

One British Methodism. By Rev. George Eayrs, F.R.Hist.S.
"To Him That is Weary." By Rev. John Swinden.
A Book for Free Churchmen.

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"To Him That is Weary."

BY REV. JOHN SWINDEN.

There are two facts which the Church of to-day cannot ignore. One is that weariness is real, powerful, prevalent, and the other, that ability to sustain the weary has always been the distinguishing claim of the Christian faith. It cannot be denied that the mood of weariness is settling upon the world. The spirit of over-confidence in regard to the war has gone, but by what it is, perhaps, a natural reaction, the mood of weariness is taking its place. Both are dangerous, but the mood of weariness is the more dangerous of the two. Some in high authority declare it to be a real danger, that there is no need for it, that it ought not to be, but there it is. Its prevalence need occasion no surprise. It is the natural effect of the pressure and strain and stress of life during past months. The present outlook is not inspiring. The clouds do not lift, they seem to thicken. The atmosphere is rife with criticism, rumour, complaint. The burdens of sorrow and sacrifice are heavy. The weight of anxiety rests on many hearts and homes. The grim realities of war are being pressed home. Every family knows by this time that "there is a war on."

The increasing number of the "unreturning brave" spells disappointment, grief, heart break. The return of many to civil life, broken in body and nerve, and bruised in spirit, has its effect upon the temper of domestic and social life. It is surely no matter for wonder that weariness has followed in the wake of war, that there seems little capacity in many for adventure or endurance, that in the stress and strain many have lost heart and hope. If, as Dr. J. A. Hutton says, "Not to rejoice in this life of ours is to be weary," then the one who is weary represents a numerous loss.

Every Church has witnessed the encroachment of this mood. It has touched many once vigilant and active in religious service. They have changed like "those who have breathed a poisoned atmosphere or taken a powerful drug; they are without ability or desire to serve. The duties of their particular task are without interest; the claims of love and brotherhood are against the grain; even the duties of religious worship are irksome. They are reluctant to obey the summons of faith and resist the perpetual demand of boldness, seriousness, service and prayer. In its ability to meet the needs of humanity lies the test of any religion of its value and its worth. Christianity is unique in its attitude to the weary and its promise of rest. Dr. Matheson says "Christianity is a regenerative religion." It goes back to gather up things that have fallen by the way and been left behind. All other religions are pressing forward. Their messages are to the strong. Jesus alone has a message to the weak. Our Lord set forth the ideals of His own Ministry and gave a programme to His Church in his declaration at Nazareth. The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor, to set at liberty them that are bruised." He proved Himself master of the gracious service. "He healed the broken in heart and bled up their wounds." Our Lord is no longer

here in the flesh. Yet in a great profession the Church proclaims that He is. It is the Christian claim that the Church in this country is the Body of Christ and that through that body He ministers to-day. That is the significance of the Church. She exists to continue "all that Jesus began to do and to teach." The tremendous claim involves the stupendous task. In the light of New Testament teaching it may safely be affirmed that the claim of the weary upon the Church is paramount. She cannot be true to her Lord unless she re-echoes his call, and breathes new life and hope into the bruised and broken at her gate. It is recognised that this is not the whole of her ministry or her message. Other truths claim utterance and other ministries press themselves upon her attention, but in this hour of urgent need "to sustain with words him that is weary" is to reach the highest level of usefulness possible to her. To speak "a word in season," to him that is weary is the unique privilege of the Church to-day. Does she know this master secret of the Christian religion? With what message or ministry can she ease life of its grim pressure and rid it of its hard grind and sordid monotony, and give "new strength to fainting souls." What is there in the faith which the Church proclaims that meets the need of the burdened and the depressed?

There are many causes of weariness, but perhaps sorrow and sin are the chief. Sorrow occasioned by sickness, disappointment, loss, bereavement. Sin which shows us at enmity with ourselves and with God. The weariness of trouble—the weariness of sin. How did our Lord deal with these? He always treated trouble as a real thing. He never ignored it or treated it lightly. He knew sorrow too well to belittle it. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God." He helped the soul in its sorest need, not by dealing with the mood directly, but by reminding the troubled disciple of other facts. The Church must set sorrow in its true perspective. It is apt to take up too much room—to spread itself over the whole horizon. It is not the whole of life, not even the greater part of it. Sorrow has its ministry. It is a contributing factor to the progress and ennoblement of life. It must not tyrannise. Trouble was never intended to impoverish, but to enrich. To extend the bounds of knowledge, to increase the spiritual resources, to deepen the springs of joy. It may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. The troubles of to-day may be the joys of to-morrow. The Cross which caused the grief of the disciples became the object in which they gloried. Our light affliction worketh out an eternal weight of glory.

The Church must renew its emphasis on the greater things of life. Honour, integrity, duty. It must challenge the weary to faith in God. Does the past go for nothing? Is the allegiance of years to be forsaken and all the vows and promises broken? Ye believers in God, accept Christ's revelation of Him as Father, and trust Him. The Church must not move away from the hope of the Gospel. Hope for the future of the world—the new Heaven and the new earth where all things shall be renewed. Hope for the redemption and salvation of the human race, and the hope that centres in the Father's House. The Church must deal with sin, the fruitful cause of so much trouble and weariness. She must denounce it,

One British Methodism.

THE CALL AND PROMISE OF METHODISM AS IT IS.

By Rev. GEORGE EAYRS, F.R.Hist.S.

This Symposium on "One British Methodism," and its appearance in these columns, are happy signs. Another such sign is the remarkable article by Rev. James Lewis (Wesleyan) in last week's issue. That is the latest of many efforts he has made to serve the cause of Methodist reunion. As a minister of the United Methodist Church I have been asked to continue the Symposium. I propose to remark upon Mr. Lewis's article; to note the contribution of the United Methodist Church to the movement for the reunion of British Methodism; and to urge that the position and condition of Methodism to-day in its five sections in this country is at once a call to reunion, and gives assurance of its possibility.

I.

Readers may be reminded that the sections of Methodism included in our references are the Wesleyan, Primitive, United, Wesleyan Reform and Independent. Many have read and read again the article by Mr. Lewis as written from within the first-named, and by much the largest, of these British Methodist communities. The admissions, holy daring, visions and suggestions of the article excite high hopes. Its writer and readers do not deceive themselves. They are aware that one swallow does not make a summer. It tells, however, that summer is coming, and in that there is hope. "The sweet birds sang"; when there was not even one swallow to twit them with the spring. Moreover, nowadays there are many such harbingers. Mr. Lewis has uttered the authentic word of many of his brother Wesleyan ministers, and of many thousands in their great Church. He represents many responsible and capable leaders. The words of the present President (Rev. Simpson Johnson), of Dr. J. Scott Lidgett, Dr. G. G. Findlay, the late Dr. Henry High, and Rev. William Wainwright at the Toronto Meeting, are more than a concurrence may be recalled. Recently, especially, the "Methodist Recorder" has given us the illuminating articles of Dr. C. Ryder Smith and others.

The constitutional fact and most inspiring feature in the case is that a large and representative committee of ministers and laymen of the Wesleyan Methodist Church is at once engaged in the work of reunion. The Wesleyan Conference declares that it is—

"... convinced that a time has come when a serious effort must be made to unite in one common organisation the different branches of British Methodism."

This is a new fact in Wesleyan Methodist history. Its significance is great. The leadership in this divine, Christlike enterprise has been assumed by the honoured mighty Mother Church. It is a gigantic task, worthy alike of her position and her best. And they are working fervently do they pray that in this leadership she may display courage, wisdom, strength and flexibility. They were seen in Wesley at his best. And they are strikingly evident at the last Wesleyan Conference. The Wesleyan Church Committee on Reunion has gathered a unique and invaluable mass of information, as your columns reported recently. Particulars of the doctrine, polity, usages and methods, members, scholars, institutions, departments, financial resources and contributions, and many other matters have been gathered, tabulated and compared, concerning the five Methodist Churches. Meanwhile the same committee has invited twelve representatives of some other Methodist Churches to confer with it.

As readers of the *Primitive Methodist Leader* are aware, an important committee, recently enlarged, appointed by the Primitive Methodist Conference has been gathering information also. Its consideration of union with the United Methodist Church has been widened to include all sections of British Methodism. It is interesting to note that five years (1892-1897) were occupied with the Conference formulations of proposals and plans for union and the consultation of the churches of the three Methodist Communities, now one in the United Methodist Church. The conveners of the above-named Union Committees are Rev. E. Aldom, French's assistant, and Samuel Hartley. They can be relied upon to use and to inspire in others the energy, tact and resource required in this large complicated task with which they have been entrusted. As was found in the first effort to unite such communities, which we refer to below, there will come to them at the call of occasion and of this holy cause, all needful gifts and fellow-labourers. Not only will Simon waiting for the consolation of Israel, but young Isaiah, "with morning in his eyes," will hear God's call and dedicate his powers to this high enterprise. He will be the sons of Isaac, "who have an understanding of the times and know what the tribes of our Methodist Israel ought to do."

As a call is now heard, Mr. James Lewis writes words of truth and soberness:—

"The whole position needs looking at afresh by all concerned, and a bold lead, worthy of supreme leaders, lay and clerical, in all the Methodist Churches of Britain."

Among such lay leaders Sir R. W. Perks, Mr. Joseph Rank (encomiast), Mr. de Montagu, Mr. H. Pringle (Simpson), Sir William P. Hartley, Mr. William Mallison, J.P., who sees what a united Methodism might do for London, and others have already shown their keen interest. The issue of the late Sir Percy Bunting must be remembered. His pen has still leaved this cause, as do Hugh Price Hughes, William Bellenden and Dr. W. J. Townsend. Their messages should be read again to-day. Especially valu-

able is the chapter by Sir Percy Bunting entitled "Lines of Development and Steps towards Reunion," in Volume II of "A New History of Methodism." The manuscript of that chapter is a cherished possession; it is the utterance of a prophet and statesman. The close study of it is earnestly commended.

II.

The contribution of the United Methodist Church to this effort for reunion is obviously unique. It is believed that the one United Methodist Church yet to be will exert such organisation the world has seen. Certainly, the United Methodist Church exceeds any of the three Churches which passed their lives into it. Its creation by the combination of three highly organised Methodist communities, under the conditions of our own time, is a fact the impression and meaning of which can scarcely be exaggerated. The few despairing prophecies which foretold that "it never will be done because it never can be done," are carried somewhere by the good ship as the barely sailed to-day, just as the first ship driven by steam carried a copy of a learned treatise which declared that no such ship could be made. The "Minutes of Conference" of the uniting Churches give with admirable lucid accounts of the procedure and stages towards union. * Rev. Dr. George Parker, Rev. E. D. Cornish, Rev. George Parker and others stood up there and else, where they detailed. Precedents inspired and guide. They should not forget. The uniting Conference in Wesleyan Chapel, City-road, London, in 1897, is rightly regarded by the Unitarian Churches as one of the greatest acts in modern Church history.

Details of the results of the union cannot be given here. Only one small local church was lost in the process. Not one member left or was without appointment. None but good results followed. Unusable, unnecessary buildings were dispensed with; churches were united and circuits rearranged. The economies effected were more locally and Connectionally. They led to larger, wiser and more productive expenditure. Missionary gifts were more generous, and economies insisted with the very spirit of the Christian Gospel became possible in larger measure.

It is sober truth to say that now no one wishes the union dissolved, or a return to the prior state. Ministers, lay leaders and members have long passed into sections other than their own with the utmost freedom. It is now very rarely that there is any reluctance to change—union has evidenced of *esprit de corps*, of a spirit common to all and prepared to accept the responsibilities, meet the needs, and bear the losses of the other. The union has, on several occasions excited thankful wonder and the historic exclamation, "The best of all is, God is with us." In common with all Methodist and other churches, this has effected some decrease in membership and young people. What would these losses have been had the three communities remained separate and sequestered.

Reference is made to the Act of Disunion which enabled, while of course it did not enact, the union. The Act had behind it the highest forensic learning. It is regarded as the most skilful of all such instruments. It conferred legal ability for the churches to unite and the united Church into possession of all properties and powers of the uniting churches, while it left the new Church absolutely free to define, reject, or adopt such doctrinal statement and constitution as, under Divine guidance, it desired. A copy of the Act is given in "A New History of Methodism" (Appendix E Vol. II.). The Constitution enables the Church to unite with other Churches and permits revision of the Constitution and Doctrinal Statement. These provisions cannot be used hastily or without practical unanimity.

III.

British Methodism as it is to-day, its position, condition and temper, the Act of Parliament just referred to, its creation and development of the United Methodist Church by the Holy Spirit—these all utter a call for one British Methodism. They also assure its possibility. "Methodism as it is." This phrase, used as a motto by James Everett of Wesleyan Reform, and as a motto by the title of one of his saddest literary works, may well become a slogan to-day for those who would faintly unite the sections of British Methodism. As it is, Methodism is weak in its substance. And yet as it is it is more ready for healing measures and co-operative effort than ever in its history. How much longer will the waste of our moral and spiritual wealth occasioned by our unhappy divisions be condoned? There is in preparation a report on the overlapping which at present occurs in British Methodism. If anything like a complete account can be given, it will make all good men weep. No necessary toll or cost is too great to maintain Christian principles or the preaching of the Gospel which we Methodists are wasting in the least unnecessary toll or expenditure is an offence to God and men. We look to our devoted army of local preachers and church workers to give their voice like a trumpet as to this misuse of power and of sacred opportunities. If to the summary of the overlapping which occurs there could be added an estimate of the chances missed, of the loss in effectiveness, of the loss in attractiveness to the unattached, the young, the heroic, the account would stir to immediate effort for the cessation of these mistakes of our history.

British Methodism is ripe for such action. It is not as it was. All the sections have been travelling towards a

* A summary is given by Rev. Henry Smith, p. 46, "A New History of Methodism" (1911). See also the book "The United Methodist Church: Its History, Constitution, and Doctrines" (London: Henry Blackie & Co.).

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common ideal. Mr. James Lewis's words as a Wesleyan Methodist should be noted. He has the facts with him—
 "The things the separatists broke away from each other for have been actually and substantially conceded. Change has come on both sides. Today, in all the Churches, the whole Church, lay and clerical together, legislate for the whole Church. Spiritual freedom is safe."

Each local Wesleyan church now annually elects representatives to its leaders' meeting. The old-time unshared assertion of ministerial prerogative is nowadays a little less tried as it is possible in that Church. On the other hand, the minister in the United and Primitive Methodist Churches has a definite, legal, and undisputed right of initiative, power and influence. The congregational tendency and "distraction" in these respective churches has declined. The circuit system is more firmly rooted than in the last generation. It found fresh confirmation and definition in the legal constitution of the United Methodist Church. Connectionalism and the supremacy of the annual Conference is not disputed in these Churches. Wesleyan Methodism, as Mr. Lewis points out, acts nowadays chiefly through the Representative Session of its Conference. Then ministers and laymen are present in comparison of the agendas of the Representative and Pastoral sessions is most instructive as to Wesleyan Methodism as it is. So are the proceedings of the other United Conference. More, much more, must be told of these things. Our insularity is largely the result of lack of knowledge and ancient prejudice. The Primitive Methodist Church has all the remarkable things to show itself from encumbering capital liabilities. Her missionary enterprise abroad, her aggressive Christianity, and the strength and power of her ministry, through all who know them. Dr. G. G. Findlay's solemn injunction and splendid prophecy should be rung out from end to end of all the sections of British Methodism. "It is time to forsake our grandfatherly quarrels and seek the things that make for peace and the things by which we may build up each other. And I believe also that there will come back to us a great restoration and renewal of popular influence and affection when our quarrels are over."

Controlling the Drink Trade.

"The Control of the Drink Trade." By Rev. Henry Carter. (Longmans and Co. 7s. 6d.)

This is an essential book for all temperance and social reformers. It is without question the most important book published on the subject since Rowntree and Sherwell's great book. Mr. Carter is peculiarly fitted for the task he has undertaken. He is a genuine temperance reformer. As secretary of the Wesleyan Temperance Department he has proved his devotion to the cause. A couple of years ago he was made a member of the Control Board and has since been prominent in the work of the new work. His book is a successful attempt to show how by focussing all the usual dangers and difficulties of the trade, and the strong elements of evil in the creation of special social problems due to the gathering of the new armies, the overcrowding of the munition areas, the sudden plentifulness of money amongst certain classes, the general raising of the price which is the usual accompaniment of war, made some restrictive action in relation to the drink trade to be necessary. The inclusion of the question of the military and naval stores and chiefs of police is made clear. When Parliament refused to take any further action of a direct kind against the trade, it became inevitable that the Control Board should be set up. The book is in a main a record and a justification of the work of the Control Board, but the whole discussion is carried on in such a large-minded way that it becomes a weighty contribution to the study of social science.

The book consists of three parts with appendices. Part I describes the conditions before the Board took control. Part II gives a careful and complete account of the work of the Board. Much noisy criticism would have been saved if it had been remembered that, wide as the powers conferred on the Board were, they were not unlimited. The prohibition and national State purchase was not granted. Short of that, within the declared areas, they could do almost anything. They have done great things. Hours of sale have been closed, treating abolished, spirits diluted, "bona fide" travellers ruled out, and clubs brought under the same rule as public-houses. Thirty-eight millions of our people are now under the new order. On the constructive side the Board have helped in the provision of industrial canteens, stimulated the sale of beer on licensed premises, encouraged the sale of light beers of very small alcoholic strength, and applied direct control to the trade in certain places, particularly in the "Quintessence" area, following on State purchase. This action has been meritorious and successful. It is a great success to see what else could have been done in the circumstances. Part III deals with the effects of State control. There is no question that the position of the Board has saved England from orgies of drunkenness. The important side of the book lies in the fact that unless there is to be trade—and that is unthinkable—all after-war legislation must be based on the experiments and experiences of the Control Board. To be able intelligently to support or oppose such legislation it is necessary to know the facts. Mr. Carter's book provides them.

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TO A YOUNG MARRIED SOLDIER.

DEAR FRIEND—You have been in the Army for two years. It was a memorable hour when you crossed the threshold of your cottage home. The pull of love, the memory of restrained emotion, the vague sense of a period of discipline, hardship and perhaps unaccountable friendships in camp life made the hour of departure tense with physical and temporal uncertainties. Never did the moment seem so precious or the love of a devoted wife and child so valuable as at that moment. The compulsion of the hour and the task seemed to fill you with a kind of dread. You were not afraid, you never were a coward; but the tenderest links of life were not under a new strain. You were facing a set of unknown morrows. You knew not whether the future was to be brief or long. But the deep attachments of your heart, made permanent by the idealism of love and the cement of prayer, created the vow that when you left home you would be true to home and Church and God.

Through the eventful intervening months you have lived in face of tests and peril. Your years of religious fellowship and the memory of your wife and child have confirmed your faith. There have been hours of monotonous drill and hours when the human atmosphere was not healthy. Sometimes the unexpected duration of a great military struggle that you expected to see the end of on two or three occasions has created moments of temporary despondency. For we live in deeds not years. You have lived through an ordinary career in two years. You have been driven into long periods of introspection. And the apparent insignificance of life has made strange appeals. You have seen men of careless habit. They seemed to go through the days in an ecstasy of irresponsibility. They could rough it in circumstances against which the best in you rebelled. And when, as has often been the case, your Sunday was made of uncomprehending days there has been the subtle tendency to a weakening of faith and also the occasional unconscious lowering of the moral tone. And if for days letters came seldom you were tempted to think that after all mattered little whether you lived or died. You didn't seem to count.

But still you have not gone under. You have faced death and amid hours when the struggle seemed even you, by the grace of God, found the balance on the right side when the struggle was past. You conquered the demon of despair, scepticism and the fascination of powdered sin. Aromas of life were in you an expert spiritual chemist, a magistrate of life. You were captain of your soul. But now you are longing for the peace of your former domestic life. You feel the greatness of the issue of the war, the personal emotions continue to assert themselves with compound urgency.

Remember to you that you are not forgotten by your home comrades and your home church and Sunday-school and Christian Endeavour Society. They have followed with growth interest your career in camp and trench. Inquiries innumerable which you never hear are made about you. And often round winter evening fires your name comes up in the conversation and even in the prayers. They are eager for your return. Do not forget, too, that no Sunday passes without a prayer in worship for you. You live in hearts made ampler by your brave conduct and unflinching fighting of the flag of honour and cleanliness. And you form one of the great throng of heroes who have kept back the hosts of tyranny, brutality and superstition. The peace of the new world is in the hands of the peoples. But for you and your fellow soldiers the soul of the race would have been threatened. You can live in the inspiring conviction that you have assented to bring into the world a relief the principle of self-determination of peoples. And rulers everywhere will learn before long that it is a principle which will be faithfully maintained and unflinching fighting of the flag of honour and economic highway is being made to take the place of some obsolete roads. The new road will be more spacious and attractive. Children will enjoy its "appealing stretches, and new home country lies beyond." You have helped to lay the track.

And remember, too, your brave wife and child at home. The boy never to estimate the value of his often asked, "When is daddy coming home?" His question brings the nameless tears to the eyes of your devoted wife. Mother and boy look to your photographs again and again. It is the cry of the one life whose life when it is needed to complete the home. Every eventide your wife commends you to God and the word of His grace. She lives on in the hope of the day when you will be able to live in your love and confidence. Do not neglect the arts of pencil and paper. The preserving power of frequent unexpressed correspondence is incalculable. It will grow by the expression of your own heart. You will in this way enjoy the mystic intimacy of those who are far away. The peace of the new world is in the hands of the peoples. But for you and your fellow soldiers the soul of the race would have been threatened. You can live in the inspiring conviction that you have assented to bring into the world a relief the principle of self-determination of peoples. And rulers everywhere will learn before long that it is a principle which will be faithfully maintained and unflinching fighting of the flag of honour and economic highway is being made to take the place of some obsolete roads. The new road will be more spacious and attractive. Children will enjoy its "appealing stretches, and new home country lies beyond." You have helped to lay the track.

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By W. M. PATTERSON.

Author of "Men on Fire," &c., &c.

PART II.

CHAPTER V.—continued. A Sudden Storm.

The minister looked keenly at his visitor. "It was an extraordinary occasion." Mr. Graham's voice was low, and in it was expressed a meaning which his listener knew not at all.

"Only once before have I been in such a remarkable service; but I have only known the soul of worship for a few years," volunteered the young man.

A change seemed to pass over the minister when his companion had so spoken. "Tell me about it," he said; and David readily related to him what took place on that memorable Sunday when he and Mr. Black were in "a place apart." Then followed with what had transpired in Wycombe pit, and detailed the conversation at the "tea party" in Dr. Carmichael's.

"Dr. Carmichael?" exclaimed the minister. "What is he like? A youngish Border man, bright, active, clever?"

"That's the man. Do you know him?"

"He was here for a short time, if it's the same man, and he did some astonishing things. He certainly saved Mrs. Buchanan's life when he had typhoid fever. Have you seen the doctor lately?"

"No; my mother desires me—for the present at any rate, and that is all that will disturb me, for I have promised submission in all things to her will until a period expires, and I have the utmost confidence in her—my mother desires me to have no correspondence with my friends at the colliery until I have reached my goal. She—"

"Your mother?"

"Well, my foster-mother, really, Mrs. Simpson."

"Yes, yes; exactly. Well, proceed. Tell me all about yourself. Do I understand you actually worked in a colliery? Begin at the beginning."

Mr. Graham spoke rapidly, and as his visitor proceeded with his story the interest of the older man increased. David had just finished when the housekeeper rapped at the door, and announced luncheon, or dinner, as it was called in the manse household.

"But I had promised Lord Aird to be back for lunch," said David; "and the trap was to be here to take me."

"Is the Aird here, Mr. Drummond?" inquired the minister.

"No, sir," was the answer. "The Drelichglen carriage came some time ago, and I see the laird and young lady coming up to the Cliff."

"We must ask them to have something to eat before they start," saying which, the minister hurried out to the roadway.

"No, no; thank you," hastily replied the laird to the invitation. "We had a scones and milk at the chiel, and we must really get away home, after my niece has apologised for her mistake and thanked her deliverer. We will not go in. Ask Mr. Narn to come outside to us, please."

"I am not feeling well," Mr. Graham, but I am much better than I was," Miss Palmer said, in answer to the minister's solicitors inquiry. When David subsequently approached her, however, she was greatly affected, and trembled visibly.

"She held out her hand, and the rescuer, seeing her condition, at once led her to the conveyance. "You have had more than enough for to-day," he said, pleasantly, so as not to put an end to her agitation. "Four thanks are accepted. Get home, and into bed, and into there for a day or two. I was assisting her into the coach while he spoke, and she was now smiling though her eyes were dry."

"Will you come to-morrow or next day?" asked the laird.

"Yes, do," seconded Miss Palmer. "I would like it so much."

"I cannot promise; but I will if I can," responded David.

"A! Jetch the Aird folk with you," added the laird. "All right," laughed the youth, who was looking his best, having had the noblest within him aroused during the narration of the sketch of his life's story to the minister. The sight of the young man's boyish clarity—the absolute sincerity displayed in word and voice while he, Graham in captivity, commanding his admiration and something more.

During lunch the trap from Aird House arrived, and the driver said he had to make his lordship's apologies for his being so late. There had been a storm at Drum-mill Towers, and Mr. Tamkor and Miss Germain had to go home. The Towers were struck by lightning, and there was damage had been done, but no one had been injured. All the young people had escaped.

David was soon on his way to Aird. His heart was warm within him. The wave of the girl he had rescued was photographed on his mind, and her "Yes, do for a support of her niece's invitation to visit them, chimed sweetly in his ears. He meant to go, but he did not. That afternoon and night the Rev. Robert Graham had a busy time in his thoughts. He despatched two letters to his brother at Clithero and the other to a firm of lawyers in Edinburgh.

CHAPTER VI.

Argest of David.

"Hallo! Were you caught in the storm, and had to get into the minister's clothes?" That was Munro's salutation when David arrived at the house.

"I am instead of another property from the sky downwards, the hat being the only exception," replied the other, laughing. "If you'll excuse me, I'll change."

"I needn't be ashamed of what you have on," remarked Ian.

"No; but I want them returned."

"All in good time, my boy," said Munro. "Where are your own things?"

"At the manse."

"But they ought to have been dried before you left."

"That's the fact of the matter, is they had to get the salt water washed out of them first."

"Why sulks water? Did you get into the sea?"

David nodded.

"Did you get into the manse manage that?"

"A girl fell in."

"And you jumped in after her?"

"A boat accident!"

Another nod.

"Let us have the story, then," thrust in Macgregor.

"Come along."

A bare outline was given, the teller making light of his own part in the matter, and saying nothing about the girl who had been rescued.

"Have you told us all?" Ian had an intuition that something was being held back.

"Yes, that's all about the accident."

"About the accident, yes; but there is something else?"

"Who told you?"

"No one. Out with it, man."

David hesitated, and Munro joined Ian in asking him to give them the whole story.

"Miss Palmer," he began, "after she had been attended by the doctor, and the doctor, for a while, regained consciousness, asked to see me. The moment I entered the room her whole manner changed. Imagining I was Charlie Garthorpe, she denounced me in a passionate manner. He then described the scene in detail."

"And do you say the minister was present?" asked Munro.

"Yes, and I was sorry for him. The poor girl evidently had no conception of his relationship to Garthorpe."

At that moment a message came from Lord Aird that he wished to speak with Mr. Narn in the library, and he instantly followed the messenger.

"What can that mean?" and Munro turned a troubled face to Ian.

"Why ask me? What trouble are you seeking now?"

"Father has been closeted with that constable who arrived shortly before Narn drove up."

"Yes, man! The excitement of the morning has unstrung you. Let us hunt the girls, and have a walk."

"No; say, here, Ian. We may be wanted."

When David entered the library he was surprised to find a constable seated at the table with his lordship. He was further surprised to observe the stern countenance of the latter, the atmosphere of the room was heavy, and the newcomer felt the depression.

"Take that chair, Mr. Narn," said Lord Aird, pointing to one at the head of the table. "It was a constable, and in a hard voice, and under apparent repression of feeling. 'This is a constable,' he continued, 'who has a warrant for your arrest.'"

The blunt statement drew the young man off his balance, and the two onlookers regarded the appearance of the accused as something akin to a confession of guilt. David stared at them, and was speechless for some seconds during which the frown deepened on the face of the peer and the constable's face had an expression of gratification.

"A warrant for my arrest?" David managed to say, and then, getting control of himself, demanded: "For what? What is the charge against me?"

"You are charged with committing forgery," his lordship replied, looking out, calmly.

"Forgery—forgery?" gasped the accused young man, as if dazed with the enormity of the charge. "When? Where? What?"

"That's a hideous mistake somewhere," he cried. "Perhaps you have seen this before," remarked the officer of the law, holding up an envelope in front of David.

"Yes; it is a letter sent to me from my friend Mr. Grant, a farmer, in Berwickshire. I missed it several days before coming here. But what has that to do with forgery?"

"And perhaps you have seen this before?"

"I never saw a cheque for fifty pounds, payable to Mr. David Narn," signed Laurence Grant, and endorsed "David Narn." The constable held it in his hand, and the accused examined it.

"I never saw that cheque until this moment; and the name of the firm is a forgery, so also is the endorsement." David had now fully gained his self-possession, and an

idea had entered his mind. "What is the firm, might I ask?"

"An English company, manufacturers of agricultural implements, with an office in Edinburgh," detailed the constable.

"Thank you, sir. This is my first hearing of it. I never heard of it until now, and now it is a warrant; when does it say I cashed this cheque at the bank?"

"On the 6th. I serve the warrant upon you now, and arrest you on the charge contained therein."

"Very well. But before we go, I want his lordship to be convinced of my innocence."

"But can you do it? I demanded the peer; and there was sympathy in the ring of his voice."

"Most completely, my lord; for I would not leave your roof until I had removed from your mind that your son had been the associate of a felon, and that through him I had received your kind hospitality. Will you, please, send for Munro and Macgregor to come here?"

The radical change in the young man's demeanour had made a decided impression upon his lordship, although he could not then see how there could be a doubt of the accused's guilt. That he had harboured a fonder in his house, and that forger a born companion of his son and heir, gave him pride a terrible shock. But he complied with his guest's appeal.

"Munro and Ian had the same feeling as David possessed on entering the library, and they looked at the occupants. Who is the master, father?" Munro burst out, and he went up to the chair.

"Mr. Narn has been arrested here by this constable on a charge of forgery."

Munro was dumfounded. "But you do not believe it?" he hotly questioned.

"The circumstances are very damaging, my son. But before he has his guest's appeal, he wishes to remove from my mind that my son has been the associate of a felon and that that felon has been my guest. To convince me he has desired your presence and the presence of Mr. Macgregor in this room."

Lord Aird spoke with judicial calmness, and Ian had drawn to the side of David and put his hand on his shoulder, a touch of compassion and help which he often felt and cherished.

There has been some footling play," warmly assured Munro. "I have said it, because of what I think, father. Then he stopped abruptly. "Ah, I see!" he suddenly gulped. "It's another low-down trick of that fellow."

"Munro, stop!" David had sprung to his feet, and held up his hand. "Remember the presence of the constable, who is warning the officer because more signs, signed something more in this than his hitherto appearance. He made a mental note. 'It is altogether a ghastly mis-

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LIABILITIES.		BALANCE SHEET, 31st December, 1917.		ASSETS.	
		£	s. d.		£ s. d.
CAPITAL:—				Cash at Bank of England, and at Head Office and Branches	17,204,901 7 1
40,000 Shares of £75 each, £10 10s. paid ..		3,000,000	0 0	Money at Call and Short Notice ..	8,100,943 17 3
25,000 Shares of £50 each, £12 paid ..		2,300,000	0 0		
RESERVE FUND ..		2,100,000	0 0	INVESTMENTS INCLUDING 5% WAR LOAN TAKEN AT COST PRICE, AND OTHER SECURITIES AT MARKET PRICES RULING ON 31st DECEMBER, 1917:—	
		2,100,000	0 0	British Government Securities including Treasury Bills (Of which £110,975 is lodged for public account)	3,712,030 12 1
CURRENT DEPOSIT AND OTHER ACCOUNTS, including relate on Bills not due, provision for bad and doubtful debts, contingencies, &c.		510,950	0 0	Indian and Colonial Government Securities; Debentures, Guaranteed, and Preference Stocks of British Railways; British Corporations, and Water Works Stocks	4,077,892 6 11
ACCOUNTS AND ENDORSEMENTS OF FOREIGN BILLS, on Account of Customers, and obligations under Treasury Minutes ..		112,967,463 10 7		Canal, Dock, River Conservancy, and other Investments	973,042 3 4
PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT:—		1,982,961 7 7			
Balance of Profit and Loss Account, including £58,250,110, brought from year 1916 ..		£1,312,952 0 2		LYONS BANK (FRANCE) and NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK (FRANCE) LTD., 12,000 Shares of £50 each, £20 paid ..	42,102,960 3 4
Less Interim Dividend, 8 per cent, subject to deduction of Income Tax (£50,000) paid in August last ..		£28,000 0 0		Bills Discounted, Loans, &c., including Stock Exchange Loans under Treasury Minute of 31st October, 1914 ..	240,000 0 0
Dividend of 8 per cent, subject to deduction of Income Tax (£60,000) payable 5th February next ..		240,000 0 0		LIABILITY OF CUSTOMERS FOR ACCEPTANCES, &c., as per Contra ..	49,236,357 9 2
Transferred to Reserve Fund ..		100,000 0 0		BANK PREMISES in London and Country ..	1,982,961 7 7
Placed to Contingencies ..		350,000 0 0			824,942 14 11
		1,130,000 0 0			
Balance carried forward to 1918 ..		182,932 0 2			
		£119,863,364 13 4			£119,863,364 13 4

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