sad it is to think of these young women on the way to judgment and eternity turning the blessing of the Sabbath Day into a curse against themselves, and how ominous is the thought that these careless young people will to a large extent provide the parents of a future generation. How the consideration of these things ought to stir up the spirit of prayer among the Lord's people, especially when we know that this conduct is but one symptom among very many others of a morally and spiritually degenerate age.

Television Blasphemy.

One wonders where will the blasphemous presumption of the ungodly cease. Are there any bounds of sacredness or recognised propriety they will not leap over? We are told that an eight weeks' play, "Jesus of Nazareth," is to be shown on the television screen on successive Sabbath evenings specially prepared for children. The play will depict the life of Jesus from boyhood; his death and resurrection to coincide with Easter Sunday. There is no lack of ministerial backing for the play—the Rev. R. C. Walter and the Rev. R. MacKay, both on the religious broadcasting staff of the B.B.C., having been consulted. The chief character chosen to act the part of Jesus is a Scot, the son of a Baptist minister. This sort of thing may be served up to the public in the name of religion, but our name for it is undiluted blasphemy. The dictionary meaning of the latter word is given as "contempt of God," and when we consider that Jesus is the Mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh, what greater contempt could be offered to God than that He should be impersonated on the stage and screen by a sinful worm of the dust? May the Lord in infinite mercy save our children from the pernicious effects of such a travesty of religion.

Psalms or Hymns.

In the January issue of the *Friendly Companion*, a Strict Baptist publication, there is an article which complains rather bitterly of "attacks" by the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* and the *Young People's Magazine*. The question at issue is the use of uninspired hymns in the worship of God. This subject has been repeatedly and convincingly dealt with at various times in our Magazines, and we have no intention of dealing with it here. We feel, however, that we cannot allow the article in question to pass altogether without comment. It would appear that our Strict Baptist friends think that these articles are deliberately and exclusively aimed at them. We can assure them that that is not true. The vast majority of bodies professing to worship God in Britain to-day admit to use of uninspired hymns—the Church of Scotland, the Church of England, Baptists, and Brethren of all kinds, and Billy Graham and his associates. Of these the Strict Baptists are, after all, but a very very small minority. Are we going to remain silent because of the objections of this minority? As a Church we are persuaded that hymn singing should have no place in the public worship of God because there is no Scriptural warrant for it, and it is an exceedingly dangerous practice. We intend that our people should be well informed and frequently reminded of this. If in the course of our carrying out what we conceive to be our solemn duty some of our arrows fall into the Strict Baptist camp and wound the consciences of some good people there, can we be held responsible for that?

Mr. J. C. Philpot was doubtless a great and good man and held in high esteem by those of his own persuasion. Nevertheless the name and authority of Mr. Philpot cannot make right a practice which is wrong in itself. Indeed, history provides many examples of the grave danger of using the name of a great and good man to cover up a fault. On the propriety or otherwise of the entirely gratuitous advice with which the article concludes we make no comment.

Church Notes.
Communions.

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness and Portree; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, London, Portnalong, Achmore and Stoer; second, Fort William; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; and fifth, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie and Broadford; third, Edinburgh. *June*—First Sabbath, Tarbert, Applecross, Coigach; second, Shildaig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Inverness and Gairloch. *July*—First Sabbath, Lairg, Raasay and

Beaul; second, Staffin, Tomatin and Tain; third, Halkirk, Rogart, Flashadder and Daviot; fourth, Bracadale, North Uist and Plockton; fifth, Achmore and Thurso. *August*—First Sabbath, Dingwall and Vancouver (Canada); second, Portree and Stratherriek; third, Bonar, Finsbay and Laide; fourth, Vatten and Stornoway. *September*—First Sabbath, Ullapool and Breaslete; second, Strathy; third, Tarbert and Stoer. *October*—First Sabbath, Tolsta and Lochcarron; second, Gairloch and Ness; third, Applecross; fourth, Greenock, Lochinver and Wick. *November*—First Sabbath, Oban and Raasay; second, Glasgow and Halkirk; third, Edinburgh, Dornoch and Uig. *December*—First Sabbath, London.

Special Notice.

We have published above all the Communion dates for the year 1956. Will ministers kindly check the list and forward a note of omissions or corrections to the Editor.

London Communion Services.

Sabbath, 1st April, 1956. At Eccleston Hall, Eccleston Street, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1. The following services have been arranged, to be conducted by Rev. D. J. Matheson, Glasgow, and Rev. J. A. MacDonald, Raasay (D.V.):—Thursday, 29th March, 7 p.m. Friday, 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic); 7 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting). Saturday, 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. (Prayer Meeting). Sabbath, 11 a.m., 3.30 p.m. (Gaelic), Upstairs Hall and English (Downstairs Hall), and 7 p.m. Monday, 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.

Magazine Business during Editor's Absence.

As the Editor of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* expects (D.V.) to be away from 26th January until the 20th April, 1956, all correspondence and articles for the Editor should be sent to Rev. James A. Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, James Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, during the above period.

Synod Business during Clerk's Absence.

The Clerk of Synod, Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick, expects (D.V.) to be abroad from 26th January until the 20th April, 1956, and hopes on his return to prepare business for the Synod meeting in May, if well. But during his absence the Rev. A. F. MacKay, M.A., Free Presbyterian Manse, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, will receive and deal with any correspondence or business requiring attention.

Induction at Lairg.

In the early afternoon of Tuesday, 17th January, 1956, the pastoral vacancy in the Lairg-Bonar congregation, which had lasted for nine years, was filled with the settlement of Rev. Don. M. MacLeod,

Probationer, as pastor over the congregation. The day was very stormy with high wind and heavy rain, but in spite of the unfavourable weather, friends gathered from many parts of the North, as far distant as Lochinver and Helmsdale and from Inverness, as well as Golspie, Tain and Dingwall.

The Church was quite full when the Moderator of the Northern Presbytery, Rev. D. A. MacFarlane, conducted public worship and preached an instructive and most appropriate sermon on the words of the address to the Laodicean Church: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see" (Rev. iii. 18). The narrative of the steps taken in preparing the Call to Mr. MacLeod was then recounted by the clerk. The pastor-elect answered the questions usually put to candidates for the ministry to the satisfaction of the court, and signed the formula in the presence of the congregation. The Moderator then solemnly ordained Mr. MacLeod to the office of the ministry with the laying on of hands in which he was joined by the ministerial members of Presbytery present, and thereafter formally received and admitted the newly ordained minister in the name of the Presbytery and by authority of the Great Head of the Church to the pastoral oversight of the joint congregation of Lairg and Bonar. Minister and congregation were then addressed in appropriate and, it was felt, reasonable terms respectively by Rev. R. R. Sinclair and Rev. M. MacLeod.

The people of the congregation and the friends who had gathered to the service were then able to welcome Mr. MacLeod at the door as they passed out of the building. Several office-bearers from other parts of the Church were present, and of these Rev. D. MacLean, Portree, was associated with the Presbytery throughout the proceedings, and gave brief expression of his delight at being present, and offered his good wishes for Mr. MacLeod's happiness and success in the Gospel ministry. A letter was received from Rev. D. J. Matheson, Glasgow, who had been minister of the Lairg and Bonar congregation for more than 20 years, in which he expressed regret that Church duties in Glasgow prevented him from being present and wished his successor success in his work and all prosperity in the Lord. The Moderator, who presided, had also been minister of the congregation before Mr. Matheson, appropriately enough.

Lairg lies in the midst of a parish where in the past the fruits of the Gospel were greatly in evidence, and the memory of many of these gracious men and women is still preserved. In the early days of the Free Presbyterian Church some of the very salt of the earth were connected with our Church and there still survive, greatly reduced, a small number who love the "Gates of Zion." They have now, we believe, a pastor settled over them who will break to them the bread of life. May the Lord spare Mr. MacLeod to minister long among

the flock over the which He has made him overseer, and may He see much fruit attend his labours.—A. F. MACKAY, *Clerk of Northern Presbytery*.

Foreign Mission Notes.

Our people will be glad to know that Mrs. and Miss Nicolson arrived safely and in good health at Ingwenya after a comfortable and interesting journey. The re-union of old friends and fellow workers was a most happy one.

On January 8th communion services were held at a place called Ntabenendi, an out-station under Ingwenya, and about 20 miles distant. The Rev. J. Fraser came through from Mbumba to conduct the services. The small school there was packed to capacity. The services were most encouraging, warm and cordial. This was the first communion for some years held at this station. We trust that much good may result from these services.

At Mbumba a new school year was opened on the 24th January. Owing to the scarcity of teachers it may be necessary to limit the number of students.

Binding of Church Magazines.

This very desirable work is being done by Messrs. Adshead & Son, Ltd. We appreciate the difficulties they, and other bookbinders, have to contend with under present conditions. We wish our people to take advantage of the opportunity of having, if possible, complete volumes from No. 1. The early contentings of our Church against the infamous "Declaratory Act," and its evil accompaniments, should be read by the rising generation and re-read by others.

It is necessary to remind all that address and instructions should be carefully included in each parcel (not in separate letters). Further, time is required by the binders to accumulate a considerable number of copies before they proceed with the binding: thus delay in returning bound copies need not cause surprise. The next despatch of bound volumes is about to take place.—W. GRANT.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

Mr. J. Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, General Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following:—*Sustentation Fund*.—M. M. C., £5; Mr. M. McL., Kindrochit, Ardtalnaig, £10; Mr. D. M. McLennan, Cedar Rapids, U.S.A., £10; A Friend o/a Lochinver Congregation, £2; Anon. Thankoffering, £1 3/-; Miss B. McKay, Seaforth, Ontario, £3; Mrs. W. Streeton, Sidecup, 8/6; Mrs. R. C. Humphrey, Rodney, Ontario, £5 2/7; Mrs. R. C. Cornwell, Rodney, Ontario, £1 15/-; Mr. Coll Nicolson, Berkeley, California, £1 2/6; Miss H. M. Kelman, Forres, 10/-.

Home Mission Fund.—Mr. Ian McIver, Bradford, £1 1/-; Miss A. McK., Cama Cottage, Elphin, £2; Mr. D. M. McL., Cedar Rapids, £8.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' and Widows' and Orphans' Fund.—Miss C. Fletcher, Ardrishaig, 10/-; Mr. D. M. McL., Cedar Rapids, £4; Miss A. McK., Elphin, £2; Mrs. N. McK., Grosse, Mich., £3.

Home of Rest Fund.—Anon., £1; Anon. (Psalm 92, 14), 10/-; Miss C. F., Killearn Hospital, £1.

Dominions and Colonial Missions.—Mr. D. M. McL., Cedar Rapids, £5; Mrs. N. McK., Grosse, Mich., £1 15/-.

Organisation Fund.—Mr. N. S., George St., Dunoon, £1; Mr. D. M. McL., Cedar Rapids, £4.

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