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Missionary Enterprises

by Rev. Andrew Fuller

I have been a good deal impressed with a persuasion that in our missionary undertakings, both at home and abroad, we shall not be remarkably successful, unless we enter deeply into the spirit of primitive Christians; particularly with respect to faith in the Divine promises. I am apprehensive that we are all deficient in this grace, and therefore presume that a few hints on the subject may not be unseasonable.

When Israel went out of Egypt, they greatly rejoiced on the shores of the Red Sea; but the greater part of them entered not into the Promised Land, and that on account of their unbelief. The resemblance between their case and ours has struck my mind with considerable force. The grand object of their undertaking was to root out idolatry, and to establish the knowledge and worship of the one living and true God; and such also is ours. The authority on which they acted was the sovereign command of Heaven; and ours is the same. "Go preach the gospel to every creature." The ground on which they were to rest their hope of success was the Divine promise. It was by relying upon this alone that they were enabled to surmount difficulties, and to encounter their gigantic enemies. Those among them who believed, like Joshua and Caleb, felt themselves well able to go up; but they that distrusted the promise turned their backs in the hour of danger. Such also is the ground of our hope. He who hath commissioned us to "teach all nations" hath added, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world". The heathen nations are given to our Redeemer for an inheritance, as much as Canaan was given to the seed of Abra-

ham; and it is our business, as it was theirs, to go up and possess the land. We should lay our account with difficulties as well as they: but, according to our faith in the Divine promises, we may expect these mountains to become a plain. If the Lord delight in us, He will bring us into the land; but if, like the unbelieving Israelites, we make light of the promised good, or magnify the difficulties in the way of obtaining it, and so relax our efforts, we may expect to die as it were in the wilderness.

It is true, there are some differences between their case and ours; but they are wholly in our favour. We are not, like them, going to possess countries for ourselves, but for Christ. They went armed with the temporal sword, we with the sword of the Spirit; they were commissioned in justice to destroy men's lives, we in mercy to save their souls; they sought not them but theirs, we seek not theirs but them. Now by how much our cause exceeds theirs in the magnitude and beneficence of its object, by so much the more shall we incur the frowns of Heaven, if we fail of accomplishing it through unbelief.

On a certain occasion "the disciples said unto the Lord, Increase our faith;" and it is worth while to consider what that occasion was, Luke 17: 3-6. There was a hard duty enjoined, to forgive lamented injuries, even though committed seven times a day. The apostles very properly turned the injunction into a petition, praying for great grace to enable them to discharge so difficult a duty. They said unto the Lord, "Increase our faith". But why ask for an increase in faith? Possibly we might have said, Lord, increase our love, our self-denial, our patience. Asking for an increase of faith was asking for an increase of every other grace; this being a kind of first wheel that sets the rest in motion. Our Lord's answer intimates that they had chosen a right petition; for faith, even in a small degree, will enable us to surmount great difficulties—difficulties the surmounting of which is as the removal of mountains. The passage, taken in its connection, teaches us the efficacy of faith in discharging duties, and surmounting difficulties.

Where there is no faith in the truths and promises of the gospel, there is no heart for duty; and where it is very low and defective in its exercises, there is but little spiritual activity. If a good man be entangled in sceptical doubts respecting the truth of the gospel, or any of its leading doctrines, he will, during that time, be not only unhappy in his own mind, but of little use to others. He admits

that God used in former ages to hear the prayers and succeed the labours of His servants, and that there will be times in which great things will again be wrought for the church. But of late, and especially in the present age, he imagines we are not to expect anything remarkable. This is no other than a spice of that atheistical spirit which said, "The Lord hath forsaken the earth, he regardeth not man"; the effect of which is an indifference to every exercise and enterprise of a religious nature. Faith operates as a stimulus, unbelief as a palsy.

If faith in Divine truths and promises be low, though we should be drawn in with others to engage in religious enterprises, yet we shall not follow them up with ardent prayer, or look for the blessing of God with that earnest expectation which generally precedes the bestowment of it. Instead of forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, we shall be in danger of resting satisfied in present attainments, and so of losing the things which we have wrought, for want of following up the work to which we have set our hands.

All the great things that have been wrought in the church of God have been accomplished by this principle. It was by faith that the worthies "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and put to flight the armies of the aliens". It was by faith that the apostles and primitive Christians went forth as sheep among wolves, and, at the expense of all that was dear to them on earth, carried the gospel into all nations. Wherever they went they were previously persuaded that they should go in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; and it was so. God always caused them to triumph in Christ, and make manifest the savour of His knowledge by them in every place. Could we but imbibe this spirit, surely we should be able, in some good degree, to say so too. "Believe in the Lord our God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."

But why is it that God should thus honour the exercise of faith? Is it not because faith is a grace that peculiarly honours Him? We cannot do greater dishonour to a person of kind and generous intentions than by thinking very ill of him, and acting towards him on the ground of such evil thoughts. It was thus that the slothful servant thought and acted toward his lord. On the other hand, we

cannot do greater honour to a character of the above description than by thinking well of him, and placing the most unreserved confidence in all he says. Any man who had a just regard to honour would in such a case feel a strong inducement to answer the expectations which were entertained of him. And God Himself hath condescended to intimate something like the same thing. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." In believing His word we think well of Him, and He takes pleasure in answering such expectations; proving thereby that we have thought justly concerning Him. It was on this principle that our Lord usually conferred the blessings of miraculous healing, in answer to the faith of the patient, or of those that accompanied him. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. According to your faith be it unto you."

Sermon (III)

by Rev. J. Colquhoun, D.D.

Text—"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1: 14.

I proceed now to the fourth general head, which was—To consider the import of the assertion in the text, "He *dwelt* among us".

The original verb, which is here translated "DWELT" properly signifies, *He tabernacled*, or pitched his tabernacle; that is he dwelt in human nature among us. This is foretold in Zech. 2: 10. "Sing and rejoice, Oh daughter of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will *dwell* in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." It is hinted also in Psalm 68 verse 18, "Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might *dwell* among them". And in Rev. 21 verse 3, "I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them." Now, this expression in the text, "He tabernacled or dwelt among us"—

1. Does *not imply* that he had never dwelt in the Church before; for it is evident, that, by his Spirit, and by his prophets, by typical representations of him, and by sacrifices, he dwelt in it long before his incarnation. Hence, long before his assumption of human nature, he said concerning the Church, "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell: for I have desired it". Psalm 132: 14. And we read in

the Revelation, that he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; but he could not be said to be slain, when he was in no respect present. The expression, then, does not imply that he never dwelt in His Church previously to his incarnation, but only, that he never tabernacled or dwelt in human nature in it before.

2. It shows his amazing *condescension and grace*. He dwelt, says the evangelist, among *us*—among us men and us apostles. He dwelt among us who are counted less than nothing and vanity—among us who were by nature sinners, the chief of sinners, who were rebellious also, and his most inveterate enemies. If he had, in this affair, consulted his own ease of pleasure, to dwell among us would be worse to him than it was to David to dwell in Mesech, or to Ezekiel to dwell among scorpions. How mean, how sinful, and how dangerous, is this world which we inhabit! and how difficult to a devout and contemplative mind to be reconciled to dwell in it always! and yet our Divine Redeemer dwelt in it for more than thirty-three years, and that in circumstances of the deepest abasement.

3. The expression also implies, that he lived in the *meanest circumstances* during his state of humiliation. He tabernacled among us; he lived in a low condition, as shepherds do who dwell in tents. When he was in this world, he did not reside under a gilded roof, nor in a splendid habitation, as the rich and honourable of the earth do; but he dwelt as in a tent or tabernacle. He was like a stranger and a sojourner, and he had not where to lay his head, in order that he might exalt all who believe in him, to a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.

4. It imports, that while he was in this world, the rays of his *Divinity*, or *Divine glory*, shone through the vail of his *humanity*, in the view of those whose eyes had been opened to behold them. “The *Word* was made flesh, and *dwelt* among us, and *we beheld his glory*, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.” The eternal “Word, the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person”, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He tabernacled or dwelt in flesh among us. The expression evidently contains an allusion to the shechinah, or cloud of glory, which hovered above the mercy-seat and between the cherubim, in the tabernacle of Moses. This cloud was a lively representation of Jeho-

vah and his glory, as peculiarly present in the most holy place of the tabernacle. Now, as the Son of God dwelt in the Mosaic tabernacle, by the shechinah or cloud of glory, so he tabernacled or dwelt for a time in the human nature upon earth. He dwelt among us in flesh, which the Apostle Paul calls "this tabernacle", as he did formerly in the Jewish tabernacle and temple, by the cloud of glory. And as the high priest, who went once in the year into the holy of holies, had access to see this cloud of glory shining in it, so those who were kings and priests to God, and had access to see the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, beheld a spiritual glory in him, which, especially on some occasions, shone with refulgent lustre to their view. And, indeed, all true believers behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord Jesus; and so are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. Their spiritual sight of the glory of Christ in human nature is an assimilating sight.

5. The expression suggests, that Christ's state in this world was a state of warfare. In time of war, soldiers who sojourn in a country which is the seat of war commonly dwell in tents. The Son of God had, long before his incarnation, proclaimed war against the god of this world; and now he enters the enemy's country and pitches his tent to carry on the war. He that speaketh in righteousness, mighty to save, travelled through this enemy's country; he marched through it in the greatness of his strength, conquering and to conquer. He spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, and triumphed over them in his cross, Col. 2: 15.

Finally, it intimates, that the Lord Jesus was *not to continue* long in human nature upon earth. He dwelt here as in a tent, and not as in a fixed habitation. He so inhabited this world as to show that here he had no continuing city. The ancient patriarchs dwelt in tabernacles, and thereby confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. In like manner, Christ's abode, in this world was like that of a stranger and a pilgrim, only but for a time, a short time. But why did the Lord Jesus, after his assumption of human nature, choose to dwell in it upon earth, and not rather immediately among the blessed inhabitants of heaven? In addition to the reasons of this already mentioned, I would say, he chose to dwell for a time rather upon earth, that he might show the more effectually his tender *regard* to his people. One discovers great regard to a friend when he takes a long and difficult journey to visit him. The Lord Jesus performed a journey of infinite length,

in order to visit and redeem his people. He resolved also to tabernacle for a time upon earth, that he might give to his saints an *example* of being willing to continue in this valley of tears so long as they had any service to perform in it for the glory of their heavenly Father. And he dwelt for a time in this world, that by his residence in it he might sanctify it, as the place of his people's pilgrimage, before they arrive at their Father's house, the holy place on high.

Now, from what has been said on the whole subject before us, we may see the *high honour* which is put upon human nature. The greatest and most wonderful work that ever God did, was done in our nature. The work of redeeming a lost world was a greater work than the creation of millions of worlds, and yet this most wonderful work was performed in the human nature. If he hath honoured our nature so highly, ought not we to glorify him in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his? Shall we debase our nature, which has been thus highly honoured, by yielding to any motion of sin or temptation of Satan? Should not we employ all the faculties of our souls, and members of our bodies, in performing works of faith, and labours of love, and in maintaining good works?

2. Hence we see, that the law as a covenant of works, is *magnified* and made *honourable*, in the highest degree possible. It has been honoured with the perfect obedience of a Divine Person in human nature. It is honoured and magnified more with the meritorious obedience of the Son of God, than ever it had been dishonoured by the disobedience of man. Whenever, therefore, the law as a covenant finds its way again into the believer's conscience, and charges him with the guilt of dishonouring it by acts of disobedience, let him present in the hand of faith to it, the consummate obedience and the complete atonement of God his Saviour: let him also, in reliance on promised grace, perform that sincere and evangelical obedience to it as a rule of duty, by which he will honour it as the law of Christ. Since the Lord Jesus Christ, believer, honoured the law as a covenant for your salvation, it is surely your duty to honour it as a rule for his glory, and the glory of God in him.

3. Hence learn this sovereign remedy for our having been conceived in sin, and our having brought a depraved nature into the world with us. Our Lord Jesus Christ brought a human nature *perfectly holy* into the world with him, and, as the Surety for sinners,

presented to the law an holy human nature; which holiness of nature is imputed to believers as a fundamental part of their justifying righteousness. He at the same time purchased the saving influences of the Holy Spirit for the sanctification of their nature. This is ground of comfort to you, to whom the sin that dwelleth in you is the most oppressive and grievous burden.

4. Did the Lord Jesus tabernacle among men, and thereby show that he was not to remain long an inhabitant of this world? Then, let believers study to be more and more *conformed* to him, by living so as daily to confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Let them declare plainly, that they seek a better country, and that their conversation is in heaven.

5. Hence we may see what ground we have of *thankfulness and praise* to our gracious God and Father. Our nature is indissolubly united to the Divine nature in the person of his only-begotten Son. And what reason have we to thank and praise his dear Son for remembering us in our low estate, and for condescending to be made flesh and dwell among us; and so to unite our low nature to himself by a personal and indissoluble union, that he might lay a foundation for the spiritual union of our persons with his adorable person! We ought to thank God for Moses and the prophets; for evangelists and apostles; but, above all, for Jesus the incarnate Redeemer, the Messenger of the covenant, the Desire of all nations. But some disconsolate believer will say, "I ought indeed to be thankful that ever Christ united the human nature to the Divine in his person; but I find it very difficult to be heartily thankful for it. If I were satisfied that I was vitally united to Him as my Kinsman-Redeemer, I should find it easy to give thanks for that personal union; but my fear that this is not the case renders the sincere performance of such a duty very hard to me." Indeed, if you be under prevailing doubts as to your union and communion with Christ, you cannot be cordially thankful for anything connected with him. But is it true that you are not united to Christ? Then whence is it that you see indwelling sin so plainly, and feel it so sensibly, as to loathe it, and long for deliverance from it? This must be from the Spirit of Christ. False professors pretend that they see the corruption of their hearts; but that which they see never either discourages their presumptuous confidence, or makes them loathe themselves in their own sight before the Lord. How comes it that you complain bitterly of your want of love to Jesus

Christ, and to God in him? Union of affection is a good evidence of vital union. If you were entirely destitute of true love to Christ, you would not bewail your want of love to him. And whence is it, that you complain to him of your want of conformity to him in holiness, and of the prevalence of iniquities against you, by which you dishonour him? Is it not, that you delight in his law after the inward man, and long for perfect conformity to it? Credit the reports of sense less, and of faith more. Be thankful for the signs of union with Christ which you have, and especially that, by the offers of the Gospel, you are warranted to come as a sinner in yourself, and to trust in him for all his salvation. Let it fill you with gratitude to the God of all grace, that he hath made this your present duty.

6. In conclusion: Let saints and sinners suffer the word of *exhortation*. As for you who have not only your nature, but your persons united to Jesus Christ, be persuaded, first, to meditate frequently on the transcendent glory of his person. It is the masterpiece of the manifold wisdom of God. Devout meditation on this glorious object is attended with many advantages. It is a means of confirming, faith, hope, love, admiration, and conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ; II Cor. 3: 18. Second, take encouragement in the midst of all your conflicts with corruption and temptation, from that personal union: for so long as it continues, the union between your persons and the person of Christ shall not be dissolved. There is no condemnation to you, for you are in Christ Jesus; and in union with him, sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law as a covenant, but under grace. Thirdly, study to make a particular and daily application of Christ to yourselves, in virtue of the union of your nature with him; saying, "Spread the covering of this spotless righteousness over me, for thou art a near Kinsman". What is the reason that little love, desire, zeal, courage, joy and holiness is in many of the saints of this day? They do not, as they ought, appropriate to themselves the person of Christ, nor place the confidence of their hearts in him for all his salvation. Fourthly, did the only-begotten of the Father obey the law as a covenant, and endure the execution of the curse of it in your *nature*? You are, therefore, bound to obey it as a rule of life in your persons. His design in assuming your nature was, that he might yield perfect obedience to the law as a covenant of works

for your salvation; and his intention in obeying it under that form was, that he might merit the sanctification of the Spirit, to enable you to yield sincere obedience to it, as the rule of righteousness in his kingdom. He obeyed it as a covenant for your justification of life that you might obey it as a rule for his glory, and the glory of God in him. Study, then, in reliance on his promised grace to fall in with the gracious design of his incarnation and obedience unto death, in your nature. From principles of faith and love, advance daily in holy conformity to him. Glorify him in your body and in your spirit, which are his.

As for you, who are *not* by faith united to the incarnate Redeemer, and have no communion with him in his righteousness and salvation, be convinced of your sinfulness and misery. If the Son of God had not seen from eternity that you are lost, he would never have stooped to infinitely low as to be made flesh. Do not imagine, that because he assumed your *nature*, you are secured from perishing in your sins. Except your *persons* be vitally united to him by a living faith, you cannot inherit eternal life. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." Oh be persuaded to embrace and trust in the compassionate Saviour, as he is freely offered to you in the Gospel. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Instrumental Music

by Rev. Walter Scott, Grafton

The use of instrumental music in the Old Testament was a ceremonial rite. It was no casual thing. It formed the principal part of Old Testament worship (Numbers 10: 1-10). It was a constant attendant of sacrifice, intimately connected with it from the days of David, and the blowing of trumpets from the days of Moses (II Chron. 29: 24, 27, 28). All these ceremonial observances are no longer in force. Dr Begg, in his Treatise on Organs, remarks that as the sacrifices under the law terminated in the death and sacrifice of Christ, it is most reasonable to conclude that all the concomitants of the typical service was also abolished with them. Accordingly in the whole of the New Testament no mention is made of instrumental music being used in the worship of God. On the

other hand, it is clearly stated what the worship of God is to be. Paul, writing to the Hebrews about the doing away of their priests, sacrifices, and all that pertains to the "wordly sanctuary", says most emphatically, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually", and lest there should be any misunderstanding, or any should think this praise was to include instrumental music, he adds a particular definition of what he means, "That is," says he, "the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." (Heb. 13: 15.)

We search in vain for any direction or example in favour of musical instruments in the New Testament.

There was no instrumental music in the Primitive Church. Clement of Alexandria who was born about the year 150, contrasts the worship of the Christians with the instruments used by the heathen at their idolatrous worship, and says, "We Christians make use of only one organ or instrument, even the peaceful Word with which we honour God: no longer with the old psaltery, trumpet, drum or cymbal and pipe, and commence the blessing and praising of God by thanksgiving and singing of Psalms."

Chrysostom who flourished about the year 400, remarks on Psalm 150: "As therefore the Jews did praise the Lord with all instruments, so we are, in like manner, commanded to glorify God with our members. Let no man deceive you: these (musical instruments) are alien to the Catholic Church, all these things do the nations of the world seek after."

Having seen that instrumental music in the worship of God was not authorised by Christ or by His apostles, nor used by the Primitive Church, we have now to show that its introduction belonged to a corrupt era, when darkness was again "covering the earth and gross darkness the people." Like human hymns and other corruptions in the worship of God, instrumental music owes its origin to Popery.

Bellarmino, the Romish author, states that the organ began to be used in the service of the Church about the year 660, and that when Pope Vitalian reformed the singing of the Roman Church, he added to it organs in order to support and embellish it.

After the long night of popish idolatry and superstition, the dawn of the Reformation was the signal of light and purity. Accordingly at the Reformation from Popery in Scotland, the worship of God was purged from all those corrupt practices by

which it had been polluted, and restored to its original simplicity and purity.

Scotland was not alone in abolishing the use of the organs at the Reformation: the same is recorded of the Reformed Churches of Germany, France, Piedmont, Helvetia, Transylvania, and most of the Reformed Churches of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, the United Provinces of Holland, England, and to a great extent Ireland. Luther, according to Eckhart, a German doctor of Theology, considered musical instruments in the worship of God among the badges of Baal (*organa musica inter Baalis insignia refert*).

Calvin in his commentary on Exodus 15: 20 says, "Instrumental music is not fitted to be adopted into the public worship of the Christian Church any more than incense, the candlestick, and the shadows of the Mosaic Law . . . We know that our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared and, by His advent, has abolished these legal shadows. For instruments of music in gospel times, we must not have recourse to these, unless we wish to destroy the evangelical perfection and to obscure the meridian light which we enjoy in Christ our Lord."

We are told that the use of instrumental music is not forbidden in Scripture. This is a dangerous principle to go upon. In the case of Nadab and Abihu, it was for offering "strange fire before the Lord, *which he commanded them not*", and "fire went out from the Lord and devoured them". The example of Artaxerxes, a heathen monarch is a reproof to those who use this argument. In his royal decree he orders whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, to be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven" and he adds as the reason "for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" (Ezra 7: 23). But is the use of instrumental music not forbidden? Does not Christ Himself lay down the opposite principle as our rule? "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28: 20), intimating that a divine command is necessary as our warrant for every observance in the Church, and that therefore, "In vain do they worship me teaching for doctrines commandments of men." Of the tribe of Judah, Moses "saith nothing" concerning priesthood. Hence Paul inferred that there was nothing; and so nothing is said of instrumental music in the New Testament.

It is said that the use of organs lends a majesty and inspires a

reverence and veneration in the worshippers. In answer we say that the thrill of music and the divine joys of the soul are very different things. But the argument supposes that we may accommodate the worship of God to our own tastes and feelings, and papists plead the same things for their images, tapers, etc. But God says of such, "who hath required this at your hand?" There never was a corruption in the Church which was not introduced under plausible pretence. The will-worship and carnal inventions of primitive times had a show of wisdom and humility (Col. 2: 23). "Beware," says the apostle, "lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ" (Col. 2: 8). Charnock observes that "when God has by His sovereign order formed a religion for the heart, men are ready to usurp authority to frame one for the sense; to dress the ordinances of God in new and gaudy habits to take the eye or the ear with a vain pomp". (Purity of Worship.)

To the above may be added what the late eminent Dr Kennedy of Dingwall says on instrumental music in the worship of God. "Let no one venture to say that the use of a musical instrument is a matter of no moment. It was introduced for a temporary purpose by a special revelation from God, and ought not therefore to be regarded as a matter of indifference: and the more certain we are of its having been divinely appointed as a symbol, and 'till the time of reformation', the more guilty they appear who, after that time has passed, and God has laid it aside, attempt to find for it a place in the worship of the New Testament Church."

Christmas

by Rev. D.J. Macdonald, M.A.

By the time this will be in your hands the 'festive season' will once more be upon us. What we are most concerned about is the day celebrated allegedly in honour of the birth of Christ. How this event is connected with the 25th of December is surely a relevant question. There is not a word in the Scriptures about the precise day of His birth or even the time of year when He was born. There can, however, be no doubt that this 'celebration' dates back to

Pagan times and is now thoroughly Romish in character. There is also a strong implication that it could not have been on the 25th of December. We base this on two indisputable facts. (1) The climate of Palestine is not so severe as that of Britain but the cold of the night from December to February is very piercing and it was not the custom for the shepherds of Judea to feed their flocks in the open during this period. (2) Customs in Palestine have not changed much and at present shepherds do not feed their flocks in the open later than the end of October. These are not assumptions but *facts* which can be proved by anyone who cares to take the trouble. The truth is that the date of the birth of Christ cannot be determined and that within the Christian church no such festival as 'Christmas' was even heard of till about the end of the fourth century. Writing in 380 A.D. Chrysostom says, "It is not yet ten years since this day was made known to us." What follows furnishes a remarkable example of the ease with which customs of recent date were made to assume the character of apostolic institutions. There is ample evidence in secular history to prove that the 25th of December was celebrated as a special day long before the Christian era, by heathens. That this day was originally a Pagan festival is beyond all doubt. At that precise time of the year a festival was celebrated in Babylon in honour of the birth of the son of the Babylonian 'queen of heaven'. In Egypt the son of Isis (the Egyptian title for the 'queen of heaven') was reputedly born at this precise time. The 25th of December was called Yule-day (or the child's day) by our Pagan ancestors in this country long before the advent of Christianity. Examples could be multiplied but sufficient has been said to prove that far and wide in realms of Paganism this day was celebrated as a special festival.

How then did the Church of Rome fix on the 25th of December as the alleged day of Christ's birth? The answer is that to conciliate the heathen and to swell the number of nominal adherents of Christianity the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ. This tendency to meet Paganism half-way has been a feature of the Roman Church from the beginning and one of the reasons why it is so submerged under Pagan superstition. One matter of chief relevance to us today is that there is no warrant in Scripture to celebrate the birth of Christ on the 25th December or any other day for that matter. We are told specifically to remember Christ's death and the manner in

which it is to be remembered. The manner of this remembrance is calculated to bring to our attention the nature of His death. It was an atoning death, the just died for the unjust. Alas as far as celebrating the birth of Christ is concerned how true are the words of the American preacher and broadcaster, Dr De Hann, "They have kept the manger but thrown away the Cross." Our forefathers, the Reformers, were scrupulous in purging the land of all Romish idolatry and with the rest went the celebration of Christmas. How different things are today. It is not only in the Romish churches that Christmas trees are to be found but alleged Protestant churches throughout the land are polluted by the tree, the crib with a plastic doll depicting the child Jesus, the Madonna and the trappings of Rome.

In Protestant, yes in Free Presbyterian homes, "Christmas" cards are openly displayed, many of them displaying pictures or drawings which are open breaches of the second Commandment. What would our fathers far less our forefathers have said? Many plausible arguments are put forward. "They are only for the children," is a favourite one. What kind of parents are they who keep a bottle of poison and on being challenged say, "It is only for the children"? In the realm of nature this would seem preposterous. Is it not equally so in the realm of religion? This insidious evil of celebrating Christmas is creeping in more and more every year. At that time Christmas cards and 'nativity plays' are the order of the day in our schools. Our children are being 'brainwashed'. But that is where our duty and responsibility lies. No child can legally be made to take part in these frivolities without the consent of his parents. It is for us to make our position crystal clear and take our stand four-square on the Word of God. "But no child wants to be branded 'odd'; no child wants to have a feeling of being deprived," argue the protagonists of "Christmas". To my way of thinking, if the Scriptural position in this matter is reasonably explained to any normal child he will not feel 'odd' or 'deprived', Do our children feel 'odd' or 'deprived' because they are not allowed to play football or other games on the Sabbath? Has God not said, "Them that honour me I will honour"? Surely it is not asking too much of those who seek and receive the privilege of Baptism for their children to be prepared to bear the reproach of Christ to this extent that they would keep their children separate from this blasphemy which has flooded our land.

It is important to bear in mind that opposition to the celebration of "Christmas" is not a new idea dreamt up by the Free Presbyterian Church. As I have already mentioned the Reformers swept it out of the land and it is only because of the determination of the Romish church and the laxness which has been creeping into the National Church for years that leaves us almost alone today in holding a true Scriptural position on this matter. But let us be sure we are holding it and let us be convinced of our Scriptural foundation for so doing. Though we may suffer for it and be derided and mocked let us keep ourselves from recognising this blasphemy in any shape or form and avoid the slightest suggestion of any of its vestiges.

But how important is this matter? Very, for every year 'Christmas' seems to be making fresh inroads and is so insidiously pushed that only by being on our guard can we be kept. Surely any practice that involves flagrant breaches of the second and third Commandments cannot be indulged in without incurring guilt. Surely anyone to whom the name of Christ is precious cannot but grieve at the manner in which the alleged day of His birth is celebrated, religious services consisting mostly of 'nativity' plays and highly unscriptural "cards", orgies of eating, drinking and dancing. Even if the date of Christ's birth was known for a certainty no right thinking person would celebrate it in this way. Let me go back to where I started. The whole matter is Pagan in origin and Romish in character. Let us, therefore, shun it as the plague that it is.

An Appraisal of John Knox

by Rev. D.J. MacDonald, M.A.

At this particular time much is being written and spoken of John Knox. The reason is, of course, that it is 400 years last month since his death. On the 24th of November 1572 there passed from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant one to whom, under the hand of God, we owe so much of the civil and religious liberty we enjoy today. John Knox was the man who, in the hand of the Most High, was largely instrumental in abolishing from our beloved land the idolatry, licentiousness and

avarice of the "Anti-Christ", the Pope of Rome and his minions. The Romeward trend of the National Church in our day shows only too clearly how far that Church has fallen in the last 400 years. No doubt it will be claimed that John Knox was one of the founders of the Church of Scotland, yet that self same Church this year again invited a representative of the "Anti-Christ" to their General Assembly where he was cordially received. How far they have drifted from all that John Knox stood for! Whatever commemoration of the death of Knox there will be in the Church of Scotland, it is only too obvious that that Church is busy undoing much of the work of which the great Reformer laid the foundation and with others built up. As things stand at present, Scotland is in great danger of being swept back under the Roman yoke from which God in His mercy delivered her in the 16th century.

John Knox was born a Roman Catholic and was about thirty years of age before he became an avowed and convinced Protestant, but his Protestantism was more than just a creed. His soul was firmly anchored in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. This explains to a great extent why he hated Romanism with a perfect hatred. In the Church of Rome then, as now, Christ and the Gospel were lost sight of in the midst of idolatry, superstitions, traditions and much human invention and addition to the true worship of God. As one who had found Christ to be precious he could not but hate a system which hid Christ from the people. To all who have seen Christ as 'the fairest of ten thousand' the "Anti-Christ", the Bishop of Rome must be an "anathema". This was especially true in the case of John Knox. "I am more afraid of one Mass being said in this country than of 10,000 foreign soldiers landing in any part of this realm." This quotation from Knox himself gives some idea of the spiritual danger he saw in Popery. How far we as a nation have fallen from that standard! How we have lost sight of the motto of the Roman Church—'Semper idem'! John Knox saw its darkness from the inside, as one taught within its pale, and the soul-destroying grip it had on all who followed its teachings. When he was truly delivered spiritually he saw only too clearly its naked persecution of those whom it chose to brand as 'heretics'. As Knox came to the forefront in the battle to establish the true religion he saw the Roman Church also as the ruthless enemy of the Gospel of redeeming Grace through faith in Christ alone,

which it still is. He recognised that Roman Catholicism was the ruthless and persecuting enemy of the Truth with which no compromise can ever be possible for lovers of the Truth. "Recant or burn", to quote a Romish leader, was its policy. This insight into what Rome really was, along with his own personal knowledge and conviction that salvation lay in nothing but the true Gospel, shows why he was so suited to be the great Reformer in Scotland. Modern judges may not like his type of eloquence or the way he set about his God-given task but these were exceptional times which required exceptional methods and exceptional men. Among them all John Knox stands out as *the* Scottish Reformer. Much of Knox's determination sprang from his firm belief that he was to be God's chosen instrument in restoring to Scotland the true religion. This gave him a redoubtable sense of mission and his great concern for wholesome truth being proclaimed no matter how painful to hear, amongst high or low for, in his own words, he "flattered no flesh".

The details of John Knox's life should be well enough known to readers from the excellent biography of him written by MacRie and republished in 1960 by the Publications Committee of our own Church. Indeed we feel his life is aptly summarised in the foreward to that edition. "Knox was honoured to be a leader among the God-given instruments who achieved the great Scottish Reformation which had as its chief features and fundamental doctrines:— (1) The Supremacy of the Bible. (2) Justification by Faith. (3) Individual Responsibility and Freedom (within the authority of the Bible) of Conscience and Worship."

Though 400 years have passed since John Knox's death there is the same need today of the proclamation of the Gospel of which he was the chief means used to bring it back to Scotland. How true it was of him—"I'll speak thy Word to kings and I with shame shall not be moved." What need there is of this spirit in our day, of men who will speak the Truth to high and low without fear or favour. From first to last Knox followed this straight course, consistent, sincere and faithful in his sole objective. Is such a one not to be more admired than the time-serving characters who are the religious leaders in our day, who fear man rather than God, and who are so afraid of offending those in high estate that they have watered down the Gospel so that it is no Gospel? Even in his own day there were such time-servers. As one historian of his own time has said, "Who else in Scotland would have withstood Mary, Queen

of Scots, to her face, rebuked her, corrected her and sought to point the error which she stood for?" While credit is due to Knox for his faithfulness and fearlessness we must acknowledge that he did not stand in his own strength. He was but an instrument in the hand of the Lord, Who fitted and prepared him to bring His own counsels to pass. When writing or reading concerning John Knox let us remember the heritage that has been left us. This is the heritage of the Gospel of free and sovereign grace, of the whole counsel of God wherein is brought before us God's 'unspeakable gift'. Let us be on the watchtower in view of the many and powerful forces that are at work in our day to erode this heritage and rob us of it. May we by grace see it not primarily as of the Reformers or our forefathers but as proceeding from the God of all grace and value it as such, bearing in mind that he has said, "them that honour me I will honour."

Antinomianism and Popery

by C.H. Spurgeon

Do not tell me about your orthodoxy, do not come and tell me about your private prayers and secret piety; if your life be bad, you are bad altogether. A good tree cannot bring forth anything but good fruit, and a corrupt tree will bring forth corrupt fruit. There is no questioning that; what your life is, that you are—for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, so out of the abundance of the heart the man lives. It is all in vain for you to deprecate so strong a sentiment as this is, and to say, "The best of saints are fallible". I know they are; I know that even the best of men will sin, but they do not sin willingly; if they sin publicly, it will be but an exception; their lives, under the power of divine grace, will be holy, and pure and upright. I believe the devil likes Antinomianism, and says to the Romanist, "Preach on, you priest; I do not mind what you preach, for you will enter my dominions. You tell people that they may live in sin, and then procure absolution for a shilling! Fine doctrine that!" And he pats the priest on the back, and gives him all the assistance he can. Then comes the Antinomian minister into the pulpit. The devil says, "Ah, though he rails against the Pope of Rome, I like them both, the one as

much as the other." Then how he preaches! He begins preaching justification by faith alone, and he carries his argument a step too far, for he begins railing at good works, calls them legalists who think it is their duty to lead a holy life, and hints with a smirk and a smile, that the excellent conduct of a man is of little importance, so long as he believes the truth and goes to his chapel. "Ah," says the devil, "preach away; I love the two things, Antinomianism and Popery, for they are two of the finest quacks for canting souls." Again I say, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." By our works we are not to be justified, but still by our works we shall be judged, and by our works we shall be condemned. So saith the Scripture, and this we must receive.

(From Sermon on I John 3: 2.)

Posadh an Anama ri Croisd

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 347)

Caib. xi.

Beachdaich air nàdur a ghràidh neo-chriochnach agus ioraslachd Chrìosd do dh'anamaibh; agus a chomhfhurtachd agus an sòlas a tha aig creidmheach anns a phòsadh mhilis so.

Ann an sealladh na chaidh a chur an ceill faodaidh sinn gu maith sealladh sòlasach a ghabhail air gràdh Chrìosd agus air ior-aslachd, agus air comhfhurtachd agus sòlas na'n creidmheach, an dara aon agus an aon eile ro mhòr agus glòrmhor. Oh! air son Chrìosd a phòsadh anamaibh bochda Ris Féin, agus anamaibh a bhi air am pòsadh Ris, cia mòr gràdh an aon agus sonas an aon eile ann an so.

1. Cia chò mòr sa tha gràdh agus ioraslachd Chrìosd ann a bhi pòsadh anamaibh Ris Féin! An ath nì do E bhi air a dheanamh 'n a dhuine, agus bàsachadh air an son, C'ait an taisbean E gràdh agus ioraslachd is motha dhoibh na so? Tha, a measg mòran eile ghabhadh a bhi air an ainmeachadh, nithean a tha dearbhadh a ghràidh ann an so a bhi iongatach agus glòrmhor, dà nì; is e aon an dealachadh neochriochnach agus eucoimeas a tha eadar na buidhnean,

Esan agus iadsan; 's e'n aon eile an dluthachd do labhairt agus glormhorachd am aoinidh agus an daimh anns am bheil E dha'n toirt Dhà Féin; na dha sin bu mhath leam a thoirt fa'n ear.

1. Gabh beachd air an eadar-dhealachadh agus an eu-coimeas neo-chrìochnach a tha eadar Esan agus iadsan. Ciod an coimeas a tha eadar rìgh agus diol-déirichd? Ciod an coimeas eadar sneangan agus aingeal? Seadh, Gu neo-chrìochnach nì 's lugha na sin tha eadar Crìosd agus peacaich; agus gidheadh tha E ga'm pòsadh Ris Féin. Giod a their mì? Tha E'n dà chuid àrd agus mòr, tha sinne tàireil agus salach; tha Esan beannaichte agus glòrmhor, tha sinne truagh agus duaichnigh; tha Esan na Rìgh mòr; tha sinne na'r tràillean agus dìblidh, seadh 'na 'r tràillean dìblidh aig a pheacadh agus aig Sàtan. Agus gu suimeadh suas ann am beagan fhocal, is e Dia tha annsan agus 's e creutairean a tha annain-ne; seadh is e Dia neo-chrìochnach, fìor-ghlan agus naomh a tha ann-san, agus tha sinne do-labhairt neo-ghlan agus 'n ar créutairean mì-naomh. Oh! cia cho mor an eu-coimeas, agus gidheadh tha e dha'r posadh Ris Féin! Ciod e'n coimeas a tha eadar Dia agus an creutair? Tha'n creutair aig a chuid is fearr mar bhoinne beag de bhith, tha Dia na mhuir, na thobar, na chuan de bhith. Tha'n creutair ann am bith, agus cha'n eil aige ach beagan maith; ach, mar a tha *Bradwardin* a labhairt, tha Dia gu ro-neo-chrìochnach maith. 'S e nì tha'n crochadh a tha'n sa chreutair; tha bith a chreutair na bhith a tha'n crochadh; tha dearbh nàdur a chreutair na luidh gle mhòr ann an crochadh; ach tha Dia na bhith bith-bhuan agus neo-chlaohluidheach, air dha bhi bh'uaihte fein agus ann fein. Gu dearbh, tha na h-uile nì eile bh'uaihte fein, agus a tighinn bh'uaihte féin, agus dha ionnsuidh Féin mar a tha na Sgrìobtur an labhairt. Nis, air son Dhé a phòsadh a chreutair Ris Féin, agus a cheangal ann an ceangal pòsaidh Ris Féin, Oh ciod e'n gràdh, ciod e'n ioraslachd tha'n so! Agus gidheadh gràdh is motha na so tha Crìosd a nochadh; oir ciod e'n coimeas a tha eadar Dia neo-chrìochnach naomh agus creutair a tha iomlan peacach, salach, agus truailte? Tha'n t-astar a tha eadar Dia agus sinne mar chreutairean, mòr, ach an t-astar a tha eadar Dia neo-chrìochnach naomh agus sinne mar pheacaich, ann an seadh, do-labhairt nì 's motha. Is e ar dleasdanas, agus bu chor gu'm b'e ar n'aoibhneas, aithne bhi againn Air agus gu'n cumadh mid ar n'astar mar chreutairean ri Dia. Bhuineadh dhuinn a bhi deanamh gàirdeachais ann a bhi smuainteachadh cho neo-chrìochnach 's a tha E os ar ceann: ach 's e ar truaigh, agus bhuinneadh e

bhi toirt crith oirne ann a bhi smuainteachadh air ar n'astar peacach bho Dhia; an t'astar a tha'm peacadh, tha mì ciallachadh, agus a dh'aobhraich e eadar Dia agus sinne. Nis air son Dia a posadh chreutairean peacach Ris Fein: seadh, air son Dia cho neo-chriochnach naomh a bhi pòsadh anamaibh cho tur peacach Ris Féin, mar a tha chuid is fearr againn a thaobh nàduir; tha so'n a ghràdh agus 'n a ioraslachd is motha fathasd. O mhalairt iongantach! a deir aon dheth na diadhairean, ann a bhi labhairt air Criosd a bàsachadh air son a shluaigh, an Rìgh a bàsachadh air son seirbhisich. Dia air son duine, an Cruithneach air son a chreutair, a' neo-chiontach air son a chiontaich. An samhail sin faodaidh mì ràdh an so: O ioraslachd iongantach! an Rìgh a pòsadh trall; Dia an creutair; an neach fìor-ghlan agus naomh a pòsadh peacaich thruailte agus shalach. Is fìor e da-rìreadh gu'm bheil E deanamh naoimh dhiubh air Dhà pòsadh riubh; ach tha E dha'm faotainn na'm peacaich 'n uair a tha E 'n toiseach dha dheanamh na aimsir gràidh lhoibh. O Mollaibh an gradh so, agus an ioraslachd so!

2. Gabh beachd air an fhagasgachd do-labhair agus a ghlòrmhorachd a tha anns an aonadh agus an daimh anns am bheil E dha'n ghabhail dha ionnsuidh Fein. Mar a tha'n t-astar agus an eu-coimeas eadar na buidhnean cho do-labhairt mòr, mar sin tha'n t-aonadh agus an an daimh a dh'ionnsuidh am bheil E dha'n toirt ro dhluth agus ro ghlòrmhor. Tha'n t-aonadh eadar am fìonan agus na geugan dluth; tha'n t-aonadh eadar an ceann agus na buill dluth; tha'n t-aonadh agus an daimh eadar fear agus bean dluth; ach tha iad so uile na'n sgailean agus na'n samhlaidhean air an aonadh agus an daimh anns an toir Criosd creidmhidh dha ionnsuidh Fein, a dh'feumas mar sin a bhi ni's motha ni's dlùithe 'n a na h-uile. 'S e, da-rìreadh, mar a mhothaicheadh dha cheana, ni 's fhaig ann an dlùthas do'n aonadh do-sheachainte agus phearsata; seadh tha e tighinn cho dluth do'n aonadh is airde air bith, an t-aonadh eadar an t-Athair agus a' Mac, mar a tha sin air a chur sìos anns na Sgrìobhturan, leis na dearbh fhoclan gu'm bheil an t-aonadh, 's e sin a gabhail comhnuidh ann an aon a cheile. Seadh, tha Criosd Fein coltach ri thoirt cho dluth do'n aonadh mhor sin, is gu'm bheil E dha dheanamh 'n a eiseimpleir agus mar sin tha E guidhe air son a shluaigh, "Chum gu'm bi iad uile 'n an aon; chum mar a tha thusa, Athair, annam-sa, agus mise annad-sa gu'm bi iadsan mar an ceudna 'n an aon annainne; chum gu'n creid an saoghal gu'n do chuir thusa uat mi." Eoin 17: 21. Thugaibh fa'n ear: tha E guidhe air

son coimhlionadh aonaidh riutha mar mhullach agus iomlanachd an sonais; agus cha'n e mhain so, ach mar an ri sin a thig cho dluth do'n aonadh mhor sin a' tha eadar an t-Athair agus Esan is urrainear a bhreithneachadh. 'S e focal milis a tha aig aon dheth na diadhairean air na briathran so aig Criosd: Coid a ni is glormhora, tha e'g radh, na'n t-aonadh so? Coid e ni is airde, anam bhoichd, is urrain dhuit a bhì agad, na mhiannaicheas tu bhì agad, na so, gu'm biodh tu ann a'd' aon ris an Fhear-phosda? An t-aonadh sona, do-labhairt sona, thar na h-uile aonadh eile! Ann am focal, cha'n urrain creutairean a bhì air an toirt gu Criosd, nì motha is urrain iad gloir is motha bhì air a chur orra, na tha air a chur orra le bhi air an toirt do'n aonadh agus do'n daimh so dha. Cia mòr, uime sin, a dh' fheumas an gràdh agus an ioraslachd so aig Criosd do chreidmhich a bhi. Oh! air son Esan a bhi toirt a leithid sin dlùth dha Fein gu bhi dha'n deanamh 'n an aon ris Féin, dha'n tasgadh na Bhroilleach, dha' dheanamh Féin thairis dhoibh.

(Air a leantuinn)

Book Review

The Westminster Confession and Modern Society by F.H. Lee

This small booklet is in defence of the Westminster Confession, stating in the foreword that this Confession is 'the high water mark of the Reformed Creeds of Christendom'. In the booklet the author, Dr Lee, who is a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, seeks to show the relevance of the teaching of the Westminster Confession to modern society. The substance of the booklet was first delivered as a lecture to the Faculty and students of Faith Theological Seminary. On page 11 Dr Lee appears to advocate the view that this earth will be renovated and be the habitation for Christ and believers forever, as kings together. However, the more favourable view and that held by many is that we look for a new heaven and a new earth (cf II Peter 3: 10-13). Dr Lee suggests that 'perhaps a good argument could be advanced to replace obsolescent words and phrases in the Confession by more understandable current terminology'. I do not agree with him on this point. The language of the Confession is concise and most expressive of the

doctrines taught. Replacing words and phrases, in what is already understandable in the context, is fraught with dangers.

Otherwise I commend the booklet for the application which Dr Lee makes of the teaching of the Confession relative to different aspects of modern society. At a time when the Church of Scotland, among other bodies, is undermining the Westminster Confession of Faith, it is appreciated that an article should appear in defence of its relevance.

Issued by the Scottish Reformed Fellowship, copies are obtainable from Mr T. Frankland, 3 Montpellier Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 4NE. Retail price 8p.

M. MacI.

Reformation Translation Fellowship Letter

27th October, 1972.

The Clerk,
Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Synod.

Dear Mr Sinclair,

I write to convey the thanks of the Board of the RTF to the members of your Synod for the contribution of £150 already acknowledged. The support of your Church has meant so much to this work over the years.

We are glad to report that our work continues with some encouragements. As you are aware the recognition of Communist China by the Western powers has created unrest in Taiwan where our Far East headquarters are located. The Rev. Charles Chao continues to labour there. This summer he spent six weeks in a preaching ministry in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. This gave him a chance to weigh up the situation among the Chinese communities in South East Asia. He has come to the conclusion that Singapore would be an excellent alternative for the location of our literature work.

The translations continue to be issued at regular intervals. Publi-

cations for which the British RTF have given support in the last year include *Christian Fundamentals and Modern Theological Thought* by Charles Chao, *The Trinity* by Loraine Boettner, *The Visible Church* by J.G. Vos and second printings of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J.I. Packer. At the suggestion of the British Board Mr Chao is proceeding with a translation of *A Manual of Christian Doctrine* by Louis Berkhof. We will be meeting the translation costs of this volume as well as the printing ones.

We are grateful to the Editor of your magazine for including news of our work from time to time. It is also a source of satisfaction to us to have three office bearers of your Church on our Board.

You will be interested to know that in the providence of God both the Treasurer and myself, who have been residing in the London area, are moving to Scotland shortly. We hope to continue in the work and will inform you in due course of new addresses.

We ask your Synod to join with us in prayer for our brethren in Taiwan and for the future of the literature work in South-east Asia. We trust that in the over-ruling providence of God mainland China will be opened up for the reception of Gospel literature.

We send your Synod the warm thanks of our Board. We are conscious of the trust you have placed in us and assure you of our concern to see that the money is used faithfully to advance the Redeemer's kingdom among the Chinese peoples.

With kind personal regards,

Yours very sincerely,

J.M. Murray.

Rhodesian Mission News

by Mission Staff

I am writing in answer to your request for any items of Mission news. We are happy to know that the Mission in Rhodesia is specially considered as a topic for special prayer for revival of the Lord's Cause.

We have just received our first rain of this rainy season. We hope

that this will be followed by more rain so as to enable the people to plant and grow their crops, which for some provide the necessities of life; sometimes the former rains are not followed by the necessary latter rains. This past season was excellent for crops after several years of drought and hardship.

We also need the Holy Spirit to bless to ourselves and to the young and old here, the Word of God which is regularly read, preached and taught in our schools.

Isaiah 55: 10. "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

At Ingwenya Secondary School the External Examinations for our two classes of Form II will be over by early December. Out of the seventy pupils who will sit this examination we can only take thirty into our Form III so as to sit Cambridge School Certificate the following year. Later on (D.V.) we hope to enlarge so as to accommodate double streams of Forms III and IV.

Many of those boys and girls who have been sitting for the last two years or more under the constant sound of the Gospel will be going into an environment where they will have no true Gospel influences.

We do hope that our special need of teachers, two from overseas to replace Miss Graham and Miss Mackay; and two Africans will have been met before school reopens on 25th January 1973 (D.V.).

Nkai Communion is expected to be observed on the last Sabbath of January 1973 (D.V.). The people there have done necessary renovations to the Church. This was where Alexander Mpofu lived.

Sisters Turner and Cox at Mbuma Hospital miss the services of Dr Dunbar and Sister Coote who returned to U.K. recently; but they are managing to cope with the situation, though handicapped through shortage of trained nursing staff.

K.M.M.

If we are not secure from trials, we are secure from harm.

Cecil.

Notes and Comments

Closing Days of 1972

As the end of 1972 draws in sight it ought to be a sobering thought to us that we must yet give account to God as to how we have used or misused the time afforded us during the past year. A time of reckoning lies ahead when we shall be judged according to our works. How shall we stand in that day?—even with respect to the deeds done during 1972. Samuel at the end of his life could call all Israel to witness against him before the Lord if he had defrauded or oppressed anyone. Have we faithfully discharged whatever the Lord has laid to our hand to do? Have we done it as unto the Lord and not to men? Have we not to confess that in all things we come short of God's glory? In surveying the past we are bound to seek anew the sprinkling of the blood of the Redeemer in order that our sins which are many may be blotted out.

Royal Assent for Common Market Bill

The final step authorising Britain's entry into Europe was taken on 17th October 1972 when the Royal Assent to the European Communities Bill was announced. Let the praying people of our nation continue to plead for deliverance for our nation at this time. The Lord is still able to intervene, if that is His holy will, and prevent the irrevocable step being taken of entry into the European Common Market. He can make known to nations and men "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will".

A Romanist and the Common Market

The "English Churchman" quotes the following remarks by Mr Norman St John Stevas, Conservative MP for Chelmsford and an ardent Romanist, which appeared in the Roman Catholic newspaper "The Tablet":

"The Protestant underworld has attempted to exploit anti-papal emotions in Britain by pointing to the sinister overtones of the very nomenclature of the European Charter—The Treaty of Rome—and they have a point, although not quite the one they are seeking to make. As the European countries grow together and build

up joint social, economic and political interests, they are bound to draw closer together religiously as well. The unhappy rift which was opened at the Reformation with the rise of nationalism is likely to grow narrower as nationalism recedes into a wider European setting. It would be strange indeed if religion was the one matter to be left out of European Union."

The Roman Catholic Church, as can be seen from these remarks, is not blind to the advantages she can expect from Western European Union.

Europe and Northern Ireland

What is in store for Britain if her entry into the Common Market were to become an accomplished fact on 1st January 1973, is seen in an attack made by Mr Jack Lynch, Prime Minister of Eire, the day after the Royal Assent to the European Communities Bill was announced, accusing Britain of flaunting the spirit of the Treaty of Rome by her actions in Northern Ireland. It is clear that once within the Community pressure will be brought to bear on our Government to agree to a settlement in Northern Ireland favourable to the Roman Catholic minority and to Roman Catholic Eire.

Stirling University Students and the Queen

We deplore the disrespect shown by a section of the students at Stirling University to Her Majesty the Queen when visiting the University recently. The action of these students is symptomatic of the general decline in standards of courtesy and respect for authority. The indiscipline and lack of patriotic feeling so apparent in certain circles at the present time is not altogether to be wondered at when the leaders of the nation do so little to instill these principles in the people. It may become apparent to all before very long that the security and maintenance of our Protestant Throne is bound up with those Christian principles which are being progressively abandoned by a nation in spiritual and moral decline.

Astonishing Speech by former Secretary for Education

Mr Edward Short, deputy leader of the Opposition and former Secretary for Education, speaking to student teachers at Caerleon College of Education in Monmouthshire, declared that "the old, externally imposed discipline made children into hypocrites and

liars because, when the disciplinarian was absent, whether he was parent, teacher or policeman, there was no discipline". While accepting that there must be rules, he argued that they should be kept down to an irreducible minimum and that the gain from this was well worth a little marginal chaos. Mr Short also criticised the idea that the adult knows what subjects are best for the child. "The principal determinants of what a child truly learns," he said, "are his own interests and his own experience."

One does not need to search far to find the reason for the expression of such extreme views. Modern educational theorists, in common with innovators in other spheres, completely overlook the fact of man's fall in Adam. The theories they propound, consequently, are hopelessly out of touch with reality. May the Universities and Schools of Britain, suffering sufficiently already through the application of such theories, be spared a further infusion of modern educational theories lest complete chaos be the final result.

School Assembly

A survey on Religious Education in Primary Schools contains the suggestion that morning assembly in a primary school should no longer be an act of Christian worship. "The presence in many assemblies of children of other faiths perhaps makes this undesirable," the Report states. The idea seems to be that rather than give offence to persons of other beliefs the schools should abandon their Christian outlook and teaching and become wholly secular. How misguided people are who advocate such a course! Should a Christian nation bow to heathen sentiment in this way? Surely not! Is the ultimate outcome of our immigration policy and acceptance of people of alien beliefs in our land to be an abandonment of Christianity? If so will we not come under the same condemnation as the people of Jeremiah's day—"Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit."

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern: At Dingwall on Tuesday, 5th December 1972, at 2.30 p.m.

Western: At Kyle of Lochalsh on Tuesday, 27th February 1973, at 11 a.m.

Congregational Contributions

Congregational Treasurers should note that all contributions in respect of 1972 should be in the General Treasurer's hands by 6th January 1973, D.V. Contributions received after that date will be credited to 1973.

Congregational Financial Statements

In accordance with a Motion of Synod, a copy of Congregational Financial Statements should be sent to the Clerk of the Finance Committee, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, by 31st March 1973, D. V.

It would be particularly helpful if such Statements were sent by 28th February 1973.

Concerted Prayer

In connection with the proposal that the first Sabbath in January, April, July and October be given over in a special way to prayer for revival, it was agreed that in the issues of the F.P. Magazine for the months previous to those mentioned above space be given to provide our people with information on matters to be remembered in prayer.

The following topics for prayer may be helpful in addition to the items of Rhodesian Mission News included in this issue of the Magazine:—

1. Prayer for our own needs as individuals—that the Lord would graciously visit our souls with His quickening and reviving Spirit.

2. Prayer for our families—that the Lord would preserve the young of our families from the many snares and dangers to which they are exposed in this dark day, and that they might early be brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour.

3. Prayer for our communities—that the Lord's hand may be evidently seen in our communities in restraining vice and corruption and in advancing righteousness and truth.

4. Prayer for our own Church—that the Lord would bless and purify it at home and abroad, extend its witness to other parts of the earth, and prosper our Mission in Rhodesia by a spiritual reviving in that land.

5. Prayer for the nations of Europe—that Eastern and Western Europe may be delivered from the twin yoke of Popery and Communism and that the Gospel may yet prevail in those lands.

6. Prayer for all the nations of the earth—that the plea of David may be fulfilled: “Let the whole earth be filled with His glory.”

Magazine Subscriptions 1973

Postal subscribers to the magazine are reminded that the 1973 subscription is due in January D.V., and are asked not to send the subscription to the Publications Treasurer until they receive the usual form which will D.V. be posted with the January Magazine.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, F.C.M.A., 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 0HE, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

Sustentation Fund: Mrs M.R. MacKay, Bettyhill, £2; Wm. Sutherland, Skelpick, Bettyhill, £4; “Bath”, £20.

Home Mission Fund: Applecross Friend, £2 per Rev. D.A. MacL; Mrs M.R. Mackay, Bettyhill, £2; Wm. Sutherland, Skelpick, Bettyhill, £1.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: “The one hope for Rhodesia”. Londonderry postmark, £5; W. Bruce, Milton, Bower, £7; Wm. Sutherland, Skelpick, Bettyhill, £1; “Bath”, £20; Ontario Friends, \$40.

Aged and Infirm Ministers’ etc. Fund: M.G., £1.

College and Library Fund: M.G., £1; Ontario Friends, \$5.

Home of Rest Fund: M.G., £2; Ontario Friends, \$5; Mrs Mary MacRae, £2; Resident, £1; Mrs MacKenzie, Ardincaskan, £1; Mrs MacDonald, Lochcarron, £1; Mr and Mrs MacLeod, Achiltibuie, £6 per Rev. M. MacInnes.

The publications Treasurer, Mr R.W.M. MacKenzie, C.A., Hilton of Cadboll, Fearn, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Free Distribution Magazine Fund: A. MacLeod, Maryburgh, 40p; Mrs C. MacKintosh, Glasgow, 40p; Mrs M. MacDonald, Lochinver, £1 per Rev. A. MacA; F. Macrae, £2 per Miss Campbell Thurso per Rev. W.G.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Ontario Friends, £2.60.

The treasurers of the following congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Applecross: In loving memory of dear Parents and Aunts from the MacLean Family, £40 per C. Gillies; Mrs C. Macdonald, Cuaig, £4 per R.W.M.M.; both for Sustentation Fund.

Bracadale: Mrs Graham, Uig, £3 for Congregational purposes; M.G. Raasay, £1 for Communion expenses; Fort William Friend, £10 for Church Renovation fund; all per D. MacAskill; Anon., £1 for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund; Anon., £8 for Church Renovation fund; both per MacAskills, Carboist; Collecting Cards, £521.50 per D.J. Morrison and Callum Nicolson.

Dumbarton: “In memory of a loving sister” £5 per W.D.F.; Mrs A. Hendrie, Glasgow, £3; Miss M.C. Forrest, Glasgow, £1; “In memory of a beloved sister-in-law, Mrs C. MacDonald, Bellsmyre, from C.M., £10; envelope in plate, £20; Two Friends, Glendale, £10; all for Dumbarton Manse Fund.

Flashadder: Mrs MacLeod and Family, Edinbane, £5; “In treasured memory of our loved ones”, Friend of the cause, £5; both per D. McKay for Church repair fund.

Fort William: “Friend”, Glasgow £2 for Church Funds; “Friend”, Muir of Ord, £5 for mini-bus; both per Treasurer; Angus Gillies, Norway, £5 for Sustentation Fund, and £5

for car fund; "Friend", £2 for Sustentation Fund; last three per Rev. J.A. McDonald.

Gairloch: Estate of late K. MacKenzie, Alberta, Canada, £2,037.41 per Executors; Anon., Gairloch, £50; both for congregational purposes; Friend Tolsta, £1; J.S. Green, London, £1; Mrs Duncan, Gairloch, in memory of Mother, £7; these three for Sustentation Fund per Rev. A. MacDonald; Mrs Munro, Invermorris, £2 per T. Macleod for Communion expenses; Friend, Applecross, £2 for distribution of Bibles per Rev. A. Macdonald; Mr Anthony Mackenzie, Greenock, £5 per T. Macleod; Miss Morrison, Croft, Poolewe, £4; M. Mackenzie, Strath, £1; both per K. Maclean; I.H., Strath, £1; last four for car fund.

Greenock: Interested, Kames, £3; Robert H. Conway, Bangor, Down, N.I., £5; Friend, £5; both per Rev. I. MacLeod; all for congregational purposes; A Greenock Friend, £5 per Treasurer for Communion Expenses; Envelope in collection plate £20 for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund.

Kinlochbervie: Mr and Mrs Tocher, Fraserburgh £10 per Mr E. Morrison for Church funds.

Kyle/Plockton: Miss D.N., £5 for Sustentation fund; Miss D.N. £5; A Friend, £2; both per Treasurer for Kyle Building fund.

Lochcarron: Two Friends, £5; In Loving Memory, £5; Lochcarron Friend, £5; Two Kishorn Friends, £5; Kishorn Friend, £2; Shildaig Friend, £1 per Rev. J.W.R.; In loving memory of our Elder, Duncan Macrae and Mrs Macrae, £10.

Lochinver: The late Mrs MacLennan, Brackloch, Lochinver, £52.03 per M. MacDonald.

London: A.N. Glasgow, £5 for London Congregation General Purpose Fund.

Portree: M.M., £5 in Church plate for Church Property maintenance fund; Anon., Braes, £3 per F.M. for Church bus; Anon., £5 for Portree Church bus.

Raasay: Friend, Broadford, £5; Friend, Uig, £2; A. MacLeod, Scalpay, Harris, £5; Friend, Inverarish, £2; all per J.M. MacLeod for Manse extension; Friend, Raasay, £2.50; Friend, Portree, £2; both for Manse extension; Mrs MacRae, Osaig, £5 for Communion expenses; these three per Treasurer; Two Friends, Raasay, £6 each for Communion expenses per Rev. D. Nicolson.

Seilabosh, South Harris: Friend, Luskentyre, £1 for Sustention Fund and £1 for Home Mission Fund; Mr I.C. Ross, Seilabosh, £1 for Home Mission Fund; all per D.J. MacLennan.

Shildaig: Friend, Inverness, £5 towards cost of cleaning memorial to Rev. Donald MacDonald, Applecross, per A. MacLennan

Staffin: Two Skye Friends, £10 for Congregational purposes per J. McD.

Stornoway: Two Portree Friends, £5 for Foreign Mission.

Strath: Friend, Staffin, £1 per D. MacKay for Broadford Manse; M.M.D., £8 for Broadford Manse, £20 for Sustentation Fund, £7 for Foreign Mission (transport) per John MacLean.

Tomatin: Wellwisher, £1 per D.C. Mackintosh for Sustention Fund.

Uig, Isle of Lewis: Envelope in Plate, £3; Anon., £30 per M.S., both for Congregational purposes.

Ullapool: Mr and Mrs D. Macleod, Culnacraig, £4 for Car Fund, £6 for Ballifeary Home of Rest, £2 for Dominions and Overseas for Italy; J. and M. Macleod, East Polbain, £10 for Sustentation Fund and £2 for Car Fund per Rev. M. MacInnes.

Aberdeen: Anonymous, Ullapool, £10 per W. McK.; Miss M. Morrison, Poolewe, £5 per R.W.M.M., both for Aberdeen Manse Fund; Anon, £10 per Aberdeen plate for Sustentation Fund.

Glendale: D.M.I., £5 per Rev. J.C. for Sustentation Fund.

Oban: Mr D. MacDonald, Meinen, Tayinloan, Argyll, £5 per Rev. M. MacSween for Sustentation Fund.