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Thy Word is Truth

One of the first lessons we learn as children is to distinguish the Bible from all other books. We are taught to believe that the Bible is the Word of God and that the Bible is true. This teaching will have been confirmed as we grew to years of discretion by the place given to the Bible by the Church of God. We could not but recognise that the Church regarded it as the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God. Here was no ordinary book, but one acknowledged by the Church to have divine authority. Acquaintance with the Word of God itself would have further established us in the view that this book was from God; that it was indeed a divine revelation. The contents of the Scriptures most certainly confirm the uniqueness of the Bible.

It is clear that the arguments in favour of the Bible being the Word of God are compelling and irresistible, so we would expect that intellectual assent to the doctrine of the infallibility of Scripture would be easily won. It is evident, however, that many do not regard the Bible as infallibly true. Why is this? It is not because of lack of evidence that the Scriptures are the very Word of God. It can only be accounted for, then, on the ground of wilful prejudice in the mind of man to that which constitutes a divine revelation. The same opposition which is found in the heart of Satan to the Word of God is found also in the heart of man. "Yea, hath God said?" is no new manifestation but one which appeared early in the world's history.

While men may be competent enough to evaluate the worth of other books, it is not so with the Bible. The natural opposition to the truth in the heart of man disqualifies him from giving an unbiassed judgment on the Word of God. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. Our heart must be opened to receive the truth before we can cordially give our consent to the truth and to the Bible as the Word of God.

It is plain — as the Confession of Faith states — that "we may be

moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture." The Confession also declares that "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby the Holy Scripture doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God." This, however, is not enough to ensure infallible conviction of the truth of God's Word. The Confession of Faith goes on to state what else is required: "Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Holy Scripture, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." It is the work of God, the Holy Spirit, to seal conviction of the truth upon the souls and consciences of men. It is when He, the Holy Spirit, comes to regenerate the dead soul that the sinner is first of all brought in reality to the discovery of the Scriptures as the very Word of God. It is when the Word of God comes not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Ghost that the sinner realises that "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12. It is then that the sinner realises that to fight against the Word of God is to fight against God. The sinner is convinced then, and only then, that in Moses and the Prophets and the Apostles alike the God of Heaven is speaking. The sinner recognises, too, that in them the great Prophet of the Church is speaking and that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. How solemn an experience it is for the sinner to have the Word of God as the voice of God in his conscience. It is a word, a voice, that cannot be gainsaid. To run against it is to run upon the thick bosses of the bucklers of the God of heaven. He is absolutely assured that if he will not hear Moses and the Prophets neither would he be convinced though one rose from the dead.

We need not wonder at the many attacks made upon the Word of God. It began with Satan in the garden of Eden and has continued with his seed ever since. Such opposition will continue so long as the world lasts. What we may be infallibly assured of from the Word of God is this — either the truth of the Word of God will be confirmed in our everlasting deliverance from death and hell, or it will be vindicated in our everlasting condemnation. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11.

How solemn it is for all who trifle with the Word of God and for all who oppose it. Let us not be moved by such opposition. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20.

Studies in the Life of the Apostle Paul

By Rev. A. M. Cattanach, M.A.

Second Series

XIII Lystra, Iconium and Antioch Revisited

At the close of our last study, we left the Apostles resting at Derbe after their stormy passage through Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. Though glad of the respite, they are still actively engaged in their labour of love, preaching the Gospel to their fellow-sinners in the strength of the Lord. But now, the time has come for them to return to base: they have reached their journey's end, outward bound, from the Syrian Antioch, whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had undertaken to do. Much of that grace had already been given on the outward journey and we have seen some of the evidences in difficult circumstances. We could not, in view of all that they have passed through, be really surprised, had they now chosen to return direct, by the quickest and safest route. Instead of doing so, however, we read in **Acts, Chapter 14 at verse 21**, "... they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium and Antioch . . ." How much more is involved than might appear, at first sight, in these simple words! To return again to such cities — 'trouble spots' of the Roman world of the day indeed, where riots were very easily sparked off — was no easy task to undertake; to revisit the very scenes where they had, so recently, experienced the full force of the 'wrath of man' and persecution for the Master's sake, would require no small measure of courage and determination; but we shall see, in our present study, that this is exactly what they did — and did right nobly too, as befitted good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Indeed, in military language, as is perhaps suggested in the word translated, 'returned again', they heard the Master's divine command, "About turn!", and so they set their faces once more to

the same route, returning to the home base via Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia. Surely it is not without significance that the record of the homeward journey is so different from that of the outward one. This time, we have no record of opposition or persecution from enemies — in itself a silent testimony to the power of God to set restraints to the wrath of man — but rather, a record of spiritual consolation for the brethren in these cities, and ecclesiastical consolidation of the churches established in these centres.

As we turn our attention a little more closely to these matters, may these few opening remarks encourage all true disciples, especially the Lord's own sent messengers, to persevere to the end, in the service of Jesus, who promises to be with them always, and in all circumstances.

The words which form the basis of this particular study are found within the short compass of two verses, and yet they cover the same extent of ground to which is devoted so much of this chapter up to this point, and the whole of the previous chapter. How much time the apostles spent in these cities is not recorded but enough is left on record to show us that such time was well spent. We read that in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch the Apostles spent their time, **"confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained then elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."** Acts 14: 22, 23.

These verses show us that the Apostles were engaged, during those days, in a two-fold activity

- (a) **That of giving spiritual instruction to the new converts, and**
- (b) **That of organising the churches on a permanent basis.**

In connection with the first of these activities, both of which were necessary in their own place, three matters present themselves for our attention meantime.

Firstly: The Apostles confirmed the souls of the disciples.

This in itself implies the need for such a gracious work: the disciples had but newly come to the knowledge of the sweet truths of the everlasting Gospel, and doubtless were subject to many temptations in connection with their hope of salvation, and also exposed to the attacks of the enemies of the Cross, among whom they lived. The Holy Ghost used the ministry of these two servants of the Lord, Paul and Barnabas, to counteract the above, and thus left for succeeding generations a noble example to all true followers of the Apostles in the ministry of reconciliation. **'Confirming the souls of the disciples'** is still an integral part of the Christian ministry. It is instructive to notice that the emphasis lies in confirming the **souls** of the disciples — their minds,

their hearts, their spirits, their whole being spiritually, would seem to be implied in the use of this all-embracing word. The purpose of the present ministry of Paul and Barnabas was to strengthen, under God's hand, the brethren, in these parts, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, a phrase later to be used by Paul as part of his express desire for the church at Ephesus. The word used here, 'to confirm', means, literally, 'to fix upon' something, with the sense of fixing securely or permanently. It is used in various ways with different shades of meaning, and here one feels that it is used to convey the idea of the souls of the disciples being fixed securely and permanently upon the one foundation laid in Zion. The Apostles thus sought to encourage the brethren by causing them to rest more and more upon the only solid foundation for eternity — Christ and Him crucified. As they would hear again the great doctrine of the faith expounded to them, in the power of the Holy Ghost, so would their hearts and minds be centred more and more upon them, to the mutual strengthening of each one of them. It was thus that they would then be able to stand firm against all opposition. They might then take up the words of the Psalmist in **Psalm 57** as the expression of their own feelings, where we find him using the Old Testament equivalent to this New Testament phrase — "**My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise**" verse 7. May it be ours to know something of that blessed fixedness of heart, in things spiritual and eternal, in a day when men have largely lost such tenacity of spirit. The Lord remains unchangeable and it is to Him we must look for this spirit of steadfastness.

Secondly, we read, the Apostles **exhorted them to continue in the faith**. Here again we meet with words familiar to all serious readers of the New Testament. The Lord Jesus Himself had instructed the people in similar terms, and now His ambassadors were seeking to do the same. The need for such exhortation is writ large in the pages of this book itself, and it is over against such a background as has already been brought before us, that we contemplate this aspect of their ministry of reconciliation. The Apostles knew the dangers were real: having confirmed the souls of the disciples by word and precept, by prayer and example, they now desired them to '**continue in the faith**' — in other words, to remain steadfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord assured of the fact that the faith, which Jude in his epistle was later to call '**the faith once delivered unto the saints**' was itself steadfast, immoveable and secure. They are hereby exhorted to abide in the doctrines of the faith, as the Apostles had delivered them unto them, for in this way alone could they stand fast in the midst of an evil world, around them and within them. Temptations to fall away were many, attractions to return to their former heathen way of life varied, but yet, if they would rejoice in their new found possession

— a goodly hope through grace — then they must persevere therein unto the end. One of the main ways in which they could do this was to continue in the faith, by dwelling in the doctrines of the Word, as in their own homes, by following on to know the Lord more fully, as One altogether worthy to be served. In this call to ‘continue’, there is a note, both of encouragement and warning: encouragement, in that therein lay the path of happiness for them, forasmuch as it had been written long before by the inspired Psalmist of Israel,

**“Bless’d is the man whose strength thou art
in whose heart are thy ways” (Psalm 84:5.);**

and warning, in that they might realise the danger of turning back to perdition, and therefore that they might use all the means at their disposal in the armoury of the faith to enable them, by God’s grace to sing, again in the words of the same sweet Psalmist of old,

**“So henceforth we will not go back,
Nor turn from thee at all.” (Psalm 80:18.)**

May we see anew the need for such continuance in the faith. Ours is a dark day indeed; on every hand, men are turning back, or turning aside, from that same faith once delivered to the saints. May our ears be opened to hear this call again, first addressed to the new disciples of the Lord Jesus in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.

Thirdly, we read that the Apostles taught ‘**that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God**’.

This was the third element in their spiritual instruction — a facet of the truth of the Gospel most apposite to the situation and to the circumstances of the time. Surely none had forgotten the stoning at Lystra, the riots at Iconium and Antioch, and the whole atmosphere of tension and enmity, coupled with fear which had characterised the Apostles’ work in these parts on the outward stage of their first missionary journey! Certainly not Paul and Barnabas anyway. However, in case others might have forgotten or tended to look upon the events as isolated incidents, they are here reminded that all this is very much an integral part of true discipleship, just as the Master Himself had foretold; had He not told His own in the upper chamber, ‘**In this world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world**’? (John 16:33.)

Now the same message is reiterated to the early church. While the word ‘**tribulation**’ covers many things, no doubt in the minds of both Apostles and people here, the thought of persecution for the Gospel’s sake was uppermost. The fact that the word itself is strengthened by the addition of the adjective ‘**much**’ would seem to confirm this, by reminding them of recent experiences of persecution (as recorded earlier, in this and the previous chapter) and seeking to link this with the

hope set before them of the glory yet to come. As with the great Head of the Church Himself, so, in measure, with the members also, the 'sufferings' are linked with the 'coming glories.' How sweet, then, for them, to contemplate these tribulations as so many stepping stones on the pathway to glory, or as so many avenues leading to the portals of the heavenly kingdom; or yet again, to change the metaphor (and introduce a thought inherent in the very word 'enter'), as so many doors or gateways by which to enter the Father's house of many mansions! Some were indeed to find, as had Stephen before, that 'tribulation' of this sort, in the last analysis, would prove to be for them the very gate of heaven. But even if this were not the case, the principle enunciated here is taught throughout the Scriptures, and covers many fields — tribulation of varying degrees of intensity and variety will be the common lot of God's children, and while often they will be overwhelmed by reason of them, they ought to give the more earnest heed to such an injunction as this, and seek grace to view them as but stepping stones, preparatory means to achieve the cherished goal in view — **'to enter into the kingdom of God'** and so to hear the sweet words of the Master whom thus they humbly serve, as He says unto them at last, **'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'** (Matthew 25:34.)

One final point before we leave this section of our study: it is instructive to remember that one of those who thus exhorted the disciples was himself called **'the son of consolation'** — a word suggestive of the very opposite of tribulation. Was it not the fact, however, that being himself in tribulation, he was the more able, therefore, to give that necessary consolation to those who would also be in like tribulation, for the Master's sake? Indeed, though Barnabas had this truth embodied in his very name, could not Paul also bear witness to the same truth, as he did in later years, writing to the church at Corinth, in the opening address of his second letter to them, **"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble (the same word in Greek), by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God . . ."** (2 Corinthians 1:3 ff.) It is also interesting to see the insertion of the first person pronoun into a construction otherwise entirely taken up with the third person — **"that WE must . . ."** Although what are called, among scholars, the **'We passages'** of the Acts do not strictly begin until Chapter 16, by which is meant that Luke himself, the inspired historian, when using this form, intimates that he himself was present, in whichever situation is being described, yet, nevertheless here itself, we feel that Luke, while certainly not there with the Apostles in person, is indeed there in spirit, and conveys this to us,

through the Holy Ghost, by the insertion of this personal touch, associating himself entirely with his brethren in their teaching and so saying, as it were, Amen. May we be taught likewise to put our personal Amen to such a word as this.

We come now to consider briefly the **second branch of their activities** in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch at this time, and here again we find three points mentioned by the inspired historian, which are worthy of a few thoughts.

Firstly, we read that the Apostles "**ordained them elders in every church.**" This point is the first reference to ecclesiastical organisation in the wake of missionary activity in this region of the ancient world, and, indeed, the first reference to such work outside of Judaea itself, up till this period in the history of the Early Church. It can be viewed as a divinely-instructed effort, on the part of Paul and Barnabas, to consolidate their labours in the Gospel, and establish in these regions, churches organised according to a specific pattern. Having sought to establish them in the doctrines of the faith, they now proceed to the field of church government, and so provide us with a pattern for future generations. Although nothing specific is told us of the duties of these elders, in this particular verse, we may rest assured that they were to be men in whom would be found the qualifications, specified in other portions of the New Testament. The word which is here used to signify their ordination to this office, is an interesting one. Its literal meaning is '**to stretch out one's hand**'; then it came to be used in a technical sense of **voting in the Athenian ecclesia** or assembly of the people, **by stretching out the hand**, and finally, to mean simply, **appoint or ordain**, with or without a vote, to particular offices, secular or ecclesiastical. It is in this final sense that it is used here, and we have thus an interesting insight into the institution of a form of church government, which is best preserved to this day, in the Presbyterian Church. It may or may not be relevant to this original meaning and use of the verb so translated here, to remind ourselves of the method of voting among ourselves in connection with ordination of office-bearers in the church.

The **second matter** to which reference is here made is that the Apostles **prayed with fasting**. They did not approach the solemn work of ordaining elders in every church, without seeking to do so in the spirit and atmosphere of prayer, to which, in accordance with regular Apostolic practice, is also attached the specific exercise of fasting. Without entering into the interesting question of fasting in connection with prayer, under both economies of redemption, suffice to say that we are here taught how everything which concerns the Cause of Christ ought to be performed in the spirit of prayer, of confession of sin and utter unworthiness, of complete dependence upon the grace and mercy

of God, and in the infinite merits of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May we all seek to learn the true place for prayer in our daily lives, and especially, in our devotional exercises and corporate worship.

Finally, we see that the Apostles here commend the brethren of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch to the Lord, on whom they believed. Before they depart, then, they leave them in safe-keeping, even in the hands of the Great Shepherd of the flock Himself, believing that, as He said Himself, no one could pluck them from His hand. This last phrase in the verse bespeaks a parting blessing for the churches of that central plain of Asia Minor. Paul and Barnabas must travel on, but there is One who can remain with them, One who has been made exceeding precious, as unto such as do believe. It is unto Him, then, that Paul and Barnabas commend them — hand them over for safe-keeping, as the verb may properly signify. They could ask no greater favour for these disciples than that the Lord would receive them, in answer to their desire and prayer for them, into His own protection and care. Whatever trials might yet await them in the future, no ill could befall them if they were thus found dwelling safely under the shade of the Almighty. This is the burden of their desire for the brethren and it provides us with the only sure dwelling place still, for all who love the Lord and seek to serve Him in this world.

May we have that exercise of soul for our fellow-believers, if we are of the number of such as have been brought out of darkness into His marvellous light, and also for ourselves and for all whom we love. We can ask for no better gift than to be found among the number of the redeemed.

Paul and Barnabas now pass on and make their way down to the coast, preaching the Word as they go. They are never idle; their journey took them through the region of Pisidia, through Pamphylia, and Perga, down to Attalia, on the sea coast, where they were to sail back to Antioch in Syria, but wherever they went, they carried with them the message of the Cross. As they slowly made their way on this stage of the homeward journey, they ceased not to show forth the unsearchable riches of God's grace in His own dear Son. May it be our happy lot to follow, however unworthily, and however far off, their noble example in this respect.

Our present study began with the Apostles turning round and setting off for home on the hazardous and difficult route via Lystra, Iconium and Antioch — the Lord did not leave them without tokens for good. At His command they had gone forth, and in the path of obedience, they found His peace and blessing. In like manner, we, too, may find that peace which passeth all understanding, and the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich for time and for eternity.

The Fruits of the Spirit

by Rev. M. MacInnes, Ullapool

2. JOY

We have already seen with regard to this passage of Scripture, the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, that the Apostle is writing of the contrast between 'the works of the flesh' and the 'fruits of the Spirit'. In continuing our study of the 'fruits of the Spirit' it is well to keep before our minds that the work of the Spirit is necessary in salvation, and accordingly if we are to bear these fruits it must be by the Spirit of God working graciously within us. We are encouraged to ask for the Holy Spirit to that end.

The particular fruit to which we are now to direct our attention is 'joy', and as it is produced by the Holy Spirit it must be holy, pure, and desirable. Joy is something for which we naturally look, making choice of happiness rather than sorrow. However, the Bible teaches us that man is 'born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward' and therefore true joy cannot belong to us as sinful creatures. There is much joy among men apart from the saving work of the Holy Spirit, but the Bible shows also that 'the laughter of the fool is as the crackling of thorns under a pot'. The important matter, therefore, is to distinguish between the joy which is of God's Spirit, and that which is only shallow, noisy and transient. Because there is sorrow in conviction of sin, and because there is that 'worldly joy' which is deceitful, Christians are in danger of thinking that it is wrong for them to be joyful. There are many things in the world around, and within the believer, which will cause him to mourn over sin. Nevertheless, there is such a sufficiency in Christ of divine grace and help that the believer has more reason for joy than for sorrow. The Apostle Paul had to say, 'O wretched man that I am'; but he could follow it with thanks to God through Jesus Christ. In whatever measure we are lacking in spiritual joy we are lacking in the mercies of the Covenant of Grace. The joy which is the fruit of the Spirit clearly has reference to Christ, so that Peter says in his First Epistle, Ch. 1 v. 8: 'Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory'.

If we would examine our joy, as to its nature, causes and effects, we would do well to look to what the Bible says on the subject, and to see there particularly what is told us of Jesus Christ with regard to joy. Concerning the Lord Jesus, we are specifically told that He was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief'; and in the course of His sojourn on earth He said 'my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even

unto death'. The sorrow with which He was familiar was peculiar to Him in that state of humiliation. There is no sorrow like unto His sorrow, wherewith the Lord afflicted Him in the day of His fierce anger. The Bible shows, however, that the Lord Jesus was not a stranger to rejoicing. In Luke 10:21 we read that 'Jesus rejoiced (exceedingly) in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth . . .'. Here we see Jesus delighting in the will of God, and thanking Him for the way of salvation by grace. This shows us the foundation of true spiritual joy. Jesus rejoiced in the will of the Father, as Representative of the Godhead, and showed His acquiescence saying, 'Ever so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight'. If we would have true joy we must come to be at one with God's will for man's salvation, even as Jesus was at one with it. There are other parts of Scripture to which we might refer to show the joy which belongs to Christ, e.g., Luke 15:5: 'when he hath found it (the lost sheep), he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing'; and Hebrews 12:2: 'who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross', both passages having reference to Jesus Christ's experiences in grace and glory respectively. This shows us that believers may have spiritual joy in God's merciful dealings with them in grace here and in glory hereafter. The work of the Holy Spirit is to bring the sinner to Christ Jesus, so that he may joy in God by trusting in Jesus Christ. David said in Psalm 43:4; 'Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy'. There can be no source of joy comparable with God, because all that we can obtain from Him by His grace is to our advantage. He is the fountain of all that is good, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. No sinner ever lost by seeking satisfaction and joy in God. That we might attain to that joy we need faith in Jesus Christ. Apart from trust in Jesus Christ we remain under the sentence of condemnation; but, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit says in Psalm 5:11, 'let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice'. The joy of the believer is that of a soul to which has been made known God's love. It is not only the reconciling of enemies by the death of God's Son, but the imparting of joy to those thus reconciled (Romans 5:10, 11). 'And not only so, but we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ'.

Believers often lose their joy because they become 'self-centred' or 'situation-centred' rather than 'Christ-centred'. When this happens we become more conscious of our needs than we are of God's provision. We can never have Jesus Christ too much in our thoughts or expectations. The more we have of Jesus in our thoughts, by the Spirit of God, the more reason we will see for thanking God for His unspeakable gift, and for rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. God has made known that, through Jesus, believers come to have pardon of their sins, that God is just and the Justifier of the ungodly who

believe in Jesus. Such a discovery of truth meeting with mercy, of righteousness and peace kissing one another, is the finding of a treasure for the which a man will with joy sell all that he has, that he might buy it. If we have the saving work of the Holy Spirit, we are willing to part with all that might come between us and Jesus Christ. With joy we part with sinful practices and seek to live for Christ. Where, in the strength of divine grace, this is done, the Lord makes the person joyful. This is illustrated in Ezra 6:21, 22, where we read about the children of Israel who had come again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen, that 'the Lord had made them joyful'. Giving place to sin is not compatible with joy in God, so that we need not be surprised if our experience of joy in the Lord is limited when we harbour sin in our lives.

Believers may also have joy with regard to their present circumstances. When all appears favourable it is easy for us to rejoice, but even then we need God's grace that we might acknowledge Him as the One who gives us richly all things to enjoy. It is when circumstances appear contrary that there is particularly a testing time. No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. If we are to benefit from every providence we must have the proper mind toward God and His dealings; we must come to see that the Redeemer has an all-wise purpose in what He does. There is a divine order in which God makes all things work together for good to such as love Him, to such as are the called according to His purpose. For this Peter and John could rejoice 'that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name' Acts 5:41.

A large measure of the joy of the believer lies in the prospect of heaven. In Psalm 16:11 we read 'at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore'; and the Apostle Paul in Romans Ch. 5 went forward from justification and peace, through the Lord Jesus Christ, to rejoicing 'in the hope of the glory of God'. The more our thoughts dwell on, and our conduct conforms to, the things of heaven through the Lord Jesus Christ, the greater will be our joy in the prospect of entering into the joy of the Lord. The joy of heaven consists in being with Christ, of being made like unto Him, and of being delivered for ever from sin and from death. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away".

Such a precious possession as joy in God, which is to the soul a foretaste of heaven, must be cared for amidst many things of an opposite nature. Sin, Satan, and self would rob you, believer, of every spiritual blessing, but God has so provided that joy may be nourished and increased in your soul's experience. Jesus has shown us how we

may come to enjoy this favour — by His word. 'These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full'. John 15:11. In the Scriptures God shows the riches of His grace, and, through them, we, by the blessing of God's Spirit, may rejoice as they do who find great spoil. (Psalm 119:162).

'Let Israel in his Maker joy,
and to him praises sing:
Let all that Zion's children are
be joyful in their King.' (Psalm 149:2.)

Obituary

The late Dr Peter A. Macleod, Stornoway

The Courts of the Church have already put on record their deep sense of loss at the passing of this outstanding Christian, but it would seem appropriate to put a little about him on permanent record in the pages of the Free Presbyterian Magazine.

Peter was seventh in a family of eight, born to Norman and Annie Macleod. Norman was one who served his Master well in his own day, and there is no doubt that Peter was a child of many prayers.

That the Holy Spirit had from time to time from his earliest years been striving with him we are sure, but time and again these strivings were stifled, and he was well into his thirties before he came under real soul concern.

His life until then was such that his desires and affection were to the world and the things of the world. He had been made a burden to many at a Throne of Grace, indeed some had been exercised for him for many years, and when the Spirit began dealing effectually with him what joy it must have given them to see former companions given up, and his energies now directed into channels and avenues which indicated a real interest in matters which concerned his soul's welfare. For several months Peter was being taught the exceeding sinfulness of sin, a lesson which we believe like all the Lord's people he continued to learn more and more throughout life's journey. Hitherto he had known remorse on many occasions, indeed could understand in measure what sin was doing to himself, but now his burden was his sin in the presence of an infinitely holy God, his sin against that God who had so blessed him in giving him his portion amongst every Gospel privilege, and yet despite his misery and darkness, the Holy Spirit was

keeping to him the wonder of redeeming grace that "There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared".

It was while reading Spurgeon's sermon on the "Cripple at Lystra" on a Sabbath afternoon in his home, that God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shone in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. A note in his diary for that day reads "Born Again", and we believe that that day Peter "walked and leaped" and praised God.

From then onwards he devoted himself whole-heartedly to his new found Master and His Cause. Like another he could say, "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God", and continued to manifest this spirit throughout his life. His excellently trained voice was now tuned to the service of his Master, so that his grandfather, his father and himself are on record as outstanding precentors in the church. After professing, his pastor in Stornoway, to whom he was deeply attached, soon began to ask him to take services, and he threw himself whole-heartedly into this work. He had an excellent mind, read widely, and studied his Bible diligently. His doctrine was sound and his preaching most acceptable. Our late friend had his own share of trials, and, that his faith might be tried, knew the furnace of affliction in the measure that the Lord willed necessary for him.

He had a particular affection for the ministry of the Church, counting many of our ministers his near friends, seeking to share their burdens and esteeming them highly for their work's sake.

The Holy Spirit used Peter in the awakening and conversion of sinners but it was as a feeder of the flock that he had a particular usefulness.

An excellent conversationalist, he enjoyed nothing better than the fellowship of the Lord's people on the Mount of Ordinances, in his home, and in the homes of those likeminded with himself.

He could use his pen to good effect and those who received help from him in this way, when seeking the Saviour or distressed in soul and in darkness, can put an high estimate on the value of his letters at such times. Like other Christians on this side of eternity he claimed no perfection for himself. If he had a fault it was, no doubt, bound up as is often the case, with the area in which his usefulness was greatest. Sometimes he would speak hastily and be very sorry for it afterwards. Oftentimes at family worship and also in public, this petition was used by him: "Set thou a watch before my mouth, keep of my lips the door". If there were occasions when he hurt others we believe he hurt himself more.

He loved children and was Superintendent of the Stornoway Sabbath School for many years. He loved the Truth and insisted that his class be word perfect in learning the Word.

As an elder in the Stornoway congregation he loved his ministers, was loyal to them and was a brother greatly beloved in the Courts. His liberality to the Cause was outstanding. Unmarried, he had a special care for his widowed sister and family in Stornoway.

He recovered from a serious operation in 1961 and for nine years gave useful service in his profession and the Cause of Christ, but towards the end of 1969 he relapsed and in April 1970 passed away to be for ever with the Lord.

His funeral to Sandwick Cemetery, one of the largest ever seen in Stornoway, was attended by hundreds of his fellow-islanders as well as many Mainland friends, testifying to the high esteem in which he was held.

Our sympathy is extended to his surviving sisters and their families. May they all choose Peter's God to be their God.

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come". Isaiah 57:1.

H.G.

The Best Versions*

Selected from the 1904 Annual Report of the Trinitarian Bible Society

One of the resolutions at the 1904 Annual Meeting pledged the Society to "the circulation of the best versions which can be obtained", and the Report contained the following statements —

"How infinitely important, then, is it, that the Bibles we send out should contain (as far as we can assure it) only and exactly what He has said, and what He can speak of and acknowledge as "My Words" . . . We ought to leave nothing undone in order to secure that every translation shall be as near to human perfection as human capability can make it."

"Satan's first words were, "Yea, hath God said?" and the answer was given in a **false version** of what God had said. In that answer there was an **omission** from, and an **addition** to, and an **alteration** of what God had said. These are the only three ways in which the Word of God can be adulterated, and these are the three marks which have characterised all false versions of that Word from that day to this . . ."

*Rev. T. H. Brown has prepared a 15-page pamphlet entitled "Holding Fast the Faithful Word" in which he gives a review of the testimony maintained by the Trinitarian Bible Society concerning the text and translations of the Holy Scriptures since the formation of the Society.

THE DIVINE PROVISION

“It is impossible to overstate the importance of these two things — unfeigned faith, and the Word of God. This is the Divine provision for all the errors, and all the evils, and all the hostile influences of the present day.”

“There is a great shaking going on all around us; the foundations are being displaced; ancient landmarks are being removed; institutions are being assailed; confusion is written on all things ecclesiastical and political. There is only one thing that can sustain us in times like these, and that is living faith in the living God.”

“It is the design of the enemy to quench the lamp of Inspiration, to get rid of the supernatural and miraculous in the Word of God; to break down its authority and integrity by **minimising differences of translations**; for, if the Bible is not the Word of God, but only “contains” it, then one version can contain it, or as much of it, as another. If there is no such thing as “THE Bible”, then “A Bible” or any Bible will do.”

“The enemy cares not by what agency he gains his great end of making the Word of God of none effect. The enemy will use any instrument to accomplish his purposes; and the greater and the better the agent, the more effectually will he obtain his ends.”

Because of deficiencies of text and translation, the Society rejected versions based on the Latin Vulgate, and the Revised Version based on a form of the Greek text developed by 19th century textual criticism. For the same reasons the Society has not adopted any of the more recent modern versions.

The Purity of the Text of Holy Scripture

Readers will remember that in a former issue of this Magazine there was printed a defence of the Authorised Version of the Bible, by the Rev. T. H. Brown of the Trinitarian Bible Society. Readers will be aware too of the plain reason for that article being printed in this Magazine, namely that we as a church hold fast to the Authorised Version as being the best translation of the Bible. It is highly disappointing to find in the December issue of the Banner of Truth monthly Magazine an article by a Free Church minister questioning the publication of the said article in our Magazine, and, what is a degree

worse, the "Banner of Truth" seems to be discounting the fact that the Trinitarian Bible Society is committed not to translate versions of the Scripture other than the A.V. It is not my intention to attempt an answer along the lines of Textual Criticism for Rev. T. H. Brown is well able to do so if he thinks it at all necessary. I am simply bringing before you the statements of John Owen on the whole matter of the worth of the disputes about the Text.

He says —

Of all the inventions of Satan to draw off the minds of men from the Word of God, this of decrying the authority of the originals seems to me the most pernicious. But the mind of man being exceedingly vain-glorious, curious, uncertain, after a door to reputation and renown by this kind of learning was opened in the world, it quickly spread itself over all bounds and limits of sobriety. We affirm that the whole Word of God in every letter and title, as given from Him by inspiration, is preserved without corruption, God by His providence preserving the whole entire.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were immediately and entirely given out by God Himself, His mind being in them represented unto us without the least interveniency of such mediums and ways as were capable of giving change or alteration to the least iota or syllable; so by His good and merciful dispensation, in His love to His Word and church, His whole Word, as first given out by Him is preserved unto us entire in the original languages; which, shining in its own beauty and lustre (as also in all translations, so far as they faithfully represent the originals) it manifests and evidences unto the consciences of men, without other foreign help or assistance, its divine original and authority.

It is granted that the original autographs of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, are in all probability lost out of the world. For the first translators of the originals we say not that it was impossible for them to make a mistake. Religious care and diligence in their work, with a due reverence of Him with whom they had to do, is all we ascribe unto them. Whatever may be looked for from the religious care and diligence of men lying under a loving and careful aspect from the promise and providence of God, may be justly expected for them who undertook that work.

Translations contain the Word of God and are the Word of God perfectly or imperfectly according as they express the words, sense, and meaning of those originals. For the Old Testament, the security we have that no mistakes were voluntarily or negligently brought into the text before the coming of our Saviour who was to declare all things, is that He not once reproves the Jews on that account, when yet for their false glosses on the Word He spares them not.

There must have been millions of copies of the N.T. Let it be remembered that the vulgar copy we use was the public possession of many generations — that upon the invention of printing it was in actual authority throughout the world with them that used and understood that language. It would quickly appear how small the number is of these varieties in the Greek copies of the New Testament which may pretend unto any consideration under the state and title of various lections and of how very little importance to weaken in any measure my former assertion concerning the care and providence of God in the preservation of the gospel. We may have full assurance that we enjoy the whole revelation of His will in the copies abiding amongst us. We went from Rome under the conduct of the **purity** of the originals. I wish none have a mind to return thither again under the pretence of their **corruptions.**”

A. E. W. MacD.

Synod Resolution

The following resolution on the New English Bible was passed at the Synod in May 1961 and is relevant to the present controversy on the text of Scripture —

“The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Inverness on Wednesday the 24th day of May, 1961, views with grave concern the publication of the New Testament section of the New English Bible.

The Synod would record its conviction that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God giving a divine revelation which could never have been attained to by men in the use of their natural faculties. God is the Author of Scripture and any tampering with the words of Holy Writ is fraught with the most serious consequences, both for those guilty of such conduct and for those who read such mutilated translations. No man has any right to the name ‘Christian’ who denies the inspiration and the consequent infallibility and inerrancy of the Word of God.

In the Introduction the translators inform the public that Biblical criticism is in such a state of confusion that no critical Greek Text can be constructed upon which scholars can agree. This being so, it is ridiculous and irresponsible to attempt a translation into **English** when the form of Greek Text is a matter of debate. The Synod do not believe that the Holy Ghost left the text in such confusion as is alleged, but that the baseless speculations of infidel Higher Critics have led them to such a condition that they, themselves, cannot agree and

each scholar or group of scholars advance different personal opinions. The Synod condemn most emphatically such profane tampering and trifling with the words of God concerning which Christ said to His Father, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me: and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee and they have believed that thou didst send me." (John 17:8).

The Synod condemns this translation because the changes effected are evidently introduced to undermine a considerable number of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith. It would be a simple matter to show that the doctrines of the Inspiration of God's Word, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the eternal generation of the Person of the Son, the atoning sacrifice of Christ and other important teachings are all affected by the New Translation. Indeed, in the opinion of the Synod, it is not too much to say that a new theology, far removed from the catholic faith of the Church, could be constructed and maintained from this work. The Synod condemns the beclouding and perverting of doctrines, the spiritual knowledge of which is absolutely essential if men are not to perish in their sins under the wrath of God in a lost Eternity.

The Synod condemns as without foundation the false and pernicious propaganda, that the ignorance of people of the Bible is due to the alleged ambiguities and archaic expressions in the Authorised Version. The real fault lies at the door of the very men who are behind this translation. These men of the Higher Critical School have done their very utmost to destroy the authority of God's Word in the consciences of the people, by their crude and ignorant attacks on Holy Scripture. This, coupled with the spiritual incompetency of the present ministry to instruct people in the Holy Scriptures, is the root cause of the people's ignorance. It is **they** who have emptied the Churches, it is **they** who have paganised the people and set them adrift on the sea of unbelief and doubt. It is **they** who now with shameless impertinence attack the Authorised Version and endeavour to replace it with a version of their own making. It is the fervent prayer and hope of this Synod that this translation will go the way of its modern predecessors, and that the love of Bible-believing and Bible-reading people to the Authorised Version will continue.

While the Synod does not expect that any of its ministers would be so lacking in spiritual discernment as to give any place to this new translation, it takes this opportunity of banning it from all the pulpits of this Church. The Synod further states its firm conviction that the Authorised Version is the best and most faithful translation of the Word of God to be found in the English language."

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Posadh an Anama ri Criosd

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 27)

(1) Thoir fa'n ear nach eil Criosd ullamh gu oilbheum an aghaidh anamaibh air son am fàluingean agus am briseadh Ris. Cha'n eil E geur gu bhì comharrachadh na tha air a dheanamh a mach as àite Salm cxxx, 3. Cha'n E ullamh gu bhì tilgeadh bh'uaihte, agus gu bhì cur air falbh, nì h-eadh 's e a nì is fuathach Leis Mal. ii, 16. Tha e fìor, faodaidh E, agus nì E iomadh uair E Fein a tharruig air ais bh'uaihte, agus a ghnùis fholach oirne, ach bhì cur air falbh cha taitneach Leis; seadh, gabhaidh E truas agus cùmhnaidh E fodh ar n'anmhuinneachd agus tha iochd-san air a ghluasad air ar son.

(2) Thoir fa'n ear mu'n d'fhoillsich Criosd riamh a ghràdh dhuit agus an d'thug E anns an daimh so ris Féin thu b'aithne Dhà gu h-iomlan ciod e ghné neach a bha thù gu bhith, agus cia mar a ghiulaineadh tù thù fein dha thaobh; agus gidheadh cha do chuir se maille air a bhì nochdadh deagh-ghean dhuit. Car son uime sin a smuainticheadh tù e na aobhar air son am briseadh E riut a nis? Faodaidh an t-anam a bhì ullamh air a ràdh, An do smuaintich Criosd gu'n d'thorainn a leithid de dh'oilbheum Dhà, gu'n giullainean mì féin cho neo-airidh dha thaobh, fodh chomhair uile ghràdh dhomh, 's a tha mì deanamh? Seadh anam an do smuaintich Criosd e, b'aithne Dhà gu h-iomlan e roimh laimh. Ann an Deut. xxxii 21, thà e air a ràdh gu'm b'aithne do Dhia ciod e bha Israel roimh laimh a dol a dheanamh; mar sin b'aithne do Chrìosd roimhe laimh mar a chuireadh tù an suarachas a ghràdh, a chuireadh tù doilgheas air a Spiorad, a bhriseadh tù a laghannan; b'aithne dhà cai mar a bheireadh tù ilbheum agus tàmailte Dhà, b'aithne Dhà cia mar a chùl-sleamhnaicheadh tù; agus nach fhaca E gu robh gràdh gu leoir Aige agus truas gu leoir Aige gu bhì còmhdach agus ag amharc thairis air na h-uile, cha nochdadh E gu bràth a ghràdh dhuit. Uime sin 'n uair a phòsas E, tha air a ràdh gu'm bheil E dha dheanamh ann am breitheanas, Hosea ii, 19. B'aithne do Chrìosd ciod a bha E deanamh, agus ciod e neach a phòs E, 'n uair a phòs E thusa Ris Féin. Agus mar nach b'urrain so uile maille a chur na ghràdh aig an toiseach, mar sin cha tòir so uile air falbh a ghràdh bh'uat a nis.

(3) Thoir fa'n ear, gu'm faod thù bhì ciontach do iomadh fàilingeadh agus teachdan gearr agus brisidhean, a thaobh Chrìosd agus seacharan bh'uaihte; agus gidheadh nach bì an cùmhnant pòsaidh eadar Esan agus thusa air a bhriseadh. Faodidh bean a bhì ciontach de iomadh fàilingeadh agus teachd gearr, iomadh smal agus mì-bheus, ach

gidheadh cha dean na h-uile nì dhiubh sin a bhi briseadh a chùmhnant pòsaidh eadar an duine agus ise. Agus mar sin tha e'n so. O cia milis 's a tha'n sgrìobtur sin! "Ma threigeas a chlann mo reachdan, agus nach gleidh iad m'aitheantan; an sin fiosraichidh le slait an easaontas, agus le buillibh an eucaert. Gidheadh cha bhuin mì gu tur mo chaoibhneas-gràidh uatha, agus cha bhreignich mì mo ghealladh. Cha bhris mì mo ghealladh; agus a' nì a thàinig am bhilibh cha'n atharraich mì." Salm lxxxix, 30-40. Feuch, gabh beachd, faodaidh sluagh Chrìosd peacachadh, gu mòr, agus faodaidh E'n smachdach gu geur air son am peacaidhean; seadh, faodaidh E bhi coltach ri bhi toirt air falbh a choimhneas gràidh, agus faodaidh E air son ùine, gu h-achdaidh a cur stad air buaidhean agus foillseachaidhean a ghràidh dhoibh; ach fanaidh a ghràidh cùmhnant agus a dhìlseachd dhoibh, agus tha sin a fantainn daingean agus seasmhach a dhaindeoin gach nì. Mar sin, mar an ceudna, Ged a rinn thù striopachas, thoir fa'n ear, ged a rinn iad cùl-sìamhnachadh, gidheadh tha Crìosd ag aideachadh a dhaimh cùmhnant ri bhi agus dhoibh; seadh, agus thà E cur, mar gu'm b'eadh, a chùmhnant as an deigh, agus le sin thà E dha'n toirt dhachaidh dha ionnsaidh Féin. O ge b'e do theachdan gearr, ge b'e do bhrisidhean ri Crìosd, agus do chur cùl Ris, gidheadh, air bhi dhuit aon uair air do phòsadh Ris, seasaidh an t-aonadh agus an daimh pòsaidh Ris agus riutsa daingean agus dlùth a dh'aindeoin na h-uile nì.

Oh! ach their an t-anam, tha mo chridhe a claonadh a chùm cùl-sleamhnachaidh bho Chrìosd, agus tha eagal orm gu'n dean mì mu dheireadh, gu h-uile agus gu h-iomlan a threigsinn, agus an sin slàn leis na h-uile nì. Freagraidh mì, gu'm bheil Crìosd air a cheangal ri do chumail daingean, firinneach, a dh'aindeoin nì air bith annad féin; na'm biodh tù air t-fhàgail le Crìosd, bhiodh tù ullamh air a dhol air seacharan, gu h-uile agus gu h-iomlan bh'uaith-san. ach tha Crìosd Féin air a cheangal gu bhi dha do ghleidheadh Dhà. 'S e fìor aonta a chùmhnant riut; "Agus nì mì riubh coimhcheangal sìorruidh, nach pill mì air falbh uatha, chùm maith a dheanamh dhoibh; agus cuiridh mì m'eagal 'n an cridhe, chùm nach dealaich iad rium. Ier. 40.0 fhearabh, cha'n e mhàin gu'm bheil cridhe Chrìosd dh'ionnsaidh a shluaigh, ach tha Esan a cheangail le chùmhnant, gu bhi cumail an cridheachan dlùth Dhà Fein, agus dileas Dhà; 's e sin cho fad agus nach teid iad air falabh bh'uaithe gu h-iomlan, agus mar sin tha'n dìlseachd Dhà a crochadh air a dhìlseachd dhoibh-san. Dùinidh mì a'nì so le bhi'g ainmeachadh an Sgrìobtur aithnichte sin, "Co chuireas coire sam bith a leth dhaoine taghta Dhé? Is e Dia dh'fhìreanaicheas. Agus air eagal nach ruigeadh na nithean so uile cùis an anama, tha E cur ri sin "na creutair air bith eile," Rom, viii, 35-39.

(R'a leantuinn)

Rhodesian Mission News

by Mission Staff

Last week we said 'Goodbye' to seventy of our Form 2 pupils forty of whom will not return in January. Do remember these boys and girls as they face an unknown world and all the attractions it offers. Some of them are very young and with so very few job opportunities can only hope to 'sit at home' as they say.

In January last the school took another step towards its final goal — the Cambridge School Certificate. The Form 3 class began with thirty pupils all of whom came from our own Form 2 class of the previous year with the exception of one girl who has fitted in very well with our ways.

We are happy to say that building has continued here. As many of you will know from the Synod Report David Ndlovu is responsible for that side of the work now. This year the new dining-room and kitchen has been completed and is now in use. A boy's dormitory is almost complete and the Form 4 boys are looking forward to using it when they return next year. The foundations have been started for a new Science Laboratory which is needed for use early next year.

A kind friend in Bulawayo and others were very helpful in giving me advice when we were faced with planning and designing a new laboratory last year. It has been a big challenge and quite new to David. Do pray that all will go smoothly and correctly when all the special fittings now ordered finally arrive.

We have had two African teachers on our school staff this year. For next year we have been granted an additional two. Do remember those who will have the responsibility of interviewing and appointing those who wish to come here. Miss Graham is also due for furlough now, but has agreed to stay until such time as someone takes her place. As we have been granted four European teachers for next year you can imagine that we are rather anxious not to have to lose this privilege.

In the Free Presbyterian Church we have only one secondary school. I am sure that some of our teachers at home must realise the unique opportunity our school here presents. Recently we heard that new laws are to be introduced to restrict the movement of mission personnel from one Tribal Trust Land to another in this country. How long I wonder will the door be open here for the Word of God to be taught in its purity?

This year, James Mpofu, one of our members in the church at Nkai was transferred here to teach Woodwork. Each weekend he is free to travel back 100 miles to Nkai to hold the services there. Though a

small congregation, they have renovated their church during this year and are now looking forward to the communion services which will be held there at the end of January (D.V.).

The staff here look forward to welcoming Rev. Wm. MacLean, New Zealand to the Mission in a week's time (mid-December). It is our prayer that he will arrive safely and be a blessing as he ministers here for a short time on his way to Scotland.

R.M.

Book Reviews

"No Night There" by the Rev. Murdoch Campbell, M.A.

I have been asked by the Editor to send him a short review of the above.

The readers of our magazine know that Mr Campbell is the author of many edifying and comforting books for "those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity". What is sadly lacking from the pulpits of Scotland today — experimental, sweet communion with God; the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart; deep, painful, spiritual desertion; the chastisements of their Covenant-God upon His people; a humble, gracious longing for and looking forward to Heaven — is all to be found in "No Night There". Mr Campbell writes, "There is in every renewed heart a longing for the perfect rest that remaineth for the people of God". The book is bedecked with apt, refreshing anecdotes. Its contents depict the rare gift of a good theologian — profound doctrine expressed in good, simple language — "And the common people heard Him gladly". Mark 12:37.

It is a pity that there are numerous misprints throughout the book, but readers will understand that this is not Mr Campbell's fault. The price is only 45p, but "worth its weight in gold".

As I have been recently reading, once more, John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", I was interested and refreshed by Mr Campbell's many quotations from that allegorical masterpiece. We need sanctifying grace to prepare us for the Place of which it is true, "No Night There".

Angus Mackay, Tarbert.

The History of Joseph by George Lawson

This book is an edition of a work completed over one hundred and fifty years ago. Dr George Lawson succeeded John Brown of Haddington as Professor of Divinity in the Scottish Secession Church. Dr Lawson's writings were voluminous and among them the most useful were the

expositions of parts of the Bible. George Lawson continued as minister of his congregation in Selkirk, and the volume under review was delivered in a series of discourses on the relevant part of the Book of Genesis. Dr Lawson's discourses are attractively simple in their presentation while at times profound in content. The book contains the text as found in Genesis, each verse or group of verses, being followed by a summary of its content with a variety of lessons drawn from the Truth, these being of a most valuable practical nature. Spurgeon says on this point that 'we have been delighted with his common sense'. There are thirty-six lectures on the life of Joseph, followed by a further seven on the blessings pronounced by Jacob on his twelve children.

Attractively presented the book should be found most acceptable to all who care for spiritual-mindedness.

Banner of Truth Trust; 556 pages; Price £1.50.

M. MacI.

A Pillow for the Night

This little booklet contains a selection of extracts from the Christian Treasury, which are slightly revised for this publication. The extracts are mainly short accounts of incidents in which the Hand of God was clearly seen in providence. There is in each chapter a lesson as to how we should live to Christ and adorn the Gospel of His grace. Among the incidents recorded are the following — the blasphemer and drunkard who was changed to be a man of prayer; the conversion of Rev. Hector M'Phail of Resolis; the Christian traveller on the Great Lakes who was a shining light for Christ; and the Prayerless Home.

As intimated on the back cover this small booklet should appeal in a special way to younger readers, but should also be helpful to an older generation.

Printed by Eccleslitho, Inverness, the booklet is obtainable from Christian Bookshops. Paperback; 80 pages; Price 30p.

M. MacI.

Notes and Comments

F.P. Magazine Criticised

In an article by Rev. Donald Macleod of Partick Highland Free Church, Glasgow, in the December 1972 issue of the Banner of Truth Magazine, the Free Presbyterian Magazine is taken to task for publishing the article by the Rev. Terence Brown, Secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society on the Bible and Textual Criticism which appeared in the

August issue. The Editor of the Banner of Truth in another article in the same issue asserts: "Mr Brown had no need to write a personal criticism of Mr Macleod's earlier article . . . his own views were well enough known". Notwithstanding these strictures we are still of the view that our action in publishing Mr Brown's article was fully justified. If those who are of a different mind would re-read Mr Macleod's first article they, too, may come to the conclusion that Mr Macleod's hesitant support for the text underlying the Authorised Version, his failure to give sufficient warning of the baneful effects of infidel higher criticism and of Roman Catholic co-operation in the field of modern Scripture translation, and his vagueness in giving guidance to evangelicals as to what version to adopt left him open to serious criticism.

In this issue we have included several brief articles which have a bearing on the textual controversy. A full article on the Bible and Textual Criticism by Rev. D. Maclean, Glasgow, will appear in the March issue (D.V.).

Britain Enters the Common Market

On 1st January 1973 our country entered the European Economic Community. Through the long years during which successive British Governments have engaged in negotiations for entry into the Common Market we have remained implacably opposed to this proposal. Our opposition did not stem from a narrow isolationistic outlook but was based on reasonable and Scriptural grounds. The fact particularly that the nations of the Common Market were predominantly Roman Catholic in character meant that our Protestant constitution, already sufficiently endangered by the luke-warm Protestantism of many in our country, would be put further at risk by such an alliance. Should Britain's newly-formed relationship with Europe continue and not be repudiated by a future Government, time will tell whether our fears were justified.

As it is a federated Europe which is ultimately in view, such a union of nations will require a religious cementing link. This can only be Roman Catholicism in the present state of Europe. If, however, it should please the Lord to pour out His Spirit on the nations of Europe, including our own sin-darkened land, the Gospel would provide a unifying bond and make a realistic and God-honouring alliance of nations possible. Until then we cannot see the present partial surrender of national sovereignty in any other light than a betrayal of the highest interests of our country, and as a judgment from the Most High for our national apostasy from the living and true God.

Famine Danger in Many Lands

Accounts have come to hand recently of a drought in India which is so serious as to be regarded as a national calamity. Millions face the

threat of famine if massive imports of food are not obtained. In the neighbouring country of Bangladesh, too, the famine situation is serious and likely to increase alarmingly. In Rhodesia a disastrous drought has seriously affected crops and African farmers are likely to suffer great hardship.

In the light of these solemn afflictive providences in other lands we have reason to wonder at the Lord's forbearance and longsuffering towards us. It should humble us to the dust that the Lord, notwithstanding our greivous provocations, is still plentifully supplying our needs when He could in a moment, if it so pleased Him, break our staff of bread.

Eire Referendum

A referendum held in Eire resulted in the deletion of Article 44 of the 1937 Constitution. This article acknowledged the special position of the Roman Catholic Church in Eire. The aim is undoubtedly to pave the way for eventual union of Northern and Southern Ireland. Our view is that this change in the relationship of the R.C. Church to the State is merely a change on paper which will not materially affect the close relationship which exists, and which will continue to exist, between Church and State in Eire.

Ecumenical Experiment

In Livingston New Town where several churches already share services in an ecumenical experiment, Roman Catholics have agreed to worship under the same roof. They are to have a special chapel for themselves as they are not prepared to share services. This concession by the Romanists is hailed as a major break-through in R.C.-Protestant Church relations! How tragic that such a venture should be regarded other than as a betrayal of the Protestant faith.

He that sees Jesus Christ, sees all the glory of paradise, Christ being the mirror of beauty, the quintessence of happiness.

Thos. Watson

Praying is a soul-enriching trade. It is a trade with heaven, and brings down temporal and spiritual mercies. He that drives this trade most diligently, will be found the most thriving Christian. Surely the leanness among professing Christians is owing to this neglect in a great measure.

Boston

Church Notes

Grafton Induction

The Southern Presbytery agreed to meet again, D.V., within the vestry of St Jude's Church, Glasgow, on Wednesday, the 14th day of February, 1973, at 6 p.m., and in St Jude's Church at 7 p.m., in order to Induct the Rev. W. MacLean, Gisborne, N.Z., to the pastoral charge of Grafton-Brushgrove Congregation, Australia.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on Tuesday, 13th February 1973 at 3.30p.m.

Southern: At Glasgow on Wednesday, 14th February 1973 at 6 p.m.

(See also Induction notice).

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

Winnipeg Elder's Death

It is with deep regret that we intimate the death of Mr Allan Macleod, Elder, Winnipeg, who passed away on 16th December 1972 at an advanced age. Though he was unable to attend the means of grace for some time, his death is a great loss to the congregation in Winnipeg. He served the Cause of Christ in Canada faithfully over a long period of time conducting the services himself except during those periods when deputies visited that Continent. No doubt a fuller obituary will appear in due course.

The Congregation in Winnipeg has suffered other losses in the passing recently of Mrs Steedman who was a member in the congregation there, and earlier in the death of Mr Kitchen, the Treasurer in Winnipeg. To all those who have lost loved ones sincere sympathy is extended. It is our desire and prayer that the Lord will grant them much of the consolations of His love.

We would commend the people in Winnipeg in their present trying condition to the prayers of the people of the Church, that He may provide for them and, if that is His will, build up His Cause there.

Letter from Tasmania

P.O. Box 956, Launceston,
Tasmania 7250.
12-12-72.

Dear Mr MacLeod,

Mrs Faulkner, who recently visited your country has asked me to write to you requesting that you would be kind enough to thank,

through your magazine, all those folk who were kind enough to send books to our Church. I have written to some individuals personally, but she suggests that you may at the same time thank everyone on our church's behalf for their kindness shown to her throughout Scotland, and for the rich time of fellowship she was privileged to share with the Church folk, also for all who made contributions to our Church in the giving of books.

Our Church has greatly appreciated the gifts of so many valuable books, and proposes to commence a library for the Elders and Ministers, that they may have access to these.

Thanking you,

Yours very sincerely,

Rev. C. L. Rodman.

Young People's Theological Conference — July 1973

At the meeting of the Theological Conference in September 1972 it was agreed to have a separate Conference for young people in the Church which would give an opportunity not only to discuss the many problems which affect them at the present time but also to meet together and have fellowship with one another. The Conference Committee was instructed to proceed to make the necessary arrangements which are as follows —

Date of Conference: 24th, 25th, 26th July 1973.

Age group: 17-30 years of age.

Place of Conference: Kilravock Castle, which is twelve miles east of Inverness.

Programme:

Tuesday 24th July

17.00 hrs Conference opens with Worship and Information.

18.00 hrs Dinner.

19.00-19.40 hrs Paper: 'Search the Scriptures'—Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick.

20.00 hrs Discussion.

21.30 hrs Worship.

Wednesday 25th July

08.30 hrs Worship.

09.00 hrs Breakfast.

10.00-10.40 hrs Paper: 'Free Presbyterian Church Principles' — Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick.

11.00 hrs Discussion.

12.30 hrs Lunch.

Afternoon free.

18.00 hrs Dinner.

19.00-19.40 hrs Paper: 'Who is my neighbour?' — Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick.

20.00 hrs Discussion.

21.30 hrs Worship.

Thursday 26th July

08.30 hrs Worship.

09.00 hrs Breakfast.

10.00-10.40 hrs Paper: 'Doctrine of Creation' — Rev. M. MacInnes, Ullapool.

11.00 hrs Discussion.

12.30 hrs Lunch.

Conference Closes.

Travel Arrangements:

1. Assemble at Kilravock Castle at 16.30 hrs on 24th July.
2. Arrangements may be made for a bus from Inverness. Intimation will be made to persons concerned.

Conference fees:

1. £5 per person, includes full board.
2. Deposit of £1 should be forwarded to the Conference Secretary with application.
3. The number for whom there is accommodation is limited to 40.

All who wish to attend the Conference should apply to the Secretary, Rev. M. MacInnes, Free Presbyterian Manse, Quay Street, Ullapool IV26 2UE. The closing date is 31st May 1973.

Rev. M. MacInnes.
Conference Secretary.

Religion and Morals Committee's Letter to Prime Minister

Free Presbyterian Manse,
16 Matheson Road,
Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.
2nd January 1973.

The Rt. Hon. Edward Heath, M.P.
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

Dear Prime Minister,

From time to time as occasion demanded, this Committee voiced its opposition to the Government's proposal to negotiate the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community. It is now with sorrowful feelings that we accept the fact that following upon the conclusion of negotiations, our nation has on the predetermined date, become a full member of the Community. We, however, notwithstanding what has taken place, have not changed our attitude towards the matter. We

are still firmly of the view that, with the other nations being so predominantly Roman Catholic in character, our joining with them places our Protestant constitution and heritage in jeopardy. The hoped for economic and technological benefits will not, in our view, compensate for the losses sustained in other spheres, such as the loss of national sovereignty involved, the subversion of our Protestant character and institutions, and the weakening of links which have hitherto bound us to other nations with which we have more natural affinity through ties of religion and kinship.

We deplore the fact that the Government chose to ignore the wishes of what clearly appears to be the majority of the electorate and have failed to honour their own promise of seeking the full-hearted consent of the British people before proceeding to carry the matter to a conclusion.

In conclusion we again express our sincere conviction that the spiritual and material prosperity of our nation does not lie in this alliance with the nations of Europe, but in an unfeigned return to the God whom we have forsaken, and whose favour we have forfeited. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts." Malachi 3, 7.

On behalf of the Committee, I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) John Macleod, Secretary.

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 Robertson, Leven, £3; Northton friend of the Cause, per J. MacL., £1; "In memory of our mother, the late Christina Fowler-Gibson", £10.55; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £50; £5, Mrs E. M. MacKellar, Tarbert (per R.W.M.M.).

Home Mission Fund — Northton friend of the Cause, per J. MacL., £1; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund — 'Anon', Scaniport postmark, £10; Mrs Robertson, Leven, £1; "In memory of our mother, the late Christina Fowler-Gibson", £10.55; A Friend, G.R., Michigan, \$100; Friend, Portree, £10; Friend, Applecross, per Dr T., £5; B. MacRae, Applecross, per Dr T., £2 for Mbuma Hospital; C. MacKenzie, Millbuie, Dingwall, per Dr T., £1 for Mbuma Hospital; "From the children of Stornoway Sabbath School" £30; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies" £10, also £10 for Mbuma Mission Hospital.

Dominions and Overseas Fund — Friend, Portree, £10; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.

Home of Rest Fund — "In memory of Miss Isabella Fraser, Daviot, £50; Tomatin Congregation Harvest Thanksgiving Collection, £20.50; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.

On behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society — Anon., Argyll, £5; "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' etc. Fund — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10; Anon, Northampton, £3 (per R.W.M.M.).
College and Library Fund — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.
Organisation Fund — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.
General Building Fund — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.
China Mission Fund — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.
On behalf of Reformation Translation Fellowship — "In acknowledgment of the Lord's mercies", £10.
Foreign Mission Fund — R. MacRae, Vernon B.C., Canada, £14.60; Anon, Northampton, £3 (last 2 per R.W.M.M.).

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

Welfare of Youth Fund — £6, "Very Interested", per Rev. J. MacD.; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's Mercies" £10 (per W.D.F.); North Tolsta Congregation, £20; R. Gillanders, Applecross, £1.50; Mrs A. P. Baker, Maidstone, £2; Mr J. MacLennan, Muir of Ord, 40p; Miss M. MacRae, Strath, £1.50; Mrs J. MacLeod, Lochinver, £1; Staffin Congregation, £10.

Publications Fund — London Congregation, £8.16; A. M. MacPherson, Cupar, £1; Mrs R. MacSween, New Cumnock, £2.80; Miss M. MacKay, East Kilbride, £2.80; R. Gillanders, Applecross, £1.50; Mrs A. P. Baker, Maidstone, £2; Mrs M. Harris, 80p.

Free Distribution Fund — A. C. MacAulay, Stornoway, £4.80; London Congregation, £8.16; Aberdeen Congregation, £25; M. Martin, Harris, £6; Mrs D. MacAskill, Islay, £2.50; Miss M. Sutherland, Lairg, 60p; Mrs A. Livingstone, Dunoon, £2.80; J. MacAskill, Stornoway, £3; A. H. Campbell, Lochbroom, 35p; W. J. MacKenzie, Lochinver, 80p; A. J. Fraser, Inverness, £2.50; A. MacRae, Ardachy, 65p; J. MacLean, San Francisco, £1.80; J. Ross, Vancouver, 80p; Mrs Canty, N.Z., £3.80; Alex. Forgie, Falkirk, 60p; Mrs J. Taylor, Bradford, £1; Mrs M. Burnett, Kishorn, 80p; W. Ross, Ullapool, 80p; Stornoway "In acknowledgment of the Lord's Mercies", £10 per W.D.F.; Mrs A. MacKenzie, Kishorn, £2.50; Miss K. MacAskill, Portree, 50p; Thurso Friend, 80p; M. MacLeod, Finsbay, 30p; A. Morrison, Northton, 80p; R. Gillanders, Applecross, £1.50; J. W. MacKenzie, Laide, £2; Mrs J. H. MacLeod, Hilton, Fearn, 30p; Mrs E. Begg, Montrose, 80p; Mrs A. P. Baker, Maidstone, £1; Mrs W. Edwards, Bonar Bridge, 80p; Mrs M. F. Campbell, Skinidin, 50p; Miss M. Stewart, Kyle, £1; Miss A. MacDonald, Kinlochewe, 35p; Mrs K. A. Wilson, Bonar Bridge, £1; Miss May M. Morrison, Poolewe, 60p; A Friend, Portree, £5; Miss M. M. MacIver, Glasgow, 50p; C. Dennel, Georgia, U.S.A., £2; Mrs J. Murray, Stornoway, 65p; F. P. Ness, £1.80; Mrs R. MacLeod, Harris, 40p; S. Morrison, Harris, £1; Miss May Gillies, Lochcarron, 30p; D. J. MacKay, Bonar Bridge, £1; Miss Ann Morison, Harris, 80p; Mrs A. Walker, Glasgow, £2.20; Miss B. Nicolson, Stornoway, 30p; W. C. Mackintosh, Kirkhill, 80p; D. J. MacDonald, Kyle, 50p; Mrs D. MacRae, Laide, 80p; J. Matheson, Plockton, £1; J. G. Ross, Scourie, 80p; E. E. Fuller, Richmond, 50p; Miss C. Banks, Dunoon, 30p; Mr J. MacLennan, Muir of Ord, 40p; Miss D. MacLennan, Lochs, 35p; Mrs R. Ross, Rhiconich, 20p; Miss M. Macrae, Strath, £1; Mr G. T. Harvey, Kyle, 30p; "Anon", Northampton, 80p; Miss M. A. MacLeod, Harris, 30p; Anon, Culkein, 80p; Mrs J. MacLeod, Lochinver, £1; Mrs Z. D. Loughborough, 80p; Mrs MacDonald, Ardmair Bay, 65p; D. MacKenzie, Leverburgh, 80p; J. Verkade, N.J., £2.20.

On behalf of Trinitarian Bible Society — Greenock Congregation, £28.50.

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

Staffin, Skye — 'Friends' envelope in plate, £10; Envelope in plate, £5, both for Sustentation Fund.

North Harris — Misses K. and J. MacKinnon, West Tarbert, Harris, £2 for Sustentation Fund, £2 for Home Mission Fund, £2 for Foreign Mission Fund.

Waternish — Friend, £2.25 for Sustentation Fund; Friend, £2 for Sustentation Fund; Friend, £2 for Home Mission Fund; Friend, £5 for College and Library Fund, all per Wm MacLeod, Treasurer.

Glendale — Friend, £5; Anonymous, £4; Old Friend, £5, all for Sustentation Fund and per Rev. J. Colquhoun; Adherent, £1; Adherent, £1; Adherent, 50p, all for College and Library Fund, per Treasurer.

Ingwenya Mission — Mrs H. Kitchen, Winnipeg, \$500, General, In loving memory of her husband.

Greenock — Two Portree Friends, £5 for Congregational Purposes per Rev. L. MacLeod.

London — "Anon", £50 for London Congregation Funds per R.W.M.M.

St Judes, Glasgow — Anon, £5, Drumchapel Sabbath School; Anon in Plate, £5, Bus Fund; C.M.B., £1, Bus Running Expenses; M.M., £1.40, Bus Running Expenses; Matheson, Cumbræ Tower, £2, Bus Fund; Anon, £5, Sustentation Fund; A. P. Macphie, Lochailort, £5, Sustentation Fund; A. P. Macphie, £5, Home Mission Fund; Anon, £5.50, Home Mission Fund; A. MacIntosh, £6, Sustentation Fund; M.S., £2, Communion Expenses; A Friend, £1.50, Communion Expenses; Mrs Walker, £1.50, Communion Expenses; Mrs Walker, £1.50, Bus Expenses; Mrs Piper, 50p, Bus Expenses; Anon, 30p, Bus Expenses; A Friend of the Cause, £1, Bus Fund; Miss I.C., £5, Bus Fund; Ian A. M. MacKinnon, £1, Aged and Infirm Ministers, Widows and Orphans; Ian A. M. MacKinnon, £1, Dominions and Overseas; Ian A. M. MacKinnon, £1, General Buildings Fund; Ian A. M. MacKinnon, £1, Organisation Fund; Ian A. M. MacKinnon, £7, Jewish and Foreign Mission, all per Rev. D. McLean.

Glendale — Callum Macphie, £5, Sustentation Fund per Rev. J.C.

Strath, Skye — C. MacKinnon, 7 Luib, £3, Luib Car Fund, In Plate; Anon, £5, Luib Car Fund, In Plate.

Raasay — Anon, £10, Sustentation Fund, per Rev. D. Nicolson; Envelope in Plate, £2, Sustentation Fund; Anon, £15, Sustentation Fund; Anon, £10, Church Door Collection; Stirlingshire Post Mark, £10, Manse Extension; A Friend Raasay, £10; Friend, Inverarish, £3; P.A.H., £2; Friends, Raasay, £5, last four for Manse Extension and per J. M. MacLeod.

Dundee — Aberdeen Congregation, £50 for Dundee Congregation.

Dumbarton — Mr and Mrs N. MacCuish, Glasgow, £5; Anon, per Mr T. MacRae, £1; William MacBeath, Arrina, £5; Mrs E. MacCallum, Glasgow, £1, all for Dumbarton Manse Purchase Fund and per A. E. Alexander.

Lochbroom — Mrs MacGroarty, £3, Congregation Funds, per Rev. M. MacInnes.

Kyle/Plockton — Donations from Kyle, £19, Car Maintenance; Passer-by, £2, Local Building; Anon, £5, Sustentation.

Uig, Isle of Lewis — Anon, £4, Communion Expenses, Envelope in Plate; Matheson, Reef, £2, Communion Expenses, Envelope in Plate; MacLean, Valtos, £1.50, Communion Expenses, Envelope in Plate; MacLean, Valtos, £1.50, Communion Expenses, per M.S.; Friend of the Cause, East Uig, £5, Congregational Purposes, per M.S.; Mrs P. A. Morrison, 12 Mangersta, £5, Trinitarian Bible Society, Envelope in Plate.

North Tolsta — A Friend, North Tolsta, £2 for Minister's Car Expenses per Rev. D. MacLean.

Portree — D.A.M., Treasland, £1; Friend, Portree, £10, both for College and Library.

Glendale — Four friends, £1 each, Trinitarian Bible Society, per Wm. Maclean; A Friend, £1, Trinitarian Bible Society, per Rev. J.C.; Absent Subscriber, £1, Trinitarian Bible Society, per Wm. Maclean; Absent Subscriber, £2, Door Collection, per Wm. Maclean; Absent Subscriber, £8, Sustentation Fund, per Wm. Maclean.

Stornoway — A Friend, £5 for Congregational purposes.

Tain and Fearn — £10, J. MacKay, Dunvegan, Manse Fund, per A. MacA.