

The
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and Monthly Record

Volume 73 June 1968 No. 2

VIOLENCE

The ordinary meaning of "violence" is the use of physical force under the influence of uncontrolled sinful passion, against persons or property. The earth was filled with violence in Noah's day and the Bible reveals that it had its roots in the hearts of men for "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually". And again, "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence". (Genesis, Chapter 6). For this cause God determined to send the flood to remove men from the earth, except Noah and his family. Then, for instance, in the days of Ezekiel the prophet, the land of Judah was filled with violence. The Lord spoke to the prophet regarding this manifestation of the wickedness of men thus: "... Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger . . ." (Ezekiel, Chap. 8, v. 17). It is obvious from these references that violence is a heinous sin in the sight of God and calls for the manifestation of His holy anger. It is a sin which frequently leads to involvement in the serious injury of persons, the destruction of property and murder.

In the New Testament this evil is seen in the conduct of the Jews with regard to the stoning of Stephen to death. His truthful charges against them so affected them that they were cut to the heart and gnashed on him with their teeth and ran upon him and cast him out of the city and stoned him. This was a clear outburst of wicked violence against the man of God. This was not a case of stoning according to the law of Moses for some outstanding sin; although they employed stoning, thinking they were punishing an evil doer in their ignorance and pride. They were filled with a murderous spirit. And again this evil broke out at Thessalonica when Paul was there, as we read: "The Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar,

and assaulted the house of Jason . . .” (Acts, Chap. 17, v. 5). Here you have a fair description of certain features of even some present-day cases of mob violence: viz., an evil spirit, men of no character, uproar occasioned deliberately and attacks upon those who have given no offence.

This dangerous line of wicked conduct has undoubtedly plagued nations and communities down through the ages. And now in this advanced age of ours, in certain positive respects and in many areas of the world, this evil of violence is repeatedly raising its ugly head. Some may argue that there has been provocation offered to certain people to have recourse to violence, as in the case of the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King, the late leader of American negroes, who himself urged non-violence in seeking privileges. And in Western Germany a man shot a German student who was a leader of a certain group. As a reaction thousands of students demonstrated and rioted in many of the chief cities of Western Germany. And recently during one weekend, there were fifty cases of serious assault, principally by stabbing in the City of Glasgow. These did not occur during mob violence, but were isolated cases. And murder has occurred again and again in the Glasgow area and elsewhere in recent times. And also in London, during demonstrations and processions of an anti-war nature, police officers were assaulted in performance of their duty in seeking to keep public order. And, incidentally, some who engage in these demonstrations are involved with the evil intention of causing rioting and trouble.

Again, vandalism against property is rife, and this unwanton destruction of property is just another phase of present day violence. Recently the Post Office authorities of the City of Aberdeen reported that fifteen telephone kiosks had been badly damaged by vandalism during one single weekend. This is wicked and malicious work undertaken with a satanic delight in destruction for its own sake. Then violence today is a prominent means by which robbery of large sums of money is accomplished by gangs of wicked and violent men. Their violence is not the urge of the moment, but pre-meditated and planned involving serious bodily injury and even death for those who dare to stand in their way. Plausible explanations for violent conduct will not bear consideration in this context.

Some who make a study of and specialise in the examination of what is called “social behaviour,” endeavour to discover and explain the causes or influences producing such as violence. To enter upon such a study apart from the light and guidance of the Word of God, is indeed to a great extent, a vain task. Although, undoubtedly there are contributory influences in certain cases;

yet as blasphemy, and murder are sins, so violence as such, is sin also according to the Word of God. It proceeds from the depraved and evil heart of man, as we find in the record of the violence of men before the Flood. The Word of God declares that there are those who love violence for its own sake and for what they may accomplish by it, as we read in Psalm XI, verse 5, "The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth."

The prevalence of this line of wicked conduct is a somewhat new evidence of the very low state of morality in our own nation. Divine restraint is being withheld from many in judgment and this may well be linked up with other sins which have provoked God to anger. And how true the Word of God is when revealing what the natural man is capable of, viz., "... living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another!" Here you have an answer to many acts of violence.

The remedy for this and every other symptom of a backsliding day, is the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, preached in its fullness with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. David prayed: "It is time for thee Lord to work, for men have made void thy law." And if the Lord will not come to work in His sovereign mercy, through the Gospel, in the hearts of men in our nation; then He will come to work in His wrath manifestly in specific judgments. The Lord's people are surely called to pray in the terms of the prophet: "In wrath remember mercy."

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE THEOLOGY OF THE DECLARATORY ACT *

by the Rev. Alexander Murray, M.A., Applecross

* This is the first of a series of articles marking the 75th Anniversary of our Church. — Editor.

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh . . ." (Eccl. 1; 4), and the words of the Preacher point to a factor of much importance in recalling events three-quarters of a century ago. Two and one half generations have passed by so that none of the parties immediately concerned in these events at the end of last century are now in the land of the living; and, for the writer and easily the great majority of readers, the Declaratory Act of 1892 is pure history. Although this fact should be borne fully in mind the situation is not one of unqualified loss for a mere historical assessment, free from the emotions which involvement in events evoke, must have its own distinctive value.

Also, as the situation is historical knowledge in the average reader of what was commonplace even one generation ago may not be assumed; and, thus, I might desire for my short survey some capability to teach.

My allotted task concerns the **theology** or doctrine of this Act; an Act whose terms were prepared as declarative or explanatory of the Westminster Confession of Faith. This Confession or creed was, in the situation which is of immediate interest to us, the chief subordinate Standard of the Free Church of Scotland, the ecclesiastical body which had "disrupted" from the Church of Scotland in 1843. We might describe a Creed or Confessional as primarily an instrument of Church Government, as it defines the "faith" of office-bearers and regulates their activities within the bounds which the Church thus prescribes. There is, however, that interdependence present in the different parts of the Church's life: that, while the worship, the government and the practice of the visible church are derived from its doctrine, their function is, in turn, the furthering and defending of that doctrine. This fact may serve presently as the barest hint of our interest in the **theology** of an Act which claimed to be explanatory of the Church's Creed.

One further word of comment is necessary before I endeavour to come directly to grips with the Act itself. This concerns its form as dictated by the expediency of the situation then obtaining in the Free Church where (a) a majority in the General Assembly were desirous of union with the United Presbyterian Church; (b) latitudinarian views of doctrine were now tolerated (cf. Dods and Bruce Case, 1890 Assembly), and (c) a strong Disestablishment crusade, notwithstanding a serious setback in 1885, was still actively prosecuted. This is reflected in the preamble to the Act, viz. "it is expedient to remove difficulties and scruples which have been felt by some in reference to the declaration of belief . . ." and, while the adoption of an Act, **declaratory**, as a means to modify the Church's constitution was one part of the stratagem resolved upon, the equivocal terms of the Act itself was another. As the late Rev. N. Cameron, when still a Divinity Student, speaking during a public meeting held at Oban in April 1892, puts it — "As for the Declaratory Act; its indefiniteness and ambiguity are its stronghold, for every clause from beginning to end could bear two, three, maybe four interpretations. The Confession of Faith is famous for the perspicuity of its statements."

In the opening paragraph of its first Section the Act gives prominence to the **Divine love** with regard to which we may compare these statements:—

The Confession says:—

"Those of mankind that are pre-destinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, . . . (iii; 5).

There should be little difficulty in seeing that the theological position of the Act in the right-hand column is very different from that of the Confession on the left. The Westminster divines treat of sovereign love going out to an elect people while the framers of the Act speak of a universal or indiscriminate love of which the objects are, palpably, "sinners of mankind".

Again, the Confession states:—

" . . . they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, . . . (iii; 6)
"The Lord Jesus . . . hath fully satisfied the justice of His Father . . . for all those whom the Father hath given unto Him." (viii; 5).

Consistent with its doctrine of the divine decree of election the Confession here speaks of a **particular** atonement having been effected by Christ whereas the Act, also consistently with its theory of universal love, here propagates what has been termed the "Double Reference" theory of the Atonement which asserts illogically (as error is) that, while Christ died for all, yet this reconciliation is only effectual for those who believe.

Confession:—

"To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same . . . effectually persuading them by His Spirit to believe and obey . . . " (viii; 8).

Here the Westminster divines, in line with their Scriptural view of predestination unto salvation of the elect, speak of the Holy Spirit's work in irresistibly applying redemption to all such; while the makers of the Act, consistent with theories of universal love and an unlimited atonement, go no further than to make mention of the "common" operations of the Spirit which man may, and does commonly, resist.

So much for the first paragraph of Section I of the Declaratory Act, and now in its second paragraph we may compare as follows,

The Declaratory Act says:—

" . . . this Church most earnestly proclaims, as standing in the forefront of the revelation of grace, the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to sinners of mankind, manifested especially in the Father's gift of His Son to be the Saviour of the world, . . . "

The Act says:—

" . . . the love of God . . . manifested especially in the Father's gift of His Son to be the Saviour of the world, in the coming of the Son to offer Himself a propitiation for sin."

Act:—

" . . . the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to sinners of mankind, manifested especially . . . and in the striving of the Holy Spirit with men to bring them to repentance."

Confession:—

"Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth . . . by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God." (xi; 1).

"They (our first parents) being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed; and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation." (vi; 3).

"Every sin, both original and actual, . . . doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is . . . made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal." (vi; 6).

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice." (iii; 7).

If we take the teaching of this paragraph as a whole its tendency is, obviously, in the direction of the Arminian viewpoint to make the human will sovereign as to whether or not man believes the Gospel; in contrast with the clear Confessional statement of the doctrine of human impotence and inability, (as well as responsibility), and of "Covenant" theology in terms of which human guilt and righteousness are present, in their basic meaning, by way of imputation from Adam and Christ respectively. (cf. Rom. ch. 5). The last sentence in the paragraph is an unabashed attempt to side-step from the solemn issue of the divine reprobation of the wicked.

In the third and last paragraph of Section I specific matters are dealt with, and comparison of the statement of Confession and Act makes evident that the professed "explanation" is, in fact, contradiction.

Confession:—

" . . . neither of which may be dispensed by any, but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained." (xxvii; 4).

Act:—

"That this Church also holds that all who hear the gospel are warranted and required to believe to the saving of their souls;"

"and that in the case of such as do not believe, but perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the gospel call."

"That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin."

Act:—

"That it is the duty of those who believe, and one end of their calling by God, to make known the gospel to all men everywhere for the obedience of faith."

"Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, . . . (x; 3).

" . . . nor is the Confession of Faith to be held as teaching, that any who die in infancy are lost, . . .

" . . . so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word." (x; 3).

" . . . or that God may not extend His mercy, . . . to those who are beyond the reach of these means (the Gospel)."

Palpably, the contradiction is between the duty of proclaiming the Gospel belonging to **all believers** and **ministers of the Word**; between **all** infants and **elect** infants being saved; and, between those who are **beyond** the reach of the Gospel and the elect who are **incapable in themselves** of being outwardly called by this means.

If my assessments of the former paragraphs are correct, the praise of being consistent must be accorded to the makers of the Declaratory Act; for, a Plymouth Brethren view of the ministry, the utmost charity in respect of infants, and the hope of salvation for Mohammedans, Buddhists, etc., if not the Larger Hope for another world, are beliefs which find a ready place in the theological system where election, a limited atonement, efficacious grace, imputation and reprobation are excluded.

Section II of the Act deals with the subject of man's condition as fallen in Adam, and here again it may not be without advantage if we place alongside each other the terms of the Church's Creed and those of that Act which purported to cast a clearer light upon it.

Confession:—

"By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they fell from their original righteousness and communion, with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body." (vi; 2).

" . . . we are utterly indisposed disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, . . . " (vi; 4).

Act:—

"That in holding and teaching, according to the Confession of Faith, the corruption of man's whole nature as fallen, this Church also maintains that there remain tokens of his greatness as created in the image of God; that he possesses a knowledge of God and of duty; that he is responsible to comply with the moral law and with the gospel; . . . "

The language of the Act here, notwithstanding its studied ambiguity, cannot well fail to leave the impression that fallen man possesses some **ability** to do good. This we must, in line with the plain teaching of the Confession, be careful to deny; and, further, out of jealousy for the truth of Scripture, discriminate with due care in respect of the truths to which the words of the Act patently refer, i.e. Conscience in man, and what the Apostle calls, "the work of the law written in their hearts", (Rom. 2; 15). It may be observed that, neither the fact of being responsible to

God nor a certain measure of appreciation as between right and wrong do, singly or together, provide fallen man with any actual ability, of himself, to perform good.

The concluding part of this Section of the 1892 Act vindicates the need of insisting upon the entire lack of ability in fallen man to do, of himself, that which is good; for, in speaking of the "aid" of the Holy Spirit, the framers of the Act adopted the language of Arminianism and imply a residual of life being present in the human soul. Thus, they go on to assert that, as something apart from the influence of the Holy Spirit, natural man, "is yet capable of affections and actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy". The true facts of the case are of a very different order; for, while natural man may, under the common, restraining grace of the Divine Spirit, perform works which, as to the matter of them, are good, yet, because they are not done from a right motive of doing glory to God, they entirely lack merit and are, in fact, sinful. This teaching, secured by the Confession in its sixteenth Chapter, conserves fully the doctrine of man's total inability, the position which the makers of the Act were at such pains to demolish.

In the remaining two Sections of the Declaratory Act matters are treated of which are not so directly questions of doctrine so that a case might be made out for their exclusion from this article. On the other hand, however, they bear so powerfully upon the interests of maintaining the orthodox position in theology that some brief mention must be made of them.

So to continue my method of direct comparison; Section III in its first part, may be considered in the light of an Act of the Free Church Assembly passed in 1846.

1846 Act:—

"The General Assembly think it right to declare that, while the Church firmly maintains the same Scriptural principles of the duties of nations and their rulers to true religion and the Church of Christ for which she has hitherto contended, she disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles . . ."

1892 Act:—

"That this Church disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, . . ."

It will be seen that the words of the latter Declaratory Act were taken directly from the earlier legislation but, in being deprived of their limiting explanation, have been given a general meaning of a dangerous tendency so as to effectively open the door for union with the "voluntary" United Presbyterian Church. In a spirit very different from this, the 1846 Act had fully conserved the Establishment principle in religion and its aim was simply to

justify the action of the Free Church fathers when they severed a state connection which had become vitiated through the intolerance of the civil power of the day.

Confession:—

"God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are, in any thing, contrary to His Word; or beside it, in matters of faith, or worship." (xx; 2).

Act:—

"... and does not consider her office-bearers in signing the Confession, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment."

The words of the Westminster fathers allow to man, in relation to his conscience, liberty from all merely human requirements in order that he may be found a total captive to the commandments of his Maker and Law-giver as set forth in the Scriptures. It would, however, be entirely gratuitous to assume that this was the position of an Act professedly designed to provide for the alleged scruples of such as had difficulty in accepting the whole doctrine of the Confession. Rather, it seems certain that in their insistence upon, "liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment", the framers of the Act were successful to the end, "to betray true liberty of conscience". (xx; 2).

With regard to the final Section we may compare,

Confession:—

"The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils . . . are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." (i; 10).

Act:—

"That, while diversity of opinion is recognised in this Church on such points in the Confession as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith therein set forth, the Church retains full authority to determine, in any case which may arise, what points fall within this description, and thus to guard against any abuse of this liberty to the detriment of sound doctrine, or to the injury of her unity and peace."

The practice of the Free Church, as instanced by the action of her General Assembly, had already shown that there was more than one fundamental matter on which diversity of opinion was allowed; and the sad irony of the situation was such; that, while this Section of the Act was, ostensibly, a bulwark of sound doctrine, its now infamous formula, — "the substance of the Reformed Faith" — has failed to conserve, not merely the doctrine of the plenary inspiration of Scripture, but likewise that of the Divine Sonship and the physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Again, it was a situation precarious in the extreme that the defence of the Christian Faith should be left in the irresolute hands of the Assembly's majority. In a word, the difference in this, — the

Confessional statement places the Church in the position of subjection to Scripture whereas the Act subordinated Scripture teaching to the Church's arbitrary will, a position at one with the arrogant claims of Popery.

In concluding my survey one is conscious of difficulty in finding language adequately to condemn the Declaratory Act of 1892. It was, of course, the greatest impertinence to place the historic, accurate and comprehensive Westminster Confession in a position of subjection to an Act of four brief sections, each of which was in the vaguest of terms; but, at the same time, the device proved sufficient to entirely subvert and nullify the Scriptural teaching of the Confession. The 1647 Confession is faithful to God in the revelation that He has given in the Bible concerning Himself and man's need and duty relative thereto; but I trust that sufficient has been said in the foregoing pages to show that the 1892 Act contends for something very different from that. It savours of the "flesh" throughout and, in common with every theory at variance with the teaching of Scripture, seeks to exalt unregenerate man and belittle the grace of God with the two-fold, inevitable result that the Divine glory is compromised and man left in the misery of an unsaved state. A complementary article will make very evident that to sow the wind is to reap the whirlwind (cf. Hosea 8; 7) and we need the prayer,

"Arise, Lord, let not man prevail;
judge heathen in thy sight:
That they may know themselves but men,
the nations, Lord, affright."

(Ps. 9; 19, 20).

THOUGHTS ON THE PSALMS

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

Psalm Fifty-one

Verse 4. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest."

The confession continues. What David has specially in mind is his great sin. In a very special way that had been against his fellows. Bathsheba he had defiled, Uriah he had caused to be killed, and upon his own family he had brought the scandal of having an adulterous father, and later they were to share in the miserable consequences of the sin. The nation too suffered because Absalom's civil war is traceable to his father's sin, and all the pious in the land must have felt the shock administered to religion by the same. David is to some extent aware of how grievously his

sin has affected others, but the reality of his repentance appears most clearly in his awareness of his prior relationship to God, and of the iniquity of his terrible sin as committed against Him. God is the Lawgiver, and the evil was done in his sight who searched and knew David. How depraved the king now saw himself to be in that he had sinned under the very eye of the God of holiness!

Nathan had pronounced judgment upon David; we can read about it in 2 Sam. 12, v. 10-12. Vile and bloody deeds would make his family history a tragic one. The justice of the sentence is acknowledged. Surely it was grace alone that made the king so acquiescent! How different his attitude to the moans of those who complain about the troubles which follow their sins, as if their faults were not so heinous as to warrant such retribution.

It is well to note at this point that God's forgiveness does not exclude chastisement so adjusted to the nature of the wrongdoing as to be called retribution. The retributive judgments which sometimes fall upon individuals and communities are often related to the sins thus punished, for example, the destruction of Jerusalem and its inhabitants who said of Christ: "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Matt. 27, v. 25). And, as in the case before us, the chastisements which God inflicts upon his erring people are often clearly related to their transgressions. Lust and cold-blooded murder had been David's sins. He was to see these same sins enacted in his own household. The thought that a Christian's transgressions may bring a recompense involving one's own offspring in trouble and sorrow ought in itself to be a solemn deterrent from sin.

Verse 5. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

David is not yet finished confessing. His awful sin has drawn his attention to the nature from which it sprang. This is not intended to palliate the offence by attributing it to something over which he had no control. Many are given to this additional sin in making excuses. "I am rather short in the grain, therefore I sometimes lose my temper." Rather it is to complete his self-condemnation that David says this. Knowing that he had a bad nature, he had boldly entered into temptation.

This verse clearly states the fact of original sin. The doctrine is rejected by many today, but the Scriptures teach it, and it perfectly accounts for the fact that all men are sinners. There never has been any exception to the rule that the children of Adam, as soon as they begin to act morally, begin to sin. Scripture endorses this by such statements as: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm 14, v. 3). And, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child." (Prov. 22, v. 15). That this evident sinful-

ness of nature is consequent upon the imputation of the guilt of the very first sin to all Adam's posterity is equally clearly taught in God's Word, e.g.: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. 5, v. 19). It would be the wisdom of every sinner to acknowledge this humbling, tragic fact, as David does here, for it is because it was righteous on God's part to impute Adam's first sin to us, that it is just for Him to impute Christ's righteousness to those who believe in Him.

Verse 6. "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

The confession has closed with an acknowledgment of the sinfulness of his very nature because David knows that if he is to be saved from sin, it must be from sin in its entirety, in the heart as well as in the life. The all-seeing One requires sincerity and rectitude inwardly as well as a life conformable to his law. The second part of the verse has a hopeful strain. Awful as his sin has been, David now perceives that the whole experience has enlarged his understanding of what salvation is from, and what it brings about. He is wiser now inasmuch as he has seen more of the hideous nature of sin, and more of the majesty, holiness and grace of the God against whom he had sinned.

Verse 7. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Here begins the plea for deliverance from sin, from all his sin. Hyssop was a plant used to sprinkle blood or water on persons requiring ceremonial cleansing, such as a leper or one who had touched a dead person. (Lev. 14; Numb. 19). David's desire is for the real washing which these ceremonies symbolized, and which Paul describes in Hebrews 9, v. 13, 14. "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Nothing less than this would suit David. We need the same so that our souls' stains may be fully cleansed away. Which leads us to ask, how white is whiter than snow? This strange expression can only refer to the perfect justification through the infinite merit of Immanuel, imputed to us and received through faith alone. In other words, it is "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." (Rom. 3, v. 22). Not a mere creature righteousness, but the righteousness which the God-man wrought out in order to clothe His loved ones, shall constitute their cleanness in God's sight through the ages of eternity. "Whiter than snow!"

ECUMENISM

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

(continued from page 10)

As we already said, the effect of reducing any basis or major disagreement to — just looking at the subject from another angle — is subtle and disastrous, and vitiates our judgment before we enter their idolatrous places of worship.

It is easy enough to speak of real differences of doctrine and worship in terms of different emphasis or cultures, but the Lord makes it very clear in His word that those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men, worship Him in vain. However numerous the worshippers, however solemn and imposing the ritual, if tradition is put on a par with the Word of God, their worship is mere mockery and idolatry. Thus, if getting to know one another entails worshipping in the midst of God dishonouring idolatry it may be a step to unity, but it is also a step towards eternal ruin.

Observers too readily become participants. Now, the Ecumenical leaders know very well, that unless the rank and file of the Church are interested in the movement, it will not succeed. Therefore they argue, that although union may be legislated in world Ecumenical councils and assemblies, true unity must be born and nurtured in the local parishes and communities. This attempt to rouse interest at every level is essential to the success of the movement. In good common sense every effort is being made to influence the minds of ordinary church members in the drive for Unity. Such action seems to us to indicate two things (i) That the movement for unity is the fond idea of a few top brassmen and not that of the rank and file. (ii) That the ordinary church member is either apathetic, disgusted, or perplexed as far as Church Unity is concerned.

Respect for the sincerity of others and for their religious beliefs, no matter how monstrous or idolatrous they may be — is another method by which Ecumenism is to succeed. For such an attitude towards error, we have yet to find Scriptural and Biblical authority. What respect, it may well be asked, had the Apostle for the Pharisees? What of His holy advice to the disciples when they told him that the Pharisees were offended at what He had said? "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind." (Matthew 15:14).

I wonder what the Ecumenical hermeneutists would say on this passage of Truth, because these are the words of the same Lord as prayed for the unity of His people? Does the Lord indeed command men to respect evil or idolatry? The respect that Isaiah had for the sincerity of the idolators of his own day may be seen

from Isaiah chapter 44.

The respect for sincerity and error commended by the Ecumenical leaders is probably proportionate to their lack of respect for Truth and loyalty to the evangelical faith. But the time would fail us to enumerate the subtle, and specious methods applauded and employed by the Ecumenical leaders, in their devotion to their man made image of Unity. Dialogue at every level — respect for sincerity — the removal of ignorance — to these add the practice of love, humility, concord, and goodwill, and you have then all but one — one which the Ecumenical does not mention, but which has been most trenchantly and devastatingly exposed by Professor Henderson who has first hand experience and information of Ecumenical activities and tactics within the pale of his own church.

To illustrate what I refer to — I shall let Professor Henderson speak for himself. Here I quote :

“Any criticism of the Ecumenical Movement in this book is to the effect that its projected solution of the contradiction of Christian lovelessness by means of a series of ecclesiastical mergers is so grotesquely superficial that in the end it can only exacerbate the problem, and has indeed already begun to do so. This is because the Ecumenical Movement refuses to face up to the fact of power. In the ‘Observer’ of 1st January 1967 there is a very moving article by Dr Charles Davis entitled, ‘Why I left the Roman Catholic Church’. In the course of it he writes, ‘As for papal documents, I sometimes think there is need for a new science of Vaticanology, in order to discover which pressure groups have succeeded in getting their way and to interpret in the light of the current Roman background the more cryptic references to opinions vaguely reprobated’. Only those with first hand knowledge of Catholic ecclesiastical politics could meet the need indicated by Dr Davis and produce his new science of Vaticanology. And this book, apart from the present introductory sector, was written before Dr Davis’ article was published. But I wonder if ‘mutatis mutandis’, his sentence does not describe what I have tried, however inexpertly to do in connection with a field of ecclesiastical politics familiar to me, the relations between my own church, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England. Perhaps, however, the most important thing about the ecclesiastical corridors of power is not where they are located, but whether the activity that goes on in them coheres with the demand for love and truth in the inward parts, which is basic to the ecclesiastic’s religion.”

Professor Henderson continues, “In the ecclesiastical sphere the adherents of the Movement engage in intense political activity and incessant propaganda to bring about oneness. It never occurs to them to analyse the term ‘oneness’ and to look at the more dis-

creditable as well as the more creditable drives which lie behind any movement toward oneness. Once this were done it would certainly be more difficult to describe, as is frequently done, the whole movement as an activity of the Holy Spirit (with the convenient implication that anyone critical of it is opposing the Holy Spirit). But it would be conducive to clarity.

Ecumenicals have never had any inhibitions in querying the motives of their opponents. C. H. Dodd's work on non-theological obstacles to union has had a lot of success. Is it too much to ask them to search their own?

Apparently they are reluctant to, or should I say unwilling and afraid to do this. In dealing with the infamous Bishops' Report of 1957 the Professor proceeds to help them to do this. He says that "The first serious attempt of Anglican imperialism to take over the Church of Scotland came to a head in 1957 with the publication of a Joint Report. This report, later to be called in Scotland the Bishops' Report, was signed by twelve representatives of the Church of England, twelve of the Church of Scotland, three of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and four of the Presbyterian Church of England. The Report, as one of the Scottish signatories accurately predicted a few months before its publication, came as a bombshell in the Church of Scotland. The reason for this was that that Church had not realised what a stranglehold the Ecumenical party had gained over its diplomacy. Nor had it realised just how far that party was prepared to go in signing a Report which can only be called an ecclesiastical Munich. On the other side of the border the document was admirably calculated not to cause the slightest ripple at a vicarage tea party. The only approach to a concession which the Anglicans made in the Report, a vague promise to introduce something like the eldership into their system, they subsequently never ever bothered to discuss among themselves. It is hard to believe that they ever had the slightest intention to implement it.

There was nothing vague about the concession the Kirk was to have to make. Bishops, duly consecrated into the apostolic succession, were to be set up as permanent moderators of presbyteries. This was quite a drastic alteration of the power structure of the Church of Scotland. The Moderator of a Presbytery was to be changed from being a mere temporary chairman into someone whom it would be injudicious to disagree with, if one valued one's professional future. This is a matter where it is foolish to shut one's eyes to the naked reality of power. A chairman who can affect the professional futures of his committee members, adversely or otherwise, is much more likely to get his way with them than one who cannot.

Professor Henderson proceeds to show that the propaganda of

the Ecumenical Movement had already brought about within the Church of Scotland a formidable group of Anglicans, whose practical skill enable them to gain control of such vital committees as the Inter Church Relations Committee, and the Panel and Doctrine Committee. Because of their ability to seize power and to keep it these Ecumenists were well able to appoint the conveners and personnel they desired, and thus secure a majority on all negotiating committees with other churches. The creation of a monopoly power structure was their ultimate aim, where the individual believer who disagreed with them would inevitably be denied the ordinances of the church. "With the possibility," says Dr Henderson, "of an Anglican take-over bid being successful, it is obvious that for the non-Ecumenist the time could be fairly near when he would have to decide whether he should leave a church which had departed from the principles he held when he entered it."

These are ominous words coming from a leading theologian in the Church of Scotland — "If the Reid Committee," he continues, "brings on a third successor to the Bishops' Report and the Grey document, and is successful, then he must allow the Ecumenists to construct their one Church which is closed to all who cannot accept the over-beliefs of fifty-six thousands Scottish Episcopalians." Further, in connection with press reports of the Grey document with its proposal for Episcopal ordination of all Church of Scotland ministers, the methods of the Ecumenists are again exposed to view. Evidently they made serious charges against the press, which they could not substantiate, and which in truth applied more to themselves than to the press reporters which they attacked so abusively. A work of darkness if it is to thrive, usually requires its native element of deceit, and we are therefore not surprised to discover that the enthusiasts of this movement had recourse to high handed and dishonest action in seeking to attain their objective.

Ecumenical ambiguous language is framed to conceal, rather than describe events, and we are strongly inclined to agree with Professor Henderson that the idea of the ONE church is the worst that ever influenced the minds of Christians. To be taken over by Anglicanism means having to accept Bishops and the myth by which Bishops justify their power — the so called doctrine of the Apostolic succession.

To sum up then, the motives, arguments and methods of the leaders of the Ecumenical movement cannot stand the light of man's scrutiny, not to speak of the blaze of the Divine omniscience. Party politics, the power lust, and the covering of one sin by another are tactics which are evidently being used by the Ecumenists.

In the light of the facts that we have stated, and the observations we have made regarding this Movement, most of you may well have anticipated what we have to say by way of conclusion. The progress of the Ecumenical Movement may continue to capture the headlines; the leaders of most churches may speak with one consent, and view the Movement as an unexpected and unprecedented step forward in the religious field, but **WE** must, like Micaiah of old, be prepared to differ from them. Although we have endeavoured to state clearly the scriptural and conscientious grounds for this attitude of mind, our judgment will no doubt be condemned by many as uncharitable. As far as we can see, however, the only foreseeable advantage, if the Unionists gain their objective, would be that the line between those who adhere to the Bible and the Reformed Faith, and those who do not, would be more clearly drawn. Our study of the Movement has deepened our conviction that it is a Romeward and Hellward movement. We were oppressed, rather than impressed by much of what we read of Ecumenical activity, and feel deeply thankful to the Lord, that in spite of such prevailing darkness and blindness, there is still a remnant who take the same stand with regard to the Bible as the Reformers did. Our study has also opened our eyes to the tremendous gulf between Evangelicals and Modernists.

In our view, the Movement is not only a grave peril and menace, but constitutes a challenge to our spiritual liberties, and a rejection of our dearly bought Protestant heritage. If ever there was a call to **PRAYER** on the part of the true followers of Christ, it is now. If ever David's words in Psalm 119 were fitting it is now

"Tis time thou work Lord
For they have, made void
Thy law divine."

and having prayed for Divine intervention, let us take action, by seeking the anointing of the Spirit, whereby we shall know the saving, sanctifying, emboldening power of the Truth. More precious than fine gold should be the heritage we enjoy, the plain preaching of the pure Gospel, the exercise of Presbyterian discipline, and the administration of the Sacraments in simplicity and purity. Let us strive then, to understand and appreciate the Scriptural basis of all we enjoy, in Church government, doctrine and practice. Let us expose and oppose this movement with all the means at our disposal, and at the same time let us pray for a spiritual awakening throughout the land — for only thus will the respective powers of Rome and Modernism begin to wane. Let us pity, and pray for poor blinded Roman Catholics, and the millions of so called Christians, who are obviously led astray by their leaders. May the Lord hasten the day, when men will join hands to "Earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude, verse 3).

JOHN CRAIG(Extracted from *Scots Worthies*)

The subject of this sketch was born about the year 1512, and had the misfortune to lose his father next year at the Battle of Flodden. Notwithstanding this misfortune, he obtained a good education, and removing to England, became tutor to the children of Lord Dacre. In consequence of war arising between England and Scotland, he returned to his native country, and became a monk of the Dominican Order. Having afforded some reason for a suspicion of heresy, he was cast into prison, but being acquitted, he returned to England, and endeavoured, by the influence of Lord Dacre, to procure a place at Cambridge, in which, however, he was disappointed. He then travelled to France, and thence to Rome, where he was in such favour with Cardinal Pole, that he obtained a place among the Dominicans of Bologna, and was appointed to instruct the novices of the cloister. Being advanced to the rectorate, he had access to the library, where, happening to read Calvin's "Institutes", he became tainted with the Protestant heresy.

Craig did not conceal his new views; he was laid hold of, sent to Rome, thrown into prison, tried, and condemned to be burnt; from which fate he was only saved by an accident. Pope Paul IV having died the day before his intended execution, the people rose tumultuously, dragged the statue of his late holiness through the streets, and, breaking open all the prisons, set the prisoners at liberty. Craig immediately left the city; and, as he was walking through the suburbs, he met a company of banditti, — one of whom, taking him aside, asked him if he had ever been in Bologna? On his answering in the affirmative, the man inquired if he recollected, as he was one day walking there in the fields with some young noblemen, having administered relief to a poor maimed soldier, who asked him for alms? Craig replied that he had no recollection of such an event; the bandit told him, however, that he could never forget the kindness he had received on that occasion, which he would now beg to repay by administering to the present necessities of his benefactor. In short, this man gave Craig a sufficient sum to carry him to Bologna.

Craig was afraid lest some of his former acquaintances might denounce him to the inquisition; accordingly, he directed his course to Milan, avoiding all the principal roads, for fear of meeting an enemy. One day, when both his money and strength were exhausted by the journey, he came to a desert place, where he threw himself down upon the ground, and almost despaired of life. At this moment a dog came fawning up to him, with a bag of money in its mouth, which it laid down at his feet. The

despairing traveller instantly recognised this as "a special token of God's favour"; and, picking up fresh energy, proceeded on his way till he reached the village, where he obtained some refreshment. He now turned to Vienna, when, professing himself of the Dominican order, he was brought to preach before the Emperor, Maximilian II, and soon became a favourite at the court of that sovereign. His fame reaching Rome, Pope III sent a letter to the Emperor, desiring him to be sent back as one that had been condemned for heresy. The Emperor generously gave him a safe guidance out of Germany.

On reaching England, about the year 1560, Craig heard of the Reformation which had taken place in his native country, and offered his services to the church. He found, however, that having been for the long period of twenty-four years absent from the country, he was unfitted to preach in his vernacular tongue, and was therefore obliged for some time to make known the Truth to the learned in Latin. Having partly recovered his native tongue, he was appointed next year to be the colleague of Knox, in the Parish Church of Edinburgh, which office he held for nine years. In 1567, the Earl of Bothwell obtained a divorce from his lawful wife, preparatory to his marriage with Queen Mary. The Queen sent a letter to Mr Craig, commanding him to publish the banns of matrimony betwixt her and Bothwell; but on Sabbath, having declared that he had received such a command, he added, that he could not in conscience obey it, the marriage being altogether unlawful. He was immediately sent for by Bothwell, to whom he declared his reasons with great boldness. He was reprov'd for this conduct at the time by the council; but two years afterwards, it was declared by the Assembly that he had acted as a faithful minister. Thus John Craig continued not only a firm friend to the Reformation, but a bold opposer of every encroachment made upon the crown and dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In 1579, Mr Craig being appointed minister to the King (James VI), returned to Edinburgh from Aberdeen and district where he had been preaching and teaching the youth in the College. He was compiler of part of the Second Book of Discipline, and the writer of the National Covenant, signed in 1580 by the King and his household, which was destined in a future age to exercise so mighty an influence over the destinies of the country. In 1584, when an Act of Parliament was made, that all ministers, masters of colleges, etc., should, within forty-eight hours, compeer and subscribe the Act of Parliament concerning the King's power over all estates, spiritual and temporal, and submit themselves to the Bishops; Mr Craig and some others having opposed this Act, were called before the council, and asked, "How they could be so bold as to controvert the late Act of Parliament". Mr Craig

replied, they would find fault with anything repugnant to God's Word. At which answer the Earl of Arran started to his feet, and said they were too pert; that he would shave their heads, pare their nails, and cut their toes, and make them an example unto all who should disobey the King's command, and his council's orders; and forthwith charged them to appear before the King at Falkland, on the 4th September following.

Upon their appearance at Falkland, they were again accused of transgressing the foresaid Act of Parliament, and disobeying the Bishop's injunction, when there arose a hot discussion between Mr Craig and the Bishop of St. Andrews. The Earl of Arran interfered, and spoke most outrageously against Mr Craig, who coolly replied "that there had been as great men set up higher, who had been brought low". Arran rejoined, "I shall make thee of a false liar, a true prophet", and, stooping down on his knee he said, "now I am humbled". "Nay", said Mr Craig, "mock the servants as thou wilt, God will not be mocked, but shall make thee find it in earnest, when thou shalt be cast down from the high horse of thy pride, and humbled". This came to pass a few years afterwards, when he was thrown off his horse by a spear by James Douglas of Parkhead, killed, and his corpse exposed to dogs and swine before it was buried.

John Craig was forthwith discharged from preaching any more in Edinburgh, and the Archbishop of St. Andrews was appointed to preach in his place; but as soon as the latter entered the great church of Edinburgh, the whole congregation except a few court parasites, went out, and it was not long before Craig was restored to his place and office.

On the 27th December, 1591, when the Earl of Bothwell and his accomplices came to the King and Chancellor's chamber doors with fire, and to the Queen's with a hammer, in the Palace of Holyrood House, with a design to seize the King and the Chancellor, Mr Craig, upon the 29th, preaching before the King, upon the two brazen mountains in Zechariah, said, "As the King had lightly regarded the many bloody shirts presented to him by his subjects craving justice, so God in His providence had made a noise of crying, and fore-hammers, to come to his own doors". The King would have the people to stay after sermon, that he might purge himself; and said, "If he had thought his hired servant (meaning Mr Craig, who was his minister) would have dealt in that manner with him, he should not have dealt with him so long in his house". Mr Craig, by reason of the crowd, not hearing what he said, went away.

John Craig died on the 4th December, 1600, aged 88, his life having extended through the reigns of four sovereigns.

Mr Craig will appear, from this short memoir, to have been a

man of uncommon resolution and activity. He was employed in most part of the affairs of the Church, during the reign of Queen Mary, and in the beginning of that of her son.

HOW CAN I, A SINNER, COME NEAR TO JESUS ?

by the late D. A. Doudney

"The life of the flesh is in the blood". Lev. 17.11.

"Without shedding of blood, there is no remission". Heb. 9.22.

Perhaps the reader will say, "I have read with interest what you have written, and there is no denying that the facts you have brought forward are encouraging; but still withal I have a weight upon my conscience and deep sorrow of heart. Sin lies like a heavy burden there, I cannot be at ease whilst yet I am in ignorance that my sins are forgiven. If they were pardoned, should I not ere this have felt relief? Oh, that the Lord would say to me as He did to the poor woman of whom you have spoken, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee!' There — then — I could be happy, but not before!"

Well, now, dear reader, I am glad indeed to hear you express yourself in these terms; and most thankful shall I be, if the Lord is pleased, through any poor instrumentality of mine, to lead you to obtain that relief, and to experience that place, which you so earnestly crave.

If you return to the 12th Chapter of Exodus, you will find, that upon the eventful night in which the Israelites were to leave Egypt, the head of each family was to kill a lamb, and to sprinkle its blood upon the lintel and upon the two side-posts of the door of the house where they dwelt. And the Lord declared, that, when the destroying angel passed through the land to smite the first-born of the Egyptians, both man and beast, "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood (He said) I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt".

Moreover, the Lord added:

"And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. . . . And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses".

Now, this paschal-lamb, as it was called, was a type of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; (Rev. 13.8). And, as the slaying of the lamb in the house of the Israelites would not

have sufficed to have saved the first-born, unless its blood was sprinkled upon the lintel and the two-sides of the doors of their dwellings, so in like manner, the blood of Jesus (the antitypical Lamb slain from the foundation of the world) must be sprinkled upon each of our hearts and consciences, if so be those consciences are to be purged from all iniquity. The Lord says **now** as emphatically as He did, in days of old, "When I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you".

Now, as in accordance with the passage I quoted at the head of this chapter, **all real spiritual life centres in the blood!** I wish to be most particular here in seeking to fix this all-important thought upon you.

I am the more anxious, dear reader, because, in these days, it is a subject sought to be set aside, or reasoned away. This, however, by no means alters the fact, All true peace, all solid joy, all true scriptural and saving hope, is **based upon the blood**. Whatever men may say to the contrary, such is the fact; and it is borne out and supported by the Word of God, the only true standards "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them". (Isa. 8.28).

Now, in the 9th and 10th chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle dwells at large, and most emphatically, upon the offerings made under the law, or under the Jewish dispensation, as typifying and pointing directly to the Great Sacrifice which, in the fullness of time, was made by Christ Himself, who, "by His one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified". (Heb. 10.14).

He declares that under the former dispensation, "the high-priest had **daily** to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the people's; but Christ (the antitypical high-priest) he says: "this He did once, when He offered up Himself". (Heb. 7.27).

Again, in the 9th chapter, and 6th and following verses, the Apostle says: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, **not without blood**, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people". Then, after showing that this was all figurative and typical, and by no means perfect or conclusive, he adds: "But Christ, having come an High-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, **but by His own blood**, He entered once into the holy place, **having obtained eternal redemption for us**". "For (says the Apostle) if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the

purifying of the flesh". In other words, if this service, appointed as it was by God, to answer for the time being, the great object of pointing like a finger-post to that ALMIGHTY ONE who was to come; then when He really had come, and once and for all presented Himself a sacrifice: then "How much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit OFFERED HIMSELF without spot (or fault) to God, purge your conscience from dead works (or sins) to serve the living God".

Then, in the 10th chapter, the Apostle having shown that, under the former or shadowy dispensation "in those sacrifices there was a remembrance of sin every year": (it was only typically — not really — done away) he speaks of Christ, as the Surety and Substitute of His Church and people; "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. **For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified**".

And all this, dear reader, was in precise fulfilment of what had been foreshown of the Person and work of Christ, upwards of seven hundred years before He came to serve and to suffer, in the room and stead of every poor sinner to feel his condition as such, and to realize the great fact, that "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved". (Acts 4.12). "Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed". (1 Peter 2.24).

Reader, if you would have pardon of sin and peace of conscience, mark it is only by the doing and dying of the Lord Jesus Christ.

" BEING LET GO "

When the apostles, Peter and John, were set free by the Council, "being let go, they went to their own company", which was the company of "them that believed". When the carrier-pigeon is "let go", it flies to its home. When the needle is "let go", it flies to the magnet. When you are "let go" (that is, when you are free from your work, or business engagements, or other duties), where do you go to? What company do you naturally seek? Some have asked the question, "Where shall I go when I die"? Where do you go now you are alive? The answer to the first question may depend very much upon the answer to the second.

Peter and John, when they were freed from all restraint, "went to their own company". Which is your company? Some would feel like a fish out of water at a prayer-meeting. Others would

feel just the same at a music-hall or a race-course. To some the Coming of Christ would mean joy, and the thought of it brings happiness; to others the Coming of Christ would mean terror, and the thought of it brings trembling.

If you see a man walking along, you know, from the direction in which he is walking, where he is going, if he does not turn.

(From Old Magazine).

WESTCOTT AND HORT

These two men were, Dr (afterwards Professor) F. J. A. Hort (1828 - 1892) a very aggressive personality, and his friend Professor (afterwards Bishop) B. F. Westcott (1825 - 1901), both of Trinity College, Cambridge. **In doctrine they favoured the Romanising movement in their church, the 'Larger Hope' (of F. D. Maurice and Dean Farrar), the Darwinian hypothesis and the Old Testament Higher Criticism.** They had been those who had turned from the Textus Receptus and had become infatuated with the Codex Vaticanus (B) and the other four oldest manuscripts Codices Sinaiticus (Aleph), Alexandrinus (A), Ephraemi (C), and Bezae (D). They had come to feel that these, being the most ancient copies of the Scriptures known, must be the most accurate. For some years they had been at work on a re-construction of a new Greek New Testament text on this basis.

The Vaticanus, the Sinaiticus and the Bezae codices, Dean Burgon considered the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversions of truth, which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God. Like many scholars before him, he became convinced that these manuscripts survived, only because they were full of mistakes and little used.

Dean Burgon in his classic, the **Revision Revised**, deals with several hundred omissions and alterations Westcott and Hort made in their Greek New Testament.

"Shame — yes, shame on the learning" the Dean exclaimed "on the learning which comes abroad only to perplex the weak, and to unsettle the doubting, and to mislead the blind! Shame — yes, shame on the two thirds majority of well-intentioned, but most incompetent men, who — finding themselves (in an evil hour) appointed to correct 'plain and clear errors' in the English 'Authorised Version' — occupied themselves instead with falsifying the inspired Greek Text in countless places, and branding with suspicion some of the most precious utterances of the Spirit! Shame — yes, shame upon them!"

Extracts from "The Greek New Testament and The Modern Versions" by Bishop D. A. Thomson. (**The Reformation Link**, Dec. 1967 and **The Bible League Quarterly**, Jan.-March 1968.)

Let the Reformed Church in New Zealand and also all professedly evangelical bodies holding to the Westcott and Hort school take note!

W.M.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

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

Air a leantuinn bho t.d.

V. Am bheil thu air son maise? Tarruigidh so móran, ach air son so cha'n eil aon ann cosmhuil ri Criosd. Air son maise agus tlachdmhorachd, tha E gu neo-chrìochnach os ceann dhaoine agus ainglean. Tha sinn a leughadh mu Mhaois gu'n robh e anabharach tlachdmhor; agus mu Dhaidhbhidh gu'n robh e ruiteach, agus 'n a ghùis sgiamhach; agus tha **Iosephus** ag ràdh mu aon dhiubh gu'n robh a h-uile neach a chunnaic e fodh mhòr-iognadh agus air an tarruig le a mhaise. Ach ciod e bha'n a mhaise ann an coimeas ri Criosd? Na'n robh a' maise, agus maille r'a maise-san, maise dhaoine agus ainglean air an cur cuideachd, cha bhiodh ann ach neo-ni ann an coimeas ri maise Chrìosd: cha bhiodh e uibhir ri solus na coinneal is lugha fodh chomhair solus na greine mu mheadhon latha. Tha E "Sgiamhach agus glòrmhor," Isaiah iv. 2. An robh Maois maiseach? Tha Criosd gu neo-chrìochnach ni's maisiche; tha E ni's maisiche na "clann nan daoine." Salm xlv. 2. Agus na'n robh sùilean agad gu bhi faicinn a mhaise, cha b'urrain thu gu'n a bhi fodh mhòr iognadh dha thaobh, agus air do tharruig leis. An robh Daibhidh ruiteach le gnùis sgiamhach aige? Faic ciod a tha a chéile ag ràdh mu Chrìosd. "Tha fear mo ghràidh-sa geal agus dearg, sònruichte am measg dheich mìle." Dàn. v. 10., ni a tha nochdadh iomlanachd a mhaise; agus uime sin tha i dha cho-dhùnadh uile le so (air dhith labhairt mu mhaise gach pàirt dheth) "tha e uile gu leir ionmhuinn," rann 16, na tha E uile ghràdhach, Mar gu'n abradh i, Ciod a tha mì deanamh? Cha'n eil crìoch air a mhaise agus a shuairceantas; Cha'n eil nì Ann ach nì tha gràdhach; agus cha'n eil nì gràdhach ach na tha Ann-san; ni motha tha nì air bith anns a chruthachadh uile aig am bheil maise agus sgéimh gu leir ann gu bhi'n a sgàile agus na choslas air a mhaise agus air a sgéimh-san, "O ghrian mhaiseach," arsa **Rutherford**, "agus a ghealach sgiamhach, agus a reultan àluinn, agus a bhlàthaibh taitneach, a ròsaibh cùbhraidh, a lilidhibh taitneach; ach O, tha Criosd deich mìle uair deich mìle

ni's maisiche na iad uile. Mo thruaighe rinn mi eucoir Air," tha e'g ràdh, "ann a bhi deanamh samhladh Dheth anns an dòigh so: O ghrian dhubh agus a ghealach! Ach O an Tighearna Iosa Maiseach. O bhlàthan dubh, a lilidhibh agus a ròsan dubh! Ach O'n Tighearna Iosa Maiseach, maiseach, eadhon os ceann na h-uile maiseach! O neamhan dubh, ach O Criosd maisach! O ainglean dubh, ach O gu barraichte maiseach an Tighearna Iosa!" A dh'aon fhocal, tha diadhairean a toirt fa'n ear gu'm bheil nì eigin ann an Criosd ni's taitniche na slàinte, agus da-rìreadh tha na maisean a tha tàladh a chridhe, na h-oirdheirceasan a th'g eigneachadh anama ann an Pearsa an aon-ghràdhach so, a tha gu neo-chrìochnach thairis air slàinte fein. Is E dealrachadh, agus foillseachadh a mach glòir an Athar, Eabh. i. 3. O cò nach biodh air an eigneachadh le a mhais? Chuir sealladh beag agus iomradh Air nigheanan Ierusalem gu bhi dha iarruidh, Dàn. vi. 1. Agus am bì buaidh air bith aig oirbhse, a chùm a bhi dha'r tarruig agus dha'r tàladh dha ionnsuidh? Am bheil aon cho maiseach agus cho sgiamhach a cur an ceill a ghràidh do leithid do chreutairean dubh agus neo-mhaiseach 's a tha sibhse agus mise, agus an diùlt sinn E? An diùlt sinn an Tighearna gràdhach so? O gu'n tarruigeadh a mhaise sinn.

VI. Am bheil thù air son gràdh cho math ri maise? Air son nàdur milis, coibhneil, agus gràdhach? Tha so ionmhiannaichte do'n a h-uile: air son so cha'n eil aon cosmhuill ri Criosd: tha E de nàdur milis, gràdhach, maoth, agus tlachdmhor. Da-rìreadh is E Fhein gràdh: "Is gràdh Dia; agus an tì a tha fantuinn ann an gràdh than e'n a chòmhnuidh ann an Dia, agus Dia ann-san." I. Eoin iv. 16. Tha a ghràdh da chéile a gabhail a stigh ann gach tomhas, àirde, leud, doimhne Ann; seadh, tha e dol thar gach uile eolas, Ephes. iii. 19, nì a tha nochdadh meudachd agus eucomas a bhi tomhas a ghràidh-san. Mar gu'n abradh e mu thimchioll; Tha e ni's àirde na neamh, agus ni's doimhne na'n cuan; tha e ni's leatha na'n talamh, agus ni's fhaide na tìm uile, a mairsinn tre'n t-siorruidheachd; seadh, tha e dol os ceann eolais. Tha dà nì a tha dol os ceann ar 'n eolais; ar peacaidhean, agus gràdh Chrìosd: tha'n aon cho mòr, tha'n aon eile gu h-iomlan gun chrìoch gun ghrùnnd. Ged a bhiodh aig duine gach foghlom gu bhi dha mholadh, gidheadh ma tha e de nàdur greannach crosda, searbh, tha so dha dheanamh mì-thaitneach air son an daimh so; ach ri uile iomlanachdan, chuir Criosd so riubha, gu'm bheil E gu neo-chrìochnach gràdhach cho math ri bhi maiseach, agus de nàdur ro choibhneil, agus maoth r'a chéile. Uime sin, tha sinn a leughadh anns na Sgriobturan mu a ghràdh, a choibhneas, a mhacantas, uaisle, agus an leithidean sin; gach aon a comharachadh a mach millseachd chiatach agus thlachdmhor a nàduir. Ghuil E os ceann a naimhdean, eadhon iadsan a dhiùlt E mu dheireadh. Lucas

xix. 41, 42. Seadh, bha coibhneas Ann a thaobh a luchd-morta, agus rinn E ùrnuigh air an son, agus sin, 'n uair a bha iad dha mhorta; seadh, agus ghiùlain ùrnuigh mòran aca do neamh, Lucas xxiii. 34. O ciod e'n gràdh, ciod e'n caoibhneas, uime sin, a dh'fheumas a bhi Aige da chéile? Esan aig am bheil gràdh dha naimhdean, agus a leithid de ghràdh, ciod e'n gràdh a dh'fheumas a bhi Aige dha chàirdean! 'S e beachd milis a th'aig aon dhe na seanairean air an earrann mu dheireadh a dh'ainmich sinn: "Athair maith dhoibh, oir cha'n eil fhios aca ciod a tha iad a deanamh." " 'S e tha'n so," tha e'g ràdh, "focal a tha freagairt an Fhocail shiorruidh, tha E 'g ùrnuigh cha'n e mhàin air an son-san a tha dha gheur- leanmhuinn agus dha mhaslachadh, ach eadhon air son a mhortairean, a tagradh uile sheasamh maille ris an Athair air an son; mar gu'm biodh E'g ràdh, Athair, tha mi guidhe ort, leis a ghràdh athaireil a th'agad dhòmhsa, agus leis am bheil sinn 'n ar 'n aon, eisd rium as leth mo mhortairean; ann a bhi toirt maitheanas dhoibh, gabh ri gràdh do Mhic, a chùm gu'n d'thoireadh tù maitheanas da naimhdean." O ciod e'n caoibhneas a tha so a foillseachadh. Ann am focal, tha a ghràdh mar chuan aig nach eil aon chuid oir na grùnnd, ni motha is urrain E ach a bhi coibhneil r'a chuid Fein. Da-rìreadh, tha lagh a choibhnis 'n a bhilibh (mar a tha e air a ràdh mu'n deagh bhean, Gnàth. xxxi. 26) seadh, agus 'n a chridhe agus 'n a ghiùlain mar an ceudna; tha E uile làn de ghràdh. O gu'n tarruigeadh a ghràdh sibh! 'S cinnteach nach eil gràdh ann coltach ri a ghràdh-san, cha'n eil aon cho làn, cha'n eil aon cho saor, cha'n eil aon cho milis, cha'n eil aon cho torach, cha'n eil aon a tha'g eigneachadh coltach Ris, cha'n eil aon cho maireannach; far am bheil Esan a' gràdhachadh cha'n fhàilnich a ghràdh gu bràth, ni motha is urrain e bhi air a bhriseadh dheth; "Co sgaras sinn o ghràdh Chrìosd," tha'n t-Abstol ag ràdh, "An dean trioblaid, no àmhghair, no geur-leanmhuinn, no gorta, no lomnochduidh, no cunnart, no claidheamh? . . . Oir tha dearbh-bheachd agam, nach bì bàs, no beatha, no aingil, no uachdaranachdan, no cumhachdan, no nithean a tha làthair, no nithean a tha ri teachd, no àirde, no doimhne, no creutair sam bith eile, comasach air sinne a sgaradh o ghràdh Dhé a tha ann an Iosa Crìosd ar Tighearna." Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39. Agus tha mi smuainteachadh, tha duine diadhaidh ag ràdh, gu'n d'thubhairt a ghràdh neo-chaochlaidheach rium, tha mi toirt dùlan dhuit mo bhriseadh na m'atharrachadh. O fhearaibh, innsidh anamaibh aig am bheil fein-fhiosrachadh dhuibh cia cho milis, cho math, agus cho saoibhir agus a tha gràdh Chrìosd. Innsidh iad dhuibh gu'n dean aon sealladh, aon bhlas dheth, neamh anns an anam, gu'n bheil e ni's fearr na fion. Dàn i. 2. Agus an diùlt sibhse E agus a ghràdh mar an ceudna? An doirt sibh tarcuais air a leithid de chaoibhneas? O ciod e cho

ceart, uime sin, agus a theid sibh a dhith fodh a choruich! tha fearg Ann cho math ri gràdh; fearg air son a naimhdean, cho math ri gràdh air son a chéile; agus tha fhearg cho teth agus cho uamhasach agus a tha ghràdh cho milisagus cho comhfhurtail; seadh, tionndaidh a ghràdh, ma bhios e air a dhiùltadh leibh, gu feirg, agus cha'n eil fearg ann cosmhuil ri toradh gràidh a bhi air a mhi-ghnàthachadh: O uime sin, dùinibh a stigh ri Criosd an diugh.

(R'a Leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Alcoholism in Scotland

The number of those affected by alcoholism is on the increase in Scotland and this makes sad reading. The alcoholic is under the terrible grip of an unsatiable desire for strong drink at all times and is in the process of becoming a physical wreck and is liable to become incapable of applying himself to earning his living. Domestic misery and unhappiness ensue. The mental hospitals are receiving and dealing with an increasing number of these poor people, as special patients. The rate of such persons is four times higher than in England. In 1965, admissions to hospitals were 2,900, an increase of 1,100 since 1962. The age group of alcoholics was becoming younger, a report states. The whole picture of this matter is serious and depressing and even drunk-driving continues apace in all parts of the country. It is no wonder that these things obtain, from one fact alone — the tremendous extent to which money is expended on advertising all kinds of alcoholic drink to the encouraging of young men and women, as well as all other members of the public to indulge. The opening of new distilleries is front page news in the press, and when sales go down in any branch of the drink trade, there is lamentation on the part of heads of firms. Mr Bruce Millan, Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, at a recent conference on alcoholism, said: "Alcoholism is an illness, not a sin . . . and that a great deal can be done to prevent it as well as to treat it." We would like to know what is being done to **prevent** it by the Government. Mr Millan did not mention any means of prevention in the report we read of his address. Public-house licenses are granted in great numbers. Clubs are started up and become nothing but drinking premises on Sabbath and week-day. As to alcoholism being a sickness and not a sin; this is too glib an observation. When drunkenness is added to thirst, the sin of

drunkenness arises and in cases alcoholism follows. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap".

Anxiety in the Episcopal Church

A Committee of the Episcopal Church has expressed serious anxiety about a steadily decreasing income, and also that a movement begun in their Church called "To serve Thee better" was in danger of "running into sand". They suggest that an immediate rescue operation be launched to help their congregations to dedicate themselves to the policy, "To serve Thee better". The rescue operation it is suggested, be undertaken by a stewardship department, led by a director. We would suggest that a return to the preaching of the whole counsel of God and the doctrines of grace and to humble and earnest prayer for the Holy Spirit's power to accompany the Gospel, is what is needed in areas of the professing Christian Church in Scotland today. The Gospel of Christ in power is what is needed everywhere to open the hearts of sinners to the Saviour and to open the purses of the people for the Cause of Christ.

The Latest Propaganda for the Cult of Mary

From Egypt and the Coptic Church there, there recently emanated reports that appearances of the Virgin Mary have been seen in the vicinity of a Church a number of times by different people. There was linked up with this story the Biblical narrative of Mary's flight into Egypt with the Child Jesus, nearly 2000 years ago. What spiritual benefits sinners or saints are supposed to derive from this fantastic report remains a mystery. One thing was admitted by the Bishop of the Coptic Church, that this — supposed — appearance of Mary might indicate future victory for Egypt in war against Israel. What a strange and complicated idea, when Mary was the Mother of Jesus, the consolation of Israel, for whom godly Simeon waited and saw as the salvation of God, in the temple. It was suggested by a practical reporter that what might have been seen was the reflection of a light from a nearby motor garage. We may conclude this note with the words: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead".

Nigeria

At the time of writing, peace talks are likely between the Nigerian Federal Government and representatives of the people of Biafra in Nigeria. In the month of April a Biafran official stated in London — that the Federal Government were trying to exterminate the Biafrans, and he complained bitterly that the British Government were selling arms to the Federal Government.

This is the British Government which would not sell 'arms' to the South African Government for the defence of their country against external attack. We are not using our pages to support the sale of arms to any country; but we note that there has been no outcry by the Prime Minister's supporters for a ban on sales of arms to the Federal Government. Mission hospitals and civilians have been bombed by the Federal Government. British Missionaries have testified to this. Yet no debate at all, far less a vital debate, has arisen in the House of Commons on this issue. Truly many of the nations through the world at this present time, are in a very unsettled state. Many men and some nations appear to be eager to enter into controversy with others and then into open conflict and bloodshed. The Most High can turn the hearts and hands of men from conflict and war. "Wars into peace He turns". There is of course the view that His judgments are presently abroad in the earth. God has controversies with men and nations. Let us hear what He saith: "Be still, and know that I am God".

A Trade Union Opposes Sabbath Trading

The 321,000 strong Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, at its annual conference at Margate, declared out and out opposition to the proposal in Lord Derwent's Private Members Bill to extend trading on the Lord's Day. The Assistant Secretary of this Union declared: "Woe betide anyone who tried to turn Sundays for the shop worker into just another normal day." Whatever the religious motives or lack of true religious motives there were behind this strong opposition to working on the Lord's Day, one thing is certain that this Union recognised the need the worker has of one day in seven to lay aside his ordinary weekday labours and burdens. The law of the Sabbath, in the Fourth Commandment, recognises the need man has of this as well as setting forth other requirements. The law of God is not only holy and just, but good.

LITERARY NOTICE

Fair Sunshine, by J. Purves: Paperback; Price 5/-. The Banner of Truth Trust.

This volume of 203 pages has for its subject-matter the more prominent of the Covenanting martyrs of Scotland, together with a closing chapter giving a brief outline of Scottish Covenant history in the 17th century. The author deals with such notables as James Guthrie, Hugh MacKail, Richard Cameron, Donald Cargill, James Renwick, and various others, and writes in a clear readable style, showing a sympathetic attitude to Scotland's

heroes of the faith, and an insight into their views which warrants one to believe that the volume is the fruit of grace in the author. Those who value the contendings of the fathers, and the cause for which they suffered, will find it difficult to tear themselves away from this book until they have finished it. We often hear the complaint of Sabbath School teachers and others who have charge of the religious instruction of the young that they have great difficulty in getting suitable books to be given as prizes, but we have no hesitation in recommending this book for such a purpose, and especially in such a day as ours when Romanists and Modernists have poured out from the press their adulterated and biased literature. Great credit is due to the Banner of Truth Trust for issuing this book, which may be procured from the Free Presbyterian Bookshop, 160 Pitt Street, Glasgow, C.2.

JOHN COLQUHOUN.

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 — A. MacKay, Quidinish, £1; E. Robertson, Leven, £3; Math. 9, v. 36-38, \$25.

Home Mission Fund — Anon., £10; A. MacKay, Quidinish, 10/-.

Foreign Mission Fund — G. Gillies, Raasay, £3 for Hospital; Math. 9, v. 36-38, \$25; A. MacKay, Quidinish, 10/-; Mrs Sim, Ontario, £2 13s 9d; F. C. MacRae, Ontario, £4; Thank-offering £1 (last three per R. MacK.); Wm. Cornell, Virginia, U.S.A., 14/7.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' etc. Fund — Math. 9, v. 36-38, \$25.

College and Library Fund — Math. 9, v. 36-38, \$25.

Mission to the Jews Fund — J. Murray, 52 Lower Barvas, £3 18/- per R. MacK.

Home of Rest Fund — Anon., Oban, in memory of the late Mr John Grant, £10, per R. MacK.; Anon., Australia, £15 12s 4d.

The Publications Treasurer, Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, C.A., 10 Beaufort Road, Inverness, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Free Distribution Magazine Fund — "In Memory of the late Miss Margaret MacLeod, 251 Achnahaird, Achiltibuie, Ullapool" £7; Mrs MacK., Balchrack, Lairg, 3/-; H. Kersten, Grand Rapids, 18/-; Mr G. McD., Baldernock, 7/-; A.F., Oban, £7; Miss C. MacK., Laide, 8/-; K.F., Shildaig, 18/-; Mrs A. McG., Kishorn, 8/-; Mr and Mrs W.H.R. Croydon, £2 1/-.

Publications Fund — "For Free Bibles", Mr and Mrs R. Bruce, £5; "In Memory of the late Miss Margaret MacLeod, Ullapool" £7; A.F., Oban, £7.

Welfare of Youth — "In Memory of the late Miss Margaret MacLeod, Ullapool" £6; A.F., Oban, £6; Jeremiah, chap. 29, v. 13, £5.

The Treasurers of the following congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks —

Inverness — Resident £2; Resident £5; Resident £3 5/-; Resident, for car maintenance, £1; Resident £1; Resident £2; Donald Gordon, Shildaig, £1.

Beauly Church Building Fund — A Friend, Glendale, Skye, per Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, £3; A Friend, Fearn, per Mr J. MacLennan, £2; Friend, £50; Friends, £10; A Friend £5; "Lover of the Cause" £100; Per Mr A. MacLennan — Mr Graham, Muir-of-Ord, £5, "Muir-of-Ord" £5, A Friend £5, Psalm 122, £10/-; A. Macdonald £5; Nurse Campbell, Kirkhill, £5.

Oban — Two Portree Friends, £10 per Rev. M. MacSween, for Congregational Funds.

Greenock — A Friend, Lewis, £3; C.M., Lewis, £2. For Manse Purchase Fund — Mr and Mrs S., Stornoway, £2 (all above per Rev. L. MacLeod). Friend, Glasgow, £2, for Congregational Purposes.

Applecross — £50 for Congregational Purposes, from Two Friends of the Congregation, per Colin Gillies. £2 for New Motor Cycle, from a Friend, North Coast; £1 from a Friend, North Coast, for Church Painting, both per Rev. A. Murray. £5 for Church Painting, from a Friend of the Cause, per C. Gillies.

North Harris — £5 from Friend, Stornoway, for maintenance of Minister's Car, per Rev. A. MacKay; £80 from a Friend, in memory of her husband, divided out as follows: £20 Sustentation Fund, £20 Home Mission Fund, £20 Foreign Mission Fund, £10 for Tarbert Church, £10 for Kyles Scalpay Mission House, per Mr John MacInnes; £5 from Mrs MacKenzie, Tarmisaig, Tarbert, for Church Door Collection, per Mr John MacInnes.

Portree — £2 for Church Repairs, from "Achnahanaid Friend" per Rev. F. McD.

Stratherrick — 30/- from "A Friend", for Sustentation Fund.

Fort William — Church Extension Fund: A Friend, Portree, £5; Three Friends £5; June Fraser £1; Mrs McKellar £1 (all per Rev. J. A. McDonald). "Friend", Braemore, £10. Car Fund — "Friend", Glasgow, £2; S.S., £1; M.I.M., £5; W. McL. £1.

Uig — £5 for Congregational Purposes from Mrs Macleod, Carloway, in memory of loved ones, per M. Smith; £3 for Car Maintenance from M. A. Macrac, Uigen, per Rev. D. J. Macaskill.

Glendale — £3 for Car Park from one of Congregation.

Stornoway — Mrs Donald MacLean, 12 Builnacraig Street, £10 for Sustentation Fund and £10 for Foreign Mission Fund, in memory of her late husband.

Glasgow — Foreign Mission Fund: Rev. J. de Bres, Waalwijk, per A. Van Woerden for Mbumba Mission, £1 5/-; In memory of her dear Mother — "A Skye Friend" £10 for Mbumba Mission Hospital; Mr K. Huibregtse, Arke, Holland, £20; "For the Needy at Ingwenya", Mr and Mrs R. Bruce, £5 (all per R. MacK.). Home of Rest: Mr and Mrs R. Bruce per R. MacK., £10. College and Library: Mr and Mrs R. Bruce per R. MacK., £5. Aged and Infirm, etc.: Mr and Mrs R. Bruce per R. MacK., £20. On behalf of Reformation Translation Fellowship: Mr and Mrs R. Bruce per R. MacK., £5.

North Uist — Friend, Bonar Bridge, £5; Friend £1, Friend £5, Friend £5 (for Car Maintenance). Staffin Friend, £5 for electricity to Manse; Well-wisher, £5 for Congregational purposes; Friend, £1 for Foreign Mission (all per Rev. A.M.). Mrs MacLeod, Grimsary, £2 10/- for Sustentation Fund and £2 10/- for Aged Ministers, Widows and Orphans Fund; Mrs Saitterthwaite, Canada, £10 for Sustentation Fund; Mr D. MacLean, Perth, £3 for Hougharry Mission House Repairs.

Lairg — Per Wm. Sim, Anon., £2; Rosehall £1.