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Things Unseen and Eternal

How real do the things of time and sense appear to us! Our whole life seems to be wrapped up in those things which we can see and hear or in the things we can handle and taste and smell. This is our world and beyond that we cannot go. Yet there is a world beyond that of our natural senses, only we have no capacity to see it until we are born again. How sad it is to think that, if we are left to ourselves, we will never progress beyond the knowledge of this world and of the things it contains. We will remain wholly immersed in things seen and temporal. How limited and narrow is our vision while as fallen sinners our horizon is bounded by the things of this life.

But, we may ask, is there another world upon which our minds can enter? Yes, there is the spiritual world or realm — a world infinitely more glorious and wonderful than this transient world. It is not just the world of thought or of imagination but rather of the knowledge of God and of Christ and of salvation. This is the world of things which are unseen and eternal — a world beheld not by the natural eye but only by the eye of faith.

How then are we to enter this world? We cannot enter it apart from the exercise of faith — and faith is the gift of God. Faith is to the soul as the senses are to the body. By it we hear and see and touch and taste and savour the things of the world to come. When life is given to the soul in the day of regeneration, the first evidence of that regenerating work is the acting of faith by the soul. Faith goes out and rests upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation. In beholding the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world, there is given to the soul a revelation of things unseen and eternal. Even in the preparatory work of the Holy Spirit in the soul there is an increasing conviction of the reality of eternal things. But it is in looking by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ that light breaks in upon the soul. The soul then finds itself in a new world, the region of things

unseen and eternal — a world more glorious than the sinner ever dreamed of or imagined.

But, you may ask, how may I know if God by His Spirit has revealed these things to me? To answer that we must ask you this question. Which of the two worlds is more real to you — the seen or the unseen, the temporal or the spiritual? Perhaps you will answer: Sometimes the one and sometimes the other. Very well, that may be so but we must test the evidences of our hope when our graces are strongest, not when they are weakest. When your graces are most lively, which is more real to you — the seen or the unseen world? You will answer — Oh, of course, the unseen. Is this not an evidence then that God by His Spirit has revealed these things to you and has made them more real to you than life itself?

What counsel can we give then to those who have in truth tasted that the Lord is gracious? What better counsel can we give than to tell you to ask the Lord to open your eyes more and more to the glorious and eternal realities of His own word — “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Ps.119;18.

The more He will reveal of His glory to you, the more you will be changed into His likeness, and the more insipid will all things seen and temporal become to you. Yes, you have to travel through this howling wilderness as a pilgrim, but may it indeed be as a pilgrim with your thoughts in heaven while you tread this earth. Heavenlimindedness is a good companion to carry you onward to the heavenly country. Yes, there are trials and dangers and privations to be met with on the way, but be encouraged by the assurance of your Master who has gone before and who has said “In my Father’s house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you.” John 14:2.

But what can we say to those who are still tied to earthly things? Can we not invite them as Moses did Hobab: “We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.” Numbers 10:29.

When the soul admires spiritual things it is then in a holy frame and so long it will not stoop to any base comfort.

Sibbes

Synod Sermon

by Rev. D. B. Macleod, Retiring Moderator

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."
Romans 16:20.

In this Epistle we find the Apostle bringing before believers at Rome the great doctrine of justification by faith in order that they might be established in the truth of this doctrine and might know that it was not by works that sinners were to be saved. As you well know it was this glorious doctrine of the faith that was resurrected at the time of the Reformation. God, by His Spirit, sealed upon the heart and conscience of Martin Luther the words: "The just shall live by faith." This doctrine liberated the countries of Europe from the darkness of popery; and it is this same glorious doctrine, by preventing men from resting on a hope of salvation by works, that will deliver our beloved land from the superstition and idolatry which is abroad today.

In the closing part of this Epistle, as in all his Epistles, the Apostle turns to practical exhortation and warning. Even in the middle of his closing salutations he turns and warns the church — as the church is to be warned in every age — of dangers to which she was exposed. "Now I beseech you brethren," he said, "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." He also commends them saying, "Your obedience is come abroad unto all men"; yet he has to exhort, "I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil." He then goes on to give this wonderful promise: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

We may now come to notice:

- 1 The kingdom of darkness in opposition to the kingdom of Christ
- 2 The promise concerning the bruising of Satan

First of all then let us consider a little concerning the kingdom of darkness.

When, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth He had to pronounce concerning all that it was good. There was no sin there — nothing to mar the perfection of the handiwork of God — no kingdom of darkness. Yet it is evident from the Word of God, as well as from the history of the world, that now there is a kingdom of darkness.

that there is a power of evil, that there are powers of darkness at work in the world in opposition to Christ and His kingdom. How are we then to account for the existence of the kingdom of darkness?

We must trace this first of all to the apostacy among the angelic host. Here is where it begins — in Satan's rebellion against God. Though created an angel of light — a morning star — a bright star in the firmament of God — yet through pride he sought the very Throne of God. He sought to displace the God of heaven from that throne which is His from everlasting to everlasting. Men are ready to say, "But why did God permit sin?" How are we to account for the entry of sin? This is a mystery that finite minds cannot fathom. We can be sure, however, in connection with the entry of sin and the setting up of the kingdom of darkness through the apostacy of Satan and the angels that kept not their first estate, that the divine permission in allowing sin to enter into the world did not mar any of the glorious perfections of God. Men would cast a reflection upon the glory of the infinitely glorious One because of the entry of sin into the universe of God. If sin has come in and marred the perfect handiwork of God — that God who is infinitely glorious shall over-rule all that to the greater glory of His great Name. In eternity, when this earth has run its course, then shall God's name be endlessly glorified for over-ruling the entry of sin into the world for the greater glory of His grace.

When we come to the kingdom of darkness in its beginning amongst men we must turn to the temptation of Eve by the serpent in the garden of Eden. The enmity of Satan to God manifested itself in enmity to our first parents who were created in the image of God. Satan hated the image of God as seen in them and by his temptation succeeded in marring it. At one stroke Satan brought down the whole race of Adam and made them subject to himself. The Saviour indicated the bondage men are in to Satan when He said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do." The whole race, through that sin of our first covenant-head lost communion with God and came under the power of the great adversary of their souls. How extensive, then, is the kingdom of darkness! Where is it not to be found? Go where you will upon the face of the earth and you find men and women, young and old, under the bondage of sin and Satan. Satan has set up his throne in the hearts of sinners. There you find the kingdom of darkness — men under the power of sin and Satan, subject to his will, slaves to the great adversary of their soul, and kept in bondage by him. Oh, we ought to ask ourselves if we are part and parcel of that kingdom. Do we owe allegiance to the great adversary of

our soul? Are we still in Satan's kingdom? Wherever sin reigns in the hearts and minds of sinners, there Satan's kingdom is; there Satan is king upon the throne of the heart. He will remain on the throne of the heart until the Lord in infinite mercy will deliver the sinner from the bondage of sin and Satan. You need not think you shall ever be able to set yourself free — you who are in bondage to sin and Satan. None of those whom he has held in bondage ever set themselves free from his chains.

In the world, too, you see Satan active. The principles of this world are the principles of the kingdom of darkness. In the world darkness reigns. Men think that they are wise but they are under the power of Satan. Satan reigns in the allurements of this world. The attractions of this world keep men in bondage to sin, so that they may never be set free. Then, again, Satan is operating in the world in his own agency as a tempting devil, drawing men into sin, setting snares for the feet of the unwary to entrap them.

As we see the activity of Satan in all these spheres so do we see Satan active especially in opposition to God, His people, His Word, His Church. It is clear from the Word of God that Satan will be nowhere so active in opposition to the truth as where the truth is most clearly manifest. Having the testimony for the truth which God has been pleased to give us as a branch of His visible Church, we need not be surprised at the enmity of Satan or at the many attempts made by Satan to destroy the witness for the truth in connection with our own Church. Satan hates the truth. He is a liar, and the father of lies; he abode not in the truth. Oh, you are perhaps ready to say: What awful attacks Satan makes on the Church to which we belong. But it is an honour if Satan is so incensed against us. We can be sure he is not incensed without good reason. Therefore, let us not be unduly moved because the great adversary seeks our overthrow and has attempted it over and over again in our history. If we are faithful to the testimony for truth we will have Satan as an adversary more and more — and particularly in a day of declension — for Satan would seek to use the opportunity of declension in the visible church to make us forsake that testimony which God in His kindness has given to us.

Although we have said that we are not to be unduly concerned that Satan is opposed to us, yet we are to lay to heart that he is powerful and mighty. We are to remember, too, that he is a subtle adversary. The people of God and the servants of the Lord know full well what it is to conflict with the devil. The Church could say: "We are not ignorant of

his devices." You know what it is to conflict with Satan upon the battlefield of your own soul. With sin and Satan you have had many a struggle. He is the great adversary of your soul. How foolish it would be for you to say, "I can easily overcome him." That would be the height of folly. Satan is powerful, too powerful for you or for me, too powerful for the Church of God. We cannot combat with him in our own strength; only in the strength of divine grace can we overcome him. It is only by laying hold upon the armour of righteousness that we can be delivered from the power of the great adversary.

Though Satan's power is great it is not unlimited. Also he cannot go beyond the divine permission so far as the people of God are concerned. Satan cannot lift up his hand against them beyond that line which God permits him to go. This was true in Job's case. Satan could not touch him beyond what the Lord permitted him to do. Again although Satan is strong in the world, though he is so powerful and so subtle, yet he is a defeated foe. He has been given the stroke from which he and his kingdom shall never recover. That stroke will bring his kingdom down to the dust and bring it down finally to the lowest hell.

Let us go on then to notice, in the second place, the promise which is given here: that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Who is the God of peace"? Is He not the God of peace who has reconciled all things to Himself by Jesus Christ? Is he not the God of peace who has not only sent forth His well-beloved Son into this world to die the accursed death of the cross in the room and stead of the guilty, but also has brought up again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep. "The God of peace has brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Oh, what a wonder this is — reconciliation through the blood that was shed on Calvary's accursed tree! What a wonder it ought to be to us this night that the God of peace made provision for the reconciling of sinners unto Himself through Jesus Christ. As far as we are concerned who are Gentiles, how wonderful it should be to us that the blessings that were Israel's under the Old Testament were not confined to Israel under the New, but that the Prince, who is our peace, has reconciled both unto Himself in one body by the cross, Jew and Gentile being brought into one body through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. All the blessings that were once Israel's, now belong to the Gentiles as well. The Gospel of reconciliation is now preached throughout the whole world for the obedience to the faith of all nations. What a wonder it should be that the Lord has sent the gospel of

reconciliation even to these distant isles! How wonderful that the Lord has committed to us this word of reconciliation to declare to sinners that are afar off from God, that they might be brought nigh to God through Jesus Christ! How wonderful that the God of peace should provide a way of deliverance for the lost and for the guilty; that there should be proclaimed to the children of men a free and full pardon of all their sins and that, not on the ground of any righteousness that is in themselves, but only on the ground of the atonement that Christ made on Calvary!

It is this God of peace that shall bruise Satan. Oh, let us go back to the Garden of Eden. Let us hear the voice of God, the God of peace, saying to the great adversary, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." Oh, what a message of reconciliation, what a message of hope to a lost world! The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent — this proclaims salvation through Jesus Christ. Who is to bruise the head of the serpent? None other than God's well-beloved Son, the Divine Son of the everlasting Father. Oh, what a message of salvation preachers of the Gospel have to declare — a Divine Saviour for lost sinners, a Saviour who is the Son of God. What a manifestation of the love of God in providing for the bruising of the head of the serpent through the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through the One who is the Son of God. But let us remember He was not to bruise the head of the serpent as the Son of God in the bosom of the Father, but as the God-man Redeemer. Mystery of mysteries that God should be manifest in the flesh: that the eternal God, infinitely glorious, glorious before all worlds were created, glorious unto eternity, should assume our nature, take hold of this human nature which we possess, only without sin; take hold of it in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and be born of her yet without sin. How marvellous that there should be constituted this glorious wonderful thing that was spoken of to Mary — "that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"; and that He should have this name Immanuel, God with us! Then again what a wonder, that the bruising of Satan's head was to be effected through the bruising of the heel of the Seed of the Woman. Christ was to make an end of sin, He was to destroy the works of the devil in that death He was to accomplish outside the gates of Jerusalem. It is there the struggle took place. We do not see much of the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary if we do not see there two kingdoms — Christ, the Head over His Kingdom, and Satan, the head over his kingdom in conflict — and these two kingdoms locked in a life and death struggle. Christ spoiled principalities and powers in that death which He accomplished. Satan manifested all his

hatred and enmity against the Son of God in our nature, and yet Christ effected the deliverance of His people in that very death that He died on Calvary. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." There in His holy humanity He suffered; there His body was broken; there His blood was shed. There in His holy soul He suffered, the Just in the room of the unjust, and there He bruised the head of the serpent. "I will contend with them that contend with thee, and I will save thy children." "Shall the pray be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered?" Yes, through the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious One, the God-man Redeemer. "The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Satan has received the stroke. It is but a little while and Christ will demonstrate to an assembled universe that He has gotten Him the victory.

But now in application for the people of God, and the church of God in the world, what can this promise mean — "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"? For you, the individual believer, the tried, the afflicted, tempest-tossed child of God, in the midst of your afflictions you are wondering — so deep are these trials — whether you will ever get out of them. Oh, yes, even in this world itself you will get out of them. God will give you seasons when you will experience that the God of peace has indeed bruised Satan under your feet. But though in this world you were not to know such seasons, it will be only a little while and you shall see Satan as a vanquished foe. As you are brought with gladness great and mirth on every side into the palace of the king to abide there forever, Satan will be a vanquished foe. There you will be out of the range of Satan. You will say then — now I am done with sin and done with Satan for ever, having obtained the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. You have to cry out here, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of this death," owing to the working of sin within. You will, however, have seasons even in this world when you will have to say — "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." But you will yet have to say with a higher note of praise in everlasting glory — "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the church of God, Satan is active. He is ever active though the Lord gives His church evidences of His own power. There are signs of the God of peace bruising Satan under the feet of people here in this world. You who declare the everlasting gospel — on every occasion that the word of God is blessed by the Holy Spirit to the salvation of a soul, there the God of peace has bruised Satan under your feet. The church of God, it is true, has seasons of languishing, seasons when there is little evidence

of the Lord's working. Still it is only a little while and He will manifest His power for the Lord has not been wont to leave His cause. He has not been a wilderness to Israel; no, nor ever will be. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Then again with regard to the glorious promises concerning the extension of the cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ — Oh, they seem impossible of fulfilment in such a day as ours. Is Satan not active everywhere? Do we not see his cause and kingdom being built up? Yes, but the Lord says in His word through His servant — the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. These mighty powers, these strong holds of the adversary are being set up, set up in our very midst; yes, but the Lord will come shortly and will bring them down." The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." What will be the effect? The effect will be this — you will have a song of gladness in your heart to Him who wrought such great deliverance for you. You will sing to the praise of the glory of His grace. You will take no glory to yourself. You will say, "Oh, this is the work of God. Surely the Lord has wrought this great work in the earth." You will be like the children of Israel when Zion's bondage was turned back in the days of their captivity in Babylon.

*When Zion's bondage God turn'd back,
as men that dream'd were we.
Then fill'd with laughter was our mouth,
our tongue with melody:
They 'mong heathen said, The Lord
great things for them hath wrought.
The Lord has done great things for us,
whence joy to us is brought.*

Let us therefore be encouraged even in this dark day that the Covenant promises, promises that are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, will be fulfilled, and this promise with every other promise — "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

In true conversion the soul is changed to be of the same mind with Christ.

Sibbes

Christ is All

by Dean Henry Law

7. THE STRANGE FIRE

"Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." Lev. x. 1, 2.

Sounds of high joy had just been swelling through the holy court. Sure tokens of approving love had rested on the typifying altar. The flame, which might not die, and which alone might now be used, witnessed God's smile on the appointed victims. The Covenant of Grace was sealed anew with blazing seal. The obedient worshipper had proof, that God was near him — with him — for him.

Reader, this sight is opening-heaven. Who would not ever gaze? But earth is yet our home. Here a vile foe is always near. He writhes, when souls are safely climbing Zion's hill. He saw the joys of Eden, and he flew to mar. He sees the Gospel of this heaven-sent fire, and he will strive to quench. So now he comes. The place is sacred, and the office holy. But he has keys for every gate. No station is too high for his foul wing. No consecrated functions scare him back.

He seeks the side of Aaron's first-born sons. Their calling to be priests is no protecting shield. He can ascend the altar-steps. He knows the fit temptation for the holiest place. So now he fosters self-exalting zeal. He leads to worship: but the worship must be strange. He prompts an offering: but the offering is not God's.

Such was his bait. Mark its success. Nadab and Abihu take each his censer. Was this God's will? Did He require this act? Their first step strays. They next add fire. Whence was it brought? God had provided what alone He would receive. It was not distant. An outstretched hand might instantly obtain. They madly reason, What, will no other flame avail? Will this alone cause incense to ascend? Impious self-will thus reasons into ruin.

Strange fire is seized, and a strange service acted. Oh! miserable men! their hands feign holy work, but rebel feet tread down God's ordinance. Oh! terrible result! To despise God is rapid downfall. His frown is withering blight. It arms each creature with destructive sting. Behold a proof. The pledge of favour inflicts sudden death. The symbol of accepted service now hurls the disobedient into ruin's gulf. The fire thus

scorned, put forth its mighty strength. It vindicates its sacred purport. They, who rejected, cannot now cast off. It wraps them in its burning arms, and lays their blackened corpses in the dust. Thus Nadab and Abihu perish from the earth.

But still the judgment lives. This story stands, as a dark beacon on a rocky coast. It cries, Beware, to all despisers of the Gospel-scheme. It shows, that they, who stray from God's appointed path, fall into quicksands of tremendous wrath.

Reader, these lines draw near bringing this counsel to your heart. Listen, with humble mind — with earnest prayer. And may the Lord of mercy mercifully bless!

The Bible-page stands open. It courts your eyes. It craves attention. It wears no dark disguise. It is an azure sky of truth. It writes with an unerring pen, the mission and the work of Christ. It tells you, that when you were ruined and undone — when condemnation's thunder roared — the Father sent His Son, to bear the curse — to die the death — to suffer in the sinner's stead, and save with uttermost salvation. These tidings loudly sound their silver note. The testimony is distinct, Behold the Lamb of God — Look to His cross — Hide in His wounds — Enter the refuge of His merits — Cement yourself by faith to Him. Urge Him, your all-prevailing plea. A train of faithful promises assures, that none thus seeking are cast out. But threats re-echo, There is none other name: no other sacrifice remains: despise — reject — neglect — and death without a remedy is near — and hell without escapes gapes for you.

Reader, a question meets you here — Let honest truth reply. Did the attesting fire on Israel's altar blaze with more brightness, than this clear mind of God? Oh! no. The fact defies denial. Such is the way marked out by God. Here is the door, which mercy opens. Here is the refuge raised by sovereign love. Here is the cure of all sin's wounds. God gives, and God attests, His Son, as full redemption for the lost.

How is such wondrous news received? Surely all earth will throb with one ecstatic pulse of joy. Surely each sinew will be strained to grasp the gift of gifts. But is it so? Draw back the curtains of man's inmost soul. Enter the chambers, in which hidden imagery dwells. In many corners many Nadabs and Abihus lurk. They hear of Christ, and sneer. They see the cross, and count it a vain thing. The fire of their own hearths is their delight. They rather choose self-kindled sparks.

Reader, draw near, and mark some leaders of this blinded troop. Self-righteous pride claims foremost place. It is a bold, unblushing rebel in earth's camp. It lifts a daring head, and wears a helmet plumed with

nature's gaudy crest. Its mouth abounds with self-invented pleas. What are they? Fancied innocence of grievous ill — a fancied treasury of virtue's deeds — a train of duties towards God — a train of charity towards man. It views this household flame, and fondly asks, What lack I more? Ah! the rash madness! Ah! the wreck of soul! Take nature's best, what is it, but a noxious plant, rooted in filthy mire — laden with poison-berries — plucked by polluted hand? Uplift self's purest clothing to the light of heaven. It is a tattered rag. No thread is clean — no part is whole. But still for this God's well-beloved Son is scorned — for this His righteousness is put aside.

What is the end? The judgment comes. The great white throne is set. How will these Nadabs and Abihus stand? He, who alone could save, is now the Judge. Where is the blood, which once flowed near? There was a plea, which might have fully saved, but this was cast behind. Can a rejected Jesus screen rejecting foes? Can a refused shield ward off death-blows? Vengeance descends, and human merit takes its own wages with the lost.

Others confess the evil of their early years. When they look back, the traversed path seems foul. They readily allow, that vile transgressions soiled their hands — their feet — their hearts. But they now flee all flagrant fault. They have sown reformation-seeds, and gathered reformation-fruits, and Cain-like, bring the produce of their fields. Here Nadab and Abihu re-appear in a patched garb. Amendments pile their censers high. This is the fire of their choice. But it is strange. God's altar gave not such supply.

Reader, think not, that reformation is of little worth. You must be born again. None but new-born can enter heaven, or be happy there. But outward changes are not always grace. Lot's wife left Sodom, but she perished by the way. A new dress may be worn without new heart. A painted surface will not purify a tomb. A Herod may reform without new-birth.

Besides, where grace is real, it is no covering for past offence. This year's honesty has no receipts for last year's debts. Again, a trust in change of life is evidence of unchanged heart. The Spirit leads not to such rotten ground. He never prompts such arrogant conceits. The saintliest man increasingly sees evil cleaving, as the bark to trees — as feathers to the fowl. He knows no hope, but Jesu's life, and Jesu's death. This is the fire, which God prescribes. And this alone the child of God will bring.

Some Nadabs and Abihus come with streaming eyes. Sin has brought

loss. Some worldly prospect has been crushed. Thus Esau weeps. Conscience sometimes is quick to see the misery of guilt. Saul's flowing tears own this. So, too, the Gospel's melody will often melt. It falls, as tender dew upon a moistening soil. Feelings relax, as ice beneath the sun. In these relaxing moments, Satan whispers, there is merit here. The mourning spirit fondly hopes, that mourning can buy peace. The tearful eye sees virtue in its drops. Thus signs of penitence are offered, as a ransom-price. Doubtless, no heart loves Christ, which hates not self, and bitterly bewails its grievous state. Doubtless the arms of penitence twine tightly round the cross. But seas of grief cannot wash out soul-stains. Sorrow, when brought as pardon's price, is but strange fire. And all strange fire calls vengeance down.

The class of formalists may not be overlooked. They crowd God's courts. Each attitude — each look — is studied reverence. Their lips drop holiest words. Their hands touch holiest symbols. Their souls seem rapt to heaven on devotion's wing. If services discharged — if rites observed — if outward show were Christ, their cup of safety would be full. But these are only means. In their right place, they are most salutary helps — but decked as saviours — they impose — mislead — destroy. To use them, as meek handmaids of the Lord, is piety's delight: to trust in them, as reconciliation's price, is superstition's blind conceit. Then they become strange fire. These worshippers reject the substance, and repose on signs. But ritual services have in themselves no saving power. Such planks span not the gaping gulf. Such ladders reach not to the throne of God. Their office is to lead to Christ: and witness of His love. They are the channels of His precious grace. But they wash out no sin: they satisfy no wrath: they stay no vengeance: they have no key of heaven: they snatch not from the grasp of Satan: they are no plea for pardon: they hold no title-deeds of glory's kingdom. Christ is Salvation — Christ alone. Such is the work, which God commissioned Him to work. He undertook it. And He gloriously achieved. The mighty truth is ever true, "I have finished the work, which Thou gavest Me to do." They, then, who now present another sacrifice, like Nadab and Abihu sin — like Nadab and Abihu die.

Reader, now view your censer: now say, what are its contents. Surely you hold some offering in your hands. Surely some confidence keeps conscience still. What is it? God has sent forth His Son — the only way — the only truth — the only life — the only ransom-price — the one atonement, for all sin. Is He the rock, on which you rest? Is He the centre of your hopes? Is He the one foundation of your trust? Is He your

only argument for mercy? One sun illuminates the world. One ark delivered from the flood. One Joseph fed in times of famine. One brazen-serpent healed the poison's sting. One fire came down for tabernacle-use. One Saviour saves the saved. One Christ is first and last to merit life. God sends, anoints, accepts, proclaims Him. If you plead Him in real faith, you cannot fail. To grasp another, is to grasp a straw.

Hark, Abel and all saints of old, and all believers of all times, and the one shout around the throne, tell, that eternal safety is beneath His wings. Hark, the wild wails of Cains, and Nadabs, and Abihus, warn, that other fire kindles a quenchless flame. Christ by God's will is heaven's gate. Strange offerings are hopeless hope. And hopeless hope must plunge in black despair.

A Praying People

I recollect, said C. H. Spurgeon, when first I went to preach to a mere handful of people in London — such a handful; but oh! how they could pray! How we sometimes seemed to plead, as though we could see the angel present and must have a blessing till we were all so awe-struck with the solemnity of prayer that we said, "Let us be quiet!" and we sat for some minutes silent, while the Lord's power seemed to overshadow us, and all the minister could do was to pronounce the blessing, and say, "Dear friends, we have had the Spirit here tonight; let us go home and not lose His blessed influences." Then down came the blessing; the house was filled with hearers; and many souls were converted; and I always give all the honour to God first, and then to a praying people, for the more our people pray for us the more successful our ministry must and will be; but without a praying people we can do nothing. I have heard of a minister, who, when his people complained to him about his preaching, said, "Well, he could not preach any better, for he had lost his prayer-book." They said they did not know he used a prayer-book. "Oh yes," he said, he did, and he told them that his prayer-book was his people's hearts, and when he had lost them it was all over with him. I once heard, too, of a person who called on his minister to tell him he could not enjoy his preaching so much as he did. "Well, my dear brother," said the minister, "before you tell me what you have to find fault with in me, let us pray together; will you kneel down and pray for me?" They knelt down and prayed, and when they got up the minister said — "Now, dear brother, sit down, and in a spirit of love, and meekness tell me what fault you have to find." "Oh, sir," said the man,

"I am ashamed of myself; I have no fault to find at all." "Why, how is that, my brother?" "Why, sir, since you have asked me to pray for you I cannot find fault with you; I believe now, sir, that the fault is in myself; I never prayed for you before, but now I will!" I have no doubt it was much to his own profit, as well as to the preacher's when he began to pray for his minister. Prayer can do anything. You may hold your public meetings, and get up your schemes and societies, and they may all end in smoke; but prayer can do anything. Praying is sure building; you may build with committees, and societies, and all that; and yet the house may be on the sand, and the next tide may sweep it away; but build with prayer, cement every stone upon its neighbour with prayer, and you have built so that all the tempests of the world shall dash harmlessly against it, but shall never be able to remove a single stone from its place.

— from Cheering Words Annual, 1951

Letter

by Mr A. Docter, Holland

My dear friend,

A month ago I received your welcome letter for which I thank you very much. Some days ago I was reading the 8th chapter of Matthew which was blessed to me a second time. The first time was in Scotland before the war. I had stayed at Dingwall, and Rev. Matheson, minister at Lairg, took me there in his car along with old George Mackenzie. I stayed at the manse and next morning Mr Matheson took me to Dornoch. He stopped at the Mound to see Malcolm Fraser. I had not the courage to go with him and remained in the car; but after a few minutes he came back with the old godly man. I did not dare to meet him and should have liked to flee, when these words came to me "Lord, I am not worthy, that Thou should'st come under my roof." Matt. 8:8. How kind Malcolm Fraser was to invite me to have food with him, and I shall never forget his prayer and words. The Lord blessed our meeting. And now the other portion which melted my heart, verse 11: "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven."

"O greatly blessed the people are, the joyful sound that know"

You know how a great part of our country is flooded, more than 1400 persons are drowned, so far. I had several friends in those parts and a most godly friend, and three persons living with him were drowned. But

he is now sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. We were told later on that they feared this part also should be flooded, but we were spared.

We are wonderfully well, but I am very busy. In my school are some victims of the flood. I intend to come to Scotland this summer and should like to attend one of the communions.

I knew a godly woman who first came to church when a "blind" preacher was preaching. She was quite ignorant but the Lord used his words to convert her. She cried out "Wretch, who told you what kind of woman I am?" Later, when the Lord taught her through His Spirit she couldn't find any food there. I have read Ebenezer Erskine's diary and enjoyed it very much.

With kind regards from Mrs Docter,

Your friend,

A. DOCTER

Tuitem agus Eirigh Eaglais na h-Alba.
Ann an Eaglais Steidhict Athleas aichte na h-Alba

Bha gaisgich bha clùiteach is treun,
'N an dilleachd air taobh Fianuis na firinn
An dilleab a dhearb Criosd d'a chéil,
Gu bhi 'g a ghleidheadh is 'g a luirigeadh
Do a chlann, is do gach linn nan deigh.
Mo thruaigh ar staid, nach slinn a thuit iosal
A glòir ann an tomhas gu ro-mhòr air falbh!
A dhiol-deircean Ard-Sheanaidh Dhun-eideann
Nach robh riamh air ar foghlum 'o shuas,
Nach sguir sibh a dh'fhiaradh na firin,
Nach sguir sibh a chur sluagh air tur air seacharan is a dhìth,
'S gur e dorainn 'ur cuibhrionn, is ar n'àite a' làmh chlìth,
'N uair a shuidheas Ceann na h-Eaglais mar Bhreitheamh 's mar Rìgh,
O ar feum mar ghinealach gu'n togadh Tu teachdairean
Air nach biodh athadh na nàire dhe bhi seideadh na caismeachd,
An aghaidh gach mearachd is mealladh is breug.

W.M.

Gathan Gloir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr, Eideard Pearce

(Air a leanntuinn bho t.d.)

2. Bho neo-chaochladheachd Dhé tha sinn a co-dhùnadh agus a tarruig searbhadas a choruich, agus truaigh do-labhairt na muinntir a thuiteas fodh a cudthrom. Cha'n eil gràdh Dhé ni's millse na tha fhearg searbh, cha'n eil a ghràdh ni's ion-mhiannaichte na thà fhearg ri bhi air a seachnadh, agus sin do bhrìgh gu'r E Dia neo chaochladheach a tha Ann. Agus Oh! cia truaigh 's a dh'fheumas iad a bhi a thuiteas fodh'n fheirg so. Ann an Isaiah x, 6, tha sinn a leughadh mu ghinealach corruich Dhé: tha cuid ann mar sin a tha gu sònraichte na'n ginealach corruich Dhé, tha iad na'n cloinn feirge, na'n oighreachan air fearg, agus bi fearg, eadhon fearg Dhe, na chuibhrionn aca gu bràth; tha leithid sin neo-aithreachail a chùim na criche agus na neo-chreidmheach, na h-uile tha beo agus a bàsachadh ann an neo-aithreachas agus ann an eas-creidimh. Agus oh, cia cho neo-chrìochnach truaigh 's a dh'fheumas iad a bhi! 'S e fearg mhòr a th'ann a fearg Dhé, fearg bhorb, fearg ghoirt, fearg chumhachdach, fearg nach eil cur na h-aghaidh, fearg loisgeach, chaiteach, a tha slugadh suas. Mar sin tha na Sgrìobturann a labhairt mu timchioll. Agus tha so uile a labhairt mu cho do-labhairt searbh agus uamhasach 's tha i, agus truaigh do-labhairt na muinntir a thuiteas foidh-pe. Ach 's e a ni a chuireas gu neo-chrìochnach ris, gu'm bheil an fhearg so sìorruidh agus neo-chaochladheach, na fearg a mhaireas gu bràth. Uime sin tha e air a chur sìos anns na Sgrìobturann mar theine nach fhaodar a mhùchadh, Mata iii.12. Tha fearg Dhé air a ghairm teine do bhrìgh a theine agus a neart do-labhairt, air dhi bhì na nàdur caithteach agus a slugadh suas, agus tha e air a ghairm teine nach fhaodar a mhùchadh do-bhrìgh e bhi buan agus neo-chaochladh-each, air dha gu'n a bhi fulung aon chuid atharrachadh na crìoch ni's motha na tha ghràdh a deanamh. Agus tuiteam fodh'n teine so nach fhaodar a mhùchadh, fodh fhoillseachadh an fhearg shìorruidh agus neo-chaochladheach so, oh cia cho duilich, cho truaigh 's a dh'fheumas so a bhi. Tha Solamh ag innse dhuinn, "Mar bheucaich leomhain tha fearg rìgh, "Gnàth. xix. 12. Agus cìod uime sin, agus cia uime sin cho uamhasach 's tha fearg Dhé, an fhearg nach gabh fearg rìghrean na talmhuinn a bhi air a' choimeas 's nach eil ach neo-ni. Tha eagal oirne aig amaibh roimh fhearg dhaoine, seadh, air uairibh a leithid de dh'eagal agus gu'm fuilig sinn sinn fein a bhi air ar fuadach bho ar dleasdanas. Ach a luchd mo ghràidh, cìod e fearg duine ann an coimeas

ri fearg Dhé. Ciod e fearg duine saochlaidheach ann an coimeas ri fearg Dhé a tha neo-chaoclaidheach? Abram ris gach anam agaibh mar a tha Dia troimh'n fhàidh ag ràdh ann an Isaiah li. 12, 13, "Is mise, eadhon mise an tì a bheir dhoibh comhfhurtachd: co thusa gu'm biodh eagal ort roimh dhuine a gheibh bàs, agus roimh mhac an duine a nithear mar am feur? (creutair caochlaidheach) Agus gu'n dì-chuimhnicheadh tù an Tighearna do Cruitheair a shì'n a mach na neamhan agus a leag steidh talmhuinn." Cha'n eil ùine ghoirid agus caochlaidheach an duine agus fhearg araon, agus bàsaichidh iad, ach mairidh Dia agus fhearg gu bràth. Oh! ionnsaichibh eagal a bhi oirbh agus a bhi fodh bhal-chrith roimh fheirg, agus bithemh air ar faiceal cia mar, air son beagan tlachd, a tha dol as an t-sealladh agus a tha caochlaidheach anns a pheacach, a thà sìbh dha'r tilgeadh fein fodh fhearg agus fodh chorruih neo-chaoclaidheach. A pheacaich bhochd, thà thù meas eutrom fearg Dhé, mar gu'm bu nì beag e, gabh beachd air do bhrosnuchadh an-dàna agus làthail 'n aghaidh le peacaidh, gabh beachd air do neo-mhothachadh air agus fodh chomharaidhean agus foillseachaidhean, gabh beachd air do dhearmad air Criosd agus a bhli deanamh do shìth ri Dia tre Chriosd, agus an leithidean sin. Ach anam, gabh beachd ann an sgàthan a neo-chaoclaidheachd shiorruidh agus sin faic am bu nì e a bu chòr a mheas eutrom na nach e; thà na naoimh a criothnachadh roimh bheachdachadh air. "Co d'an aithne neart t'fheirg? agus a reir t'eagail do chorruih." Salm xc, 11. Thà iad ag osnaich, tha iad a silleadh fala, thà iad ag osnaich, seadh, thà iad a bàsachadh, agus thà iad eadhon a dol as an ciall fodh bhoinnean agus crathaidhean beag aimseireil dheth, Salm lxxxviii, 15, 16, seadh, thà iad air an uamhasachadh agus air chrith iomadh uair ri foillseachadh air an aghaidh cuid eile. "Oir bha eagal na feirg orm (a deir Maois) agus na corruich leis an robh an Tighearna feargach 'n 'ur n-aghaidh-se a chù'm ar sgrios." Deut. ix, 19. B'urrair Maois a bhi seasamh fearg duine, seadh, ach thà e air chrith roimh fhearg Dhé 'n uair a bhà l air a brosnachadh an aghaidh muinntir eile. Mar sin thà na naoimh air chrith roimh fhearg Dhé," thà na deamhain a creidsinn mar an ceudna, agus thà iad a' criothnachadh." Seumas ii.19. Thà iad a creidsinn gu'm bheil Dia ann, agus thà iad a criothnachadh ri bhli smuainteachadh air fearg an Dia sin.

(R'a leanntuinn)

Mission Letters

c/o The Christian Clinic
2 Sub-Lane 6, Lane 139
Hsin Sheng, South Road Sect. 1
Taipei 106, Taiwan
15/10/74

Dear Friends,

We arrived in Taiwan on 18th September. We cannot pretend that the four weeks since then have been easy, yet we must acknowledge the Lord's goodness and mercy, not only in taking us safely here, but in helping us to settle as well as we have in our new surroundings. We are greatly indebted in this connection to Dr. Dale, who is in charge of the clinic where Cameron works, and also to other missionaries for their kindness. Indeed, Dr. and Mrs Dale have temporarily vacated their ground floor flat for us and are, at present, living in a fourth floor apartment.

We do, however, feel very inadequate. Living here is very difficult without a knowledge of the Chinese language. Shopping is further complicated by the strangeness of the foodstuffs and, in the Chinese markets, one is often expected to bargain.

When we arrived it was very hot and humid but, since a typhoon a week ago, it has been "cooler" (80 deg. F). It certainly seems to have been the best time of year to arrive here as the fierce heat of summer is past though the humidity is always very high.

Apart from the difference in climate we were immediately impressed by the sheer concentration of the people and especially by the heavy traffic on the roads. Taipei is a city with a population of over two millions. Perhaps this impression of so many people is intensified by the interest the Chinese take in foreigners. They will gather round and stare and often touch the children, which is sometimes more attention than Ian and Robert want. Robert's curly hair especially seems to arouse interest.

The children have really settled down very well though they do miss open spaces to play in. They have accepted our going out for language study in the mornings much better than we expected. Leaving them is still a great concern to us and we do wonder whether we should have a private tutor come to the house instead. The boys do not, as yet, have a good relationship with their Amah. (This is the name the Chinese have for someone who looks after children). Our Amah is a student who attends evening classes and wanted half-day employment. She speaks a

little English. We pray that our home life will present a Christian witness to her.

Few Chinese know Christ. It is estimated that 1% of the population of Taiwan is nominally Christian. Though many young Chinese would profess no religion they do take part in the superstitious heathen worship of the Buddhist and Taoist temples which abound. There are 200 Protestant missionaries in Taiwan, many coming after the doors to the mainland were closed by the communists in 1949. Presbyterians, mainly American, have been here long before that and account for the great majority of Christian Churches — about 1,000 in the island as a whole. A few of the churches in Taipei provide English services, some being interpreted into Chinese to meet the growing desire among young people to learn English. We would be happy to find a place of worship with which we could associate in our present circumstances. It is, of course, impossible until we gain some fluency in the language, to develop any direct witness to the Chinese ourselves.

Language study must therefore be our first priority. We began classes at the Taipei Language Institute on 30th September for three hours each morning from Mondays to Fridays. A major problem is finding enough time at home for study. We should spend at least one hour studying at home, for each hour at school. Responsibilities at home (for Ishbel) and also at the clinic (for Cameron) make this very difficult. Cameron is at present working at the clinic on three afternoons each week and sharing night and weekend calls. Dr. Dale is keen that as much time as possible be kept free for language study and we do appreciate that.

Indeed, as we suggested at the beginning, we have reason to thank the Lord for all His gracious goodness to us since leaving Scotland. We are conscious of our need of grace to be kept faithful to Him amongst the considerable pressures of our situation. His own words are a comfort: "Him that is able to keep you from falling." We solicit your prayers for this and for our success in the language study. Please remember the children too. We seek to remember the church at home, and pray that the Lord will revive His cause there to His glory.

The God of peace be with you all.

Yours very sincerely,
Cameron and Ishbel Tallach

Ingwenya
21/12/74

Dear Friends of the Mission,

This is our summer vacation but though officially on holiday there is plenty to do with the organisation of the next school year to plan, the choosing of pupils for our various classes and the employing of teachers to replace those who have left.

Just after school closed I attended a missionary head-teachers' conference in Salisbury, our capital city. It was more than disturbing to see the strength of the Roman Catholic Church in education in Rhodesia. We know this of course from the past but it hit me with special force when I saw about 15 nuns and priests out of 60 head-teachers taking part, and leading parts at that, in all our discussions. There were only two Presbyterian schools, represented by myself and a Mr Khumalo, from a mission near to our own. As far as the religious side was concerned, I doubt if as many as a dozen could be called evangelical of any sort, conservative or otherwise. Nearly all are liberal in their views and only one young African headmaster spoke up during a discussion on the moral decline among the young people, and the need of Biblical teaching on these matters. I am sure others agreed with him but many could see no solutions, obviously unaware even for themselves of the salvation from sin to be found in Christ. Educationally we found large areas of agreement but on spiritual matters we stand largely alone. I hope you will feel as we do how important a role we therefore play, and how important it is that we continue to do so as long as we are permitted to. Everyone was complaining of the difficulty of getting staff and the Maths/ Science group of teachers seemed the most unattainable. As Miss MacKay, who teaches Science, and Miss MacKenzie, who teaches Maths, are both due home in 1975 we are going to be in a serious predicament when they leave if we do not get replacements from overseas. We have an extra need for overseas staff as we wish to keep up our allowed complement of four European (or expatriate) teachers, as they are called here. The Government is requiring us to provide only university graduates now as teachers in the secondary school and we could use a graduate in almost any subject, not the sciences only. The Lord has provided before. Do pray that He will provide again.

Yours sincerely,
Marion M. Graham

Ingwenya Mission
P.O. Bembesi
Rhodesia
20/12/74

Dear Friends,

Greetings for the New Year! How quickly the months have flown past since I saw many of you and how many times we have been reminded of the mercy and kindness of the Most High.

In July Marion arrived back and took over the running of the school. With some alterations in the timetable and the mid-year exams over we all began working very hard for the important examinations which were sat in November.

We were glad to have the services of a graduate teacher for Science over the past year but now he has been asked to do his Teachers' Certificate so we face the new session without a teacher and so I will have a full load of Science beginning in January (d.v.). There is a scarcity of qualified Africans for all Science subjects throughout Rhodesia at present — only one African graduated in Science this year.

The school is due to have double classes in Forms 3 and 4 beginning in January 1976. This will (d.v.) complete our secondary school programme but will require extra buildings and expense. One Science laboratory has still to be fitted and furnished.

Rev. D. Ross and family seem well settled in Bulawayo. We heard this week that there are good prospects of a site for a church building there. The congregation there on a recent Sabbath was seventy adults, many of whom were at school with us. One of them is a boy who has been doing Form 5 at secondary school in town and has just sat his A levels. He has attended church regularly and during his holidays gathered a crowd at his home at Nkai where Mr Ross took worship with his family.

Since the last communion here the young headmaster of the primary school and his two little girls have been baptised. Rev. Ndebele preached from the words in Malachi 3 v. 16, 17 that Sabbath morning and some of us were recalling the day when he preached from the same text at the baptism of Ottilial, the mother of the two little girls, Ruth and Rachel.

As another year draws to a close I would like to thank faithful friends everywhere who send us gifts from time to time. Do continue to pray for the work here in Rhodesia that many may yet be brought to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour.

Yours Sincerely,
Rhoda MacKay

Book Reviews

Scottish Theology in relation to Church History since the Reformation. John MacLeod D.D. Banner of Truth Trust and Knox Press.

These Lectures were delivered in 1939 in the Westminster Theological Seminary, U.S.A., and were first published in 1943. A reprint came later, and now we have the third edition of this well-known volume of Lectures. The Lectures were highly appreciated at the time of their delivery, and onwards. They are known by those most competent to judge as being readable, and informative. If some portions are more difficult than other portions, an endeavour should be made to grasp, as far as one is able, the substance set forth. We may note a few of the subjects which in a special way caught our attention. Dr. MacLeod in dealing with the life and labours of Samuel Rutherford shows Rutherford's evangelical experience of the covenant of grace in portions quoted at length from "Christ Dying and Drawing Sinners to Himself," and from "The Trial and Triumph of Faith." Thomas Halyburton is described as an outstanding Theological teacher (p 117). Dr MacLeod supplies a lengthy quotation from Halyburton's own account of his conversion, and adds, "It is a pity to have to abridge a document so sane and so well-balanced. I refer you to its unabridged form."

It is needless here to give any shortened account of the "Marrow" controversy. The best course is to follow Dr MacLeod's account. It is pointed out that the "Marrow" teaching was vulnerable, although not intended to be so. Principal Hadow of St Andrews, the leader in the attack on the teaching of the "Marrow" did not come well out of the controversy. Dr MacLeod refers to Rev. D. Beaton's article on the "Marrow Controversy," in the Proceedings of The Scottish Church History Society. He states that the article was a competent one. We recall that Mr Beaton, who was himself a recognised authority in the sphere of Church History, was much pleased with these Lectures of Dr MacLeod.

In pointing out a few other cases, we may not overlook the account, given of Dr John Duncan. The reproduction in full of one of his table addresses is supplied by Dr MacLeod. Then there is the subject of Dr R. S. Candlish's Cunningham Lecture. Dissatisfaction was inevitably expressed with his view of the adoption of true believers. While Dr Candlish went doctrinally astray, likely in manifesting more zeal than knowledge, yet, Dr MacLeod gives him the place of being "a fine evangelical in his preaching (p. 272).

It is not needful to mention more concerning these well-known

Lectures. May the perusal of them be beneficial to those who are not already familiar with them. There is an excellent Index.

D. A. Macf.

The Reformed Pastor. Banner of Truth Trust. Price 65p.

The Banner of Truth have republished this classic in paperback form and in doing so have made readily available what has been called "the best manual of the clergyman's duty in the language." As may be gathered from the Introduction written by J. I. Packer, Richard Baxter, in his day, earnestly and zealously laboured for the conversion of souls under his own pastoral care and his way of doing so is commended, in this book, to fellow labourers. It would be well if all in our day who profess to be called to the ministry would deeply imbibe the spirit of this book. We have no doubt that it would have the effect of producing 'reformed' pastors indeed! We heartily recommend it to all who value their own souls, and the souls of others, and whose desire is that they, and others, would be more deeply impressed by the solemn realities of eternity.

J. MacL.

The Nonsuch Professor by William Secker. Zoar Publications. 150 pp. Price 85p.

This book is written in an epigrammatic style and therefore must be given careful attention if its valuable contents are to be appreciated. The subject matter deals with the nature of genuine Christianity as distinct from that which is merely superficial. Secker, one of the Puritans, gives the characteristic and thorough treatment of his subject that one expects from this era.

Although this book is written with all classes of Christians in view, true believers as well as nominal, there is no doubt that the book will be read and appreciated by the serious minded, by those well instructed and the more mature Christian. The searching nature of much of the book, though not so popular in this superficial age, nevertheless follows the Scriptural exhortation, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." 2 Cor. 13:5. Thus on the subject of repentance Secker says, "It is an unfavourable symptom if you can wipe away your tears from your eyes before God has washed away guilt from your conscience. It is better to travel to heaven sadly, than to hell securely," (P. 49).

The book has, however, much to say that exalts the glories of the Redeemer, to gladden and cheer God's afflicted and poor people; e.g., "It was his going into the furnace which keeps us from the flames," (P.

65) and "Though Jesus Christ has altered his condition, yet he hath not changed his affection." (P. 56).

There is also much wise counsel and much exhortation to arouse the believer to his responsibilities. "What could Jesus do more than die for us? and what can we do less than live to him?" (P. 106). This sums up the real aim of the book. What could be more relevant to this lukewarm generation?
E.R.

Rome — Our Enemy by Clifford Smyth (Obtainable from UPIB, 65 Martinez Avenue, Belfast BT5 5LY at 45p including postage).

Within the compass of a small book the author sketches the history of Ireland, with more than half the book given to the period 1916-74.

He begins with what, on the face of it, seems a startling statement — "The fact is that the church of Rome is behind the present unrest (in Ulster), the murders, the bombings and the shootings." By the time the reader has laid down the book, he is left in little doubt that the author has proved his point. Quoting mainly from Roman Catholic sources, he exposes the blatant "bloody hand" behind the smooth words of the Romish hierarchy from the Pope downwards. We have presented to us the strange spectacle of dedicated Communists, who are also "good" Roman Catholics, even to the extent of a member of the IRA receiving the Apostolic blessing from the Pope while engaged in "gun-running" from a Communist country.

One of the sinister facts brought to light is the millions of pounds spent on Roman Catholic schools in Ulster — schools in which history is taught by bigoted Jesuit priests assisted by nuns with such a Roman Catholic bias as cannot escape notice. Bernadette Devlin he sites, on her own confession, as a typical product of these schools where sedition and terrorism are openly taught, and where the solution of the "Irish problem" is taught to be a complete take over of Ulster for the church of Rome by terrorism, intimidation and murder.

The author brings clearly to light the anti-Protestant bent of the mass-media. The IRA receive maximum publicity while Protestant extremists (so called), are given but scant opportunity to speak on TV or radio in defence of their principles. The difference between "official" and "provisional" IRA is exposed as the myth that it is. One quotation from a Roman Catholic source will prove this — "Even if the provisionals were wiped out tomorrow by the British Army, another army is standing in the shadows ready to pursue the battle."

The author quite rightly castigates the British governments of both parties for their so called "neutral" attitude. Considering that, up to the time of writing, 231 British soldiers have been killed by Roman Catholics and one by Protestant extremists, it is not strange that he should do so. The following quotation from an RC source brings to light their real attitude. "The woes of Ireland are due to one single cause — the existence of Protestantism in Ireland. The remedy can only be found in the removal of that which causes the evil." Much the same sentiments are expressed by a "Father" Watson, quoted by the "Spectator" as saying, "How do you bring a Unionist government to its knees unless you bomb them out?"

The only solution to the problem of Ulster in the eyes of the author, is a spiritual one. "Ireland needs God-fearing men of vision, who are well read in the scriptures and ready to engage the enemy of souls." Much of the blame for the passive attitude to Roman Catholicism he lays at the door of the ecumenically minded churches — "The modernistic teaching in the theological colleges, has sponsored many clerical 'brethren' who are out of sympathy with basic Protestant principles." As in the rest of the UK there are in Ulster also "evangelicals" who profess salvation and the new birth, temporising with the priests of Rome.

The author traces the connection between Scotland and Ulster at the time of the reformation. "Ulster was part of that larger Protestant triumph, but many have grown weary. There has been a falling away from the faith." The whole conflict in Ireland is summed up well, "The partition in Ireland is a fundamental partition; the partition between the open Bible and a pure evangelical faith, and the power that would draw us back again into a dense darkness from which there has been merciful deliverance." He concludes with the hope that God will once more arise to plead His own cause, not only in Ulster, but world-wide. I have failed to find any trace of bias or extremism in this book. It is a startling little book, but the facts of our spiritual decadence as a nation are startling, and this is a timely reminder that Rome is still our enemy.

D.J.M.

Notes and Comments

The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church

It has become the habit of Church Histories to omit any reference to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This omission is not due to the fact that the writers or editors are ignorant of the existence of the Church but rather because it is in their interest to treat it as though it had no existence.

The **Encyclopedia of Christianity**, for instance, makes no reference to the Free Presbyterian Church in a separate way although the article on the Free Church contains a reference to the Free Presbyterian Church and its inception. When the present writer wrote Dr. Philip E. Hughes, the General Editor, he pointed this out and also referred to the fact that there was a separate article on the Free Church of England which is a very much smaller body than the Free Presbyterian Church. So far, he has not received the courtesy of a reply but then Dr. Hughes is an episcopalian!

The General Editor of this new **International Dictionary** is Dr. J. D. Douglas, a Scotsman, and he has included a piece on the Free Presbyterian Church. The entry which has been written by Dr. Henry R. Sefton, Lecturer of Church History, Aberdeen University, is as follows:

"Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This originated in a group in the Free Church of Scotland which objected to the Declaratory Act of 1892. The Act stated that the Free Church disclaimed intolerant or persecuting principles, and did not consider her office-bearers, in signing the Westminster Confession of Faith, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment. This Scottish secession is unique in that it turned primarily on a doctrinal issue, and not on relationships between church and state. The post-1900 Free Church repealed the Declaratory Act, but in such a way that the Free Presbyterians have felt constrained to continue a separate witness, although the two churches are similar in most other respects. Their numerical strength is officially estimated at 10,000 members and adherents."

While it may no doubt be felt that this presentation is in some respects inadequate, yet it is significant that the point has been made that the unique nature of the Church's separation is that it had to do with doctrine.

D. MacLean

Sad Calamities

On the night of 24th/25th December and in a matter of a few hours half the city of Darwin in Northern Australia was destroyed by a cyclone. The cyclone killed 50 people and rendered hundreds homeless. A day or two later an earthquake occurred in North Pakistan in which several thousand perished and many thousands were left homeless.

These solemn events in the closing days of 1974 remind us anew of the uncertainty of time. Little did the people of Darwin think how quickly death and destruction would come to their city. So, too, with the inhabitants of that part of Pakistan where the earthquake occurred. In the light of these events what need there is to redeem time. May these events speak to us and warn us of our danger. Let us ever remember that — "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

Mao Tse-Tung

Mao Tse-Tung, 81 year old Communist leader of China, whose writings are avidly devoured by his blinded followers and worshippers, has apparently been telling his visitors that he will soon be going to meet his gods. How revealing is all this! The man who has ruled China's millions with a rod of iron, as well as being the prophet of an atheistic creed, must go the way of all flesh and face the last awful and inevitable messenger of death. How confirmatory this is of the Biblical truth of the frailty of man.

But, Mao, it is not to meet your gods you are going, but to meet God, your Maker and Lawgiver, who is now to be your Judge. To Him you must shortly give in your account. Oh how solemn will that account be when the blood of the martyred Church of China is found in your skirts, unless Manasseh-like you are brought to repentance while the day of mercy lasts.

Death Penalty for Terrorist Murders

An attempt to make the Government consider bringing in the death penalty for terrorist murders was defeated in the Commons by a majority of 367 to 217. This vote has further confirmed what has been evident for a long time now — that Parliament has no will to restore capital punishment in any form whatsoever. As far as one can see it is only by a revival of true religion and a return to Biblical teaching that we can

expect the restoration of the death penalty as the ultimate sanction of the law. Until that time the deliberate murderer will escape the full rigour of the law. Because of its action Parliament must bear responsibility for the continuing increase in crimes of violence.

Juvenile Crime

It appears that in the first six months of 1974 there was a 25 per cent increase in juvenile crime. Because of this the Home Office is reviewing the Children and Young Persons Act of 1969. This Act deprived magistrates of the power to send a child to an approved school. A child can be sent to a local authority Community Home but these homes have proved inadequate to cope with the very delinquent child.

The real trouble lies in many of the reforms introduced in recent times. Most of these have involved an easing of sanctions against offenders — particularly with regard to the young. Sad to say, even when the reforms produce the very opposite effect from that intended there is no thought of reviewing the modern attitude to crime but only of trying something else of a similar nature. Here again as in so many other departments of national life, what is needed is a return to Biblical principles. This, of course, would involve a recognition of man's inherently depraved nature and the need for firm, not cruel, but salutary sanctions for both old and young offenders.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern — At Dingwall on 4th February at 2.30 p.m.

Southern — At Glasgow on 18th February at 6 p.m.

Canadian Deputies

We are glad to record the safe arrival in this country from Toronto during the middle of last month of Rev. and Mrs J. A. Macdonald, Fort William. Mr MacDonald enjoyed his visit to Ontario, apart from the time towards the end of his stay when he suffered an attack of flu'. It is matter of great thankfulness to the Lord that they have returned safely to their family and congregation. We do pray that Mr MacDonald's labours in Ontario at such a crucial time in the history of the Church there will be greatly owned of the Lord.

A Report of the early part of Mr MacDonald's visit will appear in next issue (D.V.), together with a full report by Rev. Donald Campbell, Convener of the Dominions and Overseas Committee, on the reception of

two Canadian Congregations by the Synod at a pro-re-rata meeting held in Inverness at the beginning of December 1974.

We also have to record the departure of Rev. Moshe Radcliff for Toronto. He left this country on 9th January and hopes to be there in Ontario until the end of March (D.V.).

Aberdeen Church Seats

The Aberdeen Congregation have purchased a suitable Church Building which came on the market. They intend to dispose of their present building. If any congregation of the Church wishes to obtain seats from the old Church, would they please get in touch with the minister, Rev. E. A. Rayer, who will be glad to give further information.

Correction

In the Book Reviews in the December 1974 issue of the Magazine on page 372 and four lines from the bottom of the page "Schofield Bible" should have read "Scofield Bible." Rev. Wm. MacLean writes from Grafton: "There was a Dr Schofield who wrote an excellent piece on the Virgin Birth. He is a different person entirely from Scofield of the Scofield Bible."

Impenitent unbelievers under the preaching of the Gospel are the vilest and most ungrateful of all God's creatures. The devils themselves, as wicked as they are, are not guilty of this sin; for Christ is never tendered unto them, they never had an offer of salvation on faith and repentance; this is your peculiar sin, and will be the peculiar aggravation of your misery unto eternity; hear, ye despisers, wonder and perish. Take the advice of the Apostle, "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, etc." This day, even this is unto you, in the tender of grace, the acceptable time, this is the day of salvation. Others have had this day as well as you, and have missed their opportunity; take heed lest it be so with you also. Now if any one should write it down or peculiarly commit it to remembrance, "This day there was an offer of Christ and salvation in Him made to my soul; from this time I will resolve to give up myself unto Hím." And if you find your resolutions fail, charge your consciences with what you have engaged, and make yourselves to know that if you go back from it, it is a token that you are going to ruin.

John Owen

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, FCMA, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 0HE. Acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

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Shieldaig: Envelope in Plate, £15 for Sustentation Fund.

Stornoway: Two Friends, £6 for Car Maintenance per Rev. J. Macleod.