



Articles and Sermons :: Days of Revival ~ Biography of M'Cheyne

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CHAPTER V.

DAYS OF REVIVAL.

"They shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses"—Isaiah 44:4

His people, who had never ceased to pray for him, welcomed his arrival among them with the greatest joy. He reached Dundee on a Thursday afternoon; and in the evening of the same day, Å—being the usual time for prayer in St. Peter's, Å—after a short meditation, he hastened to the church, there to render thanks to the Lord, and to speak once more to his flock. The appearance of the church that evening, and the aspect of the people, he never could forget. Many of his brethren were present to welcome him, and to hear the first words of his opened lips. There was not a seat in the church unoccupied, the passages were completely filled, and the stairs up to the pulpit were crowded, on the one side with the aged, on the other with eagerly-listening children. Many a face was seen anxiously gazing on their restored pastor; many were weeping under the unhealed wounds of conviction; all were still and calm, intensely earnest to hear. He gave out Psalm 66; and the manner of singing, which had been remarked since the Revival began, appeared to him peculiarly sweet, Å—"so tender and affecting, as if the people felt that they were praising a present God." After solemn prayer with them, he was able to preach for above an hour. Not knowing how long he might be permitted to proclaim the glad tidings, he seized that opportunity, not to tell of his journeyings, but to show the way of life to sinners. His subject was I Cor. 2. 1-4, Å—the matter, the manner, and the accompaniments of Paul's preaching. It was a night to be remembered.

On coming out of the church, he found the road to his house crowded with old and young, who were waiting to welcome him back. He had to shake hands with many at the same time; and before this happy multitude would disperse, had to speak some words of life to them again, and pray with them where they stood. "To thy name. O Lord," said he that night, when he returned to his home, "To thy name, O Lord, be all the glory!" A month afterwards, he was visited by one who had hitherto stood out against all the singular influence of the Revival, but who that night was deeply awakened under his words, so that the arrow festered in her soul, till she came crying, "Oh my hard, hard heart!"

On the Sabbath he preached to his flock in the afternoon. He chose II Chron. 5:13, 14, as his subject; and in the close, his hearers remember well how affectionately and solemnly he said: "Dearly beloved and longed for, I now begin another year of my ministry among you; and I am resolved, if God give me health and strength, that I will not let a man, woman, or child among you alone, until you have at least heard the testimony of God concerning his Son, either to your condemnation or salvation. And I will pray, as I have done before, that if the Lord will indeed give us a great outpouring of his Spirit, He will do it in such a way that it will be evident to the weakest child among you that it is the Lord's work, and not man's. I think I may say to you, as Rutherford said to his people, 'Your heaven would be two heavens to me.' And if the Lord be pleased to give me a crown from among you, I do here promise in his sight, that I will cast it at his feet, saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.'"

It was much feared for a time that a jealous spirit would prevail among the people of St. Peter's, some saying, "I am of Paul; and others, I of Cephas." Those recently converted were apt to regard their spiritual father in a light in which they could regard none besides. But Mr. M'Cheyne had received from the Lord a holy disinterestedness that suppressed every feeling of envy. Many wondered at the single-heartedness he was enabled to exhibit. He could sincerely say, "I have no desire but the salvation of my people, by whatever instrument."

Never, perhaps, was there one placed in better circumstances for testing the Revival impartially, and seldom has any Revival been more fully tested. He came among a people whose previous character he knew; he found a work wrought among them during his absence, in which he had not had any direct share; he returned home to go out and in among them, and to be a close observer of all that had taken place; and after a faithful and prayerful examination, he did most unhesitatingly say, that the Lord had wrought great things, whereof he was glad; and in the case of many of those whose souls were saved in that Revival, he discovered remarkable answers to the prayers of himself, and of those who

had come to the truth, before he left them. He wrote to me his impressions of the work, when he had been a few weeks among his people:—

Dec. 2, 1839.

"Rev. And. A. Bonar, Collace.

"My Dear A.,—I begin upon note-paper, because I have no other on hand but our thin travelling paper. I have much to tell you, and to praise the Lord for. I am grieved to hear that there are no marks of the Spirit's work about Collace during your absence; but if Satan drive you to your knees, he will soon find cause to repent it. Remember how fathers do to their children when they ask bread. How much more shall our heavenly Father give (&#940;&#947;&#945;&#952;&#945;) all good things to them that ask Him. Remember the rebuke which I once got from old Mr. Dempster of Denny, after preaching to his people: 'I was highly pleased with your discourse, but in prayer it struck me that you thought God unwilling to give.' Remember Daniel: 'At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.' And do not think you are forgotten by me as long as I have health and grace to pray.

"Everything here I have found in a state better than I expected. The night I arrived I preached to such a congregation as I never saw before. I do not think another person could have got into the church, and there was every sign of the deepest and tenderest emotion. R. Macdonald was with me, and prayed. Affliction and success in the ministry have taught and quickened him. I preached on I Cor. 2:1-4, and felt what I have often heard, that it is easy to preach where the Spirit of God is. On the Friday night Mr. Burns preached. On the Sabbath I preached on that wonderful passage, II Chron. 5:13, 14; Mr. Burns preached twice, morning and evening. His views of divine truth are clear and commanding. There is a great deal of substance in what he preaches, and his manner is very powerful,—so much so, that he sometimes made me tremble. In private he is deeply prayerful, and seems to feel his danger of falling into pride.

"I have seen many of the awakened, and many of the saved; indeed, this is a pleasant place compared with what it was once. Some of the awakened are still in the deepest anxiety and distress. Their great error is exactly what your brother Horace told me. They think that coming to Christ is some strange act of their mind, different from believing what God has said of his Son; so much so, that they will, tell you with one breath, I believe all that. God has said, and yet with the next complain that they cannot come to Christ, or close with Christ. It is very hard to deal with this delusion.

"I find some old people deeply shaken; they feel insecure. One confirmed drunkard has come to me, and is, I believe, now a saved man. Some little children are evidently saved. All that I have yet seen are related to converts of my own. One, eleven years old, is a singular instance of divine grace. When I asked if she desired to be made holy, she said, 'Indeed, I often wish I was awa, that I might sin nae mair.' A.L., of fifteen, is a fine tender-hearted believer. W.S., ten, is also a happy boy.

"Many of my own dear children in the Lord are much advanced; much more full of joy,—their hearts lifted up in the ways of the Lord. I have found many more savingly impressed under my own ministry than I knew of. Some have come to tell me. In one case a whole family saved. I have hardly met with anything to grieve me. Surely the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me. I fear, however, that the great Spirit has in some measure passed by,—I hope soon to return in greater power than ever. The week meetings are thinner now. I will turn two of them into my classes soon, and so give solid, regular instruction, of which they stand greatly in need. I have not met with one case of extravagance or false fire, although doubtless there may be many. At first they used to follow in a body to our house, and expected many an address and prayer by the road. They have given up this now. I preached last Sabbath twice, first on Isaiah 28:14-18, and then on Rev. 12:11, 'Overcame by the blood of the Lamb.' It was a very solemn day. The people willingly sat till it was dark. Many make it a place of Bochim. Still there is nothing of the power which has been. I have tried to persuade Mr. Burns to stay with us, and I think he will remain in Dundee. I feel fully stronger in body than when I left you. Instead of exciting me, there is everything to solemnize and still my feelings. Eternity sometimes seems very near.

"I would like your advice about prayer-meetings; how to consolidate them; what rules should be followed, if any; whether there should be mere reading of the word and prayer, or free converse also on the passage? We began to-day a ministerial prayer-meeting, to be held every Monday at eleven, for an hour and a half. This is a great comfort, and may be a great blessing. Of course we do not invite the colder ministers; that would only damp our meeting. Tell me if you think this right.

"And now, dear A., I must be done, for it is very late. May your people share in the quickening that has come over Dundee! I feel it a very powerful argument with many: 'Will you be left dry when others are getting drops of heavenly

dew?' Try this with your people.

"I think it probable we shall have another communion again before the regular one. It seems very desirable. You will come and help us; and perhaps Horace too.

"I thought of coming back by Collace from Errol, if our Glasgow meeting had not come in the way.

"Will you set agoing your Wednesday meeting again, immediately?

"Farewell, dear A. 'Oh man, greatly beloved, fear not; peace be to thee; be strong; yea, be strong.' Yours ever," etc.

To Mr. Burns he thus expresses himself on December 19: "My dear Brother, I shall never be able to thank you for all your labors among the precious souls committed to me; and what is worse, I can never thank God fully for his kindness and grace, which every day appear to me more remarkable. He has answered prayer to me in all that has happened, in a way which I have never told any one." Again, on the 31st: "Stay where you are, dear brother, as long as the Lord has any work for you to do. If I know my own heart, its only desire is that Christ may be glorified, by souls flocking to Him, and abiding in Him, and reflecting his image; and whether it be in Perth or Dundee, should signify little to us. You know I told you my mind plainly, that I thought the Lord had so blessed you in Dundee, that you were called to a fuller and deeper work there; but if the Lord accompanies you to other places, I have nothing to object. The Lord strengthened my body and soul last Sabbath, and my spirit also was glad. The people were much alive in the Lord's service. But oh! dear brother, the most are Christless still. The rich are almost untroubled."

His evidence on this subject is given fully in his answers to the queries put by a Committee of the Aberdeen Presbytery; and in a note to a friend, he incidentally mentions a pleasing result of this wide-spread awakening: "I find many souls saved under my own ministry, whom I never knew of before. They are not afraid to come out now, it has become so common a thing to be concerned about the soul." At that time, also, many came from a distance; one came from the north, who had been a year in deep distress of soul, to seek Christ in Dundee.

In his brief diary he records, on December 3, that twenty anxious souls had that night been conversing with him; "many of them very deeply interesting." He occasionally fixed an evening for the purpose of meeting with those who were awakened; and in one of his note-books there are at least four hundred visits recorded, made to him by inquiring souls, in the course of that and the following years. He observed, that those who had been believers formerly had got their hearts enlarged, and were greatly established; and some seemed able to feed upon the truth in a new manner, as when one related to him how there had for some time appeared a glory in the reading of the word in public, quite different from reading it alone.

At the same time he saw backslidings, both among those whom believers had considered really converted, and among those who had been deeply convicted, though never reckoned among the really saved. He notes in his book: "Called to see —. Poor lad, he seems to have gone back from Christ, led away by evil company. And yet I felt sure of him at one time. What blind creatures ministers are! man looketh at the outward appearance." One morning he was visited by one of his flock, proposing "a concert for prayer on the following Monday, in behalf of those who had fallen back, that God's Spirit might re-awaken them," so observant were the believers as well as their pastor of declensions. Among those who were awakened, but never truly converted, he mentions one case. "Jan. 9, 1840. Met with the case of one who had been frightened during the late work, so that her bodily health was injured. She seems to have no care now about her soul. It has only filled her mouth with evil-speaking."

That many, who promised fair, drew back and walked no more with Jesus, is true. Out of about 800 souls who, during the months of the Revival, conversed with different ministers in apparent anxiety, no wonder surely if many proved to have been impressed only for a time. President Edwards considered it likely that, in such cases, the proportion of real conversions might resemble the proportion of blossoms in spring, and fruit in autumn. Nor can anything be more unreasonable than to doubt the truth of all, because of the deceit of some. The world itself does not so act in judging of its own. The world reckons upon the possibility of being mistaken in many cases, and yet does not cease to believe that there is honesty and truth to be found. One of themselves, a poet of their own, has said with no less justice than beauty —

"Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell;

And though foul things put on the brows of grace,

Yet grace must still look so."

But, above all, we have the authority of the word of God, declaring that such backslidings are the very tests of the true church: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you," I Cor. 11:19. It is not, however, meant that any who had really believed went back to perdition. On the contrary, it is the creed of every sound evangelical church, that those who do go back to perdition were persons who never really believed in Jesus. Their eyes may have been opened to see the dread realities of sin and of the wrath to come; but if they saw not righteousness for their guilty souls in the Saviour, there is nothing in all Scripture to make us expect that they will continue awake. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and Christ will give thee light," is the call—inviting sinners to a point far beyond mere conviction. One who, for a whole year, went back to folly, said: "Your sermon on the corruption of the heart made me despair, and so I gave myself up to my old ways—attending dances, learning songs," etc. A knowledge of our guilt, and a sense of danger, will not of themselves keep us from falling; nay, these, if alone, may (as in the above case) thrust us down the slippery places. We are truly secure only when our eye is on Jesus, and our hand locked in his hand. So that the history of backslidings, instead of leading us to doubt the reality of grace in believers, will only be found to teach us two great lessons, viz. the vast importance of pressing immediate salvation on awakened souls, and the reasonableness of standing in doubt of all, however deep their convictions, who have not truly fled to the hope set before them.

There was another ground of prejudice against the whole work, arising from the circumstance that the Lord had employed in it young men not long engaged in the work of the ministry, rather than the fathers in Israel. But herein it was that sovereign grace shone forth the more conspicuously. Do such objectors suppose that God ever intends the honor of man in a work of Revival? Is it not the honor of his own name that He seeks? Had it been his wish to give the glory to man at all, then indeed it might have been asked, "Why does He pass by the older pastors, and call for the inexperienced youth?" But when sovereign grace was coming to bless a region in the way that would redound most to the glory of the Lord, can we conceive a wiser plan than to use the sling of David in bringing down the Philistine? If, however, there be some whose prejudice is from the root of envy, let such hear the remonstrance of Richard Baxter to the jealous ministers of his day. "What! malign Christ in gifts for which He should have the glory, and all because they seem to hinder our glory! Does not every man owe thanks to God for his brethren's gifts, not only as having himself part in them, as the foot has the benefit of the guidance of the eye, but also because his own ends may be attained by his brethren's gifts as well as by his own? ... A fearful thing that any man, that hath the least of the fear of God, should so envy at God's gifts, that he would rather his carnal hearers were unconverted, and the drowsy not awakened, than that it should be done by another who may be preferred before them."

The work of the Spirit went on, the stream flowing gently; for the heavy showers had fallen, and the overflowing of the waters had passed by. Mr. M'Cheyne became more than ever vigilant and discriminating in dealing with souls. Observing, also, that some were influenced more by feelings of strong attachment to their pastor personally, than by the power of the truths he preached, he became more reserved in his dealings with them, so that some thought there was a little coldness or repulsiveness in his manner. If there did appear anything of this nature to some, certainly it was no indication of diminished compassion; but, on the contrary, proceeded from a scrupulous anxiety to guard others against the deceitful feelings of their own souls. A few notes of his work occur at this period.

"Nov. 27, 1839.—A pleasant meeting in the Cross Church on Wednesday last, for the seamen. All that spoke seemed to honor the Saviour. I had to move thanksgiving to God for his mercies. This has been a real blessing to Dundee. It should not be forgotten in our prayers and thanksgivings."

"Nov. 28, Thursday evening.—Much comfort in speaking. There was often an awful stillness. Spoke on Jer. 6:14: 'They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly.'" etc.

"Dec. 1.—This evening came a tender Christian, so far as I can see; an exposition of that text, 'I will go softly,' or of that other, 'Thou shalt not open thy mouth any more.' A child of shame made one of honor. Her sister was awakened under Mr. Baxter's words in St. Peter's, of whom he asked, 'Would you like to be holy?' She replied, 'Indeed, I often wish I were dead that I might sin no more.'"

"Dec. 3.—Preached six times within these two days."

"Dec. 8.—Saw J.T. in fever. She seems really in Christ now; tells me how deeply my words sank into her soul when I was away. A.M. stayed to tell me her joy. J.B. walked home with me, telling me what God had done for his soul, when one day I had stopped at the quarry on account of a shower of rain, and took shelter with my pony in the engine-house." He had simply pointed to the fire of the furnace, and said, "What does that remind you of?" and the words had remained de

ep in the man's soul.

"Dec. 11.Â—A woman awakened that night I preached in J.D.'s green, about two years ago, on Ezek. 20:43. For twenty years she had been out of church privileges, and now, for the first time, came trembling to ask restoration. Surely Immanuel is in this place, and even old sinners are flocking to Him. I have got an account of about twenty prayer-meetings connected with my flock. Many open ones; many fellowship meetings; only one or two have anything like exhortation superadded to the word. These, I think, it must be our care to change, if possible, lest error and pride creep in. The only other difficulty is this. In two of the female meetings, originally fellowship meetings, anxious female inquirers have been admitted. They do not pray, but only hear. In one, M. and J. had felt the rising of pride to a great degree; in the other, M. could not be persuaded that there was any danger of pride. This case will require prayerful deliberation. My mind at present is, that there is great danger from it, the praying members feeling themselves on a different level from the others, and anything like female teaching, as a public teacher, seems clearly condemned in the word of God."

"Dec. 12.Â—Felt very feeble all day, and as if I could not do any more work in the vineyard. Evening.Â—Felt more of the reality of Immanuel's intercession. The people also were evidently subdued by more than a human testimony. One soul waited, sobbing most piteously. She could give no more account of herself than that she was a sinner, and did not believe that God would be merciful to her. When I showed how I found mercy, her only answer was, "But you were not sic a sinner as me."

"Dec. 18.Â—Went to Glasgow along with A.B. Preached in St. George's to a full audience, in the cause of the Jews. Felt real help in time of need." This was one of his many journeys from place to place in behalf of Israel, relating the things seen and heard among the Jews of Palestine and other lands.

"Dec. 22.Â—Preached in Anderston Church, with a good deal of inward peace and comfort."

"Dec. 23.Â—Interesting meeting with the Jewish Committee. In the evening met a number of God's people. The horror of some good people in Glasgow at the millenarian views is very great, while at the same time their objections appear very weak."

"Dec. 31.Â—Young communicants. Two have made application to be admitted under eleven years of age; four that are only fourteen; three who are fifteen or sixteen."

"Jan. 1, 1840.Â—Awoke early by the kind providence of God, and had uncommon freedom and fervency in keeping the concert for prayer this morning before light. Very touching interview with M.P., who still refuses to be comforted. Was enabled to cry after a glorious Immanuel along with her. How I wish I had her bitter convictions of sin! Another called this evening, who says she was awakened and brought to Christ during the sermon on the morning of December 1st, on the 'Covenant with death.' Gave clear answers, but seems too unmoved for one really changed."

"Jan. 2.Â—Visited six families. Was refreshed and solemnized at each of them. Spoke of the Word made flesh, and of all the paths of the Lord being mercy and truth. Visited in the evening by some interesting souls: one a believing little boy; another complaining she cannot come to Christ for the hardness of her heart; another once awakened under my ministry, again thoroughly awakened and brought to Christ under Horace Bonar's sermon at the Communion. She is the only saved one in her family,Â—awfully persecuted by father and mother. Lord, stand up for thine own! Make known, by their constancy under suffering, the power and beauty of thy grace! Evening.Â—Mr. Miller preached delightfully on 'The love of Christ constraineth us.' His account of the Protestants of France was very interesting: the work of God at Nismes, where it is said they are no more fishing with line, but dragging with the nets. Read a letter from Mr. Cumming, describing the work at Perth, and entreating the prayers of God's children."

This last reference is to the awakening which took place in St. Leonard's Church, Perth, on the last night of the year, when Mr. Burns, along with their pastor, Mr. Milne, was preaching. Mr. B. had intended to return to Dundee for the Sabbath, but was detained by the plain indications of the Lord's presence. At one meeting the work was so glorious, that one night about 150 persons at one time seemed bowed down under a sense of their guilt, and above 200 came next day to the church in the forenoon to converse about their souls. This awakening was the commencement of a solid work of grace, both in that town and its neighborhood, much fruit of which is to be found there at this day in souls that are walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost. And it was in the spring of this same year that in Collace, at our weekly prayer-meeting, when two brethren were ministering, we received a blessed shower from the Lord.

His Journal proceeds:Â—

"Jan. 3.Â—An inquirer came, awakened under my ministry two years and a half ago."

"Jan. 5.Â—Two came; M.B. sorely wounded with the forenoon's discourse."

"Jan. 12.Â—Intimated a concert for prayer, that unworthy communicants might be kept back, the Lord's children prepared for the feast, and ministers furnished from on high."

"Jan. 13.Â—Kept concert of prayer this morning with my dear people. Did not find the same enlargement as usual."

"March 5. Thursday evening.Â—Preached on Zech. 3.Â—Joshua. Was led to speak searchingly about making Christ the minister of sin. One young woman cried aloud very bitterly. M.B. came to tell me that poor M. is like to have her life taken away by her parents. A young woman also, who is still concerned and persecuted by her father. A young man came to tell me that he had found Christ. Roll on, thou river of life! visit every dwelling! save a multitude of souls. Come, Holy Spirit! come quickly!"

"March 25.Â—Last night at Forfar speaking for Israel to a small band of friends of the Jews. Fearfully wicked place; the cry of it ascends up before God like that of Sodom."

"March 31.Â—Met with young communicants on Wednesday and Friday. On the latter night especially, very deep feeling, manifested in sobbings. Visits of several. One clear child nine years old. Sick-bed."

"April 1.Â—Presbytery day. Passed the constitution of two new churches,Â—blessed be God! may He raise up faithful pastors for them both,Â—Dudhope and Wallace-Feus. Proposal also for the Mariner's Church. A fast-day fixed for the present state of the church."

"April 5, Sabbath evening.Â—Spoke to twenty-four young persons, one by one; almost all affected about their souls."

"April 6.Â—Lovely ride and meditation in a retired grove."

"April 7.Â—Impressed to-night with the complete necessity of preaching to my people in their own lanes and closes; in no other way will God's word ever reach them. To-night spoke in St. Andrew's Church to a very crowded assembly in behalf of Israel. Was helped to speak plainly to their own consciences. Lord, bless it! Shake this town!"

"April 13.Â—Spoke in private to nearly thirty young communicants, all in one room, going round each, and advising for the benefit of all."

"April 22.Â—Rode to Collessie (Fife) and Kirkcaldy. Sweet time alone in Collessie woods."

"July 30.Â—One lad came to me in great distress, wishing to know if he should confess his little dishonesties to his master." About this time, he has noted down, "I was visiting the other day, and came to a locked door. What did this mean? 'Torment me not, torment me not!' Ah, Satan is mighty still!"Â—referring to Mark 5:7.

A few of his Communion seasons are recorded. We could have desired a record of them all. The first of which he has detailed any particulars, is the one he enjoyed soon after returning home.

"Jan. 19, 1840.Â—Stormy morning, with gushing torrents of rain, but cleared up in answer to prayer. Sweet union in prayer with Mr. Cumming, and afterwards with A. Bonar, Found God in secret. Asked especially that the very sight of the broken bread and poured-out wine might be blessed to some souls, then pride will be hidden from man. Church well filledÂ—many standing. Preached the action sermon on John 17:24, 'Father, I will,' etc. Had considerable nearness to God in prayerÂ—more than usual,Â—and also freedom in preaching, although I was ashamed of such poor views of Christ's glory. The people were in a very desirable frame of attentionÂ—hanging on the word. Felt great help in fencing the tables from Acts 5:3, 'Lying to the Holy Ghost.' Came down and served the first table with much more calmness and collectedness than ever I remember to have enjoyed. Enjoyed a sweet season while A.B. served the next table. He dwelt chiefly on believing the words of Christ about his fulness, and the promise of the Father. There were six tables altogether. The people more and more moved to the end. At the last table, every head seemed bent like a bulrush while A.B. spoke of the ascension of Christ. Helped a little in the address. 'Now to Him who is able to keep you,' etc., and in the concluding prayer. One little boy, in retiring, said, 'This has been another bonnie day.' Many of the little ones seemed deeply attentive. Mr.

Cumming and Mr. Burns preached in the school the most of the day. In the evening Mr. C. preached on the Pillar Cloud on every dwelling, Isaiah 4:5 some very sweet powerful words. Mr. Burns preached in the schoolroom. When the church emptied a congregation formed in the lower school, and began to sing. Sang several psalms with them, and spoke on 'Behold I stand at the door.' Going home, A.L. said 'Pray for me; I am quite happy, and so is H.' Altogether a day of the revelation of Christ, a sweet day to myself, and, I am persuaded, to many souls. Lord, make us meet for the table above."

Another of these Communion seasons recorded, is April 1840. "Sabbath 19. a Sweet and precious day. Preached a sermon on Zech. 12:10, 13:1. A good deal assisted. Also in fencing the tables, on Ps. 139., 'Search me, O God.' Less at serving the tables on 'I will betroth thee,' and 'To him that overcometh;' though the thanksgiving was sweet. Communicated with calm joy. Old Mr. Burns served two tables; H. Bonar five. There was a very melting frame visible among the people. Helped a good deal in the address on 'My sheep hear my voice.' After seven before all was over. Met before eight. Old Mr. Burns preached on 'A word in season.' Gave three parting texts, and so concluded this blessed day. Many were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

"Monday, 20. a Mr. Grierson preached on 'Ye are come to Mount Zion,' an instructive word. Pleasant walk with H.B. Evening sermon from him to the little children on the 'new heart,' truly delightful. Prayer-meeting after. I began; then old Mr. Burns, then Horace, in a very lively manner, on the 'woman of Samaria.' The people were brought into a very tender frame. After the blessing, a multitude remained. One (A.N.) was like a person struck through with a dart, she could neither stand nor go. Many were looking on her with faces of horror. Others were comforting her in a very kind manner, bidding her look to Jesus. Mr. Burns went to the desk, and told them of Kilsyth. Still they would not go away. Spoke a few words more to those around me, telling them of the loveliness of Christ, and the hardness of their hearts, that they could be so unmoved when one was so deeply wounded. The sobbing soon spread, till many heads were bent down, and the church was filled with sobbing. Many whom I did not know were now affected. After prayer, we dismissed, near midnight. Many followed us. One, in great agony, prayed that she might find Christ that very night. So ends this blessed season."

The prayer-meeting on the Monday evening following the Communion was generally enjoyed by all the Lord's people, and by the ministers who assisted, in a peculiar manner. Often all felt the last day of the feast to be the great day. Souls that had been enjoying the feast were then, at its conclusion, taking hold on the arm of the Beloved in the prospect of going up through the wilderness.

The only notice of his last Communion, January 1, 1843, is the following: "Sabbath. A happy communion season. Mr. W. Burns preached on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings the first and last very solemn. Mr. Baxter (of Hilltown Church) on the Friday. A. Bonar on Saturday, on Rom. 8: a The spirit of adoption. I fainted on the Sabbath morning, but revived, and got grace and strength to preach on I Tim. 1:16 Paul's conversion a pattern. There were five tables. Many godly strangers, and a very desirable frame observable in the people. 'While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth out the smell thereof.' Much sin was covered. He restoreth my soul. Monday, 2. a Mr. Milne (of Perth) preached on 'Hold fast that thou hast;' and in the evening, to the children, on Josh. 24. a 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.' Andrew and I concluded with Rev. 5. a 'Thou hast redeemed us,' etc., and I Cor. 15. a 'Be stedfast,' etc."

He dispensed the Lord's Supper to his flock every quarter; and though on this account his calls upon his brethren for help were frequent, yet never did a brother reckon it anything else than a blessed privilege to be with him. His first invitation to his friend Mr. Hamilton (then at Abernethy) will show the nature of the intercourse that subsisted between him and his brethren who gave their services on these occasions: "My dear Friend. Will you excuse lack of ceremony, and come down to-morrow and preach to us the unsearchable riches of Christ? We have the communion on Sabbath. We have no fast-day, but only a meeting in the evening at a quarter past seven. Come, my dear sir, if you can, and refresh us with your company. Bring the fragrance of 'the bundle of myrrh' along with you, and may grace be poured into your lips. Yours ever." (Jan. 15. 1840.)

Re: Days of Revival ~ Biography of M'Cheyne, on: 2008/8/25 8:54

(Cont'd)

Soon after his return from his mission to the Jews, a ministerial prayer-meeting was formed among some of the brethren in Dundee. Mr. M'Cheyne took part in it, along with Mr. Lewis of St. David's, Mr. Baxter of Hilltown, Mr. P.L. Miller, afterwards of Wallacetown, and others. Feeling deep concern for the salvation of the souls under their care, they met every Monday forenoon, to pray together for their flocks and their own souls. The time of the meeting was limited to an hour and a half, in order that all who attended might form their pastoral arrangements for the day, without fear of being hindered; and, in addition to prayer, those present conversed on some selected topic, vitally connected with their duties as ministers of Christ. Mr. M'Cheyne was never absent from this prayer-meeting unless through absolute necessity, and the brethren scarcely remember any occasion on which some important remark did not drop from his lips. He himself reaped great profit from it. He notes, Dec. 8: "This has been a deeply interesting week. On Monday our ministerial prayer-meeting was set agoing in St. David's vestry. The hearts of all seem really in earnest in it. The Lord answers prayer; may it be a great blessing to our souls and to our flocks." Another time: "Meeting in St. David's vestry. The subject of fasting was spoken upon. Felt exceedingly in my own spirit how little we feel real grief on account of sin before God, or we would often lose our appetite for food. When parents lose a child, they often do not taste a bit from morning to night, out of pure grief. Should we not mourn as for an only child? How little of the spirit of grace and supplication we have then!" On Dec. 30: "Pleasant meeting of ministers. Many delightful texts on 'Arguments to be used with God in prayer.' How little I have used these! Should we not study prayer more?"

Full as he was of affection and Christian kindness to all believers, he was specially so to the faithful brethren in the gospel of Christ. Perhaps there never was one who more carefully watched against the danger of undervaluing precious men, and detracting from a brother's character. Although naturally ambitious, grace so wrought in him, that he never sought to bring himself into view; and most cheerfully would he observe and take notice of the graces and gifts of others. Who is there of us that should ever feel otherwise? "For the body is not one member, but many." And "the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor, again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

All with whom he was intimate still remember with gratitude how faithfully and anxiously he used to warn his friends of whatever he apprehended they were in danger from. To Mr. W.C. Burns he wrote, Dec. 31, 1839: "Now, the Lord be your strength, teacher, and guide. I charge you, be clothed with humility, or you will yet be a wandering star, for which is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. Let Christ increase; let man decrease. This is my constant prayer for myself and you. If you lead sinners to yourself and not to Christ, Immanuel will cast the star out of his right hand into utter darkness. Remember what I said of preaching out of the Scriptures: honor the word both in the matter and manner. Do not cease to pray for me." At another time (November 3, 1841), he thus wrote to the same friend: "Now remember Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone. Looking at our own shining face is the bane of the spiritual life and of the ministry. Oh for closest communion with God, till soul and body—head, face, and heart—shine with divine brilliancy! but oh for a holy ignorance of our shining! Pray for this; for you need it as well as I."

To another friend in the ministry who had written to him despondingly about his people and the times, his reply was, "I am sure there never was a time when the Spirit of God was more present in Scotland, and it does not become you to murmur in your tents, but rather to give thanks. Remember, we may grieve the Spirit as truly by not joyfully acknowledging his wonders as by not praying for Him. There is the clearest evidence that God is saving souls in Kilsyth, Dundee, Perth, Collace, Blairgowrie, Strathbogie, Ross-shire, Breadalbane, Kelso, Jedburgh, Ancrum; and surely it becomes us to say, 'I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.' Forgive my presumption; but I fear lest you hurt your own peace and usefulness in not praising God enough for the operation of his hands." To another: "I have told you that you needed trial, and now it is come. May you be exercised thereby, and come to that happy 'afterwards' of which the apostle speaks," To the same again "Remember the necessity of your own soul, and do not grow slack or lean in feeding others. 'Mine own vineyard have I not kept.' Ah, take heed of that!" And in a similar tone of faithfulness at an after period: "Remember the case of your own soul. 'What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Remember how often Paul appeals to his holy, just, unblameable life. Oh that we may be able always to do the same!" "Remember the priming-knife," he says to another, "and do not let your vine run to wood." And after a visit to Mr. Thornton of Milnathort, in whose parish there had been an awakening, he asks a brother, "Mr. Thornton is willing that others be blessed more than himself; do you think that you have that grace? I find that I am never so successful as when I can lie at Christ's feet, willing to be used or not as seemeth good in his sight. Do you remember David? 'If the Lord say, I have no delight in thee; behold, he is I; let Him do to me as seemeth good unto Him.'"

In his familiar letters, as in his life, there was the manifestation of a bright, cheerful soul, without the least tendency to levity.



ity. When his medical attendant had, on one occasion, declined any remuneration, Mr. M'Cheyne peremptorily opposed his purpose; and to overcome his reluctance, returned the inclosure in a letter, in which he used his poetical gifts with most pleasant humor.

To many it was a subject of wonder that he found time to write letters that always breathed the name of Jesus, amid his innumerable engagements. But the truth was, his letters cost him no expenditure of time; they were ever the fresh thoughts and feelings of his soul at the moment he took up the pen; his habitual frame of soul is what appears in them all; the calm, holy, tenderly affectionate style of his letters reminds us of Samuel Rutherford, whose works he delighted to read, —excepting only that his joy never seems to have risen to ecstasies. The selection of his letters which I have made for publication, may exhibit somewhat of his holy skill in dropping a word for his Master on all occasions. But what impressed many yet more, was his manner of introducing the truth, most naturally and strikingly, even in the shortest note he penned; and there was something so elegant, as well as solemn, in his few words at the close of some of his letters, that these remained deep in the receiver's heart. Writing to Mr. G.S., on July 28, 1841, he thus draws to a close: "Remember me to H.T. I pray he may be kept abiding in Christ. Kindest regards to his mother. Say to her from me, 'Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear, forasmuch as ye know ye were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold' (I Peter 1:17, 18). Keep your own heart, dear brother, 'in the love of God' (Jude 21)—in his love to you, and that will draw your love to Him. Kindest remembrances to your brother. Say to him, 'Be sober and hope to the end' (I Peter 1:13). To your own dear mother say, 'He doth not afflict willingly.' Write me soon.—Ever yours, till time shall be no more." In a note to the members of his own family: "The Tay is before me now like a resplendent mirror, glistening in the morning sun. May the same sun shine sweetly on you, and may He that makes it shine, shine into your hearts to give you the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—In haste, your affectionate son and brother." There were often such last words as the following: "Oh for drops in the pastures of the wilderness! The smiles of Jesus be with you, and the breathings of the Holy Ghost. Ever yours." (To Rev. J. Milne.) "May we have gales passing from Perth to this, and from here to you, and from heaven to both. Ever yours." (To the same.) "The time is short; eternity is near; yea, the coming of Christ the second time is at hand. Make sure of being one with the Lord Jesus, that you may be glad when you see Him. Commending you all to our Father in heaven," etc. (To his own brother.) "I have a host of letters before me, and therefore can add no more. I give you a parting text, 'Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.'" Another: "Farewell! yours till the day dawn." To the Rev. Hor. Bonar he says, at the close of a letter about some ministerial arrangements: "I am humbled and cheered by what you say of good done in Kelso. Roll on, roll on, river of God, that art full of water! A woman came to me, awakened under your sermon to the children in the Cross Church, very bitterly convinced of sin. Glory to the Divine Archer, who bringeth down the people!" He closes a letter to a student thus: "Grace be with you, and much of the knowledge of Jesus—much of his likeness. I thirst for the knowledge of the word but most of all of Jesus himself, the true Word. May He abide in you, and you in Him! The Fear of Isaac watch over you." In concluding a letter to Mr. Bonar of Larbert, in February 1843, some weeks before his last illness, he writes: "My soul often goes out at the throne of grace in behalf of Larbert and Dunipace. May the disruption be more blessed to them than days of peace! How sweet to be in the ark when the deluge comes down! Ever yours in gospel bonds."

The Jewish Mission continued near his heart, "the nearest," said he to Mr. Edwards, who is now at Jassy, "of all missionary enterprises. Were it not for my own unfitness, and also the success the Lord has given me where I am, I would joyfully devote myself to it." In connection with this cause, he was invited to visit Ireland, and be present at the meeting of the Synod of our Presbyterian brethren in the summer of 1840. When preparing to set out, he notices the hand of his Master guiding him:—"July 2.—Expected to have been in Ireland this day. Detained by not being able to get supply for Sabbath, in the good providence of God; for this evening there was a considerable awakening in the church while I was preaching upon Phil. 3:18, 'Enemies of the cross of Christ,' When that part was expounded, there was a loud and bitter weeping,—probably thirty or forty seemed to share in it; the rest deeply impressed,—many secretly praying." On the Sabbath following, one person was so overcome as to be carried out of the church.

He set out for Ireland on the 7th, and on the 10th witnessed at Belfast the union between the Synod of Ulster and the Session. He speaks of it as a most solemn scene—500 ministers and elders present. During his stay there, he pleaded the cause of the Jews in Mr. Morgan's church, Mr. Wilson's, and some others; and also visited Mr. Kirkpatrick at Dublin. He preached the way of salvation to the Gentiles in all his pleadings for Israel. His visit was blessed to awaken a deep interest in the cause of the Jews, and his words sank into the consciences of some. His sermon on Ezek. 34:16 was felt by some to be indescribably impressive; and when he preached on Rom. 1:16, 17, many ministers, as they came out, were heard saying, "How was it we never thought of the duty of remembering Israel before?" On another occasion, the people to whom he had preached entreated their minister to try and get him again, and if he could not preach to them, that at least he should pray once more with them.

He was not, however, long absent from home on this occasion. On the 25th I find him recording: "Reached home; entirel

y unprepared for the evening. Spoke on Psalm 51:12, 13, 'Restore unto me the joy,' etc. There seemed much of the presence of God, first one crying out in extreme agony, then another. Many were deeply melted, and all solemnized. Felt a good deal of freedom in speaking of the glory of Christ's salvation. Coming down, I spoke quietly to some whom I knew to be under deep concern. They were soon heard together weeping bitterly; many more joined them. Mr. Cumming spoke to them in a most touching strain, while I dealt privately with several in the vestry. Their cries were often very bitter and piercing, bitterest when the freeness of Christ was pressed upon them, and the lion's nearness. Several were offended; but I felt no hesitation as to our duty to declare the simple truth impressively, and leave God to work in their hearts in his own way. If He save souls in a quiet way, I shall be happy; if in the midst of cries and tears, still I will bless his name. One painful thing has occurred: a man who pretends to be a missionary for Israel, and who brings forward the apocryphal book of Enoch, has been among my people in my absence, and many have been led after him. How humbling is this to them and to me! Lord, what is man! This may be blessed, 1st, to discover chaff which we thought to be wheat; 2nd, to lead some to greater distrust of themselves, when their eyes are opened: 3rd, to teach me the need of solidly instructing those who seem to have grace in their hearts."

The work of God went on, so much so at this time, that he gave it as his belief, in a letter to Mr. Purves of Jedburgh, that for some months about this period no minister of Christ had preached in a lively manner, without being blessed to some soul among his flock.

In other places of Scotland also the Lord was then pouring out his Spirit. Perth has been already mentioned, and its vicinity. Throughout Ross-shire, whole congregations were frequently moved as one man, and the voice of the minister drowned in the cries of anxious souls. At Kelso, where Mr. Horace Bonar laboured, and at Jedburgh, where Mr. Purves was pastor, a more silent but very solid work of conversion was advancing. At Ancrum (once the scene of John Livingston's labors), the whole parish, but especially the men of the place, were awakened to the most solemn concern. On Lochtayside, where Mr. Burns was for a season laboring, there were marks of the Spirit everywhere; and the people crossing the lake in hundreds, to listen to the words of life on the hillside, called to mind the people of Galilee in the days when the gospel began to be preached. At Lawers, Mr. Campbell, their pastor (who has now fallen asleep in Jesus), spoke of the awakening as "like a resurrection." so great and sudden was the change from deadness to intense concern. On several occasions, the Spirit seemed to sweep over the congregations like wind over the fields, which bends the heavy corn to the earth. It was evident to discerning minds that the Lord was preparing Scotland for some crisis not far distant.

Several districts of Strathbogie had shared to some extent in a similar blessing. Faithful ministers were now everywhere on the watch for the shower, and were greatly strengthened to go forward boldly in seeking to cleanse the sanctuary. It was their fond hope that the Established Church of Scotland would soon become an example and pattern to the nations of a pure church of Christ, acknowledged and upheld by the State without being trammelled in any degree, far less controlled by civil interference. But Satan was stirring up adversaries on every side.

The Court of Session had adopted a line of procedure that was at once arbitrary and unconstitutional. And now that Court interdicted, under the penalty of fine or imprisonment, all the ministers of the Church of Scotland from administering or ordinances or preaching the word in any of the seven parishes of Strathbogie, whose former incumbents had been suspended from office by the General Assembly for ecclesiastical offences. The church saw it to be her duty to refuse obedience to an interdict which hindered the preaching of Jesus, and attempted to crush her constitutional liberties. Accordingly, ministers were sent to these districts, fearless of the result; and under their preaching the gross darkness of the region began to give way to the light of truth.

In the month of August, Mr. M'Cheyne was appointed, along with Mr. Cumming of Dumbarny, to visit Huntly, and dispense the Lord's Supper there. As he set out, he expressed the hope, that "the dews of the Spirit there might be turned into the pouring rain." His own visit was blessed to many. Mr. Cumming preached the action sermon in the open air at the Meadow Well; but the tables were served within the building where the congregation usually met. Mr. M'Cheyne preached in the evening to a vast multitude at the well; and about a hundred waited after sermon for prayer, many of them in deep anxiety.

He came to Edinburgh on the 11th, to attend the meeting of ministers and elders who had come together to sign the Solemn Engagement in defence of the liberties of Christ's church. He hesitated not to put his hand to the Engagement. He then returned to Dundee; and scarcely had he returned, when he was laid aside by one of those attacks of illness with which he was so often tried. In this case, however, it soon passed away. "My health," he remarked, "has taken a gracious turn, which should make me look up." But again, on September 6, an attack of fever laid him down for six days. On this occasion, just before the sickness came on, three persons had visited him, to tell him how they were brought to Christ under his ministry some years before. "Why," he noted in his journal, "Why has God brought these cases before me this w

seek? Surely He is preparing me for some trial of faith." The result proved that his conjecture was just. And while his Master prepared him beforehand for these trials, He had ends to accomplish in his servant by means of them. There were other trials, also, besides these, which were very heavy to him; but in all we could discern the Husbandman pruning the branch, that it might bear more fruit. As he himself said one day in the church of Abernyte, when he was assisting Mr. Manson, "If we only saw the whole, we should see that the Father is doing little else in the world but training his vines."

His preaching became more and more to him a work of faith. Often I find him writing at the close or beginning of a sermon: "Master, help!" "Help, Lord, help!" "Send showers;" "Pardon, give the Spirit, and take the glory;" "May the opening of my lips be right things!" The piercing effects of the word preached on souls at this season may be judged of from what one of the awakened, with whom he was conversing, said to him, "I think hell would be some relief from an angry God."

His delight in preaching was very great. He himself used to say that he could scarcely ever resist an invitation to preach. And this did not arise from the natural excitement there is in commanding the attention of thousands; for he was equally ready to proclaim Christ to small country flocks. Nay, he was ready to travel far to visit and comfort even one soul. There was an occasion this year on which he rode far to give a cup of cold water to a disciple, and his remark was, "I observe how often Jesus went a long way for one soul, as for example the maniac, and the woman of Canaan."

In February 1841, he visited Kelso and Jedburgh at the Communion season; and gladly complied with an invitation to Anstruther also, that he might witness the hand of the Lord. "Sweet are the spots," he wrote, "where Immanuel has ever shown his glorious power in the conviction and conversion of sinners. The world loves to muse on the scenes where battles were fought and victories won. Should not we love the spots where our great Captain has won his amazing victories? Is not the conversion of a soul more worthy to be spoken of than the taking of Acre?" At Kelso, some will long remember his remarks in visiting a little girl, to whom he said, "Christ gives last knocks. When your heart becomes hard and careless, then fear lest Christ may have given a last knock." At Jedburgh, the impression left was chiefly that there had been among them a man of peculiar holiness. Some felt, not so much his words, as his presence and holy solemnity, as if one spoke to them who was standing in the presence of God; and to others his prayers appeared like the breathings of one already within the veil.

I find him proposing to a minister who was going up to the General Assembly that year, "that the Assembly should draw out a Confession of Sin for all its ministers." The state, also, of parishes under the direful influence of Moderatism, lay much upon his spirit. In his diary he writes: "Have been laying much to heart the absolute necessity laid upon the church of sending the gospel to our dead parishes, during the life of the present incumbents. It is confessed that many of our ministers do not preach the gospel—alas! because they know it not. Yet they have complete control over their own pulpits, and may never suffer the truth to be heard there during their whole incumbency. And yet our church consigns these parishes to their tender mercies for perhaps fifty years, without a sigh! Should not certain men be ordained as evangelists, with full power to preach in every pulpit of their district—faithful, judicious, lively preachers, who may go from parish to parish, and thus carry life into many a dead corner?" This was a subject he often reverted to; and he eagerly held up the example of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, who made a proposal to this effect. From some of his later letters, it appears that he had sometimes seriously weighed the duty of giving up his fixed charge, if only the church would ordain him as an evangelist. So deep were his feelings on this matter, that a friend relates of him, that as they rode together through a parish where the pastor "clothed himself with the wool, but fed not the flock," he knit his brow and raised his hand with vehemence as he spoke of the people left to perish under such a minister.

He was invited to visit Ireland again this year, his former visit having been much valued by the Presbyterian brethren there. He did so in July. Many were greatly stirred up by his preaching, and by his details of God's work in Scotland. His sermon on Song 8:5, 6, is still spoken of by many. His prayerfulness and consistent holiness left enduring impressions on not a few; and it was during his visit that a memorial was presented to the Irish Assembly in behalf of a Jewish mission. His visit was in a great measure the means of setting that mission on foot.

Cordially entering into the proposal of the concert for prayer, he took part, in September of this year, in the preliminary meetings in which Christians of all denominations joined. "How sweet are the smallest approximations to unity!" is his remark in his diary. Indeed, he so much longed for a scriptural unity, that some time after, when the General Assembly had repealed the statute of 1799, he embraced the opportunity of showing his sincere desire for unity, by inviting two dissenting brethren to his pulpit, and then writing in defence of his conduct when attacked. In reference to this matter, he observed, in a note to a friend: "I have been much delighted with the 25th and 26th chapters of the Confession of Faith. Oh for the grace of the Westminster divines to be poured out upon this generation of lesser men!"

As it was evident that his Master owned his labor abundantly, by giving him seals of his apostleship, there were attempts

made occasionally by zealous friends to induce him to remove to other spheres. In all these cases, he looked simply at the apparent indications of the Lord's will. Worldly interest seemed scarcely ever to cross his mind in regard to such a matter, for he truly lived a disinterested life. His views may be judged of by one instance, Å—a letter to Mr. Heriot of Ramornie, in reference to a charge which many were anxious to offer him: Å—

"Dundee, Dec. 24, 1841

"DEAR SIR, Å—I have received a letter from my friend Mr. M'Farlane of Collessie, asking what I would do if the people of Kettle were to write desiring me to be their minister. He also desires me to send an answer to you. I have been asked to leave this place again and again, but have never seen my way clear to do so. I feel quite at the disposal of my Divine Master. I gave myself away to Him when I began my ministry, and He has guided me as by the Pillar Cloud from the first day till now. I think I would leave this place to-morrow if He were to bid me; but as to seeking removal, I dare not and could not. If my ministry were unsuccessful, Å—if God frowned upon the place and made my message void, Å—then I would willingly go, for I would rather beg my bread than preach without success; but I have never wanted success. I do not think I can speak a month in this parish without winning some souls. This very week, I think, has been a fruitful one, Å—more so than many for a long time, which perhaps was intended graciously to free me from all hesitation in declining your kind offer. I mention these things not, I trust, boastfully, but only to show you the ground upon which I feel it to be my duty not for a moment to entertain the proposal. I have 4000 souls here hanging on me. I have as much of this world's goods as I care for. I have full liberty to preach the gospel night and day; and the Spirit of God is often with us. What can I desire more? 'I dwell among mine own people.' Hundreds look to me as a father; and I fear I would be but a false shepherd if I were to leave them when the clouds of adversity are beginning to lower. I know the need of Kettle, and its importance; and also the dark prospect of your getting a godly minister. Still that is a future event in the hand of God. My duty is made plain and simple according to God's word.

"Praying that the Lord Jesus may send you a star from his own right hand, believe me to be," etc.

It was during this year that the Sabbath question began to interest him so much. His tract, *I Love the Lord's Day*, was published December 18; but he had already exerted himself much in this cause, as convener of the Committee of Presbytery on Sabbath Observance, and had written his well-known letter to one of the chief defenders of the Sabbath desecration. He continued unceasingly to use every effort in this holy cause. And is it not worth the prayers and self-denying efforts of every believing man? Is not that day set apart as a season wherein the Lord desires the refreshing rest of his own love to be offered to a fallen world? Is it not designed to be a day on which every other voice and sound is to be hushed, in order that the silver trumpets may proclaim atonement for sinners? Nay, it is understood to be a day wherein God himself stands before the altar and pleads with sinners to accept the Lamb slain, from morning to evening. Who is there that does not see the deep design of Satan in seeking to effect an inroad on this most merciful appointment of God our Saviour?

Mr. M'Cheyne's own conduct was in full accordance with his principles in regard to strict yet cheerful Sabbath observance. Considering it the summit of human privilege to be admitted to fellowship with God, his principle was, that the Lord's day was to be spent wholly in the enjoyment of that sweetest privilege. A letter, written at a later period, but bearing on this subject, will show how he felt this day to be better than a thousand. An individual, near Inverness, had consulted him on a point of sabbatical casuistry: the question was, Whether or not it was sinful to spend time in registering meteorological observations on the Sabbaths? His reply was the following, marked by a holy wisdom, and discovering the place which the Lord held in his inmost soul: Å—

"Dec. 7, 1842

"DEAR FRIEND, Å—You ask me a hard question. Had you asked me what I would do in the case, I could easily tell you. I love the Lord's day too well to be marking down the height of the thermometer and barometer every hour. I have other work to do, higher and better, and more like that of angels above. The more entirely I can give my Sabbaths to God, and half forget that I am not before the throne of the Lamb, with my harp of gold, the happier am I, and I feel it my duty to be as happy as I can be, and as God intended me to be. The joy of the Lord is my strength. But whether another Christian can spend the Sabbath in his service, and mark down degrees of heat and atmospherical pressure, without letting down the warmth of his affections, or losing the atmosphere of heaven, I cannot tell. My conscience is not the rule of another man. One thing we may learn from these men of science, namely, to be as careful in marking the changes and progress of our own spirit, as they are in marking the changes of the weather. An hour should never pass without our looking up to God for forgiveness and peace. This is the noblest science, to know how to live in hourly communion with God in Christ. May you and I know more of this, and thank God that we are not among the wise and prudent from whom these things a

re hid!—The grace of the Lord of the Sabbath be with you," etc.

Up till this period, the Narrative of our Mission to Israel had not been given to the public. Interruptions, arising from multiplicity of labors and constant calls of duty, had from time to time come in our way. Mr. M'Cheyne found it exceedingly difficult to spare a day or two at a time in order to take part. "I find it hard work to carry on the work of a diligent pastor and that of an author at the same time. How John Calvin would have smiled at my difficulties!" At length, however, in the month of March 1842, we resolved to gain time by exchanging each other's pastoral duties for a month. Accordingly, during four or five weeks, he remained in Collace, my flock enjoying his Sabbath-day services and his occasional visits, while he was set free from what would have been the never-ceasing interruptions of his own town.

Many a pleasant remembrance remains of these days, as sheet after sheet passed under the eyes of our mutual criticism. Though intent on accomplishing his work, he kept by his rule, "that he must first see the face of God before he could undertake any duty." Often would he wander in the mornings among the pleasant woods of Dunsinnan, till he had drunk in refreshment to his soul by meditation on the word of God; and then he took up the pen. And to a brother in the ministry, who had one day broken in upon his close occupation, he afterwards wrote: "You know you stole away my day; yet I trust all was not lost. I think I have had more grace ever since that prayer among the fir-trees. Oh to be like Jesus, and with him to all eternity!" Occasionally, during the same period, he wrote some pieces for the Christian's Daily Companion. The Narrative was finished in May, and the Lord has made it acceptable to the brethren.

When this work was finished, the Lord had other employment ready for him in his own parish. His diary has this entry: "May 22.—I have seen some very evident awakenings of late. J.G. awakened partly through the word preached, and partly through the faithful warnings of her fellow-servant. A.R., who has been for about a year in the deepest distress, seeking rest, but finding none. B.M. converted last winter at the Tuesday meeting in Annfield. She was brought very rapidly to peace with God, and to a calm, sedate, prayerful state of mind. I was surprised at the quickness of the work in this case, and pleased with the clear tokens of grace; and now I see God's gracious end in it. She was to be admitted at last communion, but caught fever before the Sabbath. On Tuesday last, she died in great peace and joy. When she felt death coming on, she said, 'Oh death, death, come! let us sing!' Many that knew her have been a good deal moved homeward by this solemn providence. This evening, I invited those to come who are leaving the parish at this term. About twenty came, to whom I gave tracts and words of warning. I feel persuaded that if I could follow the Lord more fully myself, my ministry would be used to make a deeper impression than it has yet done."