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The General Assemblies Church of Scotland

In the Church of Scotland Rev. Andrew Doig, Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland was appointed Moderator. The Lord High Commissioner this year was Lord Elgin. The Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, attended the opening meeting of the Assembly. Mr Doig said that the Church's message of compassion was not getting through to the people. He urged the need to build Christian education on the family pattern.

Rev James Matheson, Convenor of the recently appointed Assembly Council forecast radical changes within the Church. He believed that these changes must come, maintaining that Christ's Lordship in His Church is always radical. Time alone will tell what Mr Matheson has in mind but we fear such changes will do little to promote the Cause of Christ in Scotland.

The Assembly overwhelmingly approved a meeting of the Moderator with the Pope. Dr Wm Johnston stated that the same courtesies should be extended to the Pope as to any other religious leader. A counter motion for complete rejection of any move on the Kirk's part to seek a meeting was put forward. In support of it, it was said that the Pope promotes Anti-Christian teaching. Another counter motion agreed to a meeting on certain conditions. These counter motions received little support. The Church of Scotland in this way has shown how little it values its Protestant heritage.

Great concern was expressed in the Assembly over religion in schools and a demand made for pressure to be kept up on the Secretary of State for Scotland for action to improve the teaching of religion in schools. It was pointed out by different members of Assembly how woefully inadequate was the present teaching of religious education. Dr Herron

said it was strange that the national church was denied in national schools facilities comparable to those in Roman Catholic schools. One member said that it was time to demand the same rights as the Roman Catholic community and the setting up of church schools. It was claimed that many children were leaving schools in total ignorance of Christ and even of the Lord's Prayer. The criticisms made in the Assembly are well justified in the case of many schools. It is very clear that the statutory requirement for the teaching of religious education is being disregarded in many schools in the country. It is to be hoped that something can be done to remedy the situation. We cannot but state, however, that failure by the State Church to proclaim the whole counsel of God has not a little to do with the present situation.

The Assembly overwhelmingly voted to continue support for a British nuclear deterrent against the view of the Church and Nation Committee that the Assembly should support unilateral nuclear disarmament. Grave concern was expressed over the high level of unemployment in the country. A plea from two ministers to concede the principle of voluntary euthanasia was rejected. The Assembly urged the Government to campaign more vigorously against alcohol abuse, including the use of alcohol advertising. Opposition was expressed to sex aid shops and advertisements. Continued vigilance on the part of the local community was stressed. An attempt by a Peterhead minister to have the works of Eric Von Daniken, such as, *Is God an Astronaut*, discontinued in the Church bookshops did not succeed.

When the matter of the Pope's visit was dealt with, one minister raised the possibility of an invitation to the Free Church Moderator to address the General Assembly. This was referred to the Church and Nation Committee to look into the possibility.

Free Church

In the Free Church Assembly, Rev Donald Gillies, Lochs was appointed Moderator. In his address he condemned Sabbath sport declaring that people who arranged football matches on the Lord's Day were flouting the law of God. He warned against slanting the Gospel and distorting the message to win support of some current ideology. Everyone must be made to know, he said, that either Christ will save us from our sins in time or our sins will separate us from Christ in eternity. There was no neutral position. He criticised those who through misguided zeal for the good of the cause of Christ, resorted to devices and gimmicks that had no warrant from Scripture.

Rev Maurice Roberts, Convener of the Public Questions and Religion and Morals Committee said that there was strong public feeling in this country against the Pope's visit. He also stated that, in the providence of God, the visit might yet be stopped. Rev. Hugh Cartwright proposed that presbyteries be directed to keep the matter under review and do what they can to express reasoned opposition at this visit and to alert their people to the spiritual and temporal dangers of Romanism. This proposal was accepted. Rev. Hector Cameron said that they should make the preaching of the Word the antidote to Romanism. Mr Cartwright's proposal was very timely and it would be good if it was carried into effect throughout the Free Church. It is clear that in many evangelical circles in Scotland opposition to Roman Catholicism is not what it once was.

A renewed call was made in the Assembly for a large increase in contributions. It was suggested that if the 10,000 contributors gave £5 per week it would bring in £2½ million. It was pointed out by other members of Assembly that such a suggestion would be an embarrassment to people, such as pensioners who could not afford that amount.

Synod Sermon

by Rev. Angus MacKay, Tarbert

"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen." Ephesians 3:20, 21.

History informs us that Ephesus was the most splendid city of Asia Minor; Pliny writes of it as "the ornament of Asia". Before the Gospel came to it it was notorious for sin, witchcraft, idolatry, and when the Gospel came to it for persecution: see Acts 19; 1st Corinthians 15, 16. The temple of Diana was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. The Gospel preached by Paul was blessed to many in Ephesus, and then this city was noted for its practical Christianity. In Revelation 2 we read of the sad declension of the Church of Ephesus; while she was commended for sound doctrine, labour, patience and discipline she was rebuked for her serious sin of having left her first love. She was exhorted, warned — repent, lest I remove thy candlestick out of his place. The apostle gives a note of warning in Acts 20 relative to grievous wolves that would not

spare the flock, and some who would arise among themselves speaking perverse things. He then admonishes the elders of Ephesus to look to themselves and all the flock. Afterwards, when a prisoner in Rome, out of love and concern for the Ephesian believers he writes this epistle to confirm them in the faith and to exhort them to a life and conversation as becoming their profession of the Gospel.

In the first three chapters he commends to them the doctrines of the grace of God in election, redemption, calling, justification and adoption; showing them the depraved, lost condition from which they were brought, and assuring them of their salvation by free and sovereign grace. For their encouragement Paul asserts his commission as an apostle of the Lord to preach to them Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. Then he goes on to exhort them to adorn their profession by practical Christian duties which concern all believers and such as belong to them in their several relations.

From the words of our text Ephesians 3:20, 21 I wish to direct your attention as the Lord by His Spirit will enable me to three matters:

Firstly, something about the Person brought before us in v.20 "now unto Him".

Secondly, Paul's encouragement to the believers in Ephesus.

Thirdly, his ardent desire and prayer.

Firstly, in v.21 we read "unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus . . .," so we understand this person to be God the Father — the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; and He is our Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ is by nature the eternal Son of the Father, and by virtue of our union to the glorious person of Christ, the Son of God in our nature, we are, my brethren, the children of the Father by adoption. We read in v.15 of this chapter that the whole family in heaven and earth are named of Him.

The apostle prays that the Father, according to the riches of His glory, would strengthen the believer by His spirit with might in the inner man; and this is what believers stand much in need of today, to be strengthened with might, to be anointed richly by the Spirit in the hidden man of the heart. We have many enemies; the church of God has inveterate, mighty enemies — the world, the flesh and the devil; therefore we need strength. Paul prays that the Church in Ephesus would be exercised in their hearts by the graces of the Spirit, that is that Christ would dwell in them by faith, that they, being rooted and grounded in love, would discern in communion with all saints more and more of the superlative, unfathomable and inestimable love of Christ who loved us, brethren, who loved me

— unworthy, lost, guilty, vile me — “who loved me and who gave Himself for me”. Ah yes, He loved the church and He gave Himself for her. He purchased her by His own blood — by the infinite, divine, virtue of His meritorious righteousness.

In their unconverted days they used to admire the exquisite grandeur of the temple (Diana's) in all its measurements and idolatrous worship, but now they were adoring the glory of the Person of Christ, His meritorious obedience and sufferings unto death, the breadth and length and depth and height, and here they saw by faith, through an enlightened understanding of the Gospel, the love of Christ which no created mind can measure — that passeth knowledge. If we were truly diligent we would experimentally know much more of the love of Christ and the sweet presence of God that we do know. And Paul prays for the Ephesians that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. This is what we should pray for, for ourselves as individuals and for one another, to be filled with all the fullness of God. Paul does not mean that the Ephesian believers would be filled with the infinite, divine essence; oh no, but he prays that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit — that is, richly anointed with the Holy Spirit that they might be humble, lively, loving, faithful, earnest, discerning, praying Christians. We ought to aspire to this gracious exercise, each individual for himself and for one another; not that we would be admired and applauded for our gifts or learning or both but that we would love, by the Holy Spirit breathing sweetly and powerfully upon our souls — working in us mightily. Ah yes, that we would be filled with all the fullness of God.

Secondly, Paul's encouragement to the believers in Ephesus. He assures them that God is able to do for them exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think. In a time of need we all love a friend who can pity us feelingly, although he could not help us, and especially a friend who can help us in accordance with what we ask, but here we are informed and encouraged lovingly that our God is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus”, Phil, 4:19; and His riches in glory by Christ Jesus are far above, yes infinitely above, that to which our small desires can aspire. Do we ask to be protected or delivered from our malicious, implacable foes? God is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think. Are we praying for sanctification by His Spirit? We ought to. When we pray for forgiveness through the blood of Christ we ought not to forget our need of sanctification by the Spirit. Are we praying for the downfall of the kingdom of Satan and the

advancement of the kingdom of grace, ourselves and others brought into it? Are we praying for the prosperity of the Cause of Christ among ourselves and throughout the world? God omnipotent is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think. Do we pray for the temporal affairs and welfare of the Lord's Cause? We should. I think we have reason to see that God has done for us recently as a branch of His Church, in this way, far above what we did ask or even think, and from unexpected quarters; can He not do for us the same in a spiritual way?

Are we praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Jews, for the receiving of them which will be life from the dead. Rom. 11, 15. Are we praying earnestly for the downfall of the Man of sin, the Anti-Christ? It appears that we are the only church in the land that accepts the Confessional statement that "the Pope of Rome is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God." 2 Thess. 2:2,4. Let us speak, write and act lawfully and scripturally against the Pope and his evil system. How sad in the extreme to hear and read of our Queen dressing in mourning, penitential black and literally bowing to that Wicked Man! We are unreservedly against the Pope's proposed visit to Britain next year.

"There are many", said Martin Luther, "that think I am too fierce and swift against Popedom; on the contrary I complain in that I am (alas) too mild; I wish that I could breathe out thunder-claps against the Pope and Popedom, and that every word were a thunder-clap." Why are leading ministers so friendly towards the Pope at the present time, as we read in their church records? Is it because they are holier, more learned and cultured than Luther was? They are not. Should we not then be of the same mind as that man of God was towards the Anti-Christ? But Luther was taught of the Holy Spirit and therefore he had discernment.

Let us hear what George Abbot, appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 1611, had to say when he rebuked the king, James I, for his toleration of Popery and when a treaty was made for Prince Charles' marriage to Princess Henrietta, a Popish sister of the French king. "May it please your Majesty", said Abbot, "I have been too long silent, and am afraid by my silence I have neglected the duty of the place it hath pleased God to call me unto, and your Majesty to place me in. Your Majesty hath propounded a toleration of religion. I beseech you, Sir, take into your consideration what the Act is, next what the consequence may be. By your Act you labour to set up that most damnable and heretical doctrine of the Church of Rome, the whore of Babylon. And hereunto what you have done in sending the Prince to Spain. What dreadful consequence

these things may draw after them, I beseech your Majesty to consider; and above all, lest this toleration, and discontinuance of the true profession of the Gospel, whereby God hath blessed us, and under which this kingdom hath for many years flourished, your Majesty do not draw upon the kingdom in general, and yourself in particular, God's heavy wrath and indignation. Thus, in discharge of my duty towards God, to your Majesty, and the place of my calling, I have taken humble boldness to deliver my conscience. And now, Sir, do with me what you please." Should we not be respectfully and graciously concerned about Her Majesty our Queen and the heir to our British throne? Oh, may God raise up such men in the churches of our land in these present perilous times. Godly, young King Edward VI's last audible prayer ought not to be forgotten, "Oh, Lord God, defend this realm from Papistry and maintain Thy true religion." What travesty of ecclesiastical affairs — what affront to God to have a Papist in the Theological Chair of the Church of Scotland! May God enable us to pray for a revival from the Holy Spirit throughout the land.

The words of the eminent Henry Cooke of Belfast, when in London in 1835, are applicable to us as a nation today: "Protestantism," he said, "intellectual and spiritual, the Protestantism of the Reformation, of the Puritans, the genuine Protestantism of the Covenant, is the only thing under heaven that can save us from a return of the days of Charles or James II. I trust this feeling is working its way into the vitals of society, and that yet this country is not to be given over of man or deserted of God. The spirit of Liberalism has infected many of them like a leprosy; and they must have it scourged out, or turned out, for it will not go out. I trust we shall be able to consider these things with faith in God who rules over all; with love to all men, His creatures yea, to them who are our enemies; yet with an ardent desire for the conversion of all men from the error of their ways, and the salvation of our country from the dangers with which it is threatened."

We must remember some matters in the history of our nation. The Bill of Rights — 1689, declared that no Papist was in future to succeed to the throne. The Act of Settlement — 1701, reaffirmed that no Roman Catholic was eligible to rule, and that subjects of a ruler who became a Roman Catholic were absolved from their allegiance. The Act stated that in future the Sovereign at his or her coronation must take the prescribed oath and recite and sign the declaration against transubstantiation.

The Act of Security — 1704, laid down that, on Queen Anne's death without issue, the estates were to name a successor to the Scottish Throne

from the *Protestant* descendants of the Stuart house.

The Act challenged the English government to renew attempts at a constitutional settlement between the two countries. This was finally achieved in 1707.

Many, in high places and low, in our day, are of the opinion that these Acts and clauses in them, relative to the British throne, are obsolete and ought not to be applied to our present day regal affairs, but men and women in our parliament — Protestants and Roman Catholics — realise that it is not quite such an easy, simple business to ignore these Acts and especially to have them expunged from the statute book of our nation. We ought to be thankful to God that these Acts and clauses in them are still there in defence and security of our religious and civil liberties and privileges.

When we speak of those shining witnesses of God, and others such as John Knox, Andrew Melville, Alexander Henderson and Thomas Chalmers, we must not forget Donald Macfarlane who, strengthened by his God, stood faithfully on the side of Christ in Scotland in the year 1893. There is a view by those who are not the friends of that noble stand, that in that year Mr Macfarlane saw the Free Church in flames and that he cleared out and left it to burn. In reply to that view, which has been expressed in these very words, we answer in figurative language, that the Free Church of Scotland, in 1893, threw the Bible out into the flames of German Rationalism, and Donald Macfarlane fled from that Declaratory Act Free Church, rescued the Bible from the flames of damnable heresies, and preached the Word of God in the open fields and on the hillsides of Scotland while he, at times, literally with his hand, wiped the snow from the divine page.

In plain terms the Rev. Donald Macfarlane protested against the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892 which was reaffirmed in 1893. Now let it be remembered that this Declaratory Act was passed by the Free Church Assembly under the Barrier Act. Consequently the Act became law incorporated in the constitution of that Church and therefore binding on all office-bearers. The Free Church by passing that Declaratory Act vitiated her own Constitution and hence ceased to be the noble Disruption Free Church of 1843. The Free Presbyterian Church took with them or in other words adhered to that Constitution. How at all can Free Church ministers, to this day, accuse the Rev. Donald Macfarlane and the Rev. Donald Macdonald with elders and Divinity students of being schismatics? They were no schismatics; they were not guilty of the terrible sin of schism as they have been and still are falsely accused. Mr

Macfarlane was a faithful, humble servant of Christ — an able minister of the New Testament.

We do not wish to stir up controversy, but as a book has been recently published in the Gaelic language which ruthlessly attacks the original position of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland we are annoyed and we feel that we have to speak. Why was the book written in Gaelic? Perhaps we know why. Let us all, old and young especially our younger ministers, and elders beware of the sophistry of men; and let us watch and pray against that dangerous cancer — Arminianism.

Now, brethern, let us in the unity of the Spirit pray unto God who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. The Person of the Holy Spirit in divine power is working in the people of God, sanctifying them, “which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Col. 1:12. Oh, our need of the Holy Spirit! “Without me ye can do nothing” our Lord tells us. The Holy Spirit is working mightily in those whom He has regenerated; “who worketh in me mightily” says the apostle. He is working in them by God’s Word “both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

Thirdly, Paul’s ardent desire and prayer. “Unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” The desire and prayer of the Lord’s people is that they might grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that they would grow more unlike themselves and more like Christ, that they would think less of themselves and think more highly of their Saviour, that they would loathe themselves more, and love and adore their Lord Jesus more and more. This frame of spirit is giving glory unto Him — to God the Father, and without this exercise of heart and mind we will not be giving glory to God in the Church by Christ Jesus.

Now, what does the apostle mean by “the Church”? The church in this world means every true believer world-wide. We must remember that it is not one body of people that is meant by the church of God; but at the same time we should love that branch of the visible church which we believe to be keeping nearest to the Scriptures, in doctrine, discipline and government in our land, and we should adhere faithfully to that church, humbly and lovingly. This is reasonable; this is scriptural. But let us hear, and hearing let us tremble when we read the warning and exhortation from “Him who holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil:

and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Repent therefore." Within our own Church, are ministers, elders, all office-bearers as closely knit to one another as our predecessors were? Have we reason to fear that we have left our first love? Is our Lord saying to us "Repent therefore"? "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." For an individual believer or a church it is a serious sin in God's sight to have left their first love and now to be more worldly-minded; and so we read in our Lord's injunction to the church of Ephesus "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, rises higher and higher in his praises unto God. In his heart and mind he launches out into the eternal world. He is absorbed in the things of the Spirit of God — God, Christ Jesus, the Church, heaven, eternity. He has a wonderful glimpse of the glory of God. He beholds the Son of God as the essential image of the Father from all eternity, and in His incarnation becoming the Representative Image of God to the Church. Paul sees by faith (and may we by Divine grace see it) the glory of the Scheme of Redemption, and the glory of the divine work of the Holy Spirit in the Church sanctifying her and bringing her to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing into the presence of God; and the apostle exclaims in adoring ecstasy "Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end, Amen."

There is a richness and beauty of language here which shows that Paul's heart was full of the heavenly subject, and that it was difficult to find words to express adequately what was being revealed to him; but the Holy Spirit gave him words sufficient for the edification of the Church of God to the end of time. It is the language of a heart full of the love of God and desiring that He might be praised, and assured that He will be worshipped, adored and praised for ever and ever; as Dr Owen says in writing of the glory of the Person of Christ, "But we must leave it under the veil of infinite incomprehensibleness; though admiration and adoration of it be not without the highest spiritual satisfaction." Although we have not the high attainments in grace, the abilities and learning of Paul or Owen, we may be praying for the teaching of the Divine Spirit and may we be longing to be filled with the joy and love of our God. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Would to God that the young in their unrest and craving for happiness,

instead of indulging in the sinful pleasures of the world, might seek the Lord while He may be found and call on Him while He is near. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" is His loving invitation. We read of one of the early fathers, longing for happiness and peace, exclaiming joyfully, "I went to Socrates and I would have perished; I went to Plato and Aristotle and I would have perished; but I met a fisherman, coming all dripping from his little boat and he said, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth' and my longing, weary soul found peace."

May the Lord bless His Word.

Letter

by **Samuel Rutherford**

To the Parishioners of Kilmacolm

Worthy and well-beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord — Grace, mercy and peace be to you. Your letters could not come to my hand in a greater throng of business than I am now pressed with at this time, when our kirk requireth the public help of us all; yet I cannot but answer the heads of both your letters, with provision that ye choose after this a fitter time for writing. 1. I would not have you pitch upon me, as the man able by letters to answer doubts of this kind, while there are in your bounds men of such great parts most able for this work. I know the best are unable, yet it pleaseth that Spirit of Jesus to blow His sweet wind through a piece of dry stick, that the empty reed may keep no glory to itself; but a minister can make no such wind as this to blow, he is scarce able to lend it a passage to blow through him. 2. Know that the wind of this Spirit hath a time when it bloweth sharp and pierceth so strongly that it would blow through an iron door, and this is commonly rather under suffering for Christ than at any other time. Sick children get of Christ's pleasant things to play them withal, because Jesus is most tender of the sufferer, for He was a sufferer Himself. O, if I had but the leavings and the drawing of the by-board (side-table) of a sufferer's table! But I leave this to answer yours.

First, ye write that God's vows are lying on you, and security strong and sib (akin) to nature, stealing on you who are weak. I answer, 1. Till we be

in heaven, the best have heavy loads, as is evident, Song 5:1; Psalm 30:6; Job 29:18; Matt. 26:33. Nature is a sluggard, and loveth not the labour of religion: therefore rest should not be taken till we know the disease to be over and in the way of turning, and that it is like a fever past the cool. And the quietness, and the calms of the faith of victory over corruption, would be entertained in place of security, so that if I sleep, I would desire to sleep faith's sleep in Christ's bosom. 2. Know also, none that sleep sound can seriously complain of sleepiness; sorrow for a slumbering soul is a token of some watchfulness of spirit. But this is soon turned into wantonness (as grace in us too often is abused); therefore, our waking must be watched over, else sleep will even grow out of watching; and there is as much need to watch over grace as to watch over sin. Full men will soon sleep, and sooner than hungry men. 3. For your weakness to keep off security, that like a thief stealeth upon you, I would say two things. (1) To want (lack) complaints of weakness, is for heaven and angels that never sinned, not for Christians in Christ's camp on earth. I think our weakness maketh us the church of the redeemed ones, and Christ's field that the Mediator should labour in. If there were no diseases on earth, there needed no physicians on earth: if Christ had cried down weakness, He might have cried down His own calling; but weakness is our Mediator's world. Sin is Christ's only, only fair and market. No man should rejoice at weakness and diseases; but I think, we may have a sort of gladness at boils and sores, because without them Christ's fingers, as a slain Lord, should never have touched our skin. I dare not thank myself, but I dare thank God's depth of wise providence, that I have an errand in me, while I live, for Christ to come and visit me, and bring with Him His drugs and His balm. O how sweet is it for a sinner to put his weakness in Christ's strengthening hand, and to father a sick soul upon such a physician, and to lay weakness before Him, to weep upon Him, and to plead and pray; weakness can speak and cry, when we have not a tongue: Ezek. 16:6, "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live." The kirk (church) could not speak one word to Christ then, but blood and guiltiness out of measure spake, and drew out of Christ pity, and a word of life and love. (2) For weakness, we have it, that we may employ Christ's strength because of our weakness. Weakness is to make us the strongest things; that is, when having no strength of our own, we are carried upon Christ's shoulders, and walk (as it were) upon His legs. If our sinful weakness swell up to the clouds, Christ's strength will swell up to the sun, and far above the heaven of heavens.

2. Ye tell me that there is need of counsel for strengthening of new beginners; I can say little to that, who am not well begun myself; but I know, honest beginnings are nourished by Him, even by lovely Jesus, who never yet put out a poor man's dim candle, who is wrestling betwixt light and darkness. I am sure if new beginners would urge themselves upon Christ, and press their souls upon Him, and importune Him for a draught of His sweet love, they could not come wrong to Christ. Come once in upon the right nick and step of His lovely love, and I defy you to get free of Him again. If any beginners fall off Christ again, and miss Him, they never lighted upon Christ as Christ; it was but an idol, like Jesus, they took for Him.

3. Whereas ye complain of a dead ministry in your bounds, ye are to remember, that the Bible among you is the contract of marriage, and the manner of Christ's conveying His love to your heart is not so absolutely dependent upon even lively preaching, as that there is no conversion at all, no life of God, but that which is tied to a man's lips. The daughters of Jerusalem have done often that which the watchman could not do. Make Christ your minister, He can woo a soul at a dyke-side in the field; He needeth not us, howbeit the flock be obliged to seek Him in the shepherd's tents. Hunger of Christ's making may thrive, even under stewards who mind not the feeding of the flock. O blessed soul, that can leap over a man, and look above a pulpit, up to Christ, who can preach home to the heart, howbeit we were all dead and rotten!

4. So to complain of yourself as to justify God is right, and providing ye justify His Spirit in yourself; for men seldom advocate against Satan's work and sin in themselves, but against God's work in themselves. Some of the people of God slander God's grace in their souls, as some wretches use to do, who complain and murmur of want. I have nothing (say they), all is gone, the ground yieldeth but weeds and windle straws (useless grass); when as their fat harvest, and their money in bank, maketh them liars. But for myself, alas! I think it is not my sin, I have scarce wit to sin this sin. But I advise you to speak good of Christ for His beauty and sweetness, and speak good of Him for His grace to yourselves.

5. Light remaineth, ye say, but ye cannot attain to painfulness (pains-taking). See if this complaint be not booked in the New Testament; and the place, Rom. 7:18, is like this, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I know not." But every one hath not Paul's spirit in complaining, for often in us, complaining is but an humble backbiting and traducing of Christ's new work in the soul. But for the matter of the complaint, I would say, the light of glory is perfectly

obeyed in loving, and praising, and rejoicing, and resting in a seen and known Lord: but that light is not hereaway in any clay body; for while we are here, light is in the most part broader and longer than our narrow and feckless (feeble) obedience. But if there be light with a fair train and a great back, I mean, armies of challenging thoughts, and sorrow for coming short of performance, in what we know and see ought to be performed, then that sorrow for not doing is accepted of our Lord for doing. Our honest sorrow and sincere aims, together with Christ's intercession, pleading that God would welcome that which we have, and forgive what we have not, must be our life, till we be over the bound-road and in the other country where the law will get a perfect soul.

6. In Christ's absence, there is (as ye write) a willingness to use means, but heaviness after the use of them because of formal and slight performance. In Christ's absence, I confess, the work lieth behind; but if ye mean absence of comfort, and absence of sense of His sweet presence, I think that absence is Christ's trying of us, not simply our sin against Him. Therefore, howbeit our obedience then be not sugared and sweetened with joy (which is the sweetmeat bairns would still be at), yet the less sense and the more willingness in obeying, the less formality in our obedience, howbeit we think not so; for I believe many think obedience formal and lifeless, except the wind be fair in the west, and sails filled with joy and sense, till souls, like a ship fair before the wind, can spread no more sail; but I am not of their mind who think so. But if ye mean by absence of Christ, the withdrawing of His working grace, I see not how willingness to use means can be at all under such an absence. Therefore be humbled for heaviness in that obedience, and thankful for willingness: for the Bridegroom is busking (adoring) His spouse often times when she is half sleeping, and your Lord is working and helping more than ye see. Also I recommend to you heaviness for formality and lifeless deadness in obedience. Be casten down as much as ye will or can for deadness, and challenge that slow and dull carcase of sin that will neither lead nor drive in your spiritual obedience. O how sweet to lovely Jesus are bills and grievances given in against corruption and the body of sin! I would have Christ, in such a case fashed (annoyed), if I may speak so, and deaved (deafened) with our cries, as ye see the Apostle doth, Rom. 7:24, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Protestations against the law of sin in you, are law-grounds why sin can have no law against you. Seek to have your protestation discussed and judged, and then shall ye find Christ on your side of it.

7. Ye hold that Christ must either have hearty service or no service at

all. If ye mean, He will not halve a heart, or have feigned service, such as the hypocrites give Him, I grant you that. Christ must have honesty or nothing. But if ye mean, He will have no service at all where the heart draweth back in any measure, I would not that were true, for my part of heaven and all I am worth in the world. If ye mind to walk to heaven without a cramp or a crook, I fear you must go your lone (alone). He knoweth our dross and defects, and sweet Jesus pitieth us when weakness and deadness in our obedience is our cross and not our darling.

8. The liar (as ye write) challengeth the work as formal; yet ye bless your cautioner (surety) for the ground-work He hath laid, and dare not say but you have assurance in some measure. To this I say, (1) It shall be no fault to save Satan's labour, and challenge it yourself, or at least examine and censure; but beware of Satan's ends in challenging, for he mindeth to put Christ and you at odds. (2) Welcome home faith in Jesus, who washeth still when we have defiled our souls and made ourselves loathsome, and seek still the blood of atonement to faults little or meikle (great). Know the gate to the well, and lie about it. (3) Make meikle (much) of assurance, for it keepeth your anchor fixed.

9. Outbreakings (ye say) discourage you, so that ye know not if ever ye shall win again to such overjoying consolations of the Spirit in this life, as formerly ye had; and therefore a question may be, if, after assurance and mortification, the children of God be ordinarily fed with sense and joy? I answer, I see no inconvenience to think it is enough in a race to see the gold at the starting-place, howbeit the runners never get a view of it till they come to the rink's (course's) end and, that our wise Lord thinketh it fittest we should not always be fingering and playing with Christ's apples. Our Well-beloved, I know, will sport and play with His bride, as much as He thinketh will allure her to the rink's (course's) end. Yet I judge it not unlawful to seek renewed consolations, providing, (1) the heart be submissive and content to leave the measure and timing of them to Him. (2) Providing they be sought to excite us to praise, and strengthen our assurance, and sharpen our desires after Himself. (3) Let them be sought not for our humours or swellings of nature, but as the earnest of heaven; and I think many do attain to greater consolations after mortification than ever they had formerly. But I know our Lord walketh here still by a sovereign latitude, and keepeth not the same way as to one hairbreadth without a miss, towards all His children. As for the Lord's people with you, I am not the man fit to speak to them. I rejoice exceedingly that Christ is engaging souls amongst you. But I know in conversion all the winning is in the first buying (as we use to say), for many lay false and

bastard foundations, and take up conversion at their foot, and get Christ for as good as half nothing, and had never a sick night for sin, and this maketh loose work. I pray you dig deep; Christ's palace-work, and His new dwelling, laid upon hell felt and feared, is most firm: and heaven grounded and laid upon such a hell, is surest work, and will not wash away with winter storms. It were good that professors were not like young heirs, that come to their rich estate long ere they come to their wit, and so is seen on it (the result is as might be expected): the tavern, and the cards, and the harlots steal their ridges from them, ere ever they be aware what they are doing. I know, a Christ bought with strokes is sweetest.

I recommend to you conference and prayer at private meetings: for warrant whereof, see Isa. 2:3; Jer. 1:4, 5; Hos. 2:1, 2; Ezek. 8:20-23; Mal. 3:16; Luke 24:13-17; John 20:19; Acts 12:12; Col. 3:16 and 4:6; Eph. 4:29; 1 Peter 4:10; Thess. 5:14; Heb. 3:13 and 10:25. Many coals make a good fire, and this is a part of the communion of saints. I must entreat you, and your Christian acquaintances in the parish, to remember me to God in your prayers, and my flock and ministry, and my transportation and removal from this place, which I fear at this assembly. And be earnest with God for our mother kirk. For want of time, I have put you all in one letter. The rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Yours in His sweet Lord Jesus,
Samuel Rutherford

Anwoth Aug. 5, 1639

Courage in the Ministry¹

by W.G.T. Shedd D.D.

Gentlemen of the graduating class! After the animating addresses to which we have listened from your own number, you will have neither the time nor the inclination to follow very long another speaker. Let me then in a few rapid sentences say something in harmony with the hour.

You are going to work. Thus far you have been preparing for it. Now the preparation ends, and the steady solid, heavy service begins. What you need is *courage*. This is my lesson and lecture to you on this occasion. Why should you, and why should all ministers of the gospel, be intrepid, fearless, resolute and bold?

1. In the first place, because you serve the Son of God, the Almighty Redeemer, "by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions.

¹A Discourse delivered in Union Seminary.

or principalities, or powers." All this immense power is behind you, if you are really meek and lowly disciples and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that this power is that of a living Person seated on an eternal throne. It is not the power of nature, but the power of God. It is not the energy of unconscious material laws and forces, but something infinitely mightier than they, even the intelligent and holy will of their Author and Controller. You are going forth to declare a message that has been given to you by him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, and to whom as their commissioned Mediator, the eternal Trinity have promised in solemn covenant that "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." Zech. 9:10. This promise was a source of courage on a memorable occasion. When the Lord Christ was riding lowly on an ass's colt down the slopes of Olivet, when the Messenger of the covenant was on the way to his own temple (Mal. 3:1), the band of his followers brought it to mind and shouted, "Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest heavens." John 12:13; Matt. 21:9.

Now, constantly call to mind this Almighty power and Trinitarian promise, and be full of courage respecting the success of your errand in this world. The omnipotence of Jesus Christ needs to be remembered, in a world and an age when the power of man and of nature is greatly exaggerated and vaunted. Men who are travelling fifty miles an hour, and telegraphing a thousand miles a second, and tunnelling rivers and mountains, get the impression that they are more mighty than the generations that have gone before them; more mighty perhaps than their Maker and Redeemer. They fall into the belief that there is nothing so strong in Christianity and the gospel, as there is in arts and sciences, inventions and civilization. This temper and feeling of the century tends to hamper and discourage spiritual workers; those whose weapons are not carnal, those who have no control of armies, navies, wealth, and commerce. It is indeed true that this overestimate and exaggeration of man and of material nature is a great misconception: for this generation is no stronger before the old standing facts of death, judgment, and eternity, than the generations that have gone before it. The whole of modern science and civilization cannot prevent death, cannot lengthen life, cannot escape eternal judgment. Before these fixed facts, one generation is as weak as another. Educated Europe is as helpless as barbaric Africa. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption." Ps. 49:7, 9. Nevertheless, in the presence of this rapid and

absorbing material progress, this is forgotten, and one generation goes and another comes, full of infatuation respecting the comparative power of religion and civilization; respecting the comparative power of the Son of God and the children of men.

Be not entangled and involved in this error. Rise above the time and current, and remember continually that the Lord Jesus Christ has a direct and personal power by which he can do anything that he pleases in this sinful and lost world. All power in heaven and on earth is in his hands, in order to the progress of his gospel and the triumph of his kingdom; and he will use it when and where and how he pleases. He who called Lazarus from the grave, and will call all the dead from their graves, is mightier than nature, and is mighty to save, travelling in the greatness of his strength. And if you are meek and lowly before him; if you walk humbly by his side, and desire nothing but to make him honored and obeyed and adored here on earth; your work and message will be enforced by all of his omnipotence, and this will make you the boldest and most courageous of men.

2. In the second place, you should be of good courage, because the Almighty Son of God will personally empower you as individuals for all that he appoints you to do. "Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all of your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." These are promises made to the Christian ministry, beginning with the Twelve Apostles, who stand at the head of the long roll. We have no doubt that these promises were made, and made good to St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul; but so they were, and are, to every minister of Jesus Christ, past, present, and to come. These are pledges which the Lord gives to all his ministerial servants, equally and alike. It is true that we shrink from comparing ourselves with St. John and St. Paul in respect to zeal, sincerity, and self-sacrifice in preaching the gospel. Nevertheless we belong to the same class with them. We are the successors of the Apostles in every particular, excepting those of inspiration and miraculous gifts. All that Christ promised to them as preachers of his Word and servants of his Church, he promises to us. And he promised them power: inward power to understand the truth and to teach it, and the superadded power of the Holy Ghost effectually to apply it to the hearts of men. Rely on this kind of power and be full of courage. Do not trust to culture, science, art, either in yourselves or in society: but trust in that wonderful spiritual energy which, like the wind, bloweth where it listeth, and which, like the breath from the four winds, breathes on the slain, and they live.

This is no new lesson that I have set you, my brethren. You know these things; happy are you if you do them. When you shall have come, as some of your instructors have, very near to the close of your term of service in the Christian ministry, perhaps you will wonder as they do that there was not more of intrepidity, of courage, and of expectation, in the ministerial life. Could we but take our Lord at his word in the very opening of our ministry, could we but believe with a simple and undoubting faith his words of promise and of power, the ministry would be vastly more fruitful and vastly more blessed.

Enter then upon the ministry of reconciliation, firmly believing that you are serving "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13), "by whom were all things made, and without whom was not anything made." He will work in his own way, and according to the counsel of his own will. Like the stars which he made and governs, he moves without haste and without rest. Presume not to dictate the rate at which his kingdom shall make progress. Do your own piece of work to the utmost of your ability, lay it lowly at his feet, and trust him for the result and issue both of your work and of all work.

This temper will keep you calm and keep you courageous. Charles Twelfth was once hard-pressed by his powerful foe, Peter the Great. On a map of Sweden he wrote these words, "*God* has given me this kingdom, and the *devil* shall not take it away." Do the same with the map of the world. Write upon it, "God has given to his Church and ministry the whole world, and Satan shall not take it away."

With these words your instructors close their lessons and lectures to you. The connection and intercourse of three years have brought you closer and closer to them, in the bonds of Christian affection and regard. They may not have said much, but they have thought and felt much. The rapid rush of life at this centre does not permit so much of personal intercourse as is possible in more quiet retreats. But you may be very sure that we have not met you in the class-room from day to day, from month to month, from year to year, without coming to know and respect your traits of mind and heart, to perceive your fidelity, and to honour your sincere purpose to make the most of your powers and attainments, for the service of our common Lord and Master. The tie between an instructor and his scholars is high and tender. It is intellectual, grounded in the mind. And in the instance of the theological instructor and scholar, it is spiritual, grounded in the heart and a common faith. The departure of a theological class into the work of the ministry ruptures a bond that is stronger and tenderer than that which holds a class in college to its

instructors. There are common Christian beliefs, hopes, aspirations, temptations, and triumphs, that make your graduation that of younger brethren and co-labourers.

From their inmost heart, your instructors now bid you farewell and God-speed. "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart; wait, we say, on the Lord." Psa. 37:14.

Shams

by Rev. John Kennedy, D.D. Dingwall

After describing the various *shams* of society, the lecture concludes thus:

I am now to pass to a more serious theme. There is the *Christian sham*, and of this there are more counterfeits than of any other. I am to point only to a few. The *labelled* — the *prattling* — the *bustling* — the *buckram* — and the *plastic*.

The *labelled* counterfeit bears the name, and has naught else besides. "We are all Christians in this land," say some. They simply mean that we are not heathens who have never read a Bible nor heard the gospel. This, in the estimation of not a few, suffices; as if to stick a label bearing the name of an elaborate piece of furniture upon the gnarled old tree would transform it at once into that whose name it bears. The name and no more! Of what avail is this? It does add to responsibility, but it cannot change character, secure availing privilege, nor adjust your relation to God, nor brighten your prospect for eternity. They have printed the name "Invincible" on one of our ships of war, but she may be the very first to sink under the fire of the foe.

The *prattling* counterfeit thinks that religion is of no use except as a thing to speak about. All he desiderates is something for his tongue to do in parrot prattle about Scripture themes. He is just like a man who has filled his mouth with fluid which he will not swallow, and whose cheek you cannot touch without his spurring in your face. So this man, never caring to have down in his heart the transforming power of things Divine, has lapped as much knowledge as makes him a fluent talker about things which he has never truly believed and felt. Of all repulsive things, there is nothing I shrink more from than a religious talk with one who is careful to be pious only in his words.

The *bustling* counterfeit is active. You can scarcely give him too much

to do. With his confidence in himself unbroken, and unthinking of what the spirit and aim of Christian service should be, he is ready to lay his hand to any work, however high. He can rush to it from the midst of worldly business. He has equal readiness for either kind of work. Not because he brings the spiritual motive to the secular business, but because he is not afraid to bring the secular spirit to the Christian work. How much these will do if they can only be observed, and if they themselves and others think that they are doing well!

The *buckram* counterfeit thinks that a certain routine of service will earn for him a right to be reckoned as a Christian. Men by being in a certain spot, in a certain association, following certain rules, muttering certain words, and posturing in certain attitudes, becoming Christians! Surely the men who think so are in the very idiocy of spiritual folly. And yet of all they are the most bigoted. None so right as they — none right at all but they! By costly clothing do they expect to cure their sick; by daubing the leper with paint do they expect to remove his uncleanness; by polishing the bark of the dead old tree do they expect to make it living, green, and fruitful? No. But they do what is a thousandfold more serious and disastrous — they expect by mere bodily service to save a soul which only Divine blood could redeem and only Divine power can renew.

The *plastic* counterfeit seems to be so far right in his views, and he seems somewhat earnest and devout as well. But oh how yielding! There is no backbone of firm purpose in him. He is a molluscou creature. He bends to the influence of the hour, whatever it may be. Christians think they have him as a brother when he is with them, and worldlings think him theirs when he is their companion. A little moistening flattery can make this man of plaster yield to the impress of any hand that attempts to mould him. An impulsive, fitful being, he is frivolous and earnest by turns. "Unstable as water, he cannot prevail."

But amidst multiform deceptions let us not be so unsettled as to think that there is nothing genuine and that none are true. There is a *word*, to be believed, which cannot fail; there is an *arm*, on which to lean, that cannot weary; there is *friendship*, in which to trust, that cannot change; there is a *hope*, too, which cannot be disappointed; there is a *life* which cannot die; and there is a benefit which cannot end. Towards these let our intensest desires be moving us. In faith let us lay hold of Him in whose Person Divine glory is blended with the beauty of a perfect man, who holds a Divine commission for the saving of the lost, who hath in His blood Divine merit availing as a ransom for the guilty, in whom there is a fulness of Divine grace intended for the unworthy poor, and who wields Divine

power which can save to the uttermost. Let us cleave to Him, for He is both the truth and the life. Let us serve Him with a true heart which can never repent of having chosen Him as Master. And from the paths of truth, in which He guides His followers, let us in desire and hope lift up our eyes to the heaven which only those who love the truth go into, to find all around them true, and pure, and blessed, while from the Great White Throne shines a light, discovering the presence of the true God as the fountain of a blessedness which shall never end. The righteous nation which keepeth the truth shall enter thither, and there shall all the saints find a true home for ever. Then, and not till then, shall all deceptions disappear. Truth alone shall enter through these everlasting gates. Against all who believe and love a lie shall they be for ever closed. And the grand reality of purity and bliss within them shall be the full growth of that germ of truth which regenerating power produced, and is the ripened fruit of that word of truth taken into his heart by him who believed the Gospel and received the Christ of God. Oh let us have done with all tinsel that glitters but to deceive! All that hides the real let us at once shake off. Let us cherish no lie in our heart, and let us wear no disguise in our profession. Let us be anxious to be true, and then only can we aim at the great, the pure, the blessed. And let us be true at once. Let us be true to ourselves without delay in accepting the description of us given by Him who cannot lie, and the position assigned to us by Him who cannot err. Let us be true to Him in according to Him the office which, as Saviour, He claims, and the place of authority which, as Master, He demands. Thus, and thus alone, shall we have our eternal interests secured by the steadfastness of eternal truth, and have before our eye a prospect with brightness in which there is no deception, and on which no cloud can ever rest, and with peace whose blissfulness is perfect, and whose calm no trouble can disturb for ever.

Romanism Self-condemned (5)

by Rev. John MacLeod M.A., Stornoway

An indication of the importance the Vatican attaches to the papal visit to Britain is the amount of time and energy that is being devoted to its preparation. Visits to other countries can apparently be arranged a few months in advance, but the British visit requires no less than two years planning. Well does Rome realise that our nation, even in its backslidden

condition, is still the most Protestant in the world and that a triumphant Papal visit, enjoying popular support, would be a most notable and significant achievement. Public opinion must be moulded gently and carefully — an operation which requires time and meticulous planning. The mass-media, firmly in the grasp of Romanist sympathisers, is clearly being used to this end and that the desired effect is being achieved is, alas, only too evident. Even in the Island of Lewis some who regard themselves as very orthodox Protestants have outrightly refused to append their signature to a Petition addressed to the Queen respectfully asking that no official recognition be given to the Pope if he visits our land. Those controlling the British mass-media made quite certain that the public were well-informed in regard to the Queen's visit to the Vatican and that she was received in audience by the Pope clad in penitential black. To add to our sense of indignation, our Prime Minister provided the same spectacle a few weeks later. The Foreign Office informed us that the wearing of black dresses was laid down by protocol and that it had no other significance. Strange protocol, we say, that required *our* Queen and Prime Minister to wear black while the Queen of Belgium and, more recently, the Queen of Spain appear in the Papal presence clad in white and sparkling in jewels! We draw the obvious conclusion that "heretics" are required to wear black while the "faithful" are to wear white. Rome's intentions are clear — universal acknowledgement of the Papal claim to be "*Father of princes and kings and Ruler of the Universe*" — in short, all that is implied in the wearing of the three-tiered tiara already referred to. While his white-robed Queen stood by, King Juan Carlos of 'most Catholic Spain' was, in full military uniform, photographed kneeling down, very significantly, at the Pope's feet! That is the place that every head of state in the world ought to take if Rome's arrogant and blasphemous claim were to be regarded as valid and scriptural.

It is vain for Romanists to deny that the Pope in 1981 claims universal supremacy and at the same time demand the recognition of their church as being *semper eadem*. If it was true in 1825 it must be true now. John Paul II's predecessor Leo XII in that year had a medal struck at Rome and the evidence it furnishes simply cannot be explained away. It is plainly a case of "*Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee*". On the one side appears Leo with the initials of his Babylonian title appended; on the other there is a woman representing the Church, seated on a globe with the legend around her, "SEDET SVPER VNIVERSVM", ("*The whole world is her seat*"). She is stretching forth her right hand with a cup as if in the act of delivering it to someone. 'Here', some unknown writer has

commented, 'is a picture to the life of the Apocalyptic woman, whom John saw "*sitting on many waters . . . with a golden cup in her hand;*" and "*the waters . . . are peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues*". "This witness is true", even though it came from the mint of Papal Rome. By her own hand in the plenitude of her pride, she had revealed the plenitude of her apostasy, as that power "*by whose sorceries all nations were deceived, and in whom was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain on the earth*". (The reader is referred to Revelation XVII and XVIII).

'The gigantic system of moral corruption and idolatry described', says Hislop, 'in this passage under the emblem of a woman with a "GOLDEN CUP IN HER HAND", "making all nations DRUNK with the wine of her fornication" is divinely called "MYSTERY, Babylon the Great. That Paul's "MYSTERY of iniquity", as described in 2 Thess. II. 7, has its counterpart in the Church of Rome, no man of candid mind, who has carefully examined the subject, can easily doubt. Such was the impression made by that account on the mind of the great Sir Matthew Hale, no mean judge of evidence, that he used to say, that if the apostolic description were inserted in the public "*Hue and Cry*" any constable in the realm would be warranted in seizing, wherever he found him, the Bishop of Rome as the head of that "MYSTERY of iniquity". Now, as the system here described is equally characterised by the name of "MYSTERY", it may be presumed that both passages refer to the same system. But the language applied to the New Testament Babylon, as the reader cannot fail to see, naturally leads us back to the Babylon of the ancient world. As the Apocalyptic woman has in her hand A CUP, wherewith she intoxicates the nations, so was it with the Babylon of old. Of that Babylon, while in all its glory, the Lord thus spake, in denouncing its doom by the prophet Jeremiah: "Babylon hath been a GOLDEN CUP in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad". (Jer. LI. 7). Why this exact similarity of language in regard to the two systems? The natural inference surely is, that the one stands to the other in relation of type and antitype. Now, as the Babylon of the Apocalypse is characterised by the name of "MYSTERY" so the grand distinguishing feature of the ancient Babylonian system was the Chaldean "MYSTERIES", that formed so essential a part of that system . . . The Chaldean Mysteries can be traced up to the days of Semiramis, who lived only a few centuries after the flood, and who is known to have impressed upon them the image of her own depraved and polluted mind. That beautiful but abandoned queen of

Babylon was not only herself a paragon of unbridled lust and licentiousness, but in the mysteries which she had a chief hand in forming, she was worshipped as Rhea, the great "MOTHER" of the gods, with such atrocious rites as identified her with Venus, the MOTHER of all impurity, and raised the very city where she had reigned to a bad eminence among the nations, as the grand seat at once of idolatry and consecrated prostitution. Thus was this Chaldean queen a fit and remarkable prototype of the "WOMAN" in the Apocalypse, with the golden cup in her hand, and the name on her forehead, "*Mystery, Babylon the Great, the MOTHER of harlots and abominations of the earth*". The Apocalyptic emblem of the harlot woman with the cup in her hand was even embodied in the symbols of idolatry derived from ancient Babylon, as they were exhibited in Greece; for thus was the Greek Venus originally represented, and it is singular that in our own day, and so far as appears for the first time, the Roman Church has actually taken this very symbol as her own chosen emblem!

This being the true character of Romanism how sad and shameful that our Queen and Prime Minister should pay their respects to the system's head and continue to deferentially give countenance to it. In post-Reformation times our nation inflicted more damage on this Satanic system than any other. That was the honoured place to which the Most High was pleased to exalt us. "How is the gold become dim!" Little wonder that Rome now rejoices when together with our head of state so-called Protestant Church leaders in Scotland, alas, as well as in England, welcome a visit from the very person whose authority and pretensions Knox, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and other faithful servants of Christ now in Heaven expressly repudiated.

High on Rome's priority list is undoubtedly the reclamation of England, "Mary's dowry", to the Papal fold and with England we may include the other parts of the United Kingdom. England, lacking as it does the great bulwark of Presbyterianism, is especially vulnerable. No secret is made of the fact that the Roman Catholic "faithful" are exhorted to pray for the return of "Mary's dowry" and John Paul II had the bold effrontery to refer to England under that name in a letter addressed to a council of bishops meeting in Liverpool last year. The defection of Henry VIII, or at least his refusal to accept Papal ruling in connection with his divorce, began to weaken the national link with Rome that was eventually broken during the brief reign of the godly young King Edward VI. Romanist persecution and rage during his papist sister's reign was to lead to the kindling of the fires of Smithfield and the martyrdom of about 300

saints before the Lord mercifully intervened to remove to the endless world that wicked woman whose actions were to earn for her in all time coming the inglorious epithet of "Bloody Mary". Rome, however, rejoiced at her accession. A medal to commemorate the event was minted, as might be expected, at Rome. It may be viewed in the British Musuem.

The information given in regard to the medal is as follows: "Struck by Julius III, A.V. ("year of victory"), to commemorate the accession of Queen Mary of England. The Pope is represented on the reverse in full robes. Cardinal Pole, Papal Legate to England, on his right, with the Emperor Charles V between them. On the left is King Philip of Spain and Queen Catherine, wife of Henry VIII. Queen Mary kneels in the foreground. The inscription is: "*England, thou shalt rise again*".

We may be sure that what Rome now desires is the repetition of history with Queen Elizabeth II in Queen Mary's posture and found, like King Juan Carlos, acknowledging Papal supremacy. Love to our Queen and nation ought to move us to pray with importunity that Babylon would soon fall and we have every encouragement for doing so "*for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her*".

"Rome shall *perish* — write that word
In the blood that she has spilt." (Cowper)

Obituary

The Late Alexander Beaton, Totardor, Struan, Skye

With the death of Alexander Beaton who passed to his eternal rest on March 1st. 1980, a link with the past has been severed. Born in 1892, and baptized in 1912, he remembered with intelligent interest that earlier period of the history of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. That he had a gracious and spiritual appreciation of that noble stand for the Cause of Christ and Truth in Scotland, none that knew him could doubt. He delighted to regale the younger generation with interesting and edifying anecdotes of his early years, and his older contemporaries. The Lord dealt savingly with Alasdair while still in the vigour of youth, and his grace and gift soon impressed the godly who saw that he was suitably equipped for office in the church. This meant that he came in contact with the fathers in Israel, and by the grace of God took his place beside much older men. As an elder, assessor elder and as missionary, he rendered yeoman service in the Cause of Christ. In Portree, in Bracadale, and wherever he could, he gave himself freely to the work of the Lord.

It is difficult to depict on the printed page the saintliness of this good man. His favourite theme was the redeeming love of Christ. His public exercises were conducted with a kind of serene solemnity, while his private converse with those that feared the Lord was bathed in the spirit of meekness and love. Especially at communion seasons in his hospitable home, one could discern the rare blend of graces in his character. The frailty of advancing years, accentuated by the residual effects of active service in the 1914-1918 war, failed to damp his joy in the Lord. Towards the end of his pilgrimage in which it was apparent that he was no stranger to the wiles of the devil or the deep seated corruption of the old nature, he was afflicted with a degree of deafness, which affliction shut him out from that fellowship with the brethren which he enjoyed so much; yet even this never changed the inner warmth of grace in his soul. He possessed in a remarkable degree that godliness with contentment which is great gain. His prayers breathed a true catholicity of spirit, and he commanded the respect of all godly men.

To his sorrowing widow and family we extend our sympathy, and pray that their father's God may be their God for ever and ever. F.M.

Church Notes

Letter to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales

Buckingham Palace

London

6 July 1981

Your Royal Highness

This Committee has learned with deep regret that it is intended to have the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster take part in Your Royal Highness's marriage ceremony and desires to protest against this place being given to him.

Since the Bill of Rights expressly forbids any communion with the See of Rome on the part of the British Monarchy we believe Cardinal Hume's presence in St Paul's Cathedral taking part in a Divine service and in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen would be in breach of the spirit and letter of the aforementioned article of the British Constitution. It is also, we sincerely believe, highly dishonouring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone Head of the Church, to give countenance to this representative of the Roman Antichrist and we, humbly and respectfully, urge Your Royal Highness and Lady Diana to seriously reconsider the matter.

The Committee would also take this opportunity of expressing the view that the decision to omit from the service the promise on the part of the bride to obey her husband in all things lawful is contrary to the Word of God. We plead with you, Sir, and Lady Diana not to depart from this long-established, God-honouring practice to which other members of the Royal Family have, in the past, faithfully adhered. In this connection we would, respectfully, commend to Your Royal Highness the laudable example of Her Majesty the Queen. Desiring, as we earnestly do, the Divine blessing upon your marriage we, even at this late stage, humbly plead that the promise be included.

The Committee desires that the rich blessing of the God of Heaven would rest upon Your Royal Highness and Lady Diana in your married state.

On behalf of the Committee, etc.
John MacLeod
Secretary

Licensing of Student

At a meeting of the Skye Presbytery held in Portree on 23rd June 1981, Mr Hamish Ian MacKinnon M.A., 5 Kitson Crescent, Portree was licensed to preach the gospel.

Reception of Student

At a meeting of the Skye Presbytery held at Portree on 23rd June 1981, Mr Peter Lloyd Roberts, B.Eng. "Creosco", Hotel Gardens, Portree was unanimously received as a student in training for the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Broadford on 3rd August at 7 p.m. for Moderating in of Call.

Northern: At Dingwall on 11th August at 2.30 p.m.

Southern: At Glasgow on 11th August at 6 p.m.

Western: At Laide on 22nd September at 12 noon.

Theological Conference

This year's Conference will be held in Glasgow on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th September. D.V. It is expected that the following papers will be read:

Tuesday

Afternoon "Augustine" Rev A. Morrison M.A., Oban.

Evening "The Microchip Revolution"
Dr Wm. Robertson, Edinburgh.

Wednesday

Morning "Christian missions in Africa"
Rev D.A. Ross, Laide

Afternoon Christianity & History
Rev D.J. MacDonald, Perth

Evening "Evolution and the Word of God"
Dr Duncan MacSween, Glasgow.

The last paper will be in public.

Perth Communion

The Communion will be held at Perth again this year on the 4th Sabbath of August. D.V. The Services will be as follows:—

Thursday and Friday 7.30 p.m., Saturday 3 p.m., Sabbath 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Monday 7.30 p.m. All the services will be held in the Forteviot Hall, Perth, and it is expected that Rev Neil M. Ross, Ullapool, will assist on this occasion.

Inaccurate Reporting

The action of Revs J. Brentnall and M. Radcliff in taking their case to Press and Radio, together with their threat of seeking damages from the Church through the Court of Session, has led to inaccurate reporting. In a radio interview, I tried to correct some of these inaccuracies. The interview was never broadcast. I also wrote a letter to the *Glasgow Herald* which is reproduced below. This letter was not published.

The people of the Church should be well acquainted with the manoeuvres of the mass media not to be disturbed by their clumsy efforts at reporting matters they do not really understand. At the same time, constant prayer should be made that this attack on the discipline and government of the Church may be defeated.

Sir, Having just returned from preaching in England, I have been shown your issue of 12.6.81 headed "Clerk in Synod Row Speaks out" being a report by your correspondent, Stewart Lamont. I do not know where he got his information as he certainly did not interview me.

While I have no intention at the present juncture to enter into any public dispute on this matter, I do feel that certain facts need to be clarified.

The heading "Ministers banned for life" may sound quite sensational

but it is not true. Neither is it true to say that Revs Brentnall and Radcliff have been deposed. The truth is that they have been suspended "sine die" from their ministerial functions. They are still ministers of the Church: their names are still on the roll of the Presbytery to which they belong: they are still subject to the jurisdiction of the Church Courts and, should the occasion arise, further disciplinary proceedings can be taken against them.

As we all know, "sine die" means "without date". The date, therefore, when the Synod might give consideration to raising these suspensions is the date when these ministers fall in with the requirement of the Court. The length of their suspension depends entirely on their own conduct and no Court other than the Synod can raise their suspension.

By the law of the Church and the law of commonsense, a minister suspended sine die is loosed from his pastoral charge. Since he no longer has a charge, he cannot receive emoluments out of the Fund providing ministers' salaries. Neither can he remain in a Manse since he is no longer minister of the congregation. In Rev Brentnall's case, the Synod granted him *ex gratia* payment of three months' salary. The Deacons' Court of the Dumbarton Congregation granted him three months use of the Manse. The congregation, at a congregational meeting, agreed with this decision and made it very plain that they are harmoniously behind the Synod's act of discipline, as is true of the Church at large.

It is also inaccurate to be making out that these suspensions have to do with events which date back 50 years. To say that these events are "still reverberating within the denomination" is a flight of the imagination worthy of a first class novelist. The real fact is that the suspension stemmed from a Synod decision in 1978, which called upon a minister to desist from propagating a view on Protest contrary to the view held by the Church. He was warned that sanctions would be applied if he did not do so. The same requirement was made with respect to the two ministers now involved and as they refused to give the undertaking, sanctions have been applied. In making these decisions the Synod had in view preserving the peace of the Church.

It may interest your readers, including Stewart Lamont, to know that in May, 1980, in the same week in which these two ministers made their Protest, which was not received, a Protest was also made in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. This Protest was not allowed and had to be changed into a dissent in accordance with normal Presbyterian practice.

(Rev) Donald MacLean,

10.6.81

The Royal Marriage

The Synod agreed to send a Bible to the Prince of Wales and the Lady Diana Spencer. A suitable inscription was put on the Bible and the following letter of acknowledgement has been received by the Clerk of Synod.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

From: Rear-Admiral Sir Hugh Janion, KCVO,

7th July, 1981.

Dear Mr MacLean,

The Prince of Wales and the Lady Diana Spencer have asked me to send the members of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland their sincere thanks for the beautifully inscribed leather bound bible.

His Royal Highness and Lady Diana much appreciate your kind thought in sending this gift to them and ask me to thank you all most warmly.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Janion

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr W.D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks . . .

Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund: Collection at Poolewe Mission meeting, £131.50, per Rev. D. Ross, towards cost of Bibles sent to Zimbabwe; Miss G. Buggs, £70 for Mbuma Hospital; "Anon M", £15.

Organisation Fund: Mrs M. MacLennan, Lochcarron, per Rev. J.W.R., £20 for Synod Expenses; Anon, M., £20.

Sustentation Fund: Anon, M., £60.

Home Mission Fund: Anon, M., £10.

Aged & Infirm etc Fund: Anon, M., £20.

General Building Fund: Anon, M., £20.

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Anon, M., £15.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon, M., £10.

Mission to Italy: Anon, M., £25.

Mission to China: Anon, M., £25.

Underground Evangelism: Anon, M., £25.

Ingwenya: Mbuma Zending, Z\$28980.47 received in January; Winnipeg Friend, per Vancouver Treasurer Can \$325 for Hospital; Netherlands Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.\$200; Wick Friend, per Rev. R.R.S., £10 for Hospital.

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

Welfare of Youth Fund: D.W.L. Scott, Broughty Ferry, £5; Anon, M., £10.

Publications Fund: Anon, M., £20; Dundee Congregation, £8; Anon per Rev. A. MacAskill, £1.

Free Distribution Fund: Anon, M., £25; M.D.M., £2.80; J.S., 30p; R.C., £2.80; M.V., 20p; I.M., £3.10.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Applecross: Mrs Mack, Glenelg, £10 for Cuaig Mission Hall repair per Rev. A. Murray; Anon, in memory of a beloved husband £5 for Congr. Purposes (envelope in Church plate).

Barnoldswick: M.H., £10; A.F., £10; E.K., £5; all for Communion Expenses; E.K., £10; M.G., £5 per R.M.; Friend, Inverness, £20 per Rev. D. MacLean, all for Building Fund; Anon, £2 for Home Mission Fund.

Dingwall: S.C., Invergordon, £10 for Car Expenses.

Dumbarton: N.M., £5; E.M. Staffin, £5, both for Manse Fund; A.E.H., Dumbarton, £6 for Trinitarian Bible Society; Anon, Cardross, £10 for B.T.S.; Anon, Cardross, £10 for Mission to China; Anon, Cardross, £5 for Communion expenses.

Dunoon: Mrs MacG., St Jude's Congr, £7 for Congregational Purposes per N.D. MacPh.

Fort William: D.R. MacD., £10; MacLeans, Tyndrum, £10 for Sust. Fund, both per Rev. J.A. MacDonald.

Greenock: Mrs G.A.C., Maghull, Liverpool, £20 (£10 Sust. Fd. & £10 Congr. Purposes); R.H.C., Bangor, N.I., £15; Mrs G.A.C., Liverpool, £10, both for Congr. Purposes.

Kyle: Envelope in plate, £5; envelope in plate, £10; in plate, £50, all for Manse Fund; Graham House, Dornie, £1.70 door coll. per Mr Van Woerden;; Envelope in plate, £80; Envelope in plate, £15, both for Manse Fund; Graham House, Dornie, £2.20 per Mr Van Woerden.

Lochcarron: In Coll. Plate, £15 for Comm. Expenses; In memory of loved one £3 for Sust. Fund and £3 for Minister's car (twice); Summer Visitors, £1 "for the Church"; Anon, £10 per J.W.R. for Sust. Fund.

London: Kames/Glasgow Friend, £5 for Church and Manse Building Fund.

Oban: Matth. 6:3, £3 for Church Funds; A.M. Edinburgh, £3 for Property Fund, both per Rev. A.M.; Anon, £10; English Friend, £2, both for Congr. Fund.

South Harris: Mainland Friend, £20 for Manse repairs; Tarbert Friend, £10 for Car Fund, both per Rev. D. MacL; Mr Twiname, Inverness, £10; Anon Friends, £10, both for Sustentation Fund, per J. Nicolson; B. MacLean, Glasgow, £10; J. MacAulay, Glasgow, £10; D.K. MacLean, Ullapool, £10, all three for Northton Meeting House renovation; In loving memory of beloved parents £100 for Northton Mission House, all per A. MacCuish.

Staffin: J. & B., £60 for Manse re-decorating per M.M.; Friend, Harris, £20 where most needed; Friend, Staffin, £10 for Manse re-decorating; J. MacD., Kirklee, Glasgow, £10 (£5 Sust. Fund and £5 Congr. Purposes), last three per M.M.I.

Stornoway: Friend, £10 per Rev. J. MacLeod; Anon, £10 both for Congr. Purposes; Miss C.M., "Dun Eisdean", £10 for Car Fund and £15 for Sust. Fund per Mr Neil Murray.

Waternish: Mrs Morrison, Glasgow, £5 for Sust. Fund.