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I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul

The children of God are ready to write hard things against themselves and are ready to come to wrong conclusions. That oftentimes they are perfectly sincere in doing this in no way alters the fact that what they are writing and saying and thinking is not true. It is the truth that is to stand and it ill becomes the children of God, for whom the Lord has done so much and to whom He has shown so much of His favour and loving kindness, to question the reality of His promises, as though He would no longer be faithful to them.

Asaph was saying, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? Doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?" But then he went on to say, "This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." It is true that appearances may belie the promises but we are not warranted to go on appearances, it is the reality that counts. In David's case and in Asaph's case the reality was very far from the appearance.

Saul proved a relentless persecutor of David. As it was in Isaac's day when the son of the bondwoman persecuted the son of the free woman, so it was in David's day. Godless Saul persecuted godly David. So had it been from the beginning when godless Cain persecuted and slew godly Abel. This is a conflict which is to be carried on in the world down to the end of time. The true Church of God in the world can expect the opposition, not only of the world lying in the wicked one outside the Church but of the world in the Church as well. Godless Saul had many

good appearances. Did he not prophesy? Did he not repent? Yet the time came when he manifested whose he was and whom he served when, in his last extremity, he went to the witch of Endor. It was Saul who was to perish in Mount Gilboa, not David.

Jacob, too, in his experience had to say, "All these things are against me", when it was very far from being so. Yet it looked to him at that time as if the Lord was working against him and was to bereave him of more of his sons. Instead of that the Lord was about to restore to him the son whom he had already lost. In a very short time he was to say, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

It is when their hope is well nigh gone that the Lord enables His people to look again towards His holy temple. He is not to cast off His people whom He foreknew. He is to preserve their souls alive even in time of famine. He is to carry on in them and perfect the good work He has begun in them. He will never leave nor forsake them. He has engraven them upon the palms of His hands; their walls are continually before Him. He paid their redemption price, therefore they are His by purchase. He is to perfect that which concerns them.

It is often difficult for the children of God to believe that they will ever inhabit glory. As they look at themselves it is little wonder that they should come to this conclusion. They see nothing in themselves that warrants them to come to this conclusion. So, too, when they think of their own lives in this world, and of how far short they came of the Lord's glory in all things, then how can they hope ever to dwell in the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for His people. In this they write hard things against themselves and are ready to conclude that they will never enjoy the realms of glory.

But in this, as in much else, they are much mistaken and are far from the truth. It is not on the basis of anything they are in themselves or of anything that they have done that they are to inhabit glory. It is on the basis of what Christ has done. It is on the basis of the perfection of the finished work of Christ that they are to be received into glory. Can they find any ground in that work why they should be excluded from heaven, who have come to rest under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty? None perish that Him trust. Have they any warrant, again, to question the truth of His promise given to the disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"? He is faithful that promised. Or have they any reason to question the prevalency of His intercession in heaven of the One who said on earth,

"Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world"? No, in spite of all their fears, the poor, tried, afflicted people of God are not to be cast off. Notwithstanding all that might indicate otherwise,

"They shall be brought with gladness great,
and mirth on every side,
Into the palace of the King,
and there they shall abide."

Prayer Meeting Address

by Rev. John Colquhoun

(Preached in Glendale on 1st March 1956)

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful but his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:1,2.

Recently we were noticing in the hearing of some of you that the Holy Spirit pronounces them blessed who bless the Lord's people. Numbers 24:9. We now come to notice another statement which brings before us another aspect of the blessings of the blessed man, and we will notice, as enabled, two things in connection with it. I. What the blessed man does not. II. What he does.

I. What he does not.

(1) He "walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." The counsel of the ungodly is to be found in the heart of every child of Adam, and that counsel leaves God out of account. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Psalm 14:1. Others said, "With our tongue we will prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" Psalm 12:4. Pharaoh, in his heart and with his lips, said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go." The counsel of the ungodly in the heart causes the poor sinner to be heedless of the warnings of the Word of God, blind to the revelation given of Christ in the Gospel, and deaf to the proclamation of salvation for the guilty, and thus he walks according to the foolish imaginations of his own heart, and in his own way vainly wanders. This a way in which you will not find the blessed man walking.

Those who walk in the counsel of the ungodly are impatient of true

religion and have no place for it. Because it condemns their own attitude to seriousness, and their own conscience supports that condemnation, they show their hostility to the religion that is based on the Bible, and hate those who profess that religion and whose walk is in accordance with that profession, so much so, that they would wish that all such were off the face of the earth. This hatred often finds expression in the practice of those who are animated by it, so that, in process of time, secret walking in the counsels of the ungodly manifests itself in efforts to overthrow true religion. It was in process of time that Cain put in practice his hatred of Abel, evidently imagining that he would make an end of the religion which Abel professed. This bring us to another stage with respect to walking in the counsel of the ungodly, that is, the stage of practising openly what is meditated in the heart.

The man who openly walks in the counsel of the ungodly is one who, very often, has come to have no regard for the public means of grace. It is very often the case that one meets with some who frequent the public means of grace on Sabbath and week-days yet one could not regard them as having their hearts right with God. They may profess great zeal and faithfulness and their walk and conversation is circumspect, except that now and again an unguarded expression may escape their lips betraying a lack of the tenderness of the Gospel. These unguarded expressions often are the precursors of more public disregard of the ordinances of God's house. The prayer meeting becomes neglected, then the service on Sabbath morning, and ultimately all the services of the sanctuary. Some such often embrace a church connection holding doctrines and practice the very opposite of what they formerly embraced, and profess to be quite happy there, usually putting the blame for their defection on one or other of the supporters of their former church connection. Such is not the blessed man.

(2) The blessed man is not found standing in the way of sinners. To say that one is standing in the way of sinners indicates that he is in no hurry to leave that way. Habitually, he is found there, having no desire to depart, and seeking more of the sordid entertainment of that way. "Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth down on the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again." Prov. 23:34,35. Friends and well-wishers are earnestly desiring the day when such will retrace their steps, and often praying for such a day, but often their desires and prayers are not answered, for very few who stand in that way return, as

is written of one aspect of the way of sinners, "For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead, None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life." Prov. 2:18,19. This standing in the way of sinners is injurious to the sinner even from a temporal point of view. "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." Prov. 23:21.

The one who stands in the way of sinners wastes precious time there, time which ought to be spent in seeking a saving interest in Christ, and which passes all too quickly. The time wasted here was given to the sinner in order to glorify God in this world by attaining to a knowledge of His salvation, and to become familiar, in some small measure, with what will be the experience of the Lord's people in heaven, that is, the enjoying of Him. As time is wasted in the way of sinners, so is one's substance. The parable of the prodigal son affords us an example of this waste in the way of sinners. While his substance remained he could get plenty who lived riotously with him, but when he began to be in want, and would fain fill his belly with the husks which the swine did eat, none gave him, He was a very good fellow while his money lasted, but the friendship of his boon companions in the way of sinners only lasted as long as his money lasted. Good it was for him that the thought was put into his heart, "I will arise and go to my father," and good it was for him that he had a father who was full of compassion. Any blessings which he experienced after that day were blessings that are not to be found by those who are standing in the way of sinners.

The unregenerate man's delight is to stand in the way of sinners. In this his corrupt nature is in its element. Though he may have an intellectual knowledge of God through reading the Bible and hearing the Gospel preached, yet he knows not the delights of true religion, and his delights can only be in the flesh. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools . . . Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour, their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." Rom. 1:21,22,24,25. The blessed man has a clean appetite and will not feed on the delights which come from the dance, the vain song, and the abuse of strong drink. Whatever may have been true of him in his unregenerate condition he can truly say now, "The time past of our life may suffice us



to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." I Peter 4:3. He can never delight in these things any more.

(3) The blessed man does not sit in the seat of the scornful. The seat of the scornful has been characterised by a writer among the Puritans as the last stair to hell. It is the last step in the way of sin that is mentioned in this psalm where the blessed man is not found. Those who go so far have cast off all fear of God to such an extent that they make a mock of seriousness. I heard a godly minister say that he had occasion at one time to write a very serious letter to a young man of his congregation in which he mentioned that Hell would be the portion of all who would continue in the way which he was pursuing. On his death-bed that young man confessed to the minister that he and his companions read that letter so often, and laughed so much over the word "Hell" that the letter at last got so soiled that the writing could not be made out. The minister in question had a hope that this young man had returned from the seat of the scornful, but there is no evidence that his companions returned. The counsel of the Holy Ghost is, "Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong."

To be in the seat of the scorner indicates that those who occupy it are at home there. Whatever they may be engaged in, or whatever company they may temporarily be found in, they invariably return to the seat of the scorner as to the place where they are most at home. As one finds all objects in his home familiar to him, including a restfulness which he finds nowhere else, so the occupier of the seat of the scornful feels himself at rest there. He has persuaded himself that there is nothing in religion, he has cast off all fear of God so that His fear is not before his eyes, and, as occupying the seat of the scornful, he presides over those about him who are of the same mind as himself, and is the ringleader in every form of rebellion against God, thinking not of the end of his life, recklessly thinking not of the day of solemn account. The blessed man is not found there and is occupied in a totally different way.

II. The second thing which was purposed to be noticed is, What the blessed man does.

(1) His delight is in the *law of the Lord*. By the "Law of the Lord" in this place, we are to understand the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. It is by these Scriptures that the Lord condescended to speak to the successive generations of His Church through various means. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time

past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb.1:1,2. It is to these Scriptures that the Lord Jesus refers the Jews when He says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." John 5:39. These Scriptures, again, hold up the hope of God's people when they are ready to give up. "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should have perished in mine affliction." Psalm 119:92; and the desire of their soul is to hear the Lord speaking to them through His own Word, and to accompany it with power as they experienced it on former occasions. "Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." Psalm 119:49. In short, these scriptures "teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man."

The blessed man takes the Scriptures as his rule of life, which includes the Moral Law of God. Many proclaim that we have nothing to do with the Law. That is true as far as the Law as a Covenant is concerned, for the child of God is not under the Law but under Grace, but let us never forget that though we are not under the Law as a Covenant as that Law is summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments, yet we are under that same Law as a rule of life, for the Apostle, immediately after stating that we are not under the law but under grace, adds, "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Rom. 6:15. Similarly, the whole Word of God is a rule of life to the Christian. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." When the Christian is rightly exercised it should be, "What saith the Lord?" and the mind of the Lord cannot be obtained except in His own Word. The source of this Word is God Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ. In His intercessory prayer Christ says, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the World." He gave part of that Word directly in His intercourse with men, and His servants were inspired by the Holy Spirit to give that correctly in the written Word, and the rest of it He gave by the same inspiration through His servants, and no part of it is of man, for "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." I. Peter 1:20,21. This is a matter for which the Lord's people would seek to be truly thankful, for however comforting human compositions in the form of sermons and such matters may be, they

cannot bring the same relief to a distressed soul as the very word of God will do. Because nothing can be compared to the Scriptures the Psalmist was constrained to say, "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." Psalm 119:72. Here he spake the mind of the Spirit.

(2) His delight is in the law of the Lord. By that law his understanding is enlightened. In spiritual matters the man in a state of nature is darkness itself, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," but when the Holy Spirit enlightens the understanding, the sinner, not only sees his natural condition, but he begins to understand something of the remedy provided, and to see its suitableness to meet with the condition of the sinner. The more the sinner sees of this the more he is attracted to it, so that he is now convinced that, whatever his attainments were before, here is something that has escaped his notice, but it is not as it was with the Athenians, who were attracted to everything new because of the novelty of it, but because a new light had come into his soul, as we have it elsewhere, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." Ephes. 5:8.

Through this Word, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, the will yields to a supernatural power, for "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning." They are made willing to be saved by Christ, willing to follow Him through good report and through evil report, and willing to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. They are bound to Christ in the bonds of a union that can never be dissolved, and have become partakers of the nature of holiness, and, being thus changed, it is natural for the new principle to delight in that holiness that is found in God's Word. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste. Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

This delight manifests itself in the desire of the regenerated soul after Christ as He is revealed in the written Word. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" This desire manifests itself in a very pronounced way when the soul is conscious of the Lord being absent. "By night upon my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him but I found him not . . ." Song 3: 1-5. Love to an absent Lord will cause a gracious soul to seek Christ in the Word. I have heard of a young couple who came from

the North of Scotland to get married by that eminent servant of Christ, the Rev. John Kennedy of Redcastle. His address to them at the marriage was blessed to them both, and when they returned to their newly set up home it is said that, after their day's work was over, the young husband would sit on one side of the fire and the wife of the other side, each with a Bible which they would be searching until the coldest stone in the floor would be the one on which the fire had been. Such was the intensity of their desire after Christ that, in their search for Him in His Word, they became quite oblivious to the passing of time.

(3) The blessed man meditates in the law of the Lord day and night. This indicates a continuous work at his daily calling when he is engaged in the world and in the night season when others are asleep. It may indicate also the days and the nights which a gracious soul has spiritually, when the Lord lifts upon him the light of His gracious countenance and when He is pleased to hide his face. At all times this meditation indicates a desire to understand God's Word. The worldling will read God's Word much like a task and, from his point of view, the sooner it is over the better, but not so the blessed man. He desires, as it were, to break the shell and get at the kernel. In this endeavour he compares Scripture with Scripture, fully realising that the Bible is its own interpreter, and thus he is in a surer way to get the mind of the Holy Spirit. When he thus gets the mind of the Spirit there is opened up for him a rich field in which he may glean, and get sustenance, guidance, and comfort for his soul. True it is that in this connection he has many a hard-fought conflict, but it is the good fight of faith, and faith enables him to see what no natural light will enable him to see. Thus in meditating in the law of the Lord he has seasons of joy and sorrow, of light and darkness, of feasting and fasting, but he is a blessed man for all these come from the bountiful hand of his Heavenly Father, and when grace in living exercise accompanies his meditations, he takes all these in a spirit of holy submission to the will of Him who can never do evil, and who always does good. We may later notice some of the blessings of the blessed man as these are brought before us in this psalm.

God may for a time desert His children, but He will not disinherit them.

Thos. Watson

The least grace is a better security for heaven than the greatest gifts or privileges whatsoever.

John Owen

Do You confess?

by Bishop J.C. Ryle

(Continued from page 351)

Reader, if you love your soul, beware of giving to ministers the honour that belongs to Christ alone. He is the true High Priest of the Christian's profession. He ever lives to receive confessions, and to absolve sinners. Why should we turn away from Him to man? Above all, beware of the whole system of the Romish confessional. Of all practices that were ever devised by man, in the name of religion, I firmly believe that none was ever devised so mischievous and objectionable as the confessional. It overthrows Christ's office, and places man in the seat which should only be occupied by the Son of God. It puts two sinners in a thoroughly wrong position. It exalts the confessor far too high. It places those who confess far too low. It gives the confessor a place which is not safe for any child of Adam to occupy. It imposes on those who confess a bondage to which it is not safe for any child of Adam to submit. It sinks one poor sinner into the degrading attitude of a serf. It raises another poor sinner into a dangerous mastery over his brother's soul. It makes the confessor little less than a God. It makes those who confess little better than slaves. If you love Christian liberty, if you value inward peace, remember the advice I give you this day. Beware, beware of the slightest approach to the Romish confessional!

Listen not to those who tell you that Christian ministers were intended to receive confessions, and that evangelical teaching makes light of the ministerial office, and strips it of all authority and power. Such assertions are more easily made than proved. We honour the minister's office highly, but we refuse to give it a hair's breadth more dignity than we find given in the Word of God. We honour ministers as Christ's ambassadors, Christ's messengers, Christ's watchmen, helpers of believers' joy, preachers of the Word, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But we decline to regard them as priests, mediators, confessors, and rulers over men's faith, both for the sake of their souls and of our own.

Listen not to those who tell you that evangelical teaching is opposed to the exercise of soul-discipline or heart-examination, or self-humiliation, or mortification of the flesh, or true contrition. Opposed to it! There never was a more baseless assertion. We are entirely favourable to it. This only we require, that it shall be carried on in the right way.

We approve of a confessional; but it must be the only true one, — the throne of grace. We approve of going to a confessor; but it must be the true one, — Christ the Lord. We approve of submitting consciences to a priest; but it must be to the great High Priest, — Jesus the Son of God. We approve of unbosoming our secret sins, and seeking absolution; but it must be at the feet of the great Head of the Church, and not at the feet of one of His weak members. We approve of kneeling to receive ghostly counsel; but it must be at the feet of Christ, and not at the feet of man.

Reader, beware of ever losing sight of Christ's priestly office. Glory in His atoning death. Honour Him as your substitute and surety on the cross. Follow Him as your Shepherd. Hear His voice as your Prophet. Obey Him as your King. But in all your thoughts about Christ, let it be often before your mind that He alone is your High Priest, and that He has deputed His priestly office to no order of men in the world. This is the office of Christ, which Satan labours above all to obscure. It is the neglect of this office which leads to every kind of error. It is the remembrance of this office which is the best safeguard against the plausible teaching of the Church of Rome. Once right about this office you will never greatly err in the matter of the confession of sin. You will know to whom confession ought to be made; and to know that rightly is no slight thing.

And now, reader, I shall conclude this subject with three words of practical application. You have seen who ought to confess sin. You have seen to whom confession ought to be made. Give me your attention a little longer while I try to bring the matter nearer to your heart and conscience. Our years are rolling fast away. Time flies very quickly. Writing and preaching — reading and working — doubting and speculating — discussion and controversy — all, all will soon be past and gone for ever. Yet a little while and there will remain nothing but certainties, realities, and eternity. Give me, I say again, your attention while I plead with you once more about your soul. I mean nothing but your good — God is witness. Then take what I say in good part.

1. My first word of application shall be a question. That question is neither more nor less than the heading of the subject you are reading. I ask you, Do you Confess?

You know my meaning in asking this question. I trust the pages you have already read make that sufficiently plain. I do not ask you now what your opinion is about matters controverted in the present day. I ask you a plain practical question — Do you know anything of the daily habit of confessing sin to God?

You will not pretend to say you have no sins at all. Few, probably, are so blind and ignorant in the present day as to say that. But what do you do with your sins? What measures do you take about your sins? Do you use any steps to get rid of your sins? Do you ever speak to any one about your sins? Answer these questions, I do beseech you, to your own conscience. Whether you are rich or poor, old or young, churchman or dissenter, matters little. But it does matter a great deal whether you can reply to the inquiry of this subject — Do you confess your sins?

Reader, if you know nothing of the habit of confessing sin, I have only one remark to make — Your soul is in imminent danger! There is but a step between you and hell. If you die as you are, you will be lost for ever. The kingdom of God contains no silent subjects. The citizens of the heavenly city are a people who have all known, and felt, and confessed their sins.

I give you one simple warning. You will have to confess your sins one day, whether you will or no. When the great white throne is set, and the books are opened, your sins will at last be exposed before the whole world. The secrets of all hearts will be revealed. You will have to acknowledge your transgressions before the eyes of an assembled world, and an innumerable company of angels. Your confession at last will be most public; and, worst of all, your confession will be too late!

Where is the man who would not shrink from the idea of such an exposure? Where is the woman whose spirit would not fail at the very possibility of such a confession as this? Reader, this public confession will be the portion of millions. Take heed lest it be yours. Oh! think, think, think upon the question before you. Do you Confess!

2. My second word of application shall be an invitation. I address it to all who have neglected confession of sin in time past, and are ashamed of their neglect. I invite you in my Master's name to begin the habit of confessing without delay.

Go this very day to the throne of grace, and speak to the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, about your soul. Pour out your heart before Him. Keep nothing back from Him. Acknowledge your iniquities to Him, and entreat Him to cleanse them away. Say to Him, in David's words, "For Thy name's sake pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." "Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." Cry to Him as the publican did in the parable, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Psalm xxv. 11; li. 9; Luke xviii. 13).

Reader, are you afraid to do this? Do you feel unworthy and unfit to begin? I do entreat you to resist such feelings, and to begin without

delay. There are glorious Bible examples to encourage you. There are rich Bible promises to lure you on. In all the volume of Scripture there are no passages so encouraging as those which are about confession of sin. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). "If any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light" (Job xxxiii. 27). "Father," said the prodigal son, "I have sinned against Heaven and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry" (Luke xv. 21-23). Arise, dear reader, and call upon God. If Christ had never died for sinners, there might be some excuse for doubting. But Christ having suffered for sin, there is nothing that need keep you back. Only acknowledge your iniquity, and cast yourself wholly on God's mercy in Christ, and life, eternal life, shall be your own. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah i. 18). But O reader, begin, begin to confess without delay. This very day begin to confess your sin.

3. My last word of application shall be an exhortation. I address it to all who have been taught by the Holy Ghost to confess their sins, and know the subject of this tract by inward experience. I exhort them to keep up the habit of confession to the last day of their lives.

My believing brethren, we shall never cease to be sinners as long as we are in the body. Every day we shall find something to deplore in our thoughts, or motives, or words, or deeds. Every day we shall find that we need the blood of sprinkling, and the intercession of Christ. Then let us keep up daily transactions with the throne of grace. Let us daily confess our infirmities at the feet of our merciful and faithful High Priest, and seek fresh absolution. Let us daily cast ourselves under the shadow of His wings, and cry, "Surely in me dwelleth no good thing: Thou art my hiding-place, O Lamb of God!"

May every year find us more humble and yet more hopeful — more sensible of our own unworthiness, and yet more ready to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh! May our prayers become every year more fervent, and our confessions of sin more real; — our eye more single, and our walk with God more close; — our knowledge of Jesus more clear, and our love to Jesus more deep; — our

citizenship in heaven more manifest, and our separation from the world more distinct!

So living, we shall cross the waves of this trouble-some world with comfort, and have an abundant entrance into God's kingdom. So living, we shall find that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Yet a few more years and our prayers and confessions shall cease for ever. We shall begin an endless life of praise. We shall exchange our daily confessions for eternal thanksgiving.

Notes

by Rev. John Flavel

The Robin, The Worm and The Mole

Observing the mole working industriously beneath, and the bird watching so intently above, I stood to observe the issue, when in a little time the bird descends, and seizes upon a worm, which I perceived was crawling apace, from the enemy below, that hunted it. Methought that this poor worm seemed to be the emblem of my poor soul, which is more endangered by its own lusts of pride and covetousness, than this worm was by the mole and the bird: my pride like the bird watches for it above, my covetousness like the subterranean mole, digging for it beneath. Poor soul! What a sad dilemma art thou brought to! If thou go down into the caverns of the earth, there thou art a prey to thy covetousness that hunts thee; and if thou aspire or but creep upward, there thy pride waits to ensnare thee. Distressed soul! whither wilt thou go? Ascend thou mayest not by vain elation, but by heavenly conversation, beside which there is no way for thy preservation — "the way of life is above to the wise."

Again I could not but observe the accidental benefit this poor harmless bird obtained by the labour of the mole, which hunting intentionally for itself unburrowed and ferreted out this worm for the bird, which possibly was hungry enough, and could not have been relieved for this time, but by the mole's labour. Even thus the Lord often makes good his word to his people "The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just." And again "The earth shall help the woman." This was fully exemplified in David, to whom Nabal, that churlish muck-worm speaks all in possessives. "Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men,

whom I know not whence they be?" And yet David reaps the fruits of all the pains and toils of Nabal at last. Let it never encourage me to idleness, that God sometimes gives his people the fruit of others sweat, but if providence reduce me to necessity, and disable me from helping myself, I doubt not then, but it will provide instruments to do it. The bird was hungry and could not dig.

Catching a Horse in Fat Pasture

When this horse was kept in poor pasture, where he had much scope, but little grass, how gentle and tractable was he then! He would not only stand quiet to be taken, but come to hand of his own accord, and follow me up and down the field for a crust of bread, or a handful of oats. But since I turned him into this fat pasture, he comes no more to me, nor will he suffer me to come near him, but throws up his heels wantonly against me, and flies from me, as if I were rather his enemy than a benefactor. In this I behold the carriage of my own heart towards God, who the more He hath done for me, the more seldom doth He hear from me. In a low and afflicted state, how tractable is my heart to duty! Then it comes to the foot of God voluntarily. But in an exalted condition how wildly doth my heart run from God and duty! With this ungrateful requital God faulted his own people, Jer. 2,31 teachable and tractable in the wilderness, but when fatted in the rich pasture of Canaan "We are lords, we will come no more unto Thee." How soon are all God's former benefits forgotten. But that is a bad tenant, that will maintain a suit at law against his landlord with his own rent — and a bad heart that will fight against God with His own mercies. I wish it were with my heart, as it is reported to be with the waters in the Congo — that they are never so sweet to the taste, as when the tide is at the highest.

A Fair Spreading Oak

What a lofty flourishing tree! It seems rather to be a little wood than a single tree, every limb thereof having the dimensions and branches of a tree; and yet great as it is, it was once but a little slip, which one might pull up with two fingers. This vast body was contained virtually and potentially in a small acorn. Well then, I shall never despise the day of small things, nor despair of arriving to an eminency of grace, though at present it is but as a bruised reed, and the things that are in me ready to die. As in nature so the things of the Spirit, grow up to their fullness and perfection by slow and insensible degrees. The famous and heroic acts

of the most renowned believers, were such as themselves could not once perform, or perhaps think they never should. Great things in both nature and grace come from small and contemptible beginnings.

Poem

"I am Christ's and Christ is mine"

Communion seasons coming by
And souls to heaven are drawing nigh
Oh, do I truly show a sign
That I am Christ's and Christ is mine?

A still small voice the silence broke
The voice of my Belovéd spoke
Why should I doubt that call of Thine —
That I am Christ's and Christ in mine.

Oh, hear what my Belovéd said —
I'm one of those who whom He bled!
He has redeemed this soul of mine!
Oh, I am Christ's and Christ is mine.

The tears of joy from me did roll
As that voice whispered through my soul
My soul's joy — oh, I can't define
In — "I am Christ's and Christ is mine."

O pause, my soul, consider Thou
What Christ has done, so pay thy vow
And let my light before men shine,
For I am Christ's and Christ is mine.

O let me hear that voice again
Which drowned the tempter's jangling vain,
That glorious sound, that voice divine,
Saying, "I am Christ's and Christ is mine."

I'll try to keep that truth in mind
And casting not a glance behind
Will then at Jordan's river line
Sing "I am Christ's and Christ is mine!"

O happy soul, death cannot shroud
That glorious day when through the cloud
Christ takes thee to His Home divine
Saying "Thou art mine and I am thine."

Elspeth MacKenzie
November 1952

Death of John Janeway

by Rev. J. Venn

(Continued from page 356)

'I shall, before a few hours are over, be in eternity singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount Zion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant: I shall hear the voice of much people, and be one amongst them which shall say, Hallelujah! salvation, glory, honour, and power unto the Lord our God; and again we shall say, Hallelujah! And yet a very little while, and I shall sing unto the Lamb a song of praise, saying, Worthy art Thou to receive praise Who wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign with Thee for ever and ever.

'Methinks I stand, as it were, with one foot in heaven and the other upon earth; methinks I hear the melody of heaven, and by faith I see the angels waiting to carry my soul to the bosom of Jesus, and I shall be for ever with the Lord in glory. And who can choose but rejoice in all this?'

At several times he spake in this language, and repeated many of these words often, over and over again, with far greater affection than can be well worded. And I solemnly profess that what is here written is no hyperbole, and that the twentieth part of what was observable in him is not recorded; and though we cannot word it exactly as he did, yet you have the substance, and many things in his own words with little or no variation.

The day before his death, he looked somewhat earnestly upon his brother James, who stood by him very sad; of whom he judged that he was putting up some ejaculations to God upon his account. 'I thank thee, dear brother, for thy love,' said he; 'thou art now praying for me, and I know thou lovest me dearly: but Christ loveth me ten thousand

times more than thou dost. Come and kiss me, dear brother, before I die.' And so with his cold, dying lips he kissed him, and said, 'I shall go before, and I hope thou shalt follow after to glory.'

Though he was almost always praising God, and exhorting them that were about him to mind their everlasting concerns, and secure an interest in Christ; and though he slept but very little for some nights; yet his intellects were not the least affected thereby, but as his bodily strength declined, his mind became, if possible, more collected than ever, and his discourse, especially to a spiritual understanding, highly rational, solid, and divine. And so he continued to the last minute of his breath.

A few hours before his death he called all his relations and brethren together, that he might give them one solemn warning more; and bless them, and pray for them, as his breath and strength would give him leave, which he did with abundance of affection and spirituality, as follows:

He first thanked his dear mother for her tender love to him, and desired that she might be in travail to see Christ formed in the souls of the rest of her children, and see of the travail of her soul, and meet them with joy in that great day.

He then charged all his brethren and sisters in general, as they would answer it before God, that they should carry it dutifully to their dear mother. As for his eldest brother, William, at whose house he lay sick, his prayer was that he might be swallowed up of Christ, and love to souls, and be more and more exemplary in his life, and successful in his ministry, and finish his course with joy.

His next brother's name was Andrew, a citizen of London, who had been with him and saw him in this triumphing state, but could not then be present, his necessary business calling him away; yet he was not forgot, but was thus blessed: 'The God of heaven remember my poor brother at London! The Lord make him truly rich in giving him the pearl of great price, and make him a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God; the Lord deliver him from the sins of that city; may the world be kept out of his heart, and Christ dwell there! O that he may be as his name is, a strong man, and that I may meet him with joy!'

Then he called his next brother, whose name was James, whom he hoped God had made him a spiritual Father to, to whom he thus addressed himself: 'Brother James, I hope the Lord hath given thee a goodly heritage; the lines are fallen to thee in pleasant places; the Lord is thy portion. I hope the Lord hath showed thee the worth of Christ:

hold on, dear brother; Christ, heaven, and glory are worth striving for. The Lord give thee more abundance of His grace.'

Then his next brother, Abraham, was called, to whom he spake to this purpose: 'The blessing of the God of Abraham rest upon thee; the Lord make thee a father of many spiritual children.'

His fifth brother was Joseph, whom he blessed in this manner: 'Let Him bless thee, O Joseph, that blessed him that was separated from his brethren! O that His everlasting arms may take hold on thee! It is enough, if yet thou mayest live in His sight. My heart hath been working towards thee, poor Joseph; and I am not without hopes that the arms of the Almighty will embrace thee. The God of thy father bless thee with the blessings of heaven above.'

The next was his sister Mary, to whom he spoke thus: 'Poor sister Mary, thy body is weak and thy days will be filled with bitterness; thy name is Marah. The Lord sweeten all with His grace and peace, and give thee health in thy soul. Be patient, make sure of Christ, and all is well.'

Then his other sister, whose name was Sarah, was called: whom he thus blessed, 'Sister Sarah, thy body is strong and healthful; O that thy soul may be so too! The Lord make thee first a wise virgin, and then a mother in Israel; a pattern of modesty, humility, and holiness.'

Then another brother, Jacob, was called, whom he blessed after this manner: 'The Lord make thee an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile! O that thou mayest learn to wrestle with God, and like a prince mayst prevail, and not go without the blessing!'

Then he prayed for his youngest brother, Benjamin, who was then but an infant: 'Poor little Benjamin! O that the Father of the fatherless would take care of thee, poor child, that thou, which never sawest thy father upon earth, mayst see him with joy in heaven; the Lord be thy Father and portion; mayst thou prove the son of thy mother's right hand, and the joy of her age!

'O that none of us all may be found amongst the unconverted in the day of judgment! O that every one of us may appear, with our honoured father and dear mother, before Christ with joy; that they may say, Lord, here are we and the children which thou has graciously given us. O that we may live to God here, and live with Him hereafter!

'And now, my dear mother, brethren, and sisters, farewell; I leave you for a while, and I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

'And now, dear Lord, my work is done. I have finished my course, I

have fought the good fight; and henceforth there remaineth for me a crown of righteousness! Now come, dear Lord Jesus! come quickly.'

Then that godly minister came to give him his last visit, and to do the office of an inferior angel, to help to convey this blessed soul to glory, who was now even upon Mount Pisgah, and had a full sight of the goodly land at a little distance. When this minister spake to him, his heart was so inflamed with love and delight as to draw from him tears of joy, amazed to hear a man at the point of death talk as if he had been with Jesus, and came from the immediate presence of God. O the smiles that were then in his face, and the unspeakable joy that was in his heart! one might have read grace and glory in his countenance. O the praise, the triumphant praises, that he put up! And everyone must speak praise about him, or else they did make some jar in his harmony.

And indeed most did, as well as they could, help him to praise. So that I never heard, nor knew more praises given to God in one room, than in his chamber.

A little before he died, in his prayer, or rather praises, he was so wrapped up with admiration and joy, that he could scarce forbear shouting for joy. In the conclusion of the duty, with abundance of faith and fervency, he said aloud, 'Amen, Amen!'

And now his desires were soon to be satisfied. Death approached to do his office; his jaws were more and more loosened, and quivered greatly; his hands and feet became cold as clay, and a cold sweat was upon him; but, O how glad was he when he felt his spirit departing! Never was death more welcome to any mortal, I think. Though the pangs of death were strong, yet the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory made him endure them with much patience and courage. In the extremity of his pains, he desired his eldest brother to lay him a little lower, and to take away one pillow from him, that he might die with the more ease. His brother replied, that he durst not for a world do anything that might hasten his death a moment. Then he was well satisfied, and sweetly resigned himself up wholly to God's disposal; and after a few minutes, with a sudden motion gathering up all his strength, he turned a little on one side, and in the twinkling of an eye fell asleep in Jesus.

And now, blessed soul, thy longings are satisfied, and thou seest and feelest a thousand times more than thou didst upon earth, and yet thou canst bear it with delight; thou art now welcomed to thy Father's house by Christ, the beloved of thy soul; now thou hast heard Him say, 'Come, thou blessed of my Father!' and, 'Well done, good and faithful servant;

enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' and wear that crown which was 'prepared for thee before the foundation of the world.'

O that all the relations which thou hast left behind thee may live thy life, and die thy death, and live with Christ, and thee, for ever and ever! Amen, Amen.

He died June, 1657, in his twenty-fourth year; and was buried in Kelshall church, in Hertfordshire.

Encouraging Testimonies

Scientists at the Technion, Israel's Institute of Technology, Haifa, fed over 20,000 words (Hebrew of course) of Genesis into a computer, which conducted a painstaking and complete analysis of the book's linguistic make-up. After appraising the computer data, the scientists concluded that Genesis was written by one hand. These findings support the view held for centuries that the five books of Moses which include Genesis had one Author.

These scientists reject the modernistic "documentary hypothesis" — the fragmentation of Genesis into J, E and P and stand firm in their contention, backed by 54 indicators obtained through a combination of statistics, linguistics computer science and biblical scholarship. "A computer does not take sides" they maintain.

Modernistic theologians maintained that there were two Isaiahs. The recent discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls has proved their contention to be a lie from the pit. Among the scrolls was found the complete book of Isaiah that had been untouched by human hands for over two thousand years. The text is remarkably clear and has been hailed as one of the greatest archaeological discoveries of the century, and now has pride of place in the Shrine of the Book in Jerusalem.

Scholars not only in Israel but from Europe and America now believe that the sixty-six chapters were the work of one Isaiah as claimed by the Gospels in the New Testament.

(The above information is taken from "The Vineyard", an Australian monthly publication.)

In his booklet, "How God Created Man" by the late Dr J E Shelley M.B.S., an Ophthalmic Surgeon in Brisbane says:— "Believers in the verbal inspiration of the Bible rightly claim that the statements made in the early part of Genesis about the creation of man are historical and factual. The direct special creation of man from the dust on the sixth day is as much a declaration of fact as thousands of other historical

statements scattered throughout the Word of God. As believers we accept the Bible account of creation. We agree that the statements in the first two chapters of Genesis do not give us an explanation of God's creative act. A finite intelligence such as that with which man is gifted cannot understand an infinite wisdom. The Genesis narrative gives us a *revelation* concerning God's act, with as much detail concerning it as is necessary for us to grasp the revelation."

The late Sir Cecil Wakeley, BT FRCS DSc, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, London author of "A Surgeon Looks at Evolution" accepted the Bible as inspired, infallible and inerrant and would only support The Trinitarian Bible Society which only circulates the Authorised Version and in all its translations throughout the world. Modern versions of the Bible are based on corrupt manuscripts.

The Rev. Francis Nigel Lee, Doctor of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa was born in England in 1934. At an early age he was converted to atheism but as he states in his monumental thesis in defence of the Sabbath; "In the extreme mercies of Almighty God, at the age of twenty-one my soul was turned from my sinful ways to serve the living God according to his infallible word — to serve Him in every sphere, including the sphere of Sabbath Observance."

As to inspiration of the scriptures he states, "I consider academic neutrality to be impossible, and affirm my childlike faith in the plenary verbal inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures as the very Word of God, their exclusive role as the supreme arbiter in all matters of faith and conduct, and their substantially correct reflection in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Decrees of Dordt, the Thirty Nine Articles and the Westminster Confession of Faith.

"As a Calvinist, my foremost thanks and extreme gratitude must be given to the faithful God of the Covenant and Lord of the Sabbath for His great grace in enabling me to undertake and complete this thesis. To God above be all the glory! "Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev: 5:13)

"The English Bible translation employed in the thesis is the Authorised Version, to which I have consistently adhered."

"The more I have studied the subject" wrote the late Canon Hoare, "the more firmly I am brought to the deliberate and fixed conviction that the whole Bible including words as well as thoughts is to be received as the Word of God."

The late Professor Dick Wilson was a scholar of massive learning. He

says: "For forty five years continuously since I left college I have devoted myself to the one great study of the Old Testament in all its languages, in all its archaeology, in all its translation and as far as possible, everything bearing upon its text and history. He was acquainted with about forty five languages and dialects. He probably knew more about the Old Testament and everything connected with it than did all the destructive critics put together. Professor Wilson having long and thoroughly examined the evidence on which the destructive critics base their conclusions found that it was utterly worthless concerning the evidence for the orthodox position. He writes: "The evidence in our possession has convinced me that at sundry times and in divers manners God spoke unto our fathers through the Prophets," and that the Old Testament in Hebrew "being immediately inspired by God" had "by His singular care and providence been kept pure in all ages."

May we be found giving ear to what the Lord Jesus Christ the alone and glorious Head of the church says, "Cease my son to hear the instruction that causeth thee to err from the words of knowledge" Proverbs 20 v.27.

W.M.

Book Reviews

Fair Sunshine by Jock Purves. Banner of Truth Paperback. 206pp. Price £2.45.

This excellent paperback consists of character studies of thirteen of the Scottish Covenanters. The period of Scottish Church history with which it deals is one that should be familiar to young and old alike. If we are to value and hold fast to the privileges which we enjoy then we must know at what cost these were handed down to us. The sufferings and contendings of the Covenanters are well fitted to promote a proper appreciation of Gospel blessings in a day when these appear ready to be snatched from our hands.

The writer of *Fair Sunshine* is evidently in total sympathy with the Covenanters in their contendings and outlook. We would wish this reprint a wide circulation and would desire especially that it could be put in the hand of every young person in Scotland so that they might learn what their forefathers suffered in order to secure the preservation of the Gospel in our beloved land.

D.B.M.

The Children in '59 by Rev. Henry Montgomery. Price 50p post paid. From Mourne Missionary Trust, 4 Church Rd, Carginagh, Kilkeel, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

This booklet gives brief accounts of spiritual blessing received by children during the Ulster Revival in 1859. Remarkable instances are mentioned of young people being visited with divine awakening and converting grace. A deep sense of sin was experienced even by those whose lives until then had been exemplary. What need there is in our day that the Spirit would be poured out from on High! Some lessons are drawn from these events and the booklet closes with Rev. Robt. Murray McCheyne's well known sermon — "Reasons why the Young should flee to Christ now" — given in abridged form.

D.B.M.

Notes and comments

Modern Translations of the Bible

It is interesting to note that the Moderator of the Church of Scotland acknowledges that there is a deeply felt need for the Authorised Version of the Bible and that modern versions are failing to stand the tests of regular public reading or of private devotion. Samuel Bagster have just published a revised Authorised Version. The Moderator commends this new revised version as does also Professor T.F. Torrence. While we await an assessment of the new version from a more reliable source, it is a matter of thankfulness that the new versions, so widely popularised in recent times, are failing to stand up to the test of time.

The Northern Ireland Situation

The holding of elections in Northern Ireland seemed to spark off further terrible atrocities. The murderous attacks by the I.R.A. on civilians and the forces of law and order has continued and at times provokes retaliatory attacks by the Protestant para-military forces. While the Protestant forces are warranted to use every means for their defence, they gain little when some few of their number try to emulate the I.R.A. in their murderous work. The election of five Sinn Fein members to the new Assembly shows how strongly entrenched is support for the I.R.A. in the Roman Catholic community. Politicians press on with scheme after scheme hoping to obtain a lasting political solution, oblivious of the fact that what Northern Ireland needs — and even more so Southern Ireland

— is a genuine Spirit-sent religious awakening and revival. It is the conversion of multitudes of souls to true Christianity north and south of the border that will lead not only to a united Northern Ireland but to a united Northern and Southern Ireland living in true harmony and peace. Where will Romanism be then? It will lie buried in the depths of the Atlantic Ocean. May that time be hastened and that troubled land experience the peace so long wrested from her through the intrigue and subtlety of the Church of Rome.

Sodomy Bill

What a reflection is cast upon the British House of Commons in view of the fact that when police officers were dying and civilians were being mutilated and murdered in Northern Ireland, our Parliament was engaged in giving approval to the Homosexual Offence (Northern Ireland) Order, the main purpose of which was to 'legalise' homosexual acts in private between two consenting adults over 21 years old. This was passed in the Commons by 168 to 21.

We have placed the word "legalise" in inverted commas because no Government has power conferred on it to legalise what God has forbidden. The attempt to legalise such conduct is a gross affront to the God of heaven who, by his destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven, showed His signal displeasure against this abominable sin. What moral bankruptcy appeared in the Government in being so engaged at such a time. What could be more fitted to continue the troubles of Northern Ireland than this blatant condoning of unnatural vice?

Crime Figures Reach Record Levels

The crime figures for England and Wales during 1981 show an increase of 10 per cent over the previous year. Firearms were used in 8000 crimes, 1,900 of these being robberies. Burglary, theft and handling stolen goods accounted for 80 per cent of the crimes. These figures are alarming and reflect the continuing moral decline in the nation. Young, old or middle aged can no longer walk the streets of our towns and cities secure from being molested. The police continue their unenviable task of seeking to protect innocent citizens in this violent age. The Government, on their part, through their failure to pass sufficiently stringent laws, do not give the police the support they deserve. Consequently we can only expect an increasingly more violent society until the requirements of the Word of God are honoured.

Christmas Madness

During December the Popish and pagan festival of Christmas gets much publicity. Persons who, during the rest of the year, show no interest in the person and work of God's Beloved Son, suddenly become very interested in His incarnation, or rather in the antics that are supposed to commemorate that event. What can the incarnation of Christ mean to those who have no interest in His sufferings and death on Calvary? What folly to think that God can be glorified in the vain worship that is offered at such a time. How much better if men began to commemorate the rising again from the dead of the Son of Man by honouring the Sabbath day — the day He has appointed to commemorate that event. May poor sinners eyes be opened to see that the idolatrous worship so frequently practised at Christmas is abomination in the eyes of an infinitely holy God. May our own land be delivered in God's mercy from this senseless and unacceptable service and ritual and be brought to serve the Lord in a way that would be to His glory.

Church Notes

List of Communions

The list of Communions on the inside front cover of the Magazine has been corrected for 1983. Would ministers kindly intimate any further corrections which are required.

Price of Magazine

The price of the Free Presbyterian Magazine will be reduced from 45p per copy to 40p per copy as from January 1983.

Church Deputy

By the time this issue is in the hands of readers it is expected that Rev. A.F. Mackay, Inverness will have completed his three months as Church Deputy to Australia and New Zealand and have returned to this country again. Mr Mackay is due the thanks of the Church for undertaking these labours and we pray that the Word preached in those countries may be blessed to many.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 7th December at 2 p.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 25th January 1983 at 2 p.m.

Australia and New Zealand: At Auckland on 28th January 1983 at 2.30 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 15th February 1983 at 11 a.m.

Resignation of Rev. D.A. MacLean, M.A., Halkirk

After receipt by the Clerk pro. tem. of the Northern Presbytery of a letter of resignation from Rev. D.A. MacLean, Halkirk, a pro-re-nata Meeting of the Northern Presbytery was called on the motion of the Moderator of Presbytery, Rev. R.R. Sinclair, Wick, to meet at Dingwall on 19th October 1982. When the Presbytery met the Moderator's action in calling the meeting was approved.

The Presbytery went on to consider Rev. D.A. MacLean's letter of resignation from the pastoral charge of the Halkirk, Helmsdale and Thurso Joint Congregation and from the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. As Mr MacLean had indicated that he would not be present, the Presbytery proceeded to deal with it in his absence. The main reasons given for his resignation were the failure of his nomination as Moderator of Synod in May 1982 to secure the approval of Synod with which decision he was deeply hurt and the failure of his Presbytery to express sympathy with him in this matter. After discussion and the rejection of counter proposals the following became the finding of the Presbytery:—

That the Presbytery accept with sorrow the resignation of Rev. D.A. MacLean from the pastoral charge of the Halkirk, Helmsdale and Thurso Free Presbyterian Joint Congregation and from the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland as from 31st October 1982.

Thereafter Rev. F. Tallach was appointed as Interim-Moderator of the Congregation and to declare the charge vacant, which was done on 7th November 1982.

Robert R. Sinclair, Moderator
D.B. MacLeod, Clerk pro. tem.

Administrator/Treasurer for the Zimbabwe Mission

This post is due to become vacant at the beginning of 1983 and the Foreign Missions Committee would wish to hear from persons with experience in book-keeping. For particulars apply to the Clerk to the Committee, the Rev. A. Murray, Applecross (Tel: Applecross 207).

Meeting of Synod — July Issue p.196

“Rev. A. Murray said . . . A third member had said that she wished to abstain solely because she had never heard the proposed minister.”

This member was of the opinion that she had opposed the call although the Minutes of the Congregational Meeting agreed to in her presence show her as abstaining. Also, she had, in fact, heard the minister in question on one occasion at a prayer meeting.

Alex. Murray

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Sustentation Fund: Alex. Chaplin, £60.

Foreign Mission Fund: Anon., £15.

"As needed": Anon., Can \$100.00.

Underground Evangelism: Anon., £15.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon, £60, £60, £60, £20; Visiting Friend, £10; Friend, Larne, Mal 3 v 6, per Rev A.F.M., £15; Friend, London, (petrol), £5; Visitor, £1; Mrs A. Currier, £80.

The Zimbabwe Mission Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Ingwenya: Friend in Scotland, £500 for New Canaan Church and £500 for Mission work in Donsa; A. Corbett, Inverness, £100 for Mbuma Hospital "In loving memory of my late wife"; Vancouver Congregation, Can \$3332.00, per Rev. Dr J. Tallach.

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

Aberdeen: Anon (in Communion plate) £20, £40, £100; A Skye friend £10, £30; With best wishes, Stornoway £10; Anon, Inverness £500; Stornoway Friends £30, all for Car Fund; C.M. Lewis £20 for Congr. Funds, last four per Rev. J.T.

Barnoldswick: Anon, Inverness postmark £20 for Building Fund; £15 for Property Fund; McIver, Glasgow £25; E.K. £10 for Communion Expenses.

Dumbarton: Banacharaid a' Glaschu £15; Banacharaid eile £10, both for Manse Repairs.

Fort William: Envelope in plate £10 for Communion Expenses; £1 for Home Mission; Friend, Caol £10 for Sust Fund per Rev. J.A. MacDonald.

Gairloch: Miss M.T., Inverness £10 per Rev. A.E.W. MacDonald; Mrs K.B. Inverness £10, both for Strath Meeting House.

Lochcarron: Anon £10 for Communion Expenses (in plate); In memory of a loved one £8 for Sust. Fund; £4 for Ministers Car, £3 for Home Mission per Rev. J.W.R.

Perth: Mrs McD. at Laide Communion £20 for Perth "where needed" per Rev. D.J. MacDonald.

North Harris: A Friend, Meavag South £20 (£10 for Comm. Exps. & £10 for door coll.); A Friend £5 for Comm. Exps; Envelope in plate £5; A Friend, Paisley £5, both for Comm. Exps.; A friend, Harris House £3 for door coll. per R. MacCuish.

Staffin: From the late M.G. £16.23 per J.M.K.; J. MacD, Stencholl £10 for Sust. Fd (in plate); M.N. £5 for Sust Fd and £5 for Minister's personal car expenses per M.M.; Adherent (for new time switch for Church heating) £84 per D.MI; Mr & Mrs R. MacK £10 for Church Expenses per Rev. D.A. MacL.

Stornoway: Anon £30 "where most needed"; Anon £20 for petrol; C.M., Dunberisay £5 for Communion Expenses.

Strath: Mrs J. MacPh. £20 in memory of her beloved Mother for Comm. Exps. per Rev. H.I. MacKinnon; Envelope in plate £1 for Comm. exps.

Uig: Friend, Fort William £135 per M.M.; Friend of the Cause, Uig £100 per M.M.; M.M. Stornoway £25, £20; Uig Friend £50, all for Church Repair Fund; M.M. Stornoway £10; £10 for Church Door Coll.; M.M. Stornoway £5; M.M. Uig £5; K.M. Uig £10; L.M. Uig £5; B.B. Uig £10; Anon £10, all for Communion Expenses.

Vatten: Anon £25; Anon £5, both for Communion Expenses.