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A New Government

The General Election which took place on the last day of February has altered very radically the political situation in Great Britain. The Conservative and Labour Parties which have hitherto been able to command substantial overall majorities in Parliament may, from now on, have to depend on the support of other parties in order to form a Government.

There may be many reasons given to account for this new state of affairs but, to our mind, one of the main reasons is this — the failure of either of the major parties when in Government to give the moral leadership to the nation which it so desperately needed. The cause of this failure is not far to seek. Men in high places have ceased to honour God or to show respect for His laws. Consequently, God ceased to countenance them in their actions and withheld from them the wisdom needed to resolve the crisis which their own actions had precipitated. In the light of these things need we wonder although unstable government for a period of time should be the lot of our nation.

However precarious such a situation may be for the nation, let us never forget that there is a Government that is stable and sure. There is One upon whose shoulders the government is, not only the government of His Church or of one nation, but the government of the whole universe. He is King of Nations and King of Zion. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." Is. 9: 6, 7.

As our leaders direct their energies to resolving our present difficulties,

let them at the same time direct their minds to the true causes of our present ills, that is, our manifold departures from the living God. Having done so, let them resolve in the strength of divine grace to persist no longer in their former God-dishonouring course. As well as calling upon the people of the land to return to the Lord, let them return to the Lord themselves, in order that they may be enabled by His blessing to give that resolute spiritual and moral leadership so necessary for our nation in its hour of crisis.

For us, the people, our duty is clear. Let us return to the Lord whom we have forsaken. Only then can we hope for a real return to national prosperity, and only in this way will we be enabled to fulfil our duty to pray "for all that are in authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty".

Sermon

by the late Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., Dingwall

(Continued from page 74)

"In wrath remember mercy." — Hab. 3: 2.

3. The aggressive action of "the man of sin" is another token of wrath, and not less, but rather more so, is the facility with which this has been endured in this land of ours. The enemy has formed his estimate of our spiritual condition as a country. He found that we could endure a Popish aggression, and the result has proved that he did not miscalculate. Protestant Scotland has been too unruffled under this invasion. The hierarchy of the Church of Rome is again set up in this land. The soil of Scotland has again been partitioned into dioceses for bishops and sees for archbishops; and a cardinal will in due time complete the organisation. Were it only the presence of these officials of Antichrist Scotland had to endure, there has been surely some sad change of sentiment when this would be so quietly borne. But there is far more than this implied. To our face Antichrist has shown his ambition of winning back our country again. On soil reddened once by the blood shed by this fell power, all its organisation is again set up in order to regain the influence which proved to be so deadly. And all this is permitted, though all the restored appliances are to be worked in opposition to the truth, and in the delusion and destruction of precious souls. And still further, all these officers have been

appointed in Scotland as the Pope's executive to bring the canon law, as far as possible, to bear as a galling yoke on the neck of Scotland. Another civil law than that of our statute-book is introduced into our country, and these archbishops and bishops, with all the ecclesiastico-civil police of priests and friars and monks, are here to execute that law. And this is endured. The *vox populi* raises but a feeble protest, and the power of rulers offers no resistance.

To some there appears in all this nothing formidable. There is no reason to fear, they say, that Popery will ever win Scotland back again. And why not? Oh, there is too much enlightenment and too much love of liberty to allow of such a thing being possible. But what is all enlightenment, and love of liberty the most ardent, against the power of a "strong delusion" when God is provoked to send it? There is no security against Popery except where the love of the truth has been received. And even those who have this in their hearts need besides the unction from the Holy One to keep them. False is the hope that rests on other security than this.

And there are who think that it is the right thing to tolerate all that has been done. If civil rulers have nothing to do with religion, then they ought to lay no arrest on the advance of Antichrist. But Popish power is civil as well as religious. Canon law is State law as well as Church law, and opposition to its being set up in this country would surely seem to be legitimate action on the part of the civil magistrate. Yes, but it is part of the religious claim to demand liberty to use the sword as well as the keys. The Pope claims a right to have his belted knights as well as his surpliced clergy. And he claims this as the Church's head. He demands toleration of all that he regards, or represents, as essential to the extension and establishment of his religious system. If the civil magistrate has nothing to do with religion, he can have therefore nothing to do in opposition to all the demands put forth by him who claims to be the vicar of Christ on earth. And so the civil power of the country must lie idly by when all this is attempted in invasion by a foreign power of our beloved land! Alas that on the year of this aggression our own Church should have asked the civil rulers to withdraw their hand from the support of that which it is the avowed ambition of Antichrist to banish from this country.

Surely this is judgment, and it is ominous of more. The Lord has in His providence branded the year of the Popish aggression by His dealings with Scotland. There are not a few who can see in the removal of the righteous no token of wrath. There are outside the Church who can discern, as a token of wrath, nought that may be done by the Lord in the withholding of His Spirit; and within the Church there are who do not regard the state of

religion as indicating that the Lord hath a controversy with us. And there are, too, who see nothing to alarm them in the Popish aggression. But the year of that event has been made a marked one by calamities, which the most wordly and unbelieving have been compelled to feel. For —

4. Recent commercial disasters are surely to be regarded as a token of the Lord's anger. The Lord would have us to know that He was angry with us, and this itself is mercy in the midst of wrath. Knowing our insensateness to judgments merely spiritual, He has visited us in a way by which the most carnal must be made conscious of trouble. Hundreds have been deprived of their only means of support, and thousands, yea, tens of thousands, have to some extent felt the effects of the disaster. Through their love of the world many have been wounded. This was their only sensitiveness, and on this the stroke has fallen, and those who cared least for God were compelled to feel that they were smitten. The very sin that provoked the judgment makes the pain of the judgment to be sorely felt. And to some extent the judgment was the means of discovering the sin by which it was provoked. Ungodly haste to be rich caused men to rush to the object of their ambition, over all the fences which divine authority had set up in their way. But the Lord's power touched them, and their wealth has perished, their crime has been exposed, their reputation blasted, and their hearts made sad. And

5. As if all these things might happen and still some remain unaffected by these tokens of His wrath, the Lord has added a winter of unexampled severity. So extreme and so protracted has been the rigour of this season that no one could fail to observe it. And yet how few have really connected this with the hand of the Lord, and been affected by the anger it indicates! The very beasts have felt the rigor of the season; the sheep shivered on the hillside, and weak from want of food could no more move in search of it; the deer that used to roam in search of food over a wide expanse of forest could but creep to the roadside, and lie down there to die; the birds, out of which hunger drove all their wildness, hovered around the homes of men with the courage born of famine, and with no strength to fly away. These have been touched by the effects of the Lord's anger provoked by our sins, and are we among those sufferers to hold high our heads, and to keep our hearts at ease, ignoring the anger of the Lord and indisposed to think of, and to confess, the sins by which He was dishonoured and provoked.

II. But we must now shortly consider the prophet's prayer, or rather the last petition of it — "In wrath remember mercy."

He was drawn thus to cry by the view he had of the awfulness of divine wrath. Tokens of that wrath abounded. There seemed to him to be a

widespread work of judgment covering the whole area on which he looked. He felt as if the Lord, in His zeal to make His anger felt, had "forgotten to be gracious". How prone to this is every mind that is directed to the aspect of a frowning providence! What is keenly felt interposes between one's consciousness and all besides. The pain rivets the attention to that which produced it, and all besides is apt to be ignored. Wrath was seen, and the expression of it was felt, and it was as if on the field of providence there were nought besides. It was as if the Lord had "forgotten to be gracious". Therefore the prophet cries, "O Lord, in wrath remember mercy."

It was "mercy" for which he cried. If he had not realised that the Lord was angry — if he had not looked at, and trembled before, the tokens of His wrath, he had not cared to cry. And if he had not known enough of sin to be assured that the wrath was merited, it would not be mercy for which he would have cried. But he can only appeal to a justly offended God for His sovereign and unmerited favour, for he is pleading for sinners who deserved to die.

And what invests, to his view, the wrath with such awfulness, is a help so to think of the mercy that he cannot but cry for it. It was the measure in which he realised the infinite majesty of Jehovah, His wrath seemed awful; but that was just the measure in which it seemed to him a priceless boon that the Lord should "remember mercy". To have to look on infinite majesty benignant with mercy towards the land, oh, how desirable!

But does not the awfulness of the wrath intervene as a boundless ocean of fire between the sinner and mercy? How, then, can he at all send his cry for mercy winged with hope across it? How can the mind constrained to think of wrath be free to think of mercy? Does not the one so overwhelm the mind that it cannot rise to any conception of the other? So at first sight it would seem. But the life of God, in its aspiration rises to all that God is in His matchless glory, and specially to His mercy, for only when this is the aspect of the divine character to it can it, in a sinful soul, move towards Him in hope, and reach Him so as to taste and see that He is good. And as it is only the life of God that is disposed to cry for mercy, so only one who has learned about a divinely provided atonement can cry for it in a time of wrath. He has been in faith at the cross of Christ. The time was when at Sinai each thunder-peal that told of wrath, with each lightning-flash of awful glory, combined to make impossible a hope of mercy. The infliction of the sentence of death was seen to be an immovable necessity. All God's words, all God's glory, as heard and seen at the base of the mount that "burned with fire", assured him of this. For he was there alone in his sins. He saw the awfulness of divine wrath bearing on him in his weakness,

while his guilt exposed him to its consuming fire. But now, at the cross, he is where wrath has been poured out to the uttermost, and yet he has survived. For another was charged with the sin, and endured the wrath. And now even the light of the consuming fire is shining on the beaming face of mercy; and the full expression given of God's holy and awful wrath has opened up a way by which mercy, accompanied with truth, can come forth to sinners, bringing to them a peace which has been kissed by righteousness. Yes, he saw there and then how God can remember mercy in the midst of wrath, and it is because he learned this message there that he can hopefully send up the cry, "In wrath remember mercy."

As he thus prays he is lifting up his eyes to God as He is revealed in His Word. He ceases to look exclusively on the aspect He presents through a frowning providence. He looks on His name and memorial as given in His Word. He thinks of Him as "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty". He finds there three-fold encouragement to cry for mercy. He has before him an exhibition of His character as "merciful and gracious" given by God Himself. Thus God introduces Himself to sinful men. It must be quite safe to reckon on God's being and acting according to His name. It is His delight and His glory so to act. And He has a reserve of mercy for thousands who have not yet been partakers of it. And, besides, the Lord in revealing His mercy speaks of wrath, and declares that He "will by no means clear the guilty".

And his eye is resting on the exceeding great and precious promises of God to Israel. All these are fraught with mercy, and all these must be fulfilled. The work of fulfilling these cannot surely be forgotten, even in a day when tokens of His wrath abound. At any rate He cannot make a full end of Israel. There must be mercy that the sons of Jacob may not be consumed. And has He not to bring out of Zion a Deliverer — a rod from the stem of Jesse, to be a Branch of Righteousness and a Tree of Life? Has not One to arise who shall be the "Lion of the tribe of Judah", who shall secure to Israel a triumph over all their foes? Has He not through Him to fulfil many a promise of mercy to the Israel of Israel, who are to be saved with an everlasting salvation? Can the prophet look on all those promises of grace and glory pertaining to the chosen people without being encouraged to cry for mercy? And has he not good ground in the infinite wisdom and power of God for feeling quite assured that, even at the same time, He can do as He hath said, in a work of judgment and in a work of grace? The necessary fulfilment of His threat cannot make impossible the

quite as necessary fulfilment of His promise.

And even if he must think of the great mass of the generation, in the midst of which he mourns and prays, as fuel which sin has ripened for the fire of judgment, and if he cannot but tremble and be sad when constrained thus to think of the multitude, can he forget that there is "a remnant according to the election of grace"? Remembering them how can he refrain from asking mercy for them. If not for others, yet surely for them, he may ask for mercy even in a time of wrath. For as in the heart of God, as in the mystical body of Christ, as temples of the Holy Ghost, and as witnesses for God on the earth, they are far apart from all besides. And they have been set apart for mercy, and the wrath cannot intercept it from them. Yea, in the very fire of a generation judgment these shall be preserved, by means of it they shall be refined and tried, through it they shall be brought, and beyond it they shall reach a rest which never can be broken. Yea, even that which is wrath to others can be mercy to them.

And may he not think of some even among those who are exposed to, and are still provoking, the wrath of God, as objects of His everlasting love, whom He has yet to visit with His salvation? Are there not "other sheep" on that field over which the fire of divine judgment is spreading, whom the Good Shepherd hath promised to bring in? That mercy the prophet may surely pray for. And is there not a response to this pleading in the heart of God? Yea, it is the love of the Most High to His chosen which touched his heart to stir it thus to plead, and that warmed it into the fervency of earnest prayer.

And, taking the generations of the future into his view, may he not rest the eye of hope on a brightness, beaming from the bosom of gracious promise, beyond the dread and darkness of a time of wrath? Even if this generation should pass unpitied off the face of the earth, is there not a season coming when the Lord shall make all the earth, so long a wilderness, to be as a garden of the Lord? Nothing in a time of wrath can prevent the coming of that time of mercy. Even looking out of present gloom and darkness, across the fumes of a fire of wrath, the eye may kindle with hopefulness and joy, as the promised grace is seen brightening into glory the Church of God upon earth.

And even beyond all this appears a light still brighter shining through the resurrection, and from beyond the awful glory of a judgment day, out of the home into which "the ransomed of the Lord" shall at last be gathered around the throne of God and of the Lamb. While there are mansions in the Father's house, and the Lord is preparing a people to

occupy them, let none who prays at all cease to pray for mercy.

But what of the present generation? Can I enjoy that bright prospect when I have to think of those around me as laden with sin, and hardened in impenitence, while a frowning providence is casting over them the dark shadow of death? I have seen a bird flying eagerly towards a place which it fain would reach in order to find rest, and food, and fellowship, scared back by something formidable it observed as it cast its eyes downwards in its flight. Often do we thus, Fathers and Brethren, have our enjoyment broken, as we pass on the wings of thought, over a rising generation on our way to rejoice in the brightness of millennial glory. But if we cannot but tremble as we look on present providence, let not this prevent us from rejoicing in promised good. Neither let our souls pass into listless dreamings of the future, forgetful of the claims which our own generation hath upon us. Let us look at the bright prospect, opened up in promise, that we may be more affected by the darkness in which we are now benighted. And let us not hide any tokens of present wrath from our eye, nor keep them away from our heart, lest we cease to care to rejoice in the glory that is yet to be revealed. Let not the darkness and the trouble dispirit us, till we become so faint in heart that we can stretch no vigorous hand to our generation service. And let us not withhold our prayer, any more than our service, from the generation in the midst of which we are. Even for a multitude "laden with iniquity" there is merit enough in the blood through which we may plead in their behalf with God; and divine mercy is infinite in its bounty, as is the blood in its merit, through which that mercy is expressed. Even a generation of sinners can, by the omnipotence of grace, be made broken-hearted penitents. Yes, we collect them all into our pitiful regard, and at the footstool of the Throne of Grace we may, for them all, send up a cry for mercy. But let us not blindly press our suit. Let us not buoy up our hearts with hopes which are unwarranted. We must submit to the sovereignty of Him who will have mercy on whom He will. Let us beware of the rude persistency which refuses to yield to the will of God, and to Scripture limitations of its hopes.

Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, in the Lord's name and strength, let that work be done. This is our season in the vineyard. The Master has chosen for us our term of service, and let us not murmur because our lot has not fallen on other days than these. Let no wistful longings induce us to forget the aspect of the present time. If we may not ask to be ravished into listlessness before present duty by the joy of hope, nor to be dazzled into blindness to present sin and wrath by the glory on which the eye of hope is resting, let us not be scared back from sweet anticipations of what is

promised by the gloomy aspect of the present. Let us be more sensitive to present wrath, let us be more broken-hearted because of present sin, let us be more given to earnest prayer for present mercy, let us be more devoted to the work which the Lord now calls us to do — then there will be a sweeter solace to our hearts in the hope of dwelling at last where “there shall be no more curse” for ever.

Peace and Unity

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Ephesians 4: 3.

The following are some of the fruits and benefits of unity and peace, together with the mischiefs and inconveniences that attend those churches where unity and peace are wanting:—

1. Unity and peace is a duty well-pleasing to God, who is styled the Author of peace and not of confusion. In all the churches God’s Spirit rejoices in the unity of our spirits; but on the other hand, where strifes and divisions are, there the Spirit of God is grieved. Hence it is that the Apostle no sooner calls upon the Ephesians not to grieve the Spirit of God, but He presently subjoins as a remedy against that evil, that they put away bitterness and evil-speaking, and be kind to one another, and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven them. Ephesians 4: 30, 32.

2. As unity and peace is pleasing to God, and rejoices His Spirit, so it rejoices the hearts and spirits of God’s people. Unity and peace brings heaven down upon earth among us: hence it is that the Apostle tells us, Romans 4: 17, that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost”. Where unity and peace is, there is heaven upon earth; by this we taste the first fruits of that blessed estate we shall one day live in the fruition of; when we shall come “to the general assembly and church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect”. Heb. 12: 23.

This outward peace of the church (as a learned man observes) distils into peace of conscience, and turns writings and readings of controversy into treatises of mortification and devotion.

And the Psalmist tells us, that it is not only good, but pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, Psalm 133. But where unity and peace

are wanting, there are storms and troubles; "where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work". James 3: 16. It is the outward peace of the church that increases our inward joy; and the peace of God's house gives us occasion to eat our meat with gladness in our own houses. Acts 2: 46.

3. The unity and peace of the church makes communion of saints desirable. What is it that embitters church-communion and makes it burdensome, but division? Have you not heard many complain, that they are weary of church-communion, because of church-contention? But now where unity and peace is, there Christians long for communion.

David said, that he was glad when they said unto him, "Let us go to the house of God." Psalm 122: 1. Why was this, but because (as the third verse tells us) Jerusalem was a city compact together, where the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, to give thanks to His name? And David, speaking of the man that was once his friend, does thereby let us know the benefit of peace and unity. Psalm 55: 14. "We," said he, "took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company." Where unity is strongest, communion is sweetest and most desirable. You see then that peace and union fills the people of God with desires after communion: but, on the other hand, hear how David complains, Psalm 120, "Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, and that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." The Psalmist here is thought to allude to a sort of men that dwelt in the deserts of Arabia, that got their livings by contention; and therefore he adds, verse 6, that his soul had long dwelt with them that hated peace. This was that which made him long for the courts of God, and esteem one day in His house better than a thousand. This made his soul even faint for the house of God, because of the peace of it. "Blessed are they," said he, "that dwell in Thy house, they will be still praising thee." There is a certain note of concord, as appears, Acts 2, where we read of primitive Christians, meeting with one accord, praising God.

4. Where unity and peace is, there many mischiefs and inconveniences are prevented, which attend those people where peace and unity are wanting: and of those many that might be mentioned, I shall briefly insist upon these nine.

(1) Where unity and peace is wanting, there is much precious time spent to no purpose. How many days are spent, and how many fruitless journeys made to no profit, where the people are not in peace? How often have many redeemed time (even in seed-time and harvest) when they could scarce afford it, to go to church, and, by reason of their divisions, come home worse than they went, repenting they have spent so much precious

time to so little benefit? How sad is it to see men spend their precious time, in which they should work out their salvation, in labouring, as in the fire, to prove an uncertain and doubtful proposition, and to trifle away their time, in which they should make their calling and election sure, to make sure of an opinion, which, when they have done all, they are not infallibly sure whether it be true or no, because all things necessary to salvation and church-communion are plainly laid down in Scripture, in which we may be infallibly sure of the truth of them; but for other things that we have no plain texts for, but the truth of them depends upon our interpretations, here we must be cautioned, that we do not spend much time in imposing those upon others, or venting those among others, unless we can assume infallibility, otherwise we spend time upon uncertainty. And whoever casts their eyes abroad, and do open their ears to intelligence, shall both see, and to their sorrow hear, that many churches spend most of their time in jangling and contending about those things which are neither essential to salvation nor church-communion; and that which is worse, about such doubtful questions which they are never able to give an infallible solution of. But now where unity and peace is, there our time is spent in praising God; and in those great questions, What we should do to be saved? and, How we may be more holy and more humble towards God, and most charitable and more serviceable to one another?

(2) Where unity and peace is wanting, there is evil surmising and evil speaking, to the damage and disgrace, if not to the ruining, of one another. Galations 5: 14, 15. The whole law is fulfilled in one word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." No sooner the bond of charity is broken, which is as a wall about Christians, but soon they begin to make havoc and spoil of one another; then there is raising evil reports, and taking up evil reports, against each other. Hence it is that whispering and backbiting proceeds, and going from house to house to blazon the faults and infirmities of others: hence it is that we watch for the haltings of one another, and do inwardly rejoice at the miscarriage of others, saying in our hearts, "Ha! ha! so we would have it": but now where unity and peace is, there is charity; and where charity is, there we are willing to hide the faults and cover the nakedness, of our brethren. "Charity thinketh no evil;" 1 Cor. 13: 5; and therefore it cannot surmise, neither will it speak evil.

(3) Where unity and peace is wanting, there can be no great matters enterprised — we cannot do much for God, nor much for one another; when the devil would hinder the bringing to pass of good in nations and

churches, he divides their counsels (and as one well observes) he divides their heads, that he may divide their hands; when Jacob had prophesied of the cruelty of Simeon and Levi, who were brethren, he threatens them with the consequence of it; Genesis 49:7, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel". The devil is not to learn that maxim he hath taught the Machiavellians of the world, *Divide et impera*; divide and rule. It is a united force that is formidable. Hence the spouse in the Canticles is said to be but one, and the only one of her mother. Cant. 6: 9. Hereupon it is said of her, verse 10, "That she is terrible as an army with banners". What can a divided army do, or a disordered army that have lost their banners, or for fear or shame have thrown them away? In like manner, what can Christians do for Christ, and the enlarging of His dominions in the world, in bringing men from darkness to light, while themselves are divided and disordered? Peace is to Christians as great rivers are to some cities, which (besides other benefits and commodities) are natural fortifications by reason whereof those places are made impregnable; but when, by the subtilty of an adversary or the folly of the citizens, those waters come to be divided into little petty rivulets, how soon are they assailed and taken? Thus it fares with churches, when once the devil or their own folly divides them, they will be so far from resisting of him, that they will soon be subjected by him.

Peace is to churches as walls to a city; nay, unity has defended cities that had no walls. It was once demanded of Agesilaus, why Lacedemon had no walls; he answers (pointing back to the city), That the concord of the citizens was the strength of the city. In like manner, Christians are strong when united; then they are more capable to resist temptation, and to succour such as are tempted. When unity and peace is among the churches, then are they like a walled town; and when peace is the church's walls, salvation will be her bulwarks.

Plutarch tells of one Silurus that had eighty sons, whom he calls to him on his death-bed, and gave them a sheaf of arrows, thereby to signify, that if they lived in unity, they might do much, but if they divided they would come to nothing. If Christians were all of one piece, if they were all but one lump, or but one sheaf or bundle, how great are the things they might do for Christ and His people in the world, whereas otherwise they can do little but dishonour Him and offend His!

It is reported of leviathan, that his strength is in his scales; Job 41: 15-17, "His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal; one is so near to another, that no air can come between them; they are joined together, they stick together, they cannot be sundered." If the church of

God were united like the scales of leviathan, it would not be every brain-sick notion, nor angry speculation, that would cause its separation.

Solomon says, "Two are better than one," because, if one fall, the other may raise him up; then surely twenty are better than two, and an hundred are better than twenty, for the same reason; because they are more capable to help one another. If ever Christians would do anything to raise up the fallen tabernacles of Jacob, and to strengthen the weak, and comfort the feeble, and to fetch back those that have gone astray, it must be by unity.

We read of the men of Babel, Genesis 11: 6, "The Lord said, Behold, the people are one, . . . and now nothing will be restrained from them that they have imagined to do."

We learn by reason, what great things may be done in worldly achievements where unity is; and shall not reason (assisted with the motives of religion) teach us, that unity among Christians may enable them to enterprise greater things for Christ? Would not this make Satan fall from heaven like lightning? For as unity built literal Babel, it is unity that must pull down mystical Babel. And, on the other hand, where divisions are, there is confusion; by this means a Babel has been built in every age. It has been observed by a learned man — and I wish I could say not truly observed — that there is most of Babel and confusion among those that cry out against it.

Would we have a hand to destroy Babylon? let us have a heart to unite one among another.

Our English histories tell us, that after Austin the monk had been some time in England, he heard of some of the remains of the British Christians, which he convened to a place which Cambden in his *Britannia* calls "Austin's Oak". Here they met to consult about matters of religion; but such was their division, by reason of Austin's imposing spirit, that our stories tell us that Synod was only famous for this, that they only met and did nothing. This is the mischief of divisions — they hinder the doing of much good; and if Christians that are divided be ever famous for anything, it will be, that they have often met together, and talked of this and the other thing, but they did nothing.

(4) Where unity and peace is wanting, there the weak are wounded, and the wicked are hardened. Unity may well be compared to precious oil, Psalm 133: 2. It is the nature of oil to heal that which is wounded, and to soften that which is hard. Those men that have hardened themselves against God and His people, when they shall behold unity and peace among them, will say, God is in them indeed: and on the other hand, are

they not ready to say, when they see you divided, That the devil is in you that you cannot agree!

(5) Divisions and want of peace keep those out of the church that would come in; and cause many to go out that are in.

"The divisions of Christians (as a learned man observes) are a scandal to the Jews, an opprobrium to the Gentiles, and an inlet to atheism and infidelity": insomuch that our controversies about religion (especially as they have been of late managed) have made religion itself become a controversy. O then, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! The peace and unity that was among the primitive Christians drew others to them. What hinders the conversion of the Jews, but the divisions of Christians? Must I be a Christian? says the Jew. What Christian must I be? what sect must I be of? The Jews (as one observes), glossing upon that text in Isaiah 11: 6, where it is prophesied, That the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and there shall be none left to hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain: they interpreting these sayings to signify the concord and peace that shall be among the people that shall own the Messiah, do from hence conclude, that the Messiah is not yet come, because of the contentions and divisions that are among those that profess Him. And the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 14: 23, that if an unbeliever should see their disorders, he would say they were mad; but where unity and peace is, there the churches are multiplied. We read, Acts 9, that when the churches had rest, they multiplied; and Acts 2: 46, 47, when the church was serving God with one accord, "the Lord added to them daily such as should be saved".

It is unity brings men into the church, and divisions keep them out. It is reported of an Indian, passing by the house of a Christian, and hearing them contending, being desired to turn in, he refused, saying, "Habamach dwells there", meaning that the devil dwelt there: but where unity and peace is, there God is; and he that dwells in love, dwells in God. The Apostle tells the Corinthians, that if they walked orderly, even the unbelievers would hereby be enforced to come and worship, and say, God was in them indeed. And we read, Zechariah 8: 23, of a time when ten men shall take hold of a Jew, and say, "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

And hence it is that Christ prays, John 17: 21, that His disciples might be one, as the Father and He were one, that the world might believe the Father sent Him: as if He would say, you may preach Me as long as you will, and to little purpose, if you are not at peace and unity among yourselves. Such was the unity of Christians in former days, that the

intelligent heathen would say of them, that though they had many bodies, yet they had but one soul. And we read the same of them, Acts 4: 32, that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul".

And as the learned Stillingfleet observes in his *Irenicum*: "The unity and peace that was then among Christians made religion amiable in the judgment of impartial heathens: Christians were then known by the benignity and sweetness of their dispositions, by the candour and ingenuity of their spirits, by their mutual love, forbearance, and condescension to one another. But either this is not the practice of Christianity (*viz.*, a duty that Christians are bound to observe), or else it is not calculated for our meridian, where the spirits of men are of too high an elevation for it; for if pride and uncharitableness, if divisions and strifes, if wrath and envy, if animosities and contentions, were but the marks of true Christians, Diogenes need never light his lamp at noon to find out such among us; but if a spirit of meekness, gentleness, and condescension, if a stooping to the weaknesses and infirmities of one another, if pursuit after peace, when it flies from us, be the indispensable duties, and characteristic notes of Christians, it may possibly prove a difficult inquest to find out such among the crowds of those that shelter themselves under that glorious name."

It is unity and peace of churches that brings others to them, and makes Christianity amiable. What is prophesied of the church of the Jews may in this case be applied to the Gentile church, Isaiah 66: 12, that when once God extends peace to her like a river, the Gentiles shall come in like a flowing stream; then (and not till then) the glory of the Lord shall arise upon His churches, and His glory shall be seen among them; then shall their hearts fear and be enlarged, because the abundance of the nations shall be converted to them.

(6) As want of unity and peace keeps those out of the church that would come in, so it hinders the growth of those that are in. Jars and divisions, wranglings and prejudices, eat out growth, if not the life of religion. These are those waters of Marah, that embitter our spirits, and quench the Spirit of God. Unity and peace is said to be like the dew of Hermon, and as a dew that descended upon Sion, where the Lord commanded the blessing. Psalm 133: 3.

Divisions run religion into briars and thorns, contentions and parties. Divisions are to churches like wars in countries: where wars are, the ground lies waste and untilled, none takes care of it. It is love that edifies, but division pulls down. Divisions are as the north-east wind to the fruits, which causes them to dwindle away to nothing; but when the storms are

over, everything begins to grow. When men are divided, they seldom speak the truth in love; and then no marvel they grow not up to Him in all things who is the Head.

It is a sad presage of an approaching famine (as one well observes), not of bread nor water, but of hearing the Word of God, when the thin ears of corn devour the plump and full ones; when the lean kine devour the fat ones; when our controversies about doubtful things, and things of less moment, eat up our zeal for the more indisputable and practical things in religion: which may give us cause to fear, that this will be the character by which our age will be known to posterity — that it was the age that talked of religion most, and loved it least.

Look upon those churches where peace is, and there you shall find prosperity. When the churches had rest, they were not only multiplied, but, walking in the fear of the Lord and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they were edified; it is when the whole body is knit together, as with joints and bands, that they increase with the increase of God.

We are at a stand sometimes, why there is so little growth among churches, why men have been so long in learning, and are yet so far from attaining the knowledge of the truth; some have given one reason, and some another; some say pride is the cause, and others say covetousness is the cause. I wish I could say these were no causes; but I observe, that when God entered His controversy with His people of old, He mainly insisted upon some one sin, as idolatry, and shedding of innocent blood, etc., as comprehensive of the rest; not but that they were guilty of other sins, but those that were the most capital are particularly insisted on: in like manner, whoever would but take a review of churches that live in contentions and divisions, may easily find that breach of unity and charity is their capital sin, and occasion of all other sins. No marvel then, that the Scripture says, the whole law is fulfilled in love: and if so, then where love is wanting, it needs must follow the whole law is broken. It is where love grows cold that sin abounds; and therefore the want of unity and peace is the cause of that leanness and barrenness that is among us; it is true in spirituals as well as temporals, that peace brings plenty.

(7) Where unity and peace is wanting, our prayers are hindered; the promise is, that what we shall agree to ask shall be given us of our heavenly Father: no marvel we pray and pray, and yet are not answered; it is because we are not agreed what to have.

It is reported that the people in Lacedemonia, coming to make supplication to their idol god, some of them asked for rain, and others of them asked for fair weather: the oracle returns them this answer, That

they should go first and agree among themselves. Would a heathen god refuse to answer such prayers in which the supplicants were not agreed, and shall we think the true God will answer them?

We see then that divisions hinder our prayers, and lay a prohibition on our sacrifice: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar," says Christ, "and there remember that thy brother has aught against thee, leave thy gift, and go, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer it." So that want of unity and charity hinders even our particular prayers and devotions.

This hindered the prayers and fastings of the people of old from finding acceptance. Isaiah 58: 3. The people ask the reason wherefore they fasted, and God did not see nor take notice of them. He gives this reason, because they fasted for strife and debate, and hid their face from their own flesh. Again, Isaiah 59, the Lord says, His hand was not shortened, that He couldnot save; nor His ear heavy, that He could not hear: but their sins had separated between their God and them. And among those many sins they stood chargeable with, this was none the least, viz., that the way of peace they had not known. You see where peace was wanting, prayers were hindered, both under the Old and New Testaments.

The sacrifice of the people, in the 65th of Isaiah, that said, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou", was a smoke in the nostrils of the Lord. On the other hand, we read how acceptable those prayers were that were made with one accord, Acts 4: 24, compared with verse 31. They prayed with one accord, and they were all of one heart, and of one soul: And see the benefit of it, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spoke the Word with all boldness"; which was the very thing they prayed for, as appears verse 29. And the Apostle exhorts the husband to dwell with his wife, that their prayers might not be hindered. 1 Peter 3: 7. We see then want of unity and peace, either in families or churches, is a hindrance of prayers.

(8) It is a dishonour and disparagement to Christ that His family should be divided. When an army falls into mutiny and division, it reflects disparagement on him that has the conduct of it. In like manner, the divisions of families are a dishonour to the heads, and those that govern them. And if so, then how greatly do we dishonour our Lord and Governor, who gave His body to be broken to keep His church from breaking, who prayed for their peace and unity, and left peace at His departing from them for a legacy, even a peace which the world could not bestow upon them.

(9) Where there is peace and unity, there is a sympathy with each other; that which is the want of one will be the want of all. "Who is afflicted,"

says the Apostle, "and I burn not?" We should then "remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being ourselves also of the body". Heb. 13: 3. But where the body is broken, or men are not reckoned or esteemed of the body, no marvel we are so little affected with such as are afflicted. Where divisions are, that which is the joy of one is the grief of another; but where unity and peace and charity abound, there we shall find Christians in mourning with them that mourn, and rejoicing with them that rejoice; then they will not envy the prosperity of others, nor secretly rejoice at the miseries or miscarriages of any. — *Extracted.*

The Establishment Principle

by Rev. M. MacSween, M.A.

(Continued from page 79)

But we notice further that the Establishment Principle is clearly affirmed in the Documents of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Church from the First Reformation in 1560 onwards. These documents include the old Scots Confession, (1560); the First Book of Discipline, (1560); the Second Book of Discipline, (1578); the National Covenant of 1581; the National Covenant of 1638; the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643; the Westminster Confession of Faith (adopted in 1647); the Revolution Settlement of 1690; the Act of Union of 1707, and the Act of Security of 1707; the Claim, Declaration and Protest of 1842 and 1843 of the Disruption Free Church and the Deed of Separation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1893.

The Disruption did not arise from any doubt in regard to the lawfulness of Church Establishments. On the contrary, during the whole Ten Years' Conflict prior to the Disruption, the contention was that, consistently with the duty of the State to endow the Church, the State was bound to recognise her liberty and the will of the people in the calling of ministers. An opinion quite contrary to the latter part of this statement prevailed in the Civil Courts, and this was decided as law in the Auchterarder Case, 1839, and in other similar cases. Here we may quote from a Pastoral Address issued by a Special Commission of the General Assembly on 25th April, 1843, a month before the Disruption took place. The following is an extract:— "The authority which Christ claims as King of Zion in His own

spiritual Kingdom, He demands as Prince of the Kings of the earth that they shall sacredly respect and recognise (Psalm 2: 10-12). In this character He acknowledges them as Kings, and confirms their secular dominion. The very fact of his being their Prince gives new stability and a new sanction to their thrones. Civil government, by whomsoever wielded, is ratified by Him as the ordinance of God, which the Son of God as King controls and overrules, and which, in the very act of overruling, He establishes anew. (Proverbs 8: 15; Romans 13: 1-7; Titus 3: 1; 1 Peter 2: 13-17). On the other hand, as Prince of the Kings of the earth, He requires them to acknowledge Him, and to own His spiritual supremacy. He lays the Civil Magistrate under a solemn obligation, as well in the regulation of the ordinary civil affairs of his Magistracy, as in his dealing with matters spiritual and such as affect religion and the Church of the living God. In his ordinary civil administration, the Civil Magistrate owning Christ as the King of Kings, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth, is bound to have respect to His laws and to aim at the advancement of His glory. The spirit of Christianity ought to pervade all the political institutions and all the public transactions of his Kingdom, and whatever is done should be sanctioned by the Word of God and by prayer. (Psalm 82: 3; Psalm 85: 2 2 Samuel 23: 3.)

But in addition, the Christian Magistrate, as one of the Kings of the earth of whom Christ is Prince, is to interest himself directly in the affairs of Christ's Kingdom, and to act as the guardian of religion in the land. In that capacity he has many important functions to discharge in reference to the Church, and he has authority as the minister of God for good, to take measures for preserving peace and order in the Church, for reforming abuses and remedying grievances, for guarding purity of doctrine and discipline, and for supplying the means of grace in efficiency and abundance through the ministrations of the Church to the people under his dominion. (Isaiah 49: 23; 2 Kings 18: 4; 2 Chronicles 19: 8; John 18: 37; John 19: 2.)"

That extract from this document shows very clearly that those who afterwards formed the Disruption Church held the Establishment Principle and were entirely opposed to Voluntaryism. Thus we find the first Free Church Assembly issuing a Pastoral Address in 1843, containing the following passage:— "Long was it the peculiar distinction and high glory of the Established Church of Scotland, to maintain the sole Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ — His exclusive sovereignty in the Church, which is His Kingdom and house. It was ever held by her, indeed, that the Church and the State being equally ordinances of God, and having certain

common objects connected with His glory and the social welfare, might and *ought to unite* in a joint acknowledgment of Christ, and in the employment of the means and resources belonging to them respectively for the advancement of His Cause."

The Disruption Free Church therefore held that there was no incompatibility between the principle of the spiritual independence or liberty of the Church and the Establishment Principle. Voluntaryism, — along with Popery and Erastianism — it repudiated. So spoke Dr Thomas Chalmers as Moderator of that first Free Church Assembly:— "To be more plain, let me be more particular. The Voluntaries mistake us, if they conceive us to be Voluntaries. We hold by the duty of Government to give of their resources and their means for the maintenance of a Gospel ministry in the land; and we pray that their eyes may be opened, so that they may learn how to acquit themselves as the protectors of the Church, and not as its corrupters or its tyrants. We pray that the sin of Uzziah, into which they have fallen, may be forgiven them and that those days of light and blessedness may speedily arrive, when Kings shall be the nursing fathers, and Queens the nursing mothers of our Zion. In a word, we hold that every part and every function of a Commonwealth should be leavened with Christianity; and that every functionary from the highest to the lowest, should in their respective spheres, do all that in them lies to countenance and uphold it. That is to say, though we quit the Establishment, we go out on the Establishment principle — we quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. To express it otherwise, we are the advocates for a National recognition and National support of religion, and we are not Voluntaries." What forced the Disruption was the Erastian encroachment of the Court of Session, springing from the illegal Patronage Act (1712) of Queen Anne.

But while we are to stress the Headship of Christ over the Nations as well as His Headship over the Church, we are to vindicate the honour due to this doctrine as very closely connected with the Establishment Principle. Ezekiel 21: 26, 27. "Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take off the crown . . . I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more until He come, whose right it is, and I will give it Him." It is when we make the evidence of these doctrines from the Holy Scripture in its fulness and glorious certainty and grandeur pass before our minds that we are best prepared to vindicate the place which it ought to hold in the faith of the Church, and in the Church's Confession of Faith, and her testimony to Nations and their Kings. The Reformed Church of Scotland has testified equally for Christ's Headship over the Church and His Headship

over the Nations, and so for the Establishment Principle. Therefore there is no nation at this moment however hostile to the truth and Cause of Christ, but the Church of God is entitled to enter within its gates with the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is an indefeasible right of the Church, but it rests on the truth that Christ is Head of that Nation and that its gates may not be closed against "the righteous nation that keepeth the truth", since they may not be closed against its King, who is the Truth, and who has said, "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28: 18-20.

The reformed Church of Scotland has always held the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Nations under the form of the duty of the Christian Magistrate to establish the Christian religion. In the Westminster Confession of Faith we find the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Nations put down very thoroughly under the doctrine of the Civil Magistrate and his duty to the Church of Christ, in Chapter 23.

It is imperative for the welfare of both Church and State that legitimate appeal may be taken to the Authority of the Head of the Church, who is also Head of the Nations. It is of primary importance, therefore, that by His written Word, the Head of the Church claims to be Head of the Nations also, and lays His commandment on Nations and their Rulers. The prophecies indicate not only what God will do in His Providence with the Kings and rulers of the earth in relation to His Church, but what duties they shall discharge towards the Church. The prediction that Kings will one day do these things in a way of duty, is the intimation of the will of God that it is their duty to do these things *now*.

It is very important to notice that in Chapter 23 of the Westminster Confession of Faith — that on the Civil Magistrate — is the one and only form under which the Church confesses the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Nations. If the relationship of the Church to the Confession is altered, then allowance is given to deny any of the doctrines of the Confession. In 1846 the Free Church Assembly passed an Act explaining the Formula, which, by reason of her change of circumstances, the Free Church required to construct after her enforced Disruption from the State Church because of Erastianism. In passing this Act anent the Formula, the General Assembly, because the portion of the Confession referred to — Chapter 23 — had been stigmatised as teaching persecuting principles, thought it proper to clear her Confession of this unworthy stigma, and

declared:— "The General Assembly, in passing this Act think it right to declare that while the Church firmly maintains the same spiritual principles as to the duty of nations and their rulers, in reference to true religion and the Church of Christ, for which she has hitherto contended, yet she disclaims intolerant and persecuting principles" (not, be it observed, disclaims any principles she had hitherto held, but disclaims the idea that they involve intolerance and persecution) "and does not regard her Confession of Faith, or any portion thereof, when fairly interpreted, as favouring intolerance or persecution, or consider that her office-bearers by subscribing it, profess any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience or the right of private judgment." This declaration is not to be wondered at, for the Confession contains this great article of Faith, even "that God alone is Lord of the conscience". The Confession of Faith is a supremely self-consistent document, and is to be interpreted as in harmony with itself. At that time the Free Church gave an unqualified adherence to the doctrine of the Confession, *in the form* in which it is contained in the Confession.

Let us consider for a little the part of the Confession which this Act anent the Formula (1846) specifically declares to be free from intolerance and persecuting principles. First, we see that it is the Westminster Confession's form of setting forth the great doctrine of Christ's Headship over the Nations, which is a great leading principle of the Reformed Church of Scotland. Secondly, we see that the Westminster Confession sets forth this doctrine in the form of stating the magistrate's duty towards religion and the Church. That was the form in which the great leading Reformers were accustomed to affirm the doctrine. The Scottish divines Gillespie, Rutherford, Durham and others keenly opposed every form of Erastianism and especially with respect to Anglican divines, such as Hooker who made Christ's kingdom altogether spiritual, mystical and invisible, so that Christ is not a King to bind the external man or to care for the external government of His own house, which, like all other external things, they understand to belong to the Civil Magistrate. This theory those Anglicans had derived from Constantine, who said to the Bishops in his day: "God has made you bishops of the internal affairs of the Church, but He has appointed me the bishop of its external affairs." George Gillespie puts the relation of the Magistrate to the Church thus:— "He is the Keeper, defender, and guardian of both tables, but neither judge nor interpreter of Scripture. The power of the Christian Magistrate is cumulative and not privative in relation to the Church. The external administration of the magistrate in relation to the Church and religion is two-fold: First,

corrective, by external laws, and, secondly, auxiliary by external benefits. The Church's part is directive — she directs the magistrate. The magistrate says to the Church as Moses said to Hobab: "Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." ("Aaron's Rod Blossoming", p. 116.)

While there were differences in the views held with respect to the practical working out of the doctrine by Scottish Reformed Theologians, yet all were unanimous in maintaining that there is only one Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that He is Head over all that pertains to the Church. As Lord over all men, Christ has expressed His will toward all, and upon them He may enforce His will by the external operations of His providences and laws. But Christ is Head over all things only to His Church, which is His Body. Directions go forth from the Head to the several members of the Body but also inclinations and enablings through grace for the doing of that which is required. Writing in his "Institutes" on the general subject of the Establishment Principle John Calvin declares that, "Christian princes and magistrates are rebuked who neglect the care of Divine things — such as Divine worship — and devote themselves merely to the administration of justice among men: as if God had appointed rulers in His own house to decide earthly controversies and had omitted what was of far greater moment, His own pure worship, as prescribed by His law. Such views are adopted by turbulent men, who, in their eagerness to make all kinds of innovations with impunity, would fain get rid of all the vindications of violated piety." Yet we find some historians declaring that the Establishment Principle was quite unknown to the Reformers!

(To be continued)

Gathan Gloir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr. Eldeard Pearce

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 89)

2. Tha neo-caochlaidheachd Dhé air a thogail air, agus a'g eirigh bho oirdheirceas neo-chriochnach agus iomlanachd a bhith. Mar a thà Dia 'n a bhith fìor-ghlan agus sìmplidh, mar sin thà E 'n a bhith ro iomlan, na bhith neo-chriochnach iomlan, agus uime sin neo-chaochlaidheach. Thà daoine neo-iomlan, agus uime sin atharraichidh iad; thà Dia iomlan, agus uime sin cha'n atharraich E. Thà na h-uile atharrachadh, a luchd mo

ghràidh, a ciallachadh neo-iomlanachd anns a chuspair a thà air atharrachadh: oir, guidheam oirbh, thà atharrachadh dà-fhìlte ann, thà atharrachadh gu truailleachd ann, agus atharrachadh gu iomlanachd; 's e th'ann an atharrachadh gu truailidheachd ach atharrachadh bho'n a mhaith gus an olc, na bho'n olc a dh'ionnsuidh ni's miosa, agus a leithid de dh'atharrachadh gu deimhin thà e comharachadh neo-iomlanachd anns a chuspair. Tha atharrachadh bho'n olc chùm a mhaith, na bho'n a mhaith a chùm nis fearr, agus thà so mar an ceudna a comharachadh a mach neo-iomlanachd anns a chuspair, ge b'e bhà e roimh. Mar so, thà na h-uile atharrachadh a nochdadh neo-iomlanachd, ach thà Dia neo-chrìochnach iomlan, agus mar sin cha'n eil E buailteach do dh'atharrachadh. Cha'n eil E comasach air atharrach truailidh agus cha'n eil E comasach adhartais, dò-bhrìgh gu'm bheil E 'n a bhith neo-chrìochnach iomlan. Agus mar sin nach gabh nì chur Ris, 'n a nì thoirt bh'uaith. "Bitheamh-se coimhlionta mar a thà 'ur n-Athair a thà air neamh coimhlionta." (a deir Crìosd) Mata v. 48. Is bith iomlan ar n-Athair neamhaidh. Bhà E'n dà chuid do-sheachainte agus bho thùs iomlan. Tha E iomlan ann Fein, air dhà uile oirdheirceisean agus iomlanachdan a bhi gabhail còmhnuidh ann, agus 's E tobar agus aobhar na'n oirdheirceasan agus iomlanachdan a thà ri'm faotainn anns 'n a creutairean. Thà Eoin ag ràdh, "Gur solus Dia, agus nach eil dorchadas air bith ànn-san." I Eoin i, 'S e sin, thà e'n dà chuid fìorghlan agus iomlan; fìor-ghlan gu'n mheasgachadh, agus iomlan gu'n ghaoid. Thà E uile gu leir iomlan, agus uime sin neo-chaochlaidheach. Ciod a their mì? Thà Dia chò maith, cho làn, chò beannaichte, chò iomlan, anns a h-uile dòigh agus gu'm bheil e eucomasach gu'n atharraicheadh E. Is e nì mòr a leugh mì ann an aon dhe na h-athraichean, "Air do thaobh-sa, nà dhà t-ionnsuidh a Thighearn, a bhì agus a bhì beo, cha dà nì e, dò-bhrìgh gu'r tù am fìor bhith, agus am fìor bheatha, thà thù anns na h-uile seadh, an Tì is Airde, am prìomh aon, an Tì is ro-oirdheirce, agus cha'n eil caochladh maille riut." Agus gu dearbh mà tà cha'n urrain E caochladh. A luchd mo ghràidh; dh'innis Dia dhuinn, gu'r E an Dia uile-fhoghainteach. Thà agam na h-uile lànachd, bheannachdan, agus iomlanachdan annam Fein. Mar a thà neach air an àite so a gabhail beachd, thà E ro-fhoghainteach, aon a thà neo-chrìochnach foghainteach air a shon fein, agus mar an ceudna a deonachadh foghainteachd dhà shluagh. Thà na h-uile oirdheirceas agus iomlanachd Ann-san. Agus 's e aonadh beannaichte a thà'n sin, agus cia mar an sin a dh'atharraicheadh E?

3. Thà neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé air a thogail air, agus ag eirigh bho'n lànachd neo-chrìochnach agus meudachd a ghliocais agus a thuigse. Mar

a thà Dia na bhith ro-fhiorghlan agus iomlan, mar sin thà E ro-ghlic, agus uime sin neo-chaochlaidheach, agus thà so a buntainn gu h-àraidh dhà neo-chaochlaidheachd 'n a rioghachd, 'n a chomhairlean, 'n a chùmhanta agus 'n a ghràdh. Thà gliocas dhaoine lag, agus an tuigse dorch agus an-domhain, agus mar sin thà iad ag atharrachadh. Cha'n eil iad an diugh a nì a bhà iad an dé, na faodaidh e bhi nach bì iad a màrach a nì bhà iad an diugh, ach thà Dia neo-chrionnach glic, agus is aithne Dhà na uile nì, agus uime sin cha'n eil E'g atharrachadh. Thà E'n Tì ceudna gu bràth. Thà Calvin ag ràdh, "Atharraichidh daoine, thà iad bitheanta ag òrduchadh nithean a bhi air atharrachadh a chaidh a dheanamh, agus thà iad ag iarraidh dòighean gu bhi toirt air ais an gnìomharan fein agus nithean a dheoinich iad, a chionn gu'n tig nithean fodh chomhair an lntinn iomadh uair, nach fhac iad roimh laimh, agus air nach do smuaintich iad riamh. Ach, thà Dia ag àicheadh gu'm bheil a leithid sin dé nì Ann-san. Thà E neo-chrionnach glic, thà eolas iomlan agus tuigse Aige air nithean, agus mar sin chà chaochail E." Thà E air a ghairm anns na Sgrìobturan "Dia eolais," I. Samuel ii. 3. Seadh, thà e air a ràdh gu'm bheil E iomlan ann an eolas, Iob xxxvii, 16. Thà eolas iomlan Aige air na h-uile nithean, co dhiubh thà iad seachad, an làthair, no rì teachd. Chì E na h-uile nithean aig an aon àm, le aon sealladh, na aig an aon àm, agus sin gu neo-thuiteamach agus gu neo-mhearachdach, Is aithne Dhà na h-uile nithean le aon ghnìomh dhà thuigse, a thà ro-shìmplidh, neo-chaochlaidheachd agus sìorruidh. Thà Dia anns na Sgrìobturan air ainmeachadh an t-aon Dia glic, I. Tim. i, 17. Agus thà e air a ràdh thaobh a thuigse gu'm bheil i neo-chrionnach. Salm cxlvii. 5. Chì Dia, a luchd mo ghraidh, agus aithnichidh ann Fein, na h-uile nì a ghnàth, gu h-iomlan, agus aig an aon àm; na uile nì gu'n bhriseadh, gu'n stad a ghnàth: gu h-iomlan gu'n ghaid, agus aig an aon àm gu'n ruith an deigh a cheile. "Aithnichte do Dhia thà oibre fein uile o thoiseach an t-saoghail." Gnìomh. xv. 18. Ann an aon fhocal, a luchd mo ghraidh, thà aig Dia sealladh iomlan air na h-uile nithean na shìorruidheachd, chà mhotha is urrain nì air bith a bhì ùr Dhà, a bheireadh mu'n cuairt atharrachadh Ann: agus le so chì sibh ciod e bhunait no'n grùnnd air am bheil a neo-chaochlaidheachd air a togail.

(Ri'a leantuinn)

It is a great matter to have true grace, and a greater to have assurance of it, and no less to use that assurance aright.

John Brown

Book Reviews

The Examination of the New Pentecostalism by Walter J. Chantry. Banner of Truth Trust 25p.

This most readable little book, as indicated in the title, is an examination of the New Pentecostalism. It is, we think, a fair minded able and judicious assessment of the nature, claims and dramatic progress of the charismatic movement, with its strong and definite appeal to many within and without the pale of the church: to Modernists, Roman Catholics and Evangelicals alike. The author does well to place the movement in its historical, ecclesiastical and contemporary setting. In so doing, he makes some very revealing remarks relative to the factors which produce a disposition in evangelical circles to favour, or at least to hesitate to recognise and condemn its unorthodox and anti-biblical character. The problem posed by this movement, the extent and diversity of the interest it has aroused, and the reasons for the variety of attitudes adopted towards it are all stated and co-ordinated in a clear and telling manner. The assertion that student organisations are in special danger of showing more than ordinary interest in the movement, possibly because of youth and inexperience is worthy of note. Further, the fact that on the Mission Front, pressure for unity tends to silence any criticism, should be taken seriously. The exploitation of youth and of that of the difficult circumstances peculiar to a mission field are tactics which rouse a certain degree of suspicion especially in the Ecumenical age.

A most valuable distinction is made by the writer between the claim that God is working miracles, as distinct from the charismatic affirmation that men have power in the 20th century to perform miracles. His comments on the grave aspersion involved in the Pentecostal claim to have the full Gospel, are merited, while his comparison between the so-called present day miracles and those of old and New Testament times are not only fair, but devastating. Another very important point made, is that the charismatic movement undermines confidence in the sufficiency of Scripture. It also emerges from his knowledge and study of the subject that the appeal made to Christians by this movement is carnal, emotional and shot through with sensationalism, and that behind it all, lies the misinterpretation of the Word of God.

While admitting the present relative impotence of the church and the desperate need of the Spirit's power, he demonstrates that the Pentecostal movement of the Spirit fails to produce a holy, contrite, and humble race.

All in all this is one of the best books I have yet read on the New

Pentecostal Movement, and heartily recommend its perusal. I have only to add that the popularity and danger of the Movement explains the rather extended Review I have endeavoured to give. F.M.

Commentary on Philippians by William Hendriksen. Banner of Truth £1.25

The reader of a 'modernistic' commentary is liable to have his mind and soul poisoned rather than purified by the perusal of such a work. Within the church, when scholarship is divorced from reverence and devotion, the results are disastrous. Even orthodoxy itself, combined with no ordinary degree of learning, without the secret unction of the Holy Spirit must leave much to be desired in any Commentary on the Scriptures.

In Dr Hendriksen's volumes we think that we find that experimental and sanctifying knowledge of the Truth without which, neither pastoral, theological nor linguistic ability would equip him for the task of unfolding the treasures of the Word of God. His Commentaries on Paul's epistles are all modelled more or less according to the same pattern and the Philippian epistle is no exception. Each chapter is prefaced by a synthetical synopsis of its contents and supplemented by a cluster of succinct seed thoughts. The whole volume is characterised by soundness of doctrine, balance of judgment, depth and penetration of thought. The somewhat lengthy footnotes are invaluable and betray no meagre degree of proficiency in the knowledge, character and structure of the original language. At the same time, this book may be profitably read by those who lack the ability to appreciate these. A sample of the author's capability of putting his knowledge of the original language to its best and highest use is to be found on page 60, and with this quotation I leave you to judge of my warrant for recommending the reading of this Commentary.

"The apostle prays that as a further ingredient of their love the Philippians may have keen discernment; the taste and feeling for that which in any concrete situation is spiritually beautiful, the 'aesthetic sense' in the sphere of Christian duty and doctrine (aesthesis is the Greek word, occurring only here in the New Testament). Love, in other words should be judicious. This keen discernment or perception born of experience, is the ability of mind and heart to separate not only the good from the bad, but also the important from the unimportant, in each case choosing the former and rejecting the latter. This is indeed necessary. A person who possesses love but lacks 'discernment' may reveal a great deal of eagerness and enthusiasm. He may donate to all kinds of causes. His motives may be worthy and his intentions honourable, yet he may be doing more harm than good."

F.M.

Notes and Comments

Violence and Indiscipline among Teenagers

Schools in many parts of the country, but particularly in the cities, are facing serious difficulties owing to truancy and classroom hooliganism. The violence in schools is threatening a major breakdown in secondary school education, according to reports. Even among adolescent girls the incidence of violence has risen tremendously in the last few years.

It is not difficult to trace the causes of this serious situation. Partly it is traceable to the refusal of parents to instill discipline into their children when they are young. Another cause is the increasing number of broken homes resulting in lack of parental supervision at a critical stage in the life of the children of such homes. But perhaps most of all, it stems from the modern permissive outlook and the false theories about the inhibiting and dangerous nature of physical punishment or restraint of any kind — theories which have been widely and vigorously propagated and very largely adopted over the last decade and more. The sentimental reformers who were responsible for this new outlook, and who so deplored the infliction of corporal punishment, are now faced with the far more serious violence which the implementation of their own theories produced.

The return of discipline throughout every department of our national life is an urgent necessity. This, together with the restoration of adequate penalties for violence and murder, including the death penalty for the latter, would go a long way towards remedying the present situation.

Monarchies menaced

In the European Community Affairs debate (Hansard, 27/11/73), it was made abundantly clear that economic and monetary union by 1980 was the Government's objective. This would be followed by political union, itself a further step to the declared ultimate aim of world government. Herr Brandt, a former Communist Party member, who has stated that all Common Market countries should lose their monarchies, is a keen proponent of a federal-type European Government exercising control over economic, monetary and foreign affairs, also defence. It is well to recollect that, since the fall of the Roman Empire, there have been numbers of attempts to form a united Europe, all of which have been associated with the Vatican and have ended in blood and chaos.

English Churchman.

Italy

Perhaps it is time to remind our people of our missionary contact with the North of Italy. I think it is best done by quoting, as before, from letters received from our friends there. Both the letters from which I quote below were written by the grandmother — the mother of Emilia. The first was written in December.

“Now I will tell you what the priest from Pontell’ania did. (That is the little village next to Fornaci.) One morning he came into Renzo’s class, and asked if any boy had a Bible. Renzo, who had a New Testament, showed it to him. This fine specimen of a Catholic looked at it, then said to him in a low voice, ‘This is not good. It is Protestant. Burn it.’ Then he asked him, ‘Who gave it to you?’ Renzo replied, ‘My grand-mother.’ There it ended. His mother does not want him to take it out of his school-bag, and tells him not to be ashamed; it is the word of the Lord, inspired by God.”

This second letter was written at the end of January. The grandmother is referring here to the tape they had received, containing a short address on Ruth 1: 16-17. In the first part of the letter she spoke of difficulty in hearing the tape because the voice was very faint — the batteries were presumably done by this time. She went on to explain how they discovered they could run the tape recorder from the electricity mains supply. This obviously produced a marked improvement:

“How wonderful! We heard it so clearly that it seemed as if we were just beside you. I must say that if I had read the book of Ruth even many times without having listened to the sermon I would not have understood much. That is, I would not have understood the significance of it. But after your explanation we understood this little book very well, and how Ruth was steadfast in her decision to follow Naomi and to leave the idols so as to live always in the Christian faith.

O Lord, help us always and do not let us wander from the Holy Truth, for I believe there is help in Thee alone, and this I have proved by experience.

In times of great distress, because of ill-health or for other reasons, I have turned to the Most High and have been comforted. It is not that He has had regard to my sinful person, but He has had mercy on us because I go to Him through His Son, Jesus, to whom he denies nothing.”

I would like again to ask our people to pray for these Italian friends. May the Lord keep them, and bless the little that is being done for them!

I would especially ask for prayer, as my wife and I expect to return to Fornaci di Barga for a few weeks in April. May our visit be used to the glory of the Most High!

J.T.

Church Notes

Death of Rev. Dr R. Macdonald, Vancouver

We record with sorrow the passing of Rev. Dr R. Macdonald which took place in Vancouver, Canada, on Friday, 1st March 1974. Dr Macdonald had been out visiting that afternoon but as he was getting ready to go out again in the evening he collapsed and was found unconscious. He passed away in the ambulance taking him to hospital.

Dr Macdonald was ordained by the Southern Presbytery at Glasgow on 15th August 1928 as a Medical Missionary for our Mission in Rhodesia (F.P. Mag. Vol. 33 p. 197) where he continued to labour for over 20 years. In 1949 he went to Canada as the Church's Deputy and in 1950 he received a call from the Vancouver congregation. He was inducted to Vancouver in January 1951 (F.P. Mag. Vol. 55 p 252) where he laboured faithfully in the Gospel of God's grace until his passing on the 1st of March 1974. He would have been 75 years of age in August.

Dr Macdonald's death is a great loss to our Church and especially to his own congregation and family. We would extend sincere sympathy to Mrs Macdonald and her family in their time of sorrow, and also to the congregation in Vancouver now bereft of their Pastor. We trust that they will experience much of the Lord's comforting Presence in their sorrow, and be enabled with Job to say: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1: 21.

When the Lord is removing in this way those who were useful in His vineyard to the better country, may we be enabled to plead with Him to raise up other faithful labourers to take the place of those whom He has taken away to glory. We feel very much for the Vancouver congregation, situated as it is so far from the rest of the Church, and we would ask our people to remember the congregation in their prayers at a Throne of grace.

Southern Presbytery Clerkship

At a meeting of the Southern Presbytery in Gasgow on the 19th day of February, 1974, the Rev. Malcolm MacSween resigned from the Presbytery Clerkship. His resignation was accepted and the Court appointed the Rev. Donald MacLean, Glasgow, as their new Presbytery Clerk. Mr MacLean accepted the appointment and thanked the Court.

Malcolm MacSween, Clerk.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern: At Dingwall on Tuesday, 9th April at 2.30 p.m.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, 23rd April at 6 p.m.

Synod Business

As the last synod instructed the Church Interest Committee to prepare the agenda for the coming synod, would Presbytery Clerks and others who have any business for the Synod in May (DV) please forward the same to the Clerk of Synod, F.P. Manse, Wick, Caithness, not later than 16th April 1974.

R.R. Sinclair, Clerk of Synod

London Communion Services

The following services will be held (DV); Thursday, 11th April, at 7 p.m.; Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 3.30 p.m.; and Prayer Meeting 6 p.m.; Sabbath, 14th April at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Monday, 7 p.m. All the services will be held in St Michael's Hall, Eccleston Place (opposit Victoria Coach Station). Rev. D. G. Macdonald, M.A., Bracadale, an Rev. D. Beattie, Plockton are expected to assist at these services (DV).

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: Anon., Inverness, £15.

Home Mission: Friends, Ullapool, £5; C.F., £5; Anon., Battersea postmark, £5.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: Anon., Inverness postmark, £5; "In memory of a dear brother, £2000; Friends, Ullapool, for educating young African, £5; Anon., Battersea postmark, £5; Anon., Battersea postmark (for Mission of Rev. Donald and Mrs Ross) £5.

Mr Mderdyk, Kalamazoo, £1.50; Mr Van Noppen, £43.40; Mr McRae, Dutton, Ontario, £9.30.

Domnions and Overseas Fund: Mrs Campbell, Harper Woods, Michigan, £50 in memory of Mrs R.S. Mackenzie, Grosse Ile.

Organisation Fund: Anon., Battersea postmark, £5 for general purposes.

China Mission Fund: Anon., Battersea postmark, £3.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon., Battersea postmark, £2; Miss C. Macleod, Edinbane, Skye, £5; Mr J. Livingstone, Muir of Ord, £10, Last two per Rev. A.F.M. Donation, £50 per W. McK., Inverness; Friend, Kishorn, £5; Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congregations, £50; Friend, Lairg, £100 per E.M.S.; M.G., Glasgow, £5; Lairg and Bonar Congregations, £40.

Mrs Graham, Uig, Skye, £3; Mr John Haarsma, Ripon, California, £22.20, (per RWMM).

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

Trinitarian Bible Society: Vatten Congregation, £11.64

Welfare of Youth Fund: Shildaig Congregation, £5; Beaully Congregation, £15; Mr Van Stee, Grand Rapids, £7; Lover of Children, Raasay, £10.

Publication Fund: Mr Van Stee, Grand Rapids, £7; Wellwisher, Raasay, £10.

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

Bracadale: M. MacKinnon, 20 Portnalong, £5 for Portnalong church repair fund; Anon., Kyle, £5 for Bracadale Church Renovation Fund, both per Rev. D.J.McD.

Dingwall: Friend of the Cause, £10 for communion expenses.

Dumbarton: Friend, £5 per T. MacRae; Mrs MacLeod, Lochinver, £3; Anon., £3; Anon., £2, all for Dumbarton Manse Fund.

Glasgow: Mrs N.H., £5 per Rev. D. Maclean; Anon., in January envelope, £1; Anon., £20; Anon., £1 per A.G., all for Sustentation Fund; Anon., £1 per J.A.McL.; A Judean, £50 per Rev. D.McL., both for Congregational Fund.

Glendale: Friend, £5; Old Friend, £3, both per Rev. J.C.; E. Kirkham, Leeds, £5 per Treasurer, all for Sustentation Fund; E. Kirkham, Leeds, £3 for Home Mission Fund and £2 for Foreign Mission Fund per Treasurer.

Greenock: Friend, Uig, Lewis, £5 for congregational purposes per Rev L. MacLeod.

Laide: Friend of the Cause, £20; Anon, £10; A lover of the Cause, £2; In loving memory of my Mother, the late Mrs Isabella Grant, Ullapool, £3; Friend of the Cause, £6; Two Friends, £3; Dr and Mrs White, Wakefield, £10; Mrs MacLachlan, Inverness, £25, all per J.W. MacKenzie, Treasurer; Stratherrick friend, £3 per A.M.R.; Edinburgh Friend, £5 per D.M.R.; Polcork, £1 per D.M.; Miss A. Macaulay, Inverness £25; M.G., Glasgow postmark, £5 per Rev. A.E.W. Macdonald; Mrs Macpherson, Dingwall, £5; Nurse Macpherson, Dingwall, £3; Friend, £12; Dutch friend, £25; Mrs Mackillop, Harris, £15; Friend, Laide, £10; Friend, Raasay, £8; Mrs Nicolson, Kyle, £2, last eight per Treasurer; all for Laide Manse Building Fund.

London: Vancouver Congregation, \$1000; Anon, Inverness, £20; Gairloch Congregation, £131; Miss H. Hook, Croydon, £5; Anon, Helmsdale postmark, £20; Rogart Congregation, £8.60; Dornoch Congregation, £21.10; A.N., Glasgow, £5; Mr J.A. Fraser, £20; Miss D.M. Neilson, Carnoustie, £5; Shildaig Congregation, £100; Anon., Inverness, £10; Angus Macleod, Stornoway, £5; Mrs Clepstone, Kent, £2; Well wisher, £2; Mother and Self, Glenmoriston, £5; Mr and Mrs Gould, Portsmouth, £10; I.McA., £10; Mr W. Macbeath, Strathcarron, £10; Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congregation £244; Miss J.J. Sinclair, Halkirk, £5; Dunoon Congregation, £25; Anon., £5; Greenock Congregation, £240; Anon., "May the Lord bless", £12; Mackenzie, Winnipeg, \$20; last seven per Rev. M.McI; all for London Church and Manse Building Fund.

Plockton/Kyle: Macleans, Breakish, £10 per Treasurer; Miss Kate Matheson, Kilmarree, Lochcarron, £5; Miss Mary Matheson, North Strome, £5; Friend, £5; Inverness Friend, £10; last four per Rev. D. Beattie; Friend, £2 per Miss Mackay; all for Manse building fund; Friend, Raasay, £5 per Rev. D. Beattie; Friend Raasay, £2 per P. Macdonald; both for Sustentation Fund; Envelopes in plate for £5 and £2 both per Treasurer for Communion expenses.

Portree: Anon, £5; Anon., £2; both in church plate; Anon., Portree, £5; Staffin Friend, £5; Friend, £5; last three per F.M.; all for church renovation; Anon., £2 in church plate for church repair.

Stirling, Perth and Dundee: Friend, Inverness, £25 for Church extension; Friends, Inverness, £3; Two Friends, Inverness, £10; all per Rev. I.R.T.

Aberdeen: J.J. Sinclair, Halkirk, £5; E.I., Southampton, £5; Vancouver Congregation £223.21 per W.D. Fraser; Anon., Aberdeen Collection plate, £5; all for Manse Fund.

Flashadder: Mrs A. McLeod and family, Edinbane, in treasured memory of our beloved ones, £5 for Church renovation per D. McKay.