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THE LATE

Sir George Fowlds

Kt., C.B.E.

Distinguished New Zealand Statesman

Notable Native of Fenwick Parish

Tributes by Rev. James Barr, B.D., M.P.
and Others

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FOREWORD

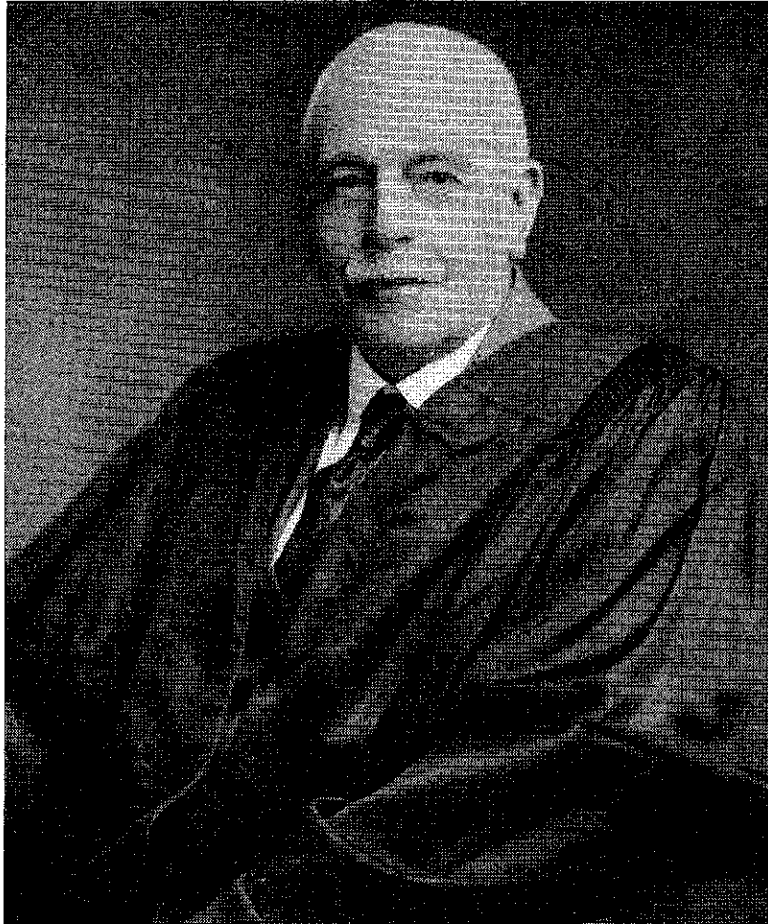
BY

REV. JAMES BARR, B.D., M.P.

This Memorial Brochure contains a full account of the proceedings connected with the Ceremony of laying with kindred dust, in his native Parish of Fenwick, the ashes of Sir George Fowlds, Kt., C.B.E., on 3rd October, 1936.

A very full account of these proceedings appeared in the "Kilmarnock Standard" of 10th October; and to the Editor of that newspaper, Mr. John P. Dickson, J.P., we are greatly indebted, not only for his permission to reprint the report there given, but also for his great interest and care manifested in the whole matter.

We are assured that not only the relatives of the late Sir George, but also his numerous friends in all parts of the world will welcome the reproduction, in this more permanent form, of the account of the proceedings, and of the high tributes paid to his memory.



THE LATE SIR GEORGE FOWLDS, KT., C.B.E.

NOTABLE AYRSHIRE MAN.

DISTINGUISHED CAREER IN NEW ZEALAND.

ASHES INTERRED AT FENWICK.

FINE TRIBUTE BY REV. JAMES BARR, M.P.

A distinctly unique and very impressive ceremony took place at Fenwick last Saturday afternoon when the ashes of the Hon. Sir George Fowlds, Kt., C.B.E., of Auckland, New Zealand, were interred in the family burial ground in the Parish Cemetery. Sir George was a son of Mr Matthew Fowlds, the Greystoneknowe weaver, who lived to the great age of 101 years, and whose life and times are depicted by the late Rev. J. K. Fairlie and others in the monumental book, "Matthew Fowlds, and other Fenwick Worthies."

Going abroad as a young man, George Fowlds settled in Auckland, where he built up an extensive business, and becoming a Member of the House of Representatives for the Dominion, he held office as Minister of Education and Public Health in the Cabinet of Sir Joseph Ward from 1906 to 1911, besides being actively associated with many other public and social activities.

The Rev. James Barr, B.D., M.P., who was a companion of the deceased at Waterside School, parish of Fenwick, conducted the service on Saturday, and paid a fine tribute to his personal worth and public work, characterising him as "one of the greatest and noblest men who ever left the parish of Fenwick—a worthy descendant of those great Covenanters who have made our native soil sacred and our native district illustrious in the annals of our country."

It was a beautiful Autumn day, and a large and representative company of friends and admirers of the late Sir George Fowlds and of his family assembled in the cemetery. The teachers and children of Fenwick Public School and Hareshaw Public School attended and led the service of praise. Among others present were Mrs Hamilton Handling (only sister of Sir George Fowlds) and her two sons—Mr Thomas Handling, Greystoneknowe, and Mr William Handling, Baillieston—and her two daughters—Mrs Bruce, Glasgow, and Mrs Murray, Killochan; Mr J. Bruce and Miss Bruce; Mrs White, Louth (niece) and Mr J. W. White; Mrs William Handling; Mrs Gibson, Kilmarnock (formerly housekeeper to Mr Matthew Fowlds) and Miss Gibson; Miss Agnes Fulton, Chiphall (sister of Lady Fowlds); Mr James Faulds, Bonnyton Road, Kilmarnock; Mr John Wyllie and Mrs Wyllie, Glassock; Mr John Young, Croilburn; Mr A.

W. Meiklejohn, Glasgow (son of a former schoolmaster at Waterside); Mrs Barr, Glasgow; Bailie and Mrs James Dunlop, Midland, Prestwick; Mr Alex. Fairlie, of Hillhouse Lodge; Miss Wallace, Roseholm, Hurlford; Rev. T. R. S. Campbell, B.D., Fenwick; Rev. Hector Macpherson, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.E., F.R.A.S., Edinburgh; County Councillor Murchland, Ladeside; Mr W. T. Dunlop, of Gree; Mr Geo. D. Lindsay, Blackbyre; Mr and Mrs Gibson, Schoolhouse, Fenwick; Mr John Rodger and Miss Rodger, Fenwick; Mr and Mrs Ross, Schoolhouse, Waterside; Mr George McKnight, Kilmarnock (formerly schoolmaster at Waterside); Mr Jas. Currans, Hareshawmill; Mr John Fitzsimmons, of Arness; Mr Hall Garven, Grassyards; Mr John Harvey, Horsehill; Mr Burton, Dailly, &c., &c.

Numerous telegrams and letters of apology for absence were read by Rev. Mr Barr. Sir Charles

Fergusson, Bart., of Kilkerran, a former Governor-General of New Zealand, wrote:—

Sir George Fowlds was a man of whom Ayrshire may well be proud. He was typical of the Scotsmen who have played so large a part in building up the great Dominion of New Zealand overseas, whose character and unswerving integrity have always been conspicuous. He was one of the most outstanding men in the community, and a leader in all that tended to its welfare. His interests were by no means confined to his business, great undertaking as that was. Agriculture, the mainstay of New Zealand's prosperity, owed much to him. As Chancellor of the University of Auckland he wielded great influence, and was identified with activities too numerous to mention.

He was a man of high ideals and character; most kind and generous, and universally beloved. His influence was always on the side of right and honour, and his sound commonsense and wisdom made him a tower of strength to those among whom he lived and worked.

Fenwick, his birthplace, was always present to his mind. He loved to talk of his early days there, and of those among whom he grew up. I am glad that he is to rest among his kith and kin, in the country which gave him birth, and of which he was such a true and devoted son.

The Right Honourable M. J. Savage, Prime Minister of New Zealand, wrote:—

Sir George Fowlds will be remembered in New Zealand as a political idealist of the finest type and as one whose sterling character and integrity was reflected throughout his long life of public service. During his tenure of ministerial office he proved himself an enlightened and very able administrator. A man of strong radical convictions and one who had the courage of his convictions he resigned his portfolio on a matter of principle at the time when the Liberal Ministry had spent its early humanitarian impulse and was shedding its radical philosophy. His speech on resignation from the Ministry in 1911 was a model of dignity and simplicity and the sentiments he then expressed would do honour to any social reformer of the present day.—

"The times in which we live," he said, "demand a new evangel—a gospel which I have felt I could not preach as a member of the present Government—and so I have decided for freedom, in order that I might express my whole soul to the people of New Zealand. Everywhere throughout the civilised world to-day we see a spirit of unrest amongst the mass of the people—an unrest, let me say, which is justified by the social conditions in which the great mass of the people live—an unrest which will not be quieted until a condition of social justice has been established. If I can succeed to any great extent in moulding this rising tide of a new democracy into what I believe to be the right channels, then I shall feel more than repaid for what appears like present sacrifice. I go out under no illusions regarding the difficulties and dangers that lie before me. Many people will judge me foolish, some may even consider me wicked. In the future, as in the past, I shall endeavour to satisfy myself that my course is the right one, that my actions are dictated not by hope of private advantage or preference, but by motives of public benefit."

It is to be regretted that after he lost his seat in Parliament he never succeeded thereafter in gaining re-election. But his services to the community were not lost. Sir George Fowlds devoted some twenty more active and untiring years to public work—mainly in connection with university educa-

tion. It was in this sphere that he performed his most valuable and enduring service.

As a politician he was outstanding for his great honesty and kindness, while a further characteristic was his enthusiasm. He always devoted himself wholeheartedly to any cause he embraced.

In summing up I should like to add that Sir George represented all that was best in pre-war radicalism—the progressive movement that never had its chance.

Mr P. J. Oregan wrote:—

Members Land Values League associate themselves with you in appreciation services Sir George Fowlds to cause of land restoration.

The secretary Rotary Club, Auckland, wrote:—

Rotarians throughout New Zealand remembering Sir George Fowlds great services to his fellow-men join you to-day in paying tribute to his memory.

Mr A. Madsen, London, wrote:—

On behalf of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values and the followers of Henry George in Great Britain, I wish to express a profound sense of the great service Sir George Fowlds rendered as a zealous land reformer who stood for the rights of the people to the bounties of nature. He strove all his life for these ideals and for the coming of the day when equal opportunity and economic freedom should ensure the happiness and prosperity of all mankind.

The Honourable W. J. Jordan, High Commissioner for New Zealand, and Member of the New Zealand delegation at Geneva, wrote to Mr Barr in the following terms:—

I recall our meeting in New Zealand a few years ago, and I also met you in the English House of Commons.

It has been mentioned to me that you will officiate at a service in connection with the burial of the remains of the highly esteemed Sir George Fowlds, whom I knew personally in our Dominion, and our Government and people would be very grateful if you would express at the graveside the following tribute to him:—

New Zealand pays tribute to, and reveres the memory of, one of her most distinguished citizens, the late Sir George Fowlds, who, as a settler and business man in our country, as well as a Cabinet Minister, played a great part in moulding the national character of our Dominion.

I notice that the service will take place early in October. I am engaged in Geneva at a meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations, otherwise I should be with you and personally represent the Government and people of our Dominion.

Telegrams were received in the following terms:—

New Zealand temperance forces mourn pioneer and staunch friend in Sir George Fowlds, who gave himself unsparingly, but results of his work remain.—New Zealand Alliance.

Congregational Union, Wellington, New Zealand, join Scottish friends in commemorating life work of Sir George Fowlds, stalwart in family, State, and Church.—Harry Johnson, Moderator.

Auckland University College and Massey Agricultural College Councils join with you in paying tribute to one who did outstanding public service in New Zealand.

Please order suitable wreath: laurel leaves. From his loved ones in New Zealand. Our thoughts are with you all to-day. Here he lies where he longed to be. "Home is the sailor, home from the sea, and the hunter home from the hill."

The service opened with the singing of the 66th Paraphrase, "How bright these glorious spirits shine," after which the Rev. Mr Campbell read a passage of Scripture, and then Rev. Mr Barr delivered his address, which we here give "in extenso":—

Sir George Fowlds, whose ashes we are met this day to commit to the family tomb, was born at Greystoneknowe, in this parish, on 15th September, 1860. He received his early education at Waterside School under the late A. W. Meiklejohn, who made an imprint of the best kind on all his scholars. It was George Fowlds who took me and my brother home the first day we went to school. He left school at the age of 12.

In 1874 he was apprenticed to the clothing trade with Stewart Brothers, Kilmarnock. Four years later he entered the warehouse of William McLaren, Sons & Co., Ltd., St. George's Square, Glasgow. In 1882 he landed at Cape Town, and after undergoing much hardship he came into a good position on the diamond fields at Bullfontein. On 5th September, 1884, he married Miss Mary Fulton, who went out from this town of Fenwick to link her fortunes with his. Partly for the sake of her health, they emigrated to Auckland, landing there in December, 1885. After renewed initial hardships, he eventually bought out the stock of a clothier and mercer in the Victoria Arcade, Auckland, and laid the foundations of the large business associated with his name.

In 1899 he entered Parliament as Member of the House of Representatives for Auckland, and thereafter sat for the Grey Lynn Division of that city from 1902 to 1911, when, owing mainly to political manipulations, he was defeated by a majority of only 31 votes on a poll of over 7000. The like misfortune befell him in 1914, and again in 1919. But to him these misfortunes were only the prelude and the call to yet broader service. It could not be said of him what Oliver Goldsmith said of Edmund Burke:

"Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind."

Henceforth no great social cause but sought and obtained his powerful influence and service, till no name was better known than his, or more widely and highly honoured, throughout the whole Dominion of New Zealand. Indeed he received still wider recognition. He was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for patriotic services during the war period; and knighthood was conferred upon him in 1928.

To the cause of education he gave of his best. Leaving school, as we have seen, at the age of 12, his only touch with college education was in his attendance at night classes in connection with the Andersonian College in Glasgow. Yet was he, in the wider sense of the word, a real scholar with a passionate and life-long devotion to learning. When he entered Sir Joseph Ward's Cabinet in 1906, it was as Minister of Education and Public Health; and when, in September, 1911, he voluntarily resigned his portfolio, all sections of the press expressed appreciation of the fine work he had done at the Education Department.

In his Education Act Amendment Bill of 1908, mindful of the rock whence he was himself hewn, he introduced clauses to improve education in rural districts by increasing the number of qualified teachers, securing better teaching conditions, and giving more worthy payments. In submitting the measure on 27th August, 1908, he said:

"A good deal of the success of this country will depend on proper opportunities of education being given to those living in country districts, and those who will spend their life in farming occupations."

Mindful of the struggles and sacrifices of Scottish parents to give their sons a university education, he laboured throughout his life to bring not only elementary and secondary but also university education within the reach of the poorest parents in New Zealand without payment of any fees whatever.

From 1920 to 1933, he was president of Auckland University College, when he took a leading part in securing a metropolitan site, erecting fine college buildings upon it, and securing a great advance in the work of the College, both in the founding of new chairs and lectureships and in the development of fresh courses of study. He took a foremost part in the founding of Massey Agricultural College, North Palmerston, which was in full working order, with 175 students, by 1929.

This is not the place to speak in detail of his political career or his political opinions. Proclaiming the imperative need of vast social changes, he held that they should be sought by evolution, not by revolution; that the issue should be thought out, not fought out; that the solution should be arrived at by consent, not by force; and that the appeal should be to ballots, not to bullets—that the general strike against all monopolies should be at the ballot box. The weavers of Scotland ever stood in the van of political reform, and he was abundantly true to the noble heritage he received from his father. Nay, it was an ever advancing democracy he followed. For him new occasions taught new duties; his thoughts were ever widening with the process of the suns; and freedom was ever broadening out, not alone from precedent to precedent, but from human need to ever larger human need. Three years before he was in Parliament at all, in a political address, on 29th September, 1896, to the electors of the city of Auckland, he declared that Government "should aim at securing to every member of the State full and equal freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action, with free and equal access to all the natural opportunities of the earth." And in the same address he said:

"Was not the demand for equal political rights intended as a stepping-stone to secure equal social and economic rights? The same spirit which animated the Chartists of old in their fight for political liberty and political justice must animate the people to-day in fighting for social liberty and social justice."

And further:

"The greatest menace to individual liberty to-day was to be found in the growth of monopolies, and these, as time proceeds, must

either be abolished or taken over by the State and run in the interests of all the people."

"Secure equality of opportunity to all, and ensure that wealth created by society shall be owned by society and used for the benefit of all, while that produced by the individual shall be owned by the individual."

In September, 1911, Mr Fowlds resigned his position in the Government, "because he felt that he could do better service for his country out of office than he could do in office." He was impatient of the Government's delays, and their aversion if not opposition to some of his policies. He desired to have "a freer hand to deal with such subjects, and thereby give a fillip to the reform forces of the Dominion." Speaking on 31st October, 1911, after his resignation and before his defeat, he nobly said:

"I know that my proposals will be jeered at by the representatives of wealth and privilege, both on the platform and in the press. That result has no terrors for me. I have dedicated my life and such talents as I possess to the service of mankind—to the service of those who have been disinherited by human selfishness and greed, whether they live in New Zealand or beyond its borders.

"The people in New Zealand have a splendid opportunity to strike a blow for freedom and justice, and I call upon you to rise in your might, and help to herald in the dawn of a new day of human emancipation. If you respond, your children's children will rise up and call you blessed. You shall earn the gratitude and blessing of the children of the slums and gutters of every land. Both you and I will be reviled by those who belong to the house of 'Have'; but to be helpers in securing justice to the great multitude of 'Have-nots'—those who are compelled to be 'Have-nots,' and who must remain 'Have-nots' under present social conditions—is surely a privilege worth fighting for; nay, more, a privilege, if need be, worth dying for, politically or otherwise."

But it was the land monopoly on which he centred his main attack. He was a devoted disciple of Henry George from the moment he read his great classic—"Progress and Poverty"—in 1886. In an address on "The Ethics of the Land Question," delivered at the Congregational Union at Wellington, in February, 1896, he thus framed his scathing indictment:

"First, then, the present system compels the poor and landless in every community to pay an undue share of the taxation of the country; secondly, it robs them of a very large portion of the products of their labour, by fixing the rate of wages at less than the full value of what they produce, and then takes a considerable portion of what is left to them, in the shape of rent; thirdly, it is the cause of the often-recurring commercial depressions and the ever-increasing army of unemployed; and lastly, it is the basis of interest, or usury, which is so frequently condemned in the Bible, and by all the early Church councils, and which is the cause of a large portion of the poverty,

misery, and degradation of our fellow-men. This monster of iniquity is the greatest barrier to the progress of the race materially, morally and spiritually. It condemns men to lives of drudgery, and haunts their homes with want, and the fear of want. It produces corruption and all uncleanness on the part of those who reap the spoils. It claims our sisters for a life of shame, and stunts and deforms the whole life of humanity."

His remedy for these ills he summed up as follows:—

"It is for the people to see to it, by peaceful, constitutional, constructive measures, that New Zealand shall be governed by the people for the people; that the people shall be untaxed; and that the public earnings, the people values, the land-values created by the people as a whole, shall be taken by the people for the people, instead of being foolishly and wrongfully allowed to flow into private pockets; that thus land monopoly shall be rendered unprofitable and impossible; and that thus, equality of opportunity having been secured, every man shall freely enjoy the full product of his labour and shall live under his own vine and fig-tree, none daring to make him afraid."

And as selfish and rapacious greed was the cause of manifold evils at home, so it was the source of wars abroad. Patriotic to the core, he laid bare the sources and the tragic results of war. Addressing the Congregational Union of New Zealand on 11th February, 1914, six months before the Great War broke out, he said: "All the great European nations, including our own Motherland, and also the United States of America, are engaged in a mad race for the increase of naval armaments." He referred to the American war with Spain over Cuba, and to the British war against the Boers in South Africa, and he said:

"I believe the verdict of the civilised world will be that both wars were unnecessary, that both were prompted by selfishness and greed on the part of a few interested people, and that both were promoted by a press campaign of exaggeration and mendacity. Both, indeed, might be designated monopolistic press wars. In both cases the people were misled, and the worst passions of the human heart were stirred into activity, leaving behind a dreadful legacy of hatred and ill-will. In my judgment these two wars set back the hands of the clock of human progress by at least 25 years."

To the cause of Temperance he gave without stint of his means and his effort. He pled for war-time prohibition, and when that proved impossible he headed a deputation of Auckland business men to the Premier, W. F. Massey, to urge six o'clock closing. An enthusiastic supporter alike of no-license and of national prohibition, he supported the demand for the inclusion of clubs in the local option vote. At first, he supported the three-fifths majority, or rather acquiesced in it, as he thought that in this way there was less likelihood of the vote taken at one election being reversed at the next.

But, later, in 1911, he reverted to the democratic principle of majority rule.

In 1911 he said:—

“ Like a good many other temperance people, I used to acquiesce in the three-fifths majority without much protest, believing that it gave a certain amount of permanence to temperance reform when no-licence was carried in any district. Apart from the fact that the three-fifths majority, plus cheating, is an intolerable handicap to impose on any free people, I have come to recognise the weakness of the ‘permanency’ argument. If the temperance sentiment of the country cannot be maintained in a majority, no three-fifths handicap will

against the drink curse, because if that curse is not speedily removed it will destroy the Church and society in one fell swoop. . . .

“ To tolerate any institution, however old, and however respectable, for long after it has ceased to minister to human well-being, means breeding anarchy—to tolerate it indefinitely, will mean the destruction of civilisation. Such an institution in past history was chattel slavery. Such an institution in the present is the licensed liquor traffic.”

No wonder that, when he passed, the “Vanguard,” the organ of the New Zealand Alliance for the suppression of the liquor traffic, should write: “By his death the New Zealand Alliance



Mrs Handling (sister of Sir George Fowlds) and members of her family in front.
Rev. James Barr, M.P., and Rev. Dr Macpherson, Edinburgh, on right.

long help it to maintain no-licence or national prohibition. . . . Let us take our courage in both hands and do justice to the demands of the cleanest and most patriotic section of the community, and not admit by our actions that we are dominated by the most selfish and heartless members of the community.”

In short, he gave the liquor traffic no quarter at any time. Thus in his chairman’s address to the Congregational Union in 1914, he said:

“ Not so many years ago, the temperance question was tabooed by many churches as a political question. To-day, most of the Churches have fallen into line in fighting this monster of iniquity. It is well for the Church that it should be in the fighting line

has lost a matchless friend. His splendid achievements in 1918-19, when, working with the late Mr Wesley Spragg, he collected £19,000, created a record in the history of the movement.” And the Standing Committee of the New Zealand Alliance adopted the following resolution:—

“ That the Standing Committee of the New Zealand Alliance places on record its sense of irreparable loss occasioned by the death of the late Hon. Sir Geo. Fowlds, Kt., C.B.E., and its deep gratitude for his invaluable services to the movement; his personal generosity and unwearied efforts in good times and bad to secure needful finance, coupled with his devotion of time and talents to the ideals we hold, won for him the admiration of all who knew

him. The Committee extends to Lady Fowlds and the bereaved family its deepest sympathy in their sorrow."

In the cause of temperance, as in all social uplift, he looked for the special interest and support of woman voters. He suggested a short platform of three planks which the women as a whole should aim at securing by the exercise of their political rights:—

1. To see that only men of good moral character and sober habits get elected to represent them.

2. To secure the amendment of every law which denies them equal civil rights with men.

3. To secure equal pay for equal service in all departments of the State.

Sir George was a devoted Churchman. Brought up in the Fenwick United Presbyterian Church, where his father celebrated his jubilee as an elder on 3rd July, 1905, he was all his life abundantly faithful to the principles of spiritual freedom and religious equality with which that denomination was specially identified. He was twice elected to the chair of the Congregational Union of New Zealand—in 1899 and in 1914. In his address in 1914 he agreed that partisan party politics had no place in the pulpit, but he maintained that in the broader sense there were political questions constantly arising from the consideration of the people on which the Church ought to give a pronouncement. The Church should be prepared to take a definite stand on all questions of morality, and at bottom all political questions, such as the land question, were moral questions. He said—

"Do the Mosaic land laws come within the definition of the term 'politics'? Does the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount cast a reflection on any of our party politicians or monopolists? And, if so, should all reference to the precepts of that glorious utterance be eliminated from our pulpits because they infringe the domain of politics? Christianity must take cognisance of everything which affects the life of man, or it will lose its hold on the people and degenerate into a pietistic social coterie. . . . The teaching of Jesus stands for justice and human brotherhood. The Fatherhood of God revealed by Jesus Christ implies an impartial equality of opportunity for all the Father's children. That equality of opportunity is not available to-day, and the Church must stand condemned if it takes no action to make it a reality. . . .

"This is a moral universe, and what is morally wrong can never be politically right. Has the Church no word to speak regarding this great moral iniquity (the land system)? All that we require is that the Mosaic land laws should be brought up to date. . . .

"Is the Church unable or unwilling to lend a hand in denouncing this monster of iniquity which, like a canker, is eating the heart out of our civilisation? The prophets of old time would have done so. Cannot you imagine them calling out: 'Woe unto you, ye monopolists of God's earth! Woe unto you, ye exploiters of the poor!' If the Church in its corporate capacity is unable to take any action, surely

this is the work of Church members who have imbibed the Master's spirit, and who have learnt the Master's teaching. To all such I make an earnest appeal to come over and help us."

He did fear that the Church was getting out of touch with the masses. "In many respects," he said, "the Churches seem to be drifting out of touch with the great mass of mankind, and are in danger of becoming a negligible factor in the life of the world." He was jealous lest there should be more of the spirit of the Master shown without the Church than within. He appealed for the revival of the three-fold witness of the Church—"The Prophetic Witness, the Healing Witness, and the Witness of Salvation."

For himself, his political principles were linked to his religious faith. To him the spirit of Christianity was the only solvent of industrial, social or economic problems. He would quote from the Levitical Law—"The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." The Great Creator had made bountiful provision for the needs of all his children, and all men had an equal right to participate in the bounty which their Heavenly Father had provided for them. The land was the great storehouse provided by the common Father for the support and comfort and well-being of the common family. The earth, he said, is the table of the Heavenly Father, and we want to make room, and equal room, at the Father's table for all the Father's children. I prize a printed Christmas and New Year card I received from him at the end of 1913:—

"The Hon. George Fowlds wishes for you and yours every blessing for the New Year and invites your assistance in the fight for the establishment of social justice, so that all God's children may find room at their Father's table."

In his religious faith he found the buoyant optimism that sustained him. In his address to the Congregational Union in 1914 he exclaimed—"God's in His heaven: all's right with the world." But God requires the co-operation of the sons of men in order that His love and justice may abound on the earth." In his faith, too, he found the spring of his fearless courage and independence. In his political address in connection with his first candidature for Auckland City in 1896, he said:—

"If he should enter Parliament he intended to take as his motto the golden rule: 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.' He would support this or any Government in so far as their policy coincided with the policy he had laid down, but he believed the true policy for the future was grandly stated in the words of Dr Norman Macleod—

'Trust no party, sect, or faction,

Trust no leaders in the fight;

But in every word and action

Trust in God and do the right.'"

These views of our honoured friend on public affairs have not been stated in order to advance any cause or support any position, for the grave closes all controversy, but rather to bring home

to you how great was this man, how noble his sentiment, how prophetic his vision. And, above all, it is his moral rectitude and his unbending devotion to high principle to which we pay tribute to-day. We might well say of him what they have inscribed on the monument of William Lyon Mackenzie in Toronto: "Duty was his law, and Conscience was his ruler." High was the tribute paid to him in 1910 by the Honourable Dr Findlay, K.C., Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, his colleague in the Ministry, at a meeting at Grey Lynn:—

"Mr Fowlds was at his best when buffeting in a storm of adverse criticism. He was a typical sailor, but he had one fault—he was no trimmer. The Minister of Education would sooner sail by the stars in the heavens than by the loudest shouts from the shore!"

It will have appeared from the above narrative that Sir George Fowlds was widely travelled. Four times at least he went round the world. I recall his visits to the homeland in 1898, 1906, and 1914. In 1906 he came for his father's centenary celebration accompanied by Sir Joseph Ward and Mr I. G. W. M. Aitken, M.H.R., New Zealand. Sir George's mother had passed, but at the dinner in the George Hotel, Kilmarnock, on 22nd May, 1906, all the members of the family—five sons and one daughter, Mrs Handling—were present. Of these only Mrs Handling remains, and our thoughts go out to her in tender sympathy as she stands beside us to-day. Nor do we forget Lady Fowlds and the members of the family, in New Zealand and in America, who are with us in thought this day, and for all of whom our prayers ascend:

"Though sundered far, by faith we meet
Around a common Mercy-seat."

As Sir George travelled much, so in keeping with his express wish, his ashes, borne by faithful hands over sea and land, are now here to be reposed in this family tomb. On their way thither they rested for a period, as was fitting, at Westminster Hall in our British Houses of Parliament, and then for a short time at my home, and at the place of his birth at Greystone-knowe.

We cannot but think to-day of the funeral ceremony in Auckland on 19th August, two years bygone, when representatives were present

from academic and temperance organisations, churches, social societies, and public bodies of all kinds. Wreaths were sent from the Governor-General and the then Prime Minister, Mr Forbes, while the entire Cabinet sent individual messages. The cortege was over a mile in length, while the wreaths from all over New Zealand filled six motor cars. Compared with such widespread and illustrious tokens of esteem, our ceremony here this day may seem poor indeed; but ours is the high tribute of his native land, his native parish, his home-kinsfolk, his old schoolmates and companions—a diminishing band—those who grew up with him in the old U.P. Church, or saw him set out on his lengthy and illustrious journey, those of a later generation who knew him only by the fame he brought to our countryside; ours is a tribute simple but sincere, deep, united; and we stand by this tomb to testify that here was a prophet not without honour in his own country and in his own house; and we commit these ashes this afternoon to mix with kindred dust, not only in all honour, but with a just pride that here we lay the dust of one of the greatest and noblest men ever given to our parish, a worthy descendant of those great Covenanters who have made our native soil sacred, our native parish illustrious in the annals of our country.

After the casket containing the ashes had been deposited in the grave, the audience joined in singing the hymn, "Shall we gather at the river?" and the Rev. Dr Macpherson offered an impressive prayer. The 2nd Paraphrase, "O God of Bethel, by whose hand Thy people still are fed" was then sung by the audience.

On the tombstone erected to the memory of Mr and Mrs Matthew Fowlds, there has been inserted, "Also their fifth son, Sir George Fowlds, Kt., C.B.E., of New Zealand. Born 1859, died 1934 (ashes interred here)."

Baillie James Dunlop, on behalf of Lady Fowlds and family in New Zealand and relatives at home, thanked the company for their presence, making special mention of the kindness of the school teachers in turning out with so many boys and girls to lead in the praise—a welcome indication of gratitude for the sum of money Sir George Fowlds invested, the interest of which is devoted to the prizes annually for the dux pupils of the schools.

The proceedings closed with the benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Mr Barr.