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HERESY IN SCOTLAND

In times of Reformation in Scotland, centuries ago, the Church of Christ declared and maintained its belief in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the Word of God and given by inspiration of God. In addition to this, the then church accepted the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1643, as setting forth the fundamental truths and doctrines of the Christian faith, clearly and firmly based on Holy Scripture. And this is what we affirm and maintain and defend as a branch of the Christian Church, since the Church's separate existence from 1893.

The term "heresy" is employed principally in the sense of doctrinal departures from revealed truth or erroneous views. Heresy must then be judged to be heresy in the light of clearly revealed truths of the Word of God. And there are truths recorded which apply, for instance, to God's nature and character, to Christ's virgin birth, to the performance of miracles, to the death of Christ and its atoning character, and to the actual, physical resurrection of Christ, and to the state and nature of man as a sinner needing God's full salvation in sovereign grace. And, of course, there are truths regarding man's need of being "born again" of the Spirit of God, and His Judgment of the Great Day, and so on. And the doctrine of inspiration of Holy Scripture is bound up with all these fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the saints.

In reading through the Epistles especially, it is soon discovered that the Apostolic Church was confronted with heresy according to the definition we have given, although in certain cases where the word heresy is used there is a reference to "sects" who caused divisions in the Church; but these divisions undoubtedly originated with men rising up, who had departed from revealed truth as taught by the apostles, and who had embraced erroneous views. In particular, erroneous views, as judged to be such by the apostles, are called in one place, "damnable heresies," and are said to have been brought in by "false teachers"; that is, pro-

fessed teachers of truth, teaching false doctrine, as judged by the light of the doctrine of the Lord and of His apostles. These men are declared to be instrumental in causing " . . . the way of truth to be evil spoken of." (2nd Peter, Chap. 2). Again, the character and conduct of heretics are made known by the apostle Paul to Timothy in the following terms : " Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils ; speaking lies in hypocrisy ; having the conscience seared with a hot iron." (1st Timothy, chap. 4).

Now any judgment we may pass upon our fellow-man is, after all, fallible ; yet at the same time, the Lord Jesus taught his disciples that they could judge and know their fellow-men by their fruits : " By their fruits ye shall know them." For instance, " The corrupt tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit." And so Paul judges men to be heretics who departed from the **revealed faith**, embraced doctrines of devils and taught lies. And in these present times, all who believe in and adhere to the Word of God and " the doctrine of God," may come to a reasonable view and opinion of the views and teaching of others who hold office and make a profession of the Christian faith, within the realm of the visible Christian Church, in our land.

There should be no difficulty for the intelligent believer in Christ Jesus, who is a lover of the Word of God, in judging a man when that man declares that he does not believe in a supernatural God, nor in the virgin birth of Christ, nor in the actual, physical resurrection of Christ. That man is guilty of heresy by the witness of the Word of God and Apostolic doctrine and teaching. Such a man is Rev. Dr Edmund Jones, who is minister of Queen's Cross Congregation of the Church of Scotland, Aberdeen. We have already referred to his case in a former issue. It will not be denied by those who know the Church of Scotland intimately, that the rejection of the inspiration of all Scripture and disbelief as to many of the doctrines of Scripture, are widespread among the ministry and laymen. Yet, we know that there are those in the Church of Scotland who acknowledge the authority and truth of God's Word and who can discern heresy when it raises its ugly head ; but who can do little to deal with it as it ought to be dealt with.

In the case of Rev. Dr Edmund Jones, the committee appointed by Aberdeen Presbytery of his Church, to inquire into the charges of heresy made against him by Aberdeen University students and others in the press, submitted its Report to the above Presbytery on the 6th of February. This Report was given very fully in the Aberdeen daily paper, **The Press and Journal**, on the 8th February 1968.

In our opinion, the Report, which was unanimously approved by the Presbytery, deals with the case critically, but in an unsatisfactory manner.

What the Report does not do, is to use the term "heresy" in dealing with Dr Jones's expressed views relative to the Christian faith. And thus there is no suggestion that he should be proceeded against by means of a Libel by the Presbytery. Therefore he retains his office as minister in the church; although, in our opinion, he promulgated false and unsound doctrines, at variance with the Holy Scriptures and the doctrines of **The Westminster Confession of Faith**. The committee acknowledges these to be the standards of their Church when it states: "The Church of Scotland held a supreme rule of faith, the Bible, and a subordinate standard, The Westminster Confession of Faith"; but it failed to judge Dr Jones's views strictly and specifically by those professed standards. Otherwise it could not fail to raise the question of heresy in his case.

What the Committee did do, was to reprove Dr Jones. "The committee held that what was at issue in the articles (by Dr Jones) was the content and expression of the Christian faith." Here the committee refer to the supreme and subordinate standards of their Church, as we note above. The rebuke given to Dr Jones is in the following terms: "By failing to distinguish traditional Christian views from absurdities held by no one, he has, by implication, parodied and brought into disrepute past Christian theology and the views of many of his contemporaries." The use of the phrases "... traditional Christian views" and "... past Christian theology," give more a hint where the committee and Presbytery stand as to the unchanging doctrine of God's Word; while at the same time admitting that many of their contemporaries hold what they call "traditional" and "past" Christian theology.

Further, the Committee recommended to their Presbytery that, "The Presbytery, in Christian love, earnestly counsel Dr Jones to avoid hasty and sensational utterances, and, while remaining within the fellowship of his brethren and contributing to its upbuilding, to respect and value the experience and beliefs of others." Here the Dr is given to understand what is required of him if he is to **remain** in the Church of Scotland ministry. He is not enjoined to believe and teach the doctrine of the Bible and the **Westminster Confession of Faith**; but to respect the beliefs of others; no doubt, those who believe the Bible and The Confession of Faith. This is a strange and difficult task for a heretic occupying the pulpit of a professed Christian Church. Here is compromise and division in relation to what ought to be clear cut fundamental issues as to what a man, holding the office of the

Christian ministry, should believe and teach the people.

Some statements in the Report would lead one to conclude that the committee took the view — to a certain extent — that Dr Jones had been expressing the Christian “faith in other than traditional terms” to meet the problems that secularisation posed for understanding the Christian Faith; and not that he was expressing his own considered and heretical notions. This is unacceptable to us, inasmuch as Dr Jones has been charged in the press with expressing disbelief in the existence of a “supernatural” God and in the “virgin birth” of the Lord Jesus and in other fundamental truths of the Christian faith, clearly recorded in Holy Scripture. As far as we know, he has never denied these charges, which unmistakably involve heresy.

As to his views of God, Dr Jones discussed these in an article he wrote in *The British Weekly* of 7th December 1967. He avoids in his style of writing, using the expressions, “I do not believe — such and such: “I believe,” or “I accept” — such and such. For instance, he writes: “How can a minister maintain intellectual integrity and at the same time be under oath to toe a party-line?” And he quotes with apparent approbation the erroneous views of other authors in his discussion of the doctrine of God. In referring to the thinking of a young minister — Dr Jones says: “There are certain areas of belief which he may not question . . . which he is forbidden to investigate. Accordingly theology has become suspect as an honest search for truth, because it pre-fabricates some fundamental answers before it asks the questions.” By his way of thinking, there must be nothing sure, certain or established unchangeably in Holy Scripture and in the Christian Faith: all must be left “wide-open” for critical examination by the human intellect and be brought under the scrutiny of the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God.

Again in the article we are dealing with, Dr Jones quotes a prayer in the Anglican Book of Common Order, in which there are petitions to Almighty God as He who rules in providence — viz., “. . . yet upon our true repentance Thou wilt send such weather that we may receive the fruits of the earth . . .” Dr Jones’s observations follow thus: “The underlying assumption was that there is a Supreme Being or Great Spirit out in the wings of the Universe exercising sovereign control over the Cosmos. It is this assumption that radical theologians reject. Such a Deity is only a religious marionette.” The radical theologians reject this assumption, says Dr Jones. And Dr Jones, in our view, also concludes that the terms of the aforesaid prayer contain a mere assumption which he also rejects. This is the man who is to be permitted to continue in the office of the Christian ministry in the Church of Scotland.

No wonder the editor of the **British Weekly** observes : “ Unless the Church officially made it clear where it stood, the man in the pew and the man never in it were going to become completely confused as to what it believed.” We agree with this statement which is but one aspect of the whole matter relative to heresy. The question arises — Can heresy be recognised as such and be condemned in the Church of Scotland in the present attitude which prevails in that Church to the Word of God ?

The following recommendation, among others, was made by the committee which reported to the Aberdeen Presbytery :— “ The Presbytery ask the General Assembly to remit to the Panel on Doctrine consideration of the place of the **Westminster Confession of Faith** as the subordinate standard of the Church.” We await, the Lord willing, the outcome of debate and decision on this recommendation, with anxiety and apprehension. Albeit, the Most High is able to turn men back to belief in His holy Word and to love it and defend it against its enemies. His Holy Spirit of truth and power can accomplish this, in divine mercy to Scotland.

Heresy is more rife in our land than we realise. And those who dare to expose it are made like the divine Master, objects of bitter animus and criticism. As Jesus said to the Jews : “ Ye go about to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth.” And Paul wrote to men in his own day : “ Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth ? ” This self-same spirit resides in the hearts of men who have taken to do with the Christian religion and associated themselves with it ; but who have found themselves out of harmony with its most precious truths, in our own day and age. Such would establish a spurious faith and gospel, which is not the Gospel of Christ and which is only a foundation of sand. But those who point to it as a spurious gospel are not to be tolerated.

But it shall we well with those who, by divine teaching, know the truth and abide in it. Let them be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and seek a continual exercise of the spirit of thanksgiving to God for the wonderful gift of His Word, which is able to make sinners wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

THOUGHTS ON THE PSALMS

by Rev. Alex. MacPherson

(continued from page 327)

Psalm One

Verse 2.

This verse next presents the positive side of the description of the blessed man. Without it the preceding verse might apply to one

who was respectful to true religion, and moral and circumspect in his life, but delight in God's Word completes the portrait of a truly gracious person. A person lacking grace may read the Bible from a sense of duty. He may even be interested in some aspect of it such as its history, poetry, character studies or doctrine, but he cannot possibly take delight in it as God's Word to sinful men. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2, v. 14). On the other hand the gracious person finds the Scriptures so much to his taste that he reads and studies them daily.

How can the natural man have any fondness for the Scriptures? They expose him as a sinner, and condemn and reprove and warn him. Can he relish that? The same Scriptures reveal God's free favour and invite the reader to receive it. But the natural man in his pride and enmity and love of sin does not like that either. However respectable and outwardly religious such a person may be, he cannot take a hearty delight in a book of this nature. Where there is grace however there is a new heart and a spiritual appreciation of the divinity and graciousness of the Word of God which makes it sweet to his tastes as a quickened Christ-dependent soul. His language becomes: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." (Psalm 119 v. 97). Yet this feeling can only be in measure, and the living soul will blame itself for not loving the Bible enough and will seek grace for a more diligent application to its study. To such a one the passage of time enhances the value and delightfulness of God's Word and increases his sense of the need of the Holy Spirit so that he may understand and believe it.

Verse 3. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

The psalmist now goes on to describe the righteous man's condition in the world using the simile of a tree. In countries like Palestine, trees have an importance which we in this country do not quite grasp. A personal recollection may serve to illustrate this. When I first went out to Rhodesia and needed firewood for the brick-kilns at Ingwenya. I cast my eye at some of the big trees within the mission grounds which if felled and sawn up would largely meet my requirements. The alternative would be to spend much time and labour scouring the surrounding bushveld for enough of the small trees which grew there to feed the hungry furnaces for three days. To my surprise, when I mentioned the matter to the other members of the staff, my plan was frowned upon, and indeed forbidden. It was explained that the trees were serving a better purpose alive than they would if cut down and

burnt, and in due course I also came to share this point of view.

In our damp climate trees grow readily, and we do not feel the same need of their shade and protection as do the people of hotter and drier lands. There in a bare, sunbaked landscape a tree gives pleasant shade and relief to man and beast. Trees also prevent soil erosion, and while their very appearance refreshes the senses, their fruit in its season revives the body. A tree is a LIVING thing of great value and use. What a catastrophe the seventh plague was which not only destroyed the Egyptians' crops, but "brake every tree of the field." (Exodus 9 v. 25). We see then the reason for resembling a righteous person, a believer, to a tree. He is alive spiritually and fitted by grace to be of great value and use in a sin-ruined world. God is glorified through such; they are a seed that serve Him and declare his righteousness unto others, some of whom shall also be born again and become in their turn instruments of blessing.

Next we learn the source of these people's spiritual vigour and usefulness. They are like trees "planted by the rivers of water." They have their situation beside the water channels of the means of grace, God's Word and ordinances. These, when drawn from by faith and the Spirit's blessing, make for sappiness and growth. The result is "fruit in season." Every occasion, every circumstance, every comfort and every trial of life produces its proper fruit. Benign providences produce humility, penitence, gratitude and love while adverse ones bring forth self-abasement, meekness, patience, hope and courage. Every occasion should have its appropriate fruit of inward grace and increased fitness for service. To this end the Saviour instructed his disciples clearly on this vital subject of fruitbearing. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (See John 15 v. 1-8).

Another consequence of believers drawing from Christ's fulness via the Word and ordinances is that their "leaf shall not wither." As leaves are the outward sign that a tree is alive, so they may be regarded here as the outward profession of a saved sinner that he is spiritually alive and has a claim to be counted part of the Church of God. How necessary then that his profession continue green and unmarred! Lastly, here is also an assurance that whatever the believer attempts in love and obedience to his God and Saviour shall prosper. What an encouragement to those who seek to train the young in right ways! And for those who pray for things that accord with God's revealed will! And for those who support the cause of Christ with their means and efforts in whatever ways lie open to them! "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

The divine definition of the blessed man contained in these first three verses says nothing about wealth, honour, power,

popularity, wordly pleasures, or even good health being necessary to a state of blessedness. As the word "blessed" indicates, his favoured condition is from God and tends to draw him towards God, and to make him find his satisfaction in God's grace here and in the hope of glory hereafter. His blessedness which began with free justification for Christ's sake will be complete when he passes from the judgment seat to inherit the kingdom of God.

The psalmist now proceeds to contrast the state of the wicked with the foregoing.

Verse 4. "The ungodly are not so : but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."

In man's eyes the ungodly are not the worst of sinners. Indeed in our day the majority of British people are neglectful of God, neither fearing nor worshipping Him, while continuing to be fairly moral and perhaps also retaining a connection with some church. Yet in their moral character they do not resemble God for they love neither righteousness nor holiness nor grace nor Christ and would in fact shrink from having the term "godly" applied to them. Well, here in emphatic language the ungodly are said to share none of the blessedness of the godly. If the righteous are like living trees, the ungodly are like chaff, a dead, unserviceable, light and worthless substance, so light that the wind scatters it, so worthless that it is left to be scattered.

How different this view from that which natural men take of themselves! Here they are counted, and count themselves, worthy of a name and a place, but when man's views cease to matter and God's opinion is all that matters, the ungodly will be seen as chaff. It has often been remarked that while the chaff is united to the wheat, it enjoys some privileges, but not when the threshing time comes. It is also true that in this world ungodly sinners enjoy many blessings along with believers. God is kind to the unthankful and to the evil; his sun and rain do good to both alike. But all that will end when men die and go to judgment. Of Christ the Judge it is written : "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matthew 3 v. 12).

Verse 5. "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous."

Being worthless and vile in God's sight, laden with guilt and full of iniquity, the ungodly shall not stand in the day when God will mark iniquity. They will be found unrighteous, and that will be fatal. No place shall be found for them in God's holy heaven among the white-robed multitude of the redeemed. Unjust and unholy, they must go to their own place.

Verse 6. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous : but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

The Psalm finishes with an explanation of the different treatment meted out to the righteous and the wicked. The Lord "knoweth" the former, that is, He approves of them and their way. To them it may seem that their lives are very faulty and unworthy, but God who observes them perfectly looks with approval on their penitence and faith and love and hope. Their perseverance in the path of obedience, their attempts to save Him, their sighs and self-accusations, and their humble prayers please Him well. (Isaiah 66 v. 2). He knows his own workmanship and how it will end, namely, that they "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13 v. 43). But "the way of the ungodly shall perish." To God it is wicked, evil and dishonouring to Himself. Those who pursue it shall be cast "into a furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13 v. 42).

Which way are you on ?

ECUMENISM

by Rev. Fraser Macdonald, M.A., Portree*

Scores of books on the Ecumenical Movement have already been published, so that whatever may be said regarding the merits or demerits of the movement, their leaders cannot complain of lack of publicity for their views.

Of the authors of these publications it may be said that relatively few are critical of the movement ; most of them indeed are not only interested in, but in favour of this trend towards what they call **Christian Unity**. Drawn from the ranks of Anglicans — Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists and Roman Catholics, these pro Ecumenical writers look at the Ecumenical "phenomenon" mainly in the light of their own distinctive characters, principles and attitudes. Some of them are no doubt concerned with even wider issues — but write primarily as Anglicans, Presbyterians or Baptists. Much of what they have to say is interesting, revealing, and even thought provoking, and without some knowledge and consideration of their convictions, aims, and arguments, we could hardly be said to write fairly on the subject. At the same time most of what we have read is characterised by a spirit of blind optimism, in which we cannot share, and is vitiated, if not rendered altogether useless by an evident refusal to consider the inspired and infallible account of the original unity and Apostolic purity of the New Testament

* This paper was given at the Church's Theological Conference in 1967.
—Editor.

Church. Surely any worthwhile honest discussion of Ecumenism must begin with the examination and acceptance of the original pattern of the Apostolic church, and then proceed to trace the real cause of any subsequent division. Should the advocates of the Ecumenical movement do this, with an open mind and the conviction (which alas they have lost) that the Bible is the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God, they would discover the true source of the divisions they so widely deplore. They would not then be so disposed to listen to the plausible words of Pope John 23 when he said "We do not wish to put anyone in history on trial; we shall not seek to establish who was right and who was wrong. Responsibility is divided. We only want to say: Let it come together, let us make an end of our divisions."

But surely we should have the courage and the honesty to say who was right and who was wrong, particularly at the beginning; otherwise we are forced to reflect primarily and seriously on the Lord Himself, and on His holy and faithful apostles to whom the faith was delivered once for all. If original responsibility for divisions in the Church is to be shared, it must be between the heretics and the faithful, between the Gnostics, the Docetists, the Antinomians, etc., and the true followers and Apostles of the Lamb. Such a conclusion we cannot accept, according to the account given by holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. If it be argued here, that in the record of Truth, we have merely the opinions of the Apostles, over against that of the liberal heretics, then we have no infallible standard to judge anything by, and so the argument ends. But we accept the Word of God in its entirety as final and authoritative in **ALL** matters of faith and practice, and therefore do not hesitate to affirm that the blame for the earliest divisions in the Church of Christ, lies altogether at the door, not of the faithful, but of the disloyal and unfaithful. If this point is overlooked there can be no true confession of our sins respecting divisions nor any lasting basis for a Unity based upon, and promoted by Truth. We sometimes think that the history and presence of divisions in the Church is in its own way a fulfilment of Scripture, and a tribute to the faithful remnant in every age and generation. If the cry for Union which is now heard (mainly from the camp of the unfaithful) indicates a guilt complex on their part, little wonder that it should be so. If the clamour for the healing of all our divisions is heard most loudly and most frequently from the ranks of those who do not accept the sole and final authority of the Scripture concerning faith and order in the Church, it is already suspect. For all that, because this movement constitutes a grave menace and peril to ourselves and our children, we as believers, and as Free Presbyterians are doubly obliged to expose and oppose it

with all our might. To help us do this we may

- I First of all, comment briefly and critically on the **ORIGIN** and the supposed **AIMS** of the movement.
- II Secondly, we may examine critically some of the main **ARGUMENTS** advanced by the Ecumenists.
- III Thirdly, we may do the same with the **METHODS** employed to achieve their ideal unity.
- IV Lastly, we may state very briefly what we think **OUR ATTITUDE** and reaction should be.

I The Origin and Aims of Ecumenism

It is generally agreed that the modern Ecumenical Movement owes its origin to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, which arose, we are informed, out of the concern of Protestant leaders who were dismayed in the presence of more than three hundred and fifty different denominations. At this gathering of one thousand three hundred and fifty-five delegates, there were representative not only of Protestant missionary societies, but also of Anglo Catholic ones. "Apparently (Prof. Henderson — page 7) it was the latter who were quick to see the new possibilities for activity in the field of ecclesiastical politics, and to develop the situation." Only four months after the Edinburgh Conference, the Anglican communion in the United States, the Protestant Episcopal Church, passed a resolution in its House of Deputies and House of Bishops which ran as follows "That a joint commission be appointed to bring about a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order, and that all Christian communions throughout the whole world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for, and conducting such a conference." The American Anglicans had their setbacks in bringing about such a conference. There was the First World War for one thing and there were what Mr John Lawrence, the Anglican, who gives a readable account of the history of the Movement in the "Hard Facts of Unity" — calls "misconceptions." For all that, the American Anglicans went doggedly on, and by 1920, they were able to call a meeting in Geneva of the representatives of about seventy churches, to decide "what subjects should be prepared for the World Conference." The conference, when it finally took place at Lausanne was by all accounts something of a shambles (footnote page 7, Professor Henderson), but it passed a Call to Unity. The first sentence of this call runs as follows:— "God wills our unity. Our presence in this conference bears testimony to our desires to bend our wills to His. However, we may justify the beginnings of disunion, we lament its continuance, and henceforth must labour in penitence and faith to build up our broken

walls." (Bell, Documents on Christian Unity, page 159). The conference also passed a section on the ministry of the Church of which the following passage is an extract : " In view of (1) the place which the Episcopate, the Councils of Presbyters and the congregation of the faithful respectively, had in the constitution of the early Church, and (2) the fact that Episcopal, Presbyterian, and congregational systems of government are each today, and have been for centuries, accepted by great communions in Christendom, (3) the fact that Episcopal presbyterian and congregational systems are each believed by many to be essential to the good order of the Church, we therefore recognise that these several elements must all, under conditions which require further study, have an appropriate place in the order of life of a re-united Church, and that each separate communion, recalling the abundant blessing of God vouchsafed to its ministry in the past, should gladly bring to the common life of the united church, its own spiritual treasures."

These two passages from the Lausanne Declaration form a fascinating introduction to the language of the Ecumenical Movement, and the double think and double talk it inevitably entails. For as one points out — if anything brought them there the dogged and determined will of the Anglican Church was a prime factor. In the words of John L. Lawrence (Hard Facts of Unity, p. 31), Christendom's debt to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the early stages of the Faith and Order Movement is beyond calculation. The idea of the Faith and Order Conference, the promotion of the idea on a world wide scale, and the money that made it possible, all came from that Church. But there is no mention of that in the Declaration which coyly attributes the occurrence of the Conference to the agency of the Almighty.

Now, the growing desire for a still greater measure of unity between the churches eventually led to the inauguration of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. A loose Federation that now includes 201 Protestant and orthodox bodies (" A new Era," O'Brien, p. 20), in some fifty countries representing about three hundred million members. The authority of the World Council of Churches lies in the Assembly which meets every five years. Seats in its Assembly are given to official representatives of the member churches, that is to say, that they are hardly likely to come the way of those who are not in favour with the establishments of their respective churches. Amsterdam was followed by the second assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston in 1954 and by a third in New Delhi in 1961. In its Evanston Report the World Council of Churches by speaking of disunity and disobedience and sin, has committed itself to a bitter and ruthless attack on denominations. In singling

out denominations for attack, says Professor Henderson, the World Council has too easily assumed that a desire for love and unity are the same thing. Nothing is more amusing, he adds, than to hear an Ecumenical enthusiast thank God for the fact that he no longer harbours acrimonious feelings towards Catholics or Protestants, and without realising that, he now feels that way about those in his own communion who cannot conscientiously become Anglicans. A resonant sounding board of Protestant opinion, the World Council of Churches, continues to sponsor extensive studies of the nature of church unity and the means to attain to it.

The Report prepared by the Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin in 1957 presented no definite concept of the nature of Christian Unity. (A "New Era" — John O'Brien, p. 21). It declared, however, that Protestant Unity of Spirit is seeking organisational expression in a fellowship of good works and inter communion, rather than in unity of belief, worship, and structure, language, which however vague, at least makes it clear that agreement on doctrine is neither essential or paramount.

The only other remark I wish to make regarding the origin of this movement is, that clearly it did not originate from the Holy Spirit of Truth. Rather, it bears the stamp of men in error — some of them sincere no doubt, and profoundly interested in the realisation of their dream, but nevertheless being unregenerate; enemies to God, and to His Truth. Indeed, we may go further and say that they are traitors to the Truth as it is in Jesus. Because of their proud and irreverent attitude to the holy, God inspired scriptures, we need not speak of them with caution as Gamaliel did of the early disciples of Christ. With all their flippant readiness to attribute this Movement to the undoubted work and power of the Holy Spirit, it is clear to all who truly love the Lord, that many of them are still like Simon Magus, in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." (John 3 : 6).

With that I now pass on to examine the **AIMS** of the Movement. It has been clearly and trenchantly demonstrated by Professor Henderson that the sponsors and advocates of Ecumenism aim at the attaining of **power** rather than unity.

Leaving that aside for the moment, I will give you first of all their own professed objective, which is Christian Unity or one great church. According to the Report on Unity of the New Delhi Assembly "Christian Unity has been the primary concern of the Faith and Order Movement from the beginning and the vision of the one church has become the inspiration of our Ecumenical endeavour." (New Delhi Report, p. 117).

Rev. Kenneth Slack, the General Secretary of the British

Council of Churches says of the conception of unity formulated at New Delhi, "It departs wholly from any idea that Christian Unity is a wholly spiritual idea, not needing in any way to be made visible to men. It departs as firmly upon any idea, that bodies like the World Council of Churches itself or a National Council of Churches provide, through co-operation, an adequate conception of unity. A visible and comprehensive unity is the ideal, and the goal, though some Ecumenical leaders would deny that the World Council aims at becoming a world or super church. Dr Fisher is reported as having said "We should like to see the Church of England, the Church of Scotland and the U.S.A. bound together in one body and if the Pope would come in as Chairman, we would all welcome him." (Church Times 31/5/61). Union with Rome, the mother of the great harlot, is at least for some, the ultimate goal. Already the Ecumenical movement is mustering its forces to give the world the impression of unity and power.

The unity envisaged is even now taking shape, and looks very much like a political unity, making a strong bid for political power; ready to compromise its faith, and all that constitutes historic Christianity in the effort. This visible organic unity is a false objective, and it is patently clear to those who have any spiritual understanding, that in the view of the Vatican, whatever double talk may be used, only a return of penitent heretics can be a prelude to union.

Further, as we shall see when we duly come to examine the methods used by the Ecumenists, their zeal for unity must be closely identified with their desire for power. Fallen man is the easy victim of many evil passions, and not least among these is this lust for power. Even where the grace of God is planted there is evidence of this monster sin which must be mourned over and mortified by those who know their own hearts. How much more may we expect to encounter this ugly monster among those who are destitute of the grace of God. Of course, this desire for power may be so closely identified with the desire for unity, and the will of God, that it may be mistaken for such. This indeed has happened, and a great sin is committed when we call our greed for power, zeal for unity and the will of God. So much then for the origin and objectives of the Ecumenical Movement.

Of the many arguments put forward by the Ecumenical enthusiasts, the most convincing one is, that church unity is the Will of God. They appeal to the Word of God, and cite among other passages the words of Christ in His great intercessory prayer in John, chapter 17. "That they all may be one as thou Father art in me." In this connection it has been asked — What is the source of the efforts for Christian Unity? — and this is

their answer. "It is undoubtedly the clear teaching of Jesus Christ, that there should be one fold and one Shepherd. So fundamental and important was the unity of His followers that our Lord refers to this on the night before He died, in His prayer to the Father recorded in John 17 : 21.

The writer from which we quote goes on to say of these words "Their meaning is so clear as to allow no ground for dispute. They are a basic and integral part of the teaching of our divine Redeemer. They are woven into the consciousness of every Christian and are an inescapable part of the message of every herald of the Gospel." ("Steps to Unity," O'Brien, p. 9). Running like threads of gold through the warp and woof of the New Testament, this teaching of our Lord regarding the paramount importance and necessity of unity of faith among His followers is echoed and re-echoed by the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Thus in his letter to the Ephesians (1-3), Paul says, "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation where with ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

This then is the teaching of Jesus which provides the incentive and motive power for the world wide movement for Christian unity. Now, "The modern ecumenist states dogmatically that the meaning of Christ's words in John 17 :21 is so clear as to allow of no dispute. We would respectfully remind him of another possible, and far more scriptural interpretation of the passage referred to.

It is clear to us that the prayer of Christ for unity between His disciples, and all those who should believe on Him through their word, is a spiritual unity, and NOT a visible unity belonging to the Church in any one age. Moreover, the unity of the churches is something quite different from the unity of Christians. The nature of the unity prayed for by Christ is most ably expounded and expressed by the late Rev. D. Beaton, Oban (in Vol. 27 of the F.P. Magazine, pp. 163, 164) Among other things he points out that the unity referred to in John 17 : 21 is a unity analagous to that of the Father and the Son, and as such is a unity fitted to impress the world that Christ has been sent by the Father. It is a unity of purpose, of life, and of love. The Father and the Son are one in love. It is out of this fulness of love treasured up in the Son, that all believers receive. It is this holy, spiritual love that pervades the whole church of the living God, and where it is not, in spite of impressive outward unity, Christ's prayer is not realised. This love, continues the writer, imperfect here in the best, binds the Lord's people of different denominations together (though they cannot agree in many points) in a way that no out-

ward unity could ever accomplish. This love is not originated by themselves, nor is it a mere higher development of a benevolent nature. It is the gift of God imparted to His people, and to them alone. The unity for which Christ prays then, may be fully realised by believers belonging to different denominations, and is infinitely better than any apparent unity of expediency or policy." The fact is, that all the larger churches in modern times are becoming more and more secularised — many of their members — sometimes the vast majority, are worldly minded. Most of them have very little Christian knowledge, and they have no Christian experience. It is evident that any unity between such churches would have little in common with the unity of true believers. It is also clear to us that this great text is altogether misused and misapplied when applied to the modern Ecumenical movement. Indeed, many ecumenical theologians who use the text in the context of ecumenism, do not believe that Christ really spoke these words. Often they maintain that the Gospel of John (especially the discourses of Christ in its Gospel) has little historical value, and many of them do not believe that Jesus Christ is one with the Father as He Himself claims in John 17 :32 (Prof. Hardegard on Ecumenism, p. 29).

We have remarked at some length on this first argument invariably used by Ecumenists for two reasons. Firstly, because it is their strongest and most plausible plea. Secondly, because the Church of Rome arrogantly claims to approximate, if not to possess the unity for which Christ prayed.

The second main argument put forward by the Ecumenical leaders is one with which we are all familiar. They have the audacity to speak of the scandal of a divided Christendom, and of our sinful divisions, as though the lack of a visible, shallow, God dishonouring unity was the only sin to be exposed and deplored. To our minds, the absence of such unity as they envisage, is a blessing rather than a scandal. The real sin, the crying scandal is NOT denominationalism, but rather the blindness, the pride, the treachery, the infidelity of the vast majority of church leaders, who have imbibed and preached the God provoking, soul ruining heresies of Modernism and Higher Criticism ranging from the blasphemous filth that flows freely from the pen of the Bishop of Woolwich (whose sources by the way are mainly Tillich, Barth, and Boeffner) — to the subtle neo-orthodoxy of Barth. Here are sins — here are scandals indeed by which evil is increased and evildoers strengthened. And, what of the utter lack of reverence for the Word of God, the undue emphasis on the feelings and thoughts of men, the absence of church discipline, the connivance of the church (by and large) at almost every violation of the moral law, and the growing fashion of sympathising with,

and protecting those who are guilty of sins which it is a shame to speak of.

These are but a few of the sins and scandals which call for immediate action on the part of the professed church of Christ. The continued and increasing appearance of such evils in the churches renders their talk about the scandal and sin of division, utterly ridiculous, if not altogether blasphemous. If the Ecumenists would turn their thoughts and devote their energies to calling upon themselves and their hearers to seek to be savingly united to Christ, they would then be acting according to the will of God. If they would confess and forsake the sins we have already referred to, and cry mightily to the Lord for mercy, instead of dissipating their energies to achieve an objective that reminds one of the builders of the tower of Babel, they would find little time or need to make such noise about the scandal of our divisions. Let them remember that the appearance of unity is not the only way of convincing the world that Christ was sent by the Father! Who can tell how many have been turned away from the Church, not because of denominationalism, but because they were thoroughly disgusted with the hollow profession of graceless Christians — so called.

A third argument urged by the Ecumenicals is that a united church would present a united front, and would be strong enough to combat and challenge Communism, atheism, and other systems of evil. This plea stems from the false premise that strength and power lie in numbers. In very recent times the falsity of this argument has been clearly demonstrated by the course of the Jewish-Arab war. A few devoted men really and closely knit together, can scatter forces by whom they are greatly outnumbered. The lesson which the Lord taught Gideon needs to be re-learned. We never read that the people were too few for the Lord to use, but we do read that they were too many. The proponents of ecclesiastical mergers go on to point out that the present wasteful duplication of church structures, organisational machinery, and personnel, mean that church expenditures are multiplied tenfold. They decry the 'mushrooming' of denominational churches in places where one or two would amply suffice. In the same strain, Dr Martin E. Marty ("Steps of Unity," p. 22), associate editor of the "Christian Century," castigates denominationalism as a self seeking enterprise. Our comment here is that we as a church (and as a rule, Evangelical churches) owing to the liberality of our people, are not unduly worried about expenditure, nor are those who fear the Lord likely to be influenced in any degree by such carnal and utilitarian arguments, or such mercenary considerations. What many may well understand the writer to be saying is: Unite and then you can reduce your pittance by way

of supporting the church still further. Undoubtedly there are many in the modernistic circles with whom this argument will have considerable weight.

(to be continued in May issue)

RHODESIAN VISIT *

by Rev. A. F. MacKay, M.A., Inverness

When I arrived on African soil on the morning of Friday, 2nd February this year, after the over-night flight from Heathrow, London, to Salisbury, I was met almost immediately with the trials which await visitors from this country to Rhodesia. The quick transition from the winter's cold of Inverness to the heavy warmth of Africa left little time for adjustment to the new conditions of climate, change of hour — there being the difference of two hours' time by which Rhodesia is ahead of Greenwich — and change of food. I suffered from some sleeplessness at first. Even in the rainy season of the year in which I arrived, the nights are close, and when the sun arose a wave of warmth flooded the room and made further sleep impossible. There was the added annoyance of the little Weaver bird, which arrived each morning at my window with daybreak. This small bird of beautiful bright yellow colouring and startlingly black head, is native to Rhodesia, builds its nest to hang like a coconut from the tips of tree branches to protect it from snakes and other natural enemies, and has a particularly harsh, raucous voice. It rapped with its beak loudly and angrily upon the pane and squawked in at the open window. Most visitors, I suppose, suffer from some sleeplessness. There is a deficiency of calcium in the soil which has to be supplemented in the feeding of cattle and sheep. Some large calcium tablets, supplied by our minister's wife at Zenka, soon removed this inconvenience. The flies are troublesome, and irritating with their persistent attentions, but are comparatively harmless. The mosquitoes, which abound, are Malaria carriers, and are a real danger. They bring out large, hard weals on the ankles and legs, among the hair of the head, and get under the clothing to attack the arms and shoulders. These trials soon passed, however, and I was able with more comfort to attend to the work for which the Church at home had asked me to visit Rhodesia.

After a brief stop at Ingwenya, which is about 30 miles from the Bulawayo Airport and stands at the entrance to our Rhodesian Mission field, where I spoke on my first Sabbath in Rhodesia to the first all African congregation of my tour, I went on a further 90 miles to Zenka in the north west part of the country. Zenka

* This article sent on request of the Editor. — Editor.

divides with the Mbumba centre, only 30 miles away, the management of the greater part of our Mission schools, 13 being under Zenka and 15 under Mbumba. Our Mission schools lie within the wide Nkai Tribal Trust Land, and are scattered along the Lupani Valley which stretches roughly between Zenka and Mbumba; others lie to the north, on each side of the Shangani River; and the remaining schools are on the eastern border. The most remote of our schools is Makasane, which lies about 60 miles to the north east from Zenka. I set out with Rev. D. Campbell to visit the Zenka schools, and with little variation the same order of procedure was observed throughout. Usually, we arrived by car from Zenka some time after ten in the morning and went round the class rooms. The children in the upper classes revealed in their questions a strong curiosity about this country, and as the class gathered around a map of the world, I tried to satisfy their thirst for information by referring to facts of geography, history, farming, wild life, etc., but before long, the talk drifted to the Reformation, incidents in the Covenanting struggle in Ayrshire, and the more recent past of our own church. It was a moving sight to look upon the closely crowded dark faces with large, expressive eyes following with the greatest attention all that their teacher told them as he interpreted what was said.

As the time of service drew near, a boy was sent out to a tree in the school compound, from which a piece of iron was suspended, a bar of metal or a piece of plough, or what proved most effective for the purpose, a curved piece of railway line perforated with holes, which was beaten with an iron rod to summon the people from the surrounding district to the service. I found it easy to speak, and often had to discard the prepared address, for a spontaneous talk on the greatest truths of the gospel, expressed in the simplest terms, as the feeling of the moment found utterance. The presence of an interpreter in no way interfered with the discourse. When any wandering of attention became apparent among the children, an interesting illustration or incident from Bunyan's great Christian classic, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, was sufficient to secure their interest once more. When the service was over, I met the people and the children as they were leaving to greet each one of them personally. It was amusing to see the efforts of the youngest and shyest of the children try to sneak past me without giving me their hand, but not many of them escaped. Many of these services were held in the open in the shade of a Chabela, or Igonde, or Mapaneni tree. May the Lord bless the gospel to the children especially; they have many advantages and privileges denied to their parents, and may these under the Lord's blessing lead many of them to devote themselves to lives of Christian usefulness.

On the way back from one of these Mission schools at Ncube, we turned off the main track leading down to the Shangani River, to visit a copper mine. The engineer spoke of quite large deposits in the small area where the mine was placed, and pointed to evidence of great antiquity which showed that the mine must have been worked in pre-historic, possible biblical times. What was left of a Mopani beam, possibly many centuries old, which was part of the wooden platform from which the miners worked, jutted out from the main shaft. Marks made by chisels could be discerned on the wall face itself, and small tunnels led into the rock where the richer veins of copper were followed. Flat stones with finger marks had been discovered on the site which were evidently used with the chisels to dig out the copper. In a series of large, shallow tanks, the copper metal passed through the various stages of being separated and purified, and in the final tank acid, which brings no reaction from copper itself, was applied to remove other minerals. To us it was most interesting. No trace of this mine can be found evidently in any of the oldest surviving survey maps of the district. Is it beyond the bounds of serious speculation to think that among the sources of precious metals which were brought from the ends of the earth to enrich the vast empire of King Solomon, this small mine, once again brought into production by modern mining methods, may have had a place? Mr Campbell enquired how religious services might be provided for the African miners, who lived in kraals nearby and spent their Sabbaths in idleness, beer drinking and quarreling. The engineer, though not greatly interested in religion, readily welcomed this offer to provide religious ordinances for his men, as a means of awakening interest in more wholesome activities and introducing some seriousness into the lives of these improvident Africans.

In the conditions that face our missionaries today in Rhodesia, many problems press for attention. During my short stay on the Mission field, observing the difficulties under which they have to labour, it seemed to me that one of the features that is found among every heathen people can be discerned at work here as well, that is, the depressed state of heathen African women. It shows itself in many ways. In the native kraals women have few rights. Should a child be taken ill, and its survival depend upon immediate medical attention, the mother will make no move or come to any decision while the husband is absent from the home. I saw a child of five months old who had suffered from diarrhoea for three weeks which weakened his strength and brought severe dissipation which injured the top of his skull, brought at last to the clinic, when the husband, who had been away from home, returned to give his verdict. We called also at the Kraal of a very

sick man who was dying with cancer, yet professed to be a Christian and a member of the London Missionary Society, although two wives still lived with him. From the unhappy atmosphere pervading the kraal and the hardened aspect of the wives, it was evident that the system of polygamy, still strongly entrenched in even so called Christian districts of the country, was a source of unhappiness to the husband and of degradation to the wives. It was a pleasure to meet our own mission people and to visit their kraals, where, in contrast, the fruits of the gospel could be seen in the happy relations of the members of the family, in which the wife was given her rightful place.

A further source of anxiety to our missionaries arises from the policies of the Rhodesian Government relating to education. Undoubtedly, the community development scheme by which community councils are encouraged to take over control of local affairs, including schools, has arrested educational development in mission areas, and severely restricted the opening of new schools, however badly they may be required. For this reason the scheme is not popular with the people. In some districts schools are badly placed to serve the community, and in others there are enough people living to justify the opening of a school, but, till a community council has been formed, the educational department will not move. The chiefs have also been given enlarged powers, and generally the scheme has a hindrance to mission work.

A more ominous development, however, has recently appeared in Salisbury. The Prime Minister, Mr Ian Smith, is reported in the press to be having trouble with what might be termed the left wing of his party, the extremists who wish to sever all ties with Britain. "Anything that smacks of the 1961 Constitution — Mr Wilson's six principles, for instance — is anathema to them. They are suspicious of any negotiation with Britain and would regard a settlement on the basis of the six principles as a sell-out." They look to South Africa for guidance in the problems of race relations in the way of separate development within Rhodesia. This struggle within the party has been going on for a long time, but now seems to have come out into the open. One Salisbury M.P. has been suspended for six months, and the chairman of his constituency council has been expelled from the party for expressing these views. If the policy of Apartheid is implemented here, it will add immeasurably to the difficulties of our missionaries.

Before I left for Mbuma in the first week of March, the communion was held at Zenka on the last Sabbath of February in beautiful weather, which was not too hot to be oppressive, and in the open air under the spreading branches of a large Chabela tree where the elders made the necessary preparations for the Lord's people to gather together to observe the Saviour's parting

command to his people to remember his death till he come. As far as in this part of the Church was appropriate, the preparatory services were held as in our home congregations. I had the opportunity of meeting our aged elders, men of grave, dignified appearance, who had spent many years in the Master's service and were familiar with the mysteries of divine grace. The ministers on the mission field were present with Mr Campbell presiding over the arrangements. On Saturday, we had the pleasure of listening to Rev. A. Ndebele preach from the consolatory words of Christ which have given reassurance and strength to many of the Lord's people in their seasons of doubt and fear: "Fear, not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I believe they were found helpful to many on this occasion too. On the Sabbath morning the sermon dealt with the Saviour's work, sufferings and reward, as predicted in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, listened to by a congregation of 600, half of whom were school children. Two tables were served at which about 80 communicants sat down, the largest number to do so at any one time up to this date in the Zenka congregation, perhaps even throughout the mission. On Sabbath evening Rev. P. Mzamo preached a most appropriate sermon on the words of our Saviour: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" — Matt. XI, verse 28, a sermon most suited to the young which we pray may be blessed to the children who listened that evening so attentively to these gracious words being expounded and enforced by the Lord's servant. This large gathering of people, quite as large as the mornings, broke up as the early dusk began to descend. On Monday, the closing sermon dealt with the pleasure of the Lord which would prosper in the hand of the Saviour.

In the discussions which followed these communion services, one of our younger elders asked me about the conditions of success in which the Gospel might be expected to be blessed to a congregation, no doubt having in view the past history of disturbance in the Zenka congregation, when class rooms were burned down and people greatly agitated, by the actions of some foolish youths. I enumerated these as necessary at least, the full unrestricted proclamation of the Gospel in which the whole counsel of God must be clearly unfolded; the prayers of the exercised among the Lord's people, in public but especially at a throne of grace in private, which has always preceded any special work of the Holy Spirit; and a period of peace to create the evangelical atmosphere in which the Holy Spirit may be expected to visit a congregation with his saving influences, for like the dew He descends in the silence of the night or like the dove which flees

from the scene of strife. The man who put the question expressed himself satisfied and again, when I met him at his own house the following day, he again mentioned the subject, and wished to discuss it further as a matter which had been exercising his mind. I think that when the minister of Zenka congregation has such men in his congregation who think along these lines, he has cause for great thankfulness to the Lord and reason for hope for the future of his congregation.

Rhodesia is a beautiful country. The tree clad ridges and hollows that are spread out from Mbumba towards the north and the clear peaceful evening sky remind me so much of the Northern Highlands. That Rhodesia suffers greatly from the vagaries of weather and climate is evident from the sandy soil, the sparse vegetation, and the terrible inroads caused by soil erosion which breaks up the trails we have to follow to reach the mission schools. The thoughtless actions of the people in denuding the countryside of all protective covering and growth such as bushes and trees is responsible for this damage to the soil. Some of the "dongas", as they are called, especially north of Mbumba, may be eight or nine feet deep, large enough to accommodate the foundation of a small house. Rain came too early last year at the beginning of the rainy season in November, and is now by several weeks overdue. The well is beginning to run low in the only bore hole supplying the Mbumba Mission. God reminds us that the control of the elements is in His hands. We pray that the "Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God" may be owned to the salvation of many here. We have met the greatest kindness and friendliness in every part of the mission field we have so far visited; the members of the European Staff have been kindness itself, and to those among them with whom we have stayed, we wish to express our heart-felt thanks for innumerable acts of kindness. For our Rhodesian African friends we pray that the seed sown will be found after many days.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

Leis an Urr. Eidard Pearce (A.D. 1672)

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 315)

Caib. vii. A tha nochdadh ciod e ghné Fear-posda a th'ann an Criosd, agus cho freagarach 's a thà E gu bhi dha dheanamh Fein gràdhach do dh'anamaibh, agus dha dheanamh ion-mhiannaichte ann an aonadh pòsaidh.

"Ciod e fear do ghràidh-sa seach fear-gràidh eile, gu'n do chuir thù mar so mar fhiachaibh oirne?" the nigheanan Ierusalem a feorach do'n cheile. Dàn v. 9. Anns an dearbh dhoigh faodaidh cuid a ràdh ruinn; Cò, na ciod e'n Criosd so, gu'n bheil thù dha choiteachadh oirne gu bhi air ar pòsadh Ris? Ciod a th'ann gu

bhi dha dheanamh ion-mhiannaicht' dhuinn? " Cò, na ciod E? Gu cinnteach cha'n urrain dhomh innse, cha mhotha a b'urraim dhomh ged robh agam teanga dhaoine agus aingeal; agus cha mhòr nach eil eagal orm labhairt air, air eagal gu'n dorchaidh mi a ghlòir an àite a bhi dha foillseachadh. So tha mi cinnteach as, is e, mar a tha neach a labhairt uime, araon ioghnadh na talmhuinn agus ioghnadh neamh; agus tha h-uile nì Ann, agus sin ann an iomlanachd neo-chrìochnacha bu chòr a dheanamh tlachdmhor do dh'anamaibh, agus air son am biodh iad taingeil ann an daimh pòsaidh. Amhaire, uime sin, Air, agus gabh beachd Air car tiota, agus faic am bheil nì air bith a mhiannaicheadh tù 'n a leithid so de dhaimh a tha dhìth Air-san. Cuiridh mi so nì's farsuing fodh do chomhair anns na cinn a leanas.

1. Am bheil thù air son àite seasamh agus mòrachd? Tha so a dol fada a' measg dhaoine agus tha e deanamh iomadh pòsadh. Air son so cha'n eil aon cosmhuil ri Crìosd, cha'n eil aon cho mòr, cho glòrmhor, cha'n eil aon cho urramach Ris. Guidheam ort gabh beachd Air air son tamull; a thaobh a shìnnsearachd thainig E mach bho Dhia, 's e sin, tre ghinealach sìorruidh, agus is E Mac sìorruidh an Athar sìorruidh. Eoin xvi. 28. Gabh beachd Air 'n a Phearsa, agus cha'n fhaic thù nì an sin ach mòrachd; oir cha'n aon eil E ach an Dia-duine, agus tha Aige uile oirdheireasan an dà nàduir ann an aon phearsa. Is E Emmanuel, agus tha E maille ruinn, Dia 'n ar nàdur. Mata i. 23. Is E Dia, Eabh. i. 8. An Dia fìor, I Eoin v. 20. An Dia mòr, Titus ii. 13. An Dia cumhachdach, Isaiah ix. 6. Dia os ceann nan uile, na'n Dia is ro-àirde, Rom. ix. 5. Dia co-ionnan ris an Athair, aig am bheil an aon suspainn Ris, agus an aon iomlanachd do-sheachainte Ann a tha aig an Athair ann Fein; is E dealradh glòir an Athar E agus fìor ionmhaigh a phearsa, Phil. ii. 6. Aon anns am bheil mòrachd, dealradh, agus glòir an Athar gu h-ionlan a dealradh a mach; Aon anns an do ghearr an t-Athair a mach uile oirdheirceasan sìorruidh. Eabh. i. 3. Tha beagan de ghathan beag de ghlòir Dhé a dealrachadh a mach ann an naoimh agus ann an aingeal; ach ann an Crìosd tha lànachd, dealradh, agus soillseachadh na glòir so dha foillseachadh. Gabh beachd Air 'n a dhreuchd agus a dhaimh ris an t-seasamh a tha E, eadhon an so, air àrdachadh dha ionnsuidh: is Rìgh E, Rìgh mòr, "Rìgh nan rìghrean, agus Tighearn nan Tighearnan." Tais. xix. 16. Rìgh nan naomh. Tais. xv. 3. Rìgh nan cinneach, Ier. 7. Rìgh na glòire, Salm xxiv. 7. Is E Ceann gach uile uachdaranachd agus chumhachd; agus is e'n glòir-san gu'm bheil a leithid de Cheann aca. Col. ii. 10. Is E dlùth champanach Tighearn nan sluagh, Sech. xiii. 7. Is E cheud-ghin Dhé E, nì's àirde na rìghrean na talmhuinn, Salm lxxxix. 27. Tha E air a chur 'n a shuidh aig deas laimh Dhé, Ephes. i. 20. Tha E air a dheanamh nì's àirde

na na neamhan, Eabh. vii. 26. A' measg nan uile neach, agus anns na h-uile nì, co dhiubh 's ann air neamh na air talamh, tha àrd-cheannas Aige, Col. i. 18. Tha mhòrachd dhe leithid de ghné agus gu'm bheil an cruthachadh uile ceangailte a bhi toirt ùmhlachd Dhà, agus cha'n eil na h-ainglean fein an taobh a mach dhe so; "Agus deanadh uile ainglean Dhé aoradh dha," tha'n t-Athair ag ràdh, Eabh. i. 6. "Air an aobhar sin dh'àrdaich Dia e gu ro àrd mar an ceudna, agus thug e dha ainm os ceann gach uile ainme: chùm do ainm Iosa gu'n lùbadh gach glùn, de nithnean a tha air neamh, agus de nithean a tha fo'n talamh, Phil. ii. 9, 10. 's e sin, feumaidh ainglean cho math ri daoine aoradh a thoirt Dhà, agus, da rìreadh a bhi diùltadh so Dhà thionndadh a ainglean gu diabhuil. Tha E ri bhi air a ghràdhachadh, eagal a bhi roimhe, a bhi creidsinn Ann, ùmhlachd a thoirt Dhà, ùrnuigh a bhi air a deanamh Ris, a bhi air a mholadh, tlachd a ghabhail Ann, agus a bhi mùirneach ann an sealladh na'n uile. Tha'n aon urram ri bhi Aige, 's a th'aig an Athair. "Chùm gu'n tugadh na h-uile dhaoine urran do'n Mhac, amhuil a tha iad a toirt urrainn do'n Athair. An tì mach eil a toirt urrainn do'n Mhac, cha'n eil e toirt urrainn do'n Athair a chuir uaith' e." Roin v. 23. Ciod a their mi? Tha tighearnas àrd-uachdaranail agus cothrom a bhi frithealadh a nach 'n a laimh araon gràs agus glòir;" Agus mar a tha an t-Athair a' dùsgadh, agus a beothachadh nam marbh, is amhuil sin a tha am Mac a beothachadh an dream is àill leis." Eoin. v. 21. Their E ri aon, Mair bea, agus bithidh a beo, agus a chuid eile dhe'n a maribh cha bhi iad beo. Tha iuchraichean a bhàis agus ifrinn Aige, Tais. i. 18. Tha riaghladh an t-saoghail uile Aige na laimh: "Shocraich an Tighearna a righ-chathair anns na neamhan; agus tha a rioghachd a riaghladh os ceann nan uile." Salm ciii. 19. Tha E ann an làn-sheilbh air rioghachd os ceann a chruthachaidh, air do'n uile bhreitheanas a bhi air a chur 'n a laimh. Eoin v. 22. Agus O! cho glòrmhor agus a tha E anns na h-uile dheth. Glòrmhor 'n a righ-chathair a tha aig deas-laimh Dhé. Eabh. i. 3. Glòrmhor 'n a thighearnas, nì is e uile chumhachd air neamh agus air talamh. Mata xviii. 18. Glòrmhor 'n a shlait riaghlaidh nì is e slat chothromach. Salm xlv. 6. Glòrmhor 'n a luchd-frithealaidh, nì is deich mìle do mhuinntir naomh, cadhon mìlte de ainglean. Daniel vii. 10. Glòrmhor 'n a dhòigh riaghlaidh, làn gràis agus millseachd dha shluagh, làn uamhais agus mòralachd dha naimhdean, air da shaighdean bhi geur 'n n cridheachan. Salm xlv. 5. Agus mar a tha E riaghladh na h-uile a nis, mar sin bheir E breith air na h-uile mu dheireadh; agus feumaidh na h-uile seasamh na tuiteam, a bhi beo na bhi marbh, a bhi air an tearnadh na bhi air na damanadh gu siorruidh, a reir na binn a bheir E mach orra. Gnìomh. xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 10. O cia cho mòr 's a

tha'n Tighearna so ! agus cia cho airidh 's a tha E air a bhi air gabhail Ris leinne ! O dhaoine, an diult sibh an cuspair cho mòr agus cho glòrmhor so 'n uair a tha E nochdadh a gràidh dhuibh ? Na'm faiceadh sibh prionnsa mòr dha thairgse fein do dhiol-deirichd ann an luideagan air an dùn aolaich, ghabhadh sibh ioghnadh i bhi dha mheas suarach, agus a bhi toirt air feitheamh àm an deigh àm air a son ; gidheadh, tha Pearsa a tha gu neo-chriochnach ni's motha a tha feitheamh ribhse, agus ag iarraidh bhur gràdh ; agus an toir sibh Air fathasd feitheamh ? an diult sibh e ? An sin biodh ioghnadh oirbh thairis air neo-thaingeachd ghràineil.

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Roman Catholic Doctrinal Controversy in Holland

Bitter controversy among Roman Catholic theologians in Holland has arisen over the publication of a Catechism by some who are described as progressive Dutch theologians. The purpose was to produce a catechism which explained points of Roman Catholic doctrine in a language which the ordinary Roman Catholic could understand. It was published in 1966, and thousands of copies have been sold in Europe and America. The Catechism was approved by the Dutch bishops and Cardinal Alfrink. Now the more "conservative" theologians in Holland are declaring that there is heresy in this publication ; and they have submitted the matter to Rome, over the heads of their bishops ; said to be an unprecedented step. The authorities in Rome are reported as wishing to rewrite most of the book. Two theologians from Rome have recently been in Holland to put their demands to the Dutch clergy involved. Some time ago, a Dutch friend explained to us that these "progressives" in the Dutch Roman Catholic Church, are not reformers at all in the light of Protestant doctrine and practice. They constitute a modernistic movement within the Church of Rome. The authority of Pope and Papal power seated at Rome, are apparently losing the absolute influence claimed for them. The unity said to prevail throughout the Church of Rome is being seriously disturbed, once and again in these times. We wonder how ecumenism is accepted in Holland, when controversy is rife in the ranks of Roman Catholics.

(It is regretted that owing to lack of space remaining Notes and Comments have been held over for the May issue).

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