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CHURCH DISCIPLINE

According to the dictionary, **Discipline** means: instruction; a mode of life according to rules; subjection to control; an instrument of punishment; to be subject to discipline; to bring under control; to chastise.

As far as ecclesiastical discipline in the Christian Church is concerned, it was a prominent part of church government in the Apostolic age and was more or less recognised as essential down through the centuries of the church's history. It degenerated, for example, in the Middle Ages, to the exercising of Church authority in calling upon offenders within the church to do penance or pay for indulgences and such like practices. There was more than a tendency to hand over cases for discipline to the Civil Magistrate on the part of the Reformed Church, although this did not continue in parts of the Reformed Church in Holland, France and Scotland. This action adopted in cases of discipline was modified. The Second Book of Discipline, approved by the Reformed Church in Scotland in 1578, and by which church government was established in 1592 and 1690, is said to be a Presbyterian standard on order and government.

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has all along taken as its guide book on church government and discipline, H. Wellwood Moncrieff's **The Practice of the Free Church of Scotland**: (fourth edition).

At the beginning of chapter 5, on **Discipline**, the following statements occur: "Church discipline is held to be of great use and necessity in our ecclesiastical system. It is regarded as belonging to that government which Christ has instituted in the visible order of His kingdom, and which, by His institution, is essentially distinct from the government of Civil Magistrates. The purpose of it is declared to be . . . 'That the name of God, by reason of ungodly and wicked persons living in the church, be not blasphemed, nor His wrath provoked against His people; that the godly be not

leavened with, but preserved from, the contagion, and stricken with fear; and that sinners who are to be censured may be ashamed, to the destruction of the flesh, and saving of the spirit in the day of the Lord Jesus.' ”

The object of discipline is thus said to be a three-fold one — “The glory of God, the purity of the church, and the spiritual good of the offender. When scripturally and prudently exercised, discipline becomes more a privilege than a punishment, as one of the ordinances granted to the professing people of God.”

What is admitted as a ground of action?

“It admits of nothing as a ground for its action, but what has been declared censurable by the Word of God, or by some act or universal custom of the church agreeable thereto. It does not apply to every kind of sin, but to those sins only which **occasion scandal**, or tend, by their character, to **bring open reproach upon the cause of Christ**, or to **interfere manifestly with spiritual edification**”

These statements will stand the test of Scripture, are clear in their guidance and are wisely worded. There is great need today in different branches of the professing Christian church, for those in office to awaken out of sleep as far as church discipline is concerned and to apply their minds and their practice to the basic principles inherent in true church discipline.

For the further information of our readers we will briefly indicate some of the church censures which our church law stipulates in appropriate cases: (1) Admonition is the lowest kind of censure which takes the form of an affectionate warning; (2) Rebuke is a more formal censure, after conviction or confession of a scandalous offence; (3) Suspension from privileges; (4) Suspension from office either for a given time or without stating a period of time; (5) Deposition consists in formally depriving a man of the office which he held in the church; and (6) Excommunication is the highest censure. It consists in striking the offender off the communion roll, and declaring him no longer a member of the church.

Rev. Robert Forbes in his **Rules and Procedure** for Church Courts observes regarding censures: “None of these censures involve civil effects, but are purely spiritual; nevertheless they are very solemn, and, when inflicted on right grounds, are sanctioned and ratified by the church’s living Head in heaven.”

In recording these points relative to this vital subject, we have in view those readers inside and outside the church, who are not conversant with even these salient facts on church discipline. Once and again the general public are confronted with reports of what is said and what is done by some prominent members of churches, all apparently inconsistent with the doctrine of the Word

of God and the conduct required of Christians. Yet, little, or rather nothing at all, is heard of the exercise of real, Scriptural, faithful discipline on the part of Church Courts. This general lack of the exercise of discipline has contributed to a great degree to the spiritual declension and the compromising with the world, so prevalent in churches today. The exercise of God given authority is being resented and rejected on every hand in these times. It is a sad state of matters when the professing Christian church is afraid to use its authority to deal with offenders under its jurisdiction. Of course there are many who bear office in churches, who are offenders themselves as to doctrine and practice, and thus they have lost their power to govern in the church when obvious cases arise which ought to be subject to discipline. "Help, Lord: for the godly man ceaseth: for the faithful fail from among the children of men" (Ps. 12 : 1).

There is clear and divine guidance given by the Lord Jesus Christ, in certain cases which require the application of church discipline. This appears in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 18, as follows: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (ver. 15-17).

And the Apostle Paul instructs the church at Rome to act as follows in the case he refers to: "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16 : 17). Again; the Apostle had of necessity to give instruction to the church at Corinth in the matter of the exercise of discipline relative to offending members of that church. He writes to them thus: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat . . . do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Corinth., chap. V, vers. XI-XIII).

These references will suffice for our readers to see and study the place which was given by the Lord Jesus and in the apostolic church, to the exercise of church discipline. In all this of course there was made manifest that the Christian church in its best and most prosperous state under the Gospel, was anything but perfect as to the character and conduct of all its members. False brethren arose at times and backsliders appeared in the midst of the church,

and such persons constituted a real danger to the purity, witness and comfort of the church. Over against such grievous events, the church has authority and divine guidance to exercise discipline with the object in view, already stated.

When the Christian church, through any of its Courts, exercises discipline in a scriptural manner, relative to any person under its jurisdiction, then the church conserves a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man; and also preserves the witness of the church on the side of righteousness and against sin which is dishonouring to the church's Head and King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In certain matters, which we are not to detail here, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, is said by some of its critics to disallow liberty of conscience to its members. Is the church forbidden by Scripture to indicate to its members what it clearly conceives to be transgression of the law of God? We think not. The Apostle Paul laid down that even the "railer" was to be "put out" as well as the drunkard and other offenders. A church without discipline is a church which comes seriously short in its professed devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Any amount of spurious charity will not cover over such laxity. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah, chap. 8, v. 20).

THE STRAIT GATE

(Sermon preached by the late Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall)

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7 : 13-14).

Our text is part of the sermon that Christ preached on the Mount. That sermon begins with the fifth chapter and ends with the seventh chapter of Matthew. There was a great multitude in that audience. His own disciples were there, and many others who were still in a state of nature. Christ gave the first part of his sermon to his disciples, calling them several times blessed — "Blessed are the poor in spirit," etc. After addressing his own disciples, he began to speak to the unconverted, the great majority of whom composed his hearers. He did not neglect in his preaching those in a state of sin and misery, and thus set a good example before ministers of the gospel, who are to preach not only to the Lord's people but to others also.

Let us take up our subject thus:

- (1) The Gate.
- (2) The Exhortation.
- (3) The Reason to Enforce the Exhortation.

(1) The Gate. The gate is Christ. "I am the door." "I am the way." It is, "A Strait Gate." How is Christ "A Strait Gate?" (1) Negatively: he is not strait in his power to save. "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." He is not strait in his invitations to sinners. "Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." All to whom the message of salvation comes are invited to him. (2) Positively: (1) Because all who enter in by him must leave their sins outside the gate. "Let the wicked forsake his ways." Although Jesus saves his people, he saves them, not in their sins but from their sins. (2) Because he will not admit any who will not leave outside his own righteousness. He will admit the sinner but not his filthy rags — self righteousness. The gate is so strait that that cannot enter in by it. Many would give up the practice of sin in order to be saved, but would not renounce their own righteousness, and be indebted entirely to Christ for salvation. Such will find the gate too narrow for them when it is too late. They shall find themselves shut out from God and from heaven. The strait gate is the door of entrance to the narrow way. Christ is the gate, and if we would enter that gate we must be "born again." The gate is so strait that no unregenerate man can enter in thereat. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Christ is the door to that kingdom, and, if we would enter the kingdom of glory in the other world, we must enter the kingdom of grace in this world. When a soul believes in Christ, he enters in the way that leads to everlasting life in heaven. That way is a "narrow way." It is hedged on both sides by the law of God. The believer, though delivered from the law as a covenant of works, is not delivered from it as a rule of life. "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end, give me understanding and I shall keep thy law" (Ps. 119 : 33, 34). It is a narrow way and it is a strait way — "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7 : 12). The way that leads to death or destruction in the world of eternity is a broad way. It is also a crooked way. It is not the same course of sin that all in this way practise and follow. Some follow one course, others another. But they are all in the same broad way, and though the way winds hither and thither in innumerable zig-zag directions, to suit the various inclinations of the great multitudes that throng it, they shall meet together at the end, for at all the terminuses there is destruction. Christ knew this and warns sinners of the

danger. The broad way is downhill, and is easy to travel for those who walk after the flesh, and for those who take up the form of religion but deny its power. It is not only the irreligious that are found in the way — many professors of religion are found therein. It is like a river running downwards which carries along its course the dead flesh without a struggle on their part. All in the broad way are spiritually dead, and they are easily carried along with the current of the river. And when any are quickened by the spirit, they begin like living fish to struggle against the stream. There are many in the broad way. By nature all the fallen human race are in it. Christ's flock is a "little flock." Satan's flock is a large one — very large. Some people boast of having a majority, so may Satan; as yet he has the majority of men in the world. He is their father, they are his children; he is their master, they are his servants. Those in the broad way say, Satan is not our father; God is our father. So said the Jews, but Christ said to them, "Ye are of your father the devil." And we know that what he said is true. It is not what you, that are in the broad way, may say about yourselves that is true, but what Christ says about you. You will never leave the broad way till you first come to realise that you are in it. May the Lord open your eyes to see where you are, sinner, before it is too late! All who are now in the narrow way that leads to life were convinced that they were by nature on the broad way that leads to destruction. They believed this, and then they began to strive to enter in at the strait gate. They by grace entered in, and they pity with all their heart their fellow sinners who are still in the broad way from which they themselves had been taken by him who "came to seek, and to save that which was lost." They are entirely indebted to Jesus Christ for this merciful translation. O, the blessed Jesus! Let all that is in me be stirred up to praise his holy name, and let my tongue be as the pen of a ready writer to recommend him to my fellow sinners!

(2) The Exhortation. The exhortation is addressed to sinners who are still in the broad way that leads to destruction. It is a part of Christ's sermon on the mount when multitudes gathered to hear him. His own disciples were there, but the great majority of the audience were in a state of sin and wrath, and to the latter he addresses this exhortation. It may be objected, how can sinners in a state of nature strive to enter in? Christ addresses them as rational and responsible creatures, and they are bound, at the risk of perishing forever, if they neglect this duty, to strive that they may be saved. "Secret things belong unto the Lord," revealed things belong unto us and to our children. This is a revealed duty, and is pressed on us by Christ. He says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." You cannot extricate yourself from the duty he enjoins. You may neglect it, but it is still a bounden duty, and if you are

saved you will strive to enter in. Do you ask, how am I to strive that I may be saved? What means to use, what efforts to put forth in the use of the means? In striving for obtaining any good thing we need in this world, there are means to be used, and if these means are neglected that good cannot be obtained. In like manner in striving to be saved, there are means that must be used, or you cannot possibly be saved. These means are not the devices of men, but the ordinances of God. He gave you the Bible, which reveals that all have sinned, and have come short of his glory. And you are one of this all that have sinned, and the Bible also reveals that Christ came, "to seek and to save that which was lost." If you would strive to enter in, search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of us as sinners, and of Christ as the saviour. We have no warrant to believe that any who neglect to read and search the word of God, as the great means of salvation can be saved. Prayer is another means of salvation. "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you," is one of the exhortations of the saviour with respect to the duty of prayer. If you neglect the means of grace, you cannot enter in at the strait gate. The sacraments — Baptism and the Lord's Supper — are means of grace; but they are not essential to your entering in at the strait gate. They are outward symbols and seals of the covenant of grace, but you may enter into God's favour although you had not been baptised or been a communicant. These are then the means you are to use if you would be saved. The way you are to use them is to strive. This is Christ's exhortation, "Strive to enter in." It indicates the manner in which you are to use the means prescribed in the word of God. To strive is not to engage in the duty in a careless and indifferent manner, not to be half-hearted in your endeavours to enter in. It is to use all diligence, to exhaust all your energy, like those running in the race that they might obtain the crown at the end. It is to be in agony, like a dying man striving to retain life. The importance of the matter at stake — the salvation of your precious soul — calls for the utmost endeavour on your part for striving that you may enter in at the strait gate — that you may believe in Christ, and be found in him not having your own righteousness. But you may object: Can I strive with success without God working in me by his spirit — changing me from a state of nature to a state of grace? No, but it is not what God will work by his spirit in all that are saved that Christ speaks of, but your duty, and the duty of every sinner to whom the Gospel comes. God, and He alone, can effect the change that is necessary to salvation, but that does not exempt you or me or any other sinner from our own duty. You fail in your striving if you do not earnestly, and in God's way, pray that he may be pleased to give you his holy spirit to

convince you of your sin and lost condition by nature, and so to change you as that you will indeed enter in at the strait gate. You will never enter in without this change, but this calls you to strive the more that he may work it in you. It is God's part to bless the means of grace, but it is our duty to make diligent use of the means.

(to be continued)

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

by Rev. A. M. Cattanach, M.A.

I — A young man, whose name was Saul.

Towards the close of the eighth chapter of Acts, we are introduced to the young man, called Saul, who was afterward to become such a faithful witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be known, the world over, as Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles. This introduction is not one calculated to give us any hint of what the future was to hold for Saul, but rather the very opposite. The Divine Record thus introduces us to him, "... They ... cast him (i.e. Stephen) out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (Acts 7 : 58). For those who love the Lord, how very sad these words must sound in their ears, and yet, in the light of what was afterwards to be true of the same young man, how very wonderful they must also sound, as they behold in Saul of Tarsus one who was indeed plucked, by Almighty God, as a brand out of the burning — "But by the grace of God I am what I am," he writes to the brethren at Corinth in his first epistle to them (1 Cor. 15 : 10).

This opening scene, outside the city of Jerusalem, may well be contrasted with the closing scene of Paul's life, as recorded for us in Acts, in "his own hired house," within the precincts of the city of Rome. On the one hand, we have the young man Saul keeping watch over the clothes of the wicked persecutors of Stephen, consenting all the while unto that good man's death; on the other, Paul the aged, chained to his Roman companion, "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." The contrast is that between darkness and light, night and day, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God's dear son.

Let us, then, consider briefly together a few points brought out by the inspired writer of Acts, in this introductory scene. Saul of Tarsus is here brought before us as:

- (a) A young man;
- (b) A young man, consenting to Stephen's death;
- (c) A young man, making havoc of the church at Jerusalem.

(a) A young man

It is generally agreed among commentators that the word translated "young man" is to be understood to signify that Saul was, by then, not less than thirty years of age, certainly not a mere youth, as we might tend to think. It is probable that it is used here in the sense in which the Rabbis used to speak of one as being a "young man" up to the age of forty or so. Among the Jews there has always been a great reverence for age. Saul is hardly likely to have been entrusted with the mission to Damascus, recorded in the following chapter, unless he were of an age to be responsible for the discharge of such a duty to the satisfaction of the Sanhedrin. The young man who holds the clothes of Stephen's persecutors is one who is of mature years, as WE reckon them, and, therefore, his part in the evil work is all the more heinous. No excuse can be made for him on the score of his youth, at any rate. He himself, looking back over this terrible time in his life, had no words of excuse for himself, but rather, a solemn word of rebuke, not to say condemnation — "blasphemer," "persecutor," "injurious person." How often God's people have reason to look back over mis-spent years of youth or early adulthood, with shame of heart, and plead the merits of the precious blood of Jesus alone for acceptance with God! Let all young people, therefore, be warned against spending the best of life's years in the service of sin and Satan, doing the will of the Gentiles.

(b) A young man, consenting to Stephen's death

Saul may not have laid hands upon Stephen, not even raised a stone to cast at the noble servant of God, but yet, for all that, his mind and his heart were at one with the perpetrators of the evil work — HE WAS consenting unto his killing. He WAS of their company, as he stood guard over their clothes; he felt no righteous indignation rise within his breast against his brethren in the assembly. His voice was not lifted up to bear witness against them. If THEY were guilty of a heinous crime, so also was HE. When grace had wrought a change in him, how differently he was wont to act, when faced with a similar situation. With what boldness he was wont to testify against them then, and against their evil work. O for a heart to praise the Lord for His works of wonder, done unto the sons of men!

The writer of Acts, when writing of another who was a member of the Sanhedrin, as was also Saul, in all probability, says of him, when that body took counsel to kill Jesus, "And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; a good man and a just (the same HAD NOT CONSENTED to the counsel and deed of them) . . ." (Luke 24 : 50, 51). Noble counsellor! How different,

the young man, Saul! Although in English, both Greek verbs are translated alike, there is a difference in meaning in the original. The word which is used of Joseph of Arimathea accurately describes his position in the Council, as one entitled to vote in any given decision, so that here we are told that he did NOT record his vote for that wicked motion; he did NOT agree with its terms; he would have NO part in it at all; he did NOT stand up with them in the Assembly on that evil day; he ABSTAINED, because he was NOT one of their company in spirit any more — for long now he had been a disciple of Jesus. What a wealth of meaning in the words, “had not consented . . . !” In Saul’s case, however, the word used is different, and bears a slightly different meaning — it signifies primarily that he heartily approved of the whole thing, he was heart and soul in it, heart and soul with them — yes, even though he only stood watching over their clothes. “And Saul was CONSENTING unto his death.” The whole episode was well-pleasing to him, in his present mood; he WAS, as distinct from good Joseph of Arimathea, ONE of their company. Yes, the one thing in common which the two verbs have, is just that prepositional prefix, which signifies that a man is “one with” someone or something, or “together with” them, or “in fellowship with” them; only, in Joseph’s case, it is preceded by that little particle, which makes all the difference in the world, “NOT” — O would it not be good for us to be searched in our hearts, to see if we are of the “company” of those who hate the LORD and His Anointed, or not? The counsel and deed of such is still a work of darkness, is still destined to fail in its purpose, but woe to that man whose heart and whose soul is knit with these “workers of iniquity!” Let us seek grace to have the Psalmist’s spirit, when he cries, in Psalm 94:—

“How long, O mighty God . . .
how long shall they who wicked are,
thus triumph haughtily.” (verses 3, 4).

**(c) A young man, making havoc of the church at Jerusalem
(Acts 8 : 3).**

It is to be expected that one who was heart and soul with such as sought to silence the voice of the first great apologist of the Early Church would also be heart and soul with them in the persecution which followed, “against the church which was at Jerusalem” (verse 1). The outcome of the persecution then was the scattering of the believers throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, with the exception of the apostles, and this itself proved a blessing in disguise, since the believers carried with them to these several regions, the faith which they had received, and thus the church was multiplied. Devout men attended to the burial of

Stephen and much grief was felt among the Lord's people there, but Saul was now more actively engaged in the evil work, endeavouring to stamp out the memory of the name of Jesus — he was searching out believers in their own homes, and carrying them off to prison. In this, he acted, no doubt, by authority of the Sanhedrin, and thought that he was doing God service. In after years, he wrote to the believers at Philippi, telling them a little of his doings then, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church" (Philippians 3 : 6). Zeal; yes, a zeal without knowledge, ever a dangerous thing. Let us seek grace to be kept from it, while given at the same time to seek that godly zeal, together with knowledge, which will be to us as the adorning of the Spirit.

The Holy Ghost, we believe, never uses words to no purpose; so here, in this verse, we have Saul's zeal at this time, described by a word which is nowhere else used in the New Testament — a strong word, meaning literally, "to outrage, or to ravage." In the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament in Greek, the same word is used to describe the actions of the wild boar in uprooting the vines in that beautiful Psalm, beginning with Israel's Shepherd, the 80th Psalm, at the 12th verse,

"The boar who from the forest comes,
doth WASTE it at his pleasure."

Saul was doing just that to God's vineyard there at Jerusalem — 'wasting it at his pleasure', 'coming from the forest', as it were, entering the houses of believers, uprooting precious vines, of God's own planting, and all in the name of the God of Israel. Israel's Shepherd. O can we not overhear, as it were, the humble praying folk of Jerusalem then, crying out, as they look up to the Covenant God of Israel:—

O God of hosts, we thee beseech,
return now unto thine (Ps. 80 : v. 14-16).

The way in which He was to visit His vineyard was hidden from them at that time, but O, when the wonderful change came over the young man, called Saul, then indeed all might see for themselves the hand that wrought deliverance for them, and sing again of victory afforded by His outstretched hand:

In dwellings of the righteous
is heard the melody,
Of joy and health: the Lord's right hand
doth ever valiantly. (Ps. 118 : 15).

As we draw our first meditation on this great subject to a close, let us take our leave of Saul, sad indeed to see him so occupied in persecuting unto death those that called upon the name of the Lord in Jerusalem, yet withal, rejoicing in spirit that another day is soon to dawn, both for himself and them, in which we shall indeed discern the purpose of the Lord fulfilled and a great work

accomplished by Him, that is to redound to His own glory, world without end. May we all be partakers of that same grace, for truly, by nature, we are all, as Saul himself says later on, "the children of wrath," even as we are also "the children of disobedience." If left to ourselves, we will be as much opposed to the Truth as he was. May the right hand of the mighty Lord do valiant things for us too, that we, too, may become followers of the despised and rejected Saviour, who is now exalted at God's right hand above.

THOUGHTS ON THE PSALMS

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

PSALM FIFTY-TWO

This Psalm tells how the malice of the wicked, however terrible, cannot avail against the purpose of God to bless his people. There are times when it might appear as if evil men were about to triumph over the church or its individual members. This Psalm was composed at such a time. We are told of the circumstances in 1 Sam. 21 : 1-10, and 22 : 6-23. David had been compelled to flee from Saul and came to Ahimelech the priest at Nob. Concealing the reason for his hasty journey, he obtained from the priest, bread and the sword of Goliath, then fled to Gath. But the transaction did not go unobserved by an enemy. When Saul began an enquiry into the circumstances of David's escape from his hands, Doeg reported what he had seen at Nob, and at Saul's command butchered the priests and their families who dwelt at Nob. The title of the Psalm speaks of the incident and informs us of who the evil persons spoken about are. There is this also to be noted, that the wicked people concerned may be worldly men inside the church. Doeg was an Edomite. He possessed all the malice and envy which characterised his people's attitude towards Israel, yet he was at the tabernacle at Nob for some religious purpose. So it is sometimes found that within the visible church there are those who hate the Lord and his people, and show this clearly when it suits them to do so.

Verse 1. "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually."

This is the theme of the Psalm. Of what use is it for even the greatest and most powerful mischief makers to boast? That cannot hinder God from doing whatever in his goodness He purposes to perform. Nothing is clearer from the Word of God than that He intends to bless his people. He made a promise to our fallen first parents in Eden which He has kept by sending his Son to redeem his chosen people by dying for them; "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." The

purpose to do good to sinners formed in eternity is taking its course with absolute certainty. From Calvary itself the prophetic word has gone forth from "the faithful witness"; "They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this" (Ps. 22 : 31). Because of this unchangeable purpose, the goodness of God endureth continually.

"O but the counsel of the Lord
doth stand for ever sure;
And of his heart the purposes
from age to age endure.
That nation blessed is, whose God
Jehovah is, and those
A blessed people are, whom for
his heritage he chose."

Psalm 33, v. 11, 12.

Verses 2, 3. "Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah."

David now describes the sort of evildoing which he had in mind specially, as exemplified by the case of Doeg, viz. sins of the tongue proceeding from a wicket heart. Doeg's report was intended to make trouble for Ahimelech and the priests, and how well he succeeded! Notice that his report of what took place between David and Ahimelech makes no mention of the priest's scruples about helping David if he were in disfavour with Saul. The deliberate nature of the omission becomes clear when it is seen how willing he was to act as the executioner of the priests. He made use of falsehood, employed his tongue like a sharp razor, because he loved evil and lying.

This is falsehood at its very worst, using it to destroy men's lives and these men the ministers of God. It is hardly less heinous to use it to destroy men's characters, and there is reason to fear that incomplete, unbalanced accounts of events have been employed for this purpose by persons who would fear to tell outright lies. Yet God regards the two types of falsehood alike and will deal with the purveyors of half-truths as He deals with full-blown liars. Let us search our hearts to see if we have been guilty of this vile behaviour. Perhaps that is the duty to which "Selah" here urges us.

Verse 4. "Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue."

Do we shrink from such a description, beseeching God to preserve us from the spirit and sin of Doeg? And as we listen to accounts of happenings at a distance affecting the work of the church and the reputations of the workers, are we most careful to ask ourselves whether these are full, unbiassed testimonies or

partial, slanted accounts designed to win support for one particular point of view? Alas, if the point of view be wrong, and if our support be enlisted in a bad cause? Watch then for devouring words and the deceitful tongue.

Verse 5. "God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living, Selah."

Here is revealed God's attitude towards malicious liars. Of the details of Doeg's end we know nothing, but this is a prediction of it. As he had destroyed others, so God would destroy him. He had lived as if there were no world beyond this; when he was cut off, he would be rooted out from all connection with the living; dying he would die. So it shall be with all who love and make lies.

Verse 6. "The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him."

There will be cases where the divine judgment upon liars will be obvious. Righteous men shall observe them and fear as the divine holiness and rectitude flame out against this kind of iniquity. And however sad and troubled they may now feel as falsehood works its evil way, the time will come when they shall see how ludicrous are the attempts of sinners to frustrate God's beneficent purposes by lying.

Verse 7. "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness."

God's people shall then fully realise that the power of the wicked rich is not lasting. Often they are permitted to have a season of prosperity, and the more they have of it, the more they trust in their own strength, but their summer is not to last. Look around you today. Are not men to be seen on every hand trusting in themselves, in wealth, in their power, in their freedom to work iniquity? God is forgotten, but wait! "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; . . . The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity . . ." (Ps. 99).

Verse 8. "But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever."

In contrast with the precarious state of the wicked, one shortly to end with a violent uprooting, David sees his own state as like an olive tree flourishing in the house of the Lord. The presently flourishing Doegs are to be uprooted and destroyed. The oppressed members of the church of God are to strike their roots all the deeper as a result of affliction. It only makes them all the stronger and more fruitful. Their hope is in God's mercy, and they believe that all things will work together for their eternal good. The sorrows and trials of earth will cause their affections to rise all the more to the place where their Saviour dwells and from which He

blesses them.

Verse 9. "I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints."

Because they expect a good issue, they should praise God. That is what they shall be doing for ever. "I will wait on thy name." Does that mean, "I will wait in hope from what I know of thy name, thy manifested perfections as the only good One who doeth good to the humble folk that call upon thee?" Only let God's people remember the Name of their God, and the greatest trials shall not shake their hope or confidence; the most wicked lies shall be revealed, and the worst results flowing from them shall yet be avenged and overruled for good. Some have had notable experience of this and could put their Amen to every word of this Psalm.

THE LATE ANDREW H. POTTINGER, ELDER, EDINBURGH

Andrew H. Pottinger was born in Edinburgh on 27th May 1903 and died in the Deaconess Hospital, Edinburgh, on 1st November 1967. His parents were Shetlanders and, solicitous of their family's welfare, endeavoured to give them an opportunity of acquiring a good education. Andrew was intended for a Banking career but chose instead a post in the clerical department of the L.M.S. Railway. Though a most competent member of the staff, his respect for the Lord's Day unduly limited his chances of promotion. The Lord had better things for him and blessed him with spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. His first contact with the Free Presbyterian Church was in 1920, when the Edinburgh Congregation worshipped in the Reigo Street Hall. The congregation had no minister at the time and the services were conducted by visiting ministers, students, and laymen. Mr Pottinger often remarked how struck he was by the fact that all the preachers proclaimed, without variation, the same Gospel doctrines, a consistency, which was a new experience for him. At the time, the congregation was small but very loyal. One of that faithful group was Kate Macleod, a daughter of the late saintly Malcolm Macleod, Ness, Lewis. She, who afterwards became his wife, brought Andrew to the services and his interest in the Gospel steadily grew until in 1925, he was brought under its saving power.

In the meantime, the congregation had moved into the church at Gilmore Place, where Mr Pottinger regularly attended the means of grace, taking a prominent part in the witness of the congregation. Having received the liberty of Gospel through John, ch. 3, v. 16, "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," he, in 1926, made a public profession of his faith in Christ and became a member in full communion with the Edinburgh congregation. In 1931, he was ordained to the Eldership and was the congregation's Treasurer for many years. Until ill health prevented, he was Precentor and was later appointed Superintendent of the Sabbath School. In appreciation of his services, the congregation gave him a monetary presentation and when he retired as Superintendent, the pupils showed their respect in a tangible form. He derived great pleasure from his contact with the children and the young people have cherished memories of his instruction.

In the Free Presbyterian Church, Mr Pottinger was associated with men and women, who were noted for their piety. Captain K. K. Macleod, a native of Lewis, was one. He was a man of sterling qualities who lost his sight in action during World War I. With this "Prince in Israel" Andrew Pottinger enjoyed close fellowship. He regarded the Captain and his minister, Rev. Neil Macintyre, as his fathers in spiritual matters. Although his choice of church was not due to men's influence, his intimate acquaintance with the men, referred to, must have greatly helped him to appreciate the distinctive position of the Denomination of his adoption.

As Mr Pottinger believed that the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation to everyone that received it, he prayed for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on his native city and country. The changes he saw in the city of Edinburgh grieved him and unable to arrest the apostacy in Church and State, he, with others like-minded, "sighed and cried for the abominations done in the land."

In his capacity as Elder, Andrew Pottinger served the congregation with increasing acceptance, especially in his maturer years, when his counsel was eagerly sought and greatly appreciated. His growth in grace became more evident as his physical health deteriorated and his interest in the work of the church at home and abroad daily grew. His visit to New Zealand and U.S.A. afforded him great pleasure, not only for the opportunity this gave Mrs Pottinger and himself of seeing their daughters, with their husbands and children but this also enabled them to meet church people in these distant lands. While in New Zealand, Mr and Mrs Pottinger made many friends and were delighted to resume fellowship with the Rev. William Maclean, a friend of the family and minister of Gisborne. There is compelling evidence that Andrew Pottinger won the affection and confidence of the church in New Zealand. The Elders there wished him to be associated with the Kirk Sessions at their meetings and his counsel was much appreciated.

He was absent from Edinburgh from October 1965 till August

1967 and during that time he was in regular communication with the minister and other members of his Kirk Session as his interest in the congregation continued unabated. In the communion news he had particular interest and greatly rejoiced when he heard of new members being received. For many years, Mr Pottinger's occupation prevented his attending communion seasons in other congregations of the church but in his own hospitable home, he met many of the Lord's people from different parts of the church. His friends have cherished memories of communions in Edinburgh, when they shared not only the generous hospitality of their hosts at 19 Montpelier, but also enjoyed Christian fellowship, to which Mr Pottinger himself always acceptably contributed. As a result of an operation, in 1952, he developed a chest condition, which seriously impaired his health but notwithstanding his active disposition, he bore his incapacity with commendable fortitude and resignation.

Ill health, however, necessitated a premature retiral, during which Mr Pottinger pursued intensive Bible studies and his notes show his profound understanding of the Word of God. As a keen reader of Scottish History, he had great admiration for the Covenanters and often quoted Richard Cameron's prayer, "Lord spare the green and take the ripe." While in New Zealand, his health appreciably improved and on their return journey home via the U.S.A., Mr and Mrs Pottinger were able to spend time with their daughter, husband and children in Texas. During their American visit, they were able to contact friends as far south as Miami and after two months in America, they arrived in Edinburgh on 5th August 1967. "When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; he suffered no man to do them wrong . . ." Psalm 105, vs, 13-14. After some weeks at home, the deterioration in his health gave cause for concern and, though all available means were used, his condition steadily worsened. On Monday, 30th October, he was too weak to read and asked his wife to do so. After the reading of the 12th chapter of Isaiah, he revived, repeated the 34th Psalm to the end, and then slept. When he woke, he seemed very happy and quoted Matthew 25, v. 34, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." On Tuesday morning, he was taken to the hospital and on Wednesday, 1st November, he passed peacefully into the "Kingdom." The end of the righteous is peace.

Andrew Pottinger is survived by his widow, son, and three daughters, with their families. To all of them, including his brother and sisters, at home and abroad, we offer our sincere sympathy, in their great loss. May his God be their God and his people be their people.

D. C.

THE LATE MRS JANE MACKENZIE FRASER, WINNIPEG

On December 13th 1968 there passed away suddenly at 713 Home Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, at the age of 81 years, Mrs Jane Fraser, widow of Donald A. Fraser. Mr Fraser died in 1966 when Rev. Fraser Tallach was in Winnipeg and he officiated at the funeral. Mrs Fraser's remains were laid to rest beside those of her husband in Brookside cemetery.

It is with deep regret that I, as last Church Deputy to Canada, record this death in the pages of the Magazine and mention a few facts concerning this warm-hearted friend of the Cause of Christ in Winnipeg. It was my privilege for three months in the summer and autumn of 1968 to enjoy the hospitality of her home. Although she was over 80 years of age, yet, Lydia-like (Acts 16 : 14 and 15), she offered me a room in her home, and during my stay in that city she most willingly attended on me while accepting what could only be termed a nominal remuneration for all her labour and expense.

Mrs Fraser was born in Rogart, Sutherland, on 24th September 1887. Her father, Donald Sutherland, was removed by death when she was seven months old. There was a family of eight, and in 1905 the family emigrated to Canada and settled in Winnipeg. In 1910 she married Donald Fraser and went to reside at 718 Home Street, where she was to spend the rest of her life. She had a family of two sons and three daughters, all of whom survive her, as well as nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

We regret that we have no information regarding Mrs Fraser's exercise of mind in coming to a knowledge of the truth. It was in 1926 that she became a member in full communion in the Church. It was evident from her deep attachment to the Lord's Cause and from her desire for its advancement that she had been brought to prize the things which concern the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. She was exemplary in her attendance at the house of God and consequently will be greatly missed from her place in the Winnipeg Church. She longed to see the congregation prosper and a ministry set over it. In connection with this last matter she mentioned to me shortly before I left, the encouragement she had received from the words in Isaiah 30, 20: "thine eyes shall see thy teachers".

During my time in Winnipeg, Mrs Fraser made every effort to encourage others to hear the Gospel, urging them to come to the services. She had a warm interest in the Rhodesian Mission and gave liberally of her means for its support as well as generously supporting the other funds of the congregation and Church. She could not understand the attitude of those who though professing an interest in Christ's Cause were niggardly in giving of their

means for its support. Mrs Fraser was naturally of a forthright disposition and had no hesitation in expressing her opposition to anything she thought to be wrong. Last September she had a great desire to attend the Vancouver communion and was afraid lest anything should arise to prevent her going. Her desire was granted and she came home satisfied that she had accomplished it. In Vancouver she stayed with her twin sister, Mrs Mowat, who is a member in that congregation.

Her prayers, her advice, her entreaties, her warnings, are now ended. May she being dead yet speak. May fruit follow to God's glory in the lives of those with whom she had close contact for many years, especially her family and friends. Her desire for those whom she knew and loved was that they might come to value the Gospel and prize the Saviour whom to know is eternal life.

We extend our sincere sympathy to the large family circle of sorrowing relatives. May they each one be led to put their trust for eternity in Christ the only Saviour, and may they be brought to manifest in their lives a deep and sincere attachment to the Lord's Cause and Kingdom in the world.

D.B.M.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 343)

Aon uair eile. Cia cho milis agus a tha E dha'n tarruing agus dha'n tàladh! "Tarruing mì," a deir a chéile, "A'd' dhéigh ruithidh sinn." Dàn. i.4. Agus da-rìreadh tha E tarruing agus a tàladh anamaibh, agus sin le mìllseachd iongantach. "Tharruing mì iad le còrdaibh duine, le ceanglaichibh gràidh, agus bha mì dhoibh mar neach a thogas dhiubh a chuing air an giallaibh, agus chuir mì sios biadh dhoibh." Hosea xi.4. Nis tha E cur a mhaise, a shaoibhreas, agus a ghlòir fa'n comhair, a chùim an tarruing agus an tàladh leoth; an sin tha E sileadh beagan mill air làmhnan na glaise; tha E toirt dhoibh beagan blas agus faireachadh air a ghràs agus a ghràdh, leis am bheil E dha'n tarruing agus dha'n tàladh. A nis tha E cur on céill a ghràidh dhoibh gu milis; tha E'g innse dhoibh cia cho mòr 's a tha chridhe air a leagail orra, ciod e na nithean mòr a rinn agus a dh'fhuiling E air an son; agus nach cil nì Aige anns an amharc air an son ach an deanamh sona gu bràth. An sin the E leigil fhaicinn dhoibh cia cho neo-chrìoch-nach sona 's a dheanadh aonadh pòsaidh agus co-chommun Ris iad tha E leigil a stigh pladhaidhean de neamh agus de ghlòir orra; tha E fosgladh suas ionmhasan a chùimhnanta agus a riogh-

achd dhoibh; agus so uile a chùim an tarruing agus an tàladh dha ionsuidh Féin. Agus thairis agus os ceann so uile, tha E'n tràth-sa agus a rithisd a tighinn, mar gu'm b'eadh, agus a toirt an anam an leth-taobh, agus le guth caol cuinn a Spioraid, a nochdadh a ghràidh dhoibh. Thig anam bho chd, tha E'g ràdh amhaire air do Shlànuighear a tha dòrtadh fhala agus a tha bàsachadh; thig, faic ciod a rinn Mi, agus ciod a dh'ullaich mi air do shon, faic ciod e'n a h-ionmhasan beatha agus gràidh, gràs agus glòir a tha annam. Faic ann an so mo ghràdh, blais agus faic, nach eil e nì's fearr na fion; so mo bhroilleach, faic gur e th'ann ach broilleach blàth. Thig anam, cha'n eil gràdh agad dhomhsa, gidheadh, tha gràdh agam-sa dhuit-sa, agus bu mhaith leam do dheanamh sona gu bràth. C'ar son uime sin a sheasadh tù aig a leithid de dh'astar bh' uamsa? Mar so tha E gu milis dha'n tàladh agus a tagradh riutha air son an gràidh agus an gabhail Ris. Nis, anam, am bheil E mar so dha do thàladh, agus an diùlt thù E? Ma bhitheas e mar so, biodh fhios agad, nach bi aimsir gràidh ann a ghnàth; seadh, gu'n tig an t-am, ged a ghlaodhas tù agus a dh'eughas tù gidheadh nach eisd esan. Leigibh dhomh, uime sin, a ràdh ribh mar a tha Pòl ag ràdh ris no Corintianaich, tha sinn a guidh oirbh "gun sibh a ghabhail gràis Dhé gu diomhain." II Cor. vi. 1.

III. Mar so tha cridhe Chrìosd, agus mar so tha e air a shuidheachadh air pòsadh ri peacaich, nach e mhàin gu'm bheil E mar so dha'n tàladh, ach mar an ceudna gu'm bheil E feitheamh fada air an son, gu tric ag ath-nuadhachadh a thairgseachan gràidh dhoibh, agus a cur suas le tàmailtean gràineil agus brosnachaidhean aig an làmhan, na'm b'e agus mu dheireadh gu'm buadhaicheadh E orra. Smuaintichibh nach e mhàin gu'n gràdhaicheadh duine neach, ach gu'm feitheadh e fad air a shon ann an tairgseachan a ghràidh; agus ged a choinnicheadh ri iomadh tàmailt agus mì-choibhneas bh'uaith, theireadh sibh gu'n robh so a foillseachadh gu'n robh a chridhe gu mòr air a chuidheachadh air, agus nach eil e mar so a thaobh Chrìosd agus peacaich bho chd? Oh! cia cho fad agus a tha E feitheamh air an son! cia cho tric agus a tha E'g ath-nuadhachadh tairgseachan a ghràidh dhoibh! agus ciod e na tàmailtean, na maslaidhean, agus na mì-choibhneasan a tha E fulung aig an làmhan. "Feuch, tha mi a'm' sheasamh aig an dorus, agus abualadh." Tais. iii. 20. 'S e th'ann an seasamh ach suidheachadh anns ar bheil neach a feitheamh: cha'n eil Chrìosd a toirt glaodh, na buile, aig dorus cridhe a peacaich, agus a falbh; nì-headh, tha E seasamh agus a bualadh, tha E toirt gairm an deigh gairm, buile an deigh buile, air Dhà bhi ghnàth ullamh gu dol a stigh, ma dh'fhosgla an t-anam idir Dhà. Mar sin, mar an ceudna, "Shìn mi mach mo làmhan fad an là ri sluagh ceannairceach a tha gluasad ann an droch shlighe, a reir an innleachdan fein; sluagh a tha an còmhnuidh 'g am bhrosnachadh gu feirg ri m' aghaidh."

Isaiah 1xv. 2, 3. Ròm. x. 21. “Re an latha gu h-ìomlan,” shin mì mach mo làmhnan, dh’fhosgail mì gàirdeanan agus broilleach mo ghaoil, agus sin do shluagh ceannairceach agus a labhras a’m aghaidh, sluagh a tha labhairt a’m aghaidh, a tha ceannairceach, a tha seasamh a’m aghaidh, a tha diùltadh, a tha cur a’m aghaidh, sluagh a tha dha mo bhrosnachadh ri m’aodan gach lath; sluagh a tha gach latha dha mo luchdachodh le am peacaidhean agus am brosnachaidhean; sluagh nach leig dhomh aon latha gun tàmailt a thoirt dhomh, agus sin ri’m aodan, sluagh a tha gach latha a toirt dùbhlán dhomh an damanadh. Oh! ciod e’n fhoghaidean a tha’n so? Mar so tha e ann a’ Mata xxxiii. 37, A Ierusalem, a Ierusalem, a mharbhas na fàidhean, agus a chlachas an dream a chuirear a t’ionnsuidh, cia minic a b’aill leam do chlann a chruinneachadh r’a a chéile, mar a chruinnicheas cearc a h-eoin fo a sgiathan, agus cha b’aill leibh-se. “Cha’n ann aon uair, na dhà, na deich uairean, ach ro-mhinic. Tha E ciallachadh gu’n do dh’fheith E fad air an son, agus gu’n do rinn E strì fhada riutha, agus an deigh iomadh tàmailte agus diùltadh air an taobh-san, tha E fathasd dha thairgse Féin agus a ghràdh dhoibh. Agus mar so tha E fathasd dha ghiulain Féin a thaobh pheacach, tha E dha thairgse Féin agus a ghràidh dhoibh, ach cha ghabh iad Ris: tha E’g ath-nuadhachadh a thairgseachan, agus tha iadsan ag ath-nuadhachadh an diùltaidhean. Tha iad a diùltadh a ghràidh, gidheadh tha E fathasd a nochdadh a ghràidh dhoibh; tha E’g innse dhoibh na h-ullaichidhean mòr a rinn E, agus mar a tha na h-uile nì ullamh, agus cia cho di-bheathta a bhios iad tighinn a dh’ionnsuidh an t-suipeir-bhainnse; ach tha iad dha chur ann an suarachas, a roghnachadh nithean an t-saoghail so iar thoiseach Air-san agus na tha Aige. Mata xxii. 5. Gidheadh, fathasd, cha’n eil E fathasd dha’m fàgail, ach tha E cur a mach agus a gairm a rithisd, a dh’aindeoin gach nì. Tha iad ann an seadh ag innse Dhà nach eil iad ag iarraidh aon chuid E Féin na a ghràs, gu’m b’fhearr leotha gu mòr a bhi sealbhachadh an ana-miannaibh na a ghràdh. Tha iad a mì-ghnàthachadh a ghràis, tha iad a deanamh dìmeas air a smachdachaidhean, tha iad a cur suarach a ghairmean, tha iad a cur an aghaidh a Spioraid-san. O ciod e na tàmailtean a tha’n sol agus an deigh so faodaidh e bhi, tha E’s ath-nuadhachadh a thairgseachan, dha chur, Féin agus a ghràdh aig an cosaibh, ma dh’fhaodas E fathasd an cosnadh Dhà Féin. Oh cia mòr ’s a dh’fheumas a chridhe a bhi fathasd an geall air pòsadh riutha! anam leaghadh so thù ann an gràdh Dhà. O co sheasadh an aghaidh a leithid so de Thighearna, a leithid de Fhear-gràidh! Ciod e! gu’n tàladh agus gu’m feitheadh E cho fada, g’un cuireadh E suas le leithid, agus an deigh coinneachadh ri uibhir de thàmailtean, gu’m biodh E fathasd a nochdadh a ghràidh! An robh riabh gràdh coltach ri so, agus foghaidean coltach ri so?

(R’a leantuinn.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A Bill for a Lottery Rejected

The House of Lords, in February, rejected a Bill to allow the Greater London Council to run a lottery to provide funds for recreational, cultural, welfare and other community services. An Amendment declining to give the Bill a second reading was carried by 76 votes to 60 — a majority of 16. Lord Stonham, speaking against the Bill, said: "The new gambling developments in this country were enough almost to make one weep." He stated that there were more than 15,000 betting shops and the turnover of gambling in this country is £2,230 million a year. Yet the Bishop of London, Dr Robert Stopford, stated that people liked a "flutter" and that he could not feel that, if not taken to excess, it was a very wicked thing. He also said that by this way a means which perhaps was dubious might be justified by the good aim it might achieve. Here we have a Churchman, in a prominent position, supporting what he himself thinks may be evil and dubious. No wonder people cannot depend on many religious leaders today for instruction and guidance on moral conduct. Gambling in any form is an evil and has brought about the ruin of many a person. But another Bishop, Dr J. Phillips of Portsmouth, said there was no kind of harmless gambling and that this was not the way for an adult responsible society to conduct its affairs. Bishop Phillips is right.

Religious Education to Stay

The following is from **The Scottish Educational Journal**, 17th January 1969. We publish this extract principally to record the Government's intention to preserve religious education in state schools — Editor.

The Government intends to preserve compulsory provision for religious education and the daily act of worship in schools under the new Education Act, said the Education Secretary for England and Wales, Mr Edward Short, when he opened a new Church of England junior school at Alnwick, Northumberland, last week.

A national survey of parents conducted in 1965, he said, had shown that a large majority were in favour of the existing provisions. It was important to ensure, however, that religious teaching had something to say about the everyday problems and experiences of children. The object should be to lead young people to an awareness of the spiritual planes of existence.

"Part of its content, of course, must be moral education — the pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness," said Mr Short, "and I hope that, increasingly, schools will embody voluntary service in their religious education. If religious education does not result

in better living there is not much to be said for it. But good works alone are not enough. They are a splendid path to the goal of religious education but not the goal itself.

"This is the point at which we part company with the humanist and the point at which an increasingly violent attack is being made on religious education in schools. It is the point at which all who care about the preservation of the Christian character of our community must man the barricades. If we do not do so, in my view, Britain will cease to be a Christian country within two generations."

World Council of Churches and Violence

A Note and Comment in a recent issue of **The Covenanter Witness** refers to the World Council of Churches meeting in Sweden last summer. The writer states: Some indications of the way in which such an organisation may be, and is being used by Marxists to further the spread of Communism will be gathered from the intimation that one of its main enquiries was the place of violence 'as a legitimate means by which the Church can transform society'. The note proceeds: "They will find themselves in the congenial company of the German theologians who have done so much to pioneer student violence in Europe. The Protestant chaplain of a German university said in correspondence with a British journalist: 'We have constant attacks here from three sources — the God is Dead theology, the new morality and the take over of the Church for extreme left political action'." So we see that the opinion sometimes expressed — that the W.C.C. is being influenced by Communistic members — is not an exaggerated opinion. Communism and Romanism may well be meeting, after a manner, in the World Council of Churches. They are both out for world domination. The godfearing are all the while looking to the Lord, who reigneth.

Methodists and the Church of England

This year thousands of Methodists in England, Scotland and Wales are to decide for or against the scheme for Anglican-Methodist unity. If this takes place the first stage in the process is said to be communion with each other, the Methodists accepting Episcopacy and the rule of episcopal ordination for the future. Here we see once again, that the unity talk means coming into the Anglican fold where no change is being made as to bishops or ordination by bishops. The second stage is envisaged as the visible, organic unity of the two Churches into one Church. The Scottish Methodist Synod has not given its views on the above scheme as a whole. It voted against the two stage scheme in 1965.

The Church of England has already decided that the scheme will only go forward if 75 per cent. of Anglican clergymen agree. We see that when 75 per cent. is mentioned, the matter of visible unity is rather uncertain. Indeed we are of the opinion that many Anglo Catholic clergymen and people in the Church of England will not be too comfortable at the thought of thousands of Methodists being part of their Church. Of course today, many Methodists are liberal in their doctrine and practice and may easily conform to episcopacy.

Another Step in Church of England Declension

At a meeting of The Church of England Church Assembly, in February 1969, Rev. Ian Ramsey, Bishop of Durham, presenting the report of the Archbishops' Commission on Christian doctrine, said that the 39 Articles were a historic formulary from the 16th century. Many of the clergy have conscientious scruples about agreeing to them today. "Much of the treatment of the articles," says the Report, "is controversial and negative, reflecting either the assumptions of, or a reaction against, late mediæval theology." This is plainly a repudiation of Articles which have always been considered by lovers of the Word of God, to be soundly based on that Word. As a criticism of these Articles, the Bishop refers to their being formulated in the 16th century. But surely time does not alter truth embodied in the most ancient Creed? Time does not alter the doctrine of Christ recorded in the Bible. But of course many of the clergy in the Church of England today, are "wiser", as theologians, than the Reformation fathers and they cannot abide the doctrine which is grounded on the Word of God. They cannot agree to Reformed doctrine, because they do not believe it, nor the Word of God from which such doctrine is derived. Now, in future, no bishop, clergymen, or laymen of the above Church will be required to read in public, and give assent to the 39 Articles of the faith. This awaits final approval, which no doubt it will get. What will the evangelicals in the Church of England now think of this latest retrograde step?

Aberdeen Education Committee and Bingo

Some time ago Aberdeen Education Committee discussed ways and means of making community centres under their care more popular. It seems that the provision of community centres for the youth is not enough to 'keep them off the streets', to use the oft-quoted phrase. These centres with what they ordinarily provide are not attractive enough apparently. So the Education Committee decided to allow Bingo (in other words, gambling) in these centres.

Surely an Education Committee, worthy of the name, had more honourable business to attend to, on behalf of the young, than to decide to encourage them to gamble. Although the Aberdeen Presbytery of the Church of Scotland is not one that we would readily commend; yet they are to seek a meeting with Aberdeen Education Committee regarding the matter of the Bingo. This should, of course, have been done long ago when the Bingo was at first mentioned. Surely a Church Court as large as Aberdeen Presbytery could wield enough influence to prevent such a decision, as aforesaid, ever being taken, if they had the will to do so.

CHURCH NOTES

Synod Standing Committee Reports

Conveners of Church Committees and others who are responsible for writing Reports to be submitted to Synod (D.V.), please undertake to have Reports in the hands of the Clerk of Synod **not later than the beginning of April**. It will avoid extra work if Reports are thoroughly edited by those who write them before sending them in. As is known, these Reports have to be printed and thereafter forwarded to all members of Synod at least ten days before the Synod on 20th May 1969. — Robert R. Sinclair, Clerk of Synod.

Southern Presbytery — Appeal from Auckland Congregation

The Auckland Congregation, which has only recently been formed and is relatively small, has had to shoulder very heavy financial responsibilities. Now, with the settlement of a minister among them, a manse had to be purchased and this added considerably to their financial commitments. These facts are brought to the notice of friends throughout the Church, who would desire the prosperity of Christ's Cause in this distant land in order that they will know that monetary contributions to the Auckland Manse Fund will be most gratefully received. "Inasmuch as ye done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me". (Matthew 25 : 40).

Donations may be sent to Mr E. A. Christensen, 9 Kingswood Road, Papatoetoe, Auckland.

The Southern Presbytery approved this Appeal at their meeting in Glasgow on February 18th 1969.

With respect to this Appeal on behalf of the Auckland Manse, the Presbytery understand that houses are much more expensive in New Zealand than in Scotland. To purchase an ordinary four-

bedroomed house in New Zealand, for example, would cost in the region of £11,000. — Malcolm Macsween, Clerk of Southern Presbytery.

New Publication

Enclosed in this issue of the magazine you will find order form, etc., for the Church's latest publication, **LADY COLQUHOUN** by James Hamilton. In procuring a copy of this work it is best to hand the completed form to your local bookseller who will obtain it for you. In areas where no bookseller is at hand you should give the completed form with remittance to your Congregational Treasurer, who should send the whole order for the congregation to the Publications Treasurer, 10 Beaufort Road, Inverness. If you wish to order by post then order form and remittance should be posted to the Bookroom, Glasgow.

— Alexander Murray, Convener, Publications Committee.

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 — Mrs Robertson, Leven, £2.10/-; A.F., £20 for Oban Congregation; Mrs R. S. Mackenzie, Grosse Ile, \$100; Mrs Hopkins, Brighton, £3; Miss S. A. MacLeod, Inverness, £2; In memory of Rev. James S. Fraser, £1, per R.W.M.M.

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Mr W. Mackenzie, 7 Crown Drive, Inverness. Treasurer, **Aberdeen Building Fund**, acknowledges with grateful thanks:— Mrs J. Morrison, Rock-View, Tarbert, Harris, £5; Mr and Mrs R. Bruce, Gairloch, £15; Mrs C. Macdonald, Portree, £2; C. MacKay, Vancouver, \$50; Anon., Daviot Congregation, £3; Raasay Friend, £2; A Wellwisher, £50; Rhiconich postmark, £5; "Wellwisher", Inverness, £2; Mrs Graham, Pineview, Uig, £5; Mrs Macdonald, Home of Rest, 10/-; Mrs Ross, Lairg, £2; Friend, Dumbarton, £1.10/-; Two Wellwishers, Glendale, £10; Alex. Forgie, Redding, Falkirk, £25; R.M., Inverness, £1; Friend, Inverness, £2; Friend, Uig, Isle of Lewis, £2; Three Friends, £6; Aberdeen Congregation, per Dr C. Tallach, £50; K. Maclean, Peterhead, £10.

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Glendale — Envelope in Plate, £5 for Foreign Mission Fund; Mr A. Beaton, £5 for Car Park; A Friend, £5 for Car Park; A Friend, £1 for Sustentation Fund (last two per Rev. J.C.).

Broadford — Manse Building Fund — Anon., Broadford, £15; Friend, Raasay, £1; A Friend, £5; Mrs A. MacDonald, Lochcarron, £1 (last three per Mr L. MacKinnon).

Bracadale — Building Fund — Mrs C. MacInnes, Portnalong, per Mr P. K. Macaskill, £5; Friend, Dingwall, per Mr D. MacAskill, £5; Collected at Struan, per D. J. Mackinnon and for Bracadale F.P. Church Repairs Fund, £118; Glendale Friend, per Rev. F. MacDonald, £5; Mrs Macdonal, Lochcarron, £2; Mr MacBeath, Kyle, £5; Friend, £5; Friend, Portree, £4 (last four per Mr D. MacAskill).

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Auckland Manse Fund — Friend of the Cause, per W. Fraser, Mt. Wellington, \$10.00; Envelope in plate, \$20.00; Envelope in plate, 'Anon', \$10.00; Anon., \$60.00; A Sydney Friend, \$5.00; Psalm 115 v. 13, \$10.00; Masterton Congregation, \$40.00; Gisborne Congregation, \$959.00; Hastings Congregation, \$100.50; Wellington Congregation, \$580.00; I.F.B., \$200.00; J. MacP., Gisborne, \$4.00; M. and C. Van Doep, Manurewa, \$50.00; Gisborne Friends (2 donations), \$20.00; Sister of Mrs Cox, \$5.00; Anon. (2nd donation), \$100.00; Mrs Hickling, Gisborne, \$30.00; Gisborne Friend, \$300.00; M. and D. McGrail, Wanganui, \$20.00; Mrs N. MacPherson, Gisborne, \$30.00; Friend, Gisborne, Interest-free Loan, \$2,000.00; Mrs Macaskill and Family, 2 Garden Road, Stornoway, Lewis, £10; Psalm 72 v. 19, £3 (last two per Mr W. D. Fraser, General Treasurer).

Inverness — Anon., Kyleakin postmark, per R.W.M.M., £2 for Communion Church Door Collections; E. Nicolson, Inverness, £5 for Inverness Church Extension Fund; I.M., Glenmoriston, £1 for Sustentation Fund.

Halkirk — "Friend of the Cause", Thurso, £100 for Congregational Purposes.

Portree — "In wish and memory of H. E. Petts", £5 for Portree Sustentation Fund, £5 for Trinitarian Bible Society; Friend, Windsor Crescent, per Rev. F. MacD., £2 for Congregational Property Fund.

Gairloch Congregation — Car Fund — Friend, Gairloch, £1; Friend, Kishorn, £1; Friend, South-side, £2; Mrs McP., Inverasdale, £1; Friend, Laide, £1; A.McK., Park, Badachro, £5; MacKenzies, Braes, Inverasdale, £1.

CORRECTIONS

Bracadale — in March issue of the Magazine, Collected by book at Portnalong, "£4.9/-" should read "£49".

In March issue, "£54.16.6" shown as Gairloch Congregation's contribution to the Foreign Mission Fund should have read "£154.16.6".

Lochcarron Congregation — Although no sum is entered under Sustentation Fund in the 1968 figures recorded in the March issue, the Fund is supported by the Congregation but is used for supply purposes.