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Through Great Tribulations

No one loves pain and sorrow, trial and vexation. A plain path, an easy road to travel is what we most desire — a life free even from minor irritations and troubles. The Christian, however, has to be ready for sufferings, for trials — yes, even for tribulations. It is through much tribulation that we are to enter the kingdom. "He that will come after Me," Christ said, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." It is not possible to follow Jesus in the way without meeting with privations, difficulties, trials, vexations, yes, and tribulations as well.

We are warned against entering on the service of Christ without first counting the cost. Failure to do so must lead on to disappointment, discouragement, despondency and eventually cause the follower of Christ to be offended and turn back and walk no more with Him. What a solemn end to a hopeful beginning if we follow the Saviour but for a time! How solemn to hear those ominous words: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God!"

"In this world," the Saviour said to His disciples, "ye shall have tribulations." The Saviour was not One to engender unnecessary alarm in the hearts of His disciples. He always told them the truth — and told it to them as they were able to bear it. Here He warns them of the difficulties of the way; that the road set before them was not to be an easy one but one fraught with dangers and trials. As He had warned so it proved in their case after He was taken from them. Each had to endure his own share of afflictions. To Peter the Lord had said: "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." To them all He had said: "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Paul the eminent Apostle of the Gentiles had to endure much, as he himself declared: "in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the

Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Or as he says elsewhere: "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." What a catalogue of tribulations, yet he could say: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."

Remember, then, that you are not to expect other than what the Lord has taught you to expect — tribulations in some measure or other as part of your lot in this world. The closer you cleave to Christ, the more resolutely you follow Him, the deeper you may expect your trials to be. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

What encouragement is there, then, for the people of God in the midst of tribulations? There is this — it is not an unknown path you tread. However deep your particular afflictions may be, however inadequate the sympathy even of fellow-Christians to meet your need, yet there is One who has travelled your path before. He knows your trials intimately because He has walked this way before. What a sympathetic High Priest you have at God's right hand, "for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." To this One you may betake yourself and find in Him One who has the balm of His consolations to pour into your soul.

Again what consolation in the fact that He is with you in your tribulations and will enable you to overcome, even as He Himself overcame, and is set down with His Father in His throne. "Be of good cheer," He says, "I have overcome the world." Rejoice in this that ye are partakers with Him in His sufferings. Look beyond the present valley of tribulations to that rest that remains for the people of God. Remember, too, what the Apostle said: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace that bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

(John Newton)

Sermon

by Rev. Thomas Watson

"And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Galatians 6:9

In the verses before the text, the apostle had laid down a proposition, "What a man soweth that shall he reap," verse 7; he that sows in sin shall reap in sorrow; he that sows the seeds of grace shall reap glory; there is the proposition. In the text, the apostle makes the application. Let us not be weary in well-doing. We that have sown the good seed of repentance, and an holy life, "let us not be weary; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

I A Dehortation: "Let us not be weary."

II The argument: "We shall reap in due season."

I A Dehortation: "Let us not be weary." Where there is, 1. Something implied — that we are apt to be weary in well-doing. 2. Something expressed — that we ought not to be weary in well-doing.

1. The thing implied, that we are apt to be weary in well-doing. This weariness is not from the regenerate part, but the fleshly; as Peter's sinking in the water, was not from the faith in him, but the fear; this weariness in a Christian course is occasioned from four things:

(1) From the revilings of the world, Ps. 71:10, "My enemies speak against me." Innocency is no shield against reproach. But why should this make us weary of well-doing? Did not Jesus Christ undergo reproach for us, when the Jews put a crown of thorns on him, and bowed the knee in scorn? Is it any dishonour to us to be reproached for doing that which is good? Is it any disparagement to a virgin to be reproached for her beauty and chastity? Our reproaches for Christ, we should bind as a crown about our head. Now a Spirit of glory rests upon us, 1 Pet., 4:14, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God and of Glory rest upon you." *Regium est bene facere et male audire*. He that clips our credit to make it weigh lighter, makes our crown heavier.

(2) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the present sufferings we are exposed to, 2 Cor., 4:8, "We are troubled on every side." But why should this make us weary in well-doing? Is not our life a warfare? It is no more strange to meet with sufferings in religion, than for a mariner to meet with storms, or a soldier to meet with bullets. Do not we consider upon what terms we are entered into religion? Did not

we vow in baptism to fight under Christ's banner? Doth not our Lord tell us, we must take "up the cross and follow" him? Mat., 16:24. Is not this part of the legacy Christ hath bequeathed us? John, 16:33. We would partake of Christ's glory but not of his sufferings: besides, does not many a man suffer for his sins? Do not men's lusts bring them to an untimely end? Do men suffer for their sins, and do we think much to suffer for Christ? How did St Paul rejoice in sufferings? 2 Cor., 7:4. How did he glory in it? "As a woman that is proud of her jewels," Chrysostome. Why should sufferings make us faint? Who would not be willing to tread upon a few thorns, that is going to a kingdom?

(3) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the deferring of the reward. We are apt to be discouraged and grow weary, if we have not what we desire presently; we are all for present pay. But consider, 1. Our work is not yet done; we have not yet finished the faith; the servant doth not receive his pay till his work be done. Even Christ's reward was referred till he had done his work; when he had completed our redemption, and said upon the cross, "It is finished," then he entered into glory. 2. God defers the reward, to make heaven more welcome to us. After all our praying, weeping, suffering, how sweet will the joys of paradise taste!

(4) That which is apt to occasion weariness in well-doing, is the greatness and difficulty of a Christian's work; but why should this make us weary? Difficulty whets a generous mind; the soldier's life hath its difficulties, but they raise his spirits the more; he loves to encounter hardship, and will endure a bloody fight for a golden harvest. Besides, where is the least principle of grace, it renders the way of religion, easy and pleasant. When the loadstone draws, it is easy for the iron to move. When God's Spirit draws we move in the way of religion with facility and delight, Christ's service is freedom. Ps. 119:45, "I will walk at liberty." To serve God, to love God, to enjoy God, is the sweetest liberty in the world. Besides, while we serve God, we gratify ourselves; as he who digs in a mine, while he sweats, he gets gold; while we glorify God, we promote our own glory.

II. The second thing expressed is, that we should not grow weary in a Christian course — we should not tire in our race — "Let us not be weary in well-doing." The Greek word to be weary signifies to shrink back, as cowards in war; let it not be thus with us; let us not shrink back from Christ's colours. Heb. 4:14, "Let us hold fast our profession." We must not only hold forth our profession, but hold fast our profession. The crown is not given to him that fights but to him that overcomes.

Use. 1st. Of reproof. It reproves such as are weary of well-doing. These are falling stars, 2 Tim. 4:10. Demas forsook God, and afterwards became a priest in an idol temple, Dorotheus. Hos. 8:3, "Israel hath cast off the thing that is good." Many have thrown off Christ's livery; they have left off an holy course of life; they have turned to worldliness or wantonness. Gal. 5:7, "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" Why did you tire in your race? 2 Pet.2:21, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then after they had known it to turn from the holy commandment."

Use. 2nd. Exhortation. "Let us not be weary in well-doing." Consider:

(1) The way of religion is of good report, Heb. 11:2. By faith "the elders obtained a good report." Shall we be weary of that which is our credit? If indeed the Christian religion were a thing that would bring shame or loss — as the ways of sin do — then we had cause to desert it, and grow weary of it; but it brings honour; Prov. 4:9, "She shall give to thy head an ornament of grace." Why then should we be weary in well-doing?

(2) The beauty of a Christian is to hold on in piety without being weary; Acts 21:16, "Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple." It is a beautiful sight to see silver hairs crowned with golden virtue. The beauty of a thing is when it comes to be finished; the beauty of a picture is, when it is drawn out in its full lineaments, and laid in its orient colours; the beauty of a Christian is, when he has finished his faith, 2 Tim. 4:7. It was the glory of the church of Thyratira, she kept her best wine till last, Rev. 2:9, "I know thy works and the last to be more than the first."

(3) Such as are weary of well-doing, it is a sign they never acted in religion from choice, or from a principle of faith, but from the external spring of applause or preferment, so that, when these fail, their seeming goodness ceaseth.

(4) God is never weary of doing us good; therefore we should not be weary of serving him. A king that is continually obliging his subjects by gifts and gratitudes, those subjects have no cause to be weary of serving their prince.

(5) If we grow weary and throw off religion, we make all that we have done null and void; Ezek. 18:24, "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned." He who hath been serving God, and doing angel's work, if once he grows weary and desists, he unravels all his work, and misseth of the recompense of reward. He that runs half a race, and then tires, loseth the garland! Oh what folly it is to do well a while, and by apostacy to

undo all! As if a limner with a pencil should draw a fair picture, and then come with his sponge and wipe it out again.

(6) Consider the examples of such as have continued their progress unweariably in a Christian course. The apostle sets before our eyes a cloud of witnesses; Heb. 12:1, "Being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run the race that is set before us." Let us run it with swiftness and constancy. How many noble martyrs and confessors of old, have walked in the ways of God, though they have been strewed with thorns? They scorned preferments, laughed at imprisonments, and their love to Christ burned hotter than the fire. Polycarp, when he came before the proconsul, and he bade him deny Christ, replied, "I have served Christ these eighty-six years, and he hath not once hurt me, and shall I deny him now?" Tertullian saith, such was the constancy of the primitive saints, that the persecutors cried out, "What misery is this, that we are more weary in tormenting, than they are in enduring torment!" Let us tread in their steps, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

(7) It will be a comfort on our death-bed, to review a well-spent life. It was Augustine's wish, that he might have a quiet, easy death. If anything makes our pillow easy at death, it will be this, that we have been unwearable in God's work; this will be a death-bed cordial. Did you ever know any repent at death that they had been too holy? Many have repented that they have followed the world too much, not that they have prayed too much, that they have repented too much. What hath made death sweet, but that they have "finished the course, and kept the faith."

(8) Think of the great reward we shall have, if we do not give over, or grow weary, and that is, glory and immortality. 1. This glory is ponderous; it is called a "weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17. The weight adds to the worth; the weightier a crown of gold is, the more it is worth. 2. It is satisfying, Ps. 17:15, "I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness." This glory will abundantly recompense all our labours and sufferings. The joy of harvest will make amends for all the labour in sowing. Oh what harvest shall the saints reap! It will be always reaping time in heaven; and this reaping will be in due season; so the apostle saith in the text, "We shall reap in due season." The husbandman doth not desire to reap till the season; he will not reap his corn while it is green, but when it is ripe; so we shall reap the reward of glory in due season; when our work is done — when our sins are purged out — when our graces are come to their full growth — then is the season of reaping; therefore let us not be weary of well-doing, but hold on in prayer, reading, and all the exercises of religion; we shall "reap in due season if

we faint not." To keep us from fainting, know, that the reward promised is very near, Rom. 13:11, "Our salvation is nearer than when we believed." We are but within a few days march of the heavenly Canaan; it is but a few more prayers and tears shed, and we shall be perfect in glory; as that martyr, Dr Taylor, said, "I have but one stile more to go over, and I shall be at my Father's house." Stay but a while, Christians, and your trouble shall be over, and your coronation-day shall come. Christ who is the oracle of truth hath said, "surely I come quickly," Rev. 22:20. And yet death's coming is sooner than Christ's personal coming, and then begins the saint's blessed jubilee.

QUEST — What means shall we use, that we may not wax weary in a Christian course.

ANS. — 1. Let us shake off spiritual sloth; sloth saith, "there is a lion in the way." He who is slothful, will soon grow weary; he is fitter to lie on his couch, than to run a race. It is a strange sight to see a busy devil, and an idle Christian.

ANS. — 2. If we would not grow weary, let us pray for perserving grace. It was David's prayer, Ps. 119:117, "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe;" and it was Beza's prayer, "Lord, perfect what thou hast begun in me." That we may hold on a Christian course, let us labour for three persevering graces. Faith keeps from fainting; faith gives a substance to things not seen, and makes them to be as it were present, Heb. 11. As a perspective glass makes those things which are at a distance near to the eye, so doth faith: heaven and glory seem near. A Christian will not be weary of service, that hath the crown in his eye. The second persevering grace is hope. Hope animates the spirits: it is to the soul as cork is to the net, which keeps it from sinking. Hope breeds patience, and patience breeds perseverance. Hope is compared to an anchor, Heb. 6:19. The Christian never sins but when he casts away his anchor. The third persevering grace is love. Love makes a man that he is never weary. Love may be compared to the rod of myrtle in the traveller's hand, which refreshes him, and keeps him from being weary in his journey. He who loves the world, is never weary of following the world; he who loves God will never be weary of serving him; that is the reason why the saints and angels in heaven are never weary of praising and worshipping God; because their love to God is perfect, and love turns service into delight. Get the love of God in your hearts, and you will run in his ways and be not weary.

The Rev. Thomas Watson — *A short Account of the Author*

It is sufficiently known to all that have any acquaintance with the

histories of the Church, that many valuable and useful ministers were ejected for non-conformity, by the Act of Uniformity in the reign of king Charles II, which took place, August 24th, 1662. Among others, the Reverend Mr THOMAS WATSON was ejected from his charge, at St Stephen's, Walbrook, London; whose character is given by the Reverend Dr Edmund Calamy, in his Abridgments, Vol. II, p.37, and is as follows:

"From St Stephen's Walbrook. Mr Thomas Watson; he was of Emanuel College in Cambridge, where he was noted for being a hard student, one so well known in the city, viz. London, for his piety and usefulness, that though he was singled out by the Friendly Debate, yet he carried a general respect for all sober persons along with him to his grave. A memorable passage, which I have from good hands, must not be passed by: When Mr Watson was in the pulpit, on a lecture day, before the Bartholemew act took place, among other hearers there came in that Reverend and learned prelate, Bishop Richardson, who was so pleased with his sermon, but especially with his prayer after it, that he followed him home, to give him thanks, and earnestly desired a copy of his prayer. 'Alas!' said Mr Watson, 'that is what I cannot give, for I do not use to pen my prayers; it was no studied thing, but uttered as God enabled me from the abundance of my heart and affections — *pro re nata*.' Upon which the good Bishop went away, wondering that any man could pray in that manner, *ex tempore*. After his ejection he continued in the exercise of the ministry in the city, as Providence gave opportunity, for many years: but his strength wearing away, he retired into Essex, and there died suddenly in his closet, at prayer." "He being dead, yet speaketh" — Heb. 12:4.

Christ is All

by Dean Henry Law

8. HOLINESS

"Ye shall be Holy, for I am Holy." Lev. 11, v. 44.

HOLINESS! There is sweet music in the very name. It tells of sin subdued — of boisterous passions lulled — of fiery lusts becalmed — of miry paths made clean. It sets before us a pure walk, where peace and joy go hand in hand, and scatter heaven-born fragrance round.

Reader, this grace for a few moments claims your view. God's voice commends it to your love. May His might graft it in your heart.

Holiness! to cause this lovely plant to thrive — its roots to deepen —

and its branches to bear fruit, is one grand purport of the scheme of grace.

Fly back in spirit to the day, when sovereign love made its all-wise decrees, and life's fair book received the blessed names. We find election choosing souls in Christ. What is the final cause? It is, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. Eph. 1, v. 4. A holy stone is laid, that thence a holy fabric may arise. The will to save wills Holiness in the saved.

Predestination next draws the full chart of the believer's course. The path is Holiness. "An highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the way of Holiness." Is. 35, v. 8. The holy pilgrims may not walk in mire. They all show features of a heavenly birth. "Whom He did fore-know He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." Rom. 8, v. 29. The God-like travellers must tread a godly road.

When the due time is come, Jesus appears with full redemption in His hands. Doubtless the first note of the Gospel-trump is rescue by His death from sin's tremendous woe — payment by His blood of sin's immeasurable debt — endurance on His cross of the law's curse — satisfaction through His sacrifice of all God's claims. Wondrous achievement! Noble triumph! Worthy display of everlasting love and power! But is this all? Are there not other waters in this well? Are there not other summits on this rock? Yes. Christ is redemption's overflowing cup. Christ is the uttermost of man's vast need. Hence He frees from the rule and sway of evil, as surely as from its endless pains. Holiness is the Redeemer's essence: and the redemption's end. Hark, the word loudly cries, "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." Tit. 2, v. 14. "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." Gal. 1, v. 4. He sows the seeds of blood, that Holiness may bloom. He spares no price, that He may buy a holy treasure.

In the fair day of grace, the tender Shepherd seeks each straying sheep. Long they may wander in earth's desert waste — exposed to cruel foes — and famished by the weeds of nature's soil. But He well knows them, and they must know Him. So the sweet notes of His alluring call at last fall softly on their ears. They hear — they yield — they follow — they obey. The call is holy. 2 Tim. 1, v. 9. 1 Thess. 4, v. 7. Sin henceforth is eschewed — abhorred — and a pure flock feeds in pure meads.

Thus the whole Gospel-plan bears, as its mitre, "Holiness to the Lord." Its every step is turned towards Holiness. Its every part subserves a holy end.

Reader, perhaps you now may say, show me some picture of this beauteous grace. A ready text points upwards. The Lord's own voice proclaims, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy." Lev. 11, v. 44. Our God is Holiness, and Holiness is likeness to our God. "The new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3, v. 10. The new-born nature is similitude to God.

Let not man's cavils shade the brightness of this truth. Take no inferior standard. True Holiness is divine. It loves, what God loves. It shuns, what God shuns. Holiness is God in the heart — the life — the lips — the ways — the walk. It is a stream, in which each drop is heavenly and heavenward. It is a sun, in which each ray is from God's throne. God can propose no model but Himself. A lower thought would acquiesce in evil. Therefore the mandate is, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." Matt. 5, v.48. Holiness falls short, when it falls short of God.

But perhaps you say, such glorious lustre is too bright for sight. The heavenly sunshine dims the dazzled eye. But still draw near. God's Holiness, in human form, has visited and trod our earth. Jesus takes flesh and tabernacles here. His walk in our soiled paths is clean as on celestial pavement. Mark every act. Hear every word. They have one feature, Holiness. No trial spared Him. Hell's every snare was laid. No circumstance, which ever won, or drove, to sin, failed to put forth its craftiest wiles. But all was vain. Each wave rebounded from the holy Rock. In childhood — in youth's bloom — in riper age — to earthly parents, and to heavenly Father — to treacherous friends, and open foes — alone, abroad, in work, in rest, in ease, in agony, in life, in death. He showed one glorious front: He stood one glorious column:—Holiness. There has been perfect Holiness on earth. Reader, your eye can scan — your mind can grasp this pattern. Such is the Holiness of God.

But some may add, this righteousness was wrought out for the Church. Christ kept each edict of the law for them. He places this obedience in their hands, as key to heaven — as right to life — as title-deeds to bliss — as beauteous robe to shine in heaven's light. This is made over as the portion of His saints. Can they need more?

True, this righteousness is the wedding-dress, in which He decks His bride. It is her spotless beauty, and her coronet of gems. But it is more. The life of Jesus draws the clear portraiture of Zion's citizens. Heaven's courts, and atmosphere, and inmates, are all holy. None but the holy can there walk, and breathe, and taste delight. Heaven is no heaven to old natures. To such, the sounding harps sound only discord. To such, the

one employ is only misery. There is no pulse in common. Man must be Holiness — not to buy heaven — that is Christ's only work: — not to fill merit's cup — that is Christ's gift: but to gain fitness to associate: to win capacity for bliss. Without Christ's righteousness, the gate cannot be passed. Without internal Holiness, the entrance is no gain. No Holiness, no heaven.

Mark next the soil, in which this flower has roots — the seed, from which it springs. Man's pride must here lie low. It never thrives in nature's field. Neither can hand of nature plant it. When sin came in, each gracious fibre died. The curse fell blighting on earth, but most so on the human heart. The thorns and briers of the outward world are dismal emblems of the wilderness within. God's likeness was effaced at once, and hideous enmity established its one rule. How then can Holiness revive? Until the waste becomes a garden — the plant cannot be set: until heaven gives the seed, it can nowhere be found. God must prepare the soil. God must infuse the seed. The work is wholly God's.

But this is all arranged in the sure Covenant of grace. The Holy Spirit lends His aid. By His Almightyness, He forms anew the texture of the soul. He takes away the barren rock. He brings down scions from the garden of the Lord. He graciously inserts them. And thus true Holiness again lifts up its fruitful and its fragrant head.

Reader, be not deceived. Trust not to powers, which are powers none. You must gain help from God, or you can never be a holy man. The wish and the ability are both divine. Can darkness melt itself to light? Can rocky channel flow in liquid streams? Can poison's stem produce the luscious grape? Can hatred love? Can the dry bones re-animate themselves? These changes cannot be. Neither can dead souls burst their tombs, and clothe themselves in self-made life. The mighty agent is above, and till He works, no work is done.

Reader, next mark the renovating means. The wondrous engine is the Gospel-truth. The Spirit wins by charming notes. He opens ears to hear new melody. He gives the eye to see new scenes. He reveals Christ — the Beauty of all beauty. He shows the cleansing blood — the sympathising heart — the perfect refuge — the all-sufficient aid. These sights wave a transforming wand. A new affection subjugates the man. Jesus and purer hopes now occupy the mind. Darkness is passed. The true light shines.

The grace of faith springs up. This is the chain, which binds the soul to Christ, and makes the Saviour and the sinner one. A channel is now formed, by which Christ's fulness plenteously flows down. The barren branch becomes a portion of the fruitful stem. Christ's vital juices

permeate the whole. The limbs receive close union with the head, and one life reigns throughout the total frame.

Reader, would you be holy? The way is only one. All other roads lead down to deeper mire. Christ must come in. All is dark death, except where Jesus lives. All is pure life and loveliness, where Jesus reigns. Draw near and nearer to the Gospel-page. There gaze on Christ, till the soul's features melt into His likeness. The Gospel heard, and read, and loved, are the bright wings on which the Spirit flies. The Spirit's presence brings the Saviour near. The Saviour welcomed, is all Holiness begun. The Saviour cherished, is all Holiness advancing. The Saviour never absent, is Holiness complete. Holiness complete, is heaven's full blaze.

Believer, this subject has a warning voice. You mourn short-comings. You find the hated monster sin still striving for the rule. Evil is present, when you would do good. Help is laid up for you in Christ. Seek clearer interest in Him. Faith sows the seeds. Assurance brings in golden sheaves. They, who most deeply feel, that they have died in Christ and paid in Him sin's penalties, ascend to highest heights of godly life. He is most holy, who has most of Christ within and joys most fully in the finished work. It is defective faith, which clogs the feet, and causes many a fall.

We here discern why Gospel truth is so assailed with hate. It is the lever, which moves men's minds from sin. It is the sweet attractive to the heaven-pure path. Hence the sin-loving world turns angrily away. Evil is more congenial to the taste. Evil is sweet. Corruption rejects Christ.

But the evil's sweets are a deceptive cup. The draught is poison. The drops prove only gall. Reader, delay not. Cast it from you. Peace only blooms beside the Gospel-road. There is no happiness, but on the Gospel-mount. True blessedness is holy oneness with the holy Saviour. When He is near, what sorrow can distress? His smile dispels all gloom. His words of comfort make each burden light. Seek Holiness, and happiness in Christ. They are conjoined by God: and thus conjoined for ever.

But if you madly turn to the false taper of this world's show, too late this truth will bar heaven's gate against you: — Oh! heed it now, before "too late" arrive:— "Holiness — without which, no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12, v. 14.

Oh, that I were where I shall sin no more!

Samuel Rutherford

Obituary

The late Donald MacIver, North Tolsta, Lewis

The subject of this short obituary was born in North Tolsta in the year 1897 and departed this life in March 1973.

He was the fourth child in a family of seven who were bereaved of their father when still very young. The burden of their upbringing fell heavily upon the widow at a time when the necessities of life were more difficult to come by than they are now. Despite the struggle to provide for the temporal needs of the family, their spiritual welfare was not neglected. The worship of God was observed in the home, the children taking it in turns to read the Bible as the mother was unable to do so.

For the greater part of his life Donald MacIver, like many of his fellow-islanders, followed a seafaring career. He served his country in both wars at sea, and on one occasion was the last man to leave the ship after it was torpedoed. The man following him up the ladder was too late and went down with the ship. This incident made a deep impression upon him and he often afterwards expressed his wonder at the Lord's mercy towards him on that occasion.

In 1929 he was married to Annie Nicolson who survives him and is a communicant in the North Tolsta Congregation. There were eight children born of their marriage of whom seven still survive. The death of a son in 1957 at the early age of twenty-three years was a sore trial to them both but they were enabled by grace to acquiesce in the will of the Lord.

We are not in a position to say when our late friend first became concerned for the salvation of his soul, but it was through the words of 1 John 1:7, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," that he entered into the liberty of the children of God.

In 1963 he was received by the Kirk Session as a member in full communion and in 1964 he was elected a Deacon of the Congregation.

He was one who possessed, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," adorning his profession as a Christian, esteeming others better than himself. He carried out the duties of his office in the humble and unassuming manner which was so characteristic of him, and was devoted to the Cause of Christ. Having an intelligent grasp of the testimony for truth raised in Scotland in 1893, he was fully persuaded that that Cause was to be found in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Due to the nature of his illness Donald MacIver was unable, for the

last three years of his life, to attend the public means of grace, but we believe the Lord was a "little sanctuary" to him within the confines of his own home. He was no stranger to the temptations of the Evil One and his sense of indwelling sin and corruption was a continual affliction to him. To him, "the Fountain opened for sin and uncleanness" became increasingly precious.

Shortly before the end came he was overheard praying. "Be thou near to us, and keep us near to thee, until the end." His end, we feel assured, was that of the perfect man.

Mark thou the perfect, and behold
The man of uprightness;
Because that surely of this man
The latter end is peace.

To his widow who lovingly attended to him during his illness, and to his family we extend our sincere sympathy.

D.McL.

Canadian Report

By Rev. J. A. Macdonald

Knowing that many in the Home Church are more than interested in how matters are with the Cause of Christ in Canada, I hasten to forward this short report to our Magazine.

In Toronto, and Chesley, there are those who earnestly pray for, and long to be under the auspices of our beloved Church: while, as yet, the inclinations of a few are not so. However, we earnestly hope and pray that that God shall establish His Cause here, so that the voice of the turtle may be audibly heard in this vast City.

In the former place, I preached twice on Sabbath to a good congregation, a number of them young boys and girls. There was also a goodly number at the Wednesday prayer-meeting; which indicates a desire to hear the gospel. God can still hear the groanings of those who cry; "What must I do to be saved."

Mrs E. Fraser and her daughter-in-law, Mrs James Fraser, and son Hugh, met us at Toronto Airport. Words cannot adequately express the welcome we received. We shall always remember it, I believe. Hugh then drove us all to our Apartment, where Mr and Mrs Vanderwal had a lovely meal ready for us. Mr James Fraser and other members of his family joined us later. Here we continued for quite a while talking of the

Cause in general, but especially of the home Church, and of the godly men and women there, whom some of them still remembered, and of whom they themselves are the offspring. Time passed quickly, and although it was now 4 a.m. on G.M.T. (11 p.m. Canadian time), we neither noticed the five hours difference, nor felt too tired.

The Chesley elder, Mr Gerrit Schuit arrived in Toronto on Wednesday, in time for the prayer-meeting, and brought us with him to Chesley the following day; thus covering approximately two hundred and fifty miles in all. Chesley is a fairly large town, surrounded by big farms, etc. Here I had my first service that evening where about forty attended. On Friday evening, I held a catechetical meeting with the young in Mr Schuit's house. We went through part of the Shorter Catechism. Those young people now look upon themselves as Free Presbyterians, and in this way are more and more anxious to know why our Church separated from the Declaratory Act Free Church, and what we now stand for. I explained this.

On Sabbath morning, I gave a short address to the children of the Sabbath School before the 11 a.m. service, from the words of our Saviour: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not."

Both services on the Lord's Day were very well attended, fifty to fifty-five at night. Mrs Edwards came by car from Goderich: while Mr and Mrs Scambler (late of Edinburgh congregation) arrived in Chesley in time for the prayer meeting and remained for the weekend: He led the praise at all services. On Monday I held the Harvest Thanksgiving service, also the prayer meeting on Tuesday. I returned to Toronto on Wednesday for the service there that evening.

The Chesley congregation, like our faithful and loyal people in the Parish of Uig, Isle of Lewis, who, in 1929, cast in their lot with our Church, thus obeying the dictates of their own consciences as well as the Divine command: "Come out from among them and be ye separate from them . . ." They too left valuable property and money behind. Moses like, they preferred to suffer affliction, ridicule and scorn with the people of God, come what may.

Petitions from both Toronto and Chesley congregations to be received into our Church have been forwarded to the Principal Clerk of Synod, Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick.

Let us pray for them as David of old did for the Church in his day:

"O God of hosts, we thee beseech,
return now unto thine;

Look down from heav'n in love, behold,
and visit this thy vine." Psalm 80, v. 14.

Petitions from Canada

(a) On 9th December 1974, the Synod met *pro re nata* in the Church, Inverness, to hear and dispose of petitions for admission to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. These petitions were signed by Office-bearers, members and adherents of the Presbyterian Reformed Church, Ontario, Canada. After long and careful deliberations the Synod unanimously granted the crave of the petitions. By this decision, two congregations have been added to our existing congregations in Canada. For this encouraging improvement in the Church's position overseas, we thank the Lord who gave the increase.

(b) An outline of the background to the decision of 4th December is given in this article and we begin with a brief sketch of the history of the Presbyterian Reformed Church. As a denomination it dates from 1965, when two congregations of which it was composed, united. These congregations were in Toronto and Chesley, and their history was better known to past generations of our Church. The Chesley congregation once belonged to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and we are glad to see our Church once more represented there. The Toronto congregation, now worshipping at Victoria Park Avenue, was for many years independent but loyal to the Reformed faith.

When the said union was consummated the Presbyterian Reformed Church had its own Presbytery having two ministers. However this happy situation ended when one of the ministers left. As two ministers and an elder are the minimum required for a quorum, the Church found itself without a Presbytery of its own. This necessitated enlisting ministerial help from other Churches; a situation which caused disappointment among those who expected the Lord's blessing on their Church. Disappointment resulted in a more thorough examination of their position and some lost confidence in their Presbytery. While looking elsewhere for a spiritual home they addressed themselves to the Head of the Church for help and although they did not petition our Synod in 1973 they continued praying that God would intervene on their behalf by leading them to a sound Church which would provide gospel ordinances for themselves and their children. One can imagine their joy when they heard that the Free Presbyterian Church was willing to consider the possibility of union between the two Churches. They regarded this as an answer to their prayers and they rejoiced. Nothing would deter them now in their determination to be identified with a church with whose constitution they wholeheartedly agreed and whose practice they admired.

(c) The said petitions stem from a decision of Synod in September 1973, when the Dominions and Overseas Committee were instructed to investigate the possibility of union between the Presbyterian Reformed Church, Ontario, and the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. In implementation of its instructions the Committee sent Deputies to Ontario. The first was Rev. Alexander Murray who was followed by Rev. John Nicolson. Mr Murray was back home for the Synod in May 1974, when he gave the Court a report of his investigations. On receiving this report, the Synod reaffirmed its decision of September 1973, and instructed the Committee to continue its investigations. It was further decided that the Convener of the Committee should visit Ontario after Mr Nicolson returned home. Both Mr Murray and Mr Nicolson had a meeting with the presbytery of the Presbyterian Reformed Church but regrettably the result of the meeting was not encouraging as the majority of the members were not in favour of union with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. After the meeting between our Deputies and the Presbyterian Reformed Presbytery, Rev. John Nicolson sent a Report and in his Report recommended to the Convener that as there were some members of Presbytery and many in both Toronto and Chesley congregations in favour of union with the Free Presbyterian Church, the investigations should be continued.

On Mr Nicolson's return to Scotland, the Convener went to Toronto at the beginning of July to have talks at all levels with interested parties. I discovered that while many of the people were enthusiastically interested, a majority of the members of Presbytery were either indifferent to or actually opposed to the proposed union. This clash of interest between the people's representatives and the people themselves made the position more difficult. After several unsuccessful attempts at having a meeting with their representatives, a Presbytery meeting was eventually called for 16th August 1974, and this was followed by a congregational meeting of the Toronto congregation, Victoria Park Avenue, on 19th August. Of the thirteen members present at that meeting, eight voted in favour of union with the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, two voted against union and three abstained. The adherents present were mainly in favour of union. I attended both meetings, presided at the latter, and submitted proposals for union. In the meantime, a section of the Chesley congregation of the Presbyterian Reformed Church decided to join the Free Presbyterian Church. These developments, most gratifying both to us and to the Church's friends in Ontario, intensified the opposition. However, members and adherents from both congregations, Toronto and

Chesley, petitioned the Synod and these petitions received by the Dominions and Overseas Committee on 1st October were transmitted to the Synod for disposal.

We left Ontario for Scotland on 19th August 1974, and Rev. M. Radcliff supplied Toronto and Chesley for a few Sabbaths.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald went to Ontario as Church Deputy on 4th October. His report covers the first part of his work there and his original term of service in Ontario had to be extended substantially as the situation there made his presence and experience most desirable. Mr MacDonald's uncompromising loyalty to his Church well qualified him for the difficult and delicate problems he, like his predecessors, had to face. The whole Church is indebted to him for his services as Deputy. We feel sure he felt well rewarded when he found himself intimating to the friends of the Church the Synod's decision.

The foregoing statement of events in Ontario is a bare outline of the situation created by the Free Presbyterian Church's desire to help our friends in that Province. The desire expressed in our offer of help proceeded from a sincere motive. This could explain the resolute manner in which all concerned pursued the matter. All tactics calculated or intended to discourage those in favour of union failed. The petitioners, resisting all opposition, persevered until they reached their goal. May the Lord who so manifestly blessed them this far, grant them the blessing they earnestly desire, namely, a gospel ministry. The "Macedonian" cry from across the Atlantic has been heard and answered.

Donald Campbell, *Convener*.
Dominions and Overseas Committee.

Gathan Gloir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce
(Air a leanntuinn bho t.d. 50)

Agus a pheacaich, ge b'e co thu, ge b'e cho aotrom 's a mheasas tù nis fearg Dhé, gidheadh, biodh fios agad gu'm bheil am a teachd 'n uair a dh'fheumas thusa agus na peacaich is dalma anns an t-saoghal crithneacadh roimhpe. Faic an aon earrann sin ann an Isaiah xxxiii.14. 'Tha na peacaich ann an Sion fo eagal; ghlac uamhann na cealgairean; co 'n measg a ghabhas comhnuidh maille ri teine mlll teach? co 'n ar measg a ghabhas còmhnuidh maille ri lasraichibh siorruidh?" C'ar son, ciod a tha cearr? Gu deimhinn, cha'n eil ach sealladh agus mothuchadh air fearg

Dhé agus dioghaltas a tighinn orra. An uibhir sin tha na briathra a leanas a nochdadh, "Co 'n ar measg a chomhnaiceas maille ri teine millteach etc. Chunnaic iad fearg Dhé a bhi mar theine millteach, chunnaic iad uamhas ann an sgàthan neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé agus uime sin tha iad dha ghairm "lasraichean siorruidh," agus lion so iad le uamhas agus crith. Gabh earrann eile. Tais. vi. 15, 16, 17, Ann an rann 16, 17, tha sinn a faotainn cuid a' glaodhaich ris na beanntaibh "tuitibh oirne," oir thà iad ag ràdh thainig latha mòr fheirg. Seadh ach co iad so a tha glaodhaich a mach? 'S cìnnteach cha'n eil annta ach badan de chreutairean aig am bheil spiorad iorasal, am bheil thù smuainteachadh, cha'n eil annta ach daoine gealtach aig nach robh riamh spiorad na misneach dhaoine. Ni h-eadh anam, cha'n e leithid sin a chreutairean a thà ann, is iad "righrean na talmhuinn," gach uile sheorsa dhaoine, daoine a thà anns na h-h-àitean is àirde, na suidhichidhean is àirde, is àirde misneach agus treubhantas, cho maith ri muinntir eile, thà iad so uile air a ràdh a bhi comhnuidh ann an sluichd agus ann an creagan na'm beanntan, agus iad ag ràdh, "Tuitibh oirne," ach ca'r son? Ca'r son? Gu ar folach bho fhearg Dhé. C'ar son, ciod a tha cearr? Am bheil eagal oirbh roimh fhearg Dhé. Bha am ann 'n uair a mheas sibh aotrom agus a chuir sibh an suarachas e, mar nì gu'n seadh, agus am bheil a leithid de dh' eagal oirbh roimh fhearg Dhé a nis. agus de chrith roimh a nis, agus gu'm bheil sibh a glaodhaich ruine a nis, a chreagan agus a bheanntan tuitibh oirne, gù ar folach bh' uaith? Oh seadh a chreagan maith, agus a bheanntan maith, tuitibh oirne, luidhidh sibh aotrom agus soirbh oirne, ann an coimeas ris ciod a nì fearg Dhé. Cia mar sin? C'ar son a smuainticheadh sibh so? Bha smuaintean eile agaibh air fearg Dhé beagan tim air ais. C'ar son a bhitheadh a leithid de dh' eagal agus de chrith oirbh roimpe a nis? Oh! a chionn gu'm bheil làtha mòr fheirg air teachd agus cha seas aon roimhe, a deir iad. Dh'amhairc sinn air an fheirg so, bho cheann greis, mar nì a bha fada bho laimh, an sin bha e coltach ri nì aotrom, ach a nis tha'n làtha, seadh làtha mòr fheirg air teasd, agus cha'n eil seasamh dhuinn: am feadh a dh'amhairc sinn air fada bho laimh, b' urrain sinn seasamh fodh chomhair, agus mheasadh-mid aotrom i; seadh, ann an laithibh nach romh chorruidh ach gu beag, ghiullain sinn suas gu maith i; ach a nis tha chorruidh air tighinn dlùth dhuinn, seadh, thà lànachd agus goirgead fheirg a briseadh a mach na'r'n aghaidh, agus thà sinn a faicinn na feirge so a bhi nì's uamhasaich agus nì's cumhachdaich, agus nach urrain sinn seasamh suas aon chuid foidhpe na na h-aghaidh. An abair sibh mar so, freagraidh na creagan agus na beanntan; an sin cha'n eil ioghnadh ged a bhiodh sibh a glaodhaich ruinne bho folach bh' uailthe, ach gu cìnnteach 's e so barrachd 's as urrain dhuinn a

dheanamh air bhur son, feumaidh sibh a nis a bhì giulain agus a gleachd ris an fheirg so gu bràth, cho fad 's tha faochadh is urrain sinn a thoirt dhuibh anns a chùis air a ghabhail a stigh. Oh pheacaich! 'n uair a làtha mòr fearg Dhé, an sin, mar a bi roimh sin, criothnaichidh tusa ris. Gu dearbh, na'm faiceadh tù e, agus gu'n criothnaech adh tù ris dh'fhaodadh tù glaodhaich rì Carruig a b' urrain agus a dheanadh t-fholach bh'uaihte, na'm be agus gu'm faigheadh tù stigh lnnte. Tha mì ciallachadh Criosd, Carruig na'n Al, air Dhà bhi air a dhlùth-ghabhail tre chreidimh, agus t-anam a bhì air aonadh Ris, dh'fhalaicheadh agus dheanadh E tearuinte thù an aghaidh fearg Dhé gu bràth: ach ma theid thù air adhart a deanamh faonais dhe'n fheirg so agus dha bhrosnachadh gach latha na t-aghaidh le peacadh, theid thù fodha mu dheireadh fodh a cudthrom agus a h-ealach gu siorruidh.

6. Ann an sgàthan neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé chì sinn fìor aobhar air son nach eil a chuid is fearr againn air ar caitheamh as, agus mar sin thugadh-mid a ghlòir sin Dhà-san da'm bheil i dlìgheach. A luchd mo ghràidh, ca'r son nach eil sibhse agus mise agus cuid eile air an caitheamh as? Is fìor, thà sinn a coinneachadh ri àmhghairean agus air ar cleachdadh le duilgheadasan an tràth so 's a rithisd, ach car son nach eil sinn gu tur air ar caitheamh as agus air ar milleadh? Gu deimhinn cha'n ann a chionn gu'm bheil sinn comasach air sinn fein a thearnadh, nì motha is ann a chionn gu'n do thoill sinn gu'n deanadh Dia ar tearnadh, ach is ann gu h-uile agus gu h-iomlan do-bhrìgh gu'm bheil Dia neo-chaochlaidheach. So 'n cùntas a tha'n ceann-teagaisg fein a toirt air; "Oir is mise Iehobhah, cha chaochail mì; air an aobhar sin cha'n eil sibhse O chlann Iacoib air 'ur sgrios." Tha ar n-uile thearuinteachd a laidh air; "Is mise Iehobhah. Thà ar n-uile thearuinteachd a laidh ann an neo-chaochliadheachd Dhé. Cha'n eil sinn air 'ur sgrios, a chionn nach eil Esan a caochladh. Feuch thugabh cead dhomh a bhi saor ribh agus rium fein. C'ar son nach eil sinn air 'ur sgrios le sgrios do-labhairt? Thà mòran againn gu goirt air ar briseadh. Thà e fìor, thà sinn air ar briseadh na'r seilbh, na ar slàinte, na ar comhfhurtachdan, na ar dàimhean, ach c'ar son nach eil sinn gu tur air ar caitheamh as? C'ar son a thà sinn beo? C'ar son a tha aon chomhfhurtachd timchioll oirne? Seadh tuilleadh, c'ar son nach eil sinn air sgrios le sgrios siorruidh? C'ar son nach eil a chuid is fearr againn uile ann an ifrinn? C'ar son nach eil sinn ann an siorruidheachd do dhoilidheas agus do thruaigh? C'ar son nach eil sinn a' nis a glaodhaich agus a bùireach fodh fhearg Dhé? C'ar son nach eil 'n ar companaich do dhiabhuil agus do spioradan damanaichte ann an losgadh siorruidh? N' ann a chionn gu'm bheil ar peacaidhean aineamh agus beag agus nach do thoill iad e? Cha 'n ann gu

cìnnreach. C'ar, uime sin, a tha e? Do bhriogh gu'm bheil ar Dia neo-chaochlaidheach, neo-chaochlaidheach ann 'n a bhith, a chòmhairle, a cho-cheangal, agus 'n a ghràdh. Oh! luchd mo ghràidh ma bheacaicheas sinn gu sòlaimichte air ciod e sinn, agus cia mar a ghiulain sinn sinn fein, c'ait an robh ar peacaidhean agus ar brosnuchaidhean agus cho àrd 's a bha iad ag eirigh an aghaidh an Dé bheannaichte, agus a leithidean sin, faodaidh sinn dà-rìreadh ioghnadh a bhi oirne gu'm bheil s'inn a mach a ifrinn, gu'm bheil bith againn an àit air bith an taobh so do shlochd ifrinn; na gu'n urrain sinn aobhar eile a thoirt ach neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé. Leigibh dhomh, uime sin, ìmpidh a chur oirbh a bhi toirt fodh'n ear beagan a chùim agus gu'n toir sibh a ghlòir far am bheil i dlìgheach.

(R'a leanntuinn)

Mission Letters

Dear Friends,

Although we live in times of spiritual decay and fruitlessness, yet over the centuries countless millions have been brought to a true and saving interest in Christ Jesus. In fact in Paul's time the number was so vast that he had to say: "For the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets." (Heb. 11:32). Indeed the list of the faithful in this chapter only touches on the fringe of all those who have by faith pleased God. Their number is so great that they cannot be numbered by man; they are like the sand of the seashore innumerable, countless millions from every nation, kindred and tongue. This number, then, is not confined to one nation. While we think of Israel in the past, we think also of Scotland, Holland, England and many other nations where we find those who fear the Lord; and to this present hour those who fear the Lord are to be found scattered among the nations of the earth.

The nations, however, to which we wish to direct your minds are the African nations. From this vast multitude of peoples many have joined the ranks of the faithful. Think even on the short duration of our own Mission in Rhodesia; in that short period, how many have come to be in the ranks of those who fear the Lord! How is this possible? Indeed, one may ask, how was it possible that so many among the Children of Israel came to fear the Lord? The correct answer would be — through the Holy Spirit's doing a work of regeneration in their souls. Another wonderful aspect of the Spirit's work in regenerating souls is the sending forth of the Word of Life — The Gospel — by the hand of his Church on earth.

Paul and his companions experienced this sending forth. When Asia

and Bithynia were closed to the gospel, Macedonia was opened; they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." (Acts 16:6). Then "they assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." (v.7). Finally, seeing in a vision a man of Macedonia inviting him to come over to Macedonia, Paul says: "We endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." (v.10).

This surely was the guiding factor in Paul's missionary work: the Holy Spirit's directing him to preach in a particular place. This surely was the guiding factor with us as a church when we sent the Gospel to Rhodesia. The Holy Spirit sent us — the only true cause of all genuine missionary work. Plainly the purpose of the Holy Spirit's direction is because God's elect are in that locality; because there is such a class of persons, albeit dead in trespasses and sins, to them the Gospel must be sent. So it is said of the Saviour, "He must needs go through Samaria." (John 4:4). Paul had to go into Macedonia, and we as a church into Rhodesia. Regarding ourselves thus may appear to some as lofty talk, but one thing is certain: nothing but fruitlessness can result if we are not in the place where the Holy Spirit would have us to be, His purpose being to gather the elect from that particular place and nation. Thankful to record, after seventy years of existence we can point to fruit. Although one may mourn over so few being brought to Christ among so many, yet these few belong to the multitude which no man can number. Down through the history of the Free Presbyterian Church in Rhodesia, sinners have been brought to Christ, and are being brought, to this present time. Surely this must be a token of our being in the place of duty.

Persuaded then that, as well as a command being given us to go into the world to preach the Gospel to every creature, we are also directed to a particular place, to this place — Rhodesia — our attention as a Church has been directed from 1904-1974. All the effort on the part of our church in Scotland, the recent enormous help from Holland, and the help from Canada and other countries continue to show that we are directed by the Holy Spirit to uphold the Gospel in Rhodesia; the Gospel which is the only means to bring sinners to Christ. As well as the activities from without, there is the actual labouring on the Mission Field. Men and women have laboured in the past; they labour still; all this to bring sinners to Christ.

Our latest venture, as you are aware, is centred here in Bulawayo. The Church feels directed to extend her borders. She feels led to believe that since God has opened a door, He is showing that in this particular place the Gospel is to be preached. The Church's confession regarding the matter is, as Paul's and his companion's was: "Assuredly gathering that

the Lord has called us for to preach the gospel unto them." (Acts 16:10).

When God thus opens a way for the preaching of the gospel, the hope of every believer is that God has a purpose of mercy in that community; that his elect are hidden there; and that they will be brought in by the Gospel, although, perhaps, in our eyes they are the most unlikely to be converted. To this end we labour in the Mission Field; to this end our preaching here in Bulawayo is conducted. We use every opportunity to preach Christ.

One such opportunity came to us which was outwith the normal routine of preaching. The headmaster of Luveve Government School invited us to conduct the school worship. This we were permitted to do by ourselves and the worship was conducted along the lines of Presbyterian practice. The precentor had the difficult task of leading the praises; difficult in this case because our young school friends were only familiar with tunes which they normally use for hymns. However, after some research he managed to use tunes with which the children were in some small degree familiar. He also kindly supplied psalm sheets and one gospel which were given to each child. Over two hundred children of between thirteen and eighteen years of age were preached to. Realising beforehand that ignorance of the Word of God was an obvious factor with these children — as with any who are separate from the pure teaching of the Scriptures — and that multitudes of Africans, educated and otherwise, still believe in the return of the spirits of their ancestors, I endeavoured to preach a simple sermon from King David's reply to his servants regarding his child who had died: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2 Sam. 12:23). I attempted to show from this truth: (1) that the spirits of men do not return to this world from the dead: "he shall not return to me." (2) David speaks of going to his son: "I shall go to him." This shows a hereafter, and the Bible plainly shows two places where the spirits of men go: to Heaven and Hell. (3) How to attain to entering Heaven and how to avoid Hell.

These efforts to bring Christ to sinners is only a continuing of the work of those who have faithfully laboured before us. Our desire now is to continue in those ways and to wait for the blessing of the Word made effectual to the lost and hell-deserving.

"The Lord himself did give the word,
the word abroad did spread;
Great was the company of them
the same who published." (Psalm 68:11 Metrical version)

"Brethren, pray for us." (2 Thess. 3:1)

Yours sincerely,

Donald A. Ross.

Taipei,
Taiwan,
11th Dec. 1947

Dear Mr MacLean,

As you suggested, I enclose a statement of my expenses in connection with coming here, and studying Chinese, and I will send one also to Mr William Fraser. I expect you will have by now received a copy of our Newsletter, so will have some news of us already. In view of the fact that it was on the Foreign Mission Committee's recommendation that the Synod agreed to finance our travel and language study, I thought it might be acceptable for each Foreign Mission Committee member to receive a Newsletter. May it be a means of stimulating more prayer, not simply for us, though indeed we need it dearly, but also for the millions of lost souls on this island.

There is a great need for a work of God here. A large proportion of the people are still steeped in idolatry, and evidence of this abounds. There are numerous temples and shrines by the roadside. The common sight of idols in shops and houses, the frequent smell of incense, and superstitious practices at weddings and at funerals, amongst other things, remind one constantly of the spiritual darkness that abounds. Yet, it is all too easy to become, even here, immersed in one's own activities, and largely forget the needs of these poor people. The Lord give us grace to weep, and to plead for them, till He send His light to give them the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus. This is impossible with men, but not with God. The prospect of such a change is a spur, though, I fear, too little so, to press on with language study, till we are able to make our own small contribution to the work of spreading the gospel amongst the Chinese. There is need for many more labourers.

The language study is not easy. Though Chinese grammar is not too different from English, the pronunciation certainly is, and, of course, the writing also. Depending on how a sound is pronounced — if the voice rises, or falls, or stays level — the meaning is completely changed. This stage of learning is, of course, very important, when the ability to pronounce correctly and to distinguish the different tones is either won, or lost. We have started writing characters, which is quite fascinating, though very time-consuming, since it requires much practice. Sometimes, the task seems too great, but it is an encouragement to hear, as we frequently do, of our being remembered at the Throne of Grace by the Lord's people in Scotland. No doubt, we receive much help in answer to these prayers.

I would like to thank you again sincerely for your help in making it possible for us to come out here. Not only did it lead to our fees being paid, but it was a means also of stirring the interest clearly of quite a number of people. And we value their prayers even more than the financial help we received, though, needless to say, that is very much appreciated.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Cameron Tallach

Book Reviews

Memories of a Wayfaring Man by Rev. Murdoch Campbell. Highland Printers Ltd. Price £1.00.

In this his last book Mr Campbell gives reminiscences of his own life. The incidents he records are full of interest, especially to Highland readers. Mr Campbell's "Gleanings of a Highland Harvest" endeared him to the people of the North. In that book he portrayed in anecdote the Christianity of a past generation. In this book he speaks of those whom he knew in his own lifetime and who manifested the grace of God in their hearts. He gives an account of the religious atmosphere and surroundings in which he was nurtured mentioning incidents relating to a number of the godly whom he knew in his youth. He was born and brought up in a part of the country where true piety still flourished. He tells how after a season of conviction of sin, he was led at a question meeting in our Church at Greenock in 1919 to put his trust in Christ for eternity. In 1923 he began studying for the ministry of the Free Church. He refers to many of the ministers and professors of those days, his visit to Fort William, Canada, in 1928 and his meeting with Dr John Macleod there. He tells of many incidents throughout his life, special tokens he received and seasons of the Lord's favourable presence which he enjoyed, Mr Campbell tells of his powerful convictions that another great catastrophe other than the two World Wars is to overtake the nation. Yet he was one who longed for the prosperity of Zion, nevertheless was no stranger to the temptations of the wicked one. Suitably the book ends with a chapter on heaven — the Better Country — where we believe Mr Campbell is now enjoying the presence of the Master whom he served.

While many of the incidents will be of special interest to Free Church people to whom the persons spoken of will be well known yet the book should be of interest to a wider range of readers as depicting a type of Christianity which is fast fading from our land.

D.B.M.

History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (1893-1970) Price £2.00.

This volume will now be in the hands of many of our readers. Part II of the history consists of 9 chapters, two of which deal with the history of the Rhodesian Mission. It contains a factual but uncritical account of what occurred in the Church from 1933-70. The material is so varied as to hold the attention of the reader and is, of course, of special interest to those who were contemporary with the events recorded. Included in the account is material of a biographical nature, chiefly about ministers of the Church, which gives added interest. Reference is made repeatedly to events in the religious world of the day and particularly to happenings in the Church of Scotland. Sometimes, we think, too detailed accounts are given of events which really constitute part of the history of the Church of Scotland rather than that of the Free Presbyterian Church, though we allow that these events have a bearing on the Free Presbyterian Church. The reader is kept fully aware of the general religious and moral decline during the years dealt with and also with the spiritual decline in the National Church. The history of the Mission is very fully covered in the two chapters devoted to this aspect of the Church's work. The omission of, or scanty treatment given to certain matters may be understandable in view of the close proximity to the present day of some of the events. The writing of contemporary history is fraught with great danger unless factual accounts are adhered to. It will remain to future historians to interpret those facts in the light of future events. This history will afford the groundwork from which a more interpretive history can be written some time in the future.

A new feature of the history is the inclusion of 16 pages of photographs. We think this a welcome feature and the selection though necessarily not exhaustive, yet is sufficiently representative as to convey to future generations some impression of the ministers and men of a past age.

We commend the History to readers throughout the Church as a useful means of becoming more fully acquainted with the real purpose for the existence of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

D.B.M.

The Autobiography of William Jay. Banner of Truth Trust. Price £1.95.

William Jay was a noted non-conformist preacher of the first half of the 19th century. His preaching labours were conducted mainly in Bath over the long period of 62 years. The first part of the book consists of the autobiography; the second part of reminiscences of distinguished contemporaries (such as, Rev. John Newton, William Wilberforce, Mrs

Hannah More, Rev. Rowland Hill, etc.) and selections from his correspondence.

The book, which is tastefully produced, will be of interest especially to ministers and to students of this particular period of Church history. We trust that those who purchase it will find it helpful and edifying. It will not, however, have the same appeal to the ordinary reader as other biographies already published by the Trust e.g. Volume I and II of the life of C. H. Spurgeon.

D.B.M.

Notes and Comments

Persecution of Christians in the Chad Republic

During the last year foreign missionaries have been expelled from the Chad Republic in Central Africa while national Christians have come under terrible persecution. President Tombalbaye of the Chad Republic has led a National Movement for Cultural and Social Revolution. In connection with this he has re-introduced old tribal initiation rites and required his people to submit to them. Christians who objected to a return to such practices have been treated unmercifully, suffering the most barbarous tortures before being put to death. May we remember at a Throne of grace these persecuted Christians, as well as others in Communist lands and elsewhere who are persecuted for righteousness sake.

Portugal

Changes have come in Portugal which seemed to herald at the outset a new era of freedom to the people of that land. It appeared as if a time of religious liberty was to be ushered in through the coup of last year, and a season of opportunity for the spread of the Gospel. Since then, however, it is becoming clear that the Communists are doing their utmost to get control of Portugal. If they succeed the freedom of the Portuguese will be short lived and they will be subjected to the merciless creed of an atheistic power. May the Lord in His mercy prevent this and overthrow the power of Communism in this and so many other lands.

Scottish Divorce Laws

Many efforts have been made to try to bring the Scottish Divorce Laws in line with those of England and so make easier divorce possible. A further attempt has just been launched by Mr Robin Cook, Labour MP for Edinburgh Central, who has introduced a Private Member's Bill aimed at

doing away with the matrimonial offence and making irretrievable breakdown of marriage the only ground of divorce. We hope the Government will not agree to give the Bill the Parliamentary time which would be necessary in order to complete its different stages.

Common Market Referendum

The Prime Minister has promised to put the issue of Common Market membership to the country in a referendum to be held before the end of June (DV). It is to be hoped that the people of Britain have had their eyes opened to the illusory advantages of Common Market membership and that they will come out decisively in rejection of membership. If our nation in her time of need will only turn to the Lord and cease to look to alliances with other nations as the only hope of national survival, a new era of blessing and prosperity could speedily dawn for this backslidden nation of ours.

Archbishop of Canterbury's Enthronement

With pomp and ceremony Dr Coggan, 101st Archbishop of Canterbury, was enthroned on 24th January in the presence of many dignitaries of Church and State, including for the first time since the Reformation representatives of the Vatican. In his sermon Dr Coggan warned that the Church is in for a time of tribulation and declared that "our radical sickness calls for a radical cure and that can only come by way of the Cross." He called for world co-operation by the churches and maintained that "our divisions will have to go."

How heartening it would have been had Dr Coggan taken the opportunity to call the Churches back to the Bible and the simplicity of Apostolic practice for there can be no true unity apart from a return to Biblical truth. Should such a genuine return to Biblical principles come about how much of the pomp and ceremony and false worship so common in the Church of England would have to be discarded.

Government and Lottery Bill

Mr Graham Page, Conservative MP for Crosby was persuaded to withdraw a Bill he sponsored in the House of Commons to allow local authorities to run lotteries on the undertaking from Mr Oakes, Under-Secretary for the Environment, that the Government would bring in its own Bill within a month. It is sad to think that the Government is taking the initiative in promoting an extension of the sin of gambling by allowing local authorities to run lotteries. What need there is for moral leadership

in the high places of our land. May the day speedily come when leaders in state will reject these evil practices with abhorrence and cease to countenance what are in effect works of darkness.

Church Notes

Concerted Prayer

What need there is to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith! What need to make our calling and election sure! Might it not be opportune for the Lord's people to unite together in prayer for the stirring up of the work of grace in their souls. The Church on one occasion had to confess: "They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." This consideration ought to make the Lord's people diligent at a Throne of grace for the reviving of the graces of the Spirit in their own souls. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Only as we receive an answer to this prayer can we hope to be delivered from a state of backsliding and be so restored that we may once again extend an invitation to Christ: "Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits."

May we continue to pray, too, for the Lord's Cause in the different parts of the world where His servants are labouring for the ingathering of souls into His kingdom. Let us pray for labourers to be sent into His vineyard and for a plentiful harvest of souls through the Lord's blessing.

Aged and Infirm Ministers', Widows' and Orphans' Fund

By appointment of the Synod this collection was due to be taken up in the month of February. Due to the addition of ministers to the Fund and the raising of the Widows' pensions, etc., the fund showed a deficit of approximately £700 at the end of 1974. The Committee would ask our people to secure by the generosity of their givings that this deficit will be made up this year. The fund is in every respect one worthy of our support.

"A father to the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in His Holy habitation." Psalm 68:5.

February 1st 1975

(Rev.) Donald MacLean
Convener

New Clerk and Treasurer required in Rhodesia

The Committee regret having to announce that Miss Jean Nicolson, MA, must return to Scotland at the end of March 1975 for an eye

operation. This unexpected development means that the post of Clerk to the Field Committee and Treasurer to the Missions falls vacant. The Committee have asked Rev. D. A. Ross to take over the work on the departure of Miss Nicolson on a temporary basis but fully realise that this cannot be a permanent solution. The Committee would therefore appeal for someone with clerical and book-keeping experience to come forward and offer his or her services for this important post which is so essential to the smooth running of the Mission. The Committee would remind the readers of the FP Magazine also that there is still a vacancy for a teacher in Ingwenya. Such a teacher must be a graduate from a University. Any applications for these posts should be addressed to the Clerk of the Committee from whom all other information can be obtained.

(Rev.) Donald MacLean,
13 Kingsborough Gardens,
Glasgow G12 9NH

Appeal for Bulawayo Church

The Committee was pleased to receive the welcome news that a site has been made available in Bulawayo for the purpose of building a Church there for the use of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Committee is thankful to the Lord that Rev. D. A. Ross's efforts have now been crowned with success. Like other countries there is a drift in Rhodesia of people from the country districts into the towns and the building of the Church there should be a tremendous help to those connected with our Church who have to go to Bulawayo to seek work. There is also, of course, the prospect of gathering in others who may come to listen to the gospel of the grace of God. Although the Committee are still restricted in the amount allowed to be sent to Rhodesia from this country, we feel that if there was a considerable response to this appeal for funds to build this church, we could come to an arrangement with the Bank of England Exchange Control to have the money sent out. The Committee has decided, therefore, to make this appeal and all donations should be sent to the General Treasurer. Considerable interest is evidenced when a new church is opened in the Home Country and we hope that a similar interest will be seen in answer to this appeal.

Service on Radio

The morning service on the BBC Radio Scotland programme on 31st January, 1975, was conducted by Rev. Fraser Tallach, Broadford. The

service was recorded in the Free Presbyterian Church, Broadford, a fortnight earlier. We believe that this was the first occasion that a Free Presbyterian service was broadcast by the BBC. May the Lord bless His Word and open the way for more opportunities of this kind to spread the gospel.

Ballifeary Home of Rest

It will be gratifying news to our friends throughout the Church to learn that the vacancy in the Home of Rest at Inverness has now been filled with the appointment of Mrs Margt. MacSwan as Matron and as she and her husband take up residence, we ask that the prayers of our people will accompany the Matron in assuming the charge of the Home with its responsibilities and duties. The Committee acknowledge the Lord's goodness in this appointment. We hope that the new Matron will be spared to serve the Church in the work of the Home for many years to come.

The committee, however, still feel concerned that the position of Assistant Matron or Housekeeper has not yet been filled and they appeal to any lady throughout the Church who may be interested in the welfare of the aged and may feel directed by the Lord into this field of service, to write to the Matron, Mrs Margt. MacSwan, Ballifeary Home of Rest, Ness Walk, Inverness. The scale of pay is up to the level which prevails in Eventide Homes or Homes for the Aged elsewhere. Nursing experience, though desirable, is not really essential. We hope that someone will respond to this appeal so that this position too may soon be filled.

A.F.M.

Committee Meetings (DV)

The following Committees will meet in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness on 1st and 2nd April (DV):

Tuesday 1st April: 10-11.30 a.m. Church Magazines Committee. 11.30-1300 Religion and Morals Committee. 1430-1630 Finance Committee. 1630-1730 Dominions and Overseas Committee. 1900-2100 Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee. 2100-2200 Home of Rest Committee.
Wednesday 2nd April: 10-11.30 Church Extension Committee.

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Sustentation Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £30; Anon, B., (for Pension Scheme) £20.

Home Mission Fund: M.G. £3; Anon, Paisley postmark £14.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: M.G. £2; Stornoway Sabbath School £40; Anon, Paisley postmark £20; Victoria Park Presbyterian Church, Toronto (sent direct) \$789.35.

Aged and Infirm Ministers' etc Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £7.

College and Library Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £5.

Organisation Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £5.

General Building Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £5.

Dominions and Overseas Fund: Anon, Paisley postmark £14; Anon (for Mission to Italy) £100.

China Mission Fund: Mrs Tegart, Battlefield, Sask., £200; Anon Harris postmark £10; Anon £100.

Trinitarian Bible Society: South Harris Congregation £50.70; Applecross Congregation £29; Waternish Congregation £6.

Home of Rest Fund: Tomatin Congregation Harvest Thanksgiving Day collection £27.50; Daviot, Stratherrick and Tomatin Congregation £47; Raasay Congregation £95.50.

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

Dumbarton: Friend £3; Friend, Inverness £5; Mch. 4:6, £3; Friend £2; Two Inverness Friends £10; Friend at Communion £5; all per Mr T. MacRae; Envelope in plate (29.12.74) £10; W.B. per A.J.M. £5; F.P. Friend £2; Miss Maclean £5, both per Mrs Macleod, all donations for Dumbarton Manse Purchase Fund.

Lochcarron: In memory of my loved husband and family £10; Envelope in church plate £5; F. MacB. £5; In memory of loved one £5, last two per Rev. J.W.R.; Envelopes in church plate £3; Friend £10; Envelope in Kishorn church plate £5; all for Congregational Purposes; Mrs M.A. MacD. per Rev. J.W.R. £5 for Sustentation Fund; Friend, Carnoustie £5 per K.M.R. for Building Fund; Mrs J. MacR. £3 for Building Fund and £3 for Sustentation, per K. McK.; Envelope in church plate £4.50 for College and Library Fund; Envelope £5 for Sustentation Fund, £5 for Ministers Car, £5 for Blythswood Tract Society.

Plockton: Envelope in Kyle plate £10; Envelope in Kyle plate £5; both for Manse Building Fund.

Portree: F.T., Tunbridge Wells £5 per F.M. for Church Renovation; Glasgow postmark £21 per F.M. for Sustentation Fund.

Raasay: A friend, Inverarish £3; Friend, Inverarish £3; In memory of the late James MacKenzie £10, all per J.M. Macleod; Friend, Raasay £1; A Friend £2; A Friend, Inverarish £3, all donations for Manse Extension.

Shieldaig: Friend of the Cause £10 for Congregational Purposes; Anon £10 for Sustentation Fund.

Stornoway: Friend, Coulegrein £24 (£10 for Foreign Mission, £10 for Home Mission, £4 for Minibus) per Rev. J. Macleod; Two Friends, Inverness £10 for Communion expenses per Rev. J. Macleod.

North Harris: Mrs C. A. MacL, Tarbert, Harris £1 for College and Library Fund.

Stirling, Perth and Dundee: E.G., Edinburgh £5; C.F. Lochgilphead £2; Friend, Farnham, Surrey, £10, all for Church Extension and per Rev. I.R.T.