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Love One Another

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." 1st John 4:7, 8.

The love that exists between the Persons of the Trinity is an unfathomable love. It is infinite, eternal and unchangeable love. Even in trying to contemplate it we are launched out into an ocean without a bottom, without a brim and without any shore. Astronauts launched out into space might as easily grasp the limits of space as a believer can the length and the breadth, and the height and the depth of the love that exists within the Trinity. The very thought of it is overwhelming. We can only gaze in wonder, unable to take in its fulness. Yet it is summed up so simply and briefly in these words: "God is love." Love belongs to the very nature of God. He is essentially love and is glorious in this respect as He is glorious in all His attributes.

But God is not only a God of love; He also is One who has made His love known to men in the Person and work of His well-beloved Son. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The end which the Father had in view in sending His Son was that poor sinners might experience the love of God in their own hearts through the effectual working of His Word and Spirit in them. The Saviour could say to the Father in the concluding words of His intercessory prayer: "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26).

As those who have the love of God dwelling in them, the true people of God are themselves to dwell in love towards one another. If we have been partakers of the love of God in Christ Jesus and can say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be

called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1), then we must also say, "Beloved, let us love one another." Love to the brethren is an essential mark of the true believer. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3:14). Every believer must seek to cultivate the grace of love, for love is the fulfilling of the law. It is also the first of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians, chapter 5.

How then are we to grow in love and manifest love to all men and more particularly to those who are of the household of faith? It cannot be apart from loving God. It is as we are more and more knit in love to God in Christ that we will have our hearts drawn out in love to our neighbour and our brethren. What then will make us love God more? Surely an increased realisation that He first loved us. "We love Him because He first loved us." It is the revelation of His love in Christ to our soul which unites us to Him and draws out our soul in love to Him. If then we love Him who begat, will we not also love those who are begotten by Him?

Another way in which we may have our hearts drawn out in love to the brethren is this. Let us not look upon them as they are in themselves, but as they are in Christ; and let us look for Christ in them. Christian love is not love to the brethren for what they are in themselves. It is just natural love when we love another because of his or her own virtues or outward attractiveness. Love of the brethren is love based on what they are in Christ and on account of what is seen of Christ in them. They will be loved therefore because they are Christ's and because of their Christ-likeness. In the measure that Christ shines forth in any of the brethren, in that measure our soul will be knit to that person in love.

How is it then that there can be any interruption of this love between the brethren? Will not Christ always be attractive in His people? It is through sin that this mutual love is disturbed. Sin will hide the image of Christ in His people. They will appear like the world. When place is given in the heart to sin — to pride, self-seeking, carnality, etc. — then we need not wonder though it should result in estrangement among the brethren. If love between the brethren is to be restored then sin must be put away. This calls each one to honest and diligent self-examination. Love among the brethren cannot flourish unless it go hand in hand with a crucifying of the flesh. There must be a putting off of the old man and a putting on of the new. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:25, 26).

May we be enabled so to put on the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives that men will take notice of us that we have been with Jesus. Other believers then cannot but be knit to us in love because of the image of Christ they see in us. In this way we will promote, not coldness and alienation among the brethren, but a deepening of love towards one another.

An Apostolic Resolution

"For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

In these famous words Paul announced to the Corinthians a resolution which he had settled on before ever he preached the gospel in their city. It seems clear that there is a negative and a positive aspect to his decision; he had resolved to avoid certain things and he was equally determined to emphasise certain other things.

In the narrow context of his words it is clear that Paul was announcing his avoidance of one particular matter. He had not come among them with the arts of a rhetorician, nor with the airs of a philosopher (v.1). These ostentatious styles he had determined to avoid, for they clashed with the spirit of his message. Paul had such a solemn sense of being God's mouthpiece that he trembled to think of any artificiality of form detracting from the message he had to declare: 'Jesus Christ and him crucified'.

We take it that this is the significance of Paul's words, limiting them to their immediate context. However, it may be permissible to see their significance also in relation to a broader context in the Epistle. And if we do allow such a broadening of the background to v. 2, there is one particular matter which Paul had clearly decided not to do, before his arrival at Corinth. He had determined not to become embroiled in the divisions within the church. That the Corinthian church was in fact split into various rival camps is clear from I:12, ' . . . every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ'.

The group which championed Paul against these others would doubtless have been delighted at the news that their hero was to visit their city. They would have anticipated many gains from opposing ranks while the apostle preached among them. But they were to be disappointed. Paul had resolved that question in his mind long before he set foot in Corinth. He was to have nothing whatever to do with their envy, their strife, and their carnal divisions (3:2). He was to preach on a higher plane; he was to move in a more spiritual sphere.

If Paul turned his back on these things, what did he turn towards? He turned to one theme — Jesus Christ and him crucified.

He could not have turned to a theme more closely allied to the glory of God. As Paul himself said elsewhere, Christ is the brightness of His Father's glory. The pride of men could feast on divisions in the churches and on other carnal subjects, but here was a theme which put every man in his place. Here was a subject which glorified the name of God and which made every man who understood it say, 'Woe is me, for I am undone . . . '

Another point about this chosen theme of the Apostle's is that it was calculated to do the Corinthians nothing but good. Jesus Christ and him crucified had been the means, through the first promise, of striking the first cheering light since darkness settled on the world. Jesus Christ and him crucified had been the subject of all the songs of the church since the beginning of time, and will be the theme of the church's songs when time shall be no longer. How did lost sinners ever get to sing of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1:30) if it was not by faith in Jesus Christ and him crucified?

There would be no regrets after this campaign, nobody would be misled, no-one would be needlessly hurt, for the theme of the campaign was simply, 'Jesus Christ and him crucified'. We cannot tell what harm is being done in men's minds when matters alien to this are raised. We cannot tell how many are discouraged from seeking Christ, when profitless matters are entertained by the church. But we know that, when we adhere to 'Jesus Christ and him crucified' there can come from it nothing but good.

This was no doubt the fruit of Paul's ministry in Corinth. The effect of his preaching was to edify his hearers' minds and elevate their thoughts, to sink their differences and deliver them from all that barred their way to Christ. How much evil was thus avoided, how much good was thus achieved!

And how much cause for heart-searching among the apostle's successors, to see if they can say as he could, 'I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified'.

J.T.

The eloquence of a holy life is never wasted.

Christian Observer.

Tenderness Towards One Another's Names

by Rev. Thos. Watson

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7)

Christians must be tender of one another's names. We must be merciful to the names of others. A good name is one of the greatest blessings upon earth. No chain of pearl so adorns as this. It being so, we ought to be very tender of names. They are to be accounted in an high degree unmerciful, who make no conscience of taking away the good names of their brethren. Their throats are open sepulchres to bury the fame and renown of men (Romans 3:13). It is a great cruelty to murder a man in his name. 'The keepers of the walls took away my vail from me' (Canticles 5:7). Some expositors interpret it of her honour and fame which covered her as a beautiful vail. The ground of this unmercifulness to names is:

1 Pride. Pride is such a thing as cannot endure to be outshined. It loves not to see itself exceeded in parts and eminency; therefore it will behead another in his good name that he may appear something lower. The proud man will be pulling down of others in their reputation, and so by their eclipse he thinks he shall shine the brighter. The breath of a proud man causes a blast or mildew upon fame.

2 Envy (1 Peter 2:1). An envious man maligns the dignity of another, therefore seeks to mischief him in his name. Religion teaches us to rejoice in the esteem and fame of others. 'I thank my God for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world'; it is 'divulged with fame' (Romans 1:8). A good report is a credit to religion (Hebrews 11:2). If persons professing godliness do not have a good name, religion will not have a very good name, but envy consulting with the devil lays a train and fetches fire from hell to blow up the good name of another.

In how many ways may we be unmerciful to the names of others?

Divers ways: First, by mis-reporting them, a sin forbidden. 'Thou shalt not raise a false report' (Exodus 23:1). Eminency is commonly blasted by slander. 'Their tongues are as arrows shot out' (Psalm 64:3). The tongue of a slanderer shoots out words to wound the fame of another and make it bleed to death. The saints of God in all ages have met with unmerciful men who have fathered things upon them that they have not been guilty of. Surius, the Jesuit, reported of Luther that he learned his divinity of the Devil and that he died drunk; but Melanchthon, who wrote his life, affirms that he died in a most pious holy manner and made a most excellent prayer before his death. It was David's complaint, 'They laid to my charge things which I knew not' (Psalm 35:11). The Greek word for

'devil' signifies slanderer (1 Timothy 3:11). 'Not slanderers' — in the Greek it is 'not devils.' Some think that it is no great matter to defame and traduce another, but know, this is to act the part of a devil. O how many unmerciful men are there, who indeed pass for Christians, but play the devil in venting their lies and calumnies! Wicked men in Scripture are called 'dogs' (Psalm 22:16). Slanderers are not like those dogs which licked Lazarus' sores to heal them, but like the dogs which ate Jezebel. They rend and tear the precious names of men. Valentinian the Emperor decreed that he who was openly convicted of this crime of slander should die for it. And Pope Gregory decreed that such a person should be ex-communicated, and not have the communion given him. I think it was a just decree.

Second, we are unmerciful to the names of others when we receive a slander, and then report what we hear. 'Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people' (Leviticus 19:16). A good man is one that 'doeth not evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour' (Psalm 15:3). We must not only not raise a false report, but not take it up. To divulge a report before we speak with the party and know the truth of it is unmercifulness and cannot acquit itself of sin. The same word in the Hebrew, 'to raise a slander,' signifies to receive it (Exodus 23:1). The receiver is even as bad as the thief. It is well if none of us have (in this sense) received stolen goods. When others have stolen away the good names of their brethren, have not we received these stolen goods? There would not be so many to broach false rumours, but that they see this liquor pleases other men's taste.

Third, we deal unmercifully with the names of others when we diminish from their just worth and dignity; when we make more of their infirmities and less of their virtues. 'Speak not evil one of another' (James 4:11). I have read a story of one, Idor, an abbot, that he was never heard to speak evil of any man. Augustine could not endure that any should eclipse and lessen the fame of others, therefore he wrote those two verses upon his table:

*Whoever loves another's name to blast,
This table's not for him; so let him fast.*

Wicked men are still paring off the credit of their neighbours, and they make thick parings. They pare off all that is good. Nothing is left but the core, something that may tend to their disparagement. Unmerciful men know how to boil a quart to a pint. They have a devilish art so to extenuate and lessen the merit of others, that it is even boiled away to nothing. Some, though they have not the power of creation, yet they have the power of annihilation. They can sooner annihilate the good which is

in others than imitate it.

Fourth, we are unmerciful to the names of others when we know them to be calumniated yet do not vindicate them. A man may sometimes as well wrong another by silence as slander. He who is merciful to his brother is an advocate to plead in his behalf when he is injuriously traduced. When the apostles, who were filled with the wine of the Spirit, were charged with drunkenness, Peter vindicated them openly (Acts 2:15). A merciful man will take the dead fly out of the box of ointment.

Fifth, they are in an high degree unmerciful to the names of others who 'bear false witness against them' (Psalm 27:12). 'Put not thy hand with the wicked to be a false witness' (Exodus 23:1). 'Putting the hand' is taking an oath falsely, as when a man puts his hand upon the book and swears to a lie. So Tostatus expounds it. This 'false-witness' is a two-edged sword. The party forsworn wounds another's name and his own soul. A false witness is compared to a maul or hammer (Proverbs 25:18). It is true in this sense, because he is hardened in impudency — he blushes at nothing — and in unmercifulness. There is no softness in a maul or hammer, nor is there any relenting or bowels to be found in a false witness. In all these ways men are unmerciful to the names of others.

Let me persuade all Christians, as they make conscience of religion, so to show mercy to the names of others. Be very chary and tender of men's good name.

Consider what a sin it is to defame any man. 'Laying aside all envies and evil speakings' (Titus 3:2; 1 Peter 2:1). Envy and evil speaking are put together: 'laying aside,' 'putting away,' as a man would put away a thing from him with indignation; as Paul shook off the viper (Acts 28:5).

Consider also the injuriousness of it. You, who take away the good name of another, wound him in that which is most dear to him. Better take away a man's life than his name. By eclipsing his name you bury him alive. It is an irreparable injury; something will remain. A wound in the name is like a flaw in a diamond or a stain in azure, which will never die out. No physician can heal the wounds of the tongue.

God will require it at men's hands. If idle words must be accountable for, shall not reproachful slanders? God will make inquisition one day as well for names as for blood. Let all this persuade to caution and circumspection. You would be loath to steal the goods of others. A man's name is of more worth, and he that takes away the good name of another sins more than if he had taken the corn out of his field or the wares out of his shop.

Especially take heed of wounding the names of the godly. God has set a crown of honour on their head, and will you take it off? 'Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?' (Numbers 12:8). To defame the saints is no less than the defaming of God himself, they having his picture drawn upon them and being members of Christ. Oh think how ill Christ will take this at your hand another day! It was under the old law a sin to defame a virgin, and what is it to calumniate Christ's spouse? Are the names of the saints written in heaven, and will you blot them out upon earth? Be merciful to the names of others.

Christ is All

by Dean Henry Law

9. CLEAN AND UNCLEAN

"To make a difference between the unclean and the clean." Lev. 11, v. 47.

Where is the spectacle, which can compare with the true child of God in Christ? He once was as a withered branch. No comeliness — no worth adorned him. But in due time a gracious eye looked on his ruined state; a gracious hand removed him to the garden of the Lord. And now unfailing grace continues its preserving care. Old things are gone. All things are fresh in verdure — fragrance — bloom.

The believer is a new-born heir. As such he journeys in new companionship along new paths to his new home. He is no longer of the earth and earthly. While his hands hold the title-deeds of heavenly life, his separated walk is worthy of his lofty prospects. His mien is as distinguished, as his hope. His heart is far away: and an uplifted heart uplifts the thoughts, and words, and works. An impulse from on high compels high motives and desires. The stream must seek its native level. The attracted steel must tend towards the magnet. Thus the new man is drawn towards God, and thus he soars above the world's debasing plain.

No doubtful text proclaims this truth. Come, is the constant Gospel-cry. What is it to come, but to leave sin, the world, and self, and enter fenced pastures, where Jesus guides His guarded flock?

But more than precept teaches separation. A nation stands its living type. Israel's children picture the family of grace. Were they commingled with the common race of man? Far otherwise. Peculiar ordinances set them apart. Peculiar institutions were a broad barrier around. Peculiar laws raised the high pathway, in which they walked alone.

Their every act in every day was a distinction. Their code was a

sign-post guiding from open thoroughfare. Many rules enclosed them within holy bounds. Many commands secured a differing life.

But one especial instance here claims notice. Their tables were hedged around. A garrison of interdictions circled them. Their diet was most rigidly confined. Were all the beasts, which browsed in meadows, or which climbed the hills, or lurked in forests, their allotted food? Might they partake of all the watery tribe, which sported in the lakes, or hid in the sea's depths? Did all the winged creation minister regalement to their palate? Might choice select all creeping reptiles, at its will? It was not so. Some only might be touched. The rest must be most scrupulously shunned. A mark was fixed on each. There was no animal — no fish — no bird — no insect of the soil, which was not Clean or Unclean — permitted or forbidden. Each had its voice. Taste or taste not.

Reader, it is well to probe the mine of this extensive law. It must be wise: the God all-wise ordains it. It must be good: the hand of love indites it. What then is the purport? May the Spirit's light reveal!

They stop far short who limit the design to some intrinsic difference in created flesh, or only find a guidance to nutritious food. The palate needed not such heaven-sent aid. Luxury would soon discern the luscious and the vile. Besides, the mark is not, salubrious — insalubrious: tasteful — tasteless; but Clean — Unclean. No. These instructions teach the wing of faith to stretch to higher regions of exalted thought. Here is a school to benefit the soul. The mind is hereby disciplined to spiritual advance. The need of inward purity is here prescribed.

The first result is far removal from all heathen contact. God's chosen tribes could hold no social fellowship with idol-worshippers. There was no common banquet-house. The tables of the nations were unclean. The Jew could have no seat at impure boards. The dish, there proffered, might contain polluted food. Thus a wide gulf divided. Thus a strict ordinance prevented intermixing union. Reader, this law commands God's people to be separate.

The literal code indeed has ceased. All shadows vanish. The Gospel-substance is revealed. But still the principle is divine. It cannot die. The holy purport lives, and will live on, till the last saint shall pass through glory's porch.

The need remains, because the world is still the world. Its baits, its filth, its vile corruptions, are unchanged. It still extends a net for the unwary soul. It still is the broad road going down to hell. It still is the wide gate courting the giddy multitude. Hence Scripture's voice still cries, Beware. Beacons still show a coast bestrewed with wrecks, and

wisdom calls the holy pilgrim from a treacherous path.

Reader, you grant, that a clear precept interdicts the world. But perhaps the term conveys no definite idea. Some shrouded phantom passes in shadowy guise. No features broadly stare you in the face. Be not deceived. The world, though masked, has still its own most fearful form. The mass of mankind, strangers to God, and rebels to His grace, are its material. They, whose chief good resides in things of time and sense; they, whose horizon stretches not beyond this fleeting scene; they, whose one object is to press most earthly joy into earth's little day; they, who dance after pleasure's bubble, and scorn the cross, and make not Christ their all, are the vile stones which form the worthless pile. All, who bear Satan's yoke, and do his work, and wear his badge, and heed his will, are subjects of that wide empire — world. The line is really broad. Enlightened eyes discern it. Believers may not cross it. They must be separate, as light from darkness — filth from purity — life from the dreary grave.

There is much mercy in the strict command. Come, mark this. The climate of the world checks growth in grace. True godliness is a tender plant. It cannot thrive, when nipped with chilling winds. A clinging weed destroys the opening flower. A coiling serpent sucks the heart-blood. Rough contact blunts an edge. Thus the world injures souls. It must be left, or holiness will sicken — wither — die. The sun of Solomon goes down in clouds of shame, because his swerving heart declined to pleasure's lure. Love therefore warns. "Be not conformed." Romans 12:2.

The world stands forward, as Christ's open foe. It wages an incessant war against pure truth. Is it not then a traitor's part to hold close converse with the adverse camp? Is it not shame, and worse than shame, to take familiar counsel with a rebel host? He cannot raise the banner of the cross, or march to victory by Jesus' side, who wavers between hostile ranks. Love cries again, "Come out," — "Be separate." The true believer glories in his Lord. In every company, act, and step, he is to show the livery of his King. It is false witness to adopt the language of an alien race. It is desertion of the holy service, to take the garb of a strange household. Can Moses live, as an Egyptian prince? He chooses hardships, that he may testify allegiance to the cause of God. "We are the salt of the earth." But mixed with filth, the salt will lose its savour.

All usefulness is slain, when Christ is left. It is a common sneer, that saintliness is a mere pretence, and faith is but hypocrisy's disguise. Suspicion fastens on the wavering steps. The world, with all its blindness, quickly reads the language of the life. It slowly credits a consistent saint. But soon, how soon, it derides inconsistent walk! In such case, zeal is a

pointless arrow and a broken bow. No argument — no eloquence — no diligence prevails. Words, which seem insincere, touch not the heart. No teacher really teaches with a doubtful fame. Therefore Jesus says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17:14.

Believer, ponder well these obvious thoughts. Would you know peace, as an unfailing stream? Would you pluck joys from ever-verdant boughs? Would you from morn till night bask in the sunshine of Christ's smile? Would you have happy consciousness, that every step is an ascent towards heaven? Would you be cheered with the sweet hope, that life is not a barren field, or summer brook? Would you pour comfort into many hearts, and wear at last a diadem of saved souls? If such be your desires, avoid the poison of the world. If you tread down the barrier line, if you stray out beyond the fold's wide fence, you wrong your soul — you bring reproach upon the Lord — your days will be uncertain sound — your memory will be no instructive page. Cling to the confines of the cross. There is no blessedness without.

But this rule of meats did more than cause the Jews to dwell alone. It forced unceasing vigilance. It placed them in the tower of constant circumspection. It always whispered in their ears, Beware. Their eyes could scarcely look around, without the thought of God's dividing line. Each object of their touch was "Clean or Unclean."

The lesson is most obvious. We thus are taught at every step to ask God's will — at every moment to inquire, Is this a lawful path? It is a grievous error to suppose, that each minutest matter is not the seed of some results. The circumstance of every moment affects the soul, and so affects the endless state. The stamp, "Clean or Unclean," belongs to every movement of each mind — to every act throughout each day. Reader, learn hence to cultivate a watchful course — apply a constant test.

When thoughts arise (and multitudes, which baffle number, hourly pass the threshold of the heart) examine them in Gospel-light, and let none linger, which are found to be unclean. In converse, words roll forth — many as drops in the fast-flowing tide — each is according to God's will, or adverse to His mind. Pause, and reflect. Pause, and uplift the prayer, "Set a watch upon my mouth, and keep the door of my lips." Let all be checked, which go not forth, as Clean, to minister pure grace.

No ground is neutral. We always stand in right or in wrong path. Hence the enquiry should often sift the soul, "What doest thou here?" Is "Clean or Unclean" God's judgment of this place? This line, when

drawn by Scripture-rule, would sweep God's children from many a contaminating spot.

No book is so insipid, as to have no character, and leave no tinge. How many trifling offsprings of the worldly pen would find an early and unknown grave, if the enquiry, "Clean or Unclean," were solemnly applied. Let, then, the truth be settled in each mind, that there is no indifferency on earth. Each moment flies on high, recording, "Clean or Unclean," concerning life's employ.

Reader, another thought demands reply. Your soul, your precious soul, your never-dying soul, Is it "Clean or Unclean?" By nature it is the vilest filth. All Adam's race flow forth, as unclean waters from an unclean spring. But are you cleansed? Do you live bathing in a Saviour's blood? Are you the mansion of His purifying Spirit? Jesus can cleanse from every sin, and He alone. Cleave then to Him. The Spirit sanctifies, and He alone. Seek His indwelling. Now is the only cleansing day. The door will soon be closed. "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Rev. 22:11.

Ordination Vows

by Rev. Donald MacLean, Glasgow

Ordination vows are entered into freely by those who are ordained to office in the Christian Church. In the Presbyterian system these vows are undertaken by ministers, elders and deacons. They are binding upon the conscience, and breach of them is a very serious matter both in the sight of Christ, the Head of the Church, and in the sight of the Church itself.

This article will deal with ministers in particular, but the observations made here have their application to the other offices in the Church. As far as a minister is concerned, ordination vows are, of course, bound up with ordination itself.

Ordination to the ministry means the setting apart of a man to that particular office and proceeds on the assumption that such an individual has already been set apart for this work by the Saviour Himself. It is He, and He alone, who gives ministers as gifts to his Church, and He does this by the operation of his Spirit through his Word. He first calls them effectually by his grace out of an estate of sin and misery into an estate of salvation. In this effectual call, the sinner experiences conviction of sin, by which his conscience is awakened, his false hopes destroyed, and his soul brought in guilty before God. In effectual calling he learns the true nature of sin, its intrinsic evil against God, ruinous to his own soul and

exposing him to all the miseries of this life, to death itself and to the pains of hell for ever. He sees clearly his utter inability to deliver himself from the sad and dangerous condition in which he finds himself. He is, therefore, in need of a Saviour such as the Son of man who came to seek and to save that which was lost. In effectual calling, the Spirit of God enlightens the soul in the knowledge of the Saviour. Through the Word of God he comes to see the glory and grace of the Person and work of Christ. His will being renewed, he is enabled to embrace Him as his Saviour, and to rest in Him alone for salvation. He now has an experimental knowledge of the Gospel, and possesses eternal life in virtue of which he knows the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Effectual calling does not make a man a minister, but a solid, savoury experience of Gospel deliverance, the efficacy of the blood to cleanse from all sin, and of the gracious work of God the Holy Ghost in conviction, illumination and renewing, is generally granted to those whom the Lord intends in due time to call to the office of the ministry.

As in effectual calling saving grace is imparted to the soul to enable that soul to answer the call of the Gospel, so in the call to the ministry grace is imparted to the soul to answer this call. Consequently there is no ministerial grace to carry out the functions of the ministry without Christ's call to this work. Very often a fundamental mistake is made here. A young man may have a good religious background; he is articulate and capable of expressing himself well; he takes up a religious profession and then enters the ministry. None of these benefits, however, can replace the actual call to the ministry, and sooner or later this is seen to be so. Such a person may begin his ministry in quite a promising way, but eventually the trials, difficulties and testings which are inescapable from the ministry arise, and it soon becomes clear to any discerning eye that these duties are beyond him. The reason is that he has never been called to this work, and consequently he does not get the necessary grace to fulfil such a ministry.

The call to the ministry is therefore of the greatest importance. For a man to run without being sent is one of the greatest calamities which can happen to himself, to his congregation, or to the Church unfortunate enough to have such in its ministry. In this call, the Holy Spirit uses the Word and providences of God, bringing the person to feel cut off from his worldly employment, giving him a desire for the glory of Christ, a thirst for the salvation of souls, and a longing for the prosperity of the Church of God in the world. By the operation of the Holy Ghost, and through his Divine anointing, he is set apart to the ministry of the Word.

When such a person has been accepted and trained by the Church and called by a congregation he is ordained by the Presbytery to the work of the ministry. Ordination without the call to the ministry does not make a man a minister, but according to the Word of God he must be ordained and set apart to this work by a Presbytery. At such a time he comes under vows of a most solemn nature. These vows are called Ordination vows, and in the Free Presbyterian Church are contained in the questions put to the minister, and the formula which he signs in the presence of the congregation.

These vows, for the sake of clarity, can be divided up as follows:

1 Doctrinal. He accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and as the only rule of faith and practice. He owns the Westminster Confession of Faith to be founded upon the Word of God, and acknowledges the same to be the confession of his faith, and promises that he will assert, maintain and defend the same. He disowns all Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Erastian and other tenets inconsistent with the Confession of Faith. It will be noticed here that he accepts the Confession as the confession of his own faith, and as founded upon the Word of God. We read of a minister in another denomination who stated that he sincerely accepted the Confession except in so far as it might be contradicted by the supreme standard, that is, the Word of God. This sounds very pious, but it is in fact a perversion of the ordination vow. If a minister decides that to his understanding a part or parts of the Confession of Faith are inconsistent with the Word of God, his proper course is to leave the church, and not to stir up trouble by advancing his personal views inconsistent with the vows he undertook.

2 Worship. He promises, to the utmost of his power, to assert, maintain and defend the purity of worship at present practised in this Church. This purity of worship, as is well known, excludes the use of hymns of human composition, and instrumental music.

3 Governmental. He professes that the Presbyterian Government and discipline of the Church are founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto, and undertakes to maintain, support and defend it. He further promises not to endeavour directly or indirectly the prejudice or subversion of such Government. He promises to submit himself to the Judicatories of the Church humbly and in the spirit of meekness.

4 Historical. He approves of the general principles of the Claim, Declaration and Protest of 1842. He approves of the Deed of Separation of the Free Presbyterian Church, adopted at its first Presbytery at Portree, 14th August, 1893.

The whole of the foregoing can be summed up in the final promise which he gives in the following words, "And I promise that I shall follow no divisive course from the doctrine, worship, discipline and exclusive jurisdiction of this Church, renouncing all doctrines, tenets and opinions whatsoever contrary to or inconsistent with the said doctrine, worship, discipline or Government or jurisdiction of the same."

The solemn, searching and all-embracing nature of these vows should make those who undertake them tremble, especially at the thought of breaking them. Yet the Free Presbyterian Church felt it necessary to pass a resolution in the Synod of 1903, on the subject of Creed Subscription. This resolution is in the following terms — "The Synod also, considering the dishonest and degrading manner in which the most solemn promises and engagements relative to subordinate standards are violated by many that hold office in Presbyterian Churches, the great reproach brought thereby on the name of Christ, and the reflection cast upon all office bearers, feels bound to restate what is the real nature and implication of these engagements, and what is expected of all office-bearers of this Church in this connection. The solemn promises and declarations made at ordination — commonly called ordination vows — are made not so much unto men as unto God, and are therefore of the like binding obligation with an oath, and ought to be made with the like seriousness and religious care. The Synod, therefore, believing that the Westminster Confession of Faith, as received by the Church of Scotland in 1647, is founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto, cannot accept the view that this Church will at any time be at liberty to depart from the doctrine, government, mode of worship and discipline which the said Confession sets forth, and which all office-bearers have solemnly engaged to assert, maintain and defend. The Synod expects of its office-bearers, as honourable men, that whensoever they are conscious of having ceased to believe in any of these doctrines and principles, or to approve of the mode of worship, which they have vowed to maintain, they should lay down their office, and not help to deprive the Church of its peace and purity; and finally it expects of the Church itself, through its Courts, to see that in this connection its discipline is observed wheresoever in any case such honourable dealing does not appear to characterise any office-bearer whatsoever."

May each one of us, who has undertaken these vows, be exercised with a conscience purged by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living God, so that we may firmly and faithfully seek grace to discharge our ordination vows according to the promises given, and in the strength of Him Who said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Christian Giving

by Rev. D. B. Macleod

(continued from page 115)

6. Amount of Giving

That the giving is to be proportionate to wealth, none are likely to deny. So, too, it will be granted that a haphazard system of giving would be unworthy of the objects for which the giving is intended; therefore it must be systematic giving. This is borne out by the Scripture — "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." (1 Cor. 16:2). In the second Epistle to the Corinthians the Apostle writes: "For I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality." (2 Cor. 8:13, 14).

Nor are any likely to deny that it is a liberal amount that is required. The Apostle could say to the Corinthians that the saints whose needs they had relieved "glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men." (2 Cor. 9:13). The Scripture — "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give," does not nullify this idea of a liberal amount, because in the context it is immediately preceded by the declaration: "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." (2 Cor. 9:6, 7).

But, of course, the question still remains — What is a liberal amount? What proportion of our wealth should we give to the Lord? Should we give a twentieth, a tenth or a fifth? Or is the exact proportion of our wealth to be given to the Lord designedly left undetermined as a test of our love to the Cause of Christ?

The arguments which follow will tend to bear out, I hope, the following assertion made by Matthew Henry in his Commentary: "We are taught in general," he says, " 'to honour the Lord with our substance,' (Prov. 3:9) and in particular to support and maintain his ministers . . . And how this may be done in a fitter and more equal proportion than that of a tenth, which God Himself appointed of old, I cannot see." Commenting elsewhere on Abraham's giving of tithes to Melchizedek, he says: "The tenth of our increase is a very fit proportion to be set apart for the honour of God, and the service of His sanctuary."

In favour of a fixed amount we may argue as follows: Would God leave man to determine for himself what proportion of his substance he should

give to Him? God has not left men without some guide to the amount of time to be devoted to His worship — that is, one day in seven. Is it likely then, when it comes to the matter of what proportion of his wealth a man should give to the Lord, that He would leave him without some specific direction? Is He not a God of order? Again, if there is no set proportion due, can a man today be said to rob God, as Malachi said to the people of his day for withholding tithes? If something is justly God's due, is it not because He has commanded it?

It is clear that a tenth was the proportion fixed by God from the beginning of the world. We conclude this from the fact that both Abraham and Jacob — Abraham in giving tithes to Melchizedek, and Jacob in making a vow at Bethel — both fixed on one tenth as the amount to give, the very amount that God later commanded the children of Israel to give under the law. We also conclude that tithing existed from the beginning of the world from the fact that a tenth for purposes of religion was a recognised custom among the Gentile nations from antiquity. The custom must therefore have stemmed from a time prior to the dispersion of the nations. The question arises, then: Was tithing, which existed from the very beginning of man's history, like sacrifice, which also existed from the fall of man, done away with in Christ? The answer hinges on this — whether tithing formed part of the ceremonial law or of the moral law. If it belonged to the moral law; if tithing was a moral duty and if it had nothing typical or ceremonial about it, as some assert, then it must still remain obligatory on men.

It may be argued that the giving of a tenth would introduce a legalistic concept into the Gospel economy. This argument will stand if the giving of a tenth is bound up with the ceremonial law which has been done away with in Christ; but if this is not so then the argument falls to the ground.

But someone may say — Is not the giving of a fixed proportion legalistic anyway? The answer to this is that the giving of a fixed amount is not of itself legalistic. The Sabbath is not legalistic because it is a fixed amount of time — one day in seven. It is true, however, that we can adopt a legalistic attitude to something not in itself legalistic. This is true both of the Sabbath and of tithing and of much else besides.

One might argue that a tenth was necessary to support the costly ritual of the Old Testament worship, but that so much is not needed now. But this overlooks the fact that though the outward splendour of religion is not what it was in Old Testament times, yet true religion is not now confined within the bounds of Israel but has to be carried to the ends of the earth.

What would be the benefits of tithing as compared with the present

system? It would mean continuous systematic support for the upholding of the Cause of Christ, for the spreading of the Gospel and for the relief of the poor. Tithing, say in a congregation of 300 to 400 people, might well make it possible for that congregation to support five ministers at home and five missionaries abroad, though this may well be a very conservative estimate of the possibilities where tithing was whole-heartedly adopted.

You may ask — But what does tithing really involve? An incident from a congregation in America may help to give the answer. This particular congregation believed in tithing. They did not, however, force their views on newcomers. They just told them what they did and left them free to do as they felt led. The lady in one new family that came to the place was quite interested when she heard about tithing and went to another lady in the congregation to find out exactly what was involved in it. The newcomer asked — “Do you pay your rent and rates and taxes and bills and then give a tenth of what remains to the church? Is that what is involved in tithing?” “What?” replied the other lady in consternation. “Give the leavings to the Lord!” Let us remember, then, that it is to be the firstfruits of all our increase — and that means the best. Only the best is good enough for the Lord — not the leavings!

It may be better to take up the argument for tithing apart altogether from the fact of whether it was part of the ceremonial law or not. The argument now is — If a tenth was required in the darker day of Old Testament times, can we give less in the noon-day light of the Gospel day? This argument is reinforced by the Scripture declaration: “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.” (Luke 12:48). In view of this it follows, that if tithing is no longer obligatory because done away with through the abrogation of the ceremonial law, we are left with the inevitable alternative that a tenth is too little today in view of our vastly increased privileges and obligations under the Gospel.

7. Sacrificial Giving

Under the Old Testament the people were not confined to a tenth. They brought free-will offerings as well, over and above what was required of them. In the New Testament there are several instances of sacrificial giving. The case of the Widow's mite is one of these, and the case of the churches in Macedonia is another. The Saviour said of the widow who cast in two mites into the treasury that “she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” (Mark 12:44). The Apostle Paul speaks of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia “how that in a great trial of afflictions the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” (2 Cor. 8:2).

Now let us turn to ourselves in this matter of sacrificial giving. There are few, very few, who hurt themselves by their giving. Today, even where much is given, how often it is out of our abundance. Let us put it this way. Has your giving to the Cause of Christ ever meant that you had to do with very plain fare at your table? Oh, you will say, you are going too far now. But am I? The thought that we should deny ourselves is so foreign to us as almost to make the very idea appear ridiculous. We have come to expect not only necessities but luxuries — and these luxuries we will not forego. The heathen world is crying out for the Gospel — but I need, you say, a sumptuous table, new clothes, new articles of furniture and many other luxuries. But what of the heathen? Oh well, you will say, I really need these things. I really must have them they are so necessary. But you do not add — and the heathen will just have to wait to have the Gospel sent to them! But, friend, they cannot wait. Those whose claims are upon you just cannot wait. Thousands upon thousands of them are being hurried to eternity every day. Time will not stand still. Death will not delay at the behest of any. Oh, you will say, I pray for them. Very good, but that is not enough. You must seek to be instrumental, under God's hand, in sending them the Gospel of which they stand so much in need.

Please do not misread my remarks. I am not asking you to have only a stool in the middle of the floor in your house and no other furniture. I am not asking you to come to the Conference in rags. What I am calling for is a radical and serious re-assessment of priorities. I am asking you to consider seriously the claims on your purse of higher objects. Surely it is time to awake to the realities of the situation and cease to live in an attitude of indifference to the spiritual needs of multitudes. The question, "Am I my brother's keeper?," did not die out with Cain. May we be delivered by divine grace from such an attitude and be stirred up to give active, liberal, self-denying, yea, even sacrificial support to the Cause of Christ.

8. Encouragements to Christian Giving

The promises of God are rich to the liberal soul. "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. 11:25). The sin of covetousness leads to death and destruction as the cases of Gehazi, Judas Iscariot, and Ananias and Sapphira solemnly witness. Christian liberality, on the other hand, shall bring a blessed reward. The giver instead of suffering loss is only more abundantly blessed. The laws of mathematics do not hold here, as we see from that Scripture: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. 11:24). The promise is

"Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Prov. 3:9, 10). Again, "He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor." (Prov. 22:9). And again, "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse." (Prov. 28:27). Think of that promise: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be room in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10). Is such a promise not incentive enough to systematic and generous giving?

9. Christian Giving and Calvary

It would be profitable to bring to bear upon this subject of Christian giving all the other doctrines of God's Word, for all the doctrines of the Bible are interrelated and throw light upon one another. For the present we will view Christian giving in the light of that one particular yet central doctrine — the Cross of Calvary. It is easy to say, and we are so ready to say, so far as Christian giving is concerned — How much will I give? meaning, more often than not, how little can I give? How despicable an attitude in the light of Calvary! There was no niggardliness, no miserliness in Christ's giving of Himself on Calvary's accursed tree. There was no restraint there, no unwillingness in His giving of Himself. Where, in being led as a lamb to the slaughter, or in the midst of His sufferings on the Tree, do you find Him saying — Thus far will I go and no further. "Having loved His own . . . He loved them unto the end." (John 13:1). His obedience was unto death, even the accursed death of the Cross. As his life was a life of giving — "I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:27), so in His sufferings unto death He was still giving — He gave His life a ransom for many. If we have any spiritual appreciation whatsoever of Christ's giving Himself on Calvary in the room and stead of the guilty, this cannot but be reflected in our attitude towards giving to His Cause in the world, and in our actual giving to His Cause. This will mean that we will not say — Am I giving too much? but, Am I giving enough? Did He give so unstintingly, so unsparingly, so willingly, so lovingly, in giving Himself a ransom for many, and shall I give so meanly, so grudgingly, as I have been accustomed to do? In the light of Calvary will you not say — "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me." (Psalm 116:12).

Finally, in the light of all the Scripture teaching on this matter of Christian giving, will we not resolve even tonight to make amends where we come short in this matter? If the Lord meet with us as He met with

Jacob at Bethel on his way to Padan-aram, so that we would have to say, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven," might we not also go on to vow with Jacob — "of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." (Gen. 28:22). My friends, if the Lord will shed abroad in our hearts a little of His love, it will not be within the confines of a tenth that our givings will be hedged up. And then, even of our most liberal givings we will have to say — Oh what a very little return it is to Him who did so much for me!

Gathan Glòir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce

(Air a leanntuinn bho t.d. 117)

5. Thugaibh fodh'n ear, cia mòr a tha Dia a fuathachadh a pheacaidh; tha'm peacadh gu neo-chrionnach salach agus gràineil Dhà, "Tha do shùilean na's gloine na gu'n seall thù air olc, agus cha'n fhaod thù amharc air aingidheachd." Hab.i.13, agus tha Erithisd agus a rithisd anns na Sgriobturan air a chur fodh'r comhair mar Dia a tha fuathachadh a pheacaidh. Tha'm peacadh dà-rìreadh gu neo-chrionnach salach na shealladh. Nis, smuaint icheadh-mid air na nitheamh sin, agus cuireadh-mid ri cheil iad, agus an sin chì sinn nach urrain nì air bith eil ar cumail bho sgrios, ach neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé, dha buin dhuinn, uime sin, a bhi toirt na glòir. 'S e gràs agus gràdh Dhé a' bheir sinn an toiseach a chùim suidheachadh beatha agus slàinte, agus 's e neo-chaochlaidhd Dhé a tha dha'r cumail ann an sin. Gu fìrinneach, 'n uair a smuainticheas cuid againn oirne fein, agus a bheir sinn fodh'n ear ciod a thà sinn, agus a tha sinn 'n ar spioradan agus 'n ar giulain a thaobh Dhé, cia cho mòr, 's a bhrosnuich sinn, cia cho bitheanta 's a thoill sinn a bhi air ar caitheamh as, agus cho beag 's thà sinn a deanamh dhe ar 'n anamaibh, ar beatha, agus ar 'n uile, chì sinn aobhar neo-chrionnach ioghnadh a bhì oirne gu'm bheil sinn beo, agus nach eil lasraichean fearg Dhé bho chionn fada air am beothachadh oirne, agus dioghaltas ceartas Dhé a briseadh a mach 'n ar 'n aghaidh, agus beannaichte gu'n robh Dia nach eil sinn ann an ifrinn. Oh! gu'm biodh a leithid de chreutair uaibhreach, rag-mhuinealach, mar a thà sinn ann fathasd beo! gu'm biodh pearsachan aig am bheil brosnachaidhean cho lionmhor agus àrd an aghaidh Dhé 's tha agadsa a leughadair agus mise ciontach dhiubh, fathasd a mach a ifrinn. Tha so a mhàin bho neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé. Agus m' aon

ghràdhach, cha'n urrain sinn gu ceart a toirt na nithean sin fodh'n ear mar a faic sinn agus an aidich sinn e bhì mar sin. Oh! beannaichte gu robh Dia air son a neo-chaohlaidheachd! Mar a biodh Dia neo-chaohlaidheach, c'àit an robh mise a nis? Bhà mì air mo dhùnadh suas anns an t-slochd ifrinneil. Bhà mì nis ann am chompanach dhiabhuil agus spioradan dhamanaichte. Bha mi nis air mo dhealachadh bho Dhia gu bràth; agus cia cho truagh 's a bhithinn? Oh! m'anam, mol an Aon neo-chaohlaidheach agus beannaich E air son a chomhairle neo-chaohlaidheach, a chùmnanta neo-atharraichte, agus a ghràdh neo-chaohlaidheach.

Caib. vii.

Cuid a dh'aobharan air son ioraslachadh bho bhi toirt fodh'n ear neo-chaohlaidheachd Dhé, mar a thà ar mì-choltas Ris ann, bhur cur as a leith gu'm bheil E'g atharrachadh, ar cion a bhi beo cho beag air a neo-chaohlaidheach.

Mar a tha neo-chaohlaidheachd Dhé gu mòr a teagasg agus ag oideachadh, mar sin mar an ceudna thà e 'g ioraslachadh, ma thà e air a thomhas agus air a chur gu buil cheart leinne; thà nithean àraidh a bhuineadh dhuin a thoirt fodh'n ear, a glaothaich gu labhar oirne a bhi air ar 'n ioraslachadh air an son, agus oh, gu'n gabhadh-mid gu cridhe iad!

1. Am bheil Dia neo-chaohlaidheach? An sin cia mar a bu chòr dhuinn a bhi air ar 'n ioraslachadh air son ar caohlaidheachd mhòr, agus mar sin ar mì-choltas ri Dia, am prìomh mhaith? Mar is caohlaidheach anns an nì thà maith, is ann is mì-choltaich thà sinn ri Dia, agus mar is mì-choltaich ri Dia a thà sinn is ann is motha tha aobhar ar 'n ioraslachaidh. Oh! cia mar a bhuinneadh dhuinn a bhi gabhail gràin dhìnn fein agus a bhi air ar 'n ioraslachadh aig cosaibh Dhé le mothachadh air ar tinneas agus ar caohladh? Mo thruaigh! cia cho caohlaidheach 's a thà sinn anns na h-uile nì tha maith? Cia cho caohlaidheach 's a tha mòran againn 'n a ar breithneachadh agus 'n a ar beachdan air dhuinn a bhi mar naoidheanan air an tonn-luasgadh, air ar giulain mu'n cuairt leis gach uile ghaoith teagaisg, mar a tha agaibh ann an Ephes. iv. 14, ullamh gu bhi gu h-aithghearr air ar tionndadh bho chreidimh an t-soisgeul, mar a bha na Galatianaich, a chuir iognadh air Pol, Gal.i.6. Cia cho caohlaidheach 's a thà sinn 'n ar 'n aignidhean a thaobh Dhé, agus nithean Dhé? An sin tha'n cridhe a lasadh le gràdh do Dhia agus do Chrìosd, an sin thà e marbh agus fuar. Nis thà sinn làn de fhadachd naomh agus miannabh an deigh Dhé agus Chrìosd, gràs agus glòir, faodaidh sinn a ràdh leis an Eaglais bho shean,

“Tha miann ar ’n anama air t-ainm, agus air do chuimhne.” Isaiah xxvi. 8. seadh “Mar a thogras am am fiadh a chùm nan sruth uisge, mar sin thà m’anan a’ togairt a t’ ionnsuidh-sa a Dhé.” Salm xlii, 1. A rithisd cha’n eil aon analachadh naomh ri bhi air fhaotainn maille ruinn. Ni-h-eadh thà sinn air deanamh suas de shaoghaltachd, peacach, mianan salach, thà sinn a plogart-aich as deigh duslach na talmhuinn mar a thà iadsan a thà air an ainmeachadh ann an Amos ii, 7, thà sinn tartmhor as deigh a chreutair agus cha dean ach sin ar sàsuachadh. Nis thà sinn a gabhail tlachd ann an Dia agus ’n a shlighibh; thà sinn a deanabh oiibhneas ann an Dia, agus thà ar ’n anam oiibhneach ann ar Dia, mar a bha e thaobh na h-Eaglais ann an Isaiah li. 10, agus shlighibh milis agus taitneach dhuinn, ’s e a lagh ar tlachd; aon chuid anns an aon na anns an aon eile; ach thà sinn a tarruig cho trom, a h-uile dleasdanas na ealach dhuinn, agus ar dearbh smuaintean air Dia na thrioblaid.

(R’a leanntuinn)

Book Review

The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell by B. M. Palmer. Banner of Truth Trust. 1974. cc. xxxvi. 614 pages. £2.75.

The appearance of this handsome volume of Dr Thornwell's Life and Letters may go a long way to repair the past century's neglect of the great theologians and leaders of the Southern Presbyterian Church of America who are largely unknown on this side of the Atlantic. The period covered by the volume embraces the troubled years leading up to the American Civil War which broke out in 1860 over the Emancipation of the Slaves working on the large cotton plantations of the South. On the outbreak of war the Presbyterian Church in the South moved towards independence of the North thereby bringing into full public life the Church's natural leaders. At the first meeting of the Southern Assembly in the city of Augusta, Georgia in December, 1861, Dr Thornwell, who had played such a leading part in the great debates in the meetings of the General Assemblies of previous years, notably on the questions of Church Boards and holding of Slaves in the Southern States when his chief adversary was Dr Chas. Hodge, now guided the counsels of the first Southern General Assembly. It was his pen that prepared the Message delivered to the Nation by the Assembly. The two great Theological centres which served the Southern Presbyterian Church at Columbia Seminary, South Carolina and Union Seminary, Virginia will always be associated with Dr Thornwell who presided over the former and his younger contemporary.

Dr Dabney who occupied the Theological Chair at the latter. Dr Dabney's theological and religious articles have recently been reprinted in two substantial volumes by the Banner of Truth Trust, and the Trust have with the present volume given the Life of Dr Thornwell in a reprint of the 1874 American Edition which now for the first time makes its appearance in this country.

James Henley Thornwell was born of English and Welsh parentage in the Marlborough district of South Carolina in December 1812 and but for two brief visits to Europe spent his whole life in his native State. From early childhood he showed remarkable powers of intellect and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge which burned with intense passion in his frail frame. He lost his father when 8 years old and thereafter, three influences can be traced in his life which shaped the future course of the young lad who was early to attain eminence. To his mother, a woman of vigorous intellect and stern in the discipline which she exercised over her wilful son, he owed a sound training in the Calvinistic Faith. Again, at a critical state in his education, two noble members of the old wealthy American families of the South undertook to pay all the expenses of his education, so impressed were they with his unusual abilities, thereby relieving him of all financial worries and opening to him the moulding influences of the refined society and the courtly manners of the old stately homes of South America. One pleasing aspect of the book is the series of letters which passed between these two noble gentlemen and their young charge which extended over the rest of his life.

A further event occurred in the last year of his college course which profoundly affected him — the discovery in a book store of a second hand copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith which he carried home and did not lay down till he had read it entire through the night. The book made him a Calvinist and a Presbyterian and thereafter was carried in his bag in his trips at home and abroad. He trained for the ministry in the Theological Seminary at Columbia and on completing his Trials, the wide extent of his attainments, so remarkable in a young man of 22, drew from Rev. Dr Goulding, then Professor of Theology in the Seminary, the affectionate tribute: "Brethren, I feel like sitting at this young man's feet as a learner." The following years were to see the ample fulfilment of this early promise. For all his youth, he was a trusted leader of the Church's General Assembly which conferred upon him at the unheard-of, early age of 35 years, the greatest honour in her power when he was called to fill the Moderator's chair in 1847.

Thornwell's massive learning and towering gifts were early recognised.

He became first Professor, then President of Caroline College, and finally, in 1856, he was called to Columbia Seminary as Professor of Systematic Theology. Four years later, at the early age of 50, he was called from the Church below to his rest at the height of his powers and in the midst of his labours. Dr Breckinridge wrote these prophetic words to him some years earlier: "My dear brother, you must do great things, or you must give a great account; and you must do it soon, for the blade is too sharp for the scabbard; and men like you rarely live to be old." Valuable as his writings are, the incomplete state in which they were left will always be regarded as a great loss to the Church. It is good to know, however, that the Banner of Truth Trust are preparing an edition of Thornwell's complete works which should take their place as companion volumes to the present Life where all his articles and writings are set in their proper context.

This is a noble volume which does full justice to the genius of a humble Presbyterian minister of Christ of a by-gone age, who like Abraham of old walked like a prince among men. Dr Thornwell is fortunate in his biographer, a close friend who succeeded him first as pastor of the First Church of Columbia and then as Professor of Theology at Columbia; in full sympathy with Dr Thornwell on the great Church questions of the day and theology, he would have ranked with Thornwell and Dabney as a theologian but for his love of pastoral work to which he devoted his life. A valuable part of the book is the general critical review of Thornwell's character, views and experience and work given towards the end. As a preacher, Dr Thornwell had the unique power of combining appeals to the intellect with overpowering application to the conscience. Dr Palmer says: "When the truth had won its way, and the mind was brought into a state of complete submission, the argument was gathered up in its weight and practical conclusions and hurled upon the conscience, compelling either confession of guilt upon the one hand or complete satisfaction of reason on the other."

In domestic life he was called to drink the cup of sorrow, the loss of a promising daughter in her teens, of a son who fell in action with the Confederate Army in the South and on the death of a boy of 9 years, he found consolation in the doctrine of Covenantal Baptism: "I believe," he says, "the covenant that God has made with His people, and which is sealed to their faith in the baptism of their offspring, to be a real and precious thing; and where Christian parents have, in faith, laid hold upon this covenant, and have pleaded its promises on behalf of their seed, they may when dying in these early years of childish immaturity be laid,

without a particle of apprehension or distrust upon the bosom of that promise: "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed," consoling balm to grieving Christian parents.

The age in which Dr Thornwell lived is inevitably reflected in the book, especially in the three Appendices which are given against the background of the Confederate Cause of the South. There appears to be an error in the numbering of these Appendices on pages 487 and 513 of the volume. Dr Palmer concludes the Life of his friend with the words: "This generation will never look upon his like again; a single century cannot afford to produce his equal," — sufficient commendation to Presbyterian ministers to lose no time in adding this handsome volume to their library shelves. The book, however, should appeal to a wider public who, if they are familiar with the "Princeton School" of divines of Northern America, have now the opportunity of acquainting themselves with one of the great Church Leaders and Theologians of the South.

A.F.M.

Reformation Translation Fellowship

P.O. Box 17-154
Taipei, Taiwan, 104
Republic of China
January 1975

Dear Christian Friends,

In the middle of the energy crisis we have been through the year of 1974. There are a lot of things we should give thanks to God for. For the most part we wish to thank God for His providential care over us in granting ample opportunities to serve Him in this favourable atmosphere and that the gospel of salvation has been proclaimed through the printed page

The year of 1974 marks the 25th anniversary of the founding of the work of the Reformation Translation Fellowship in South China in 1949, under the leadership of Dr Samuel E. Boyle who has shown great sacrifice for God's kingdom. My conscience prohibits me from failing to mention our mutual friends, Dr Johannes G. Vos and Dr Lester E. Kilpatrick, whose role played a very crucial part in the primary stages of the work of the RTF. The RTF would not have today's accomplishment, humanly speaking, without their labours of love. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the work of the RTF I wish to express my personal indebtedness to them all.

In celebrating this significant event the RTF has issued an expanded

bi-lingual edition of the Chinese magazine, *The Reformed Faith and Life* (No. 100), at the end of the year, to be distributed among the readers in the different countries all over the world. Articles by Christian leaders of the Chinese churches and western Calvinist churches were solicited. Dr Boyle serves as English editor and I am responsible for the Chinese portion of this special issue of our magazine.

I am gratified to report to our friends that Prof. Louis Berkhof's *THE MANUAL OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE* has been translated and published in the Chinese language with the financial assistance of the British RTF. It is our sincere prayer that this volume will strengthen the faith of His people in this corner of God's vineyard. Our British brethren have shown great sacrifice in providing the needs for printing RTF books and magazine, especially this anniversary number (No. 100) in the past year during the energy crisis. We wish also to thank our American and Chinese friends who remember us and the work in their prayers. Nothing could be done without their support of the work. By the grace of God, let us go forward in the years ahead though we may meet difficulties and trials on our way, "for a wide door for effective work has been opened to us but there are many adversaries." Your remembrance before the throne of God for the RTF work is earnestly requested. No human shrewdness can accomplish anything in the spiritual task of God's kingdom (Zech. 4:6).

My wife and I returned to the States in the latter part of June. I flew to the East, not very long after our arrival at Los Angeles, to attend our Church Synod which was held at Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. We had an enjoyable family reunion at Hartford, Connecticut, in the middle of July on the occasion of Grace's wedding. Grace, our third daughter, got married to Mr Philip C. Rydingsward on July 13, 1974. I was particularly asked to officiate at the ceremony with the assistance of Phil's pastor at Calvary Temple, Hartford, Connecticut. We praise the Lord for the wedding. Both Grace and Phil were graduated from Wheaton College in 1972. Grace is temporarily working in an insurance company at Hartford and Phil is seeking seminary enrolment in the field of Christian counselling. May God guide this newly wedded couple to glorify His name in their Christian family life! Our other children are scattered all over the United States and Europe.

The work here keeps me very busy. Praise God for all His mercies during the past year. We wish God's blessing with you and may the Lord our God favour us and give us success in the year of 1975!

The Charles H. Chao family.

Notes and Comments

Murder of O.M.F. Missionaries in Thailand

News was received from the Foreign Office, on the evening of March 20th, that the Thai authorities had reported the discovery of two bodies in the mountains of south Thailand and believed them to be those of the two members of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship abducted by bandits last year. Positive identification had yet to be made; all circumstantial evidence, however, support this assumption.

On April 23rd, 1974 Miss Margaret Morgan and Miss Minka Hanskamp were taken at gun-point from their leprosy clinic between Pattani and Yala and a week later a demand for half a million US dollars was received by the Fellowship. The policy of the OMF is on no account to pay a ransom, because to do so would set a price on the head of every other missionary. Subsequently a further demand was made in political terms with which the Fellowship was unable to comply.

In August the two missionaries wrote that a Bible and some clothing had reached them and this message was delivered in October. Until now no other reliable news of them has been received.

The people of south Thailand have for a long time been suffering from the activities of bandits and terrorists and have shown warm sympathy with the missionaries in this experience. Members of the Fellowship have been glad to share in the sufferings of those whom they serve for Christ's sake. In the 110 years of the mission's existence many of its missionaries have laid down their lives. These two nurses will have faced death with Christian fortitude, believing that in dying they would be "with Christ, which is far better" (Philippians 1:23).

Miss Margaret Morgan, SRN, SCM, was born at Porth, Rhondda, in 1934, and took her nursing training at the Bristol Royal Hospital, where she was a Sister from 1959-1961. She joined the OMF in 1964 and had served in south Thailand since then.

Miss Minka Hanskamp, SRN, SCM, was a New Zealand citizen of Dutch parentage, and had been with the OMF since 1958.

The Overseas Missionary Fellowship, formerly the China Inland Mission, was founded in 1865 by Dr James Hudson Taylor and served in China until 1951. Since then approximately 700 of its members have been deployed in twelve countries of East Asia. The Saiburi Christian Hospital in south Thailand, to which the leprosy work of Margaret Morgan and Minka Hanskamp was attached, is one of three OMF hospitals in Thailand.

Gambling

It is reported in the Press that £2,437 million was spent on gambling in Britain in 1974. This includes gambling on horses, dogs, machines, bingo and football pools.

Apart altogether from the intrinsic evil of all forms of gambling, what a tragedy it is that such a colossal sum of money should be diverted from a proper and legitimate use to this useless and unproductive industry. The spirit of covetousness is manifestly abroad in the land. No heed is given to the warning of God's Word that "the love of money is the root of all evil," or to the Divine injunction: "Be content with such things as ye have." May the Lord in infinite mercy turn the hearts of the people of the land to His law lest He come out in anger against us.

Euthanasia

A Church of England report dealing with the subject of 'mercy killing' comes out very definitely against voluntary euthanasia, denying that such a practice can be justified. As there is pressure in certain quarters for the legalising of euthanasia, it is good to know that there are responsible bodies that are strongly opposed to such a proposal. We trust that Britain will never stoop so low morally and spiritually as to legalise this horrific practice.

Northern Ireland

The situation in Ulster has continued unsettled during the truce in the fighting there and persons are still being killed in cold-blooded murders. The British Government has made many concessions to the I.R.A., including the release of a considerable number of detainees and the transfer of the Price sisters to Ulster, but has received little in return. A conciliatory policy towards desperadoes like the I.R.A. is hardly the way to achieve an equitable settlement and a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. It is to be hoped that the elections for the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention fixed for May 1st may prove the beginning of a satisfactory solution of Northern Ireland's problems. However, it is quite clear that the I.R.A. will do nothing to expedite such a solution. Their inbred hatred of everything British will prevent them acquiescing in any final decision which may be arrived at.

Death of King Faisal

The assassination of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, a noted Arab leader, has left a vacuum in that area of the world which the enemies of peace in the Middle East will not be slow to take advantage of. Like other Arab

leaders, King Faisal was a fierce opponent of the Jews and supported the Arab struggle against Israel. It would appear that the age-old struggle between Isaac and Ishmael has not yet ended. It is clear from God's Word, however, that the time will come when, through the Gospel of God's grace, they will be reconciled. May that time speedily come and the promises of God's Word concerning Jews and Gentiles be amply fulfilled.

Licensing Laws

Many are the attempts which have been made to 'liberalise' the liquor licensing laws. Foremost in these attempts have been the brewers themselves who stand to gain financially from any increase in liquor sales. One would have thought that they might have been satisfied with matters as they stand in view of the fact that 1974 set records for the sale of beer and spirits — a total of 11,000 million pints of beer and more than 33 million gallons of spirits having been consumed.

The latest effort to permit public houses to open from 10 p.m. until midnight is through a Bill introduced in the House of Commons and which was given its first reading by 122 votes to 35 on 25th March. In view of the widespread incidence of alcoholism at the present time it is to be hoped that this Bill will not be permitted to reach the Statute Book.

Church Notes

Annual Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is due to meet in Inverness Church on Tuesday, 20th May 1975, at 6.30 p.m. (D.V.) when the retiring Moderator of Synod, Rev. Donald Campbell, M.A., Edinburgh, is expected to preach.

It is gratifying to know that Rev. Wm. MacLean, Grafton, Rev. D. M. MacLeod, Auckland, Mr Donald Beaton, Elder, Auckland, and Rev. Petros Mzamo, Mbumba, are all expected to be present at the Synod this year. Their presence at the Synod will indeed be welcomed by the brethren at home.

We would ask the praying people of the Church to remember the brethren at a Throne of grace as they meet in Synod to deliberate on matters affecting the interests of Christ's Cause and kingdom amongst us; that the deliberations may be conducted in a spirit of brotherly harmony and love; and that the minds of the brethren may be directed by the Spirit of God to do that which will most tend to God's glory and the advancement of His Cause in the world.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Western: At Ullapool on 16th May, at 6.30 p.m. **Southern:** At Glasgow on 19th June, at 6 p.m. **Northern:** At Inverness on 13th May, at 6 p.m.

Home Mission Fund

By appointment of the Synod, this collection is to be taken in May (D.V.).

The fund was supported very well last year and the Committee express its gratitude.

The purposes of the Fund are well-known, embracing the cost of Church Extension and the salaries of our Lay Missionaries. The Committee anticipate that our people will support these worthy causes as they have done in the past.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart so let him give . . . for God loveth a cheerful giver." II Cor. 9:7.

*(Rev.) Donald MacLean, Convener,
Finance Committee.*

The Church History — A Correction

It has been brought to the notice of the Editor of the Church History that some words on page 186 are not wholly accurate. These are, "Mr MacKenzie did not reply." Two days before the expiry of the time limit set by the Synod, Mr MacKenzie sent a letter and two documents to the Clerk of Synod. A correct account of this detail would therefore read, "Mr MacKenzie did not comply with the requirements of the Synod Resolution, and his ministry, etc." The Editor regrets this error which occurred in the process of rewriting in shorter form a more detailed account.

Opening of St. Jude's Church, Glasgow

The opening of the new St. Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, Glasgow C.3, will take place (D.V.) on Friday, 6th June, 1975. Rev. D. Campbell, M.A., Edinburgh, is expected to preach and the service will commence at 7 p.m. Any friends coming from a distance to attend the opening who may wish a light meal after the service should contact Mr J. P. Dunbar, 1 Colebrook Place, Glasgow C.12, Tel. 041-339 7199, Clerk of the Deacons' Court, who will see to any necessary arrangements.

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: D. MacK., Glenelg £6.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: D. MacK., Glenelg £3; Tolsta Friend £1; Ger Gem in

Netherlands, Middleburg, for Jewish Mission £64.25; Psalm 72:22 £2; Anon, Lairg £10, last two for Bulawayo Church; A Friend, G.R. Mich. £45; A Friend, Portree £6.05.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon, Inverness, for petrol £5; Anon, Kyle Friend £5 per Rev. A.F.M.; Resident for petrol £5; Mrs G., Uig, Skye £2; Mr A. MacR., Dumfries £5; Mrs MacL., Ardineaskin £2, last two per Mrs M. MacRae; Waternish Congregation £6 per Rev. A.F.M.; Anon, Inverness £10.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Anon, Rhiconich, per D.J. MacD. for Prizes for Scripture and Catechism Exercises £20.

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

Aberdeen: A Friend, Dingwall £5 for Manse Fund; A Friend, Ballifeary House £1 for New Church, both per Rev. E.A. Rayner; Edinburgh Friends £5 for Congregational Funds.

Applecross: Anon, in loving memory of loved ones £40 for Applecross Sustentation Fund per C. Gillies.

Beaully: Dingwall Friend £10; Mr G.L. £10 for Home of Rest Fund per W.C.M.

Dumbarton: D. McS. £5; Friend, Inverness £5; E.M. £5, all per Mr T. MacRae; Envelope in plate — part of donation £50; Bookroom Friend £3; Mrs R. MacD. £5; J.W.S., Dearness, Orkney £15; Lover of the Cause, Edinburgh £5, last four per A.E. Alexander; Inverness Friend per T. MacRae £15.

Fearn: Anon, Fearn postmark £20 for the work of Dr Cameron Tallach, Taiwan; "Frequent Visitors" £2 for Manse Fund; Friends, Maine, U.S.A. per Rev. J. Nicolson £40 for Manse Fund and £42 for Sustentation Fund; M.B.T. £100 for Manse Fund.

Glasgow: Anon £10; Anon £1; Anon £1; Anon £1; Anon £1; Anon 50p; Anon 50p, all for Sustentation Fund; Anon £1; Anon 50p; Anon £5, all for College and Library Fund; In memory of A.P. Walker £10 for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund; Anon £1; Anon £1, both for Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund; Anon, Stornoway £20 for Car Fund per Rev. D. MacL.; Anon £1 for Bus Expenses per J.P.D.; In memory of Alick £100; Uist Friend £10, both for New St Jude's Development Fund per Rev. D. McL.

Greenock: Envelope in Church Plate £10 for Communion Expenses in memory of loved ones; Envelope in Church Plate £10 for Communion Expenses; Envelope in Church Plate £5, for Congregational Funds.

Kinlochbervie and Scourie: Anon, Inverness Postmark £10 for Kinlochbervie and Scourie Congregational Funds per D.N.M.

Kyle and Plockton: Inverness Postmark £10 for Kyle and Plockton Manse Fund.

Laide: Friend of the Cause, Laide £50; Friend, Laide £12; Friend per General Treasurer £10; Friend, Shieldaig £1; Anon £5; Friend, Edinburgh per D.M.R. £5; For Church Manse £1; Friends, Aberdeen £5; Stornoway Friend £10; For Church Manse £1; Friend £5; Friend of the Cause £1; Friend of the Cause £10; Friend £6, all for Laide Manse Building Fund.

London: Anon, J. and M., Dornoch £2; Fort William Congregation £85; Strathy Congregation £30; Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congregation £200.

North Uist: Two Friends £7; Anon £10; C. MacD., 12 Ashdail £3, all for car maintenance per Rev. A.M.; Envelope in Plate £5 for Car Maintenance; Friend £5 for Communion Expenses per Rev. A.M.; Friend £8 for Communion Expenses; Envelope in Plate £5 for Church Heating; Mrs C. MacL., Ballifeary House £5 for Sustentation Fund per Rev. A.M.

Portree: Anon, Ollach £5 for Church Bus; Friend £2 for Minister's Petrol; Colbost Friend £5 for Church Renovation; Glendale Friends, £10 for Church Renovation, last three per F.M.

Raasay: Friend, Inverness £1 for Church Door Collection per Rev. D. Nicolson; Two Raasay Friends £3 for Manse Extension per Treasurer.

Stornoway: B.N., Sand Street £5 for Congregational Funds per Rev. J. MacLeod; C. McA. £20 for Sustentation Fund; Anon £5 for Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund, last two also per Rev. J. MacLeod.