

The
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and **Monthly Record**

Volume 75

May 1970

No. 1

The Unshaken and Unshakable Throne

by Rev. Donald Beaton *

Of all the thrones that have been or will be there is but one that is forever and ever. It is the throne of Him to whom the promise was given: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever". (Ps. 45: 6; Heb. 1: 8) Scripture has many references to God's throne. It is spoken of in the Book of Jeremiah as a "glorious high throne". (Jer. 17: 12) When we turn to the Book of Revelation this great throne is often brought before our notice. Intimately connected with the seat of authority and absolute regal dignity is the power that is wielded by Him that sits upon this throne. He is to reign until all opposition is put down and all his enemies are put under His feet. The divine message concerning this throne, as it is set before us in Scripture, is calculated not only to produce feelings of awe and humility, but comfort and calm confidence in times when the very foundations of all things are shaken. In one of Isaiah's most beautiful and encouraging messages he says: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, **Thy God reigneth**". (Is. 52 : 7) In the great song in which the Psalmist magnifies the greatness of Jehovah over all the gods of the heathen he calls upon the people to declare that the Lord reigneth. This is a truth which needs to be kept, not only before men of the world, but also before the Lord's people. Pride of place has an intoxicating effect upon men suddenly raised from obscurity to power. They fondly dream that they can shape the destinies of nations while their eyes are shut to a St. Helena and a Doorn. Napoleon and Kaiser Wilhelm had plenty of time to think over

the inglorious setting of their careers in St. Helena and Doorn, and when God who sits upon this throne arises to deal with Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, they shall be insignificant enough in His hands. The divine announcement has already gone forth: — "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies", and no power on earth or in hell will render this decree inoperative. It is well that the thoughts of the Lord's people should be turned to this throne, for in times when all things seem out of joint and rushing on to inevitable and headlong destruction the great high throne is as unshaken as ever; for he who occupies it is as powerful as ever. The reins of the government of the world and of His Church are not in helpless hands. This is a fact we are too ready to forget, and in forgetting it we lose the confidence it is fitted to instil into our trembling hearts. Let the Lord's people never forget that the Father has delegated to His Son, their Lord, Saviour and Master, all power in heaven and in earth; and when the appointed time comes there will be no doubt left in the minds of those looking on, and those who are called upon to feel the strength of that power, how tremendous it is. It must be borne in mind, however, that we no less than John will not see the throne until a door is opened in heaven. When the door was opened strange things happened. John was immediately in the Spirit. He saw a throne in heaven and one sat upon the throne. Round about it was a rainbow. Matters were not going well with the Churches in Asia — only two of them escaped condemnation. Was there no power to stop the downward drift and arrest the progress of error? Not so far as the natural eye could see, but when "the door in Heaven" was opened, and John saw the wonderful vision of the throne, it was not unoccupied. **One sat on the throne.** What a comfort this vision must have afforded to John in the special circumstances in which the Churches in Asia were, and in which he was also at the time.

Among many other things said about Heaven's High Throne is that it is a throne of grace. It is to this throne the countless multitude who are now in heaven came with all their troubles, difficulties and perplexities and found help in their time of need. It is to this throne that the Lord's redeemed people, who are still in the wilderness are coming, and none are sent disconsolate away. When one thinks of all the suppliants that gathered to this throne and those who are yet to come to it, is it any wonder that it occupies such a place in the thoughts of the Lord's people? Listen to their prayers — how often reference is made to the throne of grace, and yet there is only one passage in Scripture where the

*This article by a former editor of the magazine was written in March 1939.—Editor.

word occurs — “Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”. (Heb. 4: 16)

There is another aspect of God's throne which sinners would do well to keep in mind. God shall one day make plain before an assembled universe that wickedness, however often it triumphed, was in direct opposition to His righteous government. God has given assurance to all men that He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained, and the appointed Judge, in words of unspeakable solemnity, has told us of the transactions before the Great White Throne when the Day of Judgment comes. The sentence by Him that sits upon the throne is irrevocable and admits of no appeal — it is final — and final for all eternity. When He says: “Depart from me ye cursed,” He shuts the door that had been so long standing open; and let us never forget that it is the Hand that opened the door that shuts it forever for the finally impenitent.

It is good news that it is not to the throne of judgment that we are now being summoned but to a throne of grace where millions of our race came penitently and found pardon, peace and eternal hope. We may derive comfort from the fact that “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth”. It is told of Dr Hugh Martin when he felt himself passing into one of these mental fits of darkness to which he was subject that he used to say: “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth”. (Rev. 19: 6) Whatever that darkness meant for him he had the confidence that the Lord God omnipotent was reigning.

A Gracious and Loving Heart

“O that they would fear me”. Deut. 5, 29.

There were many in Israel, no doubt, who had a dread of the God of Israel because of His awesome power and majesty displayed on Mount Sinai. It is not enough, however, to have a dread and awe of God. This may be no more than a slavish fear of God. What God requires, and what is pleasing in His sight is a gracious, holy, reverential and filial fear. It is of this He speaks when He says: “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me”.

God had revealed Himself as Israel's Covenant God. As their Covenant God He was a God nigh unto them, and not a God afar off. But how few in Israel really understood this! It was only those

who were brought in a spiritual way into a covenant relationship to Israel's God who could be sensibly affected by the infinite condescension of the God of heaven in graciously choosing out a people for Himself, and bringing them nigh unto Himself in and through a promised Messiah. How full of meaning the sacrifices of the Old Testament sanctuary would be for such true Israelites as they perceived, however dimly, yet truly, the good things to come in the typical ordinances which foreshadowed them. These true Israelites all took God to be their God, and to be their God for evermore. They were enabled to make this blessed choice by divine grace vouchsafed to them, and it is the same choice which living believers make today when they take God to be their covenant God in Jesus Christ — a God reconciled and no longer a God afar off. By this blessed choice we are brought into a new relationship to the God of eternity.

All those who truly fear God, love God as God and as their God with a gracious, holy, reverential and filial fear. They thus fulfil the end of their creation — to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. They love God who has made Himself known in Jesus Christ. (This love they bear to Him because He first loved them.) In Christ they have beheld His face as a reconciled God and have tasted of His love and have obtained the forgiveness of their sins. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins". (1 John 4: 10)

A gracious and loving heart is a heart in which the effects of the work of the Spirit of God are seen. God imparts grace to the soul and makes the graces of the Spirit to appear in the heart and life of the individual. The Lord's work is always glorious and, consequently, His work in the soul of the sinner is wonderful. It is in this and in this alone that the Lord can take delight. It is the fruit of the Spirit's work in the soul of the individual believer that causes the Beloved of the Church to say: "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice: I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk". (Song of Solomon 5: 1) May we be of those in whom the graces of the Spirit appear.

Do you have such an heart — we now ask — a gracious and loving heart, a heart to know God and to love and serve Him? Do you fear God with a holy, gracious, reverential and filial fear? Do you have the fear of which Job spoke when he said: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding". (Job 28: 28) If so you will cleave to Him, come what may, and you will say with godly David: "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an ever-

lasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow". (2 Sam. 23: 5)

Thoughts on the Psalms

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

(continued from Vol. 74, page 362)

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

Verse 4. "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies".

If, for a moment, we first consider that by these first words David might have meant the many instances when his life had been spared, we shall prepare the way for an enquiry into their deeper meaning. In his past had been escapes from a lion and also a bear; then from the fearsome giant Goliath, and from other ferocious human foes like Saul, the Philistines, and his own son Absalom. Why did he not lose his life on these and other occasions? And what about ourselves? Why have we been spared until now, along with millions of our fellow creatures, when the sentence for sin is death? Because of a Redeemer! David knew this, not only as the reason for his life being spared, but as also applicable to his eternal destiny. His life had been redeemed so that death in all its forms would be overthrown. Let us seek to realise that sin has exposed us to death which in its fullest extent and final form is, "destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power". We are dead spiritually, by nature, will die physically, and be destroyed eternally if not redeemed.

What then is redemption which delivers from this destruction? It means to recover a captive, slave, or condemned person by the payment of a price. In the Bible there is a good deal said about the function of a human redeemer (Goel) which is true also of the one divine Redeemer who came to seek and to save the lost.

- (1) A redeemer could recover property, or liberate a slave without waiting for the Jubilee.
- (2) He must be the next of kin, but such could concede his right to a more distant kinsman. (Ruth 3: 12, 13)
- (3) He had to act as the avenger of blood if necessary.
- (4) He might have to raise up children to a brother dying childless.

The redemptive work of Christ closely paralleled this. By his self-sacrifice He bought back his sinful people from condemnation, and restored them all that they lost through sin. He avenged Himself upon the slayer of his people. He took into union with Himself an unworthy bride. And in order to do all this He became our near-kinsman: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". Think of his humiliation, rejection, sufferings, reproach and death! "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree".

Now, when David composed this Psalm, these things had not yet been done, but they had been foretold and promised, and people like David, believing this good news, were redeemed in anticipation of the actual payment of the ransom. Because promised by God, redemption was inevitable. Have you believed in redeeming love? Do you see it as a necessary forerunner of forgiveness and healing? Redemption ensures that these benefits will continue forever, for eternal life has been procured for the redeemed by the last Adam's obedience unto death. Bless his holy name!

The redemption of the life casts a happy glow over the future. The death of the body there must be, but even that is transmuted into a falling asleep in Jesus. Later there is to be a glorious resurrection, and death is to be swallowed up in victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" And after the resurrection there is to be the full enjoyment of eternal life. Well, all this is wonderful, but wait! there is something more of God's gracious benefits to be mentioned. He gives a foretaste of heaven while the believer is still on earth, by bestowing an abundance of loving-kindness and tender mercies. Life consists in the favour of God. He will confirm to his people here that He has redeemed their life from destruction. The crowning act of his grace shown to them in this life is that He lavishes upon them loving-kindnesses and tender mercies which speak to them of his unfailing love and care.

When they come to glory, they shall be rid of sin and shall fully appreciate his grace, and fully relish the life they shall possess. Here, however, they are still sinful, not always trustful, too ready to complain and even to turn in their minds back to the fleshpots. They do not fully realize the greatness of grace, and are not as thankful as they should be. Nevertheless, goodness and mercy follow them all their days, and when their spirits are stirred up to

feel this, then they discern that He who has redeemed their life is giving them tokens of their title to eternal life by showering upon them lovingkindness and tender mercies. They are guided, preserved, instructed and made wise. They are strengthened, comforted, made humble and aided in innumerable ways. All things work together for their good; they are never forsaken or left destitute of hope. Who can measure the kindness and mercy of it all? These favours are the signs of life that shall never end. Do they not crown his grace toward us?

“For great to usward ever are
his loving kindnesses:
His truth endures for evermore,
The Lord O do ye bless.” (Ps. 117: 2.)

His name shall be called Wonderful

by Rev. William Dyer

To be in a state of grace is to be miserable no more, is to be happy for ever. It is faith that unites Christ and sanctified souls together on earth; and love that unites God and glorified souls together in heaven. O believers! you are those worthies of whom the world is not worthy. Jesus Christ, from one saint, hath more glory given to Him than He receiveth from all the world besides. We owe not only our service to Christ, but we owe also ourselves to Him.

The believer's Saviour is a wonderful Saviour. “He shall be called Wonderful”, (Isa. 9, 6.) He is wonderful in the eyes of all angels and saints for love. The world and devils, for fear, wonder at Him. For the opening of this excellent point, take these particulars: — Christ is Wonderful in His nature — in His person — in His incarnation — in His saints — in His offices — in the miracles that He wrought — in His humiliation — in His conquest — in His ascension — in His exaltation — in His working towards His saints. — Lastly, He is Wonderful in His coming to judgment.

Some have more time than matter, but I have now more matter than time; therefore I must omit much precious matter, for want of precious time. Beloved, I will handle but one of these particulars, and that is the seventh, viz., That Jesus Christ is wonderful in humiliation. This is the head we shall now insist upon, and indeed this is one of the greatest wonders of all; that He that was so high should be brought so low; that He that was so rich should

become so poor; that the Lord of life should die, and the great God become a babe, and the Eternal Word not able to speak a word; that He that made the law should be under the law; that He that was more excellent than all the angels should become less and lower than the angels. O ye angels! how stand ye amazed at this, that the Lord of heaven and earth should become a servant to His own servants. "He took upon him the form of a servant". (Phil. 2: 7.) This must needs be wonderful to all the angels in heaven.

First, Jesus Christ took upon Him our nature. (Heb. 2: 16.) God could stoop no lower than to become man, and man could be advanced no higher than to be united to God. He that before made man a soul after the image of God, now made Himself a body after the image of man; for to be like to God is a wonder, but for God to be like man is a greater wonder. But when was it that Jesus Christ took upon Him our nature? When it was in innocency from misery and calamity? No; but when it was at the lowest, after the fall, when it was most beggarly, most wretched, most bloody, most accursed, most sinful, most feeble. "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly". (Rom. 5: 6.) That Jesus Christ should take upon Him our condition, our frailty, our curse, our nature, when it was thus low, thus poor, thus wretched: Oh! this is a wonder of wonders, and yet thus you see did Jesus Christ. Oh, wonderful abasement! Must God take upon Him our frailty? Had we so far run upon the score of vengeance that none could satisfy but God Himself? Could He not send His angels or saints, but must He come Himself in person? No, no; angels or saints could not do it; but if Christ will save us, He Himself must come and die for us.

Secondly, Our Saviour's humility descended very low. He was born of a poor maid, of no account or reputation. Was there never a great lady or gentlewoman in Jerusalem for this great Prince of heaven to be born of, but that He must be born of a poor despised virgin? Yea, certainly, there were gentlewomen in store in Jerusalem, but our Lord Jesus Christ regarded not the rich more than the poor. He was revealed to poor shepherds, not to emperors and kings, not to rulers and great men, not to doctors and learned men, not to Caesar at Rome. I say, the angels did not go and declare these joyful tidings and good news to Caesar at Rome, but to poor shepherds in the fields. (Luke 2: 8.) He was born in a stable. Not in a fair house or palace, not in a parlour or chamber; no, but in a stable where horses and beasts are fed. He was wrapped up in clouts, and laid in a manger; they were no clouts of fine linen or silks, no cloths of silver or gold, nor precious robes, but poor and mean, like to beggars' rags. Now, beloved, put all this

together, and tell me what is more wonderful than this? O humility, humility, how great are thy riches that are thus commended to us! Thou pleasest men, delightest angels, and confoundest devils, and bringest the Creator to a manger. O sweet Jesus, Thou conquerest death by dying!

Thirdly, The third wonder in Christ's humiliation is this — He became poor; that He that was so rich became so poor; that He that was Lord of all had nothing at all; He that made heaven and earth had no habitation of His own; He that gives crowns of victory, of life, of glory to others, had no crowns Himself here, but a crown of thorns. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head". (Matt. 8: 20.) The foxes had holes to lay their heads in, but Christ hath not a place to lay His head on. As He was born in another man's house, so He was buried in another man's tomb. "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet he became poor". (2 Cor. 8: 9.) "Yet he became poor"; ay, poor indeed, and so poor that He had not a penny. You will say that a man is very poor that hath not a penny; truly such an one was Christ; He had not a penny to pay tribute till He got it out of a fish. (Matt. 17: 27.) And when He was to ride in pomp to Jerusalem He had no coach, no chariot, no horse or beast of His own; He was fain to ride upon another man's ass. (Matt. 21: 2.) O ye blessed saints, admire and wonder at this! is not He the brightness of God, the paradise of angels, the beauty of heaven, the Redeemer of man, the destroyer of death, the King of saints? And that He should become so poor for us! Oh! this is wonderful to angels and men.

Fourthly, The fourth wonder in Christ's humiliation is this, that He shed His blood six times for poor sinners. The first time was, when He was circumcised at eight days old. Oh what a blessed Jesus is this! What! ready for the sacrifice already? What! but eight days old, and shed His blood for the salvation of men's poor souls? The second time was when He was in His agony in the garden. Matthew tells us that His soul began to be sorrowful. "Sore amazed" (saith Mark). (Mark 14.) To be troubled: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour". (John 12: 27.) Troubled, O Lord! What! Thou that bindest up the proud waves of the sea, turnest the hearts of kings as rivers of waters; Thou that laidest the foundations of the earth, and spreadest the heavens as a curtain; Thou that guidest the stars and thunderest in the clouds; Thou that upholdest all things by the word of Thy power; and, what! Thou troubled! Oh the horror, the terror, the sorrow that seized upon the soul of Christ! Saith Luke: "He began to be in agony, and he sweat". (Luke 22: 44.)

What! no natural sweat, but blood; He was in a bloody sweat all over, — He sweat clots of blood, as the original hath it. Oh! how did Christ come swimming to us in blood; and have not we a tear to shed for all those streams of His? We did eat the sour grapes, and His teeth were set on edge; we climbed the tree, and stole the forbidden fruit, and He went up the ladder of the cross and died: Oh how lovely should He be in our eyes! We should wear His cross in our hearts, and treasure it up as Moses did the manna in the pot. Christ's cross, saith he, is the golden key that lets us into paradise, and the angel with the flaming sword is turned out. His blood washed away our sins.

He shed His blood for us when His cheeks were nipt and torn: the pulling off the hair, as the prophet speaks: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair". (Isa. 50: 6.) Oh how was that face of His lacerated and covered with blood that was brighter than the sun! He that was fairer than the sons of men; He that is the great glittering and sparkling diamond of the ring of glory; how was He besotted and besmeared with blood! O ye hard of heart, ye stubborn of heart! (and indeed too stubborn are we all; if judgment and the hammer will not break your hearts, let love and mercy do it), look unto Christ, and say, Hast Thou suffered this for me, and shall I not love Thee, O Lord, and serve Thee, and obey Thee, and honour Thee! So say, and so do, and the Lord say, Amen.

Christ shed His blood when the crown of prickling thorns was put upon His head. (Matt. 27.) Oh what a sight was this to behold that head of His, that was as the most fine gold, as the spouse expreseth it to be, now covered with thorns, and rent with thorns; that He should wear the prickly crown of sharp thorns, that was fit to wear the crown of glory! He shed His blood when His hands and feet were nailed to the cross; these beautiful feet of His that came skipping upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and salvation. How were those blessed hands of His nailed and made fast to the cross! O ye blessed spirits, look down from heaven, and you may see even the Almighty kneel at the feet of men! O ye angels, how should you be amazed at this, to see your Lord and Master so far deny Himself as to take upon Him the form of a servant! "We saw Jesus," saith the apostle, "made a little lower than the angels". To suffer death, the Creator not only became a creature, but inferior to some of the creatures which He had made. O ye blessed saints! why do ye not wonder at this wonder? to see the beauty of heaven, the paradise of angels, the brightness of His Father's glory, the Redeemer of man, thus humble Himself, and take upon Him man's nature, for the salvation of man's soul. Christ shed His blood when the spear was thrust into

His side, out of which presently gushed water and blood. (John 19: 34.) You will say a very strange cure that the physician should bleed, and His blood should have the virtue that we should all be saved. Physicians be usually liberal of other men's blood, but sparing of their own; but it is not so with our Physician; instead of the patient's bleeding in the arm He bled in the side: why dost Thou shower down Thy blood and come swimming in Thy blood? Is not a drop sufficient? "One drop", saith Luther, "is more worth than heaven and earth". Oh love without measure! Oh wonderful redemption! That God should take upon Him man's frailty, that is wonderful indeed! It is enough for a king to pardon a thief, but that the king himself should die for the malefactor, that is beyond expression! Thus did our blessed Lord and Saviour: He died that we might live: He went and suffered in His agony, that He might "stay us with flagons, and comfort us with apples:" He endured the greatest pain, that we might enjoy the greatest pleasures. Oh how lovely, how lovely was Christ in His sufferings! Who would not love thee, Thou King of saints! Christian, consider how much thy dear Lord and Saviour hath suffered and undergone for thee. Oh precious blood! it redeemeth us, it cleanseth us, it washeth us, it justifieth us, it sanctifieth us, it restoreth us to God, and bringeth us to heaven.

Fifthly, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is this — He suffered in His soul: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death". (Matt. 26: 38.) Oh what a word was this for God to speak! For a man to say so is no wonder, but for God to say so, oh this is a great wonder indeed! The suffering of His soul was the soul of His sufferings: Christ yielded His soul for our souls, His soul in our souls' stead. Many of His faithful servants have suffered much in their bodies, as the martyrs that were racked, and burnt, and sawn asunder: but they had much freedom in their souls — their souls were full of much spiritual joy and comfort. But now Jesus Christ did not only suffer in His body, but in His soul: and that is it which makes the wonder the greater. He drank the cup of affliction, that we might drink the cup of consolation; He tasted death for us, that we might taste life through Him; He was forsaken, that we might never be forsaken.

Sixthly, Another wonder in Christ's humiliation is that He should suffer Himself to be so much mocked. He was mocked as Samson was by the Philistines when His eyes were put out. And truly this is a great wonder, if we consider who Christ was; and if we consider who they were that mocked Him. He was God, the God-man; they were but dust and ashes. They did spit upon Him; — they blindfolded Him; — they crowned Him with thorns; — they put a reed into His hand, instead of a sceptre; — they clothed Him

with purple garments; — they bowed their knees to Him in scorn; — they saluted Him with “Hail, king of the Jews”; — they made Him carry His own cross, on which He was to be crucified; as malefactors go with halters about their necks to execution, so they made Him carry His cross; — they reviled Him, wagging their heads; — they crucified Him with two thieves, and Him in the midst of them, as though He had been the prince of thieves, the greatest malefactor of them all; — they exulted over Him in His misery. Thus they never left Him till His soul left the world; and all this they did in scorn to Him, that they might make His death more painful and shameful. Oh, this is no small wonder, if we consider how Jesus Christ was mocked.

Seventhly, In the humiliation of Christ He suffered much from His Father; here is a wonder, if you talk of wonders. He did not only suffer from Jews and Gentiles, Scribes and Pharisees, Judas and Pilate, wicked men and devils, but He suffers too from the Father; and this is that which makes the wonder the greater. (Isa. 53: 10.) “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief”. Mark, one would have thought, if God would spare any, it should have been His Son, His own Son, His beloved Son, His begotten Son, His bosom Son; and yet God spared Him not: “He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all”. (Rom. 8: 32.) Mark, God did not spare Him, but delivered Him up for us. If Jesus Christ will come and take our sins upon Him, God will not spare Him, but let out the fulness of justice to the full upon Him, till He had paid the uttermost farthing of justice. O blessed Jesus, didst Thou undergo so much for our sinning, for our offending, for our rebelling? Oh, then, what infinite cause have we to love Thee, and obey Thee, and honour Thee! For the more He hath done and suffered for us, the dearer He ought to be unto us.

Eighthly, The last wonder that I shall mention is, that Christ foresaw all this, and yet He willingly undertook it, to save mankind: He knew before He came from heaven how His countrymen the Jews would use Him, and that one of His family would betray Him: “Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray Him”. (John 6: 64); nothing was in the womb of time that was not first in the womb of Christ; He knew it from the beginning. That our Lord Jesus Christ should foreknow all this most wonderful misery that He endured, yet that He should come freely, willingly, and joyfully from heaven, to die and suffer by and for such poor wretches as we are; here is a wonder to angels and men, “Lo, I come”, saith Christ, “to do thy will, O God”. (Heb. 10: 9.) And what was it He was to do? Why, to suffer for poor man, to redeem poor man. Do you see here, sirs, what great love Christ bore to

His people? Rather than they should be in hell, and be damned, Jesus Christ would come from heaven and suffer all this for them, though He knew before how He should be used. Oh this is a great wonder dear Christians! Methinks such a pearl should sparkle in our eyes. We sail to glory, not in the salt seas of our tears, but in the red sea of Christ's blood. Truly it is wonderful to think how much He did for us, and how little we do for Him: the greater His sufferings were, the greater were our sins: the greater His pain was, the greater should our love be to Him.

The Diary of Dugald Buchanan

Period I — From infancy to 12 years of age

I had the blessing to be born of religious parents in the year 1716, who took every care to train me up in the fear of the Lord, and early taught me my duty; especially my tender mother, who taught me to pray as soon as I could speak, following all the means used for my improvement, by her earnest and fervent addresses at the throne of grace for my conversion. She used also every imaginable precaution to keep me from the company of other children, who were let loose in the world by their parents, lest I should be tainted by their vices. Yet, all these means were not sufficient to restrain the corrupt nature that was in me. I found by experience the truth of these Scriptures, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child"; and "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Proverbs 22: 15; Psalms 58: 3).

To the best of my remembrance, when between five and six years of age, I went out one Sabbath-day without my mother's knowledge, and for some time diverted myself foolishly; and although I returned home before my absence was observed, yet my mind was filled with terror and heavy accusations of conscience for breaking the Sabbath-day. And that night, after I had gone to bed and slept, I was greatly terrified with the following dream: I dreamed that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me in great wrath, and said that He would be avenged upon me for breaking His Sabbath. After I awoke, I repented of the wickedness I had committed, and resolved to do the like no more. In consequence of this circumstance, I began to pray more frequently

than before; for previous to this I did not pray, unless pressed to it by my mother. But now I began to pray without any entreaty.

About a year after this, on the sixth of December, 1722, it pleased the Lord to call my mother away from this life. From the time of her death I was not so well taken care of, either as to correction or instruction; and "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs, ch. 5). The thorns that hedged in my way being now removed, I began to slight duty, and like Joash, I did well all the days of Jehoiada, but when Jehoiada died, I discovered myself to be what I really was. The corrupt root began to bud, and there being none to lop off the branches, I got leave to do what was right in the sight of my own eyes.

Then the Lord began to visit me with terrible visions, dreams in the night, which greatly frightened me: I always dreamed that the day of judgment was come; that Christ appeared in the clouds to judge the world, that all people were gathered together before His throne; that He separated them into two companies, the one on His right hand and the other on His left; and that I saw myself along with others, sentenced to the everlasting burnings. I always saw myself entering into the flames, and so would instantly awake in great fear and trembling. These things used to set me again to duty, at which I continued while the impressions of another world remained on my mind, but, like Pharaoh, no sooner did these thoughts abate than I also abated in my duty. And the Lord dealt with me as He did with Pharaoh, for when I began to grow remiss and thoughtless, He always visited me with another of these terrible dreams, which generally drove me again to my prayers.

At the time I dreamed these dreams, I believed them to be the strivings of the Spirit of God with me to induce me to forsake my sinful ways. These dreams continued for about two years, so frequent that scarcely a month passed by in which I had not some such dream, and subsequently became so very frequent that I did not regard them. At last, however, they ceased, and I was no more troubled with them. This was about the ninth year of my age. For "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may draw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man" (Job 33: 14-18).

When these dreams ceased, I had no rest in my mind; for one day while reading my Bible, I was particularly struck with the following Scripture: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Genesis 6: 3). I was, as already observed, impressed with the idea that my past dreams were the strivings of the Spirit of God,

and now thought, because they had ceased, God had given me over, and would strive with me no more; that He had striven with me for a long time and that I had still resisted, till at last I had quenched His Spirit.

My fears were also greatly increased by hearing some people say, that when once God had given over dealing with a person He would never return to him; and that such a person would never find repentance. These thoughts greatly troubled me, and I would weep when alone, thinking that I had been forsaken of God. The thoughts which I now entertained of Him as an angry Judge, who would no more show mercy to me, made me neglect duty altogether: for I thought it would be to no purpose; yet I had such a fear of wrath for my sins as to prevent me sinning deliberately. Thus I spent from nine years of age till I was twelve, in a kind of stupid despair, and often thinking on these words, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man".

I have particular remembrance of several things which I did in the course of these two last years, and which cleave to me to this day; and I find that the forsaking of these things even now, is like the cutting off of a right hand.

I will now make two or three observations on this early period of my life.

First, when I reflect on this early period of my life, and consider the natural inclinations of my affections, how they ran out after those things which are expressly forbidden in the law of God, my belief is more firmly established in the truth of that doctrine which teaches me that I am just what the Pharisees said of the blind man whom Christ restored to his sight, "that he was altogether born in sin". Yea, not only born in sin, but, as the Psalmist says, "conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity". "Foolishness," says Solomon, "is bound in the heart of a child," and although "the rod of correction" while held over him "may drive it far from him," yet, it can never drive it so far from him as to prevent its turning again, till the sanctifying grace of Christ be exerted. The Apostle John also writes to little children who had their sins forgiven them, and if little children had no sin, what need had they for forgiveness?

But besides the clear Scripture proofs which testify the truth of original sin, experience put it beyond all doubt with myself, that I came into this world with the seeds of all manner of sin sown in my heart, of which the abundant crop which Satan reaped of my infancy is to me a sufficient evidence. For men do not usually reap where they do not sow some seed or other, and whatever kind of seed is sown, the fruit will be of a corresponding nature. For the Apostle says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, the

same shall he also reap." And of this I am certain, that, instead of honouring God with my first fruits, Satan got the first fruits of all my labours.

I own that in my infancy I did many things which were apparently good, but I did none of those things out of a free choice. No! I did no duty to which I was not either pressed by my parents, or out of a slavish fear of hell; and anything performed on such principles is not acceptable to the Lord. For if a man knows God aright, he will be influenced to serve Him from motives different from such as these: the love of God will be his main principle; and besides, the sweetness and delight which are enjoyed in His service, would be sufficient motives to induce any man, did he but experience them, to serve God.

But how utterly destitute of any of these motives I was, my experience now bears witness. For I never went a step in God's way but when I was compelled; and whenever this compulsion was withdrawn, I sat down till another impulse was given by the arm of the Lord. Whatever instruments He used, it matters not, since they were in His hand who makes every thing accomplish the end for which He designs it.

Secondly, when I reflect on the disposition of my heart at this early period of my life, I find that I was full of pride, covetousness, hatred, revenge, etc., all which manifested themselves abundantly on the least occasion. Should I inquire whence these dispositions flowed, or who taught me them? I shall find that they were not imbibed from others. Besides there was every possible care taken to keep me from corrupt company. Yet even at this early period of my life, before I had any access to the society of those by whom my morals or principles could be contaminated, I found those corrupt inclinations in my nature. Again, should I inquire whence proceeded those abominable outbreakings of iniquity which manifested themselves, particularly between the eighth and twelfth years of my age — actions which I never saw any person do at that time, nor did I hear any one speak of such — I shall find that they originated in, and proceeded solely from, myself. Let me then ask, Whence flowed those black streams? Surely from some poisonous fountain or other, as the Lord says by the prophet, "As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness" (Jer. 6: 7).

Thirdly, when I take a retrospective view of this period of my life, I am led to see the absolute necessity of regeneration by grace, not only in regard to outward actions, but also to inward dispositions, in renewing the nature and restoring the image of God in the soul, and making us partakers of the divine nature, "For that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and flesh and blood

cannot inherit the kingdom of God. "For all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the fading flower." "The carnal mind is enmity against God" (1 Peter 1: 24; Rom. 8: 7).

The use I shall make of this early period of my life, shall be a use of lamentation. First, I may lament with Jeremiah, and exclaim, "How is the gold become dim, and how is the most fine gold changed!" How is the image of God that shone in the soul of man defaced! How is the beautiful order that was in all the faculties thereof turned into confusion! How is the original nature of man sunk in a manner below that of the brutes! "For the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but my people do not know, neither do they consider." "Even the swallow and crane know their seasons."

Who can view man in his primitive glory and happiness, when he ~~had~~ the right exercise of his reason; when he had his judgment and understanding clear in the knowledge of God, of himself, and all the other works of creation; when he had perfect love to God and enjoyed communion with him; when all his faculties concentrated in God as his chief delight; when he was altogether pure and innocent in his nature, and not so much as one vain thought in his mind that could estrange it from God; — who, I say, can think of what man was, and what he now is, with heartrending sorrow that the nature which was planted a choice vine, wholly a right seed, is now become the degenerate plant of a strange vine? (Jer. 2 : 21).

O how unlike man is to what man was, when he proceeded from the hands of his Creator! O sad and fatal change, that he who at one time had the image of God shining in his soul, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures, should now have, instead of these, the very nature and image of the devil, in ignorance, darkness, enmity, pride, stubbornness, malice, uncleanness, atheism, idolatry, self-love, and many other such hateful affections, which, by reason of their number, cannot be named, and in consequence of which, he is exposed to the wrath and curse of a holy and sin-hating God! He is hopeless and helpless in himself, and no ways deserving that God should help him. And who, to aggravate his misery, is in consequence of his fall, unwilling to accept help when it is offered. To contrive a plan for the salvation of such a creature, is entirely beyond the comprehension of the disordered fragments of wisdom that remain in man, even were they joined to the superior wisdom of angels; so that the salvation of man would have for ever ceased, had not the love and wisdom of God found out a method.

Again, when I review the foregoing part of my life, I have great reason to lament that after such an education, and such an

example, as were set before me, I should slight them and turn such a monster of wickedness as I have done. And I have no less reason to lament the many convictions and workings of God's Spirit quenched in those early days. But this has been my manner from my youth, I obeyed not the voice of the Lord. For my neck has been as an iron sinew and my brow brass, and I have been a transgressor from the womb.

Obituary

The late Alex. James Cameron-Mackintosh, Elder, Tomatin.

There are people, acquaintance with whom one feels to have begun too late. Hardly has one begun to appreciate their qualities, than death intervenes. That is the case with the writer and the subject of this obituary. Alex. Cameron-Mackintosh was a man of strong character, upright and of a vigorous, bright nature. Above all, he was a gracious discerning man whose delight it was to serve the Saviour in every way he could.

He was born at Mid-Morile, Tomatin, in 1901 to godfearing parents who gave to him and the other twelve members of their family the best start that children can have in this world. Their children were instructed in the Word of God, given every opportunity to hear that Word preached, firmly and lovingly disciplined, and shown a Christian example. One result was that when Alex. left home to serve his apprenticeship at engineering in Glasgow he attached himself to the St. Jude's congregation, and found no cause to regret the many times he listened to Rev. Neil Cameron preach. His time served, when normally Alex. might have expected to continue working as a journeyman engineer, the post-war depression gave him no opportunity. So he joined the Glasgow Police and served in the Marine Division for several years. But again Providence checked his career, for he became seriously ill with a stomach ulcer. He almost lost his life, recovery was slow, and the strict fitness regulations of the period brought his police service to an end. As Glasgow seemed to hold no future for him, he returned to his native Strathdearn and began farming. His renewed connection with the congregation of his youth continued thereafter until his death.

It is not known when he underwent a saving change, but in 1948 he was received into full membership of the Church. Earlier that year, his beloved wife died, committing to his and the Lord's care their only boy, then seven years old. In May, 1953, Alex.

was ordained an elder of the Straths joint-congregation and applied himself diligently to the duties of the office. He was appointed Clerk of Session almost at once, and showed himself conscientious and businesslike in all his handling of church matters, winning the full respect of all with whom he came in contact. At communion times in Tomatin his hospitable home, where his widowed sister, Mrs MacDonald, kept house, was a well-known centre of warm Gospel fellowship. When Robert Watt at length became unable to continue his work as a missionary at Tomatin, Alex. Cameron-Mackintosh took up the task of conducting the public worship. He continued to do this most acceptably until he became ill in October, 1968. His familiarity with God's Word was very evident when he prayed. Many petitions were taken directly from its sacred pages, and others were almost invariably supported by appropriate portions of the Truth.

His illness lasted almost a year. It was a period marked by sickness, discomfort and weakness. When the Lord on the 17th September last year, took him away to that place where no inhabitant says he is sick, it was immeasurable gain to him, but a severe loss to his family and congregation. A large number of mourners from far and near accompanied the remains to the ancient burying ground of Dalarossie close by the swift waters of the Findhorn, beside which most of his life had been spent. But it was not the only river with which he had close contact. Being one who trusted in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, he was as a tree planted by the waters which spreads out her roots by the river of life. The pure river of water of life proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb, will eternally support and gladden all who like Alex. Cameron-Mackintosh live and die in the faith of Jesus Christ. Desiring for them the same great blessing, we extend our sympathy to his son, and to Mrs MacDonald and the other members of his family.

A. McP.

Posadh an Anama ri Criosd

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 377)

Nis, dha'n taobh-san a tha roghnachadh bàs, agus a diùltadh beatha; a tha roghnachadh mallachd, agus a diùltadh beannachd; 'S e tha 'n so ach peacadh uamhasach da-rìreadh, agus nì's

uamhasaich air an aon laimh, do bhrìgh gu'm bheil an solus cho gràdhach agus cho taitneach; agus air an laimh eile, gu'm bheil am dorchadas cho gràineil agus cho uamhasach: agus mar an ceudna, do bhrìgh gu'm bheil e mar fhiachaibh oirne a bhi gràdhachadh, a roghnachadh, a bhi cur air thoiseach an t-soluis roimh an dorchadais, leis na h-aobharan is cudthromaiche agus is treise: oir tha E cho dùrachdach dha mhiannachadh, tha E cho gràsmhor dha earalachadh, tha E cho teann dha àithne, agus cha'n eil ni's lugha na siorruidheachd iomlan de shonas de labhairt agus ghlòrmhor an crochadh air. O, amuaintichibh air na nithean sin!

(3) 'S e tha'nn am peacadh diùltadh Chrìosd ach peacadh a tha dha'r fàgail gu'n an leisgeul is lugha, na cothrom a bhi togail ar cuis gu bràth: ni a tha dearbhadh gu'r e peacadh mòr e da-rìreadh. 1. Tha e dha'r fàgail gu'n an leisgeul is lugha; gu'n an leisgeul is lugha air son peacaidh, agus gu'n an leithsgeul is lugha air son nach bàsaicheadh sibh air son peacaidh: oir tha Chrìosd Fein dha chur an céill ann an Eoin xv. 22: "Mur bithinn-sa air teachd, agus air labhairt riu, cha bhiodh peacadh aca: ach a nis cha'n eil leithsgeul am peacaidh aca." "Mar bithinn-sa air teachd agus air labhairt riu"; 's e sin anns an t-soisgeul, a toillseachadh toil m'Àthar, agus dha mo thairgse Fein agus mo ghràs dhoibh: "cha bhiodh peacadh aca"; 's e sin cha bhiodh am peacadh cho mòr. Ach a nis cha'n eil cleachd, na leithsgeul aca air son am peacadh. Nis cha'n eil leithsgeul aca, cha'n eil ni aca a ghabhadh leithsgeul am peacaidh, na dheanadh am peacadh ni bu lugha. Tha bhi deanamh dìmeas agus a bhi diùltadh Chrìosd a fàgail dhaoine gum leithsgeul, agus fàgaidh e mar sin iad aig an latha dheireannach. O! 'n uair a dh'fheoiricheas Dia, ann an latha a bhreitheanais chothromaich, do dhaoine aig an robh an còmhnuidh fodh'n t-soisgeul, c'ar son a tha iad a peacachadh, agus a pheacaich iad; c'ar son a tha iad air am faotainn 'n am peacaidhean, agus air dhoibh a bhi air am faotainn 'n am peacaidhean, c'ar son nach bàsaicheadh iad gu siorruidh, ciod a bhios aca r'a ràdh ann an rathad leisgeul air an son fein? Gu deimhinn cha'n eil leithsgeul aca; ach a bhi balbh, mar a tha e air a ràdh ann a' Mata xxii. 12. Cha'n urrainn iad a ràdh nach robh rabhadh air a thoirt dhoibh a thaobh olcas a pheacaidh; cha'n urrainn iad a ràdh nach robh maitheanas agus slàinte air a thairgse dhoibh; cha'n urrainn iad a ràdh nach robh'n tairgse làn, saor, agus soilleir; cha'n urrainn iad a ràdh gu'n robh a' Maighstair cruaidh; ni motha is urrainn iad a ràdh nach robh am peacaidh toillteanach air bàs: cha bhi ni aca is urrainn iad a ràdh. 2. Tha e dha'm fagail gu'n an cothrom is lugha na àite gu bràth air son an cùis a thogail gu cùirt eile. Faodaidh mi a ràdh an so,

mar a tha e air a ràdh an cùis eile; “Ma pheacaicheas duine an aghaidh duin’ eile, bheir am breitheamh breth air: ach ma pheacaicheas duine an aghaidh an Tighearna, co ghuidheas air a shon?” I Samuel ii. 25. Mar sin ma pheacaicheas duine an aghaidh an lagh, le bhi toirt eas-ùmhachd dhà, faodaidh e a chùis a thogail a dh’ionnsuidh an t-soisgeil agus gràs Chrìosd ann an sin: ach ma pheacaicheas duine an aghaidh Chrìosd agus a ghràs air a thairgse anns an t-soisgeul, c’àite an tog e chùis? Gu’n teagamh cha’n eil togail cùis a ghabhas a bhi air a dheanamh, cha’n eil fuasgladh a ghabhas a bhi air fhaotainn dhà, cha’n eil saorsa ri bhi air fhaotainn air a shon. Ma tha duine air a dhètheadh aig cathair ceartais, mar neach a pheacaich an aghaidh an lagha, faodaidh e a chùis a thogail a dh’ionnsuidh cathair tròcair, agus an sin gheibh e fuasgladh milis; ach ma pheacaicheas e’n aghaidh cathair tròcair agus cathair gràis, an sin cha’n eil mì aige dh’ionnsuidh an tog e a chùis na fhrithealas saorsa dhà. Nis, le bhi diùltadh Chrìosd, tha sinn a peacachadh an aghaidh cathair gràis; tha sinn a tarruing a nuas, a reir ar comais, cathair tròcair. Agus c’ait, uime sin, a dh’ionnsuidh an urrainn sinn ar cùis a thogail? Oh, thugaibh fa’n ear na nithean sin, agus foghlumaibh bh’uatha eagal a bhi oirbh roimh’n pheacadh sin a bhi diùltadh Chrìosd. Dh’fhaotainn an tuilleadh mòr na sin a ràdh gu bhi dearbhadh oirbh olcas antromaichte a pheacaidh sin: ach biodh gu leoir ann an so: is cinnteach mì gu’r a leoir so mar an ceudna; agus na’m biodh mothuchadh ceart againn air ’n ar spioradan, bheireadh e oirne criothnachadh dha thaobh gu bràth.

IV. Am bu toil leat da-rìreadh a bhi air do phòsadh ri Chrìosd? An sin na geill do mhì-mhisneachaidhean nam faireachaidhean, ach cùm suas t-anam air misneachaidhean a chreidimh air a leithid de phrionneabalan soisgeulach agus aobharan, agus a tha’g aomadh a dh’ionnsuidh a bhi tarruing pheacach gu creidimh ann an Chrìosd. Faodaidh, air dhuit a bhi leughadh agus a toirt fa’n ear cor truagh do shuidheachadh gun Chrìosd, agus antromachadh uamhasach do pheacadh agus do chionta ann a bhi cho fada agus cho tric Dha dhiùltadh, mì-mhisneachaidhean nach gann eirigh an taobh a stigh dhiot: agus gu cinnteach, gu h-àbhaisteach, cha luaithe a thoisicheas anam bochd air a bhi’g amharc a dh’ionnsuidh Chrìosd, na smuainticheas e air dùnadh a stigh Ris ann an cùmhnanta pòsaidh, na dh’eireas àireamh lionmhor de mhì-mhisnichedhean gus a chumail bh’uaithe. O! deir e, ciod e’m peacadh uamhasach a tha’n so! Cia mar a rinn mì dimeas air Chrìosd agus air a ghràs! Cia cho fad agus a sheas mì mach ’n a aghaidh! Rinn mi seirbhis do’m ana-miannaibh fad mo laithean uile, agus dhiùlt mi a ghairmean. Ciod am fàth a th’ann

dhomh bhi bruidhean air dùnadh a stigh Ris? Eirigh an leithidean sin agus mòran de mhi-mhisneachaidhean eile anns an anam, nithean air do neach geilleadh dhoibh, a ni gu h-eufachdach an t-anam a chumail bho Chrìosd. Ach, anam, na'n tigeadh tù gu bràth gu bhi ruigheachd air aonadh agus co-chomunn Ris, feumaidh tù do shùilean agus do chridhe mar an ceudna a dhùnadh an aghaidh gach uile mhi-mhisneachd dhe'n a ghné so. Agus ged a theannaicheadh iad a stigh ort a ris agus a ris, gidheadh tilg a mach iad, a socrachadh do shùil agus do chridhe air misneachaidhean a chreidimh; bi a'd chòmhnuidh gu mòr an a bhi smuainteachadh orra, agus cùm suas t-anam air prionnsabalan soisgeulach agus na nithean a tha ri bhith air an toirt fa'n ear a chùm agus gu'n lagaicheadh tù'n t-eas-creidimh agus gu'm biodh creidimh air a ghintinn anns an anam. Agus air son do chuideachadh a chùm so, ainmichidh mi cuid de mhisnichidhean a chreidimh, na prionnsabalan soisgeulach a bu mhath thù bhi beachd-smuainteachadh gu suidhichte agus gu minic orra.

(R'a leantuinn.)

The New English Bible

The New English Bible, officially published on 16th March, 1970, has been on sale for the past six weeks. Nine years ago almost to the day there appeared the New English Bible New Testament, which now, revised in no fewer than 250 places, is incorporated in the New English Bible, along with the new translation of the Old Testament and the uncanonical Apocrypha.

As an antidote to the publicity and high-pressure advertising which has accompanied this event, readers would do well to read carefully the articles which appeared in the April, June, August and September issues of the Free Presbyterian Magazine in 1961. One of these articles, entitled **The New Translation of the New Testament a Peril to the Evangelical Cause**, was written by the Rev. Terence H. Brown, Secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society, soon after the publication of the 1961 New Testament. Mr Brown has now swiftly followed up the publication of the complete translation with an analytical assessment of the revised New Testament and the Old Testament; and it is the main purpose of this brief article to direct the attention of readers to Mr Brown's assessment published in the **English Churchman** (20th March, 1970). Within the limited compass of this article

it will be possible to quote only a few passages from Mr Brown's evaluation.

One of the fundamental flaws in the translation of the Old Testament — conjectural emendation of the Hebrew text — Mr Brown explains as follows: "Professor Driver outlines the translators' view of the state of the transmitted Hebrew text in the introduction, which makes it quite plain that they felt obliged to reconstruct the Hebrew to some extent before translating it. 'It is certain that this text does not always represent what was originally written. The translators must often go behind the traditional text to discover the writer's meaning'. (Introduction, p. xvi.) A careful examination of the N.E.B. Old Testament reveals more than eleven hundred of these conjectures, referred to in the notes as 'probable readings'."

Two outstanding defects arising out of conjectural shuffling of the text are the obscuring of Messianic prophecies and the undermining by implication of certain Biblical doctrines.

On the first defect Mr Brown has this to say: "In the rendering of Genesis iii, 15, it is now barely possible to see any Gospel promise. Following Moffat almost verbatim the N.E.B. reads, 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your brood and hers. They shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their heel'.

"The treatment of Genesis xlix, 10, eliminates every vestige of relevance to the Messiah — 'The sceptre shall not pass from Judah, nor the staff from his descendants, so long as tribute is brought to him'. The word 'Shiloh' has caused difficulty to Biblical scholars for centuries. Some have adopted 'until he (Judah) comes to Shiloh', but 'Shiloh' must be the subject of the verb. Others have regarded 'Shiloh' as a proper name meaning 'Peace-maker' and have linked the text with the 'Prince of Peace' in Isaiah ix, 6. The N.E.B. has been influenced by the ancient versions which assume that the word has been incorrectly vowelled. Christian writers from the 2nd century, including Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Eusebius and Augustine, have regarded this verse as prophetic of the Messiah."

In another passage Mr Brown deals with the translation of Isaiah 9 : 6 as follows: "The testimony of Isaiah to the Deity of the Messiah in ch. ix is practically eliminated, and this passage now reads, 'in purpose wonderful, in battle God-like, Father for all time (note: or of a wide realm), Prince of peace'. There is a great difference between 'The Mighty God' and 'God-like', and between 'for all time' and 'everlasting'."

On the second defect (doctrinal implications) Mr Brown writes as follows: "'In the beginning of creation, when God made

heaven and earth' in Genesis i, 1, is in harmony with an interpretation devised by Jewish scholars in the Middle Ages, but does not appear to be supported by the ancient versions. It implies the pre-existence of the matter out of which the heavens and the earth were created. 'Once upon a time' in Genesis xi, 1, adds a suggestion of folk-lore to the narrative of the confusion of tongues. 'Noah had won the LORD'S favour' (Genesis vi, 8) and 'If I have deserved your favour' (xviii, 3) introduce without any warrant a suggestion of human merit which the text does not imply The footnote on Isaiah liv, 7, 'On the impulse of a moment I forsook you' implies a measure of capriciousness on the part of the Almighty."

When one has read Mr Brown's article and turns to Professor F. F. Bruce's preview, **The New English Bible**, in *Christianity Today* (30th January, 1970) one cannot but be pained by the tendentiousness of its tenor, especially when the author is a professedly evangelical Biblical scholar. He does, however, deal with the matter of conjectural emendation, albeit his criticism is muted. Comments like "the emendation of the Hebrew by reference to the versions (Septuagint, Peshitta and Vulgate) varies so much from one editor to another that some means of severely reducing the element of personal preference would be welcome" and "in view of our imperfect knowledge, the wiser course at this stage would be to try to establish the text attested by our earliest surviving witnesses, and wait for further light on the earlier period" underline the perils attendant on conjectural emendation, however scholarly. He cannot refrain, however, from white-washing the New English Bible: "The New English Bible, however, does not run to excess in this matter, though it indulges in conjectural emendation much more than did the Revised Standard Version — which in this respect was remarkably conservative."

In conclusions, it must be emphasised that responsible critics of this latest translation of the Bible do not regard a new translation as being in itself undesirable. After all, the Authorised Version was new in 1611. What is undesirable and deplorable is that translators, however eminent in Biblical and linguistic scholarship, should, with intellectual arrogance, irreverence and lack of spiritual sympathy with the "holy men of God" who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1 : 21), subject the words of God to their personal judgment and conjecture. There is a patent inconsistency in the devotion of time and labour to the translating of the Bible on the part of modernist translators who have jettisoned some of the fundamental doctrines of the faith — Inspiration, for instance. It is an indisputable fact that a sinner who comes by divine teaching to believe the Bible which they have attempted to translate will embrace the very doctrines they

reject. What then do the sponsors and translators hope to achieve by the new translation? Does the New English Bible in fact constitute part of the grand strategy of modernist theologians in their campaign to perpetrate the ultimate in absurdity — bringing the Bible into line with modern theological thought?

A.G.

Book Reviews

The Upper Room by Bishop J. C. Ryle. Banner of Truth Trust.
Price 25/-.

This handsome volume was first published by William Hunt & Company in 1888 and is now reprinted by photo-lithography and published by the Banner of Truth Trust. It contains twenty-one papers, most of which are the substance of pulpit addresses delivered by Bishop Ryle during his forty years' ministry on important public occasions, and it still well merits the sub-title: "being a few truths for the times".

The paper from which the volume takes its title is a sermon preached at the opening of St. Agnes' Church, Liverpool. In it Bishop Ryle invites his readers and hearers to look at the worshippers who gathered in the upper room at Jerusalem, the first place of Christian worship, after the Lord had ascended — the apostles, the women, the Lord's brethren. He asks us to notice the unity which characterised the meeting and emphasises the devotional habits of the congregation — they "were continuing in prayer and supplication". Finally he refers to the address given to the congregation by the Apostle Peter. He points out that Peter began his address with a reverent reference to Holy Scripture, taking his stand on the supremacy of the Bible as the Church's rule of faith, that Peter humbly acknowledged the liability of the highest and most privileged ministers of the Church to fall, that he calls upon the Church to fill up the place of Judas, and lastly that Peter declares that a minister and successor of the Apostles ought to be "a witness of Christ's resurrection". From these Bishop Ryle proceeds to draw some practical lessons. We should learn to be more thankful for the liberty of the days in which our lot is cast, we should learn the source of true power in the Church; and he entreats his congregation to pray for their Church. His closing words are as true today as ever: "The age needs nothing new. It only needs the bold and steady proclamation of the old truths which were held in the 'upper room' at Jerusalem".

This may suffice to give our readers an indication of the quality of this book. We would mention two further papers particularly. He has a most useful address on "The Duties of Parents" from the text "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it". Prov. 22 : 6. From this text he draws a great variety of scriptural, practical and solemn advices to parents — refreshing and as apt for today as for the time when it was first written.

The second address we should like specially to mention is concerned with the rights and duties of lay churchmen. It is both interesting and instructive to see a Bishop of the Church of England regret the fact that the Reformers in England failed to correct the neglect of the interests and position of the laity which had prevailed under Popery. By contrast he refers to what was done by John Knox in Scotland.

These are but illustrations of the interesting and instructive variety of topics discussed in this volume which we heartily commend to our readers. The volume is well got up and it is up to the high standard in this respect for which the Banner of Truth Trust publications are already well-known.

J.M.

Christianity and Culture by J. Gresham Machen (Banner of Truth Trust. Price 1/-.)

In September, 1912, at the opening of the one hundred and first session of Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr J. Gresham Machen delivered an address entitled **The Scientific Preparation of the Minister**. The address, re-titled **Christianity and Culture** was printed in the June, 1969, issue of the Banner of Truth Magazine; it has now been published in booklet form with a preface by Dr Francis Schaeffer.

The striking relevance of Dr Machen's address to our own age, almost sixty years later, is a tribute to the vision of the author. It could, on the other hand, be a testimony to the failure of many Christians to engage in the battles to which he summoned them. In dealing with the age-old problem of the relation between knowledge and piety, between culture and Christianity, the author steers a course between the two unscriptural extremes of "subordinating Christianity to culture" and ignoring culture altogether by "withdrawing from the world into a sort of modernised intellectual monasticism". In expounding his solution to the problem he states, "The Christian, therefore, cannot be indifferent to any branch of earnest human endeavour. It must all be brought into some relation to the gospel. It must be studied either in order to be demonstrated as false, or else in order to be made useful in advancing the Kingdom of God".

In these days when the study of the contemporary intellectual climate, theological science and even doctrinal preaching are regarded by many as aberrations from the essential simplicity of the gospel, it is refreshing to read Dr Machen's words: "Modern culture is a mighty force. It is either subservient to the gospel or else it is the deadliest enemy of the gospel. For making it subservient, religious emotion is not enough; intellectual labour is necessary".

The publication of this booklet is timely. Thought-provoking in content and lucid in style, it can be thoroughly recommended.

A.G.

Charity and its Fruits by Jonathan Edwards. Banner of Truth Trust. Price 21/-.

This book consists of an exposition of the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians and is by the eminent Principal Edwards of Princeton. In it Edwards deals very fully with the subject of Christian love or charity which he calls "the very life and soul of all religion". The Christian reader will wish to know if he indeed possesses this infallible mark of a true Christian profession. This book will be of great service to this end. Besides teaching us what charity really is, Edwards also shows how the other graces of the Spirit are inseparably bound up with the grace of charity. By contrast we learn what a hateful spirit there is in us by nature, from which we need to be delivered. He is searching as he exposes much of the hypocrisy of the human heart and as he applies the teaching of this great chapter of God's Word to the individual soul. A reading of the book cannot fail to humble believers under a sense of how little of this grace they possess. It will also be of help to those who desire to show forth more of this grace in their lives. The remarks which Edwards makes on the special gifts of the Spirit which were enjoyed by the early Church should expose the attempt made today in some Church circles to revive interest in these departed gifts as a movement which does not have the sanction of Heaven.

The subject of Christian love is of the utmost importance to the Christian Church and no Christian should neglect it. That this gracious spirit of Christian love would be more in evidence in the Church of God is the great need of today. This book will tend to promote such a spirit. We unhesitatingly recommend it.

D.B.M.

[Obtainable from The Banner of Truth Trust, 78b Chiltern Street, London, W1M 1PS, or the Church Bookroom.]

Church Notes

Synod Meeting

The annual meeting of Synod is due to begin in Glasgow at St. Jude's Church on Tuesday evening, 19th May (D.V.), when the Rev. A. F. MacKay, M.A., Inverness, the retiring Moderator is expected to conduct public worship. We ask for the prayers of the Lord's people in connection with the meetings of Synod — that the Lord may guide and direct in all the deliberations and decisions, and that all that is done may redound to the glory of God and the advancement of His Cause amongst us.

Bound Volumes of Magazine

Bound volumes of past issues of both Magazines and Synod proceedings are obtainable on request from the Book Room.

F.P. Magazine from Vol. 33 (1928) to Vol. 71 (1967). Price 8/- per copy.

Y.P. Magazine from Vol. 14 (1949) to Vol. 30 (1966). 5/- per copy.

Synod Proceedings, from 1946-1965. 8/6 per copy.

Notes and Comments

Ministers of the Gospel in Northern Ireland Parliament

Rev. Ian Paisley, who has in recent times contended so vigorously for the maintenance of Protestant liberties in Northern Ireland, and Rev. William Beattie, who is also a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ireland, have lately won election to the Ulster House of Commons. While recognising the sincerity of the motives of these ministers in desiring to present the case for a Protestant Ulster from the very floor of the Northern Ireland Parliament, yet we question the wisdom of ministers of the Gospel entering Parliament. We are not blind to the fact, however, that the issues for which they are contending are absolutely vital to the true welfare of Northern Ireland, but whether they will be able to wield their struggle more effectively from inside rather than from outside Parliament remains to be seen. For our part, and notwithstanding the achievements of some Dutch Reformed ministers in politics, we remain sceptical of the propriety of ministers of the Gospel entering the political arena.

We wish the Protestant Cause in Northern Ireland well, and

pray that the intrigues of those who seek the overthrow of Protestantism in that land may be defeated. May the Lord speedily open the eyes of the Roman Catholics of Northern and of Southern Ireland to the true nature of popery and so liberate them from the thralldom and tyranny of that wicked system under which they have laboured so long.

D.B.M.

Eire's Treachery

Under the 30 years' rule, which requires that all State Documents be kept under official seal for 30 years, the official papers of the British Government for 1939 have recently been released and made available to the public. Much that has hitherto remained obscure regarding the opening stages of the Second World War (1939-1945) is now available and it is of particular interest that it is now possible to see clearly from official sources the part played by Roman Catholic Eire in those critical early months of the war.

The British Government had handed over the ports of Southern Ireland to the Eire Government of De Valera in April 1938, much against the wishes of Sir Winston Churchill, who declared at the time — "I never saw the House so completely misled". No formal written agreement was signed regarding the leasing of the ports of Southern Ireland to Britain when required in time of war, but it was assumed this mistaken and foolishly generous action would create the good will on the part of the Irish Free State Government who would be willing to grant the facilities necessary in these ports. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, held the view at the outbreak of war that the use of the Irish ports of Berehaven and Lough Swilly was essential for our defence against the German U-boat menace, and ought to be seized by force, if negotiations for their return failed. It was as much in the interests of Eire as of this country that the Western Approaches should be secured, to protect the trade of both countries as well as the defence of their shores. At first, however, all that the British Government asked was for permission to maintain a salvage vessel to salvage ships torpedoed west of the British Isles. It came to light, however, that on 14th September, a German U-boat was sunk, and the prisoners from her were found to have Irish Free State cigarettes in their pockets, showing that they had been ashore in the Irish Free State. As the U-boat menace was intensified and the navy was being hampered in their operations by lack of suitable ports, the question of obtaining the use of the Southern Irish ports became urgent. Sir John Malley, who had been appointed British Special Envoy in Dublin, was sent to interview Mr De Valera, whom he met on 18th October in Dublin. He put the British case, but met with determined hostility from

De Valera, whose mind was evidently already made up to refuse all use of the ports, declaring: "If Britain had paved the way to Irish Unity, Ireland today might have been able to help". If a demand was made, he would treat it as a challenge. He went on to make the significant statement: "There are many people in Ireland ready to acclaim a British defeat at any price". We have here expressed in these words, the undying hatred of the papal country of Eire to Britain. Maffey spoke of Britain's generosity in ceding the ports to Eire, saying: "The path of generosity had been followed as an act of faith and in the belief that in the hour of need the hand of friendship would be extended", but De Valera was adamant.

Two days later the failure of Sir J. Maffey's mission to Dublin was discussed in the Cabinet, and the fear expressed that, if pressed for the ports, De Valera might decide to grant facilities to the Germans, which probably was no exaggerated fear. The decision was finally made by the Cabinet, that only if it became a matter of life or death, should the ports of S. Ireland be taken by force. Providentially, however, the danger passed, and on 23rd November the Cabinet decided that we had obtained control of the U-boat menace in the Western Approaches.

Throughout the war years, Eire's attitude did not change, but continued to be one of determined hostility to Britain. Legal officers looked into the position of Eire in the Commonwealth with a view to her expulsion. The papacy has always been the sworn foe of freedom and democracy, and conclusive proof is furnished in these official documents that Eire will always be a potential menace to this country, and to every Protestant country under the sun — potential, because at present she is on the verge of bankruptcy, kept solvent by British concessions and British money. We have here a clear warning re Ulster, should the border ever be abolished and Eire gain control of a united Ireland. This terrible prospect was foreseen by Sir J. Maffey who, at the conclusion of his interview with De Valera, uttered the prophetic warning: "What British Government would ever surrender the ports of the North after this experience?"

C.

Compulsory Religion in Schools

The "Daily Telegraph" of 16th April reported that "compulsory religion in schools is almost certain to be continued for the foreseeable future under terms of a new Education Act which is now being prepared to replace the present 1944 Act". It is gratifying to know that the efforts of the National Secular Society to have Christian teaching and worship excluded from the school curriculum are not likely to succeed. A question of the utmost import-

ance, however, is the content of the religious instruction given in schools. If the example of London is any guide to what we may expect then there is no room for complacency. The Inner London Education Authority introduced an agreed religious syllabus in December 1968 which was drawn up by a committee which included members of the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches, the Jewish and Muslim Communities as well as the Church of England and the Free Church Federal Council. This itself gives an indication of the way things are moving in this field. So far as Scotland is concerned the future pattern of religious education will be largely determined by the nature of the report produced by the Secretary of State's Committee on Moral and Religious education which is due to be published by the end of this year (D.V.).

D.B.M.

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Sustentation Fund — A. MacKay, Quidinish, £1; Mrs MacLeod, Brora, £2.

Home Mission Fund — A. MacKay, Quidinish, 10/-; R. MacKay, Bettyhill, £2 (per R.W.M.M.).

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund — A. MacKay, Quidinish, 10/-; Mrs MacLeod, Brora, £3; A Wellwisher, Lochinver, £20; "A Friend, U.S.A.", \$100; "For Mbumba Hospital" (Anon.), £50; Miss A. MacKenzie, Bad-luarach, 18/- (last 3 per R.W.M.M.).

Dominions & Overseas Fund — J. Locker Clugston, N.S.W., £2.

Free Distribution Magazine Fund — Miss Hardenbol, Holland, £1.18/-; Mr K. MacKenzie, Snizort, 8/-; Anon., 19/-; F. A. MacKenzie, Lochinver, £2; Friend, Applecross, £2; Mrs M. MacAulay, Inverness, £2.4/-; C.E.H., Lancaster, 8/-; Mrs D. A. Macaskill, Vancouver, 13/-; Mr Cameron Fin-layson, Ontario, 11/8; Mr D. MacN., Spean Bridge, 5/-; Anon., 15/4; "Wellwisher", Inverness, £2.7.6; Two Hastings, N.Z. friends, £1.14/-; Psalm 97, v. 10, £6.10/-; Miss M. S. Grant, Grafton, Australia, £8.18/-; W.A.F., Auckland, 8/-; Mr M. MacCuish, Arrochar, £3.18/-; Miss C. Mac-Kinnon, Broadford, £1.17.6; Mr S. Clark, Invergordon, 6/-; Mr John Haarsma, California, £4; Mr W. Campbell, Struan, 8/-; Mr R. Macaskill, Tain, £2.16/-.

Welfare of Youth Fund — F. A. MacKenzie, Lochinver, £10; Psalm 97, v. 10, £7.

On behalf of Trinitarian Bible Society — Strathy Congregation, £21.10/-.

Publications Fund — Psalm 97, v. 10, £7; M.F., Skigersta, 12/-.

Mr Wm. MacKenzie, 7 Crown Drive, Inverness, Treasurer, **Aberdeen Church Building Fund**, acknowledges with thanks: — Miss F. A. Mac-Kenzie, Lochinver, £10; Two Glasgow Friends, £5 (per Mr Duncan Maclean).

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

Aberdeen — A Toronto Friend, £1.5/-.

Lairg — Inverness postmark, £2 (for Lairg Church).

Scourie — Church Renovation Fund: Psalm 115, v. 12 (Inverness postmark), £10; A.M., Inverness, £3; Stornoway postmark, £5; In memory of Hector Morrison, Missionary, £1; J. Macleod, Kerracher, £15; C.D.M., Scourie, £2, Glasgow Friends, £1 (last 2 per Rev. A. Macpherson); D. A. Macleod, £3; Anon., Vancouver, B.C., \$20 (£7.12.7), W. Sim, Tain, £5 (last 2 per Mr R. Ross); Anon. Inverness postmark, £1.

Inverness — Church Extension Fund: No name, £1; A Croy Friend, £5 (per Rev. A. F. MacKay).

Applecross — "Interested", Raasay, £7 for Sustentation Fund (per Rev. A. Murray).

Beauly — Church Building Fund: Envelope in Church plate, £5; Inverness Friends, £60; Mr Ian Livingstone, Muir of Ord, £5; Dingwall Friend, £10 (per Mr Kelly). Anon., Beauly, £65 (for funds as indicated).

Broadford — Manse Building Fund: Anon. Friend, £6 (per Mr S. MacKinnon); Friends, Raasay, £2 (per Mr D. MacKay); C.M.M., £2; Portree Friends, £5; Mrs MacKenzie, Staffin, £2; Miss N. MacKinnon, Portree, £5; Mr James MacKinnon, Elgol, £5; Friend, Portree, £2 (last 5 per Mr L. MacKinnon); Anon. in collection plate, £4; Mr R. MacLennan and Family, Waterloo, £5; Portree Congregation, £76 (per Mr D. Matheson); Mr Peter Robertson, Luib, £100; 69G007227, £10 (per Mr L. MacKinnon).

Glendale — "Absent Subscriber", £1 (for Sustentation Fund) and £2 (for Door Collection); "Friends", £1 (for Church Property, per Rev. J.C.); A Friend, £15 (for General Building Fund).

Greenock — For Congregational Purposes: Mr and Mrs Balfour, Gourack, £3 (per Rev. L. MacLeod); Staffin Lady, £3 (envelope in Church plate).

Kinlochbervie — Miss May Morrison, Poolewe, £3 (for Manse Fund); Anon., Inverness postmark, £2 (for Congregational purposes, per R. Ross, Foindle).

Portree — A.M.N., £5 (in Church plate for Communion expenses); Murdo MacLeod, Uist, £2 (special collection); Two envelopes in Church plate, one containing £10, the other £1 (the combined amount of £11 to be donated equally to Bracadale and Broadford Congregations' Fabrics Funds).

Raasay — Friend, Raasay, £5 (2nd donation), Friend, Raasay, £1.10/- (2nd donation), Friend, Raasay, £3, Mr and Mrs MacLeod, Raasay, £3, D.M., Inverness, £2 (all for Church Carpet); Friend, Inverness, £5, Mr and Mrs MacLeod, Raasay, £3 (both for Manse Extension) (all per J. M. MacLeod, elder); Mrs Gillies, 2 Cottages, Raasay, £1 for Sustentation Fund and 10/- for Home Mission Fund (per Treasurer).

Uig, Lewis — In memory of the late Angus Morrison, elder, Valtos, £5 (per M.S.).

Opinan Meeting House — Rebuilding: Mrs Campbell, Shieldaig, £1; A Friend from North Coast, Applecross, £2.

St. Jude's, Glasgow — Tower Repair Fund: Anon., £1; A.W., Glasgow, £1; Anon., £1; Anon., £1; Anon., £10; Friends, Airdrie, £5 (per Rev. D. McL.); T. McD., Canada, £38.9.3; Mrs McL., Glasgow, £5 (per Rev. D. McL.). Congregational Fund: Anon., £1; Two Friends, Inverness, £2 (per Rev. D. McL.). Trinitarian Bible Society: Anon., £5. Aged & Infirm Ministers' etc Fund: Anon., £1. Foreign Mission Fund: Friend, Portree, £5 (per Rev. D. McL.). Communion Expenses: A.W., Glasgow, £1.

Shieldaig — Miss M. MacLean, Shieldaig, £2 (for Congregational Purposes, per Mr A. MacLennan).

London — Church and Manse Building Fund: Mr John Livingstone, £5, Mrs A. Dougan, £5 (both per Mr A. MacLennan); Mr A. MacLennan, Dingwall, £5; A Friend, £1, A Friend, £2 (both per Rev. D. B. Macleod). Congregational Fund: Mr Jan Van Woerden, £5 (per Rev. D. B. Macleod).