

Life and Labours
OF
DUNCAN MATHESON,
THE SCOTTISH EVANGELIST.

BY THE
REV. JOHN MACPHERSON.

“REALITY IS THE GREAT THING: I HAVE ALWAYS SOUGHT REALITY.”

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CHAPTER X.

FROM THE FURNACE TO THE SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE.

“Brief life is here our portion;
Brief sorrow, short-lived care;
The life that knows no ending,
The tearless life is there.

“Oh, happy retribution!
Short toil, eternal rest;
For mortals, and for sinners,
A mansion with the blest.

“And now we fight the battle,
But then shall wear the crown
Of full and everlasting
And passionless renown.

“But He whom now we trust in
Shall then be seen and known;
And they that know and see Him
Shall have Him for their own.”

TOWARDS the close of 1861 Duncan Matheson found himself in floods of trouble, arising from his fearless stand for vital godliness and his faithful reproof of lukewarm religion. Exhausted by gigantic labours, he sighed for rest, yet held himself ready for new fields of toil, and longed to win fresh trophies for his great Master. He was persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. “Come,” said he one day to a “companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,” “come, and let us visit St. Andrew’s, and see the place where the old Scottish heroes fought their good fight; it will stir and cheer us, and perhaps God will give us of their martyr spirit.” Accordingly they went and saw the place where George Wishart was burned to be a light to Scotland to the end of time; where Knox thundered defiance to Rome, and proved himself a match for mail-clad hosts; and where saintly Rutherford, pattern-witness for the truth not less in his sound teaching and masterly logic than in his rapturous piety and blameless life, laboured, and prayed, and suffered, and fell asleep, saying, “Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel’s land.” After they had visited every spot of historic interest, they laid themselves down on the grave of Rutherford, and all alone with their faces on the dust they wept and prayed, praising God for all He has done for Scotland, and entreating for their dear country with many supplications, and tears, another and a complete reformation in the awakening of the churches, and the conversion of all the people in the land. Here too, with the tears dropping from their eyes upon the grass, they consecrated themselves anew to the service and glory of God their Saviour, begging with heartbreaking earnestness for grace to be faithful even unto death. Here too they sang praise. The words of the psalm were joyfully recalled—

“For sure the Lord will not cast off
Those that his people be,
Neither his own inheritance
Quit and forsake will He:
But judgment unto righteousness
Shall yet return again,
And all shall follow after it
That are right-hearted men.”

As they sang “Rock of ages, cleft for me,” they realized at once their security in the great Covenant-Head, and their oneness with redeemed men of every age: and on the spot where saints and martyrs repose so calmly they could sing, “There is rest for the weary” with unwonted joy. Thus they were strengthened for the sore toil and travail that still awaited them.

Some may feel disposed to set this down as sentimentalism. But if fellowship with God and with his saints be sentimentalism, if sympathy with Christ in his blood-baptized cause, and with those that suffered for the love they bore Him be sentimentalism, if prayers and tears for a lost world that still goeth on in its mad way of cursing and casting out its best friends be sentimentalism, then I say, Heaven send us more of it. Scotchmen are said to have hard heads: but triply hard is the heart of that Scotchman who can drink at the springs of his country’s greatness and not be filled as with new wine. The ashes of the martyrs never grow cold; and dull must the Christian spirit be that is not fired with new zeal at the sight of those hallowed spots whence flamed up to heaven and far out upon the world’s night Scotland’s testimony to Christ, which is our country’s truest glory. Happily the echoes of that testimony linger about ten thousand hearths, and come back with strange power on ten times ten thousand hearts; nor will the sweetly solemn reverberations of those martyr-voices die till they merge in the sounds of the last trump.

This incident marked an epoch in the life of our evangelist. Scottish Christianity has been characterized by the pre-eminently high and holy place assigned by it to the crown rights of the Lord Jesus as the Church’s sole Head and King. Duncan Matheson was thoroughly of that spirit. His martial, loyal, heroic nature must needs love, serve, fight, and suffer for a King. Fondly and unceasingly as he preached the atonement of Jesus, and thus recognized the Priest and the one great Sacrifice for sin, the chief enthusiasm of his personal devotion to the Lord, in all the labour and turmoil of his life, seemed to take rise scarcely so much in the love he bore his Saviour as in the passionate loyalty he felt for his King. And this noble affection grew more and more intense to the end of his life: it was still to the last, “the King! the King!” When the last campaign was over, and the end drew near, one of his frequent utterances was, “I am going to see the King.”

After that last and fullest consecration of himself to God at the grave of Samuel Rutherford, a remarkable change was noticed in him by his more intimate friends. His faith now took a higher flight. Henceforth he spoke everywhere and always of "going home." "O how near eternity seems," he was ever saying: "We'll soon be home." "That man breathes the very atmosphere of heaven," said some who met him. When a young man he had a presentiment that he would not live long: middle life, he said, would see his sun set. The hope of the Gospel now taught him to think of the sun rising in another sphere rather than of its setting in this. "Heaven will literally be a rest to me," was his frequent saying. In consequence of his incessant, fatiguing, and often most painful labours, his mind naturally enough contemplated heaven as a rest. All the spiritual songs of the coming glory were now peculiarly sweet to his heart. But the feeling did not evaporate in mere singing or in the indulgence of pleasant thoughts. It was in him, as all his beliefs were, a most powerful motive to work for Christ and win souls. "You are hurting yourself," we said to him. "Souls are perishing," was his invariable reply. "But you should take rest" "Nonsense! we'll rest in heaven." Some may think he carried this too far: but he had no idea of what is called "settling in life." A mighty power was working in him. How could he rest? His soul was in the agonies of travail. And till disease struck him down the years that elapsed were one unbroken day of toil for the saving of the lost.

Towards the close of his more active life, although he did not abate one jot of his manly frankness, his uncompromising faithfulness, and his fearless testimony, a mellowing influence was clearly at work in him. His prayers grew more childlike and tender; his addresses, whilst not less searching and faithful, were more deeply solemn, and more tearfully compassionate; and the big heart of the man, like an overflowing well, gushed out in streams of genuine kindness and Christian love.

Little did we imagine, when he stood up on a gloomy November night in 1866, in Hilltown Free Church, where his voice had often been accompanied with more than human power, that we were listening to his last address in Dundee. His text was "Remember Lot's wife." Lot's wife, he said—I here give not his words, but the spirit of them—Lot's wife had many privileges, but she perished. Lot's wife had a godly husband, but she perished. Lot's wife had often been prayed for, but she perished. Lot's wife had a good example set her, but she perished. Lot's wife had been warned by God, but she perished. Lot's wife saw her danger, but she perished. Lot's wife was led by angels out of Sodom, but she perished. Lot's wife was nearly saved, but she perished. Lot's wife only looked round, and she was damned for that look. She lingered when she should have made haste, and God left her. Mercy drew her, but she grieved Mercy, and Mercy forsook

her. Where Mercy left her, Justice found her, and Destruction seized her. She loved Sodom, and would love Sodom, and God gave her her bad love to the full. The Lord took her out of Sodom, but she took Sodom out of Sodom with her. "Let me get a last look at my idol," she said; and she got a *last* look with a vengeance. "She is joined to her idols," said the jealous God: "Let her alone;" and she was let terribly alone: she became a pillar of salt. Sodom was more to her than her daughters, her husband, her soul, or God. In judgment she was wedded to her evil choice: she entered eternity in fellowship with those that suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

Ah, friends, you see how near being saved you may be, and yet never know salvation. Privileges and means of grace may be yours, and yet you may never enter heaven. You may sit at the Lord's table and sing of salvation, and after all be cast away. You may feel the strivings of the Spirit, and yet be lost. You may break off from some sins and do many things, and in the end go down to destruction. You may be all but saved, and at last find that from the very gate of heaven there is a path to hell. Anxious inquirer, you are out of Sodom, but not out of danger; you are on the plain, but not in the place of refuge. Flee to Christ. Escape for thy life. Backslider, you are just where Lot's wife was when the devouring fire overtook her. She was looking back; so are you. Remember Lot's wife. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. x. 38). Procrastinator, you are trifling with your soul and with God. There is no fear of judgment, you think. How do you know? The sin of Lot's wife is your sin: take heed lest her fate be yours. You may die tonight: what then? And if you live, God may give you your own way and let you alone. Let alone, left behind by the merciful God! To be fixed in sin, to be a pillar of salt, a soul encrusted with judicial hardness, as good as damned, how terrible!

"There is a time, we know not when,
A point we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men
To glory or despair.

"There is a line by us unseen;
That crosses every path;
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and his wrath."

With heart, voice, and eye overflowing with tenderness, he pled with his hearers to flee to the refuge—to Jesus. The people were deeply moved, and some of them, among the rest a man who is now a zealous office-bearer in a church, have a blessed remembrance of that night, as the time when they entered the ark and for them God shut the door of covenant security in Christ.

In the same month, November, he went to the feeing markets in Aberdeenshire. At Ellon his sufferings were such as he never recovered from. Here, drenched with ceaseless showers, and shivering in fierce hail-blasts of no ordinary violence, he stood all day in the mud, and delivered his last testimony for Christ amidst the din and strife of the fair. “We must not lower the standard,” said he, in reference to his trying work. Nor did he lower the standard, for the standard-bearer fell in the very front of the battle. On returning south he revisited Kirriemuir, Alyth, and other places, spending the last night of the year with the Christians in Forfar, whence he writes to his wife: “Forfar, January 1st, 1867. A happy New Year to you, my dearest M. The Lord bless you very abundantly. As the clock struck the knell of the departing year I was praying for you. My heart was with you all. Ah, my beloved, we may sing, sweetly sing. The Lord hath done great things for us. We may raise our Ebenezer. Now we know not what may be before us this year; but never mind, all will be well. The Lord will break up our way. He will lead us aright. He is our own God. Give each of our pets a New Year kiss from father. I may be able to come and give it myself to them tomorrow. If I am with you by 11 a.m. you will see me; and if not, it will be because of the work. I will try at any rate, but must return at night. We had a blessed time last night. We met at nine, and separated at half-past twelve o’clock. It was very, very solemn. I took the superintendence of the meeting. Very seldom have I seen such a meeting—so much power and evident blessing. A great cry for help comes from many places. I do trust that 1867 will be a year of greater blessing than any before it.”

About the middle of January he set out for Orkney; but in consequence of a severe snow-storm, it was only after making extraordinary efforts that he was enabled to reach Aberdeen. There he was arrested by the disease, diabetes, which ultimately, carried him to the grave. With the sentence of death in him he returned to Perth, and thence without delay went up to Edinburgh, where he sought advice from the late eminent physician, Sir James Simpson. Little hope of recovery was held out to him; nevertheless, the ruling passion stirred in him, and he addressed a meeting, ill as he was, in the house of Mr. Barbour. On returning home he suddenly grew worse, and in his fevered condition fell into unconsciousness. But whilst reason slept, the gracious heart was all awake, and his talk was constantly of Jesus and souls

and eternity. Fancying that he was addressing the students of the New College, Edinburgh, he cried out, "Young men, young men, down with books and up with Christ! Souls are perishing! souls are perishing! Up, and aim at saving sinners." Noble spirit, in thy very wanderings wise and good!

On recovering a measure of strength, he went in April to Limpley Stoke, near Bath, where he sought rest and restoration in the hydropathic establishment. A few of his letters will be read with interest:

"Limpley Stoke, near Bath, 13th April, 1867.

"MY DEAR MRS. B____, I cannot tell you how gladdened I was by your kind letter. Away from home, among strangers, sick, one likes to see old friends have not forgotten them. I knew neither you nor Mr. B. would, nor many of the flock to whom I have so often spoken, and to whom if it please God, I hope to speak again—though not this Whit-Sunday—after Turriff market. Markets, I fear, if I should be spared, must be left now to others. My day, I fear, is done with them, and with much rough work besides. It has been a trying time. I cannot tell you all I have passed through for three months, nor recount to you the loving kindness of our God. Oh, how good He has been! How tenderly He has watched over me! How bounteously He has provided for me! I have been treading the banks of the river, and listening to its flow as it rolled along, but all has been peace within. All has been calm, unruffled. I have had no fears, and at the worst was helped to say, "Even so, Father," etc. A greater trial than even leaving my beloved wife penniless on a cold world, and children loved with tenderest affection, was the thought of leaving the loved work of bringing souls to Jesus. Away from it—dumb, one sees its greatness, and heaven, hell, God, salvation, eternity, stand out as great realities. I had long battled with the storm, long tried to do something on the field, and God saw fit to put His hand on me even when success in His work was at its highest. We shall know all one day; the web is rapidly weaving, and in glory its finish will be bright, shining in perfect holiness. Hallelujah! I have been six weeks from home. How wondrous the Lord's raising up Mr. J____ M____, of London, to keep me here. He has been as a brother, and I lack nothing, as he is paying all costs. There was no hope of my getting better at home, and I can say it has been good to be here. I cannot tell you exactly how I am. My general health is better, but as yet the disease is apparently not touched. It is greatly kept under, and I am not without hope, in answer to much prayer offered and offering up, I may be so far cured as to be able to preach. It is a strange, mysterious disease, but the Lord can heal it. I am not allowed to preach, read, or write, though I cannot refrain from sending this to you. Today I feel strong. Tomorrow I may be weak. I often think of you all, and am with you in spirit. May the dew of heaven be on your beloved husband and his flock. It is a

dying scene. All around this death reigns. Poor, poor England! Highly favoured Scotland! If I could preach I would. Revival all around this is unknown. My wife left three days ago for home, going to see Miss M____ on her way. Amidst all her watching, etc., she has been greatly supported. Give my love to Mr. B____, Miss F____, and all friends. Pray for me. I do hope there is room to encourage faith in my better condition for the last week. I commend you to the Lord. It is long since we met, going to Aberdeen in the 'Defiance' coach. How many are gone since! We too shall soon go. Blessed be the Lord, it is home. There is sweet rest in heaven. God bless you.

“Yours in Jesus, DUNCAN MATHESON.”

TO MRS. J. S.

“Limpley Stoke, near Bath, 18th April, 1867.

“MY DEAR FRIEND:—Many, many a time I think of you and of all the S____s of that ilk. You are often very near my heart, and the prayer for blessing on each has often gone up from me here where I am living, at the back of Horeb.

“Like an old hulk disabled, I lie passive—no easy thing for a restless Bedouin like me. I am in a new school, and if I learn my lessons well I may be able yet to comfort many and give them a lift Zionward. Rutherford says: ‘Oh, how much I owe to the file and hammer of the dear Lord Jesus!’ Can we not say the same?

“Tenderly, lovingly, and in a fatherly way, has the Lord dealt with me. How gently He has held the cup to my lips! How much of mercy (yea, it's all mercy) has been mingled with my lot! I have been standing by the banks of the dark river, and have listened to its flow, and yet have not been afraid. I have been on the verge of eternity, and could sing for joy. Ah, there is no god like *our* God! no rock like our Rock!

“Right glad was I to meet Mrs. C____ on my way here. I could scarcely credit it. Short as my interview was, it sent me along more cheerfully. My heart was much set on coming to see you all; but the Lord arranged differently. . . It is a strange and fickle disease, and if I should be ever again as before, it will be a special forth-putting of divine power. I long for the loved work of bringing souls to Jesus. I long to be on the battle-field. I long to sing over the slain of the Lord, and shout ‘victory’ because He has done it. Sometimes I hope I shall. All is in his hands. The sheep in the wilderness I feel for. The lambs’ bleating goes to my heart. I pity the *lost*. It is only at times we can realize sin, salvation, heaven, hell, eternity, as great realities. How soon shall all have passed here! Life ought to be an earnest matter, *seeing we have only one*. . . And now I must close. May all blessing rest on

you and yours. We are under the shadow of His wings. We are safe in His arms. We move along the rugged pathway to that land where no sigh is heard nor sorrow known, where not a cloud darkens the sky. Ah, we shall soon know about the palms, harps, crowns of glory! *Forever with the Lord!* Once again I pray for blessings on you all.

“Ever yours in a loving Lord,
“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

TO HIS WIFE.

“Limpley Stoke, May 13th.

“Another morning dawned, my beloved M____, and another week begun. How they do glide away! How quickly they run! Soon all will be done, all will end. The vast eternity lies before. Many in heaven! many in hell! No day there! no star of hope! no rest! no rest! no rest! Saved from hell, we should sing all the way. We should never murmur. Ah, how the thought should still be, shall never be in devouring fire! I shall never lie down in everlasting burnings!’ As the song of heaven shall never end, neither shall the wail of hell. May the Lord save our children I long to see them in the ark. They will be brought. Don’t let us ever doubt it for a moment. We had a blessed day yesterday—a sweet word from Mr. T____. The Lord can restore me fully; but patience must have her perfect work.”

“Limpley Stoke, May 15th.

“How few realize the solemnity of eternity! I feel for the people. They are dying, perishing, going to destruction! Oh that God in infinite love would save! I long to be in the field again, but must possess my soul in patience. I am glad I do feel as I do. It’s joy to be able to do some little work for God. I cannot express it. My whole system feels as if it partook of joy. If not able to preach, I may for some time be able to get tracts ready, and many things. I hope Lizzie is getting on with her spelling and reading. She will try and be able to read to me the 90th Psalm when I come home. How I do long to see them (the children), and yet the Lord keeps my mind at rest. It has been all love.”

Leaving Limpley Stoke in May, he went to Jersey. He is charmed with the scenery, praises God for all he beholds of the divine glory on land and sea, and often wishes his wife were by his side to share his delight. “But we shall see grander sights,” he adds: “we shall see the King in His beauty, and the land that is afar off.” But the scenery is not the great thing; it is the souls of the perishing. In a certain town he sees the walls covered with placards announcing that Dean this and Rev. that will lecture on Shakespeare, etc., and his heart bleeds.

From Jersey he proceeds to St. Servan, in Normandy; but the disease has fastened on him, and will not let him go. Not a breath of murmur escapes his lips. He is full of comfort, and often writes to cheer the beloved partner of his life, whose heart droops on his account. Often he breaks out in praise. "Oh praise the Lord, O my soul. How wondrous His love! At times it quite overpowers me. Oh for grace, grace to love His Holy Name! When I think of others I am humbled. Poor _____ and his family several times last winter had only meal in the house. He told me so. Oh, how good the Lord is!"

TO MRS. J. S.

"St. Servan, Normandy, France, 27th May, 1867.

"MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND: Your kind letter reached me at Limpley Stoke. . . . I congratulate you on the birth of another son. The Lord bless him, and early implant grace, that, if spared, he may be a great blessing. We can take our children to Jesus and not be rejected. They are dear to Him. I like to grasp the promise, 'To thee and to thy seed.' Our charge, our responsibility, is great; but the great burden-bearer will take all. Oh, how He loves! The height, depth, breadth, we cannot fathom. The length we may have some dim idea of, but cannot understand.

"I left Limpley some time ago better of my sojourn there. I do feel stronger, but the disease still remains. It seems to have got firmly entrenched; but the Lord can remove it, and no one else. The more I see of doctors, the more do I see they know little of it. As yet its seat is a mystery. Some days I think it is almost gone; and next day I feel great weakness. But all is in a Father's hand, and such a Father too! I would not it were otherwise than He chooses.

"I long to get home, and may in course of a fortnight. My dear wife and children I have not seen for long now. They are well. She longs to meet you all. We shall see if it can be arranged her meeting me at Edinburgh, and both coming on. We shall see as the Lord directs.

"I am all alone in this strange land, unknown to any, and knowing no one. Poor, poor France! You can have no idea of the perfect despotism that reigns. No happy smile seems to light up the people's countenances. There is a restlessness and a yearning after something—they know not what. Alas, alas! no Gospel is preached, no salvation made known, and, so far as can be seen, no souls saved. I often almost weep as I see the masses here rushing on to eternity, not knowing that 'God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son.' God will not forget the prayers of many a martyred Huguenot. The soil of France was drenched with their blood. The cry, 'How long, Lord, how long,' has gone up from those beneath the altar. Many a time on entering the churches here, and seeing the mummery on

every side, have I prayed, 'Lord, send thy light forth and thy truth;' and often have I blessed God Scotland had a Knox, a Cameron, a Cargill, and a Peden.

"I was looking today at the grave of the great Chateaubriand, who is buried on a small island off this place, and asking what now is all the glory he had? All has perished. Only shall the righteous be had in everlasting remembrance. Ah! my beloved friend, ours is a glorious hope, ours is a great reward. What things are in the light of eternity, and that alone, is worth, and ought to be looked at. To live for Christ, our motto now, To be with Him—what shall it be? I do long to go forth again. Had I been in health, I would have been speaking to masses with God's blue sky overhead and his presence realized. Open-air preaching is glorious, though hard work. I hear from Kirriemuir and Forfar that the converts go well on. Cullen still retains the blessing. I long to hear of Melrose and Little Darnick. It will come. Let faith be strengthened. What God is doing in other places, He can do with you. My kindest love to your beloved J____, to Mrs. C____, and all the S____s. Kindly omit no one. To Mr. and Mrs. B____ and A____, etc., etc. Now I must finish, as I have a good deal to do. I send you Psalm cxxi. 6 and Deut. xxxii. 9. We are marching home. Every march shall yet become an Elim. He will take the stumbling-blocks out of the way. He will lead and guide. His everlasting arms are around and underneath. He keeps us as the apple of his eye. Hold! is it not enough?

"Ever yours in Christ Jesus,

"DUNCAN MATHESON."

In July he returned to Scotland, and for a while stayed at Bervie, where he set up a daily prayer-meeting. From Bervie he went to Braemar, and from Braemar to Aberdeen, still seeking to recover health and win souls. Health was denied him; souls were given him. From Aberdeen he went to Dufftown, which had been much laid on his heart in prayer. The weak man was strong to bear this burden before the Lord. His prayers were marvelously answered. Here God began to work by him, and several were added to the Lord. At a social meeting held on the evening of the first day of the following year, he delivered an address of extraordinary power, and a considerable number were converted. From Dufftown he retraced his steps to Aberdeen.

His soul is on fire. "I would gladly give all I have," he writes to his wife, "to be once more out preaching Jesus. It is a great and glorious work. I bless God I was called to it. The work done is done for eternity. All other things will soon end. . . . Tell Lizzie I long to hear of her becoming a child of God, a lamb in Christ's fold. Tell her I long very much. Tell Duncan I wish him to cleave to Jesus. Tell Mary I long to know she has a

new heart. Tell them I wish them all to be in heaven with us to praise *for ever*. I feel being away from them, but it is the Lord, and all is well.”

In the beginning of 1868 he went to reside for a few weeks with his Christian friends at Darnlee, in the south of Scotland. Here again the fire burned. He could not rest. Gathering together the people of Darnick, a village in the neighbourhood, he indulged once more in the luxury of preaching Christ. Immediately there was a sound and a stir among the dry bones. The Spirit of God began to work gloriously among the dead. The movement, though confined within the narrow limits of the village and adjacent country, was a remarkable one: men and women were brought to the Lord. Happening to meet him at this time, I asked how he, who was suffering from a terrible malady, could do so much work. His reply was characteristic. “Ah!” said he, “the Lord saw that I was very weak, and just worked all the more Himself.”

In spring he went to Carlsbad, Bohemia, for the benefit of the waters. On his way to the Continent he writes from Tunbridge Wells to Miss M____:

“MY DEAR FRIEND: Mary has sent me your note here. I left Perth about ten days ago, and have been in Hampshire and London. I went to see Major Gibson. He is very ill. I am here for a few days in a palace. The proprietor, Mr. R____, is a man of God. I scarcely ever was in a house like it. ‘Holiness unto the Lord’ is stamped upon it. I am going to Carlsbad in Austria on Tuesday (D.V.). The doctors have ordered a trial of its baths, and God has sent plenty of money to take me. It is a strange, wandering life, in quest of health. Yet all is well. I have been rather worse lately. The disease has been very active. All is in the Lord’s hands. I feel leaving all at home. I shall be away about five weeks. Pray for me that I may be useful, and if the Lord sees fit, get health for his work. I do desire greatly to see you. I long for it. Had I not been going to the Continent I would have come at once. *All, ALL, ALL* is love. God can do nothing amiss. All but Mary Jane are well at Perth. We are kindly treated. We have all things richly to enjoy. You would wonder what the Lord does for us. If I come back by London I may get to see you. Will you not be with us this summer? What a welcome you will get! I must close, as I have a good deal to do. There are many changes, but Jesus lives and Jesus reigns. We shall soon be home. It is a sweet prospect—Home!

“A dear saint of God when dying asked them to put his simple name on his tombstone, and ‘*kept*’ under it. We may do the same.

DUNCAN MATHESON.

Born, —. Died, —.

Kept.

J _____ McP _____,
Born _____, Died _____,
Kept

“In Jesus, yours, “DUNCAN MATHESON.”

In Carlsbad he found means of distributing some 600 copies of the Word of God. Unable to speak the language, he would turn up his favourite text, “God so loved the world,” &c., and by gestures and the use of such terms as he could command he managed to introduce himself and the gospel to a good many of the people. By and by they began to know him, and hail him as a friend. Here he made the acquaintance of a German Christian, who had charge of the Bible Depot. An attempt being made by the Burgomaster, instigated by the priest, to stop the Bible selling and distribution, and the agent being ordered to leave the house, with the view to his being thrust out of the place altogether, our evangelist took up the case, wrote to a friend in London, through whose instrumentality the priest’s design was foiled, and the Bible distribution went on as before. Still panting to be useful, Mr. Matheson undertook to give instruction to the two Jewish girls who attended him in his lodgings. His own children were never forgotten. In all his labours and wanderings he found time to write little letters to them. Out of a heap let us take one very much of a piece with the rest:

TO HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER LIZZIE.

“Carlsbad, 4th May, 1868.

“MY OWN DEAR LIZZIE,—I often think of you, for I love you very much. I often pray for you, for I long to see you safe in Jesus’ fold. Many a time when wandering alone in the woods here, I wonder what you are doing, and what kind of a scholar you are getting. You must get on very fast at school, as likely you will one day have to earn your bread through the education you have got. I expect great progress before I return. This is a very beautiful country. The town of Carlsbad is very pleasant, built on both sides of a little river about the size of Bogie at Huntly. The boys and girls are very much like what they are in Perth. I see some with knickerbockers like Duncan’s. They have balls, and marbles, and hoops, as the children have in Scotland, But alas, dear Lizzie, they hear not about Jesus as you do. I give some of them copies of the Gospel of John, and if you saw how pleased they are! Some of them begin to know me now, and as I pass smile and take my hand. I love all children: Jesus did so very much. I gave a man a copy of the Gospel, and, poor fellow, he was so grateful, he asked me to come at night and get wine and coffee from him.

“There are a good few Jewish boys and girls here. I feel deeply for them. They hate the very name of Jesus. Oh, my own Lizzie, if you were really

converted you would pray for them. We should love the Jews. We got the Bible through the Jews, and Jesus was born a Jew. Once He was a little boy, running about the streets of Nazareth.

“Would it not be grand if God would send me back to Perth to you all healed? Would I not, as Duncan says, pack up my things, and be off to preach? The waters are very nice, boiling up from the earth. One is very great. I am up every morning long before you now. You must write me a long letter some day. I will try to send a letter to Duncan, and Mary, and George soon. Will you, dear Lizzie, take Jesus to be your Saviour? Oh, do! It would give mother and me more joy than anything in the world would.

“Your own dear father,

“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

TO MISS G.

“Carlsbad, Bohemia, 11th May, 1868.

“MY DEAR MISS G____, How are you all, and especially your dear mother? I do hope you are all well. The larks will be singing sweetly now in S____, and I hope the time of the singing of birds (spiritual) has also come. Thank God for droppings on the parched ground. Thank God for saved ones. The little one shall soon, I trust, become a thousand, and many a sweet flower be planted among your hills that shall bloom and blossom up yonder where the weary rest. Rest is a sweet word. Even a child knows its meaning. My third child Mary is very delicate. One day she came in tired, and in her artless way said, ‘Mother, will there be chairs in heaven to sit down on?’ Oh, yes, there will be thrones, and crowns, and palms. How we shall make the courts re-echo with the sweet name of Jesus! How we shall shout Hallelujah! Hallelujah! You see, I am far from home in a land of strangers, I know no one. All the time I have been here, I have been the only Englishman. I have met only one Christian, a German Protestant. It is a dark, dark land. No Sabbath here. It is the chief market day. The theatre is open, and almost every shop. The priests have it all their own way. I wish Mr. M____ and others were here one day. After that they would cease tearing the lambs, and speaking against revival. What a terrible doom theirs will be that go to hell from Scotland! Tell W____ to flee for his very life. Were he here he would have no one to tell him. I love W____, and my heart wanders at times from this earthly paradise to the bleak strath. I long to hear glorious tidings from it. I hope M____, ‘Great-heart,’ has visited you again. God bless him, and give him mighty strength. I was very poorly when I left Scotland. I am drinking the mineral waters, and taking the baths. Thank God, I am feeling a good deal better, but as to whether it may touch the root of the disease remains to be seen. Pray for me. Tell your dear mother to ask healing for the work’s sake, if the Lord sees fit. I hope to leave this in three weeks, and may

come home by Switzerland. I enclose this in a letter to Mr. Matheson, London. He will post it for you.

“I feel it sweet to lean on Jesus here. I can speak to Him though I can to no one else. He heareth prayer. My church is the woods alone on the Sabbath day. I have no one to go to. The Lord bless you all. I would like to see you once more. What if my sun is to set at noon? Yet I long to preach Jesus. He *must* reign. He *shall* reign. We shall soon see Him as He is. We shall be like Him.”

Ever yours *in HIM*,

“DUNCAN MATHESON.”

The following letter appeared in *The Revival*:—

“MY DEAR BROTHER,—I am about to leave this land, and I am sorry to do so. Circumstances, however, compel me; and, if my work is done in it, I would joyfully say, ‘Thy will be done.’

“Since my last, a great door has been opened for the dissemination of the Word of life. I have bought at full price from the Bible Society nearly 600 copies, and scattered them abroad. My main efforts have been directed to the peasantry, as the most hopeful and most needy field. The poverty of many of them is such that they cannot purchase a Bible, and they need it to be brought to their very homes.

“Many a weary mile I have walked, and many a scorching sun has shone upon me. Day after day I have waited on the highway, some distance from the town, and, accosting the travellers passing along, have made all who could read John iii. 16. I felt God could make one text as effectual as a thousand; and especially that one on which so many have rested their all for eternity. It has undoubtedly been the most interesting work in which I was ever engaged. Many had never seen the Book; and many even did not know its name. This is true of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, in the Austrian empire.

“One day, shortly after my arrival, I gave a copy of John’s Gospel to an old man. He took it to his home. In a few days he came to the depot and bought a Bible. Time after time he has come for copies for his neighbours, and now he has become a self-appointed colporteur. Last week the police interfered with him, but he has since got a regular license from a magistrate, and from love to the truth pursues his calling.

“I have had a fine opening amongst the soldiers here in hospital, some of whom had been in Mexico with the unhappy Maximilian. One poor fellow, who has lost his eyesight, asked his comrades what I was doing. On telling him, he said, with a voice choked with emotion as he pointed to his sightless eyeballs, No light, no light.’

“One day I came upon an old man sitting by the wayside reading a copy I had given. He smiled on seeing me; and, pointing to heaven, and then to John xiv. 2, repeated with much emphasis, ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions,’ and added, ‘Yes, and one for me.’

“It is work needing the greatest caution; for there is the greatest danger of over-driving and attracting notice. One false step might injure for long to come, as, though there is a measure of liberty, yet the priestly power is very great. The work will go rolling along, but not so fast as we may anticipate, or would from our hearts desire.

“To get one Bible into Austria almost baffled me when in the east; and now the Bible Society have an unlimited field, a field the extent of which no one can conceive. Fourteen years ago, 50,000 copies of the Word were sent across the Austrian frontier guarded by dragoons. Now they have returned, and a thousand times more will follow. A bill has lately passed the Hungarian Assembly giving free toleration; and now the colporteur may go from one end to another unmolested. Colportage is the special agency needed. Men of God must be found. The Word must be carried to the cottages of the poor, and the palaces of the rich. Men and money! men and money! The Lord send that with his blessing; for the fields are ripening, and ‘the breaker-up’ (Micah ii. a 3) is going before. Half-hearted efforts will not do. The opening has been made, the prayer of years has been answered, and the responsibility is not realized. Something more is needed than thundering applause at great meetings, when some well-turned sentence is uttered. Something more is needed than singing—

“‘Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.’

“God does not want what we have not to give. The whole realm of nature belongs to Him. He has, however, given money to some, and He expects that his cause shall be supported, and that with liberal hand.

“I have gleaned much information about the Bohemian Protestant Church, and have met with some of its pastors. Looking abroad on Bohemia, you are reminded of Ezekiel’s visions. The valley is full of bones, and they are very dry. Can these dry bones live? Yea, Lord, we believe they can. Only breathe, and it is done! Only command, and it shall stand fast! Many of the Protestants live too much on the past. It is well to speak of the sufferings, trials, and triumphs of those who have gone before. It is well to unroll the scroll of martyred lives, and speak with hallowed breath of the names so gloriously written there. But nothing will do in the place of a crucified, living, coming Jesus, and the forth-putting of the Spirit’s power.

“Bohemia fills a noble niche in history’s page; but as one reads it, how sad the thought, that what faggot and exile could not do a Christless form accomplished! Revival is a thing unknown, and few think of the living power. If they can hold their own, they are satisfied. Efforts for the conversion of others are almost unknown. They have been sadly isolated, and now when they breathe the air of freedom, and the opening is made, no one is ready to enter on it. One said to me yesterday, ‘We need evangelists. If God were to raise up a Spurgeon amongst us, the fuel is ready for the kindling.’ Only let the cry be heard, Bohemia for Christ!’ and many would rally round the standard. On its plains the battles of 1866 were fought, which have made a way for the truth never known before.

“I am deeply anxious to get ‘The Blood of Jesus,’ by Mr. Reid, and a selection of M’Cheyne’s sermons, such as I got into Gaelic, translated into the Bohemian language, spoken by three millions. I have so far made arrangements for the translation, and also to have articles taken from the *Herald of Mercy* monthly, and inserted in periodicals published in Prague. Will your readers help with money? It would be but little for some of them to do it altogether. It would be a great privilege. I ask it in the name of Him whose they are, and whom they serve. It may be of infinite consequence having it done soon. Time is passing quickly, and masses are on the march to an eternal hell.

“A gentleman from London has been labouring quietly, and putting the gospel before many here. He has great advantages, speaking the German as well as English.

“Farewell, Bohemia! The dark shadows which so long have hung over thee may soon be chased away. A bright morning may soon dawn upon thee. Resurrection-life may be felt in thy scattered hamlets, along thy mountain-sides, and in thy crowded cities. I bid thee farewell! and as I do, I breathe out the prayer that God may soon say, ‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!’

“Ever yours in Jesus,

“DUNCAN MATHESON.

“Carlsbad, Bohemia, June 2, 1868.”

After making arrangements with a Bohemian pastor for the translation of Bonar’s “Memoir of M’Cheyne,” Reid’s “Blood of Jesus,” and his own “Herald of Mercy,” into German, he took his departure from Carlsbad. Passing through Switzerland, he spent a few days at Mannedorf, the scene of Dorothea Trüdel’s healing labours, where he was received with the greatest kindness by Pastor Zeller. “All here,” he writes, “is love.” Ever bent on winning souls, he sought the means of reaching at least one poor heart. A lady, who had lived a gay life, was deeply impressed by his faithful words

as he spoke to her of Christ. Hastening home, he reached Perth in a state of utter exhaustion; and it was only too evident to all his friends that the earthly tabernacle was passing rapidly to decay.

At the Perth Conference, in September, 1868, he delivered the following address on co-operation in the work of the Lord:

“We live in stirring times. The old order of things in Church and State is rapidly breaking up, or if not breaking up, great changes are taking place in both.

“A few years ago there was no need of introducing such a subject as this, for evangelists did not occupy the places they now do, and the work which the great God has on the wheels had not then appeared. Whatever may be thought, this subject is a momentous one, and demands instant attention. It is pregnant with infinite results, and affects the destiny of many a soul.

“God has raised up not a few evangelists who go hither and thither. I call the majority of them irregulars, freelances, knowing no church, understanding nothing of parochial divisions, subject to no master but Christ, and, it cannot be denied, wielding a mighty influence on not a few.

“There is much in their freedom of action fitted to help on the work, and also snares which only grace can deliver from. It is likely their numbers will be greatly increased; and if the Lord shall use them as sharp sickles for gathering in souls, surely every Christian will, from the inmost soul, bid them God-speed.

“With such of them as have a single eye in seeking the salvation of the lost (and I think life is nobly spent if spent for this), living ministers can have no difficulty in working. Co-operation with the dead on either side is out of the question; co-operation with the living is to be sought after by every possible means.

“Usually evangelists go to places to which they have been invited by one or more living souls. Their work is to ‘PREACH THE GOSPEL.’ With all my heart I protest against what I have known—men received with all warmth of simplicity, and quietly leading unsuspecting ones away to their peculiar views, leaving afterwards a leaven of division injurious in its results. Let men be honest. They have a fair field, and the sacred rights of conscience no man has a right to invade. I have preached in many lands, and in this dear land of ours I have proclaimed salvation in its crowded cities, lowly hamlets, by the side of its wimpling burnies, and on its mountain-sides, and no one dare charge me with making one proselyte to my views, or spending my time on aught else but the one theme.

“I stand today and with my eye fixed on the *lost*, I plead with evangelists to keep at the one thing. With the vision cleared by heaven’s lamp, they will see the crowd rushing on to destruction, sporting with death, indifferent to Calvary, laughing on the way to hell. When there are no souls to save, turn

to teaching. William Burns, that man of God now in glory, was once asked by a lady many things as to how he felt when preaching to the millions of China. After a pause, and fixing his eye on her—an eye that was always full of pity—he said, ‘I never think but of one thing—the LOST and a CHRIST for them!’

“I have been told that it is a sacrifice preaching always to the unsaved. I grant it. We lose much joy in always dwelling about the temple door, and not rising to proclaim higher truths, in which our souls would luxuriate. But if we speak of sacrifices, let us think of the tears wept over Jerusalem, of the sore agony in dark Gethsemane, of the dying love on the cross, and then say if life itself is not worth the giving, if we may but win one jewel for Immanuel’s crown.

“Bless God for Scottish caution; but it is often at fault. When an evangelist comes to a place, there ought at first to be a ‘trying of the spirits.’ Standing on etiquette must be laid aside. Evangelists, if full of power, need not to be patronized. Earnest ministers are not to be ignored. They meet on a common platform. They serve the one Christ.

“Stereotyped modes of action, if need be, must be laid aside, and the ministry of the Spirit must be recognized.

“In my younger days there was a very current advice common amongst the people—‘*Bear and forbear.*’ There will ever be need of doing both. Essentials must be held by both as with a death-grip; but non-essentials may be scattered to the winds. In one sense, neither must act the gentleman. Both should toil and sweat as labourers. The furrows turned up by both should be so joined that when the seed springs the furrows may be hid under the golden grain ripening for the harvest-home of heaven.

“I only returned a few days ago from the sea-side. In my weakness I used to sit and mark the ebbing and flowing tide. When it was out every inequality in the shore could be seen, hidden rocks were laid bare, and the tangle-covered bottom exposed. When in, all was covered. There was nothing to be seen but the blue sea—the one great ocean. So, when the Holy Ghost shall put forth his almighty power, a subject such as this will not be raised. The waves of salvation rolling along shall put all out of sight, as ministers and evangelists,—like men rescuing the drowning from a wreck, almost sweating blood as they do it; or saving the inmates of some burning home,—run with hell pursuing and heaven beckoning onward, holding up the cross, and in thrilling tones cry aloud—

“‘There is life for a look at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee;
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him that was nailed to the tree.’

“There is nothing comparable to the loss of a soul. God, heaven, hell, salvation, are awfully solemn realities. The shadows of eternity are falling on the path of some of us. They are not dark, but lightened by the glory that shines from the better land. I know not how it may soon be with me. A Father can heal if He pleases. I leave it in his hand. It is sweet to know that we toil only for a little. That sowing in tears, we shall reap in joy. Let us seek the welding heat of heaven. We can only do valiantly as we receive power from on high. That power will not be withheld, and blessing will come. With all the earnestness of a dying man, and with my eye fixed on the judgment-seat, I would affectionately urge all who love the Lord to pray, labour, and live for the lost. Lift up Jesus and “JESUS ONLY,” for—

“His name for ever shall endure:
Last like the sun it shall;
Men shall be blest in Him, and Bless’d
All nations shall Him call.

“And blessed be his glorious name,
To all eternity;
The whole earth let his glory fill:
Amen: so let it be.”

For the rest of his time he was seldom able to preach. But the ruling passion was strong in him to the last. Although not a murmur escaped his lips, he longed for the old freedom and joy in proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, and sometimes seemed like the imprisoned lion thrusting himself with a noble violence against the bars of his cage. One day on hearing that three persons had been converted through the instrumentality of his “Herald of Mercy” he said, “I thank God for this; but after all there is nothing like the living voice for carrying the truth to men’s souls.” Now and then he indulged in the luxury of preaching, and never at this period without marked results. There was now a marvellous intensity and tenderness in his words. He really poured out his soul in his addresses. It appeared to need more than human obduracy of heart to listen to him without being melted and drawn. In several places sinners were converted at the little meetings.

Now, however, that the living voice was all but hushed did he labour to publish salvation through the press. And the grace and kindness of his Divine Master were strikingly displayed in the remarkable blessing that now rested on his publications. Every week, and sometimes indeed every day, brought him tidings of sinners converted by means of his periodical or special issues. The blessed results of the labour of former years were also constantly and providentially coming to light, and he was both cheered and humbled. “Oh, how good a God He is!” was his frequent exclamation.” Oh!

if I were better," he often said, "I would preach Christ more than ever. I would warn men more than ever. I would speak of eternity more than ever."

As he was about to start for the South of England in quest of health, the dying evangelist took up the railway map to examine the route, but forgetting his immediate purpose he began to ponder the spiritual condition of the region, and looking up said, "These three counties are *dead—utterly dead!*" Compelled by the inroads of the fatal disease to avoid the excitement of conversation, he invented various devices to supply the place of personal dealing with fellow-travellers, or other strangers whom he happened to meet. Knowing the reluctance of many to read religious tracts or books, he printed in large type on little neat cards pointed and solemn truths, with which he sought to awaken the world's heavy sleepers. For example the following:

"There is
A GOD
Who sees thee!
A MOMENT
Which flies from thee!
AN ETERNITY
Which awaits thee!
A God whom you serve so ill!
A Moment of which you so little profit!
An Eternity you hazard so rashly!
READER,
Where will you spend Eternity?
In Heaven or Hell?
WHICH?"

His was now a new and even more Christ-like ministry. The ministry of activity, of valour, of exhausting toil, and of heroic perseverance had been fully accomplished. It was now the ministry of suffering: and holy suffering is most like the ministry of the Son of God. It is the ministry of the crushed sandal-tree which yields its perfume to the woodman's axe. The ministry of the alabaster box which must needs be broken that the aroma of the ointment may fill the house. We saw the breaking of the box, and the richness of the fragrance tempted us to ask, Why this waste,—why this premature break-up of that goodly form? We might as well ask why the angel of the covenant maimed Jacob just as he obtained victory and blessing. God's Israel have strange experiences: out of weakness they are often made strong. It was at this period he attained his greatest power in prayer. He now ascended to a summit of faith that few Christians ever reach. "I have been all

night," said he to a Christian friend," between Gethsemane and Calvary, between the manger and the cross." Many a night was now spent on the mount of intercession. It was not merely the prayer of faith: it was also the prayer of love. As the glory of love is its disinterestedness, so one of the noblest qualities of true prayer is disinterested love. He seemed to lay his will alongside of the will of God, and the answer admitted not of doubt. Often did he rise from his knees in a flood of tears, but they were tears of joy. And we have seen a whole assembly moved till every eye was wet, whilst with child-like simplicity and holy tenderness he entreated his God—"Lord, take us today to Calvary, and show us afresh thy pierced hands and feet, thy thorn-crowned brow. Give us at the cross a new baptism of thy Holy Spirit. Send us to tell the unsaved that we have seen the Lord. Make us weep over them, as Thou didst over Jerusalem. Show us the moving mass on their march down to the pit. Show us the city: let us walk its golden streets. We are in it by faith today. Show us its jasper walls, and above all Him that is its light." Thus he prayed: and it is added by the narrator, "he wept as he rose from prayer." Often as he pled for the salvation of Scotland, and of the whole world, he said, like one of our ancient worthies, "Take long strides, Lord, take long strides."

The summer of 1869 found him in a dying state. Many prayers had been offered for his recovery, but he grew worse. All known remedies had been employed; for the same generous friends who had aided him in his numerous schemes of Christian usefulness, lovingly ministered to him of their substance during his long illness. But all means were in vain; the disease obedient to the great Master's will went on in its stern course, till at length every pin was unfastened, and the tabernacle lay in ruins. In July of that year he went to Bruar in the Highlands, where he remained till within a fortnight of his death. Although in a condition of extreme prostration, he employed much of his time in preparing various matters for the press. "The Herald of Mercy" was got ready for the rest of the year; and after he was gone it was touching enough to see his little periodical appear month after month just as he had prepared it; it was like a voice speaking out of eternity. He also prepared a little book entitled "Things Worth Knowing," and papers called "Good Tidings" and "New Year's Gift," hundreds of thousands of which were printed and put into circulation. One of these papers, it may be stated on the authority of a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, was instrumental in the conversion of two persons some three months after the hand of this unwearying sower of the truth had lost its cunning in death.

Another instance of blessing on those last labours appeared in "The Christian," of Sept. 15th, 1870:—

"H.M.S. *Hibernia*, Malta.—Towards the end of last year I received a large bundle of tracts, books, and 'New Year's Gifts,' from an unknown do-

nor. They were addressed to Mr. Hodges, Royal Naval Scripture Reader (my predecessor), Soldiers' and Sailors' Institute, Burmala, Malta, who kindly sent word that I might distribute them amongst the men for whom they were intended. This I did as follows:—Hymn-books, Burmala and Valletta Institutes, books amongst the soldiers and children; New Year's Gifts' one in each mess of every ship on the station, some twenty-four vessels; and the tracts have been given away in various ships, regiments, hospitals, and prisons. Now all these have not only greatly strengthened my hands during the past ten months, but a rich manifest blessing has attended their widespread circulation. *The 'New Year's Gifts' and 'Good Tidings' caused quite a revival of true religion in several quarters.* One remarkable case I will mention. To the reading of a 'New Year's Gift,' one of the crew of the *Bellerophon* owes his direct conversion. This man is a genuine disciple of the Lord; so that if he was the only case of blessing, the person who kindly sent them is richly rewarded. 'That day' will declare all the good done. I ought to mention that, after W____ received the blessing himself, he sent the little messenger home to his aged mother and friends, there to be a further blessing, we trust. I should be very happy to receive another similar bundle ere this year closes, and we will look forward with increasing joy for a greater blessing on them, and to that happy hour when sower and reaper shall rejoice together in our home above. Mr. G. Brown, Sick Bay, Steward H.M.S. *Crocodile*, Portsmouth, will receive any parcels for me, and see them safely delivered.—CHARLES BRIDER."

On Sabbath evenings Mr. Matheson addressed a meeting in a room of the house where he lodged. To this meeting he literally crept, so weak was he; and from the last one he was all but carried to his own room. In vain did friends entreat him to spare himself. He knew his time was very short; he several times told his wife he would be removed about the middle of September; and he begged to be indulged in the luxury of preaching Christ once more. These services were deeply impressive, his last text being, "What think ye of Christ?"

As he lay looking out on the hills he said, "Very, very soon these eyes shall be gazing on the everlasting hills. . . . Soon I shall be beholding fairer scenes than these. . . . I shall soon see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off."

On September 3rd he returned to Perth; and on reaching his house he called his whole family together, that together they might offer thanks for the great goodness of the Lord to him and them. He then calmly set his house in order, not overlooking the most trivial matter. "Give my clothes to the poor," he said to his wife: it was almost the only legacy he had to leave. To his friends at parting he spake words of joy and triumph. To Dr. A. S____ he said, "Resurgam." To Mr. M____, an evangelist, "You are going

to speak of the King, but I am going to see Him.” To his old Crimean friend, Mr. Hector Macpherson, whose emotion at parting was too strong for even the soldier’s firmness, he said, “Do not weep for me: I have only to die once that I may live for ever.” To another, who found him making arrangements for a series of evangelistic services to be held at Hillhead, near Glasgow, he said, “I should like to die planning revival services.” The services then planned by him were in progress at the time of his death: the word was in demonstration of the Spirit, and a considerable number of persons were converted.

To another friend he said, “I got the victory long ago—when the Lord first forgave my sins. . . . You have nothing now to ask for me but that I may have an abundant entrance.”

To Mrs. Sandeman, Springland, he said, “It’s all love—it’s all well. *Reality* is the great thing—I have always sought reality. . . . I have served the Lord for two and twenty years; I have sought to win souls—it has been my *passion*—and now I have the fruit of it. One of my spiritual children went the other day as a missionary to China, and many others of them are preaching the gospel. . . . Well, at least you can say you have seen the vanquished the conqueror.”

When alone, he was often heard saying to himself with a quiet jubilation of tone, “Victory!” and often too, in soft, rapt whispers, “Jesus only!”

From day to day he fed on the good word of grace. One day it was, “Ye are complete in Him.” Another day it was, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” Again it was, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.” Near his end he triumphed in those words, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” Shortly before his departure he was fiercely assailed by the great adversary. The conflict was sharp but short, and victory remained with the soldier of the cross. Grasping the sword of the Spirit, he was enabled to contend till at length the enemy left the field and returned no more. Curiously enough, the scripture by which he was enabled through grace at this time to overcome was the memorable passage inscribed on his grand-uncle’s tombstone, “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever!” More than twenty years before he had knelt upon the grave and consecrated himself to the service of Jesus, transcribing with prayers and tears into his innermost heart the words of the prophet. They had been the helm of his subsequent career, the guiding star of his extraordinary ministry. To these words his thoughts naturally reverted; and now when clouds gathered upon the sky, his star shone calmly down upon him, and he was guided through the storm. To use his own saying, *he was now getting what he had*

gone in for. There are many lights in the firmament of the Word; and it may seem meet to God in his wisdom to guide through the darkness and the tempest some keen-eyed mariner of faith by a star too remote for your eyes or mine to discern. "I have not been wise," he said with unfeigned humility to his wife. "Yet God has used me in turning many to righteousness, and I know," he added, with an eye rekindled as the darkness passed away before the light of coming glory now streaming into his soul, "I know He is true, and I shall be with Him for ever."

To his children he spoke of Jesus, and of the chariot coming to take him to glory. He charged them each one to meet him in heaven. To his wife he frequently addressed words of comfort: "You will have your trials," he said, "but the Lord will bear you through them, and the trials will make you shine the brighter." He assured her again and again that the Lord would liberally supply all her and their children's needs. "Mary," said he to her, "I have another text to give you today. It is this: 'A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.'" (Ps. lxxviii. 5.) To his sister he said, "Oh, Jessie, isn't it infinite love that I should not be suffering?" He abounded in thanksgiving, and often asked Mrs. Matheson to assist him in singing praise. Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs were the latest efforts of his voice. Two hymns, "Awaiting the Summons," and "Soon to be with Jesus," he frequently repeated; and as they seemed most fitly to express his thoughts and feelings during his last hours, one of them may, in part at least, be given here:—

AWAITING THE SUMMONS.

"Away from the wilderness-state
 My spirit would thankfully flee;
 And yet in the patience of hope I would wait,
 Till Thou, my Lord, callest for me.
 "O why should I tremble or dread
 At whatever may happen around,
 While I cling unto Thee, the life-giving Head,
 In whom all true nourishment's found?
 "Thou dost not allow me to quail,
 Though keen the blasts oftentimes blow;
 For Thou art my refuge, that never can fail,
 Though all things are failing below.
 "With a conscience at peace with my God,
 And a heart from anxiety free,
 I pray that the rest of my path may be trod
 In happy communion with Thee."

"Mary," he said to his wife, "this room is filled with the heavenly host. Had I strength, how we would sing!" On this he repeated the last three vers-

es of the 72nd Psalm in metre, coming back with rapt delight on the last four lines—

“And blessed be his glorious name
To all eternity!
The whole earth let his glory fill:
Amen: so let it be!”

He now appeared to be filled with the Spirit of glory and of God; and as if already triumphing amidst the heavenly host, his voice gave out with exultant tones the words of Psalm lxxviii. 17—

“God’s chariots twenty thousand are,
Thousands of angels strong;
In ‘s holy place God is, as in
Mount Sinai them among.”

As night came on—the last brief period of darkness to him for ever—he said, with characteristic joyfulness of faith, “Light all the lights; and let not this be a charnel-house.” It was to him not death but life; not sorrow, disaster, or defeat, but joy, honour, and victory. It was not a time to mourn, but a festive season; and he would go to the marriage-supper of the Lamb with a garland of praise in his hand to cast at the feet of the King. It was in the same jubilation of faith that he often said, “Be not sorrowful at my burial. Praise God as ye carry me to my grave. And when you lay me down, sing—

“‘There is rest for the weary.’”

Yet amidst all this triumph, nothing could be more striking than the increasing trustfulness with which he clung to the cross. The scriptures he chiefly dwelt on were those bearing on the death of Jesus in the room of sinners. To an evangelist who came to bid him farewell, he said, with death-like earnestness, “Preach CHRIST.” Not long before he had said to a young minister—one of his own converts—“If I were to live I would preach *substitution* more than I have ever done.”

His peace was now neither coming nor going, but flowing on like a river; and he frequently repeated these lines—

“In peace let me resign my breath,
And thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me.”

He had now but one want—“the coming of the King.” “How is it the King tarries,” he said, in a tone of intense longing, “when the chariot-wheels

are so very near?" Then he seemed to hearken for a little to the inaudible voice of the King, and after the pause said, "Ah, but He has a purpose in this!"

It was said to him,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

"Yes," he replied; "and He is doing it for me." His suffering was great, but at the worst he said, in his own hopeful way,

"Beyond the sighing and the weeping
I shall be soon."

At this time, a few hours before he died, he said that many of his old friends were passing before his mind. His ardently affectionate heart was summoning them up for a last embrace. Mentioning the names of one after another, he said, "Give them my undying love."

Every prayer seemed to be answered and every wish gratified. He longed to see his sister, and she came unexpectedly from Huntly. He desired to see his former pastor and fellow-labourer in the gospel, Mr. Williamson, and providentially his well-trying friend came in after a long journey. He earnestly desired once more to see the writer of these pages, and it was my privilege to be with him during the last hour of his life. On entering his room I was struck with his appearance. He was singularly elevated, and yet profoundly calm. His intellect possessed all the vigour of his best days; his eye was clear and softly lustrous; his voice had recovered its manliness and power, and his lion-like features seemed to repose in the sense of victory. I saw at a glance that he was on the threshold of glory, for the very light of heaven was on his face. Yet all was so natural and unaffected that I could not help saying to myself, "He is the same man, the very same man, Duncan Matheson and no other." Even a touch of the old humour was there. Taking a few whiffs of a cigar to relieve his mouth of the painful sensations caused by disease, he said, referring to the morbid pietism which his manly spirit had never liked, "If some people saw me at this, they would think it was not very like reading Thomas à Kempis."

Particularly and tenderly he enquired about the welfare of all his friends. As of old, he asked especially about the work of the Lord, praising God when he was told of prosperity, and saying solemnly in reference to certain who temporised, "Never mind them. 'What is the chaff to the wheat?' saith the Lord." Then he began to tell me that he was resting on the Sin-bearer, at the same time quoting the scriptures that were yielding his soul peace and rest. He said, "I am weary, and I am waiting. . . . Heaven will literally be a

rest to me.” He seemed like a man returning from the harvest-field with the last golden sheaf upon his shoulder. Pacing wearily along the stubble in the clear, crisp air of an autumnal evening, suddenly the countenance of the worn-out reaper brightens, and his step is instinctively quickened as his ear catches the first sound of the merry-making and the harvest-home; and all his weariness is forgotten as he anticipates

“The shout of them that triumph,
The song of them that feast.”

As he talked of Christ and glory, he said, “It may be a few days yet before I get home, or only a few hours.” Perceiving the emotion I could not conceal, he said, with the tear of fond, but manly affection in his eye, “You cannot come with me. You have more work to do, and you must wait awhile “Ah! dear Macpherson,” he added, with much feeling, as he called to mind the former days, “you and I are like two war-ships”—the old warrior spirit stirred in him to the last—“meeting far out at sea, and one of them is going down in mid-ocean.” “Not so,” I replied; “rather it is this: one of them is about to enter the haven of peace, while the other is left to toss upon the uncertain deep.” Then, as if girding up his loins, he said bravely, “I have cast my five fatherless children upon the Lord, and all shall be well.”

His heart now began to stir again with longings to depart, and with the high praises of his God. When we had prayed together, he said in his old familiar way, “Man, I don’t get singing enough. I want to sing: will you help me?” I agreed to sing with him the hymn, “Shall we gather at the river?” But before singing he insisted, with that warmth of genuine hospitality that characterized him, on my partaking of refreshment. Just then he was seized with cramp. We seemed to hear a voice saying, “The Master is come, and calleth for thee.” Quickly his wife and sister were by his side. “Our friend is in deep waters,” said his kind Christian physician whom I ran to fetch. So indeed it was: but his feet were firm upon the rock. The everlasting arms were underneath him. “Lord Jesus, come quickly! Oh, come quickly!” he several times exclaimed. Quickly the Lord Jesus came and took him. Our hymn was not sung. He went to sing by the river: we were left to weep. On the 6th day of September, just as the sun was going down, Duncan Matheson disappeared from our view to shine in another sphere. Thus departed a right brave and greathearted man,—the man who above millions had lived for God, the man who above most men had laboured for souls and for eternity. “Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: and their works do follow them.”

In accordance with his own wish the funeral was a private one. On the 21st September a few friends, not without prayers and praises, and tears and sore pangs of grief, quietly carried him to the new burial place at Scone, and laid him down in a pleasant spot chosen by himself. His friend, the minister of the Free Church at Scone, having offered prayer by the grave, the company joined in singing, "There is rest for the weary," two of the evangelist's own converts, a preacher and a student, both devoted to the work of the Lord, leading the praise. So we left him there to rest, and truly he sleeps well.

His grave is marked by a plain monument on which is inscribed, as prepared by himself, the following epitaph:

"In Memory
of
DUNCAN MATHESON,
Editor 'Herald of Mercy',
and
Evangelist.
Born at Huntly, Nov. 22nd, 1824.
Born again, Oct. 26th, 1846.
Died Sept. 16th, 1869.

'And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament:
and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.'
(Dan. xii. 3.)"