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Ye Cannot Serve the Lord

"And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the Lord: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." (Josh. 24 : 19.)

At the end of his days Joshua called Israel together to remind them of the goodness of the Lord to them. He could say: "Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." He also solemnly charged them to fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth, and uttered those memorable words: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." The people's immediate response was: "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods", but Joshua's reply was: "Ye cannot serve the Lord." This was a lesson which they had great need to learn and it is as necessary for us today as it was for those whom Joshua addressed.

Many in Israel, no doubt, had very inadequate views of what serving the Lord meant. An outward approach to God in His worship and ordinances was all that was necessary in their eyes, and when they had performed those services to their own satisfaction entertained the thought that God would be well pleased with them too. This attitude to the Lord's service is as prominent today as it was then. Many are so satisfied with their endeavours in the service of God that they are ready to say with Jehu, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord," or with others, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?"

Some conception of what the worship and service of Jehovah

involves may be gained from the words of the Lord to Moses at the burning bush: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." God is a holy God, a sin-hating God. How then can the sinner approach unto Him far less serve Him? In another part of Scripture we read: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11 : 6.) If we are to honour Him and serve Him then we must believe in Him. The Lord is a great God and can never be satisfied with the kind of service which would satisfy men. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55 : 9.) In view of this may we be brought to say with another, "who is sufficient for these things?"

If we are ever truly to serve the Lord, the first lesson for us to learn is: "Ye cannot serve the Lord." What a humbling lesson it is for the sinner to learn — to understand that all one's professed zeal and earnestness in serving the Lord is worth nothing if the source of it all is their own strength. The true people of God, too, have to learn this same lesson — that all efforts to serve the Lord in their own strength will avail nothing. "Ye cannot serve the Lord."

How then, it must be asked, can the Lord be served? Is there any who can and do serve Him? Yes, — all those who serve Him in reliance upon divine grace. It is through the strength which divine grace imparts that the living in Jerusalem serve the Lord, the King. They are utterly dependent upon Himself for the strength they need to do those things which are pleasing in His sight. The gracious and exercised soul seeks grace and strength daily to perform that which is but their reasonable service — serving the Lord in singleness of mind and heart. If our eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts, we will understand in some little measure at least the service of which He is worthy, and we will endeavour in the strength of His grace to perform it.

Is it our daily and constant exercise to serve the Lord? Or are we serving other gods, even the lusts of our own hearts? There is no profit in such a service, but in serving the Lord there is great reward. What service is it that He requires? Essentially it is this — obedience to His revealed will. May David's charge to his son, Solomon, be applied to our souls: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." (1 Chron. 28 : 9.)

Notes of a Sermon

by the late Rev. James MacLeod, Greenock -

The Priesthood of the Redeemer. (Hebrews 7 : 17-21.)

Christ was a Priest of the people. He was not of the Aaronic priesthood. He was of the tribe of Judah. He was therefore of the people in general and not of any tribe in particular. The Lord Jesus in our human nature is bone of our bone, human blood, human body with the same functions as ours, human senses, soul united to that body, "a true body and a reasonable soul." This soul and body was united to the eternal and divine Person of the Son of God. The divine nature was eternally distinct and forever separate from the human nature — the two natures distinct in the One eternal Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is God and man. His human life was absolutely normal, born a babe by the Virgin Mother, but divinely conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin, and born of her yet without sin. It is a great mystery, but a mystery explained by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God for our instruction in righteousness. He is therefore a Priest of the people.

He is also a Priest for the people. The priest's function was to officiate for the people before God. They (the Old Testament Priests) were types of His Priesthood, and from the types we must search as to the office, and work of Jesus as our Priest. This will lead us to search the Scriptures of the Old Testament to find out and understand the exact nature of His Priesthood and His offering Himself up to God as a holy and complete sacrifice on our behalf who believe in Him as our own Priest. Through His office as Priest we have access unto God. The priest had the right to declare the leper clean, no one else could or even dare do it. The Lord Jesus as our Priest can declare us clean from sin, guilt, and misery. He is our Surety as well as our Priest before God. God, the Father appointed Him our Priest. Christ did not appoint Himself as our Priest.

The offering of Christ once for all abolished the Jewish priesthood. He declared it finished on the cross. The popish, or any other order of priests are agents of Satan and are serving their own lusts. They are in fact blasphemers and enemies to the cross of Christ. They are opposed to His Priesthood. The people of God need no Priest but Jesus Christ, whom God, the Father appointed as their eternal Priest. He is Priest of their consciences, of their souls, and for their souls. He pleads His own merits on their behalf, and the Holy Spirit applies the efficacy of it to their souls through the Word of God. We must make much of His Priestly office on our behalf at all times. Satan is so crafty and will do

all in his evil nature to separate us from our Priest, Jesus. His cross is the true symbol of His blood and sacrifice for us. This we must take up daily and follow our Lord Jesus to the end of our time in the world.

Action Sermon

by the late Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

(Preached at Creich, Sutherland, on Sabbath 19th August 1877)

"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." — Psalm 110 : 4.

(continued from page 193).

VI. The Father's Testimony. — This is no thought of mine read into the verse, and it is no minute or superfluous distinction (see Heb. vii. 17). "For He **testifieth**, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" — not merely says it, but testifies it, and every word of God is pure. It is not in vain that scripture assures us that God testifies — not merely teaches, but testifies. The Father assumes the attitude of witness to the priesthood of Jesus. Who but He could be competent to bear witness? Since the priestly work was chiefly one of Christ's soul, none but God could search the heart and testify with adequate knowledge what was going on in the soul of Jesus when priest. The God whose interests are concerned, law magnified, honour solved and vindicated, and whose glory is made great, has, in the circumstances, nothing more to inform the sons of men than this, that Jesus is priest. It is as if He said — "I can and do bear witness of My own divine knowledge, consciousness, satisfaction, and immediate perception of the sweetsavour of Thy sacrifice, and of the acceptableness of Thy intercession. I bear witness from My own sense of the infinite peace made by the Blood of Thy cross; of that reconciliation made by the body of Thy flesh through death — that sole sacrifice for sin; of the special complacency I have in Thee, warranting so abundantly that great word of love and confidence — 'Therefore doth my Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again;' I bear witness that I am a very God of peace and of grace and of all comfort, and that I have become a God of peace and grace and comfort through this Thy glorious priesthood; that Thou art indeed a priest for ever; I bear witness by My name, and My memorial being 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth,' for it is by Thy priesthood that My forgiving love finds free egress to the sons of men."

Speaking from His own immediate knowledge and conscious-

ness as the God of salvation, and from the state of His own feelings and affections to sinful men, who but for Christ's priesthood would have been objects of detestation and wrath, God testifies that "Jesus is a priest for ever." And he that hath received this testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. This is the ground of faith — the testimony of God simply received, for faith simply attests the truthfulness of God when He bears witness to the priesthood of Christ. With this — the Father's testimony — the Holy Ghost joins when He testifieth the forgiveness of sins, and consequently the obvious perfection of the sacrifice through which forgiveness is obtained.

If the Father and Spirit should condescend to take concurrent testimony to the successful eternal priesthood of Christ, how plentiful it may be forthcoming. Bear witness, holy law of God, which by thy curse hast slain, and by thy blessing glorified, our heavenly High Priest. Bear witness, thou glorious gospel of the blessed God, by that heavenly balm which thou pourest into wounded consciences, and that sacred peace which thou sheddest abroad in weary souls. Bear witness, ye bright spirits of light, by your joy in the presence of God over every sinner that repenteth. Bear witness, ye ransomed from among men already arrayed in white robes around the throne, to the priesthood of your Saviour by the song ye sing in glory. And ye to whom it is given to speak with human lips, will ye not lift the human hand, saying — "as our soul and body liveth, Thou art a priest for ever." Ye ransomed of the Lord, returned to Zion, join in your witness-bearing, and every soul on earth that has faith as a grain of mustard seed; every soul that believes trembling, by quiet hearty admiration of Him, or if by nothing else, by longing and mourning after Him, bear witness that He is a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

VII. The Meaning of the Oath of God. — It is very little I see of it, but by the help of God's word let us seek to find out what can possibly be meant by God's swearing — putting Himself on oath — "As I live, saith the Lord." "An oath for confirmation is an end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath," "when He could swear by no greater He sware by Himself." What is the particular force of the oath? what particular help does it render to faith? Of an honest man we say that his word is as good as his oath. Of Jesus we never read that He put Himself on oath; the repeated use of "verily, verily, I say unto you," was the form of speech nearest the oath. Why then should God swear when sustaining the honour and counsels of the Godhead? To see a little of it — what constitutes the last security for all belief? That in the Godhead itself. There

must be a belief in the Godhead itself before in Christ. The inevitable necessity of God's existence is the last security. It is not an optional thing to God to exist or not. God cannot but exist. This is the final distinction between God and all creatures. Creatures are so weak and deficient in being that it was possible once they might never be at all, and except for God's will they never would have been. About God that never could have been possible. He is too glorious a being for its being possible that He never could have been; so glorious that He could not but be, and be the glorious, unchangeable, and everlasting God that He is. Do you say, "Oh! that my salvation rested on a ground like that; I would rest secure then, if it were so that in the nature of things I could not but be safe?" Ay, but in the nature of things you can't have that security. Your salvation cannot be an inevitable necessity like the existence of the Godhead. For one reason, you never could be grateful for it in such a case. A creature without gratitude is not a saved but a lost creature. Your salvation must depend on the will of God, and **cannot** spring inevitably without God's will from His nature, as some, by perversion of the truth that "God is love," say and sing "Jesus loves me," as if Jesus could not help loving them. Your salvation must be at the disposal of the divine will, of free sovereign grace. It must rest on the divine will. Nay, more, it must be from free acceptance on your own part, as well as freely given on God's part — dependent in a sense on your will; your will renewed by divine grace, according to the Father's promise to the Priest of Zion, "Thy people shall be willing in a day of power;" but it must be by **your** will, in order, by the grace of the divine Spirit, to secure **your** willing, confiding acceptance of Christ in His priesthood, and the salvation thereby. To charm you to a confidence as great as if (and more grateful far than if) God's own being necessitated your salvation, God appeals to His own being in proof that His will in all that concerns your redemption is immutable, and that all may know it who hear the word of truth and Christ therein, He says to the Son, "Thou art a priest for ever." These are the terms, "As I live, saith the Lord." An appeal is made to the life of God — the necessary, immutable, infinite fulness of life in the Godhead — and not as of necessity, but of sovereign, good, loving pleasure. He pledges the life of God to the priesthood of Christ, and to the reliableness of the promise of salvation through Him.

Not of necessity then, thanks to God, but of sovereign free grace and love, for which eternal thanks be to His name. He places the life of the Godhead to the life of the Son's priesthood; lifting His hand to heaven, He gives us to know that He would not count it worth while being God if He could not say, "Look unto Me and be ye saved." He swears to the glorious perpetuity of the priest-

hood through which salvation comes, and gives His oath to those who trust in His word, "that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, they might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them." This truth causes the faith of His people to root at last in the everlasting life of God Himself, and the eternal life through which Christ is constituted a priest. From that great epoch it becomes true, that "as the Father hath life in Himself, so also hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" and He is able to say, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me even he shall live by Me." Thus by free grace a security is attained as strong as of necessity, and not with the iron coldness and hardness of necessity, but so as love shall still be lord of all. Such help the oath affords in bringing it to pass that it is by faith, that it might be by grace, that the promise might be sure to all the seed.

One word as to the date of this oracle. It has no date, strictly speaking; it dates with the covenant — the everlasting covenant — and transcends time, and liveth for ever, like the priesthood. You have heard that with God there is no to-morrow — to that add that with God there is no yesterday. There is nothing lost by knowing that the fact that God is, involves that He was and that He is to come — "He that cometh to Him must believe that He is." I say that this oracle transcends time and lives for ever. Hence it may be conceived of as repeating itself at every new era in the epoch of redemption. When He brings the First born into the world — the incarnation; at the baptism, cross, empty grave, and glorious ascension of Christ. It may be heard consecrating every movement of the High Priest with its awful stability, sacredness, and reliableness. Always, also, when a poor sinner touches the hem of his garment, and opens his heart to Him, the voice from the excellent glory may be heard saying that the Lord swears that, in the experience and sacred shrine of that believer's soul, Christ is priest for ever. When the gospel is preached it repeats itself, and when the sacraments are dispensed. When it was said to us this morning, "Go ye up to the house of God," we were to be present at the enthronement of this glorious priest at His table; and the voice may there be heard, "Thou art a priest for ever." May we be enabled to say, "Blessed priest, we will not see Thee sworn in and glorified without hastening to present our claim — "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than the snow; create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name; the righteous shall compass me about; for Thou wilt deal bountifully with me." Bring me to the "banqueting house." "Why art Thou cast down,

my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God."

Thoughts on Prayer

by Bishop J. C. Ryle

(Concluding part of Article)

(3) Let me speak, lastly, to those who do pray. I trust that some who read this paper know well what prayer is, and have the Spirit of adoption. To all such I offer a few words of brotherly counsel and exhortation. The incense offered in the tabernacle was ordered to be made in a particular way. Not every kind of incense would do. Let us remember this, and be careful about the matter and manner of our prayers.

If I know anything of a Christian's heart, you to whom I now speak are often sick of your own prayers. You never enter into the Apostle's words, "When I would do good, evil is present with me" (Rom. 7 : 21), so thoroughly as you sometimes do upon your knees. You can understand David's words, "I hate vain thoughts." You can sympathise with that poor converted Hottentot, who was overheard praying "Lord deliver me from all my enemies; and, above all, from that bad man myself!" — There are few children of God who do not find the season of prayer a season of conflict. The devil has special wrath against us when he sees us on our knees. Yet I believe that prayers which cost us no trouble should be regarded with great suspicion. I believe we are very poor judges of the goodness of our prayers, and that the prayer which pleases us least often pleases God most. Suffer me then, as a companion in the Christian warfare, to offer you a few words of exhortation. One thing, at least, we all feel, — we must pray. We cannot give it up; we must go on.

(a) I commend, then, to your attention the importance of **reverence and humility** in prayer. Let us never forget what we are, and what a solemn thing it is to speak with God. Let us beware of rushing into His presence with carelessness and levity. Let us say to ourselves, "I am on holy ground. This is no other than the gate of heaven. If I do not mean what I say, I am trifling with God. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Let us keep in mind the words of Solomon: "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou on earth." (Eccles. 5:2). When Abraham spoke to God, he said, "I am dust and ashes."

When Job spoke, he said, "I am vile." (Gen. 18 : 27; Job 40 : 4.) Let us do likewise.

b) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of praying **spiritually**. I mean by this, that we should labour always to have the direct help of the Spirit in our prayers, and beware above all things of formality. There is nothing so spiritual but that it may become a form, and this is specially true of private prayer. We may insensibly get into the habit of using the fittest possible words, and offering the most Scriptural petitions; and yet we may do it all by rote, without feeling it, and walk daily round an old beaten path, like a horse in a mill. I desire to touch this point with caution and delicacy. I know that there are certain great things we daily want, and that there is nothing necessarily formal in asking for these things in the same words. The world, the devil, and our hearts, are daily the same. Of necessity we must daily go over old ground. But this I say, — we must be very careful on this point. If the skeleton and outline of our prayers be by habit almost a form, let us strive that the clothing and filling up of our prayers be as far as possible of the Spirit. As to praying out of a book, it is a habit I cannot praise. If we can tell our doctors the state of our bodies without a book, we ought to be able to tell the state of our souls to God. I have no objection to a man using crutches, when he is first recovering from a broken limb. It is better to use crutches than not to walk at all. But if I saw him all his life on crutches, I should not think it a matter for congratulation. I should like to see him strong enough to throw his crutches away.

(c) I commend to you in the next place, the importance of making prayer a **regular business of life**. I might say something of the value of regular times in the day for prayer. God is a God of order. The hours for morning and evening sacrifice in the Jewish temple were not fixed as they were without a meaning. Disorder is eminently one of the fruits of sin. But I would not bring any under bondage. This only I say, that it is essential to your soul's health to make praying a part of the business of every twenty-four hours in your life. Just as you allot time to eating, sleeping, and business, so also allot time to prayer. Choose your own hours and seasons. At the very least, speak with God in the morning, before you speak with the world; and speak with God at night, after you have done with the world. But settle it down in your minds that prayer is one of the great things of every day. Do not drive it into a corner. Do not give it the scraps, and leavings, and parings of your day. Whatever else you make a business of, make a business of prayer.

(d) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **perseverance** in prayer. Once having begun the habit never give

it up. Your heart will sometimes say, "We have had family prayers; what mighty harm if we leave private prayer undone?" — Your body will sometimes say, "You are unwell, or sleepy, or weary; you need not pray." — Your mind will sometimes say, "You have important business to attend to today; cut short your prayers." Look on all such suggestions as coming direct from the devil. They are all as good as saying, "Neglect your soul." I do not maintain that prayers should always be of the same length; — but I do say, let no excuse make you give up prayer. It is not for nothing that Paul said, "Continue in prayer," and "Pray without ceasing." (Col. 4 : 2. 1 Thess. 5 : 7.) He did not mean that men should be always on their knees, as an old sect, called the Euchitae, supposed. But he did mean that our prayers should be like the continual burnt offering, — a thing steadily persevered in every day; — that it should be like seed-time and harvest, and summer and winter, — a thing that should unceasingly come round at regular seasons;—that it should be like the fire on the altar, not always consuming sacrifices, but never completely going out. Never forget that you may tie together morning and evening devotions by an endless chain of short ejaculatory prayers throughout the day. Even in company, or business, or in the very streets, you may be silently sending up little winged messengers to God, as Nehemiah did in the very presence of Artaxerxes. (Neh. 2:4.) And never think that time is wasted which is given to God. A nation does not become poorer because it loses one year of working days in seven by keeping the Sabbath. A Christian never finds he is a loser in the long run by persevering in prayer.

(e) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **earnestness** in prayer. It is not necessary that a man should shout, or scream, or be very loud, in order to prove that he is in earnest. But it is desirable that we should be hearty, and fervent, and warm, and ask as if we were really interested in what we were doing. It is the "effectual fervent" prayer that "availeth much," and not the cold, sleepy, lazy, listless one. This is the lesson that is taught us by the expressions used in Scripture about prayer. It is called, "crying, knocking, wrestling, labouring, striving." This is the lesson taught us by Scripture examples. Jacob is one. He said to the angel at Peniel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Gen. 32 : 26.) Daniel is another. Hear how he pleaded with God: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God." (Dan. 9 : 19.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is another. It is written of Him, "In the days of His flesh He offered up prayer and supplication, with strong crying and tears." (Heb. 5 : 7.) Alas, how unlike is this to many of our supplications! How tame and lukewarm they seem by comparison! How truly might God say to many of us, "You do not really

want what you pray for!" Let us try to amend this fault. Let us knock loudly at the door of grace, like Mercy in "Pilgrim's Progress," as if we must perish unless heard. Let us settle it down in our minds, that cold prayers are a sacrifice without fire. Let us remember the story of Demosthenes, the great orator, when one came to him, and wanted him to plead his cause. He heard him without attention, while he told his story without earnestness. The man saw this, and cried out with anxiety that it was all true. "Ah!" said Demosthenes, "I believe you **now**."

(f) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **praying with faith**. We should endeavour to believe that our prayers are always heard, and that if we ask things according to God's will, we shall always be answered. This is the plain command of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark 11 : 24.) Faith is to prayer what the feather is to the arrow; without it prayer will not hit the mark. We should cultivate the habit of pleading promises in our prayers. We should take with us some promise, and say, "Lord, here is Thine own word pledged. Do for us as Thou hast said." (2 Sam. 7:25.) This was the habit of Jacob, and Moses, and David. The 119th Psalm is full of things asked, "according to Thy word." Above all, we should cultivate the habit of expecting answers to our prayers. We should do like the merchant who sends his ships to sea. We should not be satisfied unless we see some return. Alas, there are few points on which Christians come short so much as this. The Church at Jerusalem made prayer without ceasing for Peter in prison; but when the prayer was answered, they would hardly believe it. (Acts 12 : 15.) It is a solemn saying of old Trail's "There is no surer mark of trifling in prayer, than when men are careless what they get by prayer."

(g) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **boldness** in prayer. There is an unseemly familiarity in some men's prayers, which I cannot praise. But there is such a thing as a holy boldness, which is exceedingly to be desired. I mean such boldness as that of Moses, when he pleads with God not to destroy Israel: "Wherefore," says he, "should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did He bring them out, to slay them in the mountains? Turn from Thy fierce anger." (Exod. 32 : 12.) I mean such boldness as that of Joshua, when the children of Israel were defeated before Ai: "What," says he "wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?" (Josh. 7 : 9.) This is the boldness for which Luther was remarkable. One who heard him praying said, "What a spirit — what a confidence was in his very expressions! With such a reverence he sued, as one begging of God, and yet with such hope and assurance, as if he spake with a loving father or friend."

This is the boldness which distinguished Bruce, a great Scotch divine of the 17th century. His prayers were said to be "like bolts shot up into heaven." Here also I fear we sadly come short. We do not sufficiently realise the believer's privileges. We do not plead as often as we might, "Lord, are we not Thine own people? Is it not for Thy Glory that we should be sanctified? Is it not for Thine honour that Thy Gospel should increase?"

(h) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **fulness** in prayer. I do not forget that our Lord warns us against the example of the Pharisees, who for pretence made long prayers, and commands us, when we pray, not to use vain repetitions. But I cannot forget, on the other hand, that He has given His own sanction to large and long devotions, by continuing all night in prayer to God. At all events we are not likely in this day to err on the side of praying too much. Might it not rather be feared that many believers in this generation pray **too little**? I am afraid these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily. I am afraid the private devotions of many are most painfully scanty and limited, — just enough to prove they are alive, and no more. They really seem to want little from God. They seem to have little to confess, little to ask for, and little to thank Him for. Alas, this is altogether wrong! Nothing is more common than to hear believers complaining that they do not get on. They tell us that they do not grow in grace, as they could desire. Is it not rather to be suspected that many have quite as much grace as they ask for? Is it not the true account of many, that they have little, because they ask little? The cause of their weakness is to be found in their own stunted, dwarfish, clipped, contracted, hurried, little, narrow diminutive prayers. **They have not because they ask not.** Oh reader, we are not straitened in Christ, but in ourselves. The Lord says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." But we are like the king of Israel who smote on the ground thrice and stayed, when he ought to have smitten five or six times. (Psalm 81 : 10; 2 Kings 13 : 18, 19.)

(i) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of particularity in prayer. We ought not to be content with great general petitions. We ought to specify our wants before the throne of grace. It should not be enough to ask for holiness. We should name the grace in which we feel most deficient. It should not be enough to tell the Lord we are in trouble. We should describe our trouble and all its peculiarities. This is what Jacob did, when he feared his brother Esau. He tells God exactly what it is he fears. (Gen. 32 : 11.) This is what Eliezer did, when he sought a wife for his master's son. He spreads before God precisely what he wants. (Gen. 24 : 12.) This is what Paul did, when he had a thorn in the flesh. He besought the Lord. (2 Cor. 12 : 8.) This is

true faith and confidence. We should believe that nothing is too small to be named before God. What should we think of the patient who told his doctor he was ill, but never went into particulars? What should we think of the wife who told her husband she was unhappy, but did not specify the cause? What should we think of the child who told his father he was in trouble, but nothing more? Let us never forget that Christ is the true bridegroom of the soul, — the true physician of the heart, — the real father of all His people. Let us show that we feel this, by being unreserved in our communications with Him. Let us hide no secrets from Him. Let us tell Him all our hearts.

(j) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **intercession** in our prayers. We are all selfish by nature, and our selfishness is very apt to stick to us, even when we are converted. There is a tendency in us to think only of our own souls, — our own spiritual conflict, — our own progress in religion, and to forget others. Against this tendency we have all need to watch and strive, and not least in our prayers. We should study to be of a public spirit. We should stir ourselves up to name other names besides our own before the throne of grace. We should try to bear in our hearts the whole world, — the heathen, — the Jews, — the Roman Catholics, — the body of true believers, — the professing Protestant Churches, the country in which we live, — the congregation to which we belong, — the household in which we sojourn, — the friends and relations we are connected with. For each and all of these we should plead. This is the highest charity. He loves me best who loves me in his prayers. This is for our soul's health. It enlarges our sympathies and expands our hearts. This is for the benefit of the Church. The wheels of all machinery for extending the Gospel are oiled by prayer. They do as much for the Lord's cause who intercede like Moses on the mount, as they do who fight like Joshua in the thick of the battle. This is to be like Christ. He bears the names of His people on His breast and shoulders as their High Priest before the Father. Oh, the privilege of being like Jesus! This is to be a true helper to ministers. If I must needs choose a congregation, give me a people that prays.

(k) I commend to you, in the next place, the importance of **thankfulness** in prayer. I know well that asking God is one thing, and praising God is another. But I see so close a connection between prayer and praise in the Bible, that I dare not call that true prayer in which thankfulness has no part. It is not for nothing, that Paul says, "By prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4 : 6.) "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." (Col. 4:2.) It is of mercy that we are not in hell. It is of mercy that we

have the hope of heaven. It is of mercy that we live in a land of spiritual light. It is of mercy that we have been called by the Spirit, and not left to reap the fruit of our own ways. It is of mercy that we still live, and have opportunities of glorifying God actively or passively. Surely, these thoughts should crowd on our minds whenever we speak with God. Surely, we should never open our lips in prayer without blessing God for that free grace by which we live, and for that loving-kindness which endureth for ever. Never was there an eminent saint who was not full of thankfulness. St. Paul hardly ever writes an Epistle without beginning with thankfulness. Men like Whitefield in the 18th century, and Bickersteth, and Marsh, and Haldane Stewart in the 19th century, were ever running over with thankfulness. Oh, if we would be bright and shining lights in our day, we must cherish a spirit of praise! And above all, let our prayers be thankful prayers.

(1) I commend to you, in the last place the importance of **watchfulness over your prayers**. Prayer is that point of all others in religion at which you must be on your guard. Here it is that true religion begins: here it flourishes, and here it decays. Tell me what a man's prayers are, and I will soon tell you the state of his soul. Prayer is the spiritual pulse: by this the spiritual health may always be tested. Prayer is the spiritual weather-glass: by this we may always know whether it is fair weather or foul with our hearts. Oh, let us keep an eye continually upon our private devotions! Here is the pith, the marrow, and backbone of our practical Christianity. Sermons, and books, and tracts, and committee meetings, and the company of good men, are all good in their way; but they will never make up for the neglect of private prayer. Mark well the places, and society, and companions, that unhinge your hearts for communion with God, and make your prayers drive heavily. **There be on your guard**. Observe narrowly what friends and what employments leave your soul in the most spiritual frame, and most ready to speak with God. **To these cleave and stick fast**. If you will only take care of your prayers, I will engage that nothing shall go very wrong with your soul.

I offer these points for private consideration. I do it in all humility. I know no one who needs to be reminded of them more than I do myself. But I believe them to be God's own truth, and I should like myself and all I love to feel them more.

I want the times we live in to be praying times. I want the Christians of our day to be praying Christians. I want the Church of our age to be a praying Church. My heart's desire and prayer in sending forth this paper is to promote a spirit of prayerfulness. I want those who never prayed yet, to arise and call upon God; and I want those who do pray, to improve their prayers every year, and to see that they are not getting slack, and praying amiss.

The Diary of Dugald Buchanan

Period III — From twenty-four years of age to twenty-six

(continued from page 202)

There was one book in the Bible on which I could never look with delight; namely, the Song of Solomon. I heard some sermons from several texts of it, but could never hear them with any delight, because I could not believe them to be divinely inspired, having heard some people say, that it was a song made between Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter. Therefore, when reading the Bible, I would not look into that part of it.

My former darkness and deadness still continued, and I sought from place to place in the Bible except in the part which I have mentioned, for some word suitable to my case, but could find none. But one Sabbath morning while praying that God would bless the public ordinances to me, and that He would make dark things light, I had some impressions on my mind that the Lord would give me directions that day how to walk. Therefore I went cheerfully all the way to the Kirk, hoping that God would shew wonders to the dead; and during the time of worship, I was waiting impatiently for God to send a portion of His word with light into my soul, but when the sermon was near a close I was as dead and dark as before. I then began to despair more than ever, calling myself a fool for believing any impressions I felt at prayer in the morning.

While I was thus perplexed, the minister was discoursing of the believer's exercise when under desertion, and said, that they made it their study to attend every place where they thought to meet with their beloved; and that it was their language, O that I knew where I might find him! Then he cited these words: "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest **thy** flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents" (Song 1, 7, 8).

The only thing which my soul wanted to know, viz., where I might meet with Christ, was here expressed to me in the former of these verses, while the answer was given in the latter; so that before I arose from where I was sitting, I was both directed and comforted, I beheld also several glorious things afterwards in this book.

One thing in particular I learned from these scriptures was, that I should still wait upon God in the use of means, and follow

the footsteps of the flock. There was another scripture also that supported my mind under the delays with which I was tried, and which kept me still in the way of duty: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand" (Eccles. 11:6).

From which I further learned that it was my duty to be still in the way of all means, because I knew not what means the Lord might bless to me; that it was dangerous to be out of the way that Christ used to pass by; but still to wait like the blind man, begging, in the way of duty. And the fourth verse says, that he who observeth the wind shall not sow. Which I thought might imply that I should not regard the winds of temptations, nor the clouds of discouragements, but rather to be always in the way of duty. These considerations kept me always at prayer and other exercises. In February, 1742, I was still seeking for this or that means for deliverance; but to no purpose, for I was like the door turning upon the hinges, and could never turn off the cheeks of sloth. I was altogether ignorant of Christ and His righteousness; was still hearing and reading of that grace of faith, and necessity thereof to obtain salvation; yea, without which, there was no salvation to be had, and I was certain that I had never as yet believed; for I thought it was presumption to believe my sins were forgiven, till I should find a certain measure of humiliation, and sanctification of nature. And besides the want of these qualifications, the thoughts of the great number of the iniquities of my past life terrified me, so that I durst not believe, unless God would work a miracle to encourage me. I have wished that God would send an angel, or give me some visible manifestation from heaven, before I could venture to believe. "Master, we would see a sign from thee."

One Sabbath as I was coming home from church, I was musing on these things, and wishing that some additional voice from heaven would sound in my ears, to testify unto me that my sins were forgiven, for I thought that without this, my conscience would never be satisfied. While thinking on these things, these words came into my mind, "Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God."

After I had read that passage, I began to consider how I should apply it to myself, and thought that Naaman represented sinners who came to the Lord Jesus, to be cleansed from spiritual leprosy, and that Christ's answer was such as the prophet gave to Naaman, "wash in Jordan and be clean." I saw that the Lord Jesus was ascended into heaven, and had given commission to His ministers, under the gospel, to direct all leprous sinners who want to be cleansed, to wash in His blood and to be cleansed; and that it was in vain to look for miracles now, and that if I would not be-

lieve the truth of His word, I would perish for ever; and that many who saw the Lord Jesus with their natural eyes did not believe, although they saw the miracles which He performed. I then endeavoured to believe, but could not, not being convinced that it was my real duty to believe, till I should be better qualified. Some time after this, I met a Christian friend, and spoke to him of my fears and the workings of my mind, but he spoke in such high and experienced language, as I could not understand. He told me of the victories that faith would obtain over all these doubts, but I did not know what faith was, only by report. I enquired "what was his opinion of Mr Whitefield?" about whom I had heard many things, though I did not hear him myself. To which he replied, "that he preached the doctrine of grace in its ancient purity." Hearing this, I began to consider what kind of doctrine that could be. But such was the pride of my heart, that I could not think of asking what difference was between that and any other; and because I found him to approve of that doctrine, I approved of it also, although I knew nothing about it. After parting with this man, I began to ponder in my mind what kind of doctrine that could be; for he spoke of it as different from every other doctrine in the world. I felt very uneasy till I should know more of this doctrine of free grace, and therefore read all the books I could get; but remained still in the dark. I thought that to be saved by free grace, was to perform sincere obedience to the commands of God, and that wherein I came short, God, for Christ's sake, would forgive. And when I considered the promises, I looked first to the conditions to be performed by me, before I could pretend to have any right to Him.

I could not see these things in a true light, and though others were willing to instruct me, I would not let my ignorance be known to them. When I read that promise, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," I thought no one had a right to come to Christ, but such as were weary and heavy laden, with a sight and sense of their sins; and that promise, Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I saw that there was a willingness required as the condition on my part, and till once I could find that qualification wrought in myself, presumed not to meddle with the promises.

It likewise increased my trouble, when I saw my former companions continuing in sin, particularly those whom I had been instrumental in the hands of Satan, in teaching the way of death. I exhorted them by all the joys of heaven, and all the terrors of hell I could think of, to return from their evil ways. But all I could say seemed like idle tales to them, for they believed me not. Then I thought that God would punish me, not only for my own sins, but for other men's also, because I had led them in the

ways of sin. That scripture lay very heavy on my mind, nor could I shake it off at any time (Jer. 2 : 33, 34).

My corrupt nature was like to overcome me, but when I prayed for the mortification of my lusts and idols, I was afraid that God would hear me; for I could not think of parting with my sins, although at the same time I durst not but pray against them. I frequently used this expression, "O Lord, I am afraid that thou wilt hear me, and thus deprive me of my idols." I had such an aversion in my very nature against holiness, that I could not think of continuing in a religious way of life. Again, I thought since I had nothing but the outward form of religion, that I could never endure to the end, and that it was the most melancholy thing in the world. Yet I believed that those who found the reality that was in religion, in their own hearts, found it quite another thing from what I did; which made me hope that the Lord would, sometime or other, enable me to find His "yoke easy and his burden light." Sometimes I thought that the Lord would keep me in this state of bondage for as many years as I continued in rebellion against Him. However, I thought several times on the man who was thirty-eight years at the pool of Siloam, and that I would also wait upon God, though I could not believe that any were like me, but hypocrites. That scripture was very terrifying to me: "but the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath." "They cry out when he bindeth them" (Job 36 : 13). This, indeed, was my case, for I was bound in chains of strong lusts. I could never say that sin made me sigh, by reason of my bondage, and how could I seek for deliverance, who never found myself in bondage? I look upon all the knowledge I had of a Saviour, but as a dream.

I was very much grieved when I heard the people of God complaining of their state, saying, "O that it was with me as in months past! There was a time in which I could say, My Beloved is mine and I am His, but now I am in great darkness." I would say, "O! happy people, who can say that there was a time in which He shone on your tabernacle whatever your case may be now! If I knew what communion with God is, I would patiently bear whatever lot He might appoint me, but it is quite otherwise. Ye complain of an absent God, and I complain of a God with whom I had never been acquainted. O that I knew where to find Him, but, to all appearance, I never will!"

Some said that I was wonderfully changed, and thus took me for a real saint; which grieved me very much, having a name to live, and being as yet dead. The people of God showed great love to me, and this also perplexed me, seeing that, when the rough garment wherewith I had deceived others and myself, should be taken off, they would abhor me, and that devils and damned reprobates would have me in everlasting derision, and say, "How

are you fallen from your great profession? " Art thou become like unto us? I could justify God in sending me to the pit; for that scripture closed my mouth: "And if thou say in thine heart, wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquities are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare." At the same time I had a full impression of the justice of God, for I could not see how God could be just, if He should save me, although the whole race of Adam were saved. The word "salvation" was great to me. When at prayer I was afraid of immediate destruction, the thoughts of which made my flesh to tremble.

As I was one night in the fields, praying, there came a great flash of lightning, and when it was passed I looked for a clap of thunder which would crush me to pieces, which made me also faint. However, I thought that if I died in this place, I would die on my knees, pleading for mercy. It then occurred to me, that many of these slavish fears came from Satan, who wished to terrify me. But after that night, I was never so much troubled with these fears as before. And I thought that, if God would have mercy upon me, and if ever it should be known what my sins were, and what was the exceeding riches of God's grace towards me, others would be encouraged to hope in His mercy. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1 : 15). Yet, after all, despairing thoughts lodged within me.

What is This Point You Long to Know?

What is this point you long to know ?
Methinks I hear you say, 'Tis this . . .
I want to know I'm born of God,
An heir of everlasting bliss.

Is this the point you long to know ?
The point is settled in my view . . .
For if you want to love your God,
It proves He first has loved you.

I want to know Christ died for me,
I want to feel the seal within;
I want to know Christ's precious blood
Was shed to wash away my sin.

I want to feel more love to Christ,
I want more liberty in prayer;
But when I look within my heart,
It almost drives me to despair.

I want a mind more firmly fixed
On Christ, my everlasting Head;
I want to feel my soul alive,
And not so barren, or so dead.

I want more faith, a stronger faith;
I want to feel its power within;
I want to feel more love to God,
I want to feel less love to sin.

I want to live above the world,
And count it all but trash and toys;
I want more tokens of God's grace,
Some foretaste of eternal joys.

I want . . . I know not what I want,
I want that real, special good !
Yet all my wants are summed up here,
I want to love ! I want my God !

Is this the point you long to know ?
The dead can neither feel nor see;
It is the slave that's bound in chains,
That knows the worth of liberty.

So where a want like this is found
I think I may be bold to say . . .
That God has fixed within thy heart
What hell can never take away.

However small thy grace appears,
There's plenty in thy Living Head;
These wants you feel, my Christian friend,
Were never found amongst the dead.

DANIEL HERBERT.

The Headship of Christ over the Nations

by the late Rev. Alexander MacColl, Lochalsh

(Extracts translated from Gaelic articles in Vol. II of the Free Presbyterian Magazine. W. M.).

The Reformation Church of Scotland was ever noted for its steadfast defence of two points of doctrine in particular — the first, that Christ is the sole Head of His Church, and the second, that He is the Governor of the kings and kingdoms of this world.

What we hereby declare and hold we substantiate from the Truth of God that kingdoms are under solemn obligation to own and acknowledge the kingdom or Cause of Christ. They are not merely to be favourably disposed towards it, but to maintain and support it, on account of their being so highly privileged to have His Cause in their midst and His Word where His revealed will is made known, and also because they are subject to the authority and power of Christ. The teaching of God's Word demands this from them. They are not only under the ruling of Christ in His providence, but He is also their moral governor. We could here advert to the distinction which exists between Christ's Headship over the nations and His Headship over His Church if that were the particular purpose we had in view. Christ is the living head of His mystical body the Church — the Head of her life, of her ordinances, and her authority by the appointment of the Father as a revelation of His Godhead. But also by the appointment of the Father He possesses authority and power over the kings and kingdoms of this world. "He hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church." There are those who hold the view that it is as God's eternal Son, and not in His Mediatorial office as the God-man that this authority and power have been given to Him. But you will observe that all authority and power belong essentially to Him as God's eternal Son, and therefore cannot be given to Him. We know what George Gillespie has to say on this point, but there is no occasion to enlarge on the matter at present. We affirm, however, that if it is as God's eternal Son alone and not as the Mediator all things are put under the feet of Christ, it necessarily follows that the view of the followers of Arius is true, who maintain that the Son is

inferior to the Father in essence and in dignity. But to countenance such a view were blasphemy. We read in 1 Corinthians 15:27, 28: "For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him: it is manifest that He is expected which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." There is another truth which says, "The Father is greater than I." Now is it with respect to His office as Redeemer, or to His essence and person as God alone that this truth refers? It is surely with respect to His office, and not to His essence and person as God alone. To adopt the other view would be blasphemy.

We shall now observe that it is especially for the good of the Church that this authority over the nations was given to Christ as Mediator. As this was the purpose of the Father, in giving Him this authority and power, does it not necessarily follow that it is the duty of kingdoms to promote the good of His Church? Must we not believe that rulers are under obligation to promote the good of the Church with all the lawful means at their disposal? We are to believe that they are under obligation to Christ not only as private individuals as other Christians are, but also in their public capacity. It was to this end they were put under Christ's authority in order to advance His Cause . . . We do not say that the king is the servant of the Church, but that he is the servant of God for the good of the Church.

There are those who repudiate our view of the Headship of Christ over kings and kingdoms, on the ground that it is from God as Creator and not as Saviour they have their origin — that it is in **nature** and not in **grace** that their foundation was originally laid. Is this, therefore, contrary to our view that they are under the Headship of Christ as King of nations? We do not believe so. It would be inconsistent with the teaching of the Truth to believe otherwise. Without question the civil government was established in the natural law of creation. We do not deny that. But are all things which have their foundation in the law of nature and established by God as Creator excluded from Christ's mediatorial dominion? If so, much we are accustomed to place under His dominion must be excluded from it. The relationship between parents and children, between masters and servants is founded in the law of nature or creation. But does that exclude them from the dominion of Christ and from obedience to Him? That manifestly cannot be; for if it did, how are we to understand the following exhortations given in the New Testament? "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Children obey your parents in the Lord." Servants, be obedient to them that are

your masters according to the flesh . . . as **unto Christ**," and much such like. We see that the duties intimately bound up with godliness as prayer and praise to God are based on the law of nature. Are they on that account, therefore, to be excluded from the dominion of Christ as Mediator? And are we to seek to observe them without an eye to Him in that office? This proves to us the unscripturalness of the view we are condemning.

They (the Voluntaries) hold that it is not within the province of the civil magistrate to make any provision for the maintenance of the Church out of the national treasury; that Christ as King over His own Church has ordained that the gospel ministry be maintained and advanced by the free-will offerings of His people; and that since this is the ordinance of Christ support from the State is thereby excluded, and also the true freedom of the Church secured and protected.

These views are diametrically opposed to the views we hold. They are contrary to the views always held by the reformed Church of Scotland; and also contrary to the fundamental principles of the fathers which they affirmed as the principles of their Church when they separated from the Church of Scotland (ir. 1843).

In the first place the Voluntaries maintain that it is unlawful for the civil magistrate to countenance any creed. They thereby exclude the true Scriptural creed of the Church of Christ, along with every false creed. Their view places the Truth of God on the same level with the teachings of falsehood and error, and equates the true Church of Christ with any association claiming the name of a church no matter how unsound its creed, or with any commercial combine in the kingdom. Furthermore they hold that it is unlawful for the civil magistrate to make any provision for the maintenance of gospel ordinances out of the national treasury, that the rule which Christ established for the maintenance of His Cause and for its advancement is the free-will offerings of the people, and on that account support from the state is excluded, and that in this way alone can the freedom of the Church be secured. If this is true, then the Reformation Church in Scotland for three hundred years was violating the order established by Christ. Her views on the matter were, therefore, unscriptural, and John Knox, Andrew Melville, Henderson, Rutherford and all the rest from that time who upheld our view were in error and guilty of transgressing the order of Christ. It is a certainty that the majority of the people of Scotland, divided though they be, will not accept views so unsound and so dangerous, which cast such dishonour on the stalwarts now in glory who were steadfast unto death in defending the doctrines which the Voluntaries condemn as sinful.

How We Got the Bible

by Rev. Terence H. Brown*

[We have received several requests for a brief outline of the history of our English Bible. Many large volumes have been written on the subject, and it may seem presumptuous to attempt to summarise such a vast accumulation of literature in a few pages. It is hoped that many who have neither the time nor the inclination to read a lengthy treatise on the subject may find the information they need in this short article.]

“The LORD gave the Word”

The Bible is the gift of God and the writers of the individual books testify that they received a revelation from God. “The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue” (2 Samuel 23.2); “I have put My Words in thy mouth” (Jeremiah 1.9); “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3.16); “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1.21). The Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 4 describes the Holy Scriptures as “every Word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God”.

The Books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew on rolls prepared from the skins of animals, and scrupulous care was taken to ensure that copies were accurate. These books were compiled over a period of nearly one thousand years and were completed about 400 years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bethlehem. Nearly 300 years before that event the Hebrew books appeared in a Greek translation which became known as the Version of the Seventy (Septuagint) because the translation was believed to be the work of seventy learned Jews of Alexandria. This version was in common use in the days of the Apostles and is often quoted in the New Testament.

Inspiration and Authority

The New Testament Books were written in Greek and were added at intervals during the hundred years following the Saviour's birth. Like the Old Testament Books they were recognised as “Holy Scripture” and acknowledged to be divinely inspired. Peter includes the epistles of Paul with “the other Scriptures” (2 Peter 3.16), and Paul declares that his teaching was delivered “not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

*This article is reprinted, by kind permission, from the Trinitarian Bible Society Quarterly Record — Editor.

teacheth" (1 Corinthians 2.13). From the last quarter of the first century to the end of the second there is a widening stream of testimony to the unique authority of the New Testament Scriptures. These testimonies may be gathered from the surviving writings of early Christian teachers in the Greek and Latin churches of Africa, Palestine, Syria, Rome and France. Here we may allow Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 180) to speak for them all — "The Scriptures are perfect, inasmuch as they were uttered by the Word of God and His Spirit" — and he proceeds to use the Old and New Testaments as "Scripture" without distinction.

Councils of the Churches made official pronouncements on the subject from time to time during the following centuries, but it can be seen that there is no ground for the claim often made by the Roman Church that we received our Bible from her hands. All of the Books of the Bible were in use and acknowledged among Christian people generations before Rome ever claimed to be "mother and mistress of all the churches".

In the first five hundred years of the Christian era there were several important translations of the Holy Scriptures in Syriac, Latin, Egyptian (Coptic), Gothic and Armenian. These were all in existence centuries before there was a Bible in English. Early in the 4th century Jerome of Bethlehem completed a Latin translation which became known as the "Vulgate" because it was in the common or "vulgar" tongue of a large portion of the professing Church. Early attempts to put the Bible into the language of our own country were based not on the Hebrew and Greek, but on this Latin version.

The English language

In order to trace the history of the English versions of the Holy Scriptures it is necessary to remember a little of the history of the English people and their language. When the Roman forces withdrew early in the fifth century the South Britons obtained the help of the Saxons against the attacks of the Picts and Scots. The Saxons returned from their victory in the North and began to take possession of the South. This struggle continued for about 150 years during which the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, a heathen people, gradually gained control and divided the country into seven kingdoms. Each of these in turn was absorbed by its stronger neighbour and finally in AD 827 Egbert combined them under his own rule, and his kingdom came to be known as Angle-land or England. In this period the light of the Gospel was practically extinguished over much of the country and then rekindled after the conversion of Ethelbert, King of Kent, at the end of the 6th century.

During the Saxon period the Danes repeatedly invaded and occupied large areas of the country. In AD 878 Alfred the Great

overcame their army at Ethandune and their king embraced the Christian faith and submitted to Alfred. The next one hundred and fifty years witnessed many periods of strife between the English and the Danes, culminating in the Danish invasion of the northern counties at the instigation of William of Normandy. Harold defeated the Danes in the North, but was himself defeated at Hastings by the Normans under William, who divided up a large part of the country among the nobles. The English Church was reorganised under Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Anglo Saxon versions

There were several attempts to make the light of God's Word available to the people in the Anglo Saxon tongue. Early in the 8th century Eadhelm of Glastonbury translated the Psalms and Egbert of Holy Island translated the Gospels. A copy of this version may be seen in the British Museum. In AD 735 Bede laboured at Jarrow on his translation of the Gospel. A letter written by one of his pupils describes how the aged scholar pressed on with his work of translating the Scriptures up to the last moment of his life. Early in the morning of "Ascension Day" in AD 735 he summoned his helpers to continue with the task and dictated to them the translation of John's Gospel from the words, "What are they among so many?" As the sun was setting one of the scribes told him there was only one more chapter, but it seemed hard for Bede to speak. He replied, "Nay, it is easy, take up thy pen and write quickly". The young scribe wrote on until he could tell his master that only one sentence was wanting, when Bede dictated it the young man exclaimed, "It is finished, master!" Bede replied, "Aye it is finished! lift me up and place me by the window where I have so often prayed to God". Then with the Name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit upon his lips he passed into the presence of the Lord.

Alfred the Great desired that his people should be able to read the Word of God and he personally engaged in a translation of the Psalms until his death in AD 901. In the later 10th century Archbishop Aelfric and a number of others endeavoured to provide translations which could be read in the Churches so that many who could not read would at least hear the word of Truth.

Wycliffe's Bible

The next four hundred years were an important period in the development of the English language. It is not possible to give precise dates but from AD 1066 to about 1150 Saxon and Norman French were in use side by side. From about 1150 the gradual fusion of the two peoples caused their languages to mingle and merge with one another, producing what has been described as

"semi-Saxon". The old Saxon and the Norman French fell into disuse, and from about 1250 "English" emerges to pass through a century or more of development before being used as the vehicle of Wycliffe's English Bible of AD 1382.

Wycliffe, knowing no Hebrew or Greek, translated from the Latin Vulgate which was far from perfect, but the English Version nevertheless showed only too clearly how far the doctrines of the Roman Church were removed from the plain teaching of God's Word. Wycliffe was accused of heresy and excommunicated, but continued with his task until his death in 1384. Every copy of his translation had to be written by hand, but so many were written that a Bill was enacted in Parliament to forbid its circulation. Archbishop Arundel complained to the Pope of "that pestilent wretch Wycliffe". The convocation of Oxford under Arundel in 1408 decreed "that no man hereafter by his own authority translate any text of the Scripture into English or any other tongue, by way of book, pamphlet or treatise; and that no man read any such book, pamphlet or treatise; now lately composed in the time of John Wycliffe or since . . . publicly or privately, upon pain of greater excommunication . . . He that shall do contrary to this shall likewise be punished as a favourer of heresy and error". During the next hundred years many Christian martyrs were burned to death with Wycliffe's Bible tied around their necks, but 170 copies remain to this day to testify to his faithfulness and the diligence of his helpers.

Invention of printing

About twenty years after Wycliffe's death a boy named Gensfleisch ("Gooseflesh") was amusing himself cutting out the letters of his name from a piece of bark. He dropped one of these accidentally in a pot of hot dye, snatched it out and dropped it on a piece of white skin on a bench near the fire and was intrigued to see the pattern of the letter was impressed on the skin. It is possible that this experience lingered in his mind and suggested the idea of printing. Thirty years afterwards he set up his famous press at Menz under the name of Gutenberg, his mother's family name. This was an epoch-making invention and was to contribute greatly towards the rapid reproduction of the Scriptures and the establishment of the Reformation in Europe.

William Tyndale

For several hundred years the Greek language was almost unknown in Western Europe, but a great revival of Greek learning commenced about the middle of the 15th century and the new art of printing was the means of placing printed copies of the Greek Scriptures in the hands of Christian scholars. Erasmus of

Rotterdam published his first edition of the Greek New Testament in 1516, and provided William Tyndale with the means of giving to English readers for the first time a New Testament translated directly from the Greek, the language in which it was first written. Like Wycliffe, Tyndale was accused of heresy, and was not allowed to pursue his studies in peace. He spent several years on the Continent and was eventually betrayed by a false friend, arrested, imprisoned, and burned at the stake at Vilvorde in Belgium in 1536. The place is marked by a memorial erected by the Trinitarian Bible Society and the Belgian Bible Society and the inscriptions include Tyndale's dying prayer — "Lord open the eyes of the King of England". His prayer was answered when in 1538 King Henry VIII gave instructions that a large Bible should be placed in every parish church.

Tyndale published an edition of the New Testament in a conveniently small size and arranged for thousands of copies to be smuggled into England in barrels, bales of cloth, and even in flour sacks. By these means the New Testament was rapidly and widely distributed. Many copies were seized and burned at St. Paul's, as "a burnt offering most pleasing to Almighty God" — as Cardinal Campeggio wrote to Wolsey. Tyndale said that he was not surprised and would not be surprised if later they should burn him also.

Opposition Providentially Over-ruled

The Bishop of London, who was anxious to obstruct the progress of the Reformation, consulted with Pakington a merchant with connections in Antwerp, and asked his advice about buying up all the copies that could be obtained in Europe. He did not know that Pakington was a friend of Tyndale. "Halle's Chronicle" contains a quaint description of the incident. "Gentle Master Pakington", said the Bishop, deeming that he had God by the toe, when in truth he had, as he after thought, the devil by the fist, "do your diligence to get them for me, and I will gladly give you whatever they cost, for the books are naughty and I intend to destroy them all, and to burn them at Paul's Cross". The bargain was made, and the story continues, "The Bishop had the Books, Pakington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money".

Tyndale was quite pleased with the arrangement, as the money relieved him of his debts, the burning of some of the Testaments had the effect of encouraging many people to support the work he was doing, and he now had resources to spend on an improved edition. Some time afterwards a man named Constantine was being tried before Sir Thomas Moore for heresy. He was promised leniency if he would tell where Tyndale and his helpers obtained the money to pay for their editions. Constantine replied—"It is

the Bishop of London that hath holpen us, for he bestowed among us a great deal of money upon New Testaments to burn them, and that hath been our chief succour and comfort”.

Editions of the Greek Text

The remainder of the 16th century saw the completion and fruitful use of several printed editions of the Greek New Testament and several translations of the entire Bible in the English language. Robert Stephens produced editions of the Greek in 1546, 1549, 1550 and 1551, Theodore Beza produced five editions of the Greek between 1559 and 1598, and the Elzevir brothers published at Leyden in 1633 an edition described in the title page as the “Received Text”, the “Textus Receptus”. Among English readers this title has often been given to Robert Stephens edition of 1560.

The English Versions

The English translation of Tyndale was followed by those of Coverdale (1536), Rogers (1537), Taverner (1538), the Great Bible (1539), the Geneva Bible (1557-1560) and the Bishop's Bible (1568). These all owed much to Tyndale's pioneer labours and each contributed to the progress and establishment of the Reformation in this country. The Geneva Bible was translated and published by Protestant scholars who found refuge in Geneva during the persecutions of Mary's reign, 1553-1558. This version was very popular and remained in use for a considerable time after the first appearance of the Authorised Version. The Geneva Version was produced during a period when the Protestants were suffering violent persecution, and it is not surprising that the marginal notes very pungently exposed the errors of the Roman Church.

The most noticeable changes in the Geneva Bible were the adoption of Roman type in place of the old “black letter”, and the division of the chapters into verses. These changes made the Geneva version much easier to use, and it achieved wonderful popularity. From 1560 to 1616 one or more editions appeared every year, and in 1599 ten separate editions were printed. About two hundred editions of this version are known to have been printed. It has been known as the “Breeches Bible” because of the use of this word in Genesis 3.7, where the A.V. has “aprons”.

The Bishops' Bible

Queen Elizabeth I commissioned Archbishop Parker to produce a Bible free from these controversial notes and his version appeared in 1568. It never achieved great popularity but it was later used as the basis of the revision of 1611 which was to become known as the “Authorised Version”. Incidentally the Bishops'

Bible had this caption — "Authorised and appointed to be read in Churches", but the version of 1611 did not have the word "authorised" on its title page.

The Bishops' Bible took the place of the Great Bible in the public services of the Church, but for private use it never displaced the Geneva Version. The Puritans who held livings in the Church of England disregarded the ruling of Convocation and continued to take their texts from the Geneva Version. The last edition of the Bishops' Bible was printed in 1619, eight years after the appearance of the "Authorised Version". This 1619 edition contained at the end of the New Testament a number of readings from the Old Testament to be used in the Communion service on certain days. Strangely enough, these readings were taken from Matthew's Bible of 1537.

The Authorised Version

At the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 the Puritan leader Reynolds made the suggestion — which was first opposed and then adopted by the conference with the enthusiastic approval of James I — that there should be a new translation of the Holy Scriptures in English to replace the different versions in common use. Fifty-four men, including "High Churchmen" and Puritans, the greatest Hebrew and Greek scholars of the age, formed six companies to undertake the task. Using their Greek sources and the best commentaries of European scholars and referring to existing versions in several other languages, they produced a version which accurately expresses the sense of the Hebrew and Greek in clear, vigorous idiomatic English. This Bible won its battles against the prejudice and criticism which greeted its first appearance, and became the Bible of the English-speaking world.

The Authorised Version has been well described as "the purest well of our native English, in its grand simplicity standing out in contrast to the ornate and affected diction of the language of that time". In the language of a competent judge, "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version this is of all versions the most excellent". The spelling and punctuation were extensively revised in 1762 and 1769 by Dr Paris and Dr Blayney, and at various times there have been considerable additions to the marginal references, which in the first edition were not more than about nine thousand in number.

The modern versions

Advocates of the modern versions often argue that the discovery of many ancient manuscripts unknown to the earlier translators has made it necessary to "correct" the Authorised Version in

many places. Many people have been very sadly misled in this matter and have accepted the allegation that the manuscript evidence is unfavourable to our old Bible. This is very far from being the case. It is true that Erasmus, Stephens and Beza had comparatively few Greek manuscripts at their disposal, but these few were representative of the Greek text preserved in the great majority of the documents which have since come to light. These now number several thousand, and they give a very full measure of support to the Greek text underlying the Authorised Version. Surviving copies of very ancient translations originating in the second, third and fourth centuries, also testify to the integrity of our English Bible. The quotations from the ancient Scriptures preserved in the writings of the earliest Christian writers after the Apostles, also make it quite clear that those "fathers" had in their hands copies of the Greek Scriptures similar to those underlying our English Bible.

During the last 150 years it has unfortunately become increasingly the fashion among Biblical scholars and translators to adopt as their guides to the original text a small group of ancient but unreliable manuscripts, including the Vatican and Sinai copies of the 4th century, and a few others which exhibit the same kind of abbreviated and altered text. One result of this tendency of modern scholarship is that modern critical editions of the Greek, and modern English versions based upon them, present in a weaker form many of the plainest declarations of the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The trustworthiness of the Authorised Version

The English reader is on safe ground in regarding the Authorised Version as a faithful translation made from trustworthy sources. God has exercised His wisdom, power and grace in sending forth His Word by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and He has exercised His providence in the preservation of the written revelation and its propagation throughout the world.

There have been many attempts to replace the Authorised Version by a translation in more modern English, but as yet none of these excels the version which has held its place in the English speaking world for more than 350 years. It was very significant that while the American astronauts were encircling the moon they read and broadcast to the world the story of the creation — not from a modern version, not from an American version, not from the R.S.V. or N.E.B., but from the Bible of the English-speaking world — the Authorised Version — an acknowledgement that this still has its pre-eminent place even in this age of modern science.

At the present time there are about one hundred modern Eng-

lish translations, most of which are based on less reliable manuscript sources, were translated by scholars with less respect for the authority of the inspired Word and the eternal deity of the Lord Jesus Christ — “The Chief Subject of the Sacred Book” —, and display less command of the wealth and resources of our English tongue.

As we recall the long history of our English Bible we remember the words of the Lord Jesus Himself — “Other men laboured and ye are entered into their labours”.

Posadh an Anama ri Crìosd

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 216)

2. Bi cinnteach gu'n altrum thu smuaintean maith air a shlighibh, a rioghachd, agus a riaghladh. Na gabh a stigh aon smuaint eudmhor mu Chrìosd, mar gu'n b'e Fear-posda cruaidh, teann, a bha Ann; mar gu'm biodh E dha ghiùllain Fein gu cruaidh, teann, a thaobh a chéile-pòsda. Mar dh' fhàilnicheas an diabhal agus an t-eas-creidimh 'n an oidhearpan gu anamaibh a chur an aghaidh Chrìosd, a toirt orra a chreidsinn gu'r e Maighsteir cruaidh agus Fear-plsda geur-theann a tha Ann, a tha riaghladh le cruas agus teannas nach gabh a bhi air a ghiùllain is maith sin leo: “A thighearna, bha fios agam,” tha neach ag ràdh anns an t-soisgeul, “gur duine cruaidh thù, a bhuaineas 's an àite anns nach do chuir thu, agus a thionaileas 's an ionad anns nach do sgaoil thù,” Mata. 24. Agus le so tha eagal air a chur air an anam bho Chrìosd. Ach anam, na'm biodh tù gu bràth air do phòsadh ri Crìosd, thoir fa'n ear a leithidean sin de smuaintean eucorach an aghaidh Chrìosd, a chuireadh tù'n a aghaidh, cùm suas smuaintean maith mu thimchioll, agus mu a shlighibh, agus mu a riaghladh; agus bì tric a beachd-smuainteachadh air a mhill-seachd-san agus a shlighean. Am bheil E geur-theann? Guidheam ort, C'àit am bheil a gheur-theannas? Am bheil E dha do chuireadh gu bhì giùllain a chuing? Thà, ach 's e cuing so-ìomchuir a th'innte. Am bheil E cur ort a bhi giùllain uallaich? Thà, ach 's e uallach aotrom a th-ann. “Gabhaidh mo chuing oirbh, agus foghlumaibh uam, oir tha mise macanta agus iorasal ann an cridhe: agus gheibh sibh fois do 'ur n-anamaibh, Oir tha mo chuing-sa so-ìomchair, agus tha m'uallach aotrom.” Mata xi. 29, 30. Am bheil E'g amharc ris gu'n togadh tù do chrann-

cheusaidh? Thà, 's e crann-ceusaidh milis a th'ann, crann-ceusaidh buannachdail, crann-ceusaidh urramach, crann-ceusaidh a thà air fhigheadh le òr, agus a tha air a chòmhdach thairis le millseachd na diadhachd; crann-ceusaidh ris am bheil crùn air a cheangal, eadhon " crùn na beatha." Tais. ii. 10. Crann-ceusaidh a tha'n a chrùn an so; oir is e urram a th'ann fulung air son Chrìosd, Gnìomh. v. 41. Crann ceusaidh a nì nì's motha agus nì's motha nì's soilleir ar crùn an deigh so; " Is beannaichte bhios sibh an uair a bheir daoine anacaint dhuibh agus a nì iad geur-leanmhuinn oirbh, agus a labhras iad gach uile dhroch fhocal ruibh gu bréugach, air mo sgàth-sa. Deanabh gairdeachas, agus bithibh ro-shubhach; oir is mòr 'ur duais air neamh; oir mar sin rinn iad geur-leanmhuinn air na fàidhean a bha roimhibh." Mata v. 11, 12. Am bheil E dha do ghairm gu bhì deanamh a leithid siud na leithid so do sheirbhisean? Thà, ach maille ri sin bheir E dhuit neart gu bhì dha'n deanamh, a cuideachadh le t-anmhuinneachdan le a Spiorad maith, Ròm. viii. 26, agus ma's e 's gu'm fàilnich thù, agus gu'n tig thù gearr ann an nì a tha E'g iarraidh — ciod e'n sin? An sin gabhaidh E truas agus cùmhnaidh E thu, mar a nì athair a thaobh a mhic a tha deanamh seirbhis dha; tha E gabhail seachad air t-fhàilingidhean agus t-easbhuidhean. Mal. 17. Cha'n urrainn thù nì air bith a dheanamh ach a mhàinn gu'm bheil inntinn agad gu seirbhis a dheanamh Dha. Seadh, gabhaidh E'n toileachas inntinn sin a reir mar a th' agad, agus cha'n ann a reir na nithean nach eil agad, II, Cor. viii. 12. 'N uair nach urrain thu ùrnuigh a dhòrtadh a mach, na osnadh, tha gearain air gabhail ris Leis-san. Am bheil E'g iarraidh na rìgh-chathair annabh, agus a bhì riaghladh ann bhur n' anamaibh? Bithidh sin Aige; ach tha'n dòigh riaghlaidh so ro-mhilis; oir tha E riaghladh le gràdh, agus tha E toirt seachad le beatha; agus tha E air son rìgh-chathair a thoirt seachad, rìgh-chathair glòir air son rìgh-chathair ann bhur 'n anamaibh. Ciod a their mì? Tha shlighibh uile 'n an slighich tlachdmhor, agus tha cheumaibh uile 'n an sith, Gnàth. iii. 17. Agus oh. ciod an tlachd, ciod a chomhfhurtachd, agus riarachadh anama a tha ri fhaotainn ann a bhì gluasad annta! Ann am focal, tha sheirbhis uile 'n saorsa iomlan, agus cha'n eil fìor shaorsa ach na shlighibh agus na sheirbhis. Is a ràdh mòr a leugh mì ann an aon de na seann diadhairean. " Cò," a deir e, " nach rìghicheadh? agus a rìghicheadh gu sona. Dean seirbhis do Iosa coibhneil. agus rìghichidh tù, do-bhrìgh gu'r e bhì deanamh seirbhis Dha-san fìor righeachadh." Mar sin chì thù nach eil aobhar firinneach air son smuaintean cruaidh mu Chrìosd anns a chùis so, ach gu cinnteach calg-dhìreach an aghaidh sin. A reir sin, freagair, agus tilg dhiot gach aon dhe na maslaidhean dubh sin a tha'n diabhol agus an t-eas-creidimh a tilgeadh air an Tighearna mhaith so; agus bì cinnteach gu'n cùm thù

suas smuaintean maith Air, agus air a shlighibh, nì a chuidicheas gu mòr ann a bhi cur air adhart a phòsaidh so eadar Esan agus thusa.

(R'a leantuinn.)

Notes and Comments

Moral Bankruptcy of W.C.C.

The decision of the World Council of Churches to give £80,000 to organisations engaged in resisting racialism, mainly in South Africa, has brought embarrassed explanations from its officials. This money has come from West Germany and America being specially earmarked for this purpose. The suspicion is strong, however, that the money is finding its way into the hands of such revolutionary groups as the Fremilo (Mozambique), Zapu and Zanu (Rhodesia), the MPLA and Unita (Angola), guerrilla organisations, who employ violence and terror, and have been responsible for wide-spread mutilation and death to innocent fellow Africans who do not share their views. Many of their members are trained in revolutionary warfare in Communist countries, are actually led by dedicated Communists, and none is known to have Christian sympathies or have ever aided any Christian cause.

Rt. Rev. M. H. Duke, Episcopal Bishop of St. Andrews has issued a letter to his diocese in an attempt to meet the demand from within his own church that the annual grant to the World Council funds should cease, by explaining that the money is meant to help oppressed peoples in their fight for freedom. He admits in his letter that some of the organisations attacking the Smith regime in Rhodesia and in Portuguese East Africa are guerilla-run, but he adds: "What can be said for all of them is that they do seem to be on the side of the oppressed". In defence of the grant the bishop makes the absurd charge that inaction lends aid to "greater violence through racial oppression than the tactics which freedom fighters use to overcome it." Recently, the Church of Scotland also appealed to its members to give a day's pay to the underdeveloped nations, setting the target at £1,000,000, but the response amounted to some £200,000, with many of the envelopes remaining untouched in the pew. The fear that any money given would be used not for the relief of suffering — the stocks of food and medical supplies left at the time of the Nigerian War to rot in the warehouses in Biafra lend some ground to this

fear — but to aid the guerrilla groups in their revolutionary activities, may account for this poor response. Brigadier Sir Bernard Fergusson in a letter to the press protested against the action of the Church of Scotland with the accusation of “Church support for extremists”. It has long been known that the W.C.C. has been infiltrated with hard core Communism, involving left wing politics, and the ecumenical craze in much the same way is influencing the Church of Scotland leaders. The World Council of Churches has no message of salvation to bring to the heathen nations of the world, and now, it seems, they have nothing to offer that will help them in their political affairs either. Purlblind worldly churchmen, when they interfere in the internal affairs of other nations, only expose their moral and spiritual bankruptcy.

C.

A Ruinous Policy

It is reported in the press that in making an up to date review of the huge Tourist Centre at Aviemore in the North of Scotland, Sir Hugh Fraser, a director of the Highland Tourist (Cairngorm) Developments, the organisation behind the scheme, admitted that since the opening of this vast Tourist complex in 1966 at Aviemore, the scheme has not yet shown a profit. This year it is expected merely to ‘wash its face’. The skating rinks and the swimming pool have turned out to be “white elephants”. To correct this failure it was proposed either to open still larger buildings for big entertainment, incorporating swimming, skating, go-karting, etc., or charge increased entry fees. In taking stock of the prospects of this vast Tourist centre the promoters would do well to consider why success has so far eluded them. It seems that the centre is self-contained, and has therefore, instead of helping the local trades and businesses, as was expected, brought no great benefit in the way of business to the local people. More serious still, the centre has gone in for Sabbath desecration on a vast scale, and special trains during the winter months unload hordes of pleasure-seekers from London and elsewhere at Aviemore, for weekend skiing. Thousands of these ungodly worshippers of pleasure roam the Cairngorm Mountains on the Lord’s Day, heedless both of the protests of Christian bodies or the Lord’s displeasure. The Lord, however, is not mocked, and if patrons of pleasure cannot understand spiritual realities they may perhaps be made to learn by failure and disappointment that the Lord’s hand is against them.

The same press report also intimates another vast Tourist attraction, costing £6,000,000, known as the Highland Gateway, to be constructed at Strathblane, 25 minutes run from Glasgow, lying

on the main route to the Highlands, and within easy reach of Loch Lomond and Glasgow and Prestwick Air-ports. The project will include hotels, three massive sky-domes for sport, exhibitions and conferences, a championship golf course, and so on, and is financed by Sir Hugh Fraser, other financiers and brewer companies. It is expected to provide 400 jobs, will be ready in 3 years, and aid the economic growth in Scotland. In all these schemes, the ominous emphasis is laid upon leisure and entertainment, which today are not only associated with but have almost become synonymous with Sabbath desecration. Pleasure that is won at the expense of God's Holy Day will in the end prove ruinous to the promoters of these vast Tourist attractions and bring bitter disillusionment to the thoughtless multitudes who may be induced to frequent them. One of the main causes of the downfall of God's own chosen people, Israel, was her Sabbath desecration, and our nation of Sabbath breakers is preparing the ground for the judgments which, unless repentance intervene, will surely be meted out by the hand of the Most High.

C.

Vatican Centenary

This is Rome's centenary year. The events of 20th September 1870, however, though written in large letters in the records of the Roman Catholic Church, cannot bring any comfort to the Vatican authorities in Rome. On this date a hundred years ago, the troops of General Cadorna stormed through the northern gate of Porta Pia, quickly quashed the token resistance of the Pope's army, and Rome once the capital of the Roman Empire and also the capital of the Papal States, was taken over by the Italian troops and the unification of Italy at last declared. The temporal power of the Pope came to an end. This is a significant date, for barely two months before Pope Pius IX had 'Infallibility' conferred upon him by decree of the Vatican Council. The pope withdrew into the Vatican which stands on the right bank of the Tiber inside the boundary of Rome, occupying about 100 acres where St. Peter's basilica stands with the Vatican palaces and gardens. The Italian President took up residence on the Quirinal Hill, once the Summer residence of the pope, on the street newly named the "20th September", to mark the achievement of the unification of Italy.

In 1870 the population of Rome was no more than 200,000, but today the city has spread far beyond the old boundaries into the countryside to accommodate the 3 million inhabitants. By the Lateran Pacts which the Vatican concluded with the Fascist Government in 1929, she has recovered her position as an independent

and sovereign state, and in compensation for her loss of temporal power received compensation to the value of about £20 millions. Along with property held in Rome and throughout Italy, and holdings abroad, this sum skillfully invested has made the Vatican one of the leading financial powers in the world today. The total value of her investments has never been disclosed. A concordat made at the same time formally declared that Roman Catholicism was the official religion of Italy. The Vatican wields great political power in Italy today. Last year, a Divorce Bill which was passed by the Italian Lower House of Parliament failed to reach the Upper House because the Bill was challenged by the Vatican as a breach of the Lateran Treaties, and led to the fall of Rumor's Government. The commemoration of the reunification of Italy, which is expected to last for 6 months, is likely to be celebrated on a modest scale, as Rome for all her great world wide prestige is a city ridden with poverty and whose accumulated debt stands at the crushing figure of £1000 million. The presence of an independent sovereign power on the other bank of the Tiber, enjoying with Rome diplomatic privileges (for two diplomatic representatives are required, one to the Italian State and another to the Holy See), and backing and often controlling the Christian Democratic Party which has had a majority in Parliament since the fall of Fascism, is clearly a threat to the sovereignty of the Italian State. Till the political and financial powers and the religious claims of the vastly rich Vatican corporation are severely curbed, Italy is not likely to enjoy any measure of prosperity.

C.

Church Notes

London Communion Services

The London communion services will be as follows (D.V.): Thursday, 3rd December, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Friday, 4th December, 11 a.m. (Prayer Meeting) and 6.30 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting); Saturday, 5th December, 2.30 p.m. (Gaelic), 3.30 p.m. (English) and 6.30 p.m. (Prayer Meeting); Sabbath, 6th December, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Monday, 7th December, 7 p.m.

The weekday services will be held in the Bridewell Hall, London City Mission, Eccleston Place, S.W.1., and the Sabbath services in St. Michael's Hall (opposite Victoria Coach Station), Eccleston Place, S.W.1. Rev. J. A. MacDonald, Fort William, and

Rev. John Macleod, M.A., Stornoway, are expected to assist at the communion (D.V.).

Induction of Missionary to the Jews

Southern Presbytery. Induction of the Rev. H. R. Moshe Radcliff, Th.L., to work among the Jews as a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Consequent upon a Synod motion of May, 1970, the Southern Presbytery met in St. Jude's Church, Glasgow, on Wednesday, the 23rd day of September, 1970, at 7 p.m., in order to the above induction. The members of the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee had been invited to attend, but the majority were unable to do so and sent apologies for absence. The Rev. Robert R. Sinclair, Wick, and Rev. John Colquhoun, Convener, were present and were associated with the Presbytery.

After the return of the Edict calling this meeting as served in St. Jude's Church by the Rev. D. MacLean on Sabbath, 13th September, 1970, and witnessed as served in the face of the congregation, and no objection being offered, the Rev. Lachlan MacLeod, Greenock, Moderator of Presbytery, proceeded to conduct public worship, preaching a most appropriate discourse from Ezekiel, Chapter 36, Verses 24-28. As this Sermon is to be published in the Church Magazine, D.V., it is unnecessary to comment here upon some of the excellent points raised in it.

Public worship being ended, the Clerk read out a Narrative of the Proceedings leading up to this Induction, and then the Questions, to which Rev. H. R. M. Radcliff returned satisfactory answers, one by one. Then, upon the Moderator's asking him if he was prepared to sign the Formula which had been read out also by the Clerk, he said that he was, and thereupon signed the Formula in the presence of the Congregation.

The Moderator then engaged in solemn prayer and, prayer being ended did Induct and Admit the Rev. H. R. M. Radcliff in the following words:—

"I do now by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of His Church, and in the name of the Southern Presbytery, Induct and Admit you, Mr H. R. Moshe Radcliff to work among the Jews as a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland." The Moderator then gave Mr Radcliff the right hand of fellowship, and the other members of Presbytery and associated members did likewise. Mr Radcliff was then addressed by Rev. D. B. Macleod, London, in suitable and encouraging terms, and the meeting was then addressed by the Rev. Robert R. Sinclair, Wick, Vice Convener of the Jewish and

Foreign Mission Committee. Mr Sinclair spoke in appropriate and solemn terms mainly of our work as a Church among the Jews, and that now when Mr Radcliff was taking up the work laid down by the late Rev. Donald Urquhart that we should pray especially for the Holy Spirit, regarding this ministry as a reviving of the work of our Jewish Mission. Mr Sinclair further stressed our needs at all times of being kept by the Lord. The Moderator then closed the public meeting with the singing of Psalm 122 from verse 6 and the benediction. Mr Radcliff shook hands with the congregation at the door of the Church as they went out. Our desire is that the Lord would greatly bless Mr Radcliff in his person and labours among his own people and among others also.

We think we cannot close this short notice more appropriately than by quoting the words of verse 7 of the concluding Psalm of this Induction Service:—

“ Pray that Jerusalem may have
peace and felicity:
Let them that love thee and thy peace
have still prosperity.”

Psalms, 122 : 7.

MALCOLM MACSWEEN, Clerk of Presbytery.

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—Mrs A. MacLeod, Brora, £5; A. MacKay, Quidinish, £1.

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Lochcarron — £3 for decoration of Lochcarron Church, per Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald, Gairloch.

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Glendale — A Friend, £5 for Church expenses per Rev. J. C.; From the estate of the late Miss Christina Nicolson, £500, for the use of Glendale Church.

Beauly Church Building Fund — A. Macleod, £10; Friend, £5; Friend, Dingwall, £5, per Mr Kelly; Mrs Higgins, Ayrshire, £1; M. Campbell, Applecross, £2; A Friend, £10, per K. MacKenzie; A Friend, Lochbroom, £5; A Friend of the Cause, Inverness, £5; Inverness Friends, £3, per Mr A. MacLennan; The Livingstone Family, Muir-of-Ord, £20; Resident, Home of Rest, Inverness, £100; A. F. MacD., Drumnadrochit, £2; Dingwall Friend, £5; Dutch Friend, per Mr Graham, £23; Envelope in Plate, £5.

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Raasay — "A Righteous Man's Memorial," £1 Sustentation fund, £1 Home Mission Fund, £1 Jewish and Foreign Mission, £2 for church carpet, with sincere thanks per treasurer.

Aberdeen — N.S. for Supply Fund, £5; Anon., per Mrs E. D. Tallach, £10.