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SOME DUTIES REQUIRED OF THE CHURCH

(Continued from page 36)

Further, *cognisance must be taken of the special and outstanding evils of the day.* The Church is obliged to expose and condemn these with no uncertain sound. In the churches, the state and throughout the nation, there are deplorable evidences that we are in a serious backsliding state, comparable to the state of religion and morals in Jerusalem and Judah in Jeremiah's time. Jeremiah was hated for his faithfulness. The Church must expect the same opposition in an evil generation.

And again, *the Lord's people are to be encouraged to witness to their faith* to those among whom they live and work. They are the Lord's witnesses in the midst of the world and to the men of the world. Jesus says to His people: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may behold your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It needs divine strength and also wisdom to witness in a Scriptural and Christian manner which will commend the religion of the gospel of Christ. The world are not ashamed to own where they stand although sin is their master. Believers are to beware of the fear of man which bringeth a share and to seek that the Lord will deliver them from this hindrance. They are surely to be advised to encourage one another in the Lord and by reference to His Word, to take care that they do not hide their light under a bushel. In the case of Andrew, who heard John the Baptist speak of the Lamb of God and followed Jesus; he thereafter findeth his own brother Simon and bears personal witness to him thus: "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." This was a wonderful testimony in love to his brother and honouring to Christ, the Son of God.

"*The regions beyond require of the Church a deep, prayerful, constant and practical interest* in the extension of the gospel of Christ Jesus to other parts of the world, beyond the borders of the Church at home—Scotland. This must always include special regard for the Foreign Mission Field. When we reflect upon the

divine providence which gave a small Church like the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, at the very beginning of its separate existence, "an open door" to our African fellow-sinners in Rhodesia, we must never falter in face of this wonderful privilege and under this burden of service to "the Lord of the harvest." We must continue and increase our support of the work of the gospel of Christ on the African Continent; not forgetting by any means the need of Gospel ordinances in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and America. The prayer of David is that of the exercised believer and the Church as a whole: ". . . And let the whole earth be filled with His glory." For the Church to serve Jesus Christ, the alone Redeemer of lost men, even in a limited measure, by carrying the gospel to different parts of the earth, is a great honour from Him. The Church is but the earthen vessel carrying the treasure of the faith once delivered to the saints to others; and the excellency of the power is of God, where and when destitute sinners are enriched with grace and salvation through faith in the Son of God.

The *continual and absolute necessity of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit* in the midst of the Church and nation, must ever occupy the minds of God's people. The Church, without the Comforter must inevitably be formal and dead spiritually. Prayer was engaged in by the Apostles and others prior to the fulfilment of the promise of the Father on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem. The counsel of the Lord Jesus to His people in all ages is, "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." Whatever the Church may engage in according to the Word of God, having in view the coming of His Kingdom on earth, the Holy Spirit alone can bring about a fulfilment of this blessed end in that measure which is according to the divine purpose, where and when He pleases. The evidences within and without the Church clearly indicate the present and great need for a day of divine power and a continuance of that power, for the strengthening of the Cause of Truth and the overthrow of the works of the devil throughout our nation. "After this manner pray ye . . . Thy Kingdom come."

THE CONFSSIONAL DOCTRINE OF ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

By the late Rev. Donald Beaton

The fact that many who profess to have assurance of salvation are only deceiving themselves, should not lead true believers to

belittle the importance of the doctrine. The fact that some may hold an erroneous view of a doctrine, or abuse it, does not justify anyone in relegating that doctrine to the background. In modern "evangelistic" circles the doctrine of the assurance of salvation is asserted with a kind of religious abandon which creates a suspicion that the foundations upon which it rests are anything but secure. It is, therefore, necessary that God's people should have true and Scriptural views on a doctrine which is so beneficial and comforting to them.

The Westminster Divines, in their Confession of Faith, after having set forth the Christian life, in all its varied experiences, describing its origin in divine grace, its essential quality in faith, its characteristic repentance, its fruition in good works, and its permanent and blessed perpetuity, add a chapter (xviii) on "Assurance of Grace and Salvation, in which they speak not only of the perseverance of the believer, but of the full, perfect and happy certainty to which he may through grace attain. The sections dealing with the doctrine under discussion are as follows: "(i)—Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men, may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God and estate of salvation; which hope of theirs shall perish; yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus and love Him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God; which hope shall never make them ashamed. (ii)—This certainly is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God; which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption. (iii)—This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be partaker of it; yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. *And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness.* (iv)—True believers may have the assurance of their

salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving it; by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience, and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation; by God's withdrawing the light of His countenance, and suffering even such as fear Him to walk in darkness, and to have no light; yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ, and the brethren, that sincerity of heart and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit this assurance may in due time be revived, and by the which, in the meantime, they are supported from utter despair."

The same doctrine is clearly set forth in the Larger Catechism, as follows:—" Q. 80—Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation? A.—Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before Him, may without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit enabling them to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation. Q. 81—Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in the estate of grace, and that they shall be saved? A.—Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it; and, after the enjoyment thereof, may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions; yet are they never left without such a presence and support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair."

Needless to say the Divines gave considerable attention to the statement of this doctrine, as is indicated in the *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly*, and produced a well-balanced statement which steered clear of the views held by so many of the Reformers that assurance of one's salvation was of the essence of faith, while on the other hand rejecting the Romanist and Arminian view that such assurance is not attainable. The Westminster Divines were not simply theologians, expert and careful expounders of the doctrines of the Christian faith, but they were men deeply taught by the Holy Spirit. The theology of the Westminster Confession is infused with life, and the warmth of a heart-experience suffuses it, without which it would lose much of its appeal to Spirit-taught men and women. Perhaps in no chapter do these characteristics show themselves so distinctly as in the words quoted above. It was one of the finest features in the

theology presented in the Confession that the Divines were careful not to make their experience the basis of their doctrine as did some of the Reformers in the doctrine in question, but checked their experience by the doctrine they found set forth in God's Word. The theologian taught by God's Spirit must seek to avoid presenting a system of truth, tasteless and devoid of life; while, on the other hand, he must equally be on his guard against basing his doctrine altogether on his experience. The Westminster Divines avoided these pitfalls into which so many have fallen, by taking their doctrine from the living oracles, and bringing to the touchstone of these same oracles their experience. How necessary these precautions are is vividly brought home to one in reading some dry statements of doctrine or, on the other hand, listening to the presentation of certain phases of experience, which may be nothing more or less than the vagrant thoughts of uninstructed expounders. It was not so with the Westminster Divines.

By "assurance of grace and salvation" they evidently mean the believer's assurance that he is in a state of grace and that he has a personal interest in the salvation of Christ. In stating their doctrine, they had in view, as already noted, the errors of the Romanists and the Arminians on this subject. (i) The former deny that it is possible to attain more than a probable persuasion of salvation, except by extraordinary revelation. This erroneous view is founded on their view of the nature of faith. Saving faith, according to Romish teaching, was essentially assent (*assensus*). The Reformers maintained that it was essentially trust (*fiducia*). Dr. W. Cunningham says: "There is an appearance of greater simplicity and metaphysical accuracy in representing faith as in itself a mere assent to truth, and trust and other graces as its necessary consequences. But the right question is, What is the meaning attached in Scripture to the faith which justifies and saves? Upon this question we agree with the Reformers in thinking that in Scripture usage faith is applied, in its highest and most important sense, only to a state of mind of which trust in Christ as a Saviour is a necessary constituent element" (*The Reformers and Theology of the Reformation*, p. 122). (ii) The Arminians, in denying the doctrine of the believer's final perseverance, were led into this false position of denying the possibility of any man attaining to a greater certainty of salvation than that he who perseveres unto the end shall be saved. Through this view, founded upon their erroneous and unscriptural teaching of perseverance, they fell into error. It will thus be seen that both the Romanist and Arminian doctrine on this subject was founded on error and led to error. It is a

warning to us to see that the foundation is well and truly laid according to the plan set before us in the divine oracles.

We have already pointed out the danger of introducing into theology an individual experience, which at times and in many cases may be abnormal. It would be wrong to insist that every believer must necessarily have an experience such as Lydia, or Paul, or the Philippian gaoler. Some who have passed through a very trying and unforgettable experience are in danger of insisting that others must pass through a similar experience if they are to enter the kingdom. While we are to guard against laying down as the standard what, after all, may be an abnormal experience, there are certain things that hold true of all that are effectually called, with the exception of "elect infants dying in infancy" (*Conf.* X iii) and "elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word" (*ibid.*), and these are, as stated by the Westminster Divines, that the saved are called "by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good; effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace" (*Conf.* X i). This well-balanced statement sets forth the normal experience of all those whom God has predestinated unto life and whom He has effectually called. In thus stating the case the Westminster Divines guard against a lifeless doctrine that never touches the heart and a sentimental emotionalism that often passes for Christian experience, but which at best is only the vagrant impulse of a wayward heart.

There have been times in the history of the Church when Spirit-taught men, who were endowed for the special work assigned them, have introduced their experience, which, on certain points, was abnormal, into their doctrine. This was notably so with the Reformers, that noble band of men raised up by God to witness for His truth amidst the throes of a mighty conflict which shook error to its very foundations. Most of these men enjoyed in their own experience an assurance of their salvation that enabled them to stand their ground in the face of tremendous opposition. Added to this was the opposition from the Romish theologians who asserted the impossibility of enjoying certainty with regard to one's personal salvation. Dr. Cunningham thus states the point at issue: "The leading topic of discussion was this: Whether, without any special revelation, believers could

and should (*possent et deberent*) be assured of their justification and salvation? This was practically the question that was controverted. It is one of great practical importance, and orthodox divines, in general, have continued ever since to concur with the Reformers in answering it in the affirmative. But though this was practically the real point controverted, though the papists were most anxious to persuade men that they could attain to no certainty upon this point, except either by a special revelation or by the testimony of the Church, yet this was not just the precise form which the question assumed in the controversy; and the reason of this was one we have already hinted at, viz., that the more reasonable Romanists shrank from meeting the question, as thus put, with a direct negative, and fell back upon the topic of the kind or degree of the assurance or certainty that was ordinarily attainable by believers. Into this discussion of the nature and grounds of the certainty that might attach to this matter, the Reformers were unfortunately tempted to follow their opponents. In the heat of the controversy many of them were led to lay down the untenable position, that the certainty or assurance ordinarily attainable by believers was of the highest and most perfect description, that it was the certainty of faith, or, as they sometimes expressed it, the certainty of divine faith, the same certainty with which men believe in the plainly revealed doctrines of God's Word. And then, again, it was as an argument or proof in support of this extreme and untenable position as to the kind of degree of certainty, that they were led on to assert, that this personal assurance was necessarily involved in justifying faith, nay, was its distinguishing characteristic, and belonged, of course, to its essence" (*op. cit.*, pp. 123, 124).

These views were taught by many of the Reformers in their polemical and practical treatises. We find them set forth in the Lutheran symbolical books of the Confession of Augsburg, and its Apology, and in the Saxon and Wirtemberg Confessions. They find no place, however, in the symbolical books of the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches, although certain expressions in them may indicate that such views were held by their founders. Luther held this view as to personal assurance, though there are passages in his works in which a more correct view of saving faith is given. Calvin taught in his *Institutes*, and also in his *Catechism* of Geneva, that saving faith necessarily implies personal assurance. It must be pointed out, however, that while Luther's and Calvin's views were held by many of the Reformers, yet there were some eminent Reformers such as Peter Martyr, Musculus, and Zanchius who did not share their views.

We come now to discuss the view held by the Marrowmen, Thomas Boston, Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, and others, who were so called because they maintained many of the doctrines advocated in a book, entitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. While they were one with the Reformers in maintaining that saving faith is not merely an *assensus* (assent) but includes *fiducia* (trust), they differed with those Reformers who held that this trust included the believer's assurance that he was a saved person, and that this assurance was of the essence of faith. The Marrowmen, while in full sympathy with the Confessional doctrine, made use of a phrase, "assurance of faith," to which they gave a new meaning. They drew a distinction between "assurance of faith" and "assurance of sense." The former is the direct act of faith (*actio fidei directa*), and the latter the reflex act of faith (*actio fidei reflexa*). What they termed the assurance of sense or the reflex act of faith is "the infallible assurance" of the Confession, the assurance that a believer may have of his salvation. By the "assurance of faith," or the direct act of faith, they meant the assurance that is exercised in believing. In the act of believing the believer is exercising assurance. This is the kind of assurance that the Apostle credits the Thessalonians with having, when he says: "For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." The Gospel was received by them as the very message of heaven.

The Marrowmen's distinction between "the assurance of faith" and "the assurance of sense," though the terms are open to objection because of the confusion caused by their use, must be kept clearly before us if justice is to be done to the theological position of these worthy men. In their eagerness to find the Reformers on their side they did not always exercise due care in quoting from their writings, for some of the Reformers, as we have seen, used assurance in a different sense from that in which they used it. Not only was the Marrow doctrine misunderstood in the early XVIIIth century, but in quarters where one would expect better their position has been mis-stated. Even so distinguished and careful a theologian as Dr. Cunningham allows himself to write thus: "While the generality of the Reformers and some modern divines, especially those known in Scotland as Marrowmen, have regarded it as comprehending this last element also and have thus come to maintain that personal assurance is necessarily and directly included in the exercise of saving faith or belongs to its essence" (*op. cit.*, p. 123).

This is not the true position of the Marrowmen as may be seen from some of their authoritative books and statements. For instance, in *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, Evangelista, after

pointing out that believers are no longer under the law as a covenant of works, turns to Neophytus and addresses him thus: "Wherefore, as Paul and Silas said to the jailer, so say I unto you: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,' that is, be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours and that you shall have life and salvation by Him; that whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind He did it for you" (II iii). The Representers, in their Representation in answer to Query viii put to them, thus define what they mean by this assurance: "There is a full persuasion, by reflection, spiritual argumentation or inward sensation, which we are far from holding to be of the essence of faith; but this last being mediate and collected by inference as we gather the cause from such signs and effects as give evidence of it; it is very different from that confidence or persuasion by divines called the assurance of faith. . . . Further as to the difference between these two kinds of assurances, the assurance of faith has its object and foundation without the man, but that of sense has them within him." If this assurance of faith is essential to saving faith, what explanation then do the Marrowmen give as to the doubts of believers? They answer: "While these doubts are in the believer they are not in this faith, which from its very nature and exercise is as opposite to them as light to darkness or the flesh to the Spirit, which, though they be in the same person, are contrary the one to the other (Gal. v 17). And, therefore, faith wrestles against them, though with varied success, it being so far overcome sometimes and brought under by main force and superior strength of prevailing unbelief that the true faith cannot be more discerned than the fire when it is covered with ashes or the sun when wrapped up in thick clouds."

The most lucid summary of the Marrow doctrine which we know, will be found in that excellent *Treatise on Saving Faith* by Dr. Colquhoun, Leith, who himself accepted the Marrow doctrine. "It may be remarked," he says, "that there is a very great difference between the assurance of faith and the assurance of sense, which is one of the fruits of faith. The assurance of sense is a believer's assurance that he is already united to Christ, and is in a state of grace. The assurance of faith is as inseparable from faith as light is from the sun; but it is quite otherwise with the assurance of sense. A man cannot have faith without having assurance in it; but he may have faith and not have assurance of it. For, though the mind cannot but be conscious of its own act, yet whether that act have the peculiar properties and nature of saving faith cannot satisfactorily be known but by reflexion. The assurance of sense or reflexion, then, is not a believing in

Christ; but it is a believing that we have believed in Him. It is not a direct act terminating on Him, but a reflex act by which we are assured of the saving nature of that direct act. But, although the direct act may be without the reflex, yet the latter cannot be without the former. A man must begin to believe before he can begin to know that he has believed. . . . The assurance of faith is commonly not so strong nor sweet as the assurance of sense which is supported by evidences. By the former, a man trusts upon the warrant of the free offer and promise that Christ will do the part of a Saviour to him; by the latter he believes upon the inward evidences of grace, that his faith is unfeigned and operative. By the one, he is assured of the truth of what God hath said to him; by the other, of the reality of what God hath wrought in him. By that he trusts he shall be pardoned and saved; but by this he is persuaded that he is pardoned and saved in part already. The object of the assurance of faith is Christ revealed and offered in the Word; the object of the assurance of sense is Christ formed and perceived in the heart. The former is the root and the latter is the fruit."

The controversy in connection with the Marrow doctrine of saving faith passed into England, where it found an able defender in James Hervey, the author of *Theron and Aspasio*. His view was attacked by Robert Sandeman with great acuteness in *Letters on Theron and Aspasio*. Sandeman's views were adopted by Dr. John Erskine, Greyfriars, Edinburgh, the noted Evangelical leader, in his *Theological Dissertations*. Archibald Maclean, Edinburgh, a Baptist, and Dr. Chalmers, the famous preacher and divine, also held Sandeman's view that faith is a bare belief of the bare truth. Dr. Stewart, Dingwall, in a little book, *Hints on Faith and Hope* (1845), held the same view. Sandeman was ably answered by Wilson in his *Palaemon's Creed Reviewed*, by Cudworth in his *Defence of Theron and Aspasio*, and by Andrew Fuller in his *Strictures on Sandemanianism*. Sandeman's views were adopted by the Glasites to which denomination he belonged, and also by the Old Scots Independents, who trace their history back to 1768. The Bereans or Barclayites, another small sect, the followers of John Barclay, who was deposed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1773, while holding that the assurance of the Westminster Divine was of the essence of faith, rejected the Marrow doctrine with scorn (*Assurance of Faith Vindicated*, p. 185). In America the Marrow view as set forth by Hervey was attacked by Bellamy in his *Letters and Dialogues between Theron, Paulinus, and Aspasio*, while Dr. Anderson, in his *Scripture Doctrine of Appropriation*, ably defended it. Among the writings of more recent divines who advocate the same

view is to be mentioned Dr. James Buchanan's Cunningham Lectures on *The Doctrine of Justification*.

Prof. A. A. Hodge has summarised the Confessional doctrine on the subject as set forth in chapter xvii under the following heads: " (i) There is a false assurance of salvation which unregenerate men sometimes indulge, in which they are deceived, and which shall be finally disappointed. (ii) There is, on the other hand, a true assurance, amounting to an infallible certainty, which sincere believers may entertain as to their own personal salvation, which shall not be confounded. (iii) This infallible assurance of faith rests—(1) Upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation. (2) Upon the inward evidence of those graces unto which those promises are made. (3) The testimony of the Spirit of adoption, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God " (*Class-book on the Confession of Faith*, p. 230). True assurance may be distinguished from false by the following characteristics:— (i) True assurance begets humility; false assurance begets spiritual pride (I Cor. xv 10; Gal. vi 14). (ii) True assurance leads to activity; false to sloth and indolence (Ps. li 12, 13, 19). (iii) True assurance leads to self-examination; false to self-satisfaction (Ps. cxxxix 23, 24). In true assurance there are longings after God (I John iii 2, 3).

The assurance of their personal salvation to which true believers may attain is not a bare conjectural persuasion founded upon a fallible hope, " but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation (Heb. vi -1, 18), the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made (II Pet. i 4, 5, 10, 11; I John ii 3), the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God (Rom. viii 15, 16); which spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption (Eph. i 13, 14; iv 30; II Cor. i 22)." In sections iii and iv the Confession teaches that this "infallible assurance of faith" (i) does not so belong to the essence of faith but a true believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be a partaker of it (I John v 13; Is. i 10; Mark ix 24; Ps. lxxxviii; lxxvii 1-12). (ii) Yet diligent use of the ordinary appointed means is to be made for its attainment. " And therefore, it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure " (II Pet. i 10).

We return again to the experience of the Reformers. God gave these noble instruments a convincing assurance of their own salvation such as stood them in good stead in the day of battle, though many of them erred in saying that such personal assurance was of the essence of saving faith. Donald Cargill,

the Scottish martyr, had this assurance of his own salvation to a remarkable degree, as had also Donald Matheson, the Kildonan bard. The benefits accompanying genuine assurance are attainable by the use of the ordinary means, and surely they are worth seeking. Some of these are set forth in section (iii) of chapter xviii of the Confession as peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, love and thankfulness to God, strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience.

This personal assurance of salvation may be shaken, diminished and intermitted. Such experiences arise, as the Confession informs us, from "negligence in preserving it; by falling into some special sin, which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation; by God's withdrawing the light of His countenance, and suffering even such as fear Him to walk in darkness and have no light." It is when God's people have such experiences that they may wrongly conclude that the doctrine of personal assurance of salvation is untenable, and so fall into the error of reading into their doctrine what may after all be only a passing phase of their experience. We have in this article, endeavoured to "redd the marches," to use a well-known and significant Scottish phrase, between true and false assurance. True assurance is attainable by the use of ordinary means, and is accompanied by comforting and strengthening fruits.

REV. WILLIAM C. BURNS

By Rev. D. A. MacLean, M.A., Halkirk

(Continued from page 47)

V. "The field is the world."

When William Burns was in Canada he received word from Dr. Begg inviting him to visit France. Although he never went, yet we see in his own words how he left himself entirely in the hands of his Master. He said, "Perhaps the Lord intends to call me thither, to bear testimony to His Truth. May His will be done!"

While yet a student in Glasgow his mind was set on being a missionary. When he was licensed to preach the Gospel there happened to be no opening at the time on the Mission Field. This, however, did not change his mind. His purpose remained unchanged. He only waited for the Lord to open the way, and while thus waiting he was profitably employed at home and in Canada. The Master "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." It was so also with William Burns. He had special work to do in Scotland. In 1843, the year of the Disruption, the field of his labour changed.

The whole fabric of the Church was altered. Ecclesiastical questions had taken a deep hold on the public mind. While he sympathised wholeheartedly with the movement, yet the question of interest to him was simply "conversion," and to that end he preached with zeal and pentecostal power. Most likely this was the reason why he went to Dublin in 1844 and shortly afterwards to Canada. In the end of 1846 he was back in Scotland again. He was asked to go to the Continent but the way did not open up. It was at this period that he wrote, "I could not but reflect that at my period of life it must be now decided whether I was to preach from place to place to the end, or go to a heathen field as originally destined." His great question was "what was his duty?" with reference to the future. He arrived at the clear decision that his duty was to consult the Missionary Committee with regard to work among the heathen. This was accordingly done, but once more there was no special opening for him. At this very time the English Presbyterian Church Missionary Committee sought a minister who might be suitable to go to China as their first missionary. For two years they had been unsuccessful in finding a suitable person. Mr Burns' name was mentioned. Could he be the man? Would he say, "Here am I, send me?" He would never rush into making decisions and he would never do anything without first imploring Divine guidance. He was approached personally but he would not give a speedy answer. The Lord's servants known to him did their utmost to help him. Some were of the opinion that he should go; others would say that the field in China would not agree with his habits. The difficulties were thus great but the wise servant put himself entirely into the hands of Him who can over-rule all difficulties. The powerful obstacles which hinder the progress of the Gospel will be overcome. "Every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

In April of the following year William Burns wrote, "The impression of my duty now became so strong that I felt I could no longer hesitate from signifying my willingness to go and on Monday I wrote to that effect. I saw that I would dishonour my profession of the Gospel, and thus wound the honour of Jesus, if I seemed to linger any longer." By this time, however, the Committee were discouraged through a report given about missions in China and were on the verge of cancelling the idea of entering this new field. William Burns had no sympathy with the purpose to draw back. Indeed, we find him more pressed in spirit to go forward.

On the 20th April he travelled to Sunderland to meet the Synod there. Much to his delight they were resolved to go forward. He was accepted as their first missionary to China and the following day he was ordained to the work. Humanly speaking, there were unsurmountable difficulties yet the command was—"Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." With William Burns, forward it must be, and forward in absolute dependence on Him who commands to go forward. The banner the Lord gave him to display, because of the Truth, he was prepared to carry into China. The Lord promised His abiding presence to His Church, this the missionary did not doubt. His duty was made clear to him. He knew his success in any field did not depend on himself but on Him who sent him forth. The Lord does not disappoint.

When the newly-ordained missionary was asked by the Synod when he would be ready to enter on his work, his reply was, "Tomorrow." This reply was typical of him. Later, on the sea-voyage, he wrote, "In this manner from step to step my path has been hedged up in this important matter, and now I find myself in the midst of the great ocean studying Chinese, and having the prospect, if the Lord will, of spending the rest of my days in that empire of heathen darkness. In considering how he was guided, one cannot but recall how doors were closed against the apostles but yet another opened. He waited for a long time for this opening but his time was occupied in a profitable way, and indeed it proved good training for the devoted missionary to the Chinese.

What William Penn said of George Fox was true of William Burns—"But above all he excelled in prayer. The inwardness and weight of his spirit, the reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, and the fewness and fullness of his words have often struck even strangers with admiration as they used to reach others with consolation. The most awful, living, reverend frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his prayer. And truly it was a testimony. He knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men, for they that know Him most will see most reason to approach Him with reverence and fear."

On the 9th June, 1847, William Burns sailed for China. His brother, Islay, accompanied him to Portsmouth and spent some time with him on board the vessel. Both felt that it was a privilege to be separated for such a cause. Nothing, to either of them, was more precious than the Bible. To make the way of salvation known to the heathens was truly a rewarding work, even although the reward would not be reaped in this world. Those who have travelled in modern times have enjoyed comfort in their travels. How different it was with Mr Burns. He left

the coasts of England in June and on December 7th we find him writing from Hong-Kong. It was a long and tedious journey. But the missionary was a good steward of his time. Every moment was precious and so his time was used for good. Immediately he made up his mind to go to China he applied himself to study the Chinese language. Before, he learned French to preach in French; he learned Gaelic to preach in Gaelic; now he began with Chinese for the same purpose. His heart's desire is contained in the words of the apostle Paul—"that I might gain the more."

As regularly as difficult circumstances permitted, he conducted worship with the crew and passengers. Every opportunity to speak in the name of the Saviour was to him a labour of love.

The way he set himself to master a most difficulty language was told by a Mr Williams, LL.D., the Secretary of the United States Legation at Peking at the time.

"His determination and singleness of purpose in the mission work were illustrated in his account of the way he began the study of the language on his voyage to China. The only book which he could find in London to aid him in this study was my English and Chinese vocabulary: with this he procured a volume of Matthew's Gospel, and perhaps a tract or two. He then examined the first verses of the 2nd chapter, learned the figures so as to distinguish the verses, and, taking the first characters, hunted through the vocabulary till he found them as the Chinese equivalents of the English words, reconstructing the sentences, as he found one word after the other, until he found out the sound, meaning, and radical of each character. Then he wrote them over and over, until he had acquired them thoroughly. This tedious way of learning the characters continued until he arrived in Hong-Kong, but no one, unless acquainted with the Chinese language, can fully appreciate the tedium of acquiring its characters otherwise than by beginning with the radicals. I think he went over nearly the whole Gospel in this way before the end of the voyage, and then sat down to the study with a preparation and zest that few have brought to the task. It was a pleasant gratification to me to learn that the time spent on that small vocabulary had helped Mr Burns in his labours, for I remembered how helpless I felt on my voyage out fifteen years before, when I had no possible means of learning a single character, and reached the country quite ignorant of the people and their language." The method William Burns took was not an easy one but it shows us how he was bent on making his mission a success. "Even Christ pleased not himself."

On his arrival at Hong-Kong he was welcomed by friends of the Gospel. This he appreciated. The Lord's good hand who took him through dangers seen and unseen he gratefully acknowledged.

At home and in Canada the evangelist was close to his friends who could relate his labours in the Gospel. In vast China it was different. Often he was on his own and there was no one who could relate fully his labours. We only get glimpses of all he did. He never spoke much about himself.

Shortly after arriving he wrote from Hong-Kong to his close and dear friend, Rev. John Milne, Perth. He said, "How different are my present engagements from those of 1839-40 in Scotland: and yet this is the work to which I first devoted myself and all that I have seen and felt of the power of God in times past ought the more to confirm and quicken me amid the difficulties of a Chinese mission. I feel clear about having followed the call of God in coming here although I know not for what end he is thus leading me. I trust the Lord is still remembering you in Scotland and confirming His covenant with many. Oh! when I think of Perth and the days gone past, thoughts begin to open to me which are almost too much to bear. What accounts must be rendered by preachers and people of those days of the right hand of the Most High! Pray for me that I may not fall back, but be enabled to go on to the end in the strength of the Lord God." The change from Scotland to China was truly vast but we find in him a restful trust in God for the supply of all needs. His heart knew the long-formed habit of depending upon God and thus he rose to the new situation which met him.

The Chinese, like all heathen nations, were deeply sunk in ungodliness and sin. Their religion was not the religion of the Bible. Their gods were many but they were only the works of men's hand. They had a multitude of religious ceremonies but the honour of the true God was not in their devotions. They measured time not by weeks but by the periodical recurrences of market days. It was a land without the Christian Sabbath. Few knew, at that time, the most glorious event this world has ever heard—the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Although missionaries went to China from an early date yet it was not until 1807 that the first Protestant missionary arrived. He was Robert Morrison, who went out under the auspices of the London Missionary Society. His labours were great and exacting. He printed a Dictionary of Chinese. In 1834 he died. He was joined by Dr. Milne who became his successor. He saw the Word of God translated into the language of the people. Thus the good work was carried on. By the Treaty of Monking

in 1842, when five ports were opened to foreign traffic, missionaries were able to get a better foothold in that vast territory.

For fourteen months William Burns stayed in an English settlement in Hong-Kong studying the language. This barrier was truly a most difficult task but the end he had in view made it a labour of love. He was like Jacob when he laboured for his beloved Rachel. In months, not in years, as one would expect, he was able to make known the way of salvation, through the only Saviour to the prisoners in the public jail. In all the places where he laboured he showed himself as "the friend of publicans and sinners." Indeed, it was one of his purposes in life to attend to the uncared for. Patiently he would address the prisoners, and we must bear in mind that the prisoners did not speak the Canton dialect which the missionary was chiefly studying. Often he would stop to correct his "rude attempts." No doubt he had more than ordinary ability for the study of languages. The training and discipline which he received in early life while at school in Aberdeen contributed to his success. His character was formed: he was able to persevere and would never think of drawing back. He knew and felt the difficulties. With interest we notice his remarks regarding his Chinese studies in a letter to his mother: ". . . were it not for the greatness of the end in view, I would be disposed to abandon the undertaking." He had "put his hand to the plough," and he did not even look back. In the strength of Him whose servant he was, he looked cheerfully to the future, believing that all things were possible. The love of Christ shed abroad in his heart and the zeal he had for the work made him a "polished shaft" in the hand of his Divine Master.

(To be continued)

YE THAT HUNGER

By the late Rev. John Willison, Dundee

"Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled"

—Luke vi: 21.

In Scripture, hunger and thirst, when applied to scriptural things, imports the same thing, to wit, a strong desire after spiritual and heavenly good things, which desire implies spiritual life, a feeling sense of want, and a longing for food to the soul, together with the use of all proper means to obtain it. Now, the main object of this hunger or thirst is Jesus Christ, or God in Christ, Psal. xlii 1-2; lxiii 1. Now there are many things in Christ which the hungry soul doth desire; as, 1. Christ's blood, as the soul's ransom and cleansing fountain. 2. Christ's Spirit, as the soul's quickener,

comforter, and guide. 3. Christ's righteousness, as the soul's clothing and protection 4. Christ's Word, as the soul's daily food and cordials. 5. Christ's Supper, as the soul's feast and pledge of Heaven 6. Christ's graces, as the soul's riches and ornaments. 7. Christ's way, or holiness in heart and life, as the soul's path to Heaven. 8. Christ's day, as the soul's weekly market-day, for getting in provision necessary for working, journeying, and fighting, etc. 9. Christ's mansions above as the soul's dwelling place for eternal communion with God and his saints. Now, if you would be truly blessed, you must hunger and thirst for these things, firmly believing that in these your true happiness doth lie, and not in the world or sensual things.

Again, see that your hunger be of the right kind, that it be insatiable, so that nothing can put it off or satisfy it but Christ; the truly hungry soul will not be pleased with the best duties, ordinances, ministers, sermons, sacraments, or any other thing without Christ. The hungry soul will adventure on the greatest difficulties for Christ, he will part with anything for him: all the treasures, honours, music or comforts of life, cannot satisfy him, none but Christ the soul's food. True hunger will put him upon the use of all means, and make him content to take Christ upon any terms, and put a blank in his hand, and say, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? I'll subscribe to anything, only give me Christ, give me food to my starving soul.

Such hungry souls are blessed, because he hath promised to satisfy and fill them. It is God that creates the appetite, and excites the hunger, and therefore He will satisfy it.—The hungry are the most earnest and importunate beggars at the throne of grace; and such He has promised to hear, Luke ii. 9. The hungry will wait at God's door for an alms, and He promises that those who "wait for Him shall not be ashamed," Isa. xlix. 23. The proud, the rich, the full and self-righteous will go away, if the door be not presently opened; but the hungry will ask, seek, knock, and knock again, and wait till God think fit to open, and grant an alms. These God is bound by His Word to satisfy. He is their Father, and hath the bowels of a Father to pity His children. He hears the ravens and young lions when they cry, and feeds them, and will He not hear His own children, and fill their hungry souls? Yes, He hath promised it.

Question : But what is that fill He promises to the hungry? *Ans.*: He fills them with divine discoveries, as with the knowledge of God's greatness and majesty, so as to make them sensible of their own nothingness, and with the knowledge of God's goodness and free love to sinners in Christ, so as to make them fall into raptures of admiration, and cry who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth

iniquity? Micah vii. 18. He fills them with a discovery of the excellency of the gospel-remedy for perishing souls, so as to make them say, it is a device every way worthy of God: Christ's mediatory offices, His covenant, His righteousness, His blood, His purchase and fulness do nobly answer all our soul's wants and necessities; they deliver us from sin and misery, and they bring us grace and glory. He fills His hungry people with gospel-promises, by letting them see their name in them, and giving them faith to take hold of them and apply them. Many a sweet fill do they get from such promises as these, Jer. xxxii. 40; Ezak. xxxvi, 26, 28; Jer. iii, 22; 1 John ii, 1; Rom. xvi, 20; Heb. xiii. 5. He fills them with the intimations of the pardon of their sins, and with peace and joy in believing, Rom. xv. 13. So as to banish their doubts and fears. What a sweet fill doth Christ's voice give them, such as that in Matt. ix. 2; Luke xxiv. 36, 38; John xiv. 27; Rom. viii. 1. He fills them with resolution and a strength to conquer sin, perform duties, resist temptations, and bear afflictions, when He speaks to them as to Paul, 2 Cor. xii, 9; or as in Isa. xli, 10: and xlii, 2. He fills them by giving them sweet returns of prayer, assurance of His love, and of His gracious presence with them. He fills them by making over Christ's fulness and purchase to them, and by giving them Pisgah views of the promised land, and will at last fill them with glory.

It is only the hungry that shall be filled, the needy, the humble, and self-denied, for "the rich are sent empty away," Luke 1, 53; the *rich*, that is, those who are filled with a conceit of their own strength and sufficiency, their gifts and performances, and go about to establish a righteousness of their own, and see not their need of Christ; those shall go empty away, for they do not prize Christ, nor are willing to come up to His terms. They go away empty of Christ and His riches; but alas, they go away, filled with love to sin, love to the world, and love to their own righteousness. O this is a miserable fill.

O hungry souls, bless God that gives you this appetite, when others are rich and full in their own conceit, labour to preserve this appetite and wait about God's house and table, where soul-food is to be had; and bless Him even for the smallest crumbs, as when He gives you a greater hatred of sin, a higher esteem of Christ, a greater desire after heart-holiness, a restlessness without Christ, a willingness to part with all for Christ, or stronger resolutions to cleave to Christ and duty. These crumbs are worthy of thanks, though ye be not filled with joy and peace in believing. Wait on the Lord, and wait on Him in every ordinance and duty of his appointment, believing Him to be faithful who hath said, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me."

Object : Some may say, we have waited long, and have not got a crumb.

Ans.: Some eminent saints have been put to cry, "How long wilt Thou forget me, Lord, shall it be for ever!" Psal. xiii. But they must wait in the use of means until God's time come, and adore the sovereignty of God in His dealings with them. His people have resigned themselves to the care and wisdom of God, who knows what is best for them; believing there is a time coming when God will make up all their losses. O believers there is a fill remaining for you above, that will soon make you forget all your days of scarcity here below.

WHAT IS CALVINISM ?

By B. B. Warfield, D.D. (1851-1921)

Being part of an address on "The Present Day Attitude toward Calvinism" which is contained in the booklet *Calvin as a Theologian and Calvinism Today*, published by the Sovereign Grace Union, 34-40 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

Calvinism is evangelicalism in its pure and only stable expression, and when we say evangelicalism we say sin and salvation. It means utter dependence on God for salvation. It implies therefore, need of salvation and a profound sense of this need, along with an equally profound sense of helplessness in the presence of this need, and utter dependence on God for its satisfaction. Its type is found in the publican who smote his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No question there of saving himself, or of helping God to save him, or of opening the way to God to save him. No question of anything but "I am a sinner, and all my hope is in God my Saviour!" This is Calvinism, not just something like Calvinism or an approach to Calvinism, but Calvinism in its vital manifestation. Wherever this attitude of heart is found and is given expression in direct and unambiguous terms, there is Calvinism. Wherever this attitude of mind and heart is fallen away from, in however small a measure, there Calvinism has become impossible.

For Calvinism, in this soteriological aspect of it, is just the perception and expression and defence of the utter dependence of the soul on the free grace of God for salvation. All its so-called hard features—its doctrine of original sin; yes, speak it right out, its doctrine of total depravity and the entire inability of the sinful will to good; its doctrine of election, or, to put it in the words everywhere spoken against, its doctrine of predestination and preterition, of reprobation itself—mean just this and nothing more.

Calvinism will not play fast and loose with the free grace of God. It is set upon giving to God, and to God alone, the glory and all the glory of salvation. There are others than Calvinists, no doubt, who would fain make the same great confession. But they make it with reserves; or they painfully justify the making of it by some tenuous theory which confuses nature and grace. They leave logical pitfalls on this side or that; and the difference between logical pitfalls and other pitfalls is that the wayfarer may fall into the others, but the plain man, just because his is a simple mind, must fall into those. Calvinism will leave no logical pitfalls, and will make no reserves. It will have nothing to do with theories whose function it is to explain away facts. It confesses, with a heart full of adoring gratitude, that to God and to God alone belongs salvation and the whole of salvation; that He it is, and He alone, who works salvation in its whole reach. Any falling away in the slightest measure from this great confession is to fall away from Calvinism. Any intrusion of any human merit, or act, or disposition, or power, as ground or cause or occasion, into the process of divine salvation—whether in the way of power to resist or of ability to improve grace, of the opening of the soul to the reception of grace, or of the employment of grace already received—is a breach with Calvinism.

Calvinism is the casting of the soul wholly on the free grace of God alone, to whom alone belongs salvation.

The Calvinist is the man who has seen God, and who, having seen God in His Glory, is filled on the one hand, with a sense of his own unworthiness to stand in God's sight, as a creature, and much more as a sinner, and, on the other hand, with adoring wonder that nevertheless this God is a God who receives sinners. He who believes in God without reserve, and is determined that God shall be God to him, in all his thinking, feeling, willing—in the entire compass of his life activities, intellectual, moral, spiritual—throughout all his individual, social, religious relations—is, by the force of that strictest of all logic which presides over the outworking of principles into thought and life, by the very necessity of the case, a Calvinist.

THE LATE GEORGE MURRAY, ELDER

Bonar Bridge and Lairg

When a man dies who was good in the sense that Barnabas was good, the loss to the Church was great, but it is felt most keenly when he was one of a useful few in a small congregation. That was what many felt when George Murray passed away to his eternal rest on 6th October, 1964. His lifetime was spent in his

native district, and for thirty years, first as a member in full communion and then as an elder, he had taken an active part in the affairs of the Lairg and Creich Joint Congregation. Latterly there was only one other elder living locally to share with him the burden of the pastorless congregation, and when eventually George was removed by death, a sense of the extreme weakness of Christ's Cause in these parts gripped the hearts of all who felt concern for its welfare.

Badbea, the little farm on the shores of Loch Migdale in the hills above Bonar Bridge was George's birthplace. Only a mile to the west was the spot on the hillside where the great gatherings of people from all parts of the country assembled at the Creich Communion. To this event, held annually on the third Sabbath of August, came year after year such noted preachers as Dr. MacDonald, Ferintosh, Rev. John Kennedy, Redcastle and Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall. There were many of the Lord's people in Creich in those days, and George's father was one of them. It is an evidence of the esteem in which Alexander Murray was held, that he had been made an elder at the early age of 27 years.

Into this godly home George Murray was born on 17th August, 1883. It was the Friday of the Communion, and Dr. Kennedy was again present. The visit was to be his last for he died in the following April. Often in after years when the great Communion gatherings had become only memories, George referred to the Doctor's prediction that a sign of the approaching declension in the Church would be the people gathering in tens when formerly they had done so in hundreds.

Badbea was a Christian home in the fullest sense. Both parents had as great a concern for their children's spiritual welfare as they had for their temporal well-being, and the truths of God's Word were early brought to bear upon the minds of the children. Sandy Murray would no doubt be remembering his own upbringing. He could recollect being put to bed by an aged relative when he was only two years old, and being requested to repeat after her, "Create a clean heart, Lord, renew a right spirit me within." Not only the Murray family dwelt at Badbea. Ellen Logan, a godly woman, found a haven there in her declining years, and young George often was called upon to read to her the Scriptures on which her soul lived.

As a youth George worked with his father who was a road-contractor, and they were both engaged in laying out the grounds of Andrew Carnegie's large new mansion of Aultnagar, high above the River Shin half-way between Lairg and Bonar Bridge. In 1910 George went to Aultnagar as gardener and caretaker, and here he spent his long working life. He married Mary, daughter

of Donald Kelly, a St. Jude's elder, and a family of sons and daughters was brought up in Aultnagar Lodge.

In 1933 George publicly professed faith in the Saviour and in 1940 he was made an elder. Until 1946 when Rev. D. J. Matheson left Lairg to go to Glasgow, George attended church at Bonar. After that he regularly cycled to Lairg to keep the services there. The homeward journey of five miles is all uphill and must have been very exhausting for a man in his sixties, as George now was. It was by self-denying activities of this kind that what was in George Murray's heart became evident. He had little of the gift of self-expression, and it was love to the Cause of Christ at a time of need and not any desire for prominence that impelled him to lead the worship in public when pulpit supply was not available. His heart rejoiced when the Rev. D. M. MacLeod went to Lairg in 1956, but he lived to be again saddened at seeing the congregation once more without a pastor.

George Murray was very strong physically, and he was an old man before his strength began to wear. A series of illnesses then gradually curtailed his activities. Nevertheless, he still attended the various Communion in the district until the time of the Tain Sacrament in July, 1964. He took very ill on the Thursday, and when the Creich Communion came round five weeks later, George was still in a critical condition. Yet he recovered sufficiently to come home to Badbea where he and his wife made their home with George's sisters in the year or two following his retirement. In September he again became ill, and after a few weeks was taken away on the 6th October from his state of weakness to, we believe, that place where the inhabitants do not grow old or say, "I am sick." Although during his last days he was often rather confused in his mind, George Murray gave abundant evidence of his interest in Christ and of his desire to be with Him, which is far better. He desired a full conformity with the will of his God and Saviour, and his death was undubitably the death of the righteous.

A large number of men followed the remains to the old cemetery at Creich, and made it plain that they mourned his passing. Church and Community are alike the poorer by it. George was an upright man, humble, loving and kind. He spoke his mind in a manner that honest people appreciated but there was no edge to his tongue. His conversation was seasoned with salt. With his death there is lost a great store of information and edifying anecdotes of his native parish and the godly of a bygone day. To his widow and family, the oldest being Rev. Alexander Murray, and to his brother and two sisters we extend our sincere sympathy and hope that to them the memory of the just will be blessed.—A. McP.

TRIBUTE

To the late Hugh Mackay, Elder, Vancouver. From
Dominions and Colonial Committee

The Committee desires to record the deep sense of loss caused by the death of Mr Hugh MacKay, elder, Vancouver, on 7th March, 1966.

A native of Sutherland, Scotland, Mr MacKay was born in the year 1887, and was the son of God-fearing parents who cast their lot with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1893.

In 1907 Hugh emigrated to Canada, where, with brief intermissions, he lived during the remainder of his life. After a short time in the Province of Manitoba, he moved to British Columbia to make his home in Vancouver, along with his like-minded wife, where their family, consisting of two sons and four daughters, was born.

Though he had the privilege of an early and close association with the Lord's people in his native country, and though incidents in his formative years made lasting impressions on his mind, it was in the land of his adoption that Hugh MacKay was brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. His piety was reflected in the sincere and active interest he took in projects designed to advance the Kingdom of God at home and abroad. An admirer of the principles of the church, he took a prominent part in the formation of the Vancouver congregation, which he served with much acceptance as an elder and as a lay preacher. A man of sterling character, of unimpeachable reputation, and of true piety, his witness made a lasting impression. Like the Apostle Paul, for Hugh MacKay "to live was Christ, and to die was gain."

In expressing sincere sympathy with the widow, family and congregation who have been thus bereaved, the Committee would commit them to God, whom their friend loved and served. "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace" (Psalm 37, v. 37).

CUNNTAS MU DHITHIS SHEANN DAOINE

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 60)

Dhealaich mi ris an t-seann duine thruagh so le cridhe làn do bhròn. Ciod a b'urrainn mi ràdh 's a mhionaid sin gus a choguis a dhùsgadh? Thuig mi nach robh e'n comas neach air bith an t-anam sin a dhùsgadh a bha cho fad 'n a luidhe ann an neo-mhothachadh chruadhaichte, ach a' neach sin a mhàin a tha comasachadh an cridhe cloiche a thoirt air falbh, agus cridhe feola a thoirt 'n a àite; (Esec. xxxvi: 26), an Tì 'n a aonar "a dh'fhosgla agus nach dùin neach air bith," Tais. iii: 7. Air

an aobhar sin ghuidh mi air Athair nan tròcair truas a ghabhail ris a pheacach bhochd so, agus slighe fhosgladh a dh'ionnsuidh a chridhe seacharanach, ge b'e uair a gheibhinn cothrom air an ath chòmhradh ris. 'S e so uile arsa mise, an diadhachd sin leis am bheil creutair so Dhé ga sgeadachadh fein an sùilibh dhaoine; fodh leithid so a dh'ardan, a dh'fhéin-mhuinghinn, agus a dhearbh eas-creidimh choisinn e'n cliù sin as am bheil e deanamh urrad de uail. Beagan bhriathar, beagan cainnt ghnàthach, taobh a muigh ciatach, agus an cron a tha e faotainn do pheacanaibh muinntir eile; is leoir iad sin gu bhi toirt a chreidsinn air an dream a tha sealltuinn air coslas a mhàin, gu bheil e diadhaidh. Ach e'ait am bheil earbsa? Ciod air an socraich e'n làthair an Dia naomh agus ceart sin nach aithne dhà? E cho fad bho bhi'g iarruidh a bhi réidh Ris trid Mic gráidh an Athar, Neach 'n a aonar is e'n t-slighe tre'n urrainn duine dhol suas bho thalamh gu neamh; Ciod an Slànuighear a th'aig? Mo thruaigh. Cha'n eil eadhon fios aige gu'm bheil feum Slànuighear air an duine. Ciod an t-aineolas eagalach. Tha cunnartan ga chuartaich agus ga bhagrachd, anns a mhionaid 's a bheil esan ag eigheach "sith agus tearuinteachd." O cia truagh cor seana chreutair nach eil 'n a Chrìosduidh. Tha e ro choltach nach crath e dheth a chodal, gidheadh cia beag 's a cheud bhàs a tha na luidh cho fagus aig a dhorus, na chùis eagail, an coimeas ris an dara bàs a tha ga leantuinn. Oh. cia lion ùrnuigh bu chòr do chlann Dé chur suas ris an Tighearna, gu'n gabhadh E truas ris a mhuinntir aosmhor am feadh 's a tha tim ann fathasd. Rinn an smuain dheireanach so drùghadh orm, agus rùnaich mi, nach dearmaidean gu bràth 'n am ùrnuighean, athchuinge àraidh a chur suas air son seana mhuinntir mo sgìreachd; gu'm biodh foghaidean Dhé air a shìneadh agus a thròcair air a nochdadh dhoibh-hsan a dh'fhan diomhain gus an aon uair deug; Gu'n rachadh E fathasd a mach da'n ionnsuidh, agus gu'n cuireadh E dà fhion-lios iad mu'n tig an oidhche. Mar a bha mi smuain-teachadh mar so thainig mi dlùth do'n aon a b'fhaisg do na tighibh, a bha rùn orm a dhol ga'n amharc.

Bha'm bothan so air a thogail ri aghaidh creige a dh'eirich a' meadhon àilean claon-bhruthaich; bha beagan chraobhan a fàs air a chnoc a bh'air a chùlthaobh, a chòmhdach ach beag mullach an tighe le'n geugaibh; beagan ni b'fhaide as bha doire de chraobhan giuthais agus daraich, agus dlùth do'n tigh bha làn shruthan pailt do fhior-uisge, a bha teachd a nuas bho'n bheinn agus a ruith 'n a chuartaigaibh a crònanaich a' measg nam preas seilich agus droigheann. Anns a bhothan so bha aon de na daoinibh bu shine bha 'n am sgìreachd a chòmhnuidh, da'n goirte gu cummanta La Roche (a Charraig); bho'n àite 's an

roghnaich e tigh a thogail dhà fein leth cheud bliadhna roimhe sin; “ a chùm,” ars esan gu sùgach, “ gu’m bi mo thigh steidhichte air carraig.” Agus gu’n teagamh ’s ann air carraig nan àl a leag e bunait a bheatha dhiadhaidh agus gach dòchas a thà ga mhisneachadh agus ga chrùnadh le sìth agus aoibhneas, eadhon ann a’ meadhon uireasbhuidh, laigsinn, agus anmhuinneachd sean aois. Bha e roimhe so air a chuartachadh le bean-phosda ionmhuinn, triur mhac, agus dithis nighean, a bha glé ghealltanach; agus an déigh dha blasad ’s a chomunn mhilis so, air an t-sonas sin uile a tha’n Crìosduidh a mealtuinn ann a’ maitheas a Dhé, dhealaicheadh e r’a mhnaoi agus le triur de na chloinn leis a bhàs, agus ris a chuid eile d’a theaghlach le iad a ghluasad do sgìreachd eile. Cha robh companach air bith eile aige ’n an àm so, ach seann seirbhiseach a bha’s an tigh bho rugadh an aon bu shine d’a chloinn; agus leanabh gille mu aois sheachd na ochd de bhliadhnachaibh a b’ ogha dhà, mu’n do bhuilicheadh mòran d’a chùram.

Bha mi gu tric ag amharc an t-seann duine urramaich so, agus thuair mi gach àm buannachd da m’ cho-labhairt ris. Ann an diadhachd bha leithid de dh’aon-fhillteachd agus de threibhidheireas ann a chainnt, a leithid de ioraslachd agus de shìth—gràdh an t-Slànuighear ga fhoillseachadh fein cho soilleir anns gach nì a thug e fa’n ear mu thimchioll a bheatha fein agus a thrioblaidean: ionnas gu’m bu do-dheanta nach drùghadh an deothas naomha sin orm, a thà cho bitheanta an lorg an fhior chreidimh Chrìosduidh. Mar a thàinig mi steach air an àilean, chunnaic mi La Roche na shuidh aig dorus an tighe, agus ogha eadar a dhà ghlùn. Sheall mi air beagan mhionaidean gun teachd nì b’fhaisge. Bha e cosmhuil ri bhì mineachadh nì éiginn do’n leanabh, le aon laimh air a ghualainn, agus leis an laimh eile a feuchainn nì eiginn dhà. Do bhrìgh nach robh mi deonach stad a chur orra, dh’imich mi mu’n cuairt do’n achadh, agus air dhomh teach dlù bho thaobh cuil an tighe, chuala mis na briathran drùighteach so: “ Cha’n eil, a Bheniamin, cha’n eil t’athair cailte—tha fhios agad gu bheil a chorp na luidhe fodh’n tobhtag dlùth do’n Eaglais, agus tha anam an uchd a Thighearna a rinn a shaoradh. Oh! mo mhac gradhach! cia diadhaidh ’s a bha esan, agus gidheadh cho òg; ciod a bheath agus am bàs a bha aige-san. A Bheniamin, mo leanabh gaol, cuimhnich Daniel, t’athair oirdheirc, agus bi cosmhuil ris a’ t’fhear-leanmhuinn air air an Tighearn Iosa.” Oh! a Shlànuighear naomha, “ ars an seann duine, agus e gu h-urramach a rusgadh a chinn, nach teid mise gu h-aithghearr a ris an cuideachd Shiusan agus ar clann ghràdhach? Cia fhad a Thighearna?

“ Oh. a shean-athair,” ars an leanabh, agus e tarruig an

t-seann duine d'a ionnsuidh chùm a phògadh, " ann sin ciod a thig dhìom-sa? " " Nach eil fhios agad, mo leanabh, gu bheil Iosa Criosd a gabhail cùram do'n dilleachdan? Gabh misneach, mo leanabh, oir siubhlaidh mise gu h-aithghearr." Mar a thuirt e na briathran so le guth air chrith, chuir an leanabh gràdhach a làmhan air aodann, agus leag e a cheann air glùn a charaid urramach, a gul gu goirt. " Oh. a Bheniamin," arsa mise, agus mi teachd suas da ionnsuidh, " na bi gul, mo ghaoil, na bi an eu-dòchas; 's e'n Tighearna Dia t'athar agus arc n'Athar-ne. Thig thugam, a Bheniamin, mo ghaoil." Dh'aithnich an leanabh mo ghuth—bu ghnàth leis m'fhaicinn an tigh a shean-athair, agus fheuchainn gu'm bu ghlé chaomh leis mi. Thainig e da m'ionnsuidh, agus ghlac e mi gu caidreach 'us e silleadh nan deur. Thug mi comhfhurtachd dhà, agus a chùm lasachadh da chridhe beag, thug mi leabhran as mo phòcaid a bha freagarach da aois, agus chuir mi 'n a laimh e, ag ràdh, " Siubhail, mo leanabh gaoil, leugh an naigheachd so, agus chì thu nach eil ar n-Athair neamhaidh a di-chuimhneacadh aon air bith da chloinn. Dh'fhalbh Benjamin gu cul a chreagain, agus dh' fhan mise a'm aonar maille ris an t-seann duine. " Mo dheadh charaid," arsa mise, " moladh-mid an Tighearna air son uile mhaitheas dhuinn."

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Editorial Note

As we have been unable to find time to write our usual Notes and Comments, we give below two resolutions of our recent Synod dealing with current matters of public interest.

Sexual Offences Bill

We, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, convened at Glasgow on the 17th day of May, 1966, being apprehensive that the Sexual Offences Bill, which was held up by the sudden dissolution of Parliament, will be speedily brought forward in the new Parliament do hereby utter our solemn and emphatic Protest against that Bill becoming law. This Bill has as its aim the legalising of homosexuality between consenting adults above a certain age, and is an embracing of the recommendations of the Wolfenden Report, which was rejected by a previous Government some years ago. We deplore the attitude of the majority of the members of the House of Commons in the discussion which took place when the Bill passed its second reading, as we also deplore that of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York when a similar Bill was before the House of Lords. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are our only infallible guide in these

matters, solemnly condemn the sin of sodomy, showing that it is abominable in the sight of God, and will be justly punished by Divine wrath. The sin of sodomy is among the sins forbidden in Israel under the Divine Law, which binding on us as well as on the Israelites, and their rulers were held responsible to God for the punishment of those guilty of it. On whose authority, it may be asked, do the present legislators of Britain abrogate a law which was so manifestly based on the Law of God? Let the present legislators of Britain bear in mind that they also are responsible to God for the maintenance of laws which were handed down to them, and that God will require at their hands any retrograde steps such as are at present proposed in this matter.

It is worthy of note that when Israel prospered, the sodomites were taken out of the land, and it was only in days of declension in departing from God that they were permitted to remain. Let our legislators bear in mind the solemn admonition of Scripture "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galatians vi. 7, 8.

Corporal Punishment

In view of the great increase of crime the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland convened in Glasgow on 19th May, 1966, ask the Government to re-introduce corporal punishment as a deterrent to crime as imprisonment appears to have no salutary effect on criminals and further ask that capital punishment be restored as a Scriptural punishment for murder.

CHURCH NOTES

Communions

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist, Kyle of Lochalsh. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness, Portree and Tarbert; third, Finsbay; fourth, Kinlochbervie and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Achmore, Portnalong, Stoer and Fort-William; second, Fearn, Gisborne, N.Z., and London; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie; third, Edinburgh and Broadford. *June*—First Sabbath, Applecross; second, Shieldaig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Gairloch and Inverness. *July*—First Sabbath, Lairg, Raasay and Beaulay; second, Staffin, Tomatin and Tain; third, Halkirk, Rogart, Flashadder and Daviot; fourth, Bracadale, North Uist and Plockton; fifth, Achmore. *August*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; second, Portree and Stratherrick; third, Bonar, Finsbay and Laide; fourth, Stornoway, Thurso and Vatten. *September*—First Sabbath, Ullapool, Breasclete; second, Strathy; third, Tarbert, Stoer and Vancouver (Canada); fourth, Applecross. *October*—First Sabbath, Tolsta, Lochcarron, Fort-William; second, Dumbarton, Gairloch and Ness; fourth, Gisborne, N.Z., Greenock, Lochinver; fifth, Wick. *November*—First Sabbath, Oban and Raasay; second, Glasgow and Halkirk; third, Edinburgh, Dornoch, Staffin and Uig. *December*—First Sabbath, London.

Day Of Prayer

The Synod decided at its meeting in May, last, that a Day of Humiliation and Prayer be held throughout the Congregations of the Church on Wednesday, the 12th of October, or Thursday, 13th day of October, 1966 (D.V.), for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and on account of the continuing backsliding state of the nation and generation.—Robert R. Sinclair, Clerk of Synod.

Ordination at Ingwenya

On Thursday afternoon, the 2nd of June, the Southern Rhodesia Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met in church at Ingwenya for the purpose of ordaining Mr Aaron Ndebele to the ministry, and to induct him to the pastoral charge of Ingwenya.

The church was filled to capacity. Two lorries each took a load of people from Shangani Reserve for the occasion.

The Moderator preached from "Let a man account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." (I Cor. 4, 1). The outline of the sermon was somewhat as follows:

(1) what a minister in the church is not. The office of the ministry in the church is ordained by God. It is an exalted and honourable office; yet the minister is not the Head of the church. In other churches they have archbishops etc. These offices were invented by men and have no authority from the New Testament. There are two offices in the New Testament church that of the deacon, and that of the elder. The Presbyter and Bishop in the New Testament are one and the same. The Head of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ and the minister is not a lord over God's heritage.

(2) What a minister is. In ordinary circles the steward serves food for the body. The minister, the Word says here, is a steward, and he has to prepare spiritual food for the souls of those under him. This is a very difficult work! Those whom Christ has appointed for this work are themselves sinners saved by grace, therefore they need to be prayed for. Paul says "pray for us."

(3) What is required of the steward. He is to be found faithful. (a) the minister is to be faithful to his master, by preaching the word of God, not subtracting from or adding thereto, and lifting up "Christ and Him crucified." (b) He is to be faithful to the Lord's people, by feeding them with knowledge and understanding. (c) He is to be faithful to the unconverted by warning them to flee from the wrath to come. They are to be faithful to the end despite many difficulties and disappointments.

Mr Ndebele answered satisfactorily the questions put to Probationers in the Free Presbyterian Church, and also signed the Formula in the presence of the congregation.

The pastor-elect was asked to kneel and the moderator solemnly prayed, and, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery ordained him to the ministry. The moderator then formally received and admitted Mr Ndebele, in the name of the Presbytery, and by the authority of the Divine Head of the church, to the pastoral charge of Ingwenya, and along with the other members of Presbytery gave him the right hand of fellowship.

The Moderator addressed the newly admitted pastor from the words "the love of Christ constraineth us." It was the love of Christ that had enabled all believers who had gone before to endure many trials and difficulties. He hoped the love of Christ constraining him would enable the newly ordained minister to overcome also.

Rev. D. Campbell addressed the congregation. He said this occasion reminded him of a historic occasion 73 years ago, when about this time of year, the Free Presbyterian church came into existence. He pointed out some of the reasons why it was necessary for Rev. D. MacFarlane and Rev. D. MacDonald to separate from the then Free Church, such as departure from the truths of God's word.

He said this was an historic occasion in that Mr Ndebele was the first minister to be ordained by the Southern Rhodesia Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church. This historic occasion, was similar, to the historic occasion 73 years ago already spoken about, in that there were only two ministers in the then newly-formed Presbytery. There were to-day but two African ministers in the Southern Rhodesia Presbytery. There were many who were saying in 1892 that the ministers referred to were acting too hastily. The separation was not too early, because things had already gone too far. Nevertheless history has also proved that they were not too late, that they acted at the right time, and under divine guidance. He said the formation of the Presbytery in Africa was certainly not too early, or hasty. He believed that time would prove that it was not too late and that the Lord would yet send forth more labourers into His harvest. He then advised the congregation. (1) not to resist like the Galatians, their minister's preaching. "Am I then become your enemy because I tell you the truth." (2) Not to waste the minister's time with trivialities, because the minister needs all this time for his work. (3) He stressed that the congregation should help their minister in a practical way. If God had provided him for them, they ought to provide for the minister's needs. "Let him that is taught in

the Word communicate with him that teacheth in all good things." (4) In view of the fact that there was such a spirit of carelessness abroad in the land, they ought to be careful to obey him that had the rule over them and submit themselves to him, as one that watched for their souls.

Mr Ndebele repaired to the door of the church to shake hands with the people as they passed out, and the proceedings were brought to a close with singing and the Benediction. We ought to pray that this ministry newly begun would be richly blessed.

D. M. Campbell, Presbytery Clerk.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund Collection

The Synod appointed this Collection to be taken by book in August, and we once again approach our loyal people for their contributions. The work in Rhodesia is most worthy of support, and the Lord has countenanced it in turning many from darkness unto light. It cannot be expected that this work should go on without opposition from the kingdom of Satan, and the result is that there are many trials to counter-balance our blessings, yet the work goes on, manifesting that it is of the Lord, who is the Almighty. We appeal to our people for their support, and as the work is of Him, we have confidence in asking them to contribute as liberally as the Lord will lay to their hands, for He bestows liberally on us, and His Cause ought to have the first claim upon us. Thus we could say with the Apostle," For we are labourers together with God." I. Cor. iii. 9.

John Colquhoun, Convener.

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