

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
AND MONTHLY RECORD

Vol. LXXI

October, 1966

No. 6

**THE QUESTION OF RESTORING CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT**

What has been called "The No Hanging Bill" was passed some time ago by a "free vote" in the House of Commons, although the country as a whole was not consulted as to this very important change in the law. The Synod at the time passed a detailed resolution opposing this alteration in the law on Scriptural grounds.

The question as to restoring capital punishment has been raised again on account of the dastardly crime of the murder of three police officers in the exercise of their duty, in the London area, in the month of August. Desperate and wicked men shot dead these three officers. And the law as it stands does not expose these murderers to the death penalty but only to life imprisonment. This state of affairs is quite intolerable in the view of many responsible people of all classes throughout the nation.

The Secretary of the Police Federation said in connection with the murder of the three police officers: "The police are engaged in a war against crime when they are weak in numbers . . . London and other large cities are in danger of being dominated by gangs of organised criminals. These are desperate men who will stop at nothing if anybody gets in their way. Urgent action must be taken to strengthen the police and to reform the criminal law to secure convictions." The Federation told Parliament when they were discussing the "No Hanging Bill," a desperate criminal can escape arrest and conviction by shooting the policeman. They said it was vital to restore capital punishment for the murder of policemen.

One member of Parliament in expressing his horror at the killing of these police officers said regarding the murderers: "When they are convicted, they should be subjected not merely to a period of imprisonment but to the same capital sentence they so lawlessly imposed on their innocent victims." This expression

of opinion is fully consistent with the teaching of God's Word, whether intended specifically to be so or not.

One or two Members of Parliament from both sides of the House have spoken against hasty alteration of the law to bring back hanging for the convicted murderer. But on the other hand, we are greatly relieved to find that there are other Members of Parliament from both sides of the House, who are determined to introduce an amendment to this Bill when the House of Commons sits again this month. A few members of all three parties have signed a motion, viz., "That this House, mindful of the special dangers to which they are exposed, calls for the restoration of capital punishment for the murder of police and prison officers."

We may freely state here that the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland fully supports this amendment by Mr Duncan Sandys. But Mr Sandys and those supporting him were bitterly criticised by Mr George Wigg, M.P. and Paymaster-General, who said their views show little sign of either wisdom or knowledge. If Mr Wigg would read the Bible, he might discover there what would expose his folly and ignorance as the prime mover of the "No Hanging Bill." Much that we have read of reports of Mr Wigg's utterances in Parliament, on a variety of subjects, have been anything but edifying. Again, Mr Wigg had the impudence to refer to Mr Duncan Sandys and those supporting his amendment (this was immediately after the murder of the police officers) as "little men attempting to exploit deep public feelings in order to enhance their own egos." This type of observation upon the actions of men acting according to their considered judgment is characteristic of Mr Wigg. These comments of ours are completely non-political; as these are moral and Scriptural issues with which we are dealing.

As we believe it has been pointed out to our readers before, the purpose of Capital Punishment is not at all in the first instance to be involved with the debate as to whether it is a deterrent to others to refrain from murder or not. It is Scripturally and fundamentally a matter concerning the proper punishment in justice, fitted to this terrible crime and sin of murder. The Word of God is absolutely clear on this matter. But some men today in places of authority, as in Parliament, are like Mr Wigg, wiser and more just than the expressed mind of the Most High in Holy Scripture.

To refresh the memories of our readers as to "What saith the Scriptures," we give the following quotations:—

THE OLD TESTAMENT

“ Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man ” (Genesis, chapter ix: v. 6).

“ He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death ” (Exodus chapter xxi: 12).

“ And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death ” (Leviticus chapter xxiv: 18). “ And he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death ” (Leviticus xxiv: 21).

“ Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die ” (Numbers chapter xxxv: v. 30).

“ Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death ” (Numbers xxxv: 31).

“ So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it ” (Numbers chapter xxxv: v. 33).

THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the parable of the Lord Jesus, concerning “ A certain householder, which planted a vineyard . . . and let it out to husbandmen ”; the householder sent unto them his son saying, “ They will reverence my son.” But “ They caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men . . . ” (Matthew chapter xxi: v. 37-41).

In another parable, the Saviour tells of a king, which made a marriage for his son. Some of those who were bidden to the wedding, “. . . took his servants and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. And when the king heard thereof he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers . . . ” (Matthew chapter xxii: v. 2-7).

The Apostle Paul, defending himself against the Jews and before Festus, utters words which are very significant as an expression of his mind on the death penalty as a sentence, in law, for an appropriate crime. His words are: “ For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die . . . ” (Acts chapter xxv: v.11).

The view of the barbarians on the island Milita, upon which Paul and others were cast, is interesting relative to this subject. A viper fastened on Paul’s hand. “ And when the barbarians

saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live " (Acts chapter xxviii: v. 3-4). The late Dr. T. A. Alexander, Professor of Theology at Princeton, in his exposition of *The Acts of the Apostles*, writes on this incident thus: ". . . seeing him assailed by a venomous animal, whose bite they well knew to be mortal, they concluded that his crime was that of murder, as the highest known to human laws, and one appropriately punished by the loss of life."

The Apostle Paul in writing, of course, as a divinely inspired apostle, deals with certain aspects of civil government, in the 13th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, among other statements he writes: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Charles Hodge, D.D., in commenting upon "the sword" in this passage, says: ". . . that instrument is mentioned as the symbol of the right of punishment, and, as many infer from this passage, of the right of capital punishment."

Thus the Church of God, guided by the doctrine and light of God's Word, must support in civil government what is required by and consistent with that Word. The Church is also obliged to oppose and condemn what in civil government is clearly inconsistent with Holy Scripture. This, as in the case of capital punishment, can oblige men in authority to take serious and solemn decisions affecting their fellow men. If some are not prepared to take these serious decisions, then let them retire from places of authority in our civil government.

*CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Appeal to Home Secretary and to Secretary of State for Scotland

The Religion and Morals Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, taking into account the recent deplorable deaths of three London policemen in the course of their duties appeal to our Government to restore Capital Punishment to the Statute Book at the earliest available opportunity. This tragic incident, and the "Moors" case earlier in the year, are, in our

* Our opening article was written prior to our receiving this copy of Appeal for publication.—*Editor*.

view, instances we may expect to occur in the atmosphere prevailing through the removal of the death penalty, and demonstrate, we are convinced, the folly and irresponsibility of Parliament in its abolition of Capital Punishment.

The basis for our appeal is our belief that the death penalty for cases of deliberate murder is in accordance with the revealed will of God for the ordered government of society. The Bible, from which many of our laws derive their authority, explicitly states: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis ix: 6). In the New Testament we read regarding the civil power: "He is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. xiii: 4). The power of the sword implies, at least to our mind, the right and duty of the civil power to execute the full penalty of the law on the condemned murderer. Accordingly, we view it as Christian, reasonable and just that the life of the deliberate murderer should be forfeit.

While we would welcome the restoration of Capital Punishment for the killing of officers of the law as a step in the right direction, yet our appeal is for the restoration of the death penalty for all offences of deliberate murder as being the only Scriptural basis on which true justice in relation to the offence of murder can be administered. As abolition of the death penalty caused alarm and dismay to all right thinking people, so, we are persuaded, would Government action in restoring it have the support of all who love God's law and have at heart the true moral and spiritual good of our people. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. xiv: 34).

A SERMON

By Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale, Skye

"I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest" (Psalm xl: 9).

The opening part of this psalm is often taken as describing the experience of the Lord's people in being translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Christ, and in a special manner the experience of David who composed this psalm. It is true that King David found himself in a horrible pit, but it is nothing in comparison with the pit in which David's King was found when He came to work out salvation for perishing sinners. We are not, however, left to conjecture in this matter, for we find the Holy Spirit in the Epistle to the Hebrews, taking part

of this psalm and applying it to Christ. Having before our minds that Christ is the Speaker in this psalm, we shall endeavour to notice four things from the words of our text. I. The Preacher. II. The Sermon He Preached. III. The Congregation. IV. The Manner of His Preaching.

I. The Preacher.

There was never a preacher like this One, although there were many true preachers in the world before Him, yet He alone is the One who ought to attract our attention for various reasons, and on Him all true preachers depend. He is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." As the Apostle says, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. i: 1, 2).

(1) We see, therefore, that this Preacher came from Heaven and that His relationship to the Father is unique, for He is the only begotten Son of God. An angel might have been sent from Heaven to preach to this world but he could not claim this relationship to God. Christ, being the only begotten Son of God, is God, co-equal with the Father in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, and as the three Persons of the God-head are equal in power and glory, this Preacher is One of infinite power and glory.

(2) We may call Him in the highest sense a Royal Preacher. Solomon is often referred to by that name because he was a king, but, though we have a record of his preaching given us by the Holy Spirit, yet his kingly throne is not to be found in the world today. Of this Preacher it is said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Psalm xlv: 6, 7).

Being a Royal Preacher He is One that we ought to listen to with respect and render obedience to. If the King of Britain came among us in person to make a proclamation all loyal subjects would listen to him with respect, yea, they would be straining to catch every syllable that fell from his lips. Alas, that the King of Kings should get less respect, yet it is the case, for many who show due respect to earthly kings reveal that they are open enemies to Him who came in God's great name to save sinners, and who preaches the most wonderful sermon that was ever preached in this world.

(3) None ever preached like this Preacher for it was testified of Him that "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew vii: 29). The officers who were sent by the Pharisees and chief priests to apprehend Him, and who, one may be sure, were not ready to listen to the words of those they were sent to take, had to come back without Him and to testify as a reason for not taking Him, "Never man spake like this man." Even the devils had to yield to His words for we read of the people who heard Him, that "they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits and they do obey him" (Mark i: 27).

As a Preacher He was different from others, for, while their knowledge was limited, He preached from the depths of His infinite knowledge. He spoke of God as none but He could do, for "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John i: 18). His knowledge of man was such that He "needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (John ii: 25). He spoke of Heaven and said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus He drew aside the curtain between time and a lost eternity, and spake in words which ought to burn themselves into our very hearts concerning what John Bunyan aptly called "the groans of a damned soul."

(4) He is a Preacher of good tidings. The song of the multitude of the heavenly host which accompanied the angel who heralded His birth was, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke ii: 14). The devil and man compacted to rob God of His glory, and in the effort, man fell into an estate of sin and misery, from which no creature could deliver him. The way of access to God by a covenant of works was eternally closed and no wisdom in man could reveal any other way. Christ, as the Preacher of Righteousness, came to reveal to men how God could be glorified in the salvation of sinners, and in preaching that righteousness gave a wonderful revelation of God's covenant of grace, and of Himself as the Way of that covenant to the Father. As it is written, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John xiv: 6). Christ had no hand in robbing God of His glory but by His sufferings unto death, and in the very midst of these sufferings, He could say, "then I restored that which I took not

away" (Psalm lxi: 4). In His preaching of good tidings He proclaimed salvation to the lost, life to the dead, rest to the weary and heavy laden, and an assurance that none will come and be afterwards cast away. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi: 37). Not only did He declare peace and goodwill toward men but He reveals that nothing in this world can give the faintest conception of that peace, so that to experience it is the only way to have an understanding of it. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

II. The Sermon He Preached.

(1) In the sermon which He preached He set before sinners the perfection of the Divine nature; the justice, holiness, truth, goodness and mercy of God. Sinners were assured that God was not to be trifled with, and that though hand join in hand the wicked should not go unpunished. God was a consuming fire against sin and against all sinners out of Christ. There was goodness and mercy in God, but that goodness and mercy must find a channel through which to flow to poor sinners, and that without an atonement for sin, justice barred the way of mercy, so that it could not reach any of our race.

(2) He spoke of the perfection of God's Law and how that law took to do with the thoughts and intents of the heart. The Jews thought that if they made an outward show of keeping God's law, and even that itself had to give place to the traditions of the elders, that they were sure of eternal life. In the Sermon on the Mount He taught the spirituality of God's law, assuring His hearers "That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Those who were guilty of sinful anger, hasty words and wanton looks were shown to be murderers and adulterers at heart, and in danger of hellfire. Thus He showed that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. ii: 16). By this He did not say that the law lost its power, for the law of God, being perfect, is unchangeable, but what He did show was that there was a change in man from the time that God entered into a covenant of works with him, and that the inability of the law consisted in "that it was weak through the flesh." This is revealed in the case of the lawyer who, tempting Him, asked "Master what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He sent him to the law and after he repeated the sum of the law, He said to him, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and

thou shalt live." With Divine eloquence He preached to the conscience of the lawyer, which, if it was not altogether dead, might tell him of his inability to *do* in order to live.

(3) Though He left no ground for man to hope for salvation by the covenant of works yet He did not leave sinners to despair. He has showed thee, O sinner, whoever thou art, or whatever thy sins may be, that, though thy righteousness is but filthy rags, yet, that there is a righteousness which is suitable and sufficient for thee, and it is that righteousness which He preached in the great congregation. This righteousness is not the righteousness of a sinless angel, for that would only be the righteousness of a creature, neither is it the righteousness of an absolute God, for that would in no way suit the needs of a fallen creature, for in procuring a righteousness suitable to meet with the needs of a fallen human being, it was necessary that the one who would procure it should suffer, and an absolute God could not suffer. The righteousness which He preached is the righteousness of the God-man, and this righteousness is the only one that is suitable for our needs.

When Christ came into this world to preach a righteousness by which the law of God was magnified and made honourable, and the justice of God was eternally satisfied, the manner of His coming into the world, and of His acting in it, was in perfect conformity to God's law. As the Substitute of His people He brought with Him what they could not bring, for He brought into this world a holy nature. In His conception He was holy, as the angel said to the Virgin Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i: 35). Not having come by ordinary generation He did not fall heir to the corruption of the human nature inherited by all the sons of Adam.

Because of this He was different in His nature from us in respect of the fact that there was nothing in Him to which Satan's temptations could appeal. He was able to say, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John xiv: 30). With us, it is our own corruptions which welcome Satan's temptations, and cause us to be an easy prey to them, but He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." This holy nature He brought to the holy law of God, and nothing less would be sufficient, making Him eminently suitable to act as the Substitute of His people.

He brought to the law not only a holy nature, but what must necessarily follow, a life in perfect conformity to that exalted standard. It is with us as frail, sinful creatures, that there is

want of conformity unto, and transgression of the law of God, making it utterly impossible for us to produce that righteousness which God requires, and thus clearly proving that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." From Bethlehem's stable to Calvary's cross, when He cried, "It is finished," His whole life in thought, word, and action, was a beautiful conformity to God's holy law, and a clear manifestation that He had the honouring of that law in His heart. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v: 17, 18). How perfectly this was accomplished may be seen from His statement to the Jews, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and from the fact that "the chief priests and all the council sought for witnesses against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together" (Mark xiv: 55, 56).

More, however, was required in order to save sinners than that their Substitute should be holy in His nature and righteous in His life. He must needs render satisfaction for all the guilt incurred by His people in connection with the broken covenant of works. The elect of God were a people who were under the curse, for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Their continual transgression of the holy law earned for them the pouring out upon them its incessant curse, so that before it could be possible for them to be saved Christ must meet with these curses. The Justice of God required it, and He was willing to undertake it, for the law of God was written within His Heart, and therefore that law must be obeyed by Him, on their behalf, in all its details. He, of whom it is written, that "all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made," came to have no standing place on the very earth which He Himself created, for it was fulfilled in Him what was written by the Psalmist, "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Psalm lxix: 2). To crown all, in the depth of His agony we find Him crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" What, my dear fellow-sinners, is the meaning of all this? It is the curse of the broken law of God drinking up the sap of the human nature of the Son of God when He endured that course as the Substitute of His people, for He could say, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my

tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death " (Psalm xxii: 15).

In the very throes of that death He cried, " It is finished," and thus signified that the work of redemption was finished, for the law had poured its curses to their utmost on Him, and He made an end of them all. He must needs, however, remain in the cold embrace of death until the expiry of the time appointed from all eternity, as He Himself said, " For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." At the end of that time He arose, and, by His resurrection, He gave the clearest possible proof that He had made an end of the curse, that the law was magnified and made honourable, that the Justice of God was eternally satisfied, and the redemption of His people complete, enabling them to say what will be a wonder to themselves throughout eternity, " Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us " (Gal. iii: 13).

Children of God! this righteousness, which consists of Christ's holiness of nature, righteousness of life, and satisfaction for sin, is what He preached in the great congregation, and it is this righteousness which you profess to have embraced by faith, and, O, how glorious it is in contrast to the filthy rags of your own righteousness. Your profession is that you are the subjects of the work of the Holy Spirit, and that this righteousness has been imputed to you, and received, on your part, by that faith which is the gift of God and which is begotten in you by that same Spirit. Even in connection with this matter of imputing Christ's righteousness which He Himself preached in this world, He tells us of the Comforter, that part of His mission is to reprove the world of righteousness, and in explanation of that He says, " Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." There was no need of Him to come back to this world to add to it, for the righteousness of which the Holy Spirit was to speak and convince men of, is a finished righteousness, requiring nothing to be added to it. He had this righteousness in view also when He said of the Comforter, " He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

Before leaving this head let me draw your attention to the suitableness of this righteousness to meet with the needs of everyone of you. You have no righteousness of your own, though many of you imagine that you have. The Holy Spirit describes your righteousness as filthy rags, and reason itself tells you that filthy rags are not a fit garment to appear in, even before an earthly king, and how much less so before Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Nevertheless, God requires a perfect

righteousness of everyone of you, and He will not abate His demand one *iota*. He required a perfect righteousness of Adam in a state of innocency, and Adam was able to present that righteousness, but Adam and his posterity in a fallen state are unable to do so, yet God, being unchangeable, does not lower His demands, and, therefore, for all that man can do, he would sink down eternally into despair. We have here a wonderful manifestation of the love, and mercy, and goodness of God, when we, through the Fall, are not able to bring forward that perfect righteousness which God requires, and when there was no eye to pity and no arm to save us, God Himself, in infinite compassion, brought forward that perfect righteousness which His Justice requires, and by the saving work of the Holy Spirit imputes it to men, who by nature are unrighteous. "O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi: 33).

(To be continued)

REV. WILLIAM C. BURNS

Evangelist and Missionary (1815-1868)

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

(Continued from page 141)

VI. "He that winneth souls is wise."

The headquarters of the Taeping rebels was established at Nanking during the Boxer rebellion. It was difficult to assess the real character of the movement and rumours had prevailed as to the relation of its leaders to the Christian faith. This was felt at home as well as abroad, and there existed a desire that some of the missionaries in China ought to contact the rebels in order to find out the real nature of the uprising. When William Burns arrived back in China from England he considered it his duty to proceed to the north with a view to attempting to reach the rebels. He knew the difficulties which were involved, but he did his duty bravely. While his expedition proved unsuccessful yet how wonderfully he was preserved by the unseen hand of his God. Soon afterwards he wrote, "It occurs to me that now it may not be without use to take this opportunity of giving some details regarding that journey, as it was one on which, though it failed as regards its primary object, I experienced more than usual marks of the Lord's gracious care and guidance." The object of the journey was "to try whether the way were open to reach the insurgent camp." As well as being a missionary William Burns proved himself a hero. On the journey he intended

to be useful, "in making known divine truth to those whom we should meet on the way, or who should hinder us from going on to the desired destination." His reason for not going forward past Tan-Too is explained best in his own words. "Our boatmen, who had been prevailed on to come thus far, now obstinately refused to proceed further. We had often reasoned with them on the subject; but to cut the matter short, the head man on our getting moored at Tan-Too said, somewhat curtly, 'Now, if you want to go to Nanking, you can get out and walk!' No offer of reward would induce them to go a step further. They said it was just possible that we might get to Nanking alive: but that I, and still more they, could not hope to return. Their boat would be lost, but it was said, 'You will be remunerated.' They replied, 'Of what use will money be when we have lost our lives?' Finding them thus decided, and seeing no other way open consistently with truth and integrity, I arrived unwillingly at the conclusion that, if after the Sabbath was past, circumstances wore the same aspect, this attempt to reach the insurgents must be abandoned. I had asked the boatmen where they would propose to go in case of not proceeding further towards Nanking. They replied, 'We will return to Shangae by the Great Canal.' This course recommended itself as second best, if the original one must be abandoned; and so, early on Monday morning, finding the way to Nanking closed, we passed through Tan-Too into the Great Canal on our homeward route." William Burns had the courage and faith to go forward. It was disappointing for him not to have achieved what he aimed at. But in the circumstances, no doubt, he saw that his duty was to acquiesce in God's wise ruling. On his return journey he took every opportunity to speak the Word and to distribute books for which there was always a demand. The more he saw of the people the more he longed for their salvation.

On his return he made his headquarters at Shangae. From there he made excursions amongst the towns and villages. He lived on his boat and also used the boat as his means of transport following the course of the canals and rivers. In this way he covered the plain of Ningpo where he sowed the precious seed. He never seemed tired of his work. The scenery there was most taking. His eye, however, was not on the work of creation even although it declared God's glory. Like the Psalmist, he viewed matters differently from the ordinary man. To him, God's "tender mercies are over all His works," and thus his eye was fixed upon the people and he travelled until Christ be formed in them. "Remember me," he wrote, "from this place, in the midst of a people of a strange tongue, and yet as if at

home, to all who love the Lord Jesus and seek the coming of His Kingdom and the gathering in of His elect ones in China. O let such pray for us! Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest until He establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the whole earth." Such expressions show us the enlargement of heart he had for his work. In such conditions it was a token for good to the missionary to meet with some who would give ear to his message. On one occasion he said, "... During Saturday and Sabbath, which we spent at this place, we had usually large and attentive audiences, and on the Sabbath evening when it was getting dark, we still continued to preach to an engaged audience, with whom at the close I felt at liberty to join in public prayer to the living and true God in the name of Jesus. It is not generally our custom thus to pray with the people, preaching as we do in the public street, and alas! too frequently to a people not prepared to join in spirit with us." "... At the beginning of the address to God's throne, there was some noise of voices, but towards the close all was breathless stillness. My companion and I were encouraged by thus meeting, as if by God's special guidance, with opportunities of declaring his truth and calling fellow-sinners to repentance." The missionary was by no means relaxed in his exertions. On the contrary, his labours were unceasing. But he never desired to 'build upon another man's foundation'; Shangae and the surrounding country had been occupied by many missionaries and William Burns could not content himself to remain for any length of time where the Truth was known. He longed to press into 'the regions beyond.'

On the eastern extremity of the Canton province there lay Swatow. This field was recommended to him by a Christian ship's captain. At the same time he offered a free passage. After his usual prayerful consideration Burns accepted this offer. He saw in it the hand of the Lord opening for him a door. In Swatow he had a vast and unoccupied scene for missionary activity. He did not face it in his own strength. From this field he wrote, "We have much need, as everyone must see who considers our present position, of special grace to support and render us useful. For this grace may many be led to pray, that for the gift bestowed on us by the means of many persons, thanks may be afterwards given by many in our behalf, should it please the God of Grace to preserve us in His Truth and love, and make us a means of blessing to some of these dying millions." As well as casting himself upon the care of His Saviour, he also sought the support of God's praying people. The hands of Moses, the man of God, were upheld in his work by Aaron and Hur!

Swatow possessed the advantages of a convenient and commodious commercial centre. From a moral and spiritual point of view, however, the field was not an encouraging one. It would remind one of the 'cities of the plain' mentioned in God's Holy Word. They also were well watered and gave material prosperity. Lot was to his own family circle as one that was mocked—so William Burns had bitter trials in Swatow. He had the courage and the patience to persevere but after three months he was still trying in vain to effect a landing and establish a foothold. He moved from place to place in that area, sowing the seed as he had the opportunity. He met with an inhospitable people and we find him forced into the country in the hot season. His feelings are best described in his own words, "Had we obtained a place suitable for indoor preaching at Swatow I would not have ventured at this hot season to go about in the country. Difficulties, however, have been thrown in the way of our obtaining such a place, and so no other course has been left open but the one we are now following. We have met as yet with but little decided encouragement, but still something is done to spread an incipient knowledge of the Truth, and in a field which has been so little cultivated we must not be discouraged if we meet not with immediate success." What afflictions he endured for the Gospel's sake! "In the day the drought consumed me," he could say, but as a steady, patient and consistent husbandman he waited for the precious fruits. How little are the trials of the missionary understood in a sheltered land! How often is the faith of the missionary tried! Although Swatow was a most trying experience yet William Burns could, in the secret chambers of his heart, say, "Towards the Lord my waiting eyes continually are set." In his own words we have "I need perhaps as much as ever I did since I came to China the presence and power of God's quickening Spirit, to maintain divine love and compassion for souls in my heart. Are there those who feel for us in the unbroken field of heathenism, and cry to God with spiritual agonisings for the descent of the Spirit in his life-giving and converting power? The God of Grace grant to us such helpers, for the glory of his own great name!"

From his own words, he reminds us constantly of the consciousness he had of his own weakness and his utter dependence upon God for grace to help in every time of need. How important to the Christian Church is the injunction of Scripture, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." To add to all the other difficulties there was the fear of robbers. Mr Burns wrote, "About two o'clock a.m. or past midnight, July 18th, 1856. We have just been visited by robbers, who have

taken all but the clothes we wear, without, however, doing us any injury. This is a new call to pity, and to pray for this poor people, sunk so low in darkness and sin. One of our number, it is proposed, shall return to Swatow to get a small supply of money, and books, while the other Christian and I go to another town to await his return. We are preserved in peace, and have just been joining in prayer and praise for this poor people." How wonderfully the Spirit moves the true believer to pray earnestly to God for his enemies! "And if ye salute your brethren only, *what do ye more than others?* Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

Soon after this instance, Mr Burns and his native evangelists were arrested in their boat and taken prisoners. They were examined by the District Magistrate and then by the Chief Magistrate. "On these occasions," wrote Mr Burns, "my companions and myself had valuable opportunities of making known something of the Gospel, and of the character and object of Christ's disciples in China: and as there was a great demand for our books, the work of many days seemed to be crowded into one or two." He made use of his time when under arrest! Even although they were arrested on a false report yet they were sent to Canton, to the British Consul. On the journey he made known the way of salvation to those who knew it not. But while he was well cared for, yet it must have been a great strain on him especially when he suffered from fever during all the journey. In these circumstances, the Lord took care of his servant. Innocent Joseph in Egypt could get no redress! Yet it was for a purpose and it worked for his good and the good of others. How mysterious are the ways of God in His wise ruling! Those who through grace are enabled to possess their souls in patience receive the blessing. So it was with William Burns on this occasion. He wrote, "Looking back on the whole scene through which I have passed, and contrasting the life and favour granted us with the misconstruction and suffering to which we might have been subjected, I cannot but adore the wonderful goodness and power of Him to whom the Kingdom belongs, and who unceasingly cares even for the most unworthy of his servants." His courage is shown in the words of a fellow missionary—"When he was arrested in August, 1856, and brought before the chief magistrate of the Chaou-Chow department, the Magistrate required him to go down on both knees to be examined, as is the practice in China. Mr Burns very firmly but respectfully refused, saying that he would go down on one knee, as he would do to his sovereign, Queen Victoria; but that he would only go down on

both knees to the King of Kings. The magistrate was struck by this answer, solemnly and respectfully uttered, and allowed the missionary to be examined on one knee."

Speaking of his brother's arrest, Rev. Islay Burns wrote, "There were several circumstances connected with the time and position of affairs in which these events took place which rendered them peculiarly critical, and which led him ever after to regard their peaceful issue as a remarkable instance of the Lord's gracious leading and providential care. His arrest and confinement took place immediately on the eve of the hostilities which that year broke out between the British and Chinese powers, and just before the commencement of those sanguinary proceedings on the part of Commissioner Yeh which sent a thrill of horror throughout the civilised world. Had he arrived at Canton while these events were in progress, it is not difficult to see what the swift and terrible issue would have been! It will be remembered, too, that he had been, shortly before his arrival in this province, actually on his way to the headquarters of the rebel army, on an unknown errand, to which the habitual jealousy of the Chinese authorities might have ascribed a sinister purpose. Alive to the danger of such misconstruction he had refrained at the time from giving even to his friends any account of that journey, which might afterwards find its way into the Shanghai papers, and thus lead to possible complications and interruption of his work." He displayed another noble quality; he grasped the situation, weighed it carefully and acted wisely, thus showing his well-balanced mind. Had he been suspected by the Chinese of abetting the rebellion his usefulness in the field would certainly have come to an end. This would have been a reflection and stigma not only on him but on others as well. From this he and others were completely saved when the Lord wisely ruled and permitted that he be taken prisoner. Although he was a veteran in the field yet the impressions made upon him during this time were deep and lasting. Later he wrote, ". . . I thought it also a special mercy that in neither of the examinations by the authorities at the Foo city was a single allusion made to the rebel party, nor any entangling questions put as to where I went and with what objects when journeying in the neighbourhood of Shanghai. Had such questions been put, then I might have seemed to be self-convicted of abetting the rebellion, and so have been summarily dealt with as an enemy of the government. The possibility of this was painted in painful colours to my mind when suffering from fever in my confinement, but from all these fears and dangers the Lord wonderfully delivered me. It would have been indeed a different thing to suffer as a supposed rebel, and to suffer 'as a Christian.' This

latter privilege was given to my native companions when beaten on the face and imprisoned for months; from the former I was most graciously and completely saved." This was the sober review he took afterwards and thus saw the Lord's gracious dealings with him.

Lord Panmure invited William Burns to be chaplain to the British forces with the rank and salary of major, but this he refused. He was the devoted missionary to the Chinese and any connection with the invading forces would spoil his missionary usefulness.

At all times he showed more concern for the safety of others than he did for his own. This is illustrated in the anxiety he showed for the native Christians who were arrested with him. They were held captive at the Foo city. Although Mr Burns was advised against his return to Swatow yet nothing would keep him back from inquiring for his brethren. On his arrival there he found that they had been cruelly treated yet they adhered to the Truth of the Gospel and thus made a good confession before many witnesses. While the former caused much grief to him, the latter afforded great joy. The testing time was trying but it worked not only for their good but also for the good of others. While in prison a fellow-prisoner was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ through their instrumentality. The missionary did what he could to intercede for his imprisoned brethren. After a time they were set free.

On this occasion the welcome he met with at Swatow was most unexpected. He once more began his labours there and made a permanent settlement. His companion was Dr. De la Porte, a medical missionary. The patients who came for medical treatment heard the Gospel before they returned home. The medical work brought many people to them and the natives had more confidence in those who ministered to their needs. Both missionaries thus gained a place of great importance among the people. The Word was declared. It is difficult to assess the results. But the word of the Master is a source of comfort to those who labour in word and doctrine. "So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth it shall not return unto Me void." He wrote, "Whatever change we can mark is in the way of progress. The medical work brings an increasing number of persons about us, to whom we seek to make known the truth, and gives us, in connection with our efforts to diffuse the truths of the gospel, a very favourable position in the eyes of the community . . ."

(To be continued)

FORNACI DI BARGA

by Rev. Donald MacLean, Glasgow.

Fornaci di Barga is a country village situated about forty miles from the University town of Pisa in Italy. There is a population of about 7000 souls, and the village is consequently about twice the size of Dingwall. The mountain scenery is most impressive in the surrounding districts, and as one journeys around one cannot but notice the many signs that the place is a stronghold of Roman Catholicism. Large monasteries are built high up in the mountains: the bridges are decorated with statuettes of the Madona, while the fresh flowers laid upon these indicate the devotion of the worshippers: the large cemetery outside the village is a mass of crosses, figures of saints etc. As I moved around I had a rather strange experience of the difference between this place and Rhodesia. When, in Rhodesia, I would meet a witch doctor or pass by a place of superstitious worship, I could feel the darkness of heathendom pressing upon my spirit. The darkness could be felt. When in this Roman Catholic country, however, the darkness could still be felt, but it seemed more revolting as the religion practised was in the name of Christ.

Fornaci di Barga is also the home of the Marchi family, two daughters of which are communicants in the Glasgow congregation. Both were ardent and devoted Roman Catholics when they came to Britain from Italy. Through the glorious gospel of God and the instrumentality of the Free Presbyterian Church, they were mercifully delivered from the errors and blasphemies of that Satanic system, and brought to follow Christ as the alone shepherd of the flock of God. They also have the hope that their mother and brother have come to the knowledge of the Truth, while the father shows great interest.

On Tuesday 19th July of this year, the Marchi home was saddened at the death of their mother. Mrs Marchi was born on 12th August 1902 of Roman Catholic parents, in which faith she, herself, was strictly brought up. She eventually married a Roman Catholic to whom she bore three children, the two girls already mentioned and Alphonso, their brother. After the conversion of the girls, one of them sent a bible to her mother asking her to read it, but saying nothing about the Roman Catholic Church. She sent this bible in the Summertime and, when she, herself, went home the following November, she found that her mother had been reading the bible and felt it to be a "holy book." When she spoke to her mother about the errors of the Roman Church she was surprised to discover that her mother saw them quite clearly, although she had been such an ardent devotee before. She ceased to attend the

Church soon after this. Her spiritual change from death to life appears to have been gradual. One evening she could never forget. She had been compelled by some friends to go to a dance. As soon as she felt her feet on the dance-floor she felt uneasy and became visibly upset, saying that the dancers all appeared to her like devils. When her friends saw her home, she realised that she was finished for ever with the old life and that Christ and his salvation was all her desire. Old things passed away and all things became new. She gave clear evidence that she was deeply conscious of her sinfulness and used to say, "When I was in the Roman Catholic Church I thought myself to be righteous because I did everything the Church commanded me to do. But by the grace of the Lord I discovered that all my righteousnesses were filthy rags." Christ was precious to her as the One in Whom alone righteousness could be found. Mrs Marchi suffered from indifferent health and, when suffering from a severe heart attack four months before her death, she was heard to pray and seek for deliverance. "Lord," she pled, "Help me. Thou alone canst save me. Have mercy upon me for I am a sinner. Forgive all my sins for I have sinned against Thee, Thee only. Help me to do Thy will always. Lord, grant one day that we all may be united in Christ Jesus, our Lord." The prayer for deliverance was answered and she recovered. In her last illness, however, it was noticed that she did not plead for recovery. Her last prayer was a reflection of her constant frame of mind at that time. "Lord, Thy will be done—not my will but Thine!" After a little while she bowed her head and fell asleep in Jesus.

When the news of her death reached London her daughter Lilian got in touch with me to go to the funeral. I was in Hilton, Ross-shire when this telephone request came on Wednesday, 20th July and I would need to catch the plane at 11.30 p.m. that night for Pisa in order to be at the funeral the following day. I promised that if I could make London in time I would go to Italy. (DV). A young friend ran me by car to Inverness where I got the last seat on the plane for Glasgow. I took a taxi from the airport at Abbotsinch to the Manse to collect my passport, and managed to get a seat on the plane for London, where I arrived in time to catch the flight for Italy. It was my first flight on an Italian plane and my first experience of seeing passengers crossing themselves when we landed! Mr Marchi met us at the airport and we made the journey to the Marchi home by car.

The priest at Fornaci di Farga had been puzzled that the Marchis had not sent for him when he heard of the death of their mother. He consulted a family whom he knew to be friendly with them. The family told him that they did not think the Marchis were Roman

Catholics any longer. The priest then asked if they thought he should go to see the Marchis. The reply was, "You can go to see them as a man. They will receive you with respect because we know they are one of the best families in Fornaci di Barga." Afterwards the priest telephoned to his superior to ask his advice and then called on the Marchi family. He expressed his sympathy and then asked why he was not called as he would have come to give a blessing. He was horrified when Laura told him that her mother would not have wanted him. "She believed in God, in the gospel and in Jesus Christ. She has been blessed of God and when God blesses what can man add," said Laura. The young priest arose to go and said if they needed anything they should call him. Laura thanked him but told him that they would make the arrangements for the funeral themselves. The undertaker was equally astonished when he was told that no crosses were to be put on the coffin. Many rumours now went round the people. Some said the Marchis were communists, others maintained that they had burnt the body: while others believed the body had been taken away by evil spirits. When I arrived on the scene, however, the problem was solved. The Marchis were Protestants, and a minister had come from Scotland to the funeral—to a place where there were no Protestants apart from one or two friends of the Marchis, and where a Protestant worship had never been held before. This caused a sensation, and many of the relatives of the deceased were highly displeased and indignant.

About 20 people assembled in the house for worship at the funeral, which took place at 6 p.m. Many more gathered outside in the street. The usual blessing was asked on the Word in English and we sang Psalm 23, the two girls being the only ones able to join me in this. I learned afterwards that the people were very impressed by this singing. A young man, a cousin of the Marchi girls, read the 17th Chapter of John in Italian and I concluded with prayer. After worship was concluded the undertaker failed to turn up and he had to be sent for. Eventually he arrived half an hour late with some lame excuse. We suspected that the priest had been making an attempt to prevent him coming at all. We made the last journey to the cemetery through lines of respectful people who, no doubt, wondered greatly at this event.

The family already referred to said that they wanted to come to supper and worship. At the worship I gave a short exposition of the words, "I am the door". The following day (Friday), the priest went down to see this family and asked the father about the Marchis' religion. "Their faith is deeper and stronger than ours, and the girls have no more interest in the things of the world because the Lord took away the desire for these things from them,"

was the rather remarkable reply. This man had a long discussion with the priest and, from the account of it, it would seem that he is quite concerned about his own soul. His wife had asked the priest for permission to attend the funeral. Someone had said to her daughter, "Your mother is lost if she goes into that house." The priest gave her permission to go, whereupon the woman asked him what he thought of the end of Mrs Marchi. "I am sure this lady is in heaven," he replied.

On the Friday evening this family once more came in to supper and worship and listened attentively while I endeavoured to speak from the words, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." They have continued to show the same interest since I left and spend long evenings with the Marchi family discussing the one thing needful.

The following morning I departed for Scotland leaving behind this little band of people surrounded by the darkness of popery. They are bound to meet with persecution as the father of this family said to the priest when having his discussion with him "You are boss here and people who wish to live in peace must be friendly with you and go to Mass." At the same time I feel that my visit will make persecutors careful as they now know that there are contacts with a Church in Scotland. May the Lord be their refuge and strength!

I am sorry that I did not have an interpreter to preach to the people of Fornaci di Barga. Had there been one available I should certainly have waited over the Sabbath. May it not be, however, that this remarkable event is but the opening of the door for the Free Presbyterian Church to begin to preach the gospel in Roman Catholic Italy? I should certainly like to see the attempt made and the signs are encouraging. While, therefore, prayer should undoubtedly be made for the safety of the Marchi family and those now beginning to associate with them, surely we should also seek that the way may be opened for services to be commenced and continued in that part of the world. "Enlarge the place of thy tent and stretch forth the curtains of thy habitation: spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." (Is. 55:2).

LITERARY NOTICES

The Providential Preservation of the Greek Text of the New Testament, by Ergatees. Westminster Standard Publication. Obtainable from The Publications Treasurer, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness. Price 2/-.

The various questions raised in connection with the Greek Text of the New Testament are generally regarded as the province of experts. There is a sense, of course, in which this is true. It

requires a considerable acquaintance with the various ancient documents, and accurate knowledge of the Greek language, and a detailed grasp of the history of criticism in order for one to debate the various points at issue with any degree of clarity and conviction. At the same time it needs to be remembered that many of the issues raised are caused by theories advanced by scholars of different kinds and do not therefore bear a real relevance to the question at issue. The question is as to whether or not we have in the Scriptures preserved down through the ages an accurate text of the Greek New Testament as given by the inspiration of God, the Holy Ghost. This question has been widely debated especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. The field covered is immense and it has been generally considered that the best thing to do is to leave these discussions to the experts themselves. An attempt has been made in this book-let by Ergatees, however, to set before the general reader the position that the Scriptures, which have been immediately inspired by God, are by "His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages."

Ergatees has accomplished his task by drawing upon the writings of many skilled experts in the field of Biblical Criticism. By this method, the providential preservation of the Greek Text of the New Testament is shown and the various proofs vindicating the Traditional Standard Text to be the right one are indicated. Ergatees also deals with the attacks on the Traditional Received Text and indicates how New Testament scholars are tended to go astray in choosing corrupt texts in the place of the Received Text which the singular providence of God preserved. The inevitable results flowing from this change of text has been that doctrinal changes have entered the new and recent translations. These various attacks on parts of the Word of God are dealt with and shown to be unsound.

In an appendix, Ergatees deals with the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament and its vindication. He also includes selections from an address by Professor Robert Dick Wilson on the subject *What is an Expert?* It would repay some of our young readers to read what this noted scholar has to say on this particular subject so much before the minds of men in so many fields at the present time.

"The Christian who rejects the King James Version" writes Dr Hills, one of the experts upon whom Ergatees relies, "and adopts one of its modern rivals, by this very action places himself on the high road to modernism." From this sentence, one can see the seriousness of the whole question relating to the Text of the Greek New Testament and the necessity for maintaining firmly

that the true text is that one which God in his providence has preserved to the Church. Ergatees book-let will assist the general reader in his consideration of this particular matter. D. MacLean.

CUNNTAS MU DHITHIS SHEANN DAOINE

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 155)

Ministeir.—A sheann duine shona. fhir leanmhuinn bheannaicht Chriosd. thà sibh cosmhuil ri bhì mealtuinn glòir nam flaitheas a cheana.

Seann duine.—Och a Mhaighstir, labhraibh riùmsa mu'n Uile-thròcaireach; 's e sin uile iarratus mo chridhe—innsibh dhomh mu ionmhasan neo-thraothaichte do fhoghaidean agus do mhaitheanas anns an Tighearna; 's e sin m'uile dhòchas. Aithrisibh dhòmhsa gu'm bheil mi air mo shàbhaladh tre Iosa Chriosd. Nochdaibh dhòmhsa E mar an Tì a tha macanta agus iorasal an cridhe (Mata xi: 29); mar charaid nam peacach, mar an t-Uan a mharbhadh air son m'èiric (Tais. v: 12). Oh! Innsibh do La Roche gu'n do shaor Chriosd e—agus—is leoir sin.

Mo charaide gràdhach, dh'innis Chriosd fein sin dhuibh, agus tha E gach là a toirt dearbhachd as ùr dhuibh air, gus an toir E mu dheireadh dhuibh làn sheilbh maille ris Fein. Deanamh gàirdeachas ma tà, oir tha 'ur n-ainm sgriobhta ann an leabhar na beatha (Phil. iv: 3; Luc. x: 20) fathasd sealan beag—beagan de làithibh goirid—agus bithidh rioghachd neamh mar dhachaidh shiorruidh dhuibh, agus gràdh Iosa na bheatha 'n 'ur beatha.

“Amen”: arsa La Roche, agus e glacadh mo làmh 'us ga cur r'a bhilibh: theannaich mi mo lamh agus thubhairt mi, “ Bheiream taing dhuibh an so an làthair ar n-Athar agus a Mhic, ar Tighearna agus ar Slànuighear, air son na comhfhurtachd a thug sibh do mo chridhe. Seadh, bheiream buidheachas dhuibh air son gu'n do shòlasaich agus gu'n theagaisg sibh mi. Slan leibh a dheadh charaide ghràdhaich, agus cumaibh 'n 'ur cuimhne, gu'm bheil aig bhur ministeir an t-aoibhneas is motha is urrainn e blasad air ann a shaothair; eadhon, gu'm bheil mar is lugha a h-aon de luchd-aideachaidh a sgìreachd, neach 'n uair a dh'fhàgas e l, a theid a steach do ghlòir shiorruidh.”

S. daoine.—Gu'n robh an Tighearna a toirt an aoibhneis sin gu tric dhuibh; gu'm bu toil Leis, le 'ur meadhon-sa, a bhi dùsgadh na muinntir a tha fathasd 'n an cadal fad as bho Chriosd.

Ghabh mi mo chead do'n t-seann Chriosduidh; agus air dhomh dol timchioll culthaobh an tighe, phòg mi Benjamin beag, a bha fathasd dichìollach r'a leabhar; agus phill mi dhachaidh, air eagal

na'n rachainn a dh'amharc theaghlaichean eile gu'n caillinn an drùghadh milis sin a rinneadh 's an uair air m'anam, agus a bhà mi dùrachdainn leantuinn ris.

Agus a nis a leughadair ghràdhaich, guidheam ort ath-smuain-teachadh air na thà thu'n deigh a leughadh, gu h-àraidh ma thà thù aosmhor. Leugh thù ma dhithis dhaoine mar a thà thù fein, a bha beo air an talamh, agus aig an robh anamaibh neo-bhàsmhor mar a th'agad fein. Feumaidh t-anam taisbeanadh an làthair an Tighearna a dheoin na dh'aindeoin. Bha'n dithis dhaoine so le cheile a miannachadh a bhi air an tearnadh, agus bha gach aon dhiubh a cur an ceill nach robh eagal air mu'n t-saoghal ri teachd. Ciod i do bharail-sa? ciod a deir do choguis? co aca bh'anns an t-slighe a tha teorachadh a chùm beatha? oir is cinnteach nach robh an dithis sheann daoine so araon a leantuinn an t-shlighe cheart. Am bheil thu saolsinn gu'r e esan a bha làn do fhìreantachd fein, agus do thoillteanas a dheadh oibre, aig an robh ainm Iosa 'n a bhilibh a mhàin, agus a bha'n dùil nach b'urrainn dà gun a bhi 'n a Chrìosduidh bho'n a bha's saoghal ga ghairm mar sin? No, nach dòcha leat a shaoilsinn gur e La Roche iorasal diadhaidh, a thug an cliù uile do Dhia, agus a shocraich a dhòchas gu h-iomlan ann am fuil a chruinne-cheusaidh. Is barail leam gu'm bheil thu faicinn gu soilleir gu'r esan an Chrìosduidh, agus gu'r e La Roche a mhàin aig am bheil creidimh tearnaidh. Uime sin luathaicheadh mo chairde—luathaicheadh am feadh a tha beagan làithean fathasd air a thoirt dhuibh, chùm 'ur cridhe a thoirt do'n Tì sin d'an d' thug Daniel, Elisabet, agus La Roche an cridheachaibh fein. Cosmhuil riutha-san iarraibh a bhi foisneachadh, agus a suidheachadh dòchas bhur slàinte a mhàin air toillteanas Chrìosd, agus cha'n ann ni's fhaide air bhur toillteanas fein.

Tha sibh air bhur n-earaileachadh gu dùrachdach sealltuinn 'n ar Biobull air son nan earrannan de'n Leabhar Naomh sin a tha'r an comharrachadh an so, a toirt an aire gu cùramach da'n co-cheangal ris na rannaibh a tha air thoiseach orra agus 'n an deigh; chùm gu'r ann is fearr a thuigeas sibh inntinn an Spioraid Naoimh annta. Gu'n robh an Tighearna ga'r cuideachadh 's an rannsachadh.

(A chrìoch)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A Ban On Singing Group

The group of young men, known all over the world as the Beatles, involved themselves recently in religious controversy. One of their number occasioned this by saying, among other

things, that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ. American radio stations began banning these so-called singers. This action commenced in the Southern States of America. Whatever the real religious views of this opposition happened to be, their action was commendable. In South Africa later, the Beatles were also condemned. An interesting comment was made on the subject by a Danish Lutheran bishop. He agreed that the Beatles are more popular than Jesus Christ, for so, he said, was Barrabas, the robber, who went free while Christ was crucified. And this comment sums up this affair in relation to millions of young people and others. The blessed Lord Jesus is despised and worldly entertainers are idolised. Men are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Yet the statement by one of the Beatles was indeed blasphemous. Satan's agents are bold.

The Eighth Commandment Violated

We read and hear and speak much about our national sins concerned with the violation of, say, the Fourth and Seventh Commandments. But the Eighth Commandment which states: "Thou shalt not steal," is in the violation of it, a great national burden to those in authority. The *Security Gazette* in its annual survey for 1965 of losses by theft throughout the country records that property worth £42 million was stolen through criminal offences. This figure shows an increase of £8 million on the estimated figure for 1964. The police recovered only £8.5 million. This sin is committed by highly-organised gangs to petty pilferers. It is emphasised that these figures do not include fraud cases which are thought to involve very large sums of money. This information is a further light upon the fact that our national sins today include widespread transgression of all parts of the Moral Law. Dishonesty of all kinds and types has spread throughout a considerable section of the nation. And yet the term "sin," in its full Biblical sense, is relegated to the background in the thinking of vast numbers of our people and in the teaching from many so-called Christian pulpits. A national day of humiliation and prayer was never more appropriate than now. But, after all is said and done, will those in authority agree? Our past experience has revealed that they are not interested in such a day.

Christian-Jewish Conference

A Conference was held at Cambridge in August purporting to encourage a better relationship between Christians and Jews. Some statements emanating from discussions leave the true New Testament Christian with the impression that the Conference was a fruitless affair. Resolutions and pronouncements by the Vatican Council (1965) and the World Council of Churches (1961) were

brought into discussion. Even a statement by the notorious World Council of Churches denouncing anti-Semitism was said to give the impression that the primary motive for combating anti-Semitism was the desire to make Christian witness more acceptable to the Jews. Here is Jewish resentment against the faintest impression that they were being influenced toward the acceptance of the principles of the Christian faith. Another point which was taken up about "dialogue" between Christians and Jews was, that both parties "should be especially sensitive in avoiding any attempt to undermine the beliefs of the participants." The question surely must be asked: What is the purpose and end of such conferences? Are the Jews merely seeking this friendship of professed Christians to assist in their defence against anti-Semitism where and when it arises and to contribute to their establishment in comfort outwith the land of Israel? The true godfearing believer upon the Lord Jesus Christ abhors anti-Semitism; but at the same time is not prepared to hide his Christian light under a bushel in Jewish company. For professed Christians to confer with religious Jews and each to relegate their religious beliefs and practices to the background is tantamount to meeting as Humanists. We see no profit in all this, except maybe a desire to live amicably within the realm of the nation or in a community. The Apostle Paul expressed himself thus: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved" (Romans x: 6).

Jewish Rebuke to Anglican Churchmen

The *Jewish Chronicle* for 19th August, 1966, refers to criticism by some Church of England clergymen of the teaching of the Old Testament to children. This, says a Jewish teacher, makes it imperative that Jewish children be taught the Bible by Jewish people. It was also stated that it was important that parents should recognise their right to withdraw their children from Scripture classes in State schools. It was added: "Taught by non-Jewish teachers, their children could be subjected to wrong influences and implications." Certainly non-Jewish teachers with erroneous views of the Old Testament, a part of the inspired Word of God, are a danger to Gentile children as well as Jewish. It is sad when men who maintain they are Christians are open to just criticism from those who still reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Jews and their Sabbath

The Christian Sabbath based wholly on the Fourth Commandment is of course observed now on the first day of the week, ever since the resurrection of our Lord from the grave on the first day of the week. The Jewish Sabbath is of course observed

on Saturday, the seventh day of the week. The Jewish Glasgow Sabbath Observance Organisation is presently planning better synagogue attendances. And Rabbi Dryan has said that it was only through the synagogues that Judaism could survive. Therefore, he said, they must devote all their energy and enthusiasm to strengthen the observance of the Sabbath and to encourage attendances at synagogues on that day. We as Christians are confronted with the prospect of legislation being introduced to Parliament to give greater license to the people of Britain to turn more and more to the practice of vain and worldly pleasures on the Lord's Day, and to actively engage in business on that day. This will inevitably be a means of undermining more than ever any respect for the House of God and the faith of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews see the value of their Sabbath observance and attendance on the synagogue, to retain a Christless and hopeless religion. Many on the professed Christian side are prepared to let the Christian Sabbath disappear, and the gospel of Christ will thus disappear increasingly, unless the Most High in His mercy will turn yet again to us in a day of the Holy Spirit's power.

CHURCH NOTES

Communions

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness, Auckland. *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, London and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Achmore, Portnalong, Stoer and Fort-William; second, Fearn, Gisborne, N.Z.; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie; third, Edinburgh and Broadford. *June*—First Sabbath, Applecross; second, Shielraig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Gairloch, Inverness, Auckland. *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.

*Stornoway New Church Hall

More than 170 people attended the opening service of the new Church Hall of the Free Presbyterian Congregation, Stornoway, built in the church grounds in Scotland Street, on Wednesday evening last week when the Rev. Robert R. Sinclair, Wick,

* Taken from *Stornoway Gazette* for September 3rd, 1966.—Editor.

preached an able and encouraging sermon on the text, " Lord I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth " (Psalm xxvi, verse 8).

The new hall is a roomy and attractive building with seats and pulpit made of Oregon pine. There are two rows of seats with a centre aisle and ample and attractive window space which ensures a most pleasant and interesting effect.

At the close of the service, the members of the congregation joined the Rev. D. M. Macleod in thanking all those who had contributed to the erection of the hall by way of donation, and in preparing it for the service that evening.

Rev. Mr Macleod emphasised the usefulness that the building would have and pointed out that it could be used not only for the weekly prayer meetings, but, in view of the fact that hitherto the English part of the congregation had worshipped on the Communion Sabbath morning in the school in Francis Street, the two parts of the congregation would now be worshipping side by side in the same grounds.

Mr Macleod also enjoined upon the assembled company the great need for prayer that, in the days to come, many souls would be born in Zion in this building and that the Lord's people would be edified and encouraged there, and that in terms of the discourse which had just been delivered, that the building would be used to " His honour and glory only."

Students etc. coming to Glasgow

At this time of year a considerable number of young people belonging to the Church come to this City to pursue their studies in the Universities, Colleges, Nursing Training Institutes etc. These young people are faced with temptations of no ordinary kind on leaving their homes. Not only are the attractions of the pleasures of this world dangled before their eyes to an extent unknown to them before, but the teaching they receive in their training is only too often perniciously biassed against Christianity.

It is most necessary therefore, that they regularly attend the Church to listen to the Word of God which alone brings salvation and where alone the truth is to be found.

In a large city and a large congregation it is not easy for me to get in touch with these young people. I would very much appreciate, therefore, if ministers and/or parents would send me the names and addresses of those connected with their congregations and families who come to Glasgow and I will do my best to get in touch with them.

May it be our earnest desire " that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth: that our daughters may be as corner

stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." (Ps. 144:12). (Rev.) Donald MacLean, Minister at Glasgow.

Teachers for Ingwenya

The Committee is disappointed that no replies have been received to their previous appeal for teachers for the Mission Field. Miss Macaulay has returned home and both Miss Nicolson and Miss MacCuish are coming home at the end of this year. Miss MacCuish obliged the Committee by staying out a year over her contract while Miss Nicolson was due home in August of this year.

The Committee, therefore, appeal once more to the young people of the Church to take into prayerful consideration their duty to the Church work in Rhodesia. So far, the burden of teaching has fallen upon the shoulders of the young women in the Church. The young men have sadly failed to answer these calls at various times and that is not to their credit.

The Committee once more make this urgent appeal to teachers, male or female, to come forward and fill the vacancies in Ingwenya. Those interested should get in touch with the Clerk of the Committee, 13 Kingsborough Gardens, Glasgow W.2. Phone WES 0553. (Rev.) Donald MacLean, Clerk to the Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee.

Home of Rest, Inverness

As the position of Assistant Matron at the Ballifeary Home of Rest is at present vacant, the Committee would like to receive applications from any ladies of the Church interested in the welfare of aged people, and possessing the qualifications which such a position might require, mainly, the ability to take charge of the kitchen, preparation of meals, etc., and to relieve the Matron when necessary; some nursing experience, while not essential, would be a very useful asset. Rates of salary of course are in accordance with the scales of salary laid down by the local authorities for Homes of Rest. Applications should be sent to Mr A. MacKenzie, C.A., 3 Bank Lane, Inverness.

We would also like to see more of our aged people taking advantage of this comfortable and well-appointed Home which the Church has provided for them, by applying for admission. For those who have not as yet visited the Home, we may give the assurance that every facility found in a comfortable modern Home has been provided, central heating throughout, a large, bright sitting-room with open fire, single and double bedrooms to accommodate 16 people. We would like to see the Home filled, and invite those who may be finding it difficult to maintain their own homes during the winter months, to consider entering the Home, at least, for the winter. This has already been done by

some residents last year, who spent the winter in the Home and returned to their own homes in the Spring. If there are any who would like to consider coming into the Home even for a short period, perhaps for one month, without giving up their own homes, the Committee would be glad to consider their applications. Permanent residents are charged 5 guineas per week, but those who have only their old age pensions to keep them are required to pay much less than this. Enquiries about entering the Home or application forms for admission may be obtained from Mr A. MacKenzie, C.A., or from Rev. A. F. MacKay, Convener, F.P. Manse, Inverness, and we may also assure our people that we would gladly provide any further information they might wish.

For the rest of our Church people, it may be gratifying to know that the debt on the Home is being steadily reduced, but still remains at the substantial level of £3,540, and contributions are, therefore, still necessary. We are sure that our people will respond as generously as in the past to meet the needs of the Home with financial support, and also by bearing the Home, staff and residents, and all its concerns, before the Lord at a Throne of Grace.—A. F. MacKay, Convener.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Kelvindale, Glasgow, W.2, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

Sustentation Fund.—Matt. 9, vv. 36, 37, 38, 30 dollars.

Home Mission Fund.—Matt. 9, vv. 36, 37, 38, 30 dollars; Mrs M. MacArthur, Arinisor, 10/-, per Mr J. G.

Foreign Mission Fund.—Four Dutch Friends, £10; Matt. 9, vv. 36, 37, 38, 30 dollars; Miss D. Neilson, London, £5; Dutch Society, per Mr Docter, £10; R. MacK., Inverness, £5, per Rev. D. MacLean; Anon, Skye, £5; Mrs I. Munro, Dalreichart, £1, both per Mr J. G.; Mrs M. MacArthur, Arinisor, 10/-, per Mr J. G.

Aged and Infirm Ministers', etc., Fund.—Matt. 9, vv. 36, 37, 38, 30 dollars.

Dominions and Colonial Mission Fund.—Matt. 9, vv. 36, 37, 38, 30 dollars.

Home of Rest Fund.—M.K., £1; Mr Docter, £2; F.P. Friend, Inverness, £1; A Friend, £50; Resident, £1; Stratherrick Friend, per Rev. W. G., £5; Anon, Stoer postmark, £2, per Rev. A. F. M.; Four Gairloch Friends, £20, per Rev. W. G.

The Publications Treasurer, Mr J. Grant, Palmerston Villa, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, acknowledges with many thanks:—

Publications Fund.—Mr J. M., Islay, 11/6; Mr J. N., Perth, 14/-; Matthew 9, verses 36, 37, 38, £7 10/-; Mrs J. N., Stornoway, for books to hostels, etc., £5.

On behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society.—Anon, Argyll, £5.

Welfare of Youth Fund.—Matthew 9, vv. 36-38, £7 10/-.

Free Distribution Magazine Fund.—Mrs H. C. C., Matiere, New Zealand, £1 3s 6d; Friend, Inverness, £1; Matthew 9, vv. 36-38, £8 4s 8d.

The following lists sent in for publication:—

Wick Congregation.—The Treasurer acknowledges with thanks, £1 10/- from Friend, North Coast, Applecross, for Wick Funds.

Glendale Congregation.—Mr A. MacLean, Treasurer, acknowledges with grateful thanks, £3 from Mrs J. MacLeod, Inverness, for Car Park, also £1 from Mrs Rattray for Car Park.

Halkirk Congregation.—The Treasurer acknowledges with thanks: £5 from a Friend, Edinburgh, for Sustentation Fund; £1 from A Friend for congregational purposes, per Rev. D. A. MacLean.

Gairloch Congregation.—Mr H. MacLeod acknowledges with thanks: Mrs Campbell, Nairn, £5; R. Morrison, Sand, Gairloch, £3; Mrs R. MacLeod, U.S.A., 10 dollars, all for Sustentation Fund; Five Dutch Friends, £5; Anon, £1; Anthony MacPherson, Greenock, £2 10/-, all for congregational purposes; R. Morrison, Sand, Gairloch, £2 for Home Mission Fund.

Mbumba Mission Hospital.—Mr J. Van Woerden acknowledges with thanks, from Mission Friends in Holland, per Mrs Mijnders-Van Woerden, 15/7/66 £2,000; 22/7/66 £2,000.

Dunoon Church Building Fund.—Mr H. MacPherson acknowledges with sincere thanks: M. S., Dunoon, £5; K. McK., Brookes, Canada, £5; Interested, £50; Friend of Cause, North Tolsta, £1; Friend, Ullapool, £1; In August issue Mr and Mrs Livingstone, Greenock, should have read Mr and Mrs Morrison, Greenock.

Zenka Mission.—Rev. D. Campbell acknowledges with sincere thanks: Miss Morrison, Tarbert, £5; A Friend, Stornoway, £5; Inverness Ladies, £50; Holland, £600; A Friend, Holland, £20; Inverness Ladies, further £70.

Stornoway Congregation.—Mr D. J. MacLeod, Treasurer, thankfully acknowledges the sum of £40 from A Friend, for Hall Fund.

Uig Congregation.—Rev. D. J. MacAskill acknowledges with grateful thanks, £2 from Miss R. MacLeod, Raasay, for Minister's Car Maintenance.

Bracadale Manse Building Fund.—Mr D. Morrison acknowledges with thanks, £5 from "Anon."

Greenock Manse Purchase Fund.—Mr A. Y. Cameron acknowledges with thanks, £5 from Friend, Inverness.

Portree Congregation.—The Treasurer acknowledges with grateful thanks, £3 from A Friend, Stornoway, for Communion expenses, per Rev. F. MacDonald.

Stratherrick Congregation.—Mr E. Fraser acknowledges with thanks: £1 from F.P. Friend for Sustentation Fund; £2 from Mr and Mrs D. J. Mackintosh, Lethbridge, Alberta, for Communion expenses.

Dingwall Congregation.—The Treasurer gratefully acknowledges, £5 from "Passer-by," for Foreign Mission Fund.

Fort William Church Extension Fund.—Mr Ian Matheson acknowledges with thanks: Anon, Broadford, £2; Mrs MacDonald, Tyndrum, £2, per Rev. J. A. MacDonald.

Shieldaig Congregation.—Mr N. MacPherson acknowledges with thanks: £2 from Miss K. MacDonald, King Street, Inverness, for Maintenance Fund, and £1 from Mrs MacDonald, Shore Street, Applecross, for Sustentation Fund.

Staffin Congregation.—Mr D. Gordon acknowledges with thanks, £5 from Miss M. M. Harris for Church painting, and £2 from Raasay Friend for Sustentation Fund.

North Harris Congregation.—Mr J. Ferguson acknowledges with sincere thanks: £11 from the late Mr Edward Morrison, Missionary, for repair of Church and Manse; £2 for maintenance of minister's car and £3 for repair of Church and Manse from Mrs J. MacLeod, Leacklea, all per Rev. A. MacKay.