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DR. W. P. MACKAY,
OF HULL.

HIS DEATH AND BURIAL,
WITH SOME PULPIT REFERENCES.

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS.

NO event of late years in the history of Oban has evoked so universal sorrow as the melancholy death of the Rev. Dr MacKay. This is due to many causes. Dr MacKay was, first of all, a true Highlander, though he has confessed in our hearing, and with regret, that he had no Gaelic. Apart from that, however, he loved the Highlands of his native land with a love which never tired praising the beauties he could only enjoy occasionally. With what longing he looked forward to the all too short holiday he revelled in here yearly is known only to his more intimate friends. Oban, to him, was the sweetest spot on earth. Its very dust was dear to him. The lofty peaks and mountains which begirt the town, and hide their heads in the clouds, were not unlike his own strong, massive, heavenly-minded character, for if ever a man lived with the sense of a present God, and a rest that remaineth for God's people, it was Dr Mackay. His love for the Highlands, which he never attempted to conceal, endeared him to all in these regions. We loved the man who loved to speak, and that with such eloquence and power, of the seas,

lochs, glens and mountains of old Scotia. Highlanders were proud of Dr MacKay. Then, again, Dr Mackay was, as a man, altogether devoid of anything like conventionality or cant. He was genuine to the heart's core; a true man; he never appearing more, but less than he really was. What a virtue that is in these days when boys, who should be under the birch of the school-master, ape the airs of philosophers, and young men pose as Solons and statesmen when they should be sitting at the feet of men they affect to patronise. Going out and in among us in the beautiful summer time, Dr MacKay was loved by the children, who, with the unerring instinct of childhood, knew how true and good he was. He cared absolutely nothing for the praise of men so long as he had a conscience void of offence; another virtue scarce enough in the present time to be highly prized when met with. He bend the neck before sleek respectability indulging in acts of benevolence and goodness because fashionable. Never! His soul loathed and abhorred pretence of any and all kinds so much that his protest could be seen and read by all men in his deportment, in his walk, and conversation. Another cause of his deserved popularity here was his strong love for the sea, and seafaring men. He loved to be

“Where the scattered waters roll.”

Among the yachtsmen who, following their calling, stop ever and anon at Oban he was a special favourite, while there is not a boatman on the Corran Esplanade but feels he has lost a personal friend. Few men of his gifts and graces ever condescend to talk to simple boatmen of sails, anchors, winds, and storms, as Dr MacKay did. In fact, the poor of the town, and working-men of all grades,

felt that in Dr MacKay they had the genuine servant of Christ—one who loved his work for the work's sake, and not because it was a respectable calling wherein to earn his daily bread. What wonder, then, that sadness should pervade the town, and that the unbidden tear should start in the eye of many when alluding to the death of such a man.

The universal sorrow is made still more sorrowful by the manner of Dr MacKay's dying. That he should be cut off in his prime, in the district he loved so well, and during his annual resting time, are circumstances which cast a deeper shade over the event. And that he should die among comparative, though kind and affectionate strangers, from the effects of an untoward accident which, humanly speaking, might have been easily prevented, is peculiarly sad and distressing. We always like to fancy our loved ones passing away surrounded by relatives cheering the gloom and desolation of the unknown journey. This earthly comfort was denied to Dr MacKay and to those nearest and dearest to him. But we are convinced that there was no weakness displayed by this servant of the Master as he prepared to enter on the reward of a servitude signally honoured and blessed. It is also melancholy to reflect that this sudden call came when week after week multitudes waited on Dr MacKay's ministrations, benefitting by his ripe experience in the Christian life and the fullness and freedom of his message. We are, with our limited vision, prone to question the Providence—to question its reasonableness—which put a stop to such a useful life in mid career, when, by years of toil and trouble, the garnered storehouses of knowledge were just giving forth of their

rich provision. Another reflection which might cause much questioning were it not that we know

“ God moves in a mysterious way ”

is, why such a true, good man should meet his death in what we may call a harsh, cruel way? At the time of the accident, and even after he was taken out of the water, none knew who he was. Then death came, after much suffering, and not by the wounds he received in his fall, but by congestion of the lungs, probably brought on by the time he had been in the water before rescue. Dr MacKay died while in the laudable attempt to recruit his health, strained by work of the most exalted character. Loving the sea with a love, let it be reverently said, somewhat approaching the Saviour's, who lingered by the lakes and seas of his Highland home in Galilee, and called as His disciples the humble fishermen of the locality, Dr MacKay was on his way to Thurso, taking advantage of a delightful sea trip to fit him the better to declare the whole counsel of God. And yet, under such circumstances, he is called home.

It is hardly the place of the public journalist to speak of Dr MacKay as a preacher. Yet he was such a power in the pulpit, and the magnetic influence of his name drew such large crowds, that we may be suffered to say a word. The leading feature of his preaching was earnestness. One felt that here was a man who lived what he professed. He had no exalted ideas of the respectability of the preacher's office other than that it was the divinely-appointed method for awakening and converting sinners and building up saints. The ceremonies some would hedge themselves within in order to impress the heedless and careless of the sacredness of

the office, as they say, whereas the consideration is more for their own dignity, Dr MacKay despised. He adopted any and every method whereby he could arrest the attention and get at the heart. His manner and style in the pulpit was not, therefore, on the universally approved model. He was not a man to conform to the worldly rule of what is considered decorous and respectable. Hence his power. Few but Dr MacKay, however, could have so set at naught the worldly proprieties without evoking hostility. His genius saved him here, and his earnestness disarmed opposition. Besides all this, his message as a preacher was heart-stirring and convincing. He presented the truths of the Christian religion in so unique and striking array that many going to scoff remained to pray. His appearance as he entered the church arrested attention. He hurried into the pulpit so charged with his message that he appeared hampered until he commenced its delivery. Usually his opening sentences were so formed as to compel attention, which he never allowed to flag. Then the beauty of the heavens and the earth, sea, and air, literature, science, art, and philosophy, were all laid under tribute to illustrate and press home the eternal verities of our holy religion. His ripe scholarship was undoubted; and his knowledge of the structure and anatomy of the human body were often drawn upon to point a moral truth or erect a beacon light. His light has gone out as far as this world is concerned. No more will he thrill and delight Oban residents and tourists by his eloquence. He has his reward to-day, and with Longfellow we may say—

“Servant of God, well done!
Thy words were great and bold,
At times they seemed to me

Like Luther's in the days of old,
Half battles for the free."

HOW HE CAME BY HIS DEATH.

The death of the Rev. Dr W. P. MacKay, minister of the Presbyterian Church, Hull, at Portree, through the effects of an accident, on Saturday morning last, has caused much sorrow in Oban, and evoked great sympathy for his widow and three boys. Dr MacKay and his family for more than seven years have spent their summer holiday at Oban, the scenery of which they loved so much. About three years ago he built a pretty little villa on the rising ground at the south end of the town, known as Drimvargie. Here he came year after year to recruit his health, and he was always made doubly welcome by the people of Oban. While enjoying his holiday, Dr MacKay was not idle. During the time he was here he preached twice each Sabbath day in the Free Church, which was always crowded late comers having considerable difficulty in finding seats. With a power and unction few preachers possess Dr MacKay enraptured his audiences with the old, old story. Visitors from all parts of the world heard of his power as a preacher, and flocked to hear him in Oban. Special arrangements were made by tourist parties to spend the Sabbath in Oban so that they might hear Dr MacKay. One Sabbath day last year his audience in the morning comprised four Doctors of Divinity, two baronets, and the Mayor of a large city in England. Then, as a man, he was loved by young and old, rich and poor, in Oban. He made himself to be beloved by the entire community.

On Wednesday last not feeling well, Dr MacKay determined on a sea trip to Thurso, by the steamer *Clydesdale*. He left here in his usual good spirits, looking forward to a pleasant day or two, which would fit him for his labours on the Sabbath. The steamer called at Portree, and our Portree correspondent says—"Dr MacKay came off the steamer, along with some friends who landed at Portree, the doctor intending to proceed to Thurso, to return by same boat on Saturday to Oban. The night was exceedingly dark, and the light on the quay was defective, and the rev. gentleman in making his way to the steamer fell over the pier. In the fall he, it appears, struck against the belting of the steamer whereby his head was severely cut. The accident was immediately observed, but the doctor having fallen between the steamer and the pier, it took a considerable time before he was rescued, and when got out of the water he was unconscious. In a short time afterwards he regained consciousness, and was himself so hopeful of his recovery that he did not wish his family to be made aware of the accident. Dr MacKay was taken to the Marine Hotel, where he was attended to by Dr Ross, Portree. Up till Friday hopes were entertained of his recovery; that night congestion of the lungs set in, and he died on Saturday morning. Mrs MacKay, who was at Oban, having on Friday evening been made aware of the doctor's critical condition, left on Saturday morning by the steamer *Grenadier*, and it was only on landing at Portree that she learned the sad news of her husband's death."

On Saturday morning the sad news was received by us in a telegram from Mr J. G. Weir, Hampstead, London, who with Mrs Weir and his family were on a holiday trip to Skye. On the sad intelligence becoming known in Oban, great regret and sympathy were expressed by the entire community, Dr MacKay being a great favourite in Oban. Many could hardly believe the sad news, it was so sudden and melancholy.

Dr MacKay was 47 years of age, and was ordained to the ministry in December, 1868. He graduated as M.B. at Edinburgh University in August, 1867, and was married at the same time. Both he and his wife engaged in evangelistic work until settled in Hull. He was well known as a preacher and author of works of a religious kind, one of these, "Grace and Truth," obtaining a very wide circulation. He was also editor of the *British Evangelist*. He was a native of Montrose, where he received his early education. A number of years ago he was called to the Presbyterian Church in Hull, where he had laboured with much acceptance up to the time of his death. Dr MacKay after going to Hull, paid periodical visits to his native town, where he had a considerable circle of acquaintances, and by whom his sudden death is deeply lamented. He took an active part in all evangelistic work. He leaves a widow and three boys, who have the deep sympathy of all who knew the dear departed. Dr MacKay's younger brother, the Rev. A. B. MacKay, is pastor of the leading Presbyterian Church in Montreal.

BY ONE AT HIS DEATH-BED.

An accident of so distressing a nature and so fatal in its results as to be unparalleled in the whole history of catastrophies at Portree, occurred here on Wednesday night the 19th inst. Dr MacKay, the celebrated popular preacher of Hull, was in the habit of spending some time every summer in a house he lately built at Oban, where he had a second and devoted congregation. On the previous Wednesday he started in the steamer *Olydesdale* from Oban, purposing to do the round by Thurso and return in

time for his ministerial duties on the following Sunday. On halting at Portree about 10 p.m. on Wednesday night, he, along with most of the other passengers, came ashore for a few minutes. It chanced that the pier was filled up with a flock of sheep, and these were being put on board when Dr MacKay returned. The pier, which is the property of Lord MacDonald, was lighted solely by two lanterns which seemed to be arranged so as to throw the most useless and deceptive light possible. One was placed on the further side of the sheep slip, and the other near to the first of three posts which are placed in the centre of the edge of the pier distant from each other about four or five feet and three or four feet high. In front of these posts were ranged to a height of four feet high meal bags, so as to further block up the pier. Dr MacKay wished to re-enter the vessel at the sheep slip, but was told to get on board at the spot by the first post from the slip. The darkness was rendered the greater by the delusive rays from the bad positions of the lanterns. When about to get on board the *Clydesdale* at the place indicated, Dr MacKay stated that he felt something trip him up and he fell over into the water. The scandalous part of the business is that the pier is utterly unprotected. No railing of any kind exists but a bit of bevelling about 3 inches high, edges the pier. After much difficulty he was got out by the second mate and brought ashore. Terrible wounds had been made whilst knocking about among the piles and boulders of the pier, and life was at first thought extinct. He was taken to the Marine Hotel at 11.30 p.m., and placed in the landlord's bedroom on the ground floor. After some time consciousness returned. Dr Ross and Mrs Sutherland, the proprietress, watched all night, and on Thursday morning hopes were entertained of his recovery. A lady and gentleman, Mr and Mrs J. G. Weir of Hampstead London, visitors in Portree, on hearing of the accident, although total strangers, went to inquire how the Dr fared. On learning the circumstances, and finding that he was

travelling alone, they relieved Dr Ross. In the evening they were joined by Rev. Mr MacIntyre, who sat up with Dr MacKay the whole of Thursday and Friday nights. These, together with Dr Ross and the kind-hearted landlady, were unwearied in their exertions bestowing all possible care and doing all that loving hands and forethought could do to favour his recovery and supply the place of absent wife and friends. Mr MacLachlan, Caledonian Bank agent in Portree, and Mr Macdonald the shipping agent, were most kind and attentive during the Doctor's illness, and rendered invaluable assistance in making the final arrangements. On Friday evening Mr Weir telegraphed to his esteemed friend Dr James Maxwell (staying at Lossiemouth) the honoured medical missionary of the Presbyterian Church of England, and an elder of the Hampstead Church, who sent on Mr James E. Matheson of Mildmay Conference Hall, an old friend of Dr MacKay, Dr Gauld, and Mr Wenham, who arrived on Saturday afternoon. Dr MacLean joined Dr Ross on Friday, and the latter again watched the patient during Friday night. Pneumonia having set in, the case became very critical, and the one hope was that Dr MacKay would last until the arrival of his wife on Saturday afternoon. He passed away, however, very peacefully at 10.23 a.m. on Saturday in the presence of Dr Ross and Mr and Mrs Weir. The Doctor retained consciousness almost during the whole of his brief illness, and was confident in the expectation that he would soon be well, and decidedly refused to allow his wife to be troubled or sent for. When told, however, on Friday evening this had been done, he said "Very well." On Thursday evening, turning to Mrs Weir, he said "What thou knowest not now thou shalt know hereafter." Until within the last ten or fifteen minutes he suffered great pain, but bore all with much patience and cheerfulness—the servant and nurse both saying it was a pleasure to do anything for one so grateful and bright. Shortly before passing away he was heard to say "The congre-

gation"—then turning to each one in the room he said, "God is Light," and "God is eternal Truth," and "God is Holiness," and "God is Love;" "he who would see God must walk in the light, for God is Light." With these words he passed away. After death the face lost all traces of the recent suffering and wore a calm and beautiful expression.

On the Sabbath following, the Rev. Mr Turner, and the Rev. Mr Sawday of London, who had been at Oban on the preceding Sabbath and heard Dr MacKay preaching for the last time, made touching reference to the sad event from the pulpit of the U.P. Church at Portree, of which the Rev. Mr MacIntyre is the minister. On the following Sunday his sermon was from the text—"The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth," and bore especially on the great doctrines of evangelical truth, of which he said Dr MacKay had been such an earnest and able exponent.

Mrs MacKay returned on Monday morning to Oban and Mr Mathieson to Lossiemouth. Dr Gauld and Mr Wenham remained until the evening, Rev. Mr MacIntyre being entrusted by Mrs MacKay with the final arrangements. The remains were placed on board the steamer *Claymore* on Monday night for conveyance to Oban. A short service was held in front of the Marine Hotel, around the coffin, previous to the removal to the steamer. The Rev. Mr Turner of West Green, London, opened with prayer, and was followed by Rev. Mr MacIntyre, who read the 90th Psalm; part of the 15th of 1st Corinthians, and the closing verses of the 22nd of Revelations. Rev. Mr Sawday, of King's Cross concluded with prayer, and the benediction was pronounced by Rev. Mr MacIntyre.

This shocking accident was more or less due to the abominable parsimony of the owners of the pier, in not supplying protection and sufficient lighting. Such a disgraceful state of things cannot be too severely reprimanded, and would not

be tolerated for an instant by any corporation. This is the fifth accident which has occurred at Portree during the last few years from the same cause. A noble life has been cut off in the zenith of its strength, and society has to mourn the loss of so great and useful a man as Dr MacKay, universally beloved by those holding all shades of religious belief for his many lofty virtues and high attainments, and known all over the world as the gifted author of "Grace and Truth," and other works.

FUNERAL AT OBAN.

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The funeral in connection with the interment of Rev. Dr MacKay's remains, which took place on Wednesday, was the largest and most imposing that, perhaps, Oban ever witnessed. Seldom has a community been so deeply stirred as in this pitiable death of a universal favourite. For the hour or so the large company took to pass through the town business was entirely suspended, and the shops not only closed, but shutters up and blinds down. The streets were lined with spectators, and many tear-stained faces were seen, not only in the company, but along the line of the funeral procession, as with slow and solemn step it moved along to the mournful music of the "Dead March" in *Saul*, played by the Volunteer band. The remains of the Rev. Dr MacKay were removed from Portree on Tuesday by the *Claymore*, and arrived in Oban that night. The funeral (the undertakers being Messrs MacDougall & MacColl) was fixed for Wednesday at one o'clock. The Free Mission Hall, where the company met, and where Dr MacKay had on more than one occasion presided and spoken with great acceptance at the Christian Conferences, was crowded by the

leading men of the town and district. Never, surely, did so many ladies attend the preparatory religious services of a Scotch funeral as this one. One-third of those present in the hall were ladies. The Rev. George Clazy, Paisley, read several appropriate passages of Scripture, and also read extracts from a letter written by one who had been with Dr MacKay to the last, which proved that he had died as he had lived—in the full hope of the Christian religion. Almost the last words Dr MacKay was heard to utter were: "For Thine own glory." The Rev. Hugh M'Intosh, London, then offered up a most impressive prayer, in which he remembered before the throne of grace the widow and the fatherless, and Dr MacKay's congregation who had not the consolation of following the remains of their dearly-beloved pastor to the grave. Before the company retired, Rev. Mr Clazy, who was deeply moved, invited ministers present, though strangers, to walk next to the chief mourners. Several clergymen took advantage of the invitation. The coffin was covered with a wreath of *immortelles*, sent by the members of the Hull congregation, and the coffin plate bore the following inscription:—

DR. W. P. MACKAY,
AGED 47.

The local company of Artillery Volunteers (3rd Battery of Argyll and Bute), to whom Dr MacKay had preached a remarkably powerful sermon on 16th inst., under the command of Major MacCaig and Captain Menzies of the Easdale battery, headed the procession, preceded by the company's splendid band. The coffin was carried shoulder high by six men of the Volunteers, and on either side the men of the company marched in single file.

CHIEF MOURNERS.

Master Fred. MacKay.	} Sons of the deceased.
Master Alex. MacKay.	
Master David Mackay.	
Mr Livingstone, Mr Thomson, Mr Miller;	
Mr Johnstone, Mr Hill, elder of Hull con-	
gregation;	
Mr Alexander Brown, banker, Oban.	

The company at the funeral comprised all the leading and official gentlemen of the town and district. A list of their names it would be impossible to give with anything like accuracy. The procession passed through Stevenson Terrace, the large square was crowded with people, and many spectators were stationed at the windows in the Queen's Buildings. It then moved up George Street, which it took half-an-hour to traverse, 'mid tokens on every hand of profound sorrow. The crowds stationed along this street and at the corners of the streets branching off, uncovered as the funeral passed along. A more remarkable display of public sorrow was never witnessed in Oban. Many in the company could not trust themselves to speak. The wailing mournful notes of the music and the muffled drum added to the sorrowful feeling. Arrived at the boundary of the burgh at Dunolly Castle gate, the coffin was placed in a hearse, and the company then proceeded to the place of burial, Pennyfuir Cemetery—perhaps the sweetest spot to rest in all God's universe. At the grave, the Rev. Mr Clazy addressed a few words of consolation, and at his request the immense multitude joined in singing Psalm 23. Many were utterly broken down, and the sound of weeping and the catching sob were heard from strong men. Amid such manifestations of profound sorrow all that was mortal of the Rev. Dr MacKay was given to kindred dust, to rest under the shadow of the mountains, and within sound of the lapping waves he so much loved, till the trumpet of the archangel shall sound on Resurrection Morn.

PULPIT REFERENCES.

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The Rev. George Clazy, Oakshaw Free Church, Paisley, occupied the pulpit of the Free Church, Oban, in the forenoon, and made the following reference to Dr MacKay's death :—

I scarcely know how to allude to the painful event which has cast a cloud over this congregation and the community of Oban. Last Lord's Day Dr Mackay occupied this pulpit, and preached with wonderful acceptance and power. In the evening he intimated he would preach again to-day, and the two following Sabbaths. His voice is to-day silent in death. Anything more touching and impressive I have rarely known. He went forth from this for a short excursion on Wednesday morning with all the sprightliness and joy of a boy on his holidays, and at Portree on the same evening he met with an accident, which has proved fatal. Many of us feel we have sustained a personal loss, the loss of a dear and valued friend. I myself had not known him long; but I had known him long enough to respect and love him. He was not only a man of genius, of extensive and varied knowledge, of profound acquaintance with his Bible, and an eloquent and attractive preacher; but he was frank and genial, kind and unselfish, loving and loveable, and peculiarly fitted to make and keep friendships. His death will be most keenly felt by his widow and three boys, with whom we to-day deeply sympathise; but it will be keenly felt also by the large and important congregation at Hull to whom he statedly ministered, and by you among whom he has acted for years as a summer pastor. In truth, his death will be felt as a loss by the Church of Christ at large: for he was known and valued not only in this country, but in America and the Colonies. God had endowed him with very special gifts, and made him eminently useful. By his preaching and his writings he has been the honoured instrument of spiritual blessing to many. He understood the Gospel of Christ, and the relations of grace and truth as very few do; and we cannot doubt that what he understood so clearly and preached so powerfully, he personally experienced and enjoyed. To-day it is well with him. His death, though sudden and unexpected, has been gain. One of his last utterances on Tuesday evening, when he kindly gave two or three of us a sail round Kerrera, was—"There is a great eternity before us; but I am saved." And his very last was "Life." That life we trust he now enjoys. To him we are persuaded has been given the welcome by the Master—"Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee a ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

In the afternoon the Rev. David Ogilvy, of Motherwell, conducted the service in the Free Church, and preached from John xix. 38-42. At the close he added :—

May the peculiar circumstances in which we are now met be blessed of God to lead every one of us to give all diligence to be found in Him who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In God's mysterious providence I stand here in the place of the dead, that loved and honoured servant of Christ whose words of grace and truth I expected myself to hear, but will never hear now. Though dead he yet speaketh. His sudden summons home speaks to both ministers and hearers, and bids them speak and hear the gospel as dying men who may never speak or hear it again. His words also, spoken in time past to many here, still re-echo in their memories and should make the deeper impression that they are now the words of the dead. His written words, too, with which I am most familiar, for I had not the advantage of knowing him personally, have reached far beyond his bodily presence and conveyed to multitudes the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, and they will doubtless continue to do so. But it has pleased God to call him in the prime of his days from his loved employ in the Church below to follow his Master to his Father's house. Sad, sad is his death to the view of flesh and blood—sad to many here to whom he had endeared himself during his frequent visits—sad to the important congregation to which he stately ministered, which will this day be so stunned by the tidings of his death—sad to the whole church in England with which he was connected, and to which he rendered such important service—sad, indeed, to all evangelical Christendom, which naturally feels that it is needful for it that such as he should abide in the flesh—saddest of all to that family circle of which he was the head, so sad that I could not venture to speak of it but for his connection with Him who died on Calvary, and whose broken body Joseph buried in his own tomb. Our brother is not dead but sleepeth. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. There are no deaths in the family of God, as the world reckons, but only departures sooner or later to their Father's heavenly home. Blessed, therefore, are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth—yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Hugh M'Intosh, London, at the close of his sermon to the Free English congregation, in Argyllshire Hall, on Sabbath evening, said :—

I have already stated that I felt constrained to change the subject on which I meant this evening to address you as young men, because of the solemn and startling events that have happened in our midst and near us during the past week, especially the sudden, startling, and lamentable death of that highly-honoured servant of God—the Rev. Dr MacKay of Hull—whose annual visits and powerful preaching here for the last seven years, have made his name a household word in Oban. It is impossible to express adequately the awed surprise, and deep sorrow, which the first

tidings of his death created, a sorrow that has only been intensified and extended as the sad details became more fully known, and we recovered somewhat from the shock of the awful pang that pierced every heart on the reception of the sad news yesterday. Although it may seem almost touching too soon on a fresh sorrow, and treading too quickly on sacred, to refer to-day to the character and career of one the tidings of whose death but yesterday awakened such grief, and cast such gloom over this place, I feel, that as a friend and as a minister of the same church—the Presbyterian Church of England—I cannot refrain from expressing my esteem for and admiration of a servant of Christ so eminent and faithful, and the poignant grief with which I learned that a life so noble and a career so great had so suddenly and lamentable come to a close. Dr MacKay was a man of genius, and it was this which imparted such originality and fascination to his preaching and enable him to strike off with unique power his fresh and ever-memorable discourses. He was also a man of great action. Possessed of unusual physical strength, and a full flow of vigorous life, he could never be idle, and threw himself with the whole energy of his being into whatever he became connected with and showed himself everywhere a born leader of men. He was emphatically a man of faith, who never staggered at difficulties, but having full trust in his heavenly Father, pressed forward, through obstacles that would have crushed ordinary men, with the confidence “That laughs at impossibilities, and says it shall be done.” He was consequently a man that wielded vast influence. His sparkling genius, that in a single sentence, or by an apt illustration cast a flood of light upon Scripture truth, gave him, along with his intense fervour and unique position as a preacher, and as his sermons were full of Christ, and his constant theme salvation by faith, many in all parts of the land received eternal life through his powerful preaching. Evangelistic work was his peculiar delight, and to this not only his own congregation in Hall, but several others largely owe their existence and prosperity. This also led him to become editor of *The British Evangelist*, by which he wielded a widespread influence in favour of evangelical truth. His pen was as striking as his preaching was powerful, and has pointed many to a Saviour who never heard his voice. His “Grace and Truth” was of itself sufficient to immortalize him as a fresh and earnest preacher of the evangel. It was the one book Mr Moody recommended on his first visit to Britain; and an honoured elder of my congregation still retains as a precious relic the old time-worn copy of it which was the means of the conversion of his only son, who was to have studied for the ministry; but who, like Dr MacKay, was suddenly called away, and has ere now, with many others saved through the same means, welcomed him home as his spiritual father. He had always a very special power over young men. Many of his companions at college have spoken of this, and have stated that no other exercised such an influence for Christ as he did by the force of his character, and the fearless frankness of his confession. And I am informed that a Cambridge student who heard him preach last Sabbath confessed that he had by that sermon been brought to Christ. Sitting out in the bay a few evenings ago, and watching the wavelets following one another to the shore, he said—“We follow one another to eternity like these; but I am ready.” Oh, how little could he or any one have then imagined that he was so near to that eternity! Who would have thought that one so strong, joyous, and hopeful should in the prime of his manhood and in the midst of his usefulness should be so sadly cut off—that a voice so earnest and powerful should be so suddenly silenced! But he is gone, and we shall hear his voice no more. Oh, how solemnly this should speak to us all, but specially to you young men, in whom he took such a

deep interest, and who have often heard his powerful appeals. Last Sabbath at this hour many of you doubtless listened to the voice now silent in death; but from the eternal world it rings out to-night as never before in the ear of every young man here—"Be ye therefore also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." We mourn the loss of the earnest voice, the warm heart, and the devoted life; but methinks that if anything could alleviate that loss and deepen his joy in heaven, it would be to know that young men by his death had been saved.

Servant of God well done,
Rest from thy loved employ,
Thy struggle o'er, thy victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.

The Rev. John Smith, M.A., of Oban Parish Church, on Sabbath forenoon last referred to Rev. Dr MacKay in the following words:—

Text—*Prepare to meet thy God*: Amos, iv. 12.

Before concluding I cannot but offer a few remarks on the late Dr MacKay, whose sudden removal by death from us has caused such a blank in our midst and cast such a gloom over us, especially over the F.C. congregation to whom he has ministered for about two months every summer during the last seven years. I cannot speak of him as a husband, nor yet as a father, but I have every reason to believe that he was all that a loving and devoted husband ought to be, and also a kind and affectionate father. I shall only speak of him as an author, and preacher of the Gospel. As the author of "Grace and Truth" his name is widely known, for I am informed that it has been translated into several languages. As a preacher of the Gospel he had few equals; and of all the ministers who have preached in Oban since I came, he was, without a doubt, the most popular, and always attracted not only crowds of Oban people but also of strangers. I heard him on three different occasions, and the impression left on my mind was that he was a man of great piety, and felt, deeply felt, the power of the Gospel he preached to others; that he was most original, and always took a large grasp of his subject. His style was such that it was not only possible to understand, but almost impossible to misunderstand him. I believe I am right in saying that he attained his success and popularity as a preacher by the evangelical strain of his doctrine, combined with its beautiful adaptation to the human nature, whether it was unrenewed or sanctified. He studied human nature, and applied the Bible to all its various phases. He loved the old Gospel, and wanted not a new one; he believed that sinners can only be converted by the attractions of the cross. His last sermon was upon the glory of God, and some of those who heard it describe it as one of the most powerful and eloquent sermons they ever listened to. He seems to have had a premonition of something, for, quoting the words of Baxter, he said: "To-day I preach to you as a dying man to dying men." He spake like a man that stood on the borders of eternity, although rapt in joy, as he gazed upon the glory of heaven, and convulsed with terror as he heard the howlings of the lost, and saw the smoke of their torment ascending from the bottomless pit for ever and ever. And now he is gone. It is so difficult to realise it. When his eldest boy heard of his death he could not believe it, but on being told a third time that he was dead he exclaimed "the will of the Lord be done," and wept bitterly. He is gone. Our loss is not trivial. An ambassador of Christ is recalled, a herald of salvation is withdrawn, a light of the world

which has guided many, and might have guided more to Jesus Christ is extinguished in its meridian splendour. He is gone. He has reached that blessed world "where saints immortal reign." The spirits of just men made perfect and the innumerable company of the angels have received him to their exalted and blessed fellowship. God, the Judge of all, has welcomed him to His blessed presence; and Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, has said, "Well done, good and faithful servant." He is gone, notwithstanding that he intimated on the last Sabbath on which he preached in the Free Church that he would preach on the following and on other two Sabbaths. God's providence is most mysterious. How many persons distinguished among our fellow-creatures for the great and the good influence they wield are removed by death, when useless individuals are left as encumbrances, and mischievous ones as nuisances. But if we could only see as God sees we would exclaim, "Just and right are Thy ways, O thou King of saints." Though the Lord puts out one light He can set up another. Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, but Joshua settled them as a church in Canaan. God at times transplants from His garden here to His paradise above ministers of the most eminent abilities, when the Church can ill spare them, to teach us to depend wholly on Himself. Josiah was cut off at a time when the reformation was but beginning, because the Lord's people at that time looked too much to him. What wonder is it when people admire the orator more than the preacher, the eloquence more than the truth, the beauties of imagination more than the "glad tidings" of salvation, that God should become jealous for the honour of His great name and remove the man who was preferred before Him to prove to them that though He uses instruments He needs them not. And now that our brother is gone—we trust to His Father's house—we would not, for his own sake, have him back again. The ministry of heaven is better than the ministry of earth. The candlestick is not broken—the light is only removed to shine before the throne of God. If the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, he has now a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. If he could speak to the congregation to-day he ministered to while here what would he say:—"All I told you about Jesus and His love for perishing souls is true, perfectly true. Receive Him as your Saviour; you will never be happy until you are united to Him by a living faith, and make Him all your desire, all your hope, all your glory." What would he say to every minister of the gospel? "Follow my example every Sabbath, and preach as a dying man to dying men. Endeavour every Sabbath with more than usual earnestness to exalt the Lord Jesus, and to recommend Him as the only way to pardon, peace, happiness, and heaven." To his surviving widow he would say, "Weep not for me. The widow's God will be yours. The blessed Saviour who didst weep beside the grave of a beloved friend will not leave you comfortless. The hour is certainly coming when death-divided friends who fall asleep in Jesus shall meet to part no more." To his children he would say, "Let your father's God be yours. For as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities you; and as a mother comforteth her little ones, so the Lord will comfort you. Give your hearts to Jesus, for He will be your friend, who will never leave you nor forsake you." Seldom has dust been committed to dust amid deeper regrets, and seldom, I believe, with a more sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. My christian friends, soon will the Lord summon us to His kingdom. O, prepare to meet Him. Be often thinking of home. Try to realise the Church of God in perfect purity, peace, and blessedness. May we all die in the Lord when we die, and may our death be precious in His sight.

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