Orts 1, 1981

The George MacDonald Society

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Dear Member,

This is the first of a hopefully regular series to keep you informed of the Committee’s intentions and also to act as a method of communication between all our other members world-wide. Our membership is now rapidly approaching sixty, from afar afield as Japan and Sweden, which I am sure would have surprised George MacDonald himself as well as pleasing him.

So if there is any subject you wish to have aired in this newsletter, please write to me at the address at the conclusion of this issue.

One of the Society’s aims is to re-awaken sufficient interest in MacDonald’s work so as to encourage publishers to produce new editions of some of his more readable books. Although it is still possible to obtain the obvious books such as “The Princess and the Goblin”, “The Princess and the Curie” and also in American paperback, “Phantastes and Lilith,” that still leaves a number of books that I believe could be produced with a more than reasonable chance of success. Two titles that come immediately to mind are “Wilfred Cumbermede” and “Robert Falconer”. From a realistic point of view it would seem more likely that any new editions would be best received in the United States. I am sure that most members know of the recent production of “The Portent”, published by Harper & Row, with an introduction by Professor Glenn Sadler of The University of California and Los Angeles.

If any member knows of any other book which has been reprinted recently I would be most grateful if they would let me know.

With the present cold English weather continuing with us, the following poem of George MacDonald may provide a little hope of warmer days to come.

"O thou of little faith,"

Sad-hearted, be at peace: the snowdrop lies
Buried in sepulchre of ghastly snow;
But Spring is floating up the southern skies,
And darkling the pale snowdrop waits below.

Let me persuade: in dull December's day
We scarce believe there is a month of June;
But up the stairs of April and May
The hot sun climbeth to the summer's noon.
Yet hear me: I love God, and half I rest.
O better! God loves thee, so all rest thou.
He is our summer, our dim-visioned Best;
And in his heart thy prayer is resting now.

It is hoped that the Society will soon be producing a Journal with articles of interest regarding George MacDonald, his life, work and influence. Raphael Shaberman has agreed to become the editor of the publication, and if any member would care to contribute to it, please would they send articles or enquiries to me at the address below and I will forward them to Mr Shaberman.

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 6th, in Room 223 (Library Wing), Liberal Studies Rooms, of the Central School of Art and Design, Southampton Row, London. WC1. The meeting will commence at 7.00 pm. We would be grateful if all the members who are able to attend would do so. At our last meeting in December we had too few members present to elect a full committee. The evening was very cold indeed which must have prevented some members from braving the elements, but we are anticipating a good attendance this year. The Committee is attempting to compile an index of work currently being written on George MacDonald. If any member has knowledge of any thesis, essay or criticism that has recently been published or is about to be published, please let me know.

Please write to: Christopher MacDonald,
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Orts: 1 (1981)