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Death and Eternity

by Rev. Donald Campbell, M.A., Edinburgh

The succession of the generations of men has been likened to the leaves of the forest. The foliage of one summer disappears to make room for the following summer's blossom. Nature produces and destroys with perfect rhythm and certainty. There are points, however, in which the analogy does not hold. In the succession of human generations, the processes of production and destruction are simultaneous. A child is born and an adult dies at the same moment. The Author of this process is no respecter of persons. The most prominent and the most obscure have the same end. "Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation." (Exodus 1, 6.) Autumn ends the life of the leaf, but death does not mark the end of man.

On the subject of death and eternity great controversy centres. The atheist, the agnostic and the Christian all die; but they view death in a widely different way. The atheist confidently asserts that death is the end of man. For him there is no God, no eternity and no judgment. "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14, 1). The agnostic, not accepting what the Bible tells about the eternal world, and left without any other access to the facts, hides his head in the sand of his own conceit and says that nobody knows what happens after death. The attitudes of both the atheist and the agnostic is described in 1 Cor. 2, 14 — "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The Christian's view of eternity, however, is wholly different from that of the atheist and the agnostic. The Christian, receiving the Bible as the inspired Word of God, regards death, not as the end of man's existence, but the way into his eternal state.

This outlook, *that life, begun in this world*, is continued after death raises many serious questions. Christ's Divine mission, confirmed with signs and miracles, *has the answer*; yet the fact still remains that some believe and *some believe not*. The Bible, which contains a Divinely authoritative account of eternity, shows that there is a heaven for those who *are saved* by grace, and perdition for all who do not believe *on the Lord Jesus Christ*. "The word of the Lord endureth forever. *And this is the word*, which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. 1, 25.) From this it should appear to all that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are superior to all other writings; and these, *His own infallible word*, God has given us as the only rule to direct *us* how *we* may glorify and enjoy Him. Moreover, we are solemnly warned against any form of interference with the Holy Scriptures. "If *any man* shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall *take away* from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. 22, 18-19.)

Instead of wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction, the enemies of the Bible should acknowledge that it is the word of God. The example of the Jews, who maintain that the Old Testament alone is inspired, is a stern warning to all who reject the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since they do not believe the record which God gives concerning His Son in the New Testament, the Jews, in their blindness, are still waiting for the coming of their Messiah. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (1 Cor. 4, 3-4.) The true Christian is the one who believes in the plenary inspiration of both Testaments and, consequently, knows these doctrines which make a man wise for eternity. Christ came forth from the Father and revealed Him to the world. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The Holy Spirit opens man's understanding to receive the truth regarding eternal realities. In this way we are enabled to "look not on the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4, 18.)

No atheistical theory should be regarded as an answer to the questions which the concept of life after death raises. Darwin's Theory of Evolution has failed to explain the origin of the universe — a universe in which the eternal power and Godhead of its Creator are clearly seen. (Rom. 1, 19-20.) As this theory, like the rest of Satan's inventions, is intended to deceive the guileless for eternity, the teaching of it in our schools is to be deplored. "And

when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Is. 8, 19-20.) In this materialistic age, when the general tendency is to neglect the salvation of our immortal souls, our duty is to receive the word of God and pray for all those who are yet without God and without hope in the world. "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." (Mic. 4, 12.)

A New Heart

"O that there were such an heart in them" (Deut. 5, 29).

When God gave Israel His law at Sinai it was in a way fitted to impress them with the greatness, glory and power of Jehovah, Israel's God. The effect of the mount burning with fire, the blackness and darkness and tempest, the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words must have filled the onlookers with an holy awe and dread of Jehovah. Not only did the people themselves say "let not God speak with us, lest we die," but so terrible was the sight that even Moses himself, the man of God, said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Such an experience ought to have left upon the minds of those who were eye-witnesses and hearers an indelible impression of the awfulness of falling into the hands of the living God.

The subsequent history of the children of Israel, as recorded in the books of Moses and elsewhere in Scripture, is not, however, a history of obedience to the will of God, but of disobedience, obstinacy and rebellion. Neither the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea nor even Sinai's thunders produced a lasting effect. The root cause of their trouble was a heart not right with God. "O that there were such an heart in them," was the complaint of the Lord their God against them.

How much there is for us to learn from Israel's history! However solemnly the thunders of Sinai may sound in our ears — and let us remind ourselves that the thunders of Sinai are sounding in the ears of all those who are under a faithful ministry where law and gospel are faithfully proclaimed — yet it is all in vain unless a new heart be given to us. Our hearts, as Scripture affirms, "are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17, 9.) In us dwelleth no good thing. If we are to worship and serve God in spirit and in truth then there must be the im-

plantation of a new nature by the Spirit of God. We cannot claim such a blessing on the ground of any righteousness of our own; yet it is one of the blessings, indeed the first blessing of the New Covenant for poor sinners. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 36, 26).

The question we must now ask is: Do we possess this new heart? Is this new heart in you? Or is the Lord still saying concerning us — "O that there were such an heart in them"? If we do not possess this new heart then let us seek it from the Lord. He alone can bestow it. Without it we can never love God nor serve Him. Without it we must perish eternally. If it has been bestowed upon us, then let us remember that it was God's gift to us — the gift of His grace. If this is so, then we are not our own but are bought with a price, and the exhortation of God's word to us is: "Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6, 20.)

Thoughts on the Psalms

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

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PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

Verse 3. "... who healeth all thy diseases;"

From forgiveness, the first of the great benefits for which David stirs himself up to praise God, he passes to healing, the next blessing of which the reconciled sinner is conscious. First are felt pardon of sin and restoration to the divine favour; then follows an awareness of some healing of the corruption which sin has caused in the soul. The Word of God often speaks of this corruption as a disease. Isaiah says, "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores; etc." In Psalm 6 David says, "I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed." And in Psalm 38 he says:—

"For a disease that loathsome is
so fills my loins with pain,
That in my weak and weary flesh
no soundness doth remain."

John, speaking of the unbelief of Israel, quotes Isaiah: "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be con-

verted, and I should heal them." (John 12, v. 40.) Peter also employs the figure, "By whose stripes ye are healed." And to complete our proof of this point, we have the Saviour's words: "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

That would be no salvation at all which achieved the forgiveness of a sinner but did not alter his nature, thus leaving him as much in love with sin, and as unsuited for heaven as he was before. Therefore God heals the diseased souls of those who believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. As John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These two benefits always go together. The Psalm mentions forgiveness first, but in the divine order of operating the cleansing comes first. The regenerating act of the Holy Spirit on a soul is the beginning of salvation to that soul. Until then, whatever thoughts and feelings it has had on religious matters, it is spiritually dead. It is as renewed in heart that a sinner believes in the Saviour now seen to be God's Son, the Christ; and believing, he is forgiven — a blessing which includes pardon and justification; all of grace! Grace achieved redemption, grace applies it.

In the believer's consciousness, however, his first awareness is of trusting in Christ, this carrying with it the sweet sense of sins having been forgiven. After this dawns the realisation that the work of healing has begun in the soul, for the believer finds himself in some measure turning away from sin and hungering after righteousness. Healing, begun in the new birth, is continued by a progressive sanctification. And what need is felt of such healing! One might say that the entire life of the Christian afterwards is marked by a growing discovery of the diseasedness of his soul. From the outward life his attention is directed to his speech and thence to the heart; and sin is found everywhere. "My loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh." Daily the cry becomes more urgent, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." If regeneration were rejoiced over because it made so much new, it is soon discovered that it is only a beginning. Certain diseases produce extreme lassitude, and the sufferer's feelings when the correct treatment causes new life to surge through the body are exquisitely joyous and hopeful. Yet those pleasurable feelings are not the true measure of the strength regained. That, though so different from the former weakness, is very slight, and the patient has a long way to go before he is normally healthy and strong. It is the same with grace in the soul. Its beginning, in the case of all who have some assurance of faith from the start, is wonderful, but the Holy Spirit has much to do within the soul ere the foul disease of sin gives way to grace in every direction. For sin is everywhere, in all the faculties, in the

mind, affections and conscience too. Yes, even conscience will be found to be less active than it should, leaving us too long free to indulge habitual and much cherished sins.

It is well known that a perusal of a popular medical guide can make anyone with a tendency to hypochondria think he or she has a number of diseases. It is not so well known that people have a sad inability to mark the ravages of sin in their souls, and that the only book which will open their eyes to these ravages is the Bible. Most other books assist in keeping them blind to their corruption, but the Scriptures do the opposite. This is one of the great services it performs for the saved sinner. It opens his eyes to see sin as evil, deadly, defiling, deceiving and powerful. It searches heart and life and closes him in to Christ the only Saviour. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." What a searching thing the moral law is! A reading of Questions 91-152 in The Larger Catechism can be a devastating experience. Likewise the practical sections of Paul's Epistles. "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults."

Yet, numerous though our moral ailments be, Christ can heal them all. He will do it so perfectly that in glory "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Do the words of our verse refer also to physical diseases? Those from which we have been healed were indeed healed by God, but the words are not a guarantee that all our diseases will be healed. We can ask that they may; and in sickness it is to God that we should look above all. He may heal; then we ought not to forget his kindness. If diseases are not healed, we should seek submission to his will, and the transmuting of our troubles into blessings. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Bible Reading

by the late Bishop Ryle

(continued from page 331)

"Search the Scriptures" — John 5, 39. "How readest thou?" —

4. In the fourth place, no book in existence has produced such wonderful effects on mankind at large as the Bible.

(a) This is the Book whose doctrines turned the world upside down in the days of the Apostles.

Eighteen centuries have now passed away since God sent forth a few Jews from a remote corner of the earth, to do a work which

according to man's judgment must have seemed impossible. He sent them forth at a time when the whole world was full of superstition, cruelty, lust, and sin. He sent them forth to proclaim that the established religions of the earth were false and useless, and must be forsaken. He sent them forth to persuade men to give up old habits and customs, and to live different lives. He sent them forth to do battle with the most grovelling idolatry, with the vilest and most disgusting immorality, and vested interests, with old associations, with a bigoted priesthood, with sneering philosophers, with an ignorant population, with bloody-minded emperors, with the whole influence of Rome. Never was there an enterprise to all appearance more Quixotic, and less likely to succeed!

And how did He arm them for this battle? He gave them no carnal weapons. He gave them no worldly power to compel assent, and no worldly riches to bribe belief. He simply put the Holy Ghost into their hearts, and the Scriptures into their hands. He simply bade them to expound and explain, to enforce and to publish the doctrines of the Bible. The preacher of Christianity in the first century was not a man with a sword and an army, to frighten people, like Mahomet — or a man with a license to be sensual, to allure people, like the priests of the shameful idols of Hinduism. No! he was nothing more than one holy man with one holy book.

And how did these men of one book prosper? In a few generations they entirely changed the face of society by the doctrines of the Bible. They emptied the temples of the heathen gods. They famished idolatry, or left it high and dry like a stranded ship. They brought into the world a higher tone of morality between man and man. They raised the character and position of woman. They altered the standard of purity and decency. They put an end to many cruel and bloody customs, such as the gladiatorial fights. — There was no stopping the change. Persecution and opposition were useless. One victory after another was won. One bad thing after another melted away. Whether men liked it or not, they were insensibly affected by the movement of the new religion, and drawn within the whirlpool of its power. The earth shook, and their rotten refuges fell to the ground. The flood rose, and they found themselves obliged to rise with it. The tree of Christianity swelled and grew, and the chains they had cast round it to arrest its growth, snapped like tow. And all this was done by the doctrines of the Bible! Talk of victories indeed! What are the victories of Alexander, and Caesar, and Marlborough, and Napoleon, and Wellington, compared with those I have mentioned? For extent, for completeness, for results, for permanence, there are no victories like the

victories of the Bible.

(b) This is the Book which turned Europe upside down in the days of the glorious Protestant Reformation.

No man can read the history of Christendom as it was five hundred years ago, and not see that darkness covered the whole professing Church of Christ, even a darkness that might be felt. So great was the change which had come over Christianity, that if an apostle had risen from the dead he would not have recognised it, and would have thought that heathenism had revived again. The doctrines of the Gospel lay buried under a dense mass of human traditions. Penances, and pilgrimages, and indulgences, relic-worship, and image-worship, and saint-worship, and worship of the Virgin Mary, formed the sum and substance of most people's religion. The Church was made an idol. The priests and ministers of the Church usurped the place of Christ. And by what means was all this miserable darkness cleared away? By none so much as by bringing forth once more the Bible.

It was not merely the preaching of Luther and his friends, which established Protestantism in Germany. The grand lever which overthrew the Pope's power in that country, was Luther's translation of the Bible into the German tongue. — It was not merely the writings of Cranmer and the English Reformers which cast down popery in England. The seeds of the work thus carried forward were first sown by Wycliffe's translation of the Bible many years before. — It was not merely the quarrel of Henry VIII and the Pope of Rome, which loosened the Pope's hold on English minds. It was the royal permission to have the Bible translated and set up in churches, so that everyone who liked might read it. Yes! it was the reading and circulation of Scripture which mainly established the cause of Protestantism in England, in Germany, and Switzerland. Without it the people would probably have returned to their former bondage when the first reformers died. But by the reading of the Bible the public mind became gradually leavened with the principles of true religion. Men's eyes became thoroughly open. Their spiritual understandings became thoroughly enlarged. The abominations of popery became distinctly visible. The excellence of the pure Gospel became a rooted idea in their hearts. It was then in vain for Popes to thunder forth excommunications. It was useless for Kings and Queens to attempt to stop the course of Protestantism by fire and sword. It was all too late. The people knew too much. They had seen the light. They had heard the joyful sound. They had tasted the truth. The sun had risen on their minds. The scales had fallen from their eyes. The Bible had done its appointed work within them, and that work was not to be overthrown. The people would not return to Egypt. The clock could

not be put back again. A mental and moral revolution had been effected, and mainly effected by God's Word. Those are the true revolutions which the Bible effects. What are all the revolutions which France and England have gone through compared to these? No revolutions are so bloodless, none so satisfactory, none so rich in lasting results, as the revolutions accomplished by the Bible!

This is the book on which the well-being of nations has always hinged, and with which the best interests of every nation in Christendom at this moment are inseparably bound up. Just in proportion as the Bible is honoured or not, light or darkness, morality or immorality, true religion or superstition, liberty or despotism, good laws or bad, will be found in a land. Come with me and open the pages of history, and you will read the proofs in time past. Read it in the history of Israel under the Kings. How great was the wickedness that then prevailed! But who can wonder? The law of the Lord had been completely lost sight of, and was found in the days of Josiah thrown aside in a corner of the temple. (2 Kings xxii. 8). — Read it in the history of the Jews in our Lord Jesus Christ's time. How awful the picture of Scribes and Pharisees, and their religion! But who can wonder? The Scripture was "made of none effect by man's traditions". (Matt. xv. 6). — Read it in the history of the Church of Christ in the middle ages. What can be worse than the accounts we have of its ignorance and superstition? But who can wonder? The times might well be dark, when men had not the light of the Bible.

This is the Book to which the civilised world is indebted for many of its best and most praiseworthy institutions. Few probably are aware how many are the good things that men have adopted for the public benefit, of which the origin may be clearly traced up to the Bible. It has left lasting marks wherever it has been received. From the Bible are drawn many of the best laws by which society is kept in order. From the Bible has been obtained the standard of morality about truth, honesty, and the relations of man and wife, which prevails among Christian nations, and which — however feebly respected in many cases — makes so great a difference between Christians and heathen. To the Bible we are indebted for that most merciful provision for the poor man, the Sabbath day. To the influence of the Bible we owe nearly every humane and charitable institution in existence. The sick, the poor, the aged, the orphan, the lunatic, the idiot, the blind, were seldom or never thought of before the Bible leavened the world. You may search in vain for any record of institutions for their aid in the histories of Athens or of Rome. Alas! there are many who sneer at the Bible and say the world would get on

well enough without it, who little think how great are their own obligations to the Bible. Little does the infidel workman think, as he lies sick in some of our great hospitals, that he owes all his present comforts to the very book he affects to despise. Had it not been for the Bible, he might have died in misery, uncared for, unnoticed and alone. Verily the world we live in is fearfully unconscious of its debts. The last day alone, I believe, will tell the full amount of benefit conferred upon it by the Bible.

This wonderful book is the subject about which I address the reader of this paper this day. Surely it is no light matter what you are doing with the Bible. The swords of conquering generals — the ship in which Nelson led the fleets of England to victory — the hydraulic press which raised the tubular bridge at the Menai — each and all of these are objects of interest as instruments of mighty power. The Book I speak of this day is an instrument a thousand-fold mightier still. Surely it is no light matter whether you are paying it the attention it deserves. I charge you, I summon you to give me an honest answer this day — What art thou doing with the Bible? Dost thou read it? HOW READEST THOU?

Letter

by Rev. John Duncan, LL.D. ("Rabbi" Duncan)

My very dear Friend,

I need not say what grief your brother's letter informing us of your illness has caused to me and to my dear wife. How frequently and how strikingly has the Lord been bringing before you the solemn admonition that "here we have no continuing city".

Since this world became a place of sinning, it has most righteously become a place of suffering, and it is well that we trace all that we endure to that cause, that we may "glorify God in the fires". Our suffering, indeed, can be no expiation for sin. But you know of the One who, though He "knew no sin", was made sin for sinners and a curse for accursed ones that such might be redeemed and "made the righteousness of God in Him". With what astonished joy did His now penitent betrayers and murderers gladly receiving the Word, find in the death of Jesus the Messiah the fulfilment of the prophetic Word; "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed". What a display is here of the character of God against whom we have grievously offended. Here let us sinners ever

look on Him Whom we have pierced, and while, through the working of the Spirit of grace and supplications, we mourn for Him, let us aim, however dim our eyes or weak our faith may be, to join the company of those who adoringly and gratefully exclaim, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins".

Christ crucified is the beginning of the confidence, and let the same be held steadfastly to the end. But though our sufferings cannot be expiatory, by the blessing of the heavenly Father, bestowed through His only begotten Son our Lord, and conveyed to our souls by the Spirit of all grace they may, and repairing in humble, penitent believing faith to the Faithful Who has promised, we may and should, rest assured that they will, contribute abundantly to our sanctification; the chastisements of the Father of spirits being, not for His pleasure, but our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. May He cause this affliction to work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness while you are exercised thereby.

It becomes me not to obtrude subjects on your meditations, persuaded as I am that the Glorifier of Christ is your leader and guide into all truth. As, however, He is pleased to make use of instruments, and I would wish to be helpful as far as enabled to all the flock, and especially to you, my dear friend, I may venture to suggest the following very imperfect outlines of subjects of meditation for a time of trouble.

1st. Our frailty and entire dependence as creatures on the self-existent and infinitely glorious Jehovah.

2nd. Our awful inconceivable guilt as apostates from Him who made man in His own image, after His likeness; the entire depravity of our natures as fallen, and our personal actual transgressions by omission and commission, in youth and riper years, before we knew God, and since; and most particularly in sins against Christ, His Gospel, Spirit and grace, etc.

3rd. The believing contemplation of Christ in His Person, covenant engagements, mediatory work, all-sufficiency, grace, truth, and saving benefits.

4th. The patience, long-suffering and abundant grace of the Heavenly Father, as it has been so richly manifested in the Son of His love and in His dealing with us.

5th. The shortness of time, the certainty of death, the vanity of the world, the solemnity of judgment, the preciousness of the mercy-seat, the necessity of entire sanctification.

6th. The glory of the exalted Redeemer, the perpetuity of His intercession, the fidelity of His promises, His power to guide unto death and through it, the blessedness of those that are at home

with Him in the mansions which He has gone to prepare, the unutterable blessedness, transport and triumph which are stored up in the words of eternal life — "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Pray for me, for my mind is often despondent and my faith and hope sadly and disgracefully feeble and low. How needful is the blessed Spirit. I hope the Lord may be pleased to spare you a little before you go hence, and make you a blessing. My wife unites in tenderest sympathy and love. — John Duncan.

Studies in the Life of the Apostle Paul

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

VIII. A Meeting for Prayer

Some time after Barnabas and Saul had returned from Tarsus to Antioch, there were gathered together five of the brethren at Antioch, to minister unto the Lord in prayer and fasting. The meeting for prayer was small, but the outcome of their ministrations was momentous. At the beginning of Chapter 13 in the book of Acts, we read of them in these words:

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them."

As these men of understanding in the fear of the Lord poured out their hearts unto Him, He made known unto them His Divine will, by means of the secret testimony of the Holy Ghost, confirmed in the words above quoted. It was in this manner that a Gospel mission to the ends of the earth was first unfolded to the infant Church at Antioch. The result was far beyond any of their expectations; yet the whole project was but a logical development, in process of time, of the Saviour's own commission to the disciples, "Go ye into all the world." Had He not also said that "beginning at Jerusalem," they were to carry their faithful witness beyond the city walls, out into Judaea, and then into Samaria, and finally, unto the uttermost part of the earth? Here now, they were to go beyond all that had been already done; beyond Judaea, and Samaria, into the unknown regions of the nations round about,

even unto the uttermost part of the Roman Empire.

Our present meditation, then, might well be centred on these two matters:

a. **The men involved in this enterprise**

b. **Their frame of mind at this time.**

a. The men themselves are named: each has, no doubt, his own special significance; his own spiritual background; his own special gift. In the absence of any great detail about them, in the pages of Divine Writ, we can only mention, here and there, a thought or two, which may serve to show the quality of the men and the wisdom of the Lord, in so ordering it that we find among them, both Jew and Gentile, one in Christ Jesus, ready to unite in prayer and in practice, for the furtherance of the cause of Christ on earth.

i. Of **Barnabas**, who heads the bill, we need say very little. We have already met him in these studies, and, therefore, need only remind ourselves that he is the converted Levite from Cyprus, whose wealth was great, but whose generosity to the common cause of the newly-established Church was greater. His special recommendation in the Scripture is, "**a good man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith.**"

ii. **Simeon**, that was called Niger, that is, black. It is not certain whether this is to be taken to refer to the fact that he was black-skinned — a true African — or merely dark-skinned, as so many were in the East. Perhaps it matters not. The main thing is that he is found among the brethren; surely he had learned what it was to say with the Church of old in the Song, '**I am black, but comely.**' Song i, 5.

iii. **Lucius of Cyrene** — in North Africa. Most likely a Gentile, with a Roman name. One of the band who came over to Antioch first, with the Gospel of the grace of God, we know not how he himself had come to hear and to love that same Gospel, unless it was that he had come up to Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, when Peter preached that wonderful sermon in Acts 2. In Romans xvi, 21 we read of one, Lucius, among Paul's companions at Corinth; possibly this is the same, although we cannot be sure, as the name was fairly common. The one definite point is that he came from Cyrene — a place from which came another, called Simon or Simeon, who bore the Cross after Jesus, on the way out of Jerusalem to the hill of Calvary. Simeon, called Niger, and Lucius from Cyrene — were they both from Cyrene? Can this be the Simeon who was so highly honoured? Whatever be the case, they were now in the service of the despised Nazarene together and bearing His Cross in no uncertain manner.

iv. **Manaen**, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch. Perhaps he is the most interesting member of this noble group. The word in Greek, translated in the paraphrase, 'who had been

brought up with,' means 'foster-brother', literally, one suckled by the same mother. By extension of meaning, it passed into use in the sense of a companion of youth. What appears to be revealed here about Manaen is, the near relationship in which he stood to Herod, the tetrarch, a ruler in the land, the man who caused John the Baptist to be beheaded, and mocked the Lord of glory, by clothing Him with a gorgeous robe. Herod went his own way and finally to his own place, while Manaen, his foster-brother, came to the knowledge of the truth and took up his cross and followed that same Jesus, whom Herod had so cruelly mocked. "One shall be taken, and the other left." The one-time child of the royal palace in Judaea, is now a child of God and follower of the King of glory. O, the wonder of the sovereign grace of God! This man, indeed, could be a great help to the church at Antioch — a power for good. He was a most valuable member of this famous group of five praying men.

v. **Saul.** Last, but not least, the 'young man' Saul, now much more instructed in the way of the Lord; much more exercised in the truth; much more refined in the furnace of self-imposed discipline. As he is, pre-eminently, the subject of our meditations, we can leave our discussion of him there.

O, what a noble band they present to us! Five men met for prayer. What was the outcome? A bursting forth of the river of the water of life, in the preaching of the Cross, that was to refresh, with its many streams, the souls of countless sinners, Jew and Gentile, the world over. So these men gathered together in Antioch, in those days. We now take up

b. **Their frame of mind at that time.** They were united in prayer and fellowship, as they "**ministered to the Lord and fasted**". The hours thus spent were not spent in vain. The word used of their ministering to the Lord is a technical term, originally used, in classical times, of rich Athenians who gave liberally of their means for the public good, especially for the provision of state occasions such as the annual, biennial or four-yearly festivals and games in Athens. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, it is uniformly used in connection with the temple services, especially those of the Levites. Out of this usage arose the use of the word in the New Testament, in connection with service to the Lord, in the spirit of the sanctuary service of old. These noble men of God were giving of their time, their gifts, their talents, their spiritual exercises and services, for the good of the Church, not only at Antioch, but also in every place. Above all, they were giving, in the Spirit, of their services, to the Lord Himself — worshipping Him and serving Him only.

They were seeking the mind of the Lord; praying for guidance; waiting upon Him, at the posts of His door; denying themselves

and taking up His Cross. While thus engaged, the Holy Ghost made known to them that two of their own number were to be chosen for a specific work, and these two were Barnabas and Saul.

Out of this small meeting for prayer and ministration before the Lord, arose the wonderful journeys of the Apostle Paul, first in company with his valued friend and companion of senior years, Barnabas of Cyprus, and later, in company with many others, who, from time to time, were called to join the band of noble witnesses for the Saviour, as they travelled all over the then known world, proclaiming the glad tidings of the redeeming love of God.

Let us not despise the day of small things. The great movement outlined in the above paragraph stemmed from very small and inauspicious beginnings. So, it is often still. The Lord has promised to be with the 'two or three' gathered in His name; to reveal Himself in their midst; to make known to such as earnestly desire it, and diligently and sincerely seek it, His mind and will, not merely for their salvation, but also for their continued walk in this world; not only in grace, but also in Providence. One final word: let us see the value of concerted prayer — to be united in the bond of peace, and in the unity of the spirit, earnestly striving together for the faith of the Gospel. Is it not herein fulfilled, even that which we have in Matthew, chapter 18, verses 19 and 20?

"Again I say unto you, That if any of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Some Brief Obituaries

The congregation of South Harris, in common with other congregations throughout the Church, has suffered the loss of some of its oldest members, over the years, since our coming among them. The following brief tributes to the memory of three of those, who have passed away since 1961, may serve to preserve the remembrance of such as were, we humbly believe, true followers of the Lamb, in this world, and whose ransomed souls, we also humbly believe, are now worshipping that same glorious Person before the throne. Owing to lack of information regarding the spiritual experiences of the first two under-mentioned, I am only able to give a few general impressions of their life and witness, as I knew it.

Mrs Julia Ross, Geocrab, South Harris

This worthy woman passed to her everlasting rest in September 1961, at the age of seventy-seven years. She was the widow of the

respected Mr Archibald Ross, who was a deacon in the congregation. From the time that we first knew her she appeared to us to be a person, much conscious of her own unworthiness, yet clinging to the precious promises, which are Yea and Amen, in Christ Jesus, for strength and support. The blood of Jesus was precious to her soul, and she adorned her profession with a meek and lowly spirit, esteeming, always, others above herself. Her love for the Word was always manifest, when we would visit her in her hospitable home; and it was this alone which comforted her dying pillow.

"This word of thine my comfort is
in mine affliction."

Ps. cxix. 50.

The end came peacefully, in the presence of some of her daughters, who had tenderly and devotedly nursed her in her weakness. Her place in the earthly sanctuary, which had been seldom empty, while health and strength permitted, has now been vacant these many years. It is our confident hope, however, that the place in the mansions above, purchased and prepared for her by the Redeemer, has been filled since her ransomed soul departed from the 'earthly tabernacle'. To her large family of daughters and their families, who, we are sure, still miss a dear mother, who taught them the way of life, we can only say: Be ye followers of her, inasmuch as she followed Christ, and all shall be well.

Miss Mary MacLean, Finsbay, South Harris

In November 1961, the subject of these few lines of remembrance was taken from the Church below, and her redeemed soul entered the realms of glory, to join the Church above. Such indeed is our humble hope, for Mary MacLean was one of those few, who seem to walk in this world, with a tenderness of conscience not given to all that fear the Lord, and call upon His name. Her voice was hardly ever heard, but it was enough to see her face to know that here was one to whom the Lord Jesus Christ was indeed precious, as the Beloved of heaven, and the Fairest among the children of men. She sought to keep herself unspotted from the world, and her delights were in God's Word, His house and among His people. She was often at Communion throughout the island and would testify to the spiritual benefit which these seasons afforded her, in the wilderness journey. A favourite author for private reading on Sabbath evenings was Rev. Archibald Cook, Daviot. His 'Sermons in Gaelic' were greatly appreciated by our late friend, and truly she could not have gleaned in better fields for experimental godliness.

Her end likewise was peaceful, after a gradual decline in health

and strength, and she departed this life, in her mid-seventies, in the month of November 1961, to be forever with the Lord. To her sorrowing relatives, and especially to the sister with whom she stayed so long, we can but say, **'The memory of the just is blessed'**. May they make choice of the good part which this Mary was enabled to choose and so be prepared to follow her example and profession.

Miss Mary MacKay, Geocrab, South Harris

It is just over two years since this gracious woman passed away to her everlasting rest, on 14th October 1967. She was born at Geocrab, on 1st January 1875, her father being the late respected Frederick MacLeod, who was an elder in the Free Church at Manish, prior to the separation in 1893.

It was in 1901 that the Holy Spirit made use of the 116th Psalm to convince her of her lost state before a holy God. She remained a year under deep conviction until, at length, deliverance came through the words of the Lord in Isaiah, chapter 43, verse 25 — **"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."** On account of the temptation that she might be eating and drinking damnation to herself by coming to the Lord's Table and professing His name publicly, she refrained from appearing before the Session until the autumn of 1912. Tossed between fear of judgment and fear of failing in her duty to the Lord, she was finally enabled to go forward, in the strength of words, from the very Psalm which had been blessed of the Lord to awaken her to a realisation of her lost state. These words were,

"What shall I render to the Lord
for all his gifts to me?"

Psalm cxvi, 12.

She was admitted to membership, in full communion, in September 1912, while the late Rev. D. N. MacLeod was minister at Tarbert, and often remarked that the sermon preached that day by the late Rev. Neil Macintyre, who was then in Stornoway, was a great source of comfort and strength to her, in going forward. The text that day was: **"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."** Col. iii, 3.

For the long period of fifty-five years, this worthy woman upheld her solemn profession that day and gave ample evidence, at home and from home, that her hope and confidence was placed in God alone. She was a person of strong character, who was not afraid to speak her mind in any company, and for long she was a faithful witness for the truth, wherever she would go. Until old age began to take its toll of her bodily strength, she was a regular

attender at Communion throughout the whole Long Island and in North Uist, and her remembrances of the men and women whom she met there were always sweet and refreshing to herself. She had a great attachment to the witness raised in 1893, on the side of truth, by the godly fathers of the Church, and continued to the end in that attachment. Her love for God's Word and people, His House and Cause were easily to be seen.

Her place in home and church is empty now, and consequently she is and will be missed. Her mind was unimpaired until very shortly before the end, when the Lord gently called her away to be with Himself for ever. Her husband, whom she married in 1897, predeceased her in 1946, but to the surviving members of her family we would say, may your mother's God be your God, even the God of your salvation. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

We hope that the above tributes to the consistent life and testimony of some of those godly women, whom it has been our privilege to meet in Harris, may serve to perpetuate their memory and show to the more immediate kith and kin of the deceased, as well as to all who knew them at large, that they are not forgotten. May the Lord, who made them what they were, by His grace, pour His Holy Spirit upon others so that it shall be fulfilled.

"Instead of those thy fathers dear,
thy children thou may'st take,
And in all places of the earth
Them noble princes make."

Psalm xlv, 16.

A.M.C.

Posadh an Anama ri Criosd

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 337)

3. Ged a tha h-uile peacadh a marbhadh agus a damanadh, gidheadh cha'n eil peacadh air bith a milleadh agus a damanadh mar a cuir sinn riutha peacadh dìmeas agus diùltadh Chriosd. Tha e fìor gu'm bheil a h-uile peacadh a damanadh; peacadh a stigh, peacadh a muigh. "Oir is e tuarasdal a pheacaidh am bàs." (Rom. vi. 23.) Agus tha'n t-Abstol ag innse dhùinn gu'm bheil diol-thuarasdal dligheach air son a h-uile briseadh agus eas-ùmhachd. (Eabh. ii. 2.) Ach ged a tha h-uile peacadh a damanadh, gidheadh, ge b'e air bith peacadh duine, a dh'aindeoin cho lionmhor, a dh'aindeoin cho mòr, cha'n urrain iad gu bràth a

dhamanadh ma's e agus gu'n dùinn e stigh ri Criosd. Gu dearbh cha'n urrain e bhi air a ràdh gu'm bheil aon de pheacaidhean duine 'n a aobhar a dhamanadh, ach a dhiùltadh air Criosd. Da-rìreadh, fodh'n lagh, b'e aobhar sònraichte daoine a bhi air an sgrios am peacaidhean anns a choitcheannas, ach fodh'n t-soisgeul is e aobhar sònraichte daoine a bhi air an sgrios iad a bhi diùltadh Chriosd agus a ghràs tre eas-creidimh. An uibhir sin tha Criosd Fein ag innse dhùinn anns an àite aithnichte sin, Eoin iii. 18, "An tì a chreideas ann, cha ditir e: ach an tì nach creid, tha e air a dhìteadh a cheana, a chionn nach do chreid e ann an ainm aon-ghin Mhic Dhé." Cha'n eil esan a chreideas ann an Criosd air a dhìteadh. Agus c'ar son sin? An ann a chionn nach eil peacaidhean aige gus a dhìteadh? Cha'n ann, ach do bhrìgh, air dha creidsinn ann an Criosd, tha a pheacaidhean uile air an toirt air falbh. Ach esan nach eil a creidsinn Ann tha e air a dhìteadh a cheana. Agus c'ar son? An ann a chionn gu'm bheil e'n a pheacach anns a choitcheannas, na do bhrìgh gu'm bheil a pheacaidhean lionmhor agus 'n am peacaidhean mòr? Cha'n ann, ach a chionn nach do chreid e ann an ainm aon-ghin Mhic Dhé. 'S e so suim na h-uile — Cha'n e prìomh aobhar dìtidh duine am peacadh so, na am peacadh ud, ach a dhiùltadh air Criosd tre eas-creidimh. Bh'uaihte so tha agaibh cho tric, sìos agus suas anns an t-soisgeul: "Esan a chreideas bithidh e air a shaoradh: esan nach creid bithidh e air a sgrios," agus mar sin air adhart. Uime sin, ma's e 'ur diùltadh air Criosd a bhi deanamh dìmeas air an aon ullachadh air son anamaibh peacach; ma's e sin a' nì a tha ceangal peacaidhean duine gu teann air; agus mar a b'urrain peacaidhean eile an duine, ged a tha iad mòr agus lionmhor, a dhamanadh, mar a biodh am peacadh so a bhi diùltadh Chriosd air a chur riutha; an sin gu cinnteach is e so am peacadh sin a tha gu ball-direach agus gu sònraichte a mort an anama. Oh, cia mòr, uime sin, am peacadh so! Is e peacadh mòr a tha ann a mort, aingidheachd a tha air a pheanasachadh leis a' bhreitheamh; nì motha tha sinn ag amharc air a mhortair mar aon a tha airidh air a bhi beo: ach cha'n eil mort ann coltach ri mort anama, nì motha bu chòr dhuinn fulang do mhortair anama a bhi beo air son aon mhòmainte.

6. Thugaibh fa'n ear, gur e peacadh a th'ann a bhi deanamh dìmeas agus a diùltadh Chriosd, nì a tha nochdadh gu'm bheil sibh gu cinnteach a gràdhachadh bhur peacaidhean, nì a tha gu cinnteach a ròghnachadh bàs air thoiseach air beatha, a gràdhachadh dorchadais air thoiseach air solus, agus a tha dha'r fàgail gun an leth-sgeul is lugha, na cothrom gu bhi cur suas 'ur tagradh gu sìorridh. Agus, oh, cia'm peacadh dubh agus uamhasach a dh'fheumas a bhi ann an so! Beagan a thaobh na leanas.

(1) 'S e th'ann am peacadh a bhi deanamh dìmeas agus a diùltadh Chriosd ach nì a tha dearbhadh gu'm bheil gràdh agaibh

dha bhur peacaidhean, agus dha'n smuainteachadh mar nithean aotrom. Air son daoine a bhi peacachadh is nì olc e: ach neach a bhi smuainteachadh gu'n nì aotrom a th'anns a pheacadh, tha so gu mòr nì's miosa. Air do'n a pheacadh a bhi'n aghaidh maith neo-chriochnach, eadhon a bhi gu neo-chriochnach an aghaidh an Dia bheannaichte, tha ann, air mbeòil sònraichte, olc neo-chriochnach. Agus a bhi gràdhachadh a nì sin anns am bheil olc neo-chriochnach, oh cia cho uamhasach 's a tha so! Gidheadh tha bhur diùltadh-sa air Criosd a giùlain so ann: oir, thugaibh fa'n ear, mar a biodh agaibh-se smuaintean aotrom mu'n a pheacadh, cha diùltadh sibh maitheanas peacaidh 'n uair a tha e air a thairgse dhuibh, ach chùntadh sibh e airidh air 'ur 'n uile ghabhail ris: agus mar a biodh gu'm bheil sibh a gràdhachadh 'ur peacaidhean, seadh gu mòr dha'n gràdhachadh, cha roghnaicheadh agus cha mhiannaicheadh sibh a bhi buannachadh ann 'ur peacaidhean: nì's lugha gu mòr na sin cha diùltadh agus cha deanadh sibh dimeas air a leithid de mhaith agus a tha Criosd ann air sgàth bhur peacaidhean. Na'n diùltadh fear-droch-bheart air a dhiteadh maitheanas saor an rìgh, nach dearbhadh sin gu'n robh smuaintean aotrom aige mu'n bhàs, agus gu'n robh gràdh aige dhà. O mar an robh gràdh agaibh do 'ur peacaidhean, bhiodh sibh toilichte a bhi air bhur saoradh bh'uatha agus gabhail gu toileach agus gu h-aoibhneach ri saoradh bh'uatha, 'n uair a tha'n t-saorsa air a tairgse dhuibh, mar a tha ann an Criosd.

Tha'm peacadh so a bhi diùltadh Chriosd 'n a nì a tha dearbhadh gu'm bheil sibh a gràdhachadh dorchadais nì's motha na solus, agus a roghnachadh bàs air thoiseach air beatha. 'S e th'ann ach a nì a tha roghnachadh peacadh agus bàs air thoiseach air Criosd agus beatha agus gràs: o, uime sin, ciod e'm peacadh dubh a dh'fheumas a bhi ann! So tha Criosd Fein a cur an ceill dha thaobh, agus sin, mar an-tromachadh àrd air, nì a tha dha dheanamh dùbailt toillteanach air damanadh: "Agus is e so an diteadh, gu'n d' thàinig an solus do'n t-saoghal, agus gu'n do ghràdhaich daoine an dorchadas na's motha na'n solus, a chionn gu'n robh an gnìomharan olc." (Eoin iii. 19.) Tha Criosd, agus na nithean maith a bhuinneas do Chriosd, ann an so air an gairm na'n solus: air an làimh eile, tha peacadh agus bàs, agus na h-uile truaighe a tha dha'n leantuinn, air an gairm na'n dorchadas. Nis, tha Criosd ag ràdh, tha daoine, le eas-creidimh agus a bhi dha' m dhiùltadh-sa, ann an suspainn a gràdhachadh, a roghnachadh, agus a cur air thoiseach peacadh, agus bàs, agus dorchadas, a roghainn ormsa agus mo ghràs, Mise agus a bheatha mhaireannach a bheirinn dhoibh. O ciod e'm peacadh a tha'n so! Faodaidh Criosd da-rìreadh a ràdh ri peacaich mar a thubhairt Maois riutha-san bho shean, "Tha mi a'gairm nan neamh agus na talmhainn mar fhianuisean 'n 'ur n-aghaidh air an latha diugh, gu'n do chuir mi

beatha agus bàs f'ar comhair, beannach-agus mallachadh: uime sin roghnaich beatha, chùm gu'm bi thù fein agus do shliochd beo." (Deut. xxx. 19.)

(R'a leantuinn.)

"The Plain Truth"

by Rev. Donald MacLean, Glasgow

A certain type of American is immediately recognisable by his remarkable energy, his capacity for drive and initiative and his unusual ability for overcoming all obstacles which may stand in the way of his designs. Such men are not confined to secular spheres. Many of them appear in the religious world and when their organising ability is directed to the arduous propagation of error, they are a real threat to Christianity.

Such a man is Herbert Armstrong of the Radio Church of God and the "World To-morrow" radio programme. Mr Armstrong is the Editor of **The Plain Truth**, a monthly magazine which has a rising circulation and a growing influence in the field of non-Christian cults. The copies which the present writer has seen of this magazine deal mainly with the present sad condition of society with its drug addiction, immorality and general state of degradation. To any seriously-minded person and, especially to a Christian, who is very concerned with the present conditions prevailing throughout the world, this information appears useful. The magazine does not deal at length with actual Christian beliefs. Recently, however, a copy of "**To-morrow's World**" came into the present writer's possession. This is called "An International Magazine of Bible Understanding" and deals more specifically with religion. It contains a shocking article on "What is Death?" which expresses the wholly unscriptural view that at temporal death both body and soul die and are not revived till the resurrection, etc.

Since these magazines are widely advertised and perhaps widely read, a brief statement on the activities of this organisation is most necessary. Those who wish a full treatment of the subject will find it in "The Kingdom of the Cults" by W. R. Martin, from which much of the material in this article is taken.

Herbert Armstrong is a promoter of the Cult of "Anglo-Israelism". These people believe that the ten tribes of Israel were lost when the Jews were captured by the Assyrians, and that these "lost" tribes went westwards and became the ancestors of the Saxons. The Anglo Saxons of Britain and America are supposed to be those tribes, Britain in particular being Ephraim, and the United States of America, Manasseh. This fantastic theory, which

has neither Biblical nor historical authority, means that the promises to Israel now become the portion of the Anglo-Saxons, and the Throne of England is regarded as the Throne of David.

This silly view could easily be ignored were it not that, by magazine and radio, Herbert Armstrong propagates it and adds to it his own heretical doctrines. He, himself, is supposed to have been converted to these views by his wife, who had made the remarkable discovery that "obedience to God's spiritual laws summed up in the Ten Commandments is necessary for salvation." The Apostle Paul met the same spirit in the Galatian Church in his own day and called it "another Gospel". What would Paul have said to the following? "People have been taught falsely that Christ completed the Plan of Salvation on the Cross — when actually it was only begun there. The popular denominations have taught 'Just believe — that is all there is to it; believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you are that instant saved!' That teaching is false! and because of deception — because the true Gospel of Jesus Christ has been blotted out, lo, these nineteen hundred years by the preaching of a false gospel about the person of Christ — and often a false Christ at that — millions to-day worship Christ — and all in vain! The blood of Christ does not finally save any man."

Like the rest of the Cultists, Joseph Smith, the Mormon, Pastor Russell, the Jehovah's Witness, and Mary Baker Eddy, the Christian Scientist, Herbert Armstrong thinks the Gospel was hid until he and the Radio Church of God appeared on the scene in 1931.

As well as denying salvation by grace alone without the works of the law, he also denies the Trinity, the Person of Christ, as the Co-equal of the Father and His Eternal Son, and the Personality of the Holy Spirit. He denies that at conversion a sinner is born again and maintains that the new birth takes place at the resurrection of the body. The soul, he maintains, is mortal and teaches: "The Bible, which is God's message of instruction to mankind, nowhere teaches any such thing as the pagan doctrine of an immortal soul going to Heaven at death. It teaches that the soul is mortal and shall die." Herbert Armstrong also maintains the necessity of abstaining from "unclean" foods as prohibited in the Mosaic system and, in addition to the Seventh Day Adventists' view of the Sabbath, insists on the keeping of the Jewish Feast Days, New Moons, Festivals and Sabbaths, all of which were abolished when the shadows of the ceremonial law passed away before the bright rising of the Sun of Righteousness. This bundle of almost incredible errors has earned Mr Armstrong the name of "Mr Confusion".

Yet he pursues his course with undiminished vigour. His son is being trained to assist and eventually to take his place. "The Radio

Church of God," concludes W. R. Martin, "is all the more dangerous as it makes use of the Bible and professes to swear allegiance to 'only the plain truth of the Scripture', while, in reality, its allegiance is to the interpretations of the Scripture propagated by Mr Herbert W. Armstrong." His literature and propaganda should be avoided like the plague.

Book Reviews

In All Their Afflictions, by Rev. Murdoch Campbell, M.A. Knox Press. Price 7/6.

This is the second edition of a book which treats of the experiences of the Lord's people, and it shows clearly that their way in this world is not a smooth path. The author proves clearly that many are the afflictions of the righteous, but that they have their Bethels, which, in turn, are their preparation for more afflictions which are as bitter as the waters of Marah. They are plagued by a body of sin of which they cannot get rid in this world, they have their besetting sins of which the author treats, their fears, their temptations, their spiritual enemies, and their adverse providences. However, they have also their hopes, based on God's revelation and the promises of Scripture, and these fortify them in view of the final battle with the last enemy, a battle in which they are assured of victory because Christ has taken the sting out of death, and made him His messenger of peace to bring His people home to the land where there are no more battles and no more enemies. Mr Campbell treats of these matters with a sympathetic pen, and as one who daily experiences what he is writing about. He has also throughout the book given various anecdotes to illustrate the matters he is writing about, and thus he preserves to future generations what, otherwise, would be irretrievably lost. We wish the book a wide circulation. J.C.

Diary and Selection of Hymns of Augustus Toplady. Paperback. Price 7/6, post free. Obtainable from Mr O. G. Pearce, 15a Park Avenue South, Harpenden, Herts.

Augustus Toplady is well-known as the author of the hymn, "Rock of Ages", and was truly an evangelical minister of the Gospel of God's free grace. His Diary, published in the book under review, by the Gospel Standard Baptist Trust, shows him to have been a truly exercised Christian minister who yearned after the salvation of his congregation, and who had great cause for rejoicing at the

rapt attention given to his discourses. He had his ups and downs in his Christian experience, but knew what it was to have a close fellowship with Christ, and he also knew what it was to be plunged into darkness through the "bubbling up" of indwelling sin. This, it may be said, is the invariable experience of God's true people, and because of these things he was eminently useful to those who were seeking the bread of life. There is a large selection of his hymns published, all of which are Calvinistic, but we cannot allow this remark to pass without affirming that our friends, south of the Border, are losing much by using them in public worship rather than the Psalms given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. The book is well printed and we wish it a wide circulation. J.C.

Everlasting Love, by Rev. Murdoch Campbell, M.A. Knox Press.
Price 8/-.

This volume, which is the second edition, consists of twelve sermons, and derives its title from the first of these sermons on Jeremiah xxxi. 3. The sermons, though brief, are a faithful proclamation of the whole counsel of God, and are wholly based on God's revealed will in the Scriptures. They are also most thought-provoking and encouraging to the Lord's people, and different altogether from the milk and water productions which are so common in so-called evangelical circles of the present day. The book is published by the Knox Press, 15 North Bank Street, Edinburgh, and the printing is done by John G. Eccles, Henderson Road, Longman, Inverness. The format and printing are excellent, and we wish the volume a wide circulation, in the hope that it may prove a spiritual blessing to many. J.C.

Sermons (Vol. VI), by J. C. Philpot. Gospel Standard Baptist Trust Ltd. Price 10/- post free. Obtainable from Mr O. G. Pearce, 15a Park Avenue South, Harpenden, Herts.

Philpot's sermons are well known to many readers of this Magazine. For the benefit of any who are still unacquainted with Philpot's writings we may mention that his discourses are mainly experimental in character and, consequently, are suited particularly to those who have had a saving experience of the truth. His sermons generally have been greatly appreciated by exercised Christians. He lays emphasis on the need of the soul to be united to Christ by a Spirit-wrought faith, and exposes all superficial religion as worthless. He is a master in dealing with the soul exercises of the Lord's people and in so doing ministers comfort and encouragement to the tried and afflicted people of God. In applying the truth he does not neglect reproof where that is appropriate.

We are sure that this reprint of a further seven sermons will be welcomed by those who have come to value Philpot's discourses. During the hundred years since his death his sermons have been made a blessing to many, and we trust will yet be blessed to many more. We gladly recommend this volume.

D.B.M.

Notes and Comments

Sabbath Football

The Town of Inverness has taken another downward step in promoting Sabbath desecration. By a large majority the Town Council at a meeting last month sanctioned the opening of parks and other areas in the town for the playing of football on the Lord's Day. An hotel in the town, Gellions, had petitioned the Council for the use of the playing fields for football on Sabbath so that they might form a league of seven or eight teams of hotel employees as they had no leisure through the week. At a meeting of the Parks and Cemeteries Committee, two weeks earlier, this was the unanimous recommendation, so that the Council's decision was already a foregone conclusion.

A disturbing fact of this decision was the part played by a minister of religion in influencing the meeting of the Committee. Although not a member of the Committee Rev. Baxter, a retired minister of the Church of Scotland on the Council, went out of his way to lend his support to the Committee's recommendation, suggesting the usual compromise which has now become the sop to conscience which godless Christians resort to, that the hours of play be confined to the afternoon so as not to conflict with the hours of Divine worship in the Churches. Another sad feature of this decision was the scant attention paid to the many letters of protest sent in by the local Churches and religious organisations, including the Free Presbyterian Church. It was noted by the Town Clerk that the authority appealed to in all these letters was the Fourth Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy", which although dismissed so heedlessly by the Council establishes fully the guilt of this deliberate act of Sabbath desecration. The Lord's Day has once again been put on trial and condemned before an earthly council.

In his own day, the saintly Rev. R. Murray McCheyne, in a letter of protest against the opening of the railways for traffic on the Lord's Day, says of the action of the advocate who supported this measure: 'You hold in your hand the two Tables of Stone, written with God's finger, and you say we should obey this; and

then you dash them on the ground, and say it is our duty, notwithstanding, to trample on and *defy them*'. There is much of this work going on today in Town and County Councils up and down the land. 'O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just; for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins'. — Ps. vii, 9. C.

Another Papal Myth

The notorious Turin Shroud which for centuries the Vatican has led its superstitious people to believe was the actual sheet in which the body of Christ was wrapped after it was taken down from the cross, has now proved to be a fraud. The shroud is a linen cloth with marks upon it which it is claimed were made by the body of Christ, and dates back to the time of the Crusades, when it was brought from the Holy Land. After a short stay in France, the shroud was brought by the Duke of Savoy to Italy and is now kept in the Turin Cathedral. The exiled King Umberto of Italy, being a direct descendant of the Duke of Savoy, is its present owner.

Last summer the Vatican ordered a secret examination of the shroud lasting three days, but have never published the results of this enquiry. Vatican secrecy is meant to conceal evidence which disposes of any idea that the shroud had any connection with Christ. Tradition is one of Rome's pillars for supporting the doctrines and practices of the papacy, and the relics she produces are meant to support her Traditions. A close examination of both of these is enough to expose the faulty foundations on which the R.C. Church is built. The Protestant appeal to Scripture gives protection against the childish superstitions of Rome. The Turin Shroud must take its place beside Peter's Chair and Peter's Bones as another exploded papal myth. C.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern Presbytery: At Dingwall on Tuesday 7th April, at 3.30 p.m.

Outer Isles Presbytery: At Stornoway on Tuesday, 21st April, at 3.30 p.m.

Southern Presbytery: At Glasgow on Tuesday, 28th April, at 6 p.m.

Book Room

A revised book-list is now ready and copies will be sent to readers on request.

Helmsdale Communion

As from this year (and including this year), it has been decided that the Helmsdale Communion will be held on the 2nd Sabbath of June instead of the 3rd Sabbath as formerly.

D. A. MACLEAN, Moderator of Session.

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 — Anon., £1; D.F., £20; Mrs Robertson, Leven, £2; Miss S. A. MacLeod, Inverness, £2.

Home Mission Fund — Mrs R.F., Leverburgh, £1; D.F., £20; Mrs Robertson, Leven, £1.

Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund — Anon., £5; Mrs R.F., Leverburgh, £1; Anon., £1; D.F., £20; Wm. Cornell, Harrisonberg, U.S.A., \$5; Mr N. Nicolson, Portree, £1 (per R.W.M.M.).

Aged & Infirm Ministers' etc Fund — Mrs MacKenzie, Grosse Ile, £2.3.4; Anon., £500.

College & Library Fund — D.F., £20.

General Building Fund — D.F., £20.

Dominions & Overseas Fund — Mrs MacKenzie, Grosse Ile, £2.1.8.

Home of Rest Fund — Anon., Glasgow, £2; R. Wood, 10/- (per J. MacL.); Mrs MacKenzie, Grosse Ile, £4.3.4; Anon., £1; Mr and Mrs W. F. Wilkins, S. Croydon, £4.6/- (per R.W.M.M.); Kyle Friends, £10 (per Rev. A.F.M.); Two Portree Friends, £5 (per Rev. A.F.M.); Visitor, £1; Resident, £1.10/- (for petrol).

Free Distribution Magazine Fund — "Dundee" 5/7; L. Gillanders, Stratford, N.2, 18/-; D. MacAskill, Inverness, 18/-; Mrs O. B. Zeigler, Houston, Texas, 10/-; Mrs R. S. MacKenzie, Grosse Isle, Mich., 18/-; Mrs L. B. Dixon, Vancouver, 14/-; Mrs J. M. MacKenzie, 3/-; C. Densel, Nebraska, U.S.A., £1.16/-; Mrs B. Bishop, Sheerness, Canada, £2.16/-; M. Gillies, Raasay, 8/-; Mrs Catherine MacLeod, Stornoway, £2; H. MacRae, Bonar Bridge, £3.18/-; D. MacLean, Missouri, U.S.A., 8/-; Miss J. Graham, Lochinver, 18/-; A. R. MacDonald, Kirkhill, 10/-; Mrs W. C. Thompson, Edmonton, Canada, £2.14.11; A.C., Wick, 8/-; Miss C. MacKay, Stornoway, 18/-; Mr J. A. MacLeod, Dumbarton, 8/-; Miss M. MacKenzie, London, S.W.1, 10/-; Mr D. J. MacKay, Vancouver, £2.10.4; Mr and Mrs J. Latterthwaite, Vancouver, £1; Miss J. MacKay, Inverness, 8/-; Mary MacLeod, Northton, 8/-; M. A. MacLean, Leverburgh, 8/-; Mrs MacDonald, Vancouver, 18/10; Mr D. MacKay, Kyle, 18/-.

Publications Fund — Mr D. J. MacKay, Vancouver, £3.

Welfare of Youth Fund — Mr D. J. MacKay, Vancouver, £3.

On behalf of Trinitarian Bible Society — Mr Hugh McRae, Kelwood, Manitoba, Canada, £7.17.7.

Mr W. MacKenzie, 7 Crown Drive, Inverness, Treasurer, **Aberdeen Church Building & Supply Funds**, acknowledges with grateful thanks:— North Tolsta Congregation, £30 (per R.W.M.M.); Anon., Ullapool, £2 (per Gen. Treas.); R. Macrimmon, Inverness, £1; Mrs Macdonald, Inverness, 10/-; Miss B. Angus, Inverness, 10/-; In Inverness Plate, £3; In Aberdeen Plate, £5 (for Aberdeen "New Church"); Anon., Ullapool postmark, £3.

The Treasurers of the following congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks:—

Auckland Manse Fund — Anon., Helmsdale, £5; Anon., Gisborne, \$10.00; Mr and Mrs A. Corbett, £100; Mrs Duggan, Tain, £5; A.M., Stornoway, £5; A Friend, Stornoway, £2; Mrs Charlotte MacLennan, Michigan, \$42.56; Mrs Batchelor, Rotoura, \$20.00; Miss M. MacKenzie, Kachoura, a further \$20.00.

Beaully — New Church Building Fund: Ezra 1, 34, Fort William, £30 (per Rev. D. A. MacFarlane); A Friend, £10 (per Mr H. MacKenzie); A Friend, £25 (per Mr J. MacLennan); Mr and Mrs Campbell, Drumadrochit, £5.

St. Jude's, Glasgow — Fabric Fund: £32. Congregational Fund: J.Y. (Yorks), £10; T. McD. (Eston, Sask.), £97.19.3 (both per Rev. D. McL.); K.M., Cardonald, £1.10/- (bus), "Anon.", Glasgow, £2 (bus). Church Tower Repairs: Anon., Glasgow, £7; M. McL., Glasgow, £2; Anon., Glasgow, £1; Anon., Glasgow, 6/-; J.M., Glasgow, £1; Anon., Glasgow, £1.10/-; Anon., Glasgow, £5; Anon., Glasgow, £40; Anon., Glasgow, £32.

Greenock — Anon., £1.10/- (Church Interior Decorating), £1 (Sustentation Fund) (per Rev. L. MacLeod); Legacy of £100 from Estate of the late Samuel Macdonald (for Maintenance of Church Property).

Inverness — Anon., £3 (per Inverness Communion Collection); Miss J. McPherson, Aviemore, £1 (for Sustentation Fund); Mrs Edwards, Lemington, £3.18/- (for Sustentation Fund) (all per Publications Treasurer).

London — Church and Manse Purchase Fund: Anon., Broadford, £5; Friend, Edinburgh, £3.

Portree — Mr Donald MacDonald, 11 Martin Crescent, Portree, £1 (towards Communion Expenses); A Friend, £2 (for Congregational Purposes, per Rev. F. MacD.).

Raasay — Church Carpet: Friend, Raasay, £6 (sec. don.); Friend, Raasay, £5 (sec. don.); Friend, Raasay, £2.

Staffin — Interested, £50 (for Sustentation Fund) and £10 (towards cost of Vestry); In memory of Mr Alex. MacKay from a Staffin Friend living away, £5.

Wick — Correction to February donation — "Three Friends, Halkirk, for Manse kitchen renovations", should read £13 instead of £1.3/-.

Kyle — Mrs MacIver, late of Tolsta, £5; Tain Friend, £1 (per G. Harvey). Applecross Friend, £1 (all for Communion expenses).

Stornoway — "A Friend", £5 (for Congregational Purposes).

Ingwenya Mission — 1968: Inverness Ladies, £32.12.2, £35.0.0, £51.9.0, £42.12.11; Misses J. and L. MacKay, £64.16.3; Friend of Mrs Nicolson, Ingwenya Mission, £354.12.2; Vancouver Congregation, £427.16.1; Bloor Street East Church, £97.19.4; Vancouver S/School, £32.15.5; Netherlands Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, £35.6.8; Vancouver S/School, £31.6.4; Holland Friends Dutch Society, £4,603.3.10 (per Mr Reijers). 1969: Bloor Street East Church, £102.14.4; Vancouver Congregation, £578.7.4; Vancouver Ladies Meeting £49.5.8; Vancouver Congregation, £3.12.10; Vancouver S/School, £54.10.0; Holland Friends Dutch Society, £4,914.9.9, £2,446.1.11, £5,847.17.3, £4,946, £3,614.8.7 (per Mr Reijers).

Scourie — "London Friends", £3 (per Rev. D. B. MacL.); "D.M.K.", Inverasdale, £1; "Wellwisher", North Tolsta, £2; "M.G.", Glasgow, £2; "A Friend", £1 (per Mr D.M.C.); "Friend", North Coast, Applecross, £1 (all for Church Renovation Fund).