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The Vatican's View of Religious Freedom

Acting on the proposal of its Vatican delegate, the Organisation on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is to hold a two-week conference in Warsaw in October on the subject of religious freedom. The Vatican representative said that "what has been at issue is how laws and regulations are observed and how far religious freedom is permitted as a practical, collective expression." At the conference, European governments will discuss "constitutional, legal and administrative aspects of freedom of religion with the aim of harmonising them..."

We believe this means harmonising them with the Vatican's view of religious freedom. Rome is implementing her old policy of dealing with other religions, in certain circumstances, under the guise of toleration so that she may marginalise them and then prevent them, by promoting punitive legislation, from having any significant existence. Last year, Archbishop Paul Tabet, the Vatican's representative to the United Nations, said to the UN Human Rights Commission that religious freedom is a basic human right, but also that the abuse of religious freedom in ways that infringe upon the rights of others (and we believe this is how he would view Protestant missionary work for the converting of Roman Catholics) must be punished.

Rome has not ceased to follow the policy which was expressed in this manner to some Protestants by the Roman Catholic writer, Louis Veuillot: "When you are in the majority we ask for religious liberty in the name of your principles. When we are in a majority we refuse it to you in the name of ours." As Boettner says in his *Roman Catholicism*, "It is, after all, standard Roman procedure to speak up for religious toleration when they are in the minority, and to deny it when they are in the majority."

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Pope recently called on faithful Roman Catholics to work against the expansion of "religious sects", (meaning Protestants mainly). Also, we need not wonder that the Pope, when in Guatemala last year, denounced the challenge to Rome's dominance in

Central America by the growth of other religions. (About 30 per cent of Guatemala's 10.7 million people now identify themselves as Protestants). Nor was it out of character for the Pope to accuse Protestant missionaries of sowing "confusion and uncertainty" among Roman Catholics, and to say that "Protestant sects" are "spreading like an oil stain" and threaten to pull down "the structures of faith" in numerous countries. Also, it was no surprise that Archbishop Penados del Barrio of Guatemala City denounced "evangelical teachings" as "the opium of the masses", and accused Protestants of being in the service of foreign powers.

It is at our peril that we lose sight of the fact that it is in the very nature of the Papacy to speak and act in this manner against what it defines as "error" and "heresy". Heresy, for Protestants, means "something contrary to what the Bible teaches, while for Roman Catholics it means lack of conformity to the practice of the Roman Church - which may be something quite different," (Boettner). The Roman Catholic Church, regarding herself as the only true church, sees Protestantism as heretical and therefore to be suppressed and eradicated. Indeed, as the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* states, "Heretics may be not only excommunicated, but also justly put to death." So religious freedom is something which Rome claims only for herself.

One of the most authoritative Roman Catholic sources, the official Jesuit organ, *Civiltà Cattolica*, has stated in the past, "The Roman Catholic Church, convinced through her divine prerogatives of being the only true church, must demand the right of freedom for herself alone, because such a right can only be possessed by truth, never by error... In a state where the majority of people are Catholic, the Church will require that legal existence be denied to error, and that if religious minorities actually exist, they shall have only a de facto existence without opportunity to spread their beliefs... The Church cannot blush for her want of tolerance as she asserts it in principle and applies it in practice..."

Let us not be taken in by the Vatican's apparent promoting of religious freedom, for it is speaking from both sides of its mouth. Rome's image of charming ecumenicity deceives many, but it also underlines that the Papacy is "that man of sin", (2 Thes 2:3), who works "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness". Our duty is not only to watch and to contend for the faith, but also and especially to pray. Pray that this soul deluding system may be destroyed by the coming of the Lord in the power of His Spirit, and that the millions, people and priests, held in spiritual bondage by it, will experience that true spiritual freedom of which Christ says, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

The Editor

Sermon

A Crown of Pure Gold

by Rev. Alexander McPherson, Perth

(Notes of a sermon preached at Kinlochbervie Communion, on Monday, 15th May, 1995)

Text: "*Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head,*" (Psalm 21: 3)

Some see only King David in this Psalm, but the first seven verses clearly go beyond what David could say of himself. Others think that David is combining what was true of himself with what he knew to be true of Messiah who should descend from him. Or, to put it differently, they think he is making himself a type of Christ. It is better, however, to regard David as writing of Christ by divine inspiration, just as in Psalms 22 and 45.

When Christ ascended to heaven at the close of His redemptive work, the Father crowned Him King of Sion and King of the universe. That was very different from what men did to Christ while He was in this world. Some of them also thought in terms of crowning Him, but not in the way described here. Our text suggests a contrast between the heavenly coronation and what men did on earth.

First, we shall consider *Christ, as He is the King of kings*; **secondly**, *how men treated Christ the King*; and **thirdly**, *His being crowned by the Father with a crown of glory and honour*.

First: *Jesus Christ, as He is the King of kings.*

Our word "king" comes from the Old German, and what it signifies (and what its equivalents in different languages signify) is the sovereign ruler of an independent state. People in the same locality need leadership, and in one way or another obtain leaders. In due course, leadership developed into kingship; and a king performed the functions of ruler, lawgiver, judge and commander. There were kings as early as Abraham's day, and later, when God made Israel a nation, He, Himself, was their King; Israel was meant to be a theocracy. But later, in rejecting Samuel as their governor, they in fact were rejecting God, their heavenly King; as is clear from what God said to Samuel: "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them," (1Sam. 8:7), and were not happy until they had a king similar to those ruling other nations. Saul became their king, and he acted as it was predicted he would, (1 Sam.8:10-18). In due time David replaced Saul; then David was succeeded by Solomon, and many more after that. None of them possessed kingly qualities in perfection, nor ruled perfectly. That was to be expected, for

even the best of them were sinful men.

Yet, God promised His Israel, the true Israel, a perfect King. The Spirit of the Lord spoke by David: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me, he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain," (2 Sam 23: 3, 4). Isaiah also spoke of the perfect King who should come: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," (Isaiah 9:6,7).

In the fulness of time the perfect King came. He demonstrated His possession of every kingly quality: goodness (unparalleled benevolence), truth, righteousness, integrity, wisdom, moral purity, power and valour. Happy the people with such a King. He was as promised: "a leader and commander to the people," (Isaiah 55:4).

Secondly: *How men treated the King*

John, in his Gospel, sums up the treatment given to the Saviour; "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Let us now consider particular instances of men's rejection of Christ which have in common this feature: that Christ was thought of as some sort of king, and a crown of sorts was given to Him.

Take, first, the case of *Herod*, ruling Israel by permission of the Romans, and alarmed to hear of another Person who was "born King of the Jews". Pretending to wish to worship this king, he plans to kill Him. The crown Herod is thinking of is *a promised crown*, but he has no intention of keeping the promise.

In Herod we may see a portrait of fallen man managing his own affairs, as he thinks, and resenting Christ's command, "Give me thine heart." The sinner's response is, "I will not have this man to reign over me." The "Jerusalem" sinner, professing as he does to believe the Bible, conceals his animosity behind actions which appear to credit Christ with being a King, and which imply promises to crown Him. The promise is never kept. Too many who have lived under the Gospel die still promising to crown Christ. As with Herod, their's is only a promised crown.

Next, consider *Satan's* case in connection with his tempting Christ. Read it in Luke 4:5-7. The devil shows Jesus all the kingdoms of this world and offers kingship to the Saviour on condition that He worship him. Fallen man's spiritual kinship with the devil shows in a similar strain of bargaining. They will agree to Christ being King if they be allowed to associate his kingdom with all worldliness, and themselves, the subjects, to continue in their worldliness. There must be no insistence, for instance, on a new birth.

You ask perhaps, Who do this? The answer is, Multitudes who allow a little Christianity in their lives, but always in a corrupted, carnal, worldly form. They are quite at home at funerals where the spiritually dead bury their dead: at memorial services where the deceased persons, who in their lives gave no sign of saving grace, are lauded for their works: and at worship (so-called) which is neither in spirit nor in truth. What it amounts to is offering Christ a *papier maché crown*.

What now about the *Jewish people* as they appear in John 6, verse 15? "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." These were men ready to crown Jesus because he was able to preserve them from want and suffering, bless them with temporal blessings, and exalt them, as a nation, far higher than in David's or Solomon's time.

This is the Christ of the Social Gospel and its more radical successor, the Gospel of Liberation. The crown proposed is no better than one that any earthly king would wear: an *ordinary gold crown*.

Pilate's attitude must also be considered. "Then Pilate entered into the judgement hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him. Art thou the King of the Jews?... Art thou a king then?... Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews" (John 18:33-39). Pilate recognised that Jesus of Nazareth was a king, but from fear of the chief Jews ordered Him to be crucified.

Similarly, many are impressed by Christ's claims, but the fear of man prevents them from submitting to His claims and admitting Him to reign in their hearts. Washing his hands and putting up a notice on the Cross did not absolve Pilate from guilt. Nor will any religious acts short of faith, repentance, love and obedience clear a churchgoer of the sin of rejecting Christ. A *crown of words* is useless, even insulting.

Lastly, we can think of the *soldiers at the cross*. They mocked Him with a purple robe, a *crown of thorns* and a reed sceptre (Mark 15:15-20).

The only recognition some give to Christ is to mock Him; and on suitable

occasions, they deride and revile. Infidels, whether they call themselves humanists, secularists, agnostics or just plain atheists, are today a great army openly ranged against God and his Christ and saying:

“Let us asunder break their bands,
and cast their cords from us,” (Ps 2:3).

This is fallen man casting away all pretences and appearing evil and unrestrained in contempt of his Maker, crowning Him with thorns. Sin in its naked wickedness appears in the mocking of the blessed curse-bearer, Jesus Christ, who willingly subjected Himself to being made a curse for His people. “How shall we escape?” How shall we escape if we crown Him with such a *crown of thorns*?

These things men did, and do, to the King of glory.

Thirdly: *The contrast of His being crowned by the Father with a crown of glory and honour.*

“Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.” What men failed to do, God the Father has done. Men were blinded by spiritual ignorance and hatred, and did not perceive Christ’s glory as the Son of God, perfect man, and loving, efficient Mediator. God the Father, who had given His Son to be a ransom for elect sinners, viewed His life on earth with approval and testified this three times. Therefore, when Christ had finished His redemptive work, His Father received Him into heaven as One worthy of infinite honour: “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Heb 1:9). And God sealed His Son’s fitness to be King of Kings by setting a crown of pure gold on His head.

The act of crowning denotes several things.

It denotes *royal nature*. Among men royal nature means royal descent, good breeding, appropriate education and training. But applied to Christ, it means deity. Thus God said to Him, “Thy throne, *O God*, is forever and ever.” Royal nature in this case means also, a Man who is God - “Thou art fairer than the children of men” (Psl 45:2).

Crowning also denotes *glorious conquest*. Not with an armed host, but by personal endeavour, Christ defeated Satan, won His kingdom, and overcame all opposition. “By himself he purged our sins” (Heb 1:3); “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Col 2:15).

Imperial power is also denoted. Christ has sovereign rule over the universe: “God has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above

every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philipians 2:9-11).

Lastly, crowning denotes *divine government*. Apart from Isaiah 9:6,7, “Unto us a child is born...,” quoted earlier, there is much else that tells of the ongoing reign of Christ. For example, there is the passage in Isaiah 11:1-9, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse...,” and also the majestic description in Psalm 72.

There is significance too in the statement that Christ’s crown is of *pure* gold. It images for us the moral purity of the Person and all connected with Him. His people are destined to be holy; His administration is marked by a holiness that avenges the defiling of His visible church - something to be considered in view of its present worldly condition and those who have caused that. And Christ’s Kingdom when it is finished and full will be marked by this, “There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth” (Revelation 21:27).

The purity of the crown also suggests its *solidity* and *enduring nature*: that His kingdom is a kingdom that cannot be moved, a kingdom supported by an eternal decree. “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:6). “His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed” (Psalm 72:17).

Finally, we can, or rather we must think of the pure gold as signifying *glory*. The Saviour is emphatically designated, “the King of glory”, in Psalm 24. There, we also read, “Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.” There is no King like this. We are all to meet Him either as rebels or loving subjects. Before we sing the concluding verses of Psalm 72, may grace be given to us to think of that momentous meeting as Samuel Rutherford did:

“They’ve summoned me before them,
But there I may not come,
My Lord says, ‘Come up hither,’
My Lord says, ‘Welcome home,’
My kingly King, at his white throne,
My presence doth command,
Where glory, glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel’s land.”

Lecture on the Sabbath

Rev. Neil Cameron

(Delivered in Glasgow in 1926)

Continued from the December issue in which the second head of the lecture was dealt with, that is: II. Those who are commanded to keep the Sabbath holy, (1) The father of the family, (2) The magistrates of our cities and towns, (3) Kings, their counsellors, and both houses of Parliament. The remainder of the lecture, in abridged form, is now given.

(4) The Fourth Commandment is more binding in the religious sphere, if that be possible, than in the temporal. *The church of Christ* has obligations relative to the Sabbath. The records of the church in the past prove that the true servants of Christ saw their responsibility in this matter. Kirk Sessions, for example, are bound to keep the Sabbath Day holy within their gates, that is, in their congregations. They are not to admit to church privileges any who are employed in doing any work, save works of necessity or mercy, on God's holy day. People are not to use the argument that they are compelled to work on the Lord's Day lest they lose that work; nor are they to think that the guilt of doing such work falls on the employer but not on them.

Works of necessity and mercy on the Lord's Day are such as these: to attend to the sick; to feed people, or beasts that are hand-fed; and to attend the outward and ordinary means of grace as enjoined by the words, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." Another work of necessity is navigating a ship at sea, providing the vessel did not sail from port on the Sabbath and that no unnecessary work is done on board on the Lord's Day. Policing a city or town on Sabbath is necessary, as otherwise life and property would not be safe.

The running of trains, street cars [tramcars] and buses on the Lord's Day for monetary gain is a violation of the Fourth Commandment. Such as travel by these on the Lord's Day ought not to receive Church privileges from our Kirk-Sessions. Since 1896 there has been a resolution on the records of the Kirk-Session of this congregation, to the effect that no one who worked, or travelled by street cars or trains on the Lord's Day would receive Church privileges. This has been adhered to ever since. If it should be relaxed now, as some demand (none of them in St. Jude's, I am thankful to say) I am convinced that it would appear to our people as backsliding by the Church. The Synod's finding on the subject shows that this is the unanimous judgment of our ministers in Scotland, and of our office-bearers and people. Consequently, it is the duty of our Kirk-Sessions to see to it that no one who works unnecessarily on the Lord's Day, or who travels on Sabbath by trains

or buses, shall receive baptism or the Lord's Supper from them.

Some use sophistry such as this: That they themselves would not work, or travel by trains or buses on the Lord's Day, but that the Church should not debar from church privileges such as would use them. God's Word says that we must not suffer sin on our neighbour. The real meaning of such an argument is that the Church should allow their people to do that which these sophists feel to be sin in their own conscience. If this be not so, why do they say that they would not do it themselves? Such arguments are devoid of any real force in face of the Fourth Commandment and integrity of conscience.

If any Kirk-Session should allow their people to travel by trains or buses to church or other places on the Lord's Day and extend to them the privileges of the Church, the Presbytery is bound to restrain it. It has full powers to bring such a Session to account and to deal with it in accordance with the law of the Church. Anyone who may feel aggrieved by the decision of Kirk-Session or Presbytery can appeal to the Synod for final decision. This is as it should be, in order to deal justly, in accordance with God's Word and the law of the Church, in every case.

Transgressions of the Fourth Commandment are not to be connived at. A very determined effort is being made to sweep away barriers raised against Sabbath desecration by our Synod. Those barriers were raised in accordance with the clear requirements of the Fourth Commandment and the creed and constitution we have bound ourselves, by the most solemn vows, to maintain. The statements of the Confession of Faith are as follows: "As it is the law of nature, that, in general a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so in His Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, He hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto Him: which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath. This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men after a due preparation of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy," (Confession of Faith 21:7,8).

The thin end of a wedge is being driven into the Free Presbyterian Church so as to split it on this question. Those who are determined to have the laxity

they demand, can easily find churches in Scotland or elsewhere in which they may have it to their heart's content.

Thirdly, let us consider briefly *the punishment which follows the sin of Sabbath desecration*.

The Jews were guilty of Sabbath desecration as well as contempt of God's prophets, and defiling God's house. The reason why God destroyed many of them by sword, famine, and pestilence, and sent others of them to Babylon for seventy years, is thus recorded: "Moreover, all the chief priests and all the people transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because He had compassion on his people and on His dwelling-place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His word, and misused His prophets until the wrath of God arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore, He brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; He gave them all into his hand. . . To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years," (2 Chron 36:14-21).

We are guilty as a people, in what used to be called Sabbath-loving Scotland but may now be called Sabbath-hating Scotland, of these very sins charged against the Jews. Let us take serious notice of the fact that these things are written for our admonition. We have to deal with the same holy and just God, who is unchangeable in His hatred to sin, and who will not connive at the sin in us for which He punished others so severely. The desecration of the Sabbath was a sin of the first magnitude in His estimation; for the land itself had to get rest from the desecrating feet of old and young during seventy years.

Therefore, let us beware lest our Sabbath desecration bring down the wrath of God upon us as a country: and let Free Presbyterians take to heart that God will not connive at sin in them in the day of judgment. God will take away the gospel and the Sabbath from us unless timely repentance prevent such a terrible judgement.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the

Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it," (Isaiah 58:13).

Particular Redemption

Rev Donald Beaton

This article is the penultimate part of the section on particular redemption extracted from Mr Beaton's book *The Reformed Faith*; and is continued from the last issue.

(c) **Baxterianism.** Before dealing with Baxter's views of the extent of redemption, some reference must be made to the views held by Davenant and Ussher. Both were eminent divines. John Davenant was one of the five English deputies at the Synod of Dort. In his *Dissertation on the Death of Christ* he advances certain propositions, in the second of which he says: "The death of Christ is the universal cause of the salvation of mankind; and Christ Himself is acknowledged to have died for all men sufficiently, not by reason of the mere sufficiency, or of the intrinsic value, according to which the death of God is a price more than sufficient for redeeming a thousand worlds, but by reason of the evangelical covenant confirmed with the whole human race through the merit of this death, and of the divine ordination depending upon it." In his third proposition he says: "The death or passion of Christ, as the universal cause of the salvation of mankind, hath, by the act of its oblation, so far rendered God the Father pacified and reconciled to the human race."

Archbishop Ussher, who had a principal hand in drawing up the Irish Articles of 1615, and one of the great theologians of the seventeenth century, in answer¹ to the request of a friend, gave expression to his views concerning the extent of redemption. Ussher's views were practically those of Davenant. The Westminster Assembly included a number of members who were supporters of Davenant's opinions, among them Edmund Calamy², who avowed in one of the debates that he maintained in the same sense as the English divines at the Synod of Dort "that Christ by His death did pay a price for all; with absolute intention for the elect, with conditional intention for the reprobate in case they do believe . . .; that Jesus did not only die sufficiently

¹The judgement of the late Archbishop of Armagh . . . on the extent of Christ's death.

²Minister of St Mary's, Aldermanbury, London.

for all, but God did intend, in giving of Christ, and Christ in giving Himself did intend, to put all men in a state of salvation in case they do believe" (*Minutes of the Westminster Assembly*, p 152). The subject caused considerable debate in the Assembly; Samuel Rutherford and George Gillespie took a prominent part in opposing Calamy's view. Finally it was agreed: "Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called into faith in Christ by His Spirit working in due season, are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. *Neither are any other redeemed by Christ*, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only" (*Confession of Faith* 3:6).

Dr Mitchell, in his Introduction to the *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly* (p56) remarks: "Though at first sight it may not seem easy to reconcile the opinions of these divines with the language of the sixth section of this chapter (3) of the Confession, it would be rash for me to say it is impossible." This difficulty of Dr Mitchell's probably arose from an interpretation put upon certain words in the section which has been dealt with by Dr Cunningham. Does the word *redeemed* describe only the purchase or procurement (*impetration* is the word usually used by the theologians), or does it comprehend the application as well? In Dr Cunningham's opinion, it seems quite clear that it is descriptive of the purchase of pardon and reconciliation because there is an enumeration of all the leading steps in the great process originating in God's eternal election of some men, and terminating in their complete salvation (*Historical Theology*, vol 2, p 327). It has further been argued, Dr Cunningham points out, that in the Confessional statement, "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only," the latter words, *the elect only*, apply to the preceding predicates (*redeemed, called, justified*) collectively. If so, it is the statement of a mere truism, serving no purpose, and giving no deliverance upon anything. The Confessional doctrine, therefore, must be regarded "as teaching that it is not true of any but the elect only that they are redeemed by Christ, any more than it is true that any others are called, justified or saved" (Ibid, vol 2, p 328). It may be pointed out here that the word *redemption*, as used in the Westminster period, referred to the procurement of salvation and did not include its application. It is in this sense that Baxter uses the word in the title of his book, *Universal Redemption of Mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ*. Whatever efforts may have been made to give an interpretation to chapter 3, section 6, of the

Confession favourable to the views held by the followers of Davenant and Ussher, there can be no doubt that the teaching of chapter 8, section 8, leaves no loophole for this teaching: "To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same". This statement, as Dr Cunningham truly says, contains and was intended to contain the true state of the question in the controversy about the extent of the atonement (*Ibid*, vol 2, p 329). When *The Larger Catechism* was being drawn up, the *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly* (p 369) indicate that the Davenant school of divines in the Assembly made another attempt to obtain sanction for their views. A committee brought up for discussion the following questions and answers: "*Question*: Do all men equally partake of the benefits of Christ? *Answer*: Although from Christ some common favours redound to all mankind, and some special privileges to the visible Church, yet none partake of the principal benefits of His mediation, but only such as are members of the Church invisible. *Question*: What common favours redound from Christ to all mankind? *Answer*: Besides much forbearance and many supplies for this life, which all mankind receive from Christ, the Lord of all, they by Him are made capable of having salvation tendered to them by the gospel, and are under such dispensations of Providence and operations of the Spirit as lead to repentance." The final form of the questions and answers on the above subject is set forth as follows in Questions and Answers 61 and 63 of *The Larger Catechism*: "*Question 61*: Are all they saved who hear the gospel and live in the Church? *Answer*: All that hear the gospel and live in the visible Church are not saved; but they only who are true members of the Church invisible." "*Question 63*: What are the special privileges of the visible Church? *Answer*: The visible Church hath the privilege of being under God's special care and government; of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies; and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation, and offers of grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying that whosoever believes in Him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come to Him."

In his *Confession*, Baxter, while expressing admiration for the Westminster Divines and their work, will only accept chapter 3, section 6, and chapter 8, section 8, if the redemption referred to in these sections is "not of all redemption and particularly not of the mere bearing the punishment of man's sins, and satisfying God's justice; but of that special redemption proper to the elect, which was accompanied with an intention of

actual application of the saving benefits in time. If I may not be allowed this interpretation, I must herein dissent . . . I hope it was never the mind of that reverend Assembly to have shut out such men as Bishop Ussher, Davenant, Hall, Dr Preston, Dr Staughton, Mr William Fenner, Dr Ward, and many more excellent English divines as ever this Church enjoyed, who were all for general redemption." Baxter's position on the extent of redemption is thus stated by an admirer: "That the number of the finally saved, who will be at the right hand of Christ in the Last Day is foreknown, and therefore fixed, is indisputable; and that Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and for the sins *not of the elect only*, but also for the sins of the whole world, and that the call to accept His salvation is sincerely addressed to all men, are equally indisputable" (*Works of the Puritan Divines: Baxter*, p 53).

His controversy with Dr Owen, the prince of the Puritan theologians, began in connection with the latter's great work, *The Death of Death* in the Death of Christ (Works, vol 10). In his Aphorisms on Justification, Baxter took exception to, among other things, Owen's teaching on a definite redemption. Owen answered him in what may be termed an appendix to his *Death of Death* in his work, *Of the Death of Christ*. It is remarkable that while he joins issue with Owen for his doctrine of a definite redemption, he declares: "In the article on the extent of redemption, wherein I am most suspected and accused, I do subscribe to the Synod of Dort, without any exception, limitation, or exposition of any word as doubtful and obscure." This, to say the least of it, seems strange. In an appendix to his *Vindiciae Evangelicae*, Dr. Owen returns to Baxter's criticisms in his *Confession of Faith* (1655). Baxter's final reply was appended to a work which he published against Blacke, entitled *Certain Disputations of Right to the Sacraments and the True Nature of Visible Christianity* (1656)³. While Baxter's views on the extent of the atonement are to be condemned, it is only fair to say, as Dr Smeaton has pointed out (*The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 542), that he was not an Amyraldian.

To be concluded

Dornoch Induction:

The Induction of Rev. D. J. Macdonald, MA, to the pastoral charge of Tain, Dornoch, Lairg and Bonar Congregation will take place, DV, on Friday, 29th March, at 7 pm in Dornoch FP Church at Evelex, Dornoch.

³The controversy provoked a large number of books and pamphlets which are now forgotten.

Lessons from the Baptism of Jesus

"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased," Luke 3:21,22.

We see in the above passage, the *high honour the Lord Jesus has put on baptism*. We find that among others who came to John the Baptist, the Saviour of the world came, and was "baptized".

An ordinance which the Son of God was pleased to use, and afterwards to appoint for the use of His whole Church, ought always to be held in peculiar reverence by His people. Baptism cannot be a thing of slight importance, if Christ Himself was baptized. The use of baptism would never have been enjoined on the Church of Christ, if it had been a mere outward form, incapable of conveying any blessing.

It is hardly necessary to say that errors of every sort and description abound on the subject of baptism. Some make an idol of it, and exalt it far above the place assigned to it in the Bible. Some degrade it and dishonour it, and seem almost to forget that it was ordained by Christ Himself. Some limit the use of it so narrowly that they will baptize none unless they are grown up, and can give full proof of their conversion. Some invest the baptismal water with such magic power, that they would like missionaries to go into heathen lands and baptize all persons, old and young indiscriminately, and believe that however ignorant the heathen may be, baptism must do them good. On no subject, perhaps, in religion, have Christians more need to pray for a right judgement and a sound mind.

Let it suffice us to hold firmly the general principle, that baptism was graciously intended by our Lord to be a help to His Church, and "a means of grace", and that when rightly and worthily used, we may confidently look upon it for a blessing. But let us never forget that the grace of God is not tied to any sacrament, and that we may be baptized with water, without being baptized with the Holy Ghost.

We see, secondly, in this passage, *the close connection that ought to exist between the administration of baptism and prayer*. We are specially told by Luke, that when our Lord was baptized He was also "praying".

We need not doubt that there is a great lesson in this fact, and one that the Church of Christ has too much overlooked. We are meant to learn that the

FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

	SUSTENTATION	HOME MISSION	FOREIGN MISSION	COLLEGE & LIBRARY	GENERAL BUILDING	DOMINIONS & OVERSEAS	PUBLICATIONS	BOOKROOM	TOTAL
NORTHERN PRESBYTERY									
Aberdeen.....	360.00	24.00	49.00	15.00	32.00	32.00	25.00	26.00	563.00
Creigh, Dornoch, Laing, Rochart, Fearn & Tain....	4,480.00	201.00	435.00	112.00	77.00	131.00	100.00	15.00	5,551.00
Beauly.....	3,733.34	88.34	163.32	90.00	70.00	120.00	100.00	150.00	4,515.00
Dingwall.....	7,861.00	231.67	532.99	250.00	240.00	324.00	295.00	200.00	9,934.66
Halkirk, Strathay, Thurso & Wick.....	1,502.75	140.00	275.00	45.00	48.00	50.00	0.00	30.00	2,090.75
Inverness.....	19,096.68	1,968.97	4,423.97	869.94	745.72	995.71	843.31	612.08	29,556.38
Kinlochbervie & Scourie.....	1,110.50	175.00	800.00	67.00	88.00	101.00	55.00	67.50	2,464.00
David, Tomatin & Stratherrick.....	6,622.00	223.67	1,089.85	0.00	213.60	245.00	171.30	156.00	8,721.42
	£ 44,768.27	£ 3,052.65	£ 7,769.13	£ 1,448.94	£ 1,514.32	£ 1,998.71	£ 1,589.61	£ 1,256.58	£ 63,396.21
SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY									
Barnoldswick.....	1,650.00	260.00	825.00	125.00	350.00	600.00	160.00		3,970.00
Dumbarton.....	1,013.67	73.00	239.67	64.66	42.00	68.00	43.00	41.00	1,585.00
Dundee, Perth & Stirling.....	2,386.00	302.33	669.33	220.00	122.00	163.00	52.00	82.00	3,996.66
Edinburgh.....	3,016.00	110.00	229.00	88.00	70.00	100.00	115.00	75.00	3,803.00
Ft. William & Oban.....	775.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	795.00
Glasgow.....	18,884.16	2,009.16	3,763.66	1,288.72	1,145.38	1,507.57	1,194.16	1,275.50	31,048.31
Greenock & Dunoon.....	1,530.00	161.50	211.00	80.00	43.00	22.00	57.00	35.00	2,139.50
Kames.....	400.00	0.00	300.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00	800.00
Larne.....	5,500.00	56.00	400.00	150.00	150.00	160.00	100.00	150.00	6,666.00
London.....	7,614.94	220.51	759.34	335.34	142.84	297.34	148.00	151.00	9,669.31
	£ 42,769.77	£ 3,192.50	£ 7,397.00	£ 2,401.72	£ 2,065.22	£ 2,917.91	£ 1,869.16	£ 1,859.50	£ 64,472.78
OUTER ISLES PRESBYTERY									
Achmore.....	1,189.00	98.00	129.00	40.00	32.00	50.00	36.00	0.00	1,574.00
Breaclete.....	900.00	70.00	228.00	80.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	70.00	1,468.00
Ness.....	3,353.00	76.00	62.00	28.00	28.00	46.00	25.00	0.00	3,618.00
North Harris.....	1,899.57	266.66	424.50	150.17	131.67	179.67	173.66	219.00	3,444.80
North Tolsta.....	7,115.28	276.50	576.50	328.70	460.00	277.00	273.00	280.00	9,586.98
North Uist.....	3,764.00	148.00	208.00	66.00	62.00	85.00	77.00	68.00	4,478.00
South Harris.....	9,247.50	250.00	583.00	143.00	155.00	157.00	160.00	233.00	10,928.50
Stornoway.....	13,346.00	888.50	1,787.00	539.50	411.00	428.00	412.00	313.00	17,905.00
Ulig.....	5,000.00	50.00	300.00	120.00	0.00	0.00	110.00	0.00	5,580.00
	£ 45,814.35	£ 1,923.66	£ 4,278.00	£ 1,495.37	£ 1,339.67	£ 1,222.67	£ 1,326.66	£ 1,183.00	£ 58,583.38
WESTERN PRESBYTERY									
Applecross.....	1,679.87	115.00	140.00	124.00	70.00	116.00	75.50	82.00	2,402.37
Assynt.....	4,450.01	210.00	655.00	182.00	153.00	129.00	143.00	203.00	6,125.01
Gairloch.....	5,615.00	134.00	315.00	136.00	126.00	146.00	106.00	185.00	6,101.00

CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS - 1995

Lake.....	4,585.00	100.00	283.00	113.00	90.00	335.00	93.00	73.00	5,872.00
Lochbroom.....	6,153.88	313.33	673.34	230.00	153.00	195.00	198.00	175.00	8,089.33
Lochcarron.....	5,000.00	600.00	600.00	300.00	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	7,100.00
Shieldaig.....	2,380.00	83.00	184.00	57.50	12.00	57.00	52.50	50.00	2,850.00
	£ 30,699.54	£ 1,588.33	£ 2,891.34	£ 1,167.50	£ 817.00	£ 1,191.00	£ 870.00	£ 720.00	£ 39,944.71
SKYE PRESBYTERY									
Bracadale & Strath.....	2,633.00	93.50	337.50	119.00	95.50	95.00	84.50	69.00	3,527.00
Duirinish.....	2,928.34	250.34	542.66	57.34	65.34	188.32	179.34	174.00	4,385.68
Portree & Flashadder.....	12,761.34	713.33	2,285.00	1,050.00	250.00	350.00	400.00	555.00	18,364.67
Reasay.....	4,000.00	154.00	611.00	158.00	93.00	169.00	134.00	134.40	5,453.40
Steffin.....	3,112.70	124.00	398.00	111.00	99.00	123.00	108.50	96.00	4,170.20
	£ 25,435.38	£ 1,335.17	£ 4,174.16	£ 1,495.34	£ 602.84	£ 925.32	£ 904.34	£ 1,028.40	£ 35,900.95
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND PRESBYTERY									
Auckland.....	0.00	0.00	494.52	50.00	50.00	432.38	50.00	50.00	1,126.90
Gisborne.....	0.00	54.90	675.36	178.96	88.85	165.74	100.70	83.92	1,348.45
Wellington.....	0.00	0.00	20.71	20.71	0.00	41.44	0.00	0.00	82.86
Grafton.....	0.00	0.00	604.72	0.00	0.00	379.44	0.00	0.00	984.16
Sydney.....	0.00	0.00	536.83	46.90	70.34	468.93	46.90	0.00	1,169.90
	£ 0.00	£ 54.90	£ 2,332.16	£ 296.57	£ 209.19	£ 1,487.93	£ 197.60	£ 133.92	£ 4,712.27
* (See note below)									
CANADIAN PRESBYTERY									
Chesley.....	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Toronto.....	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Vancouver.....	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00	£ 0.00
SUMMARY									
Northern Presbytery.....	44,766.27	3,052.65	7,769.13	1,448.94	1,514.32	1,998.71	1,589.61	1,256.58	63,396.21
Southern Presbytery.....	42,769.77	3,192.50	7,397.00	2,401.72	2,065.22	2,917.91	1,869.16	1,859.50	64,472.78
Outer Isles Presbytery..	45,814.35	1,923.66	4,278.00	1,495.37	1,339.67	1,222.67	1,326.66	1,163.00	58,583.38
Western Presbytery.....	30,699.54	1,588.33	2,891.34	1,167.50	817.00	1,191.00	870.00	720.00	39,944.71
Skye Presbytery.....	25,435.38	1,335.17	4,174.16	1,495.34	602.84	925.32	904.34	1,028.40	35,900.95
Australia/N.Z. Presbytery	0.00	54.90	2,332.16	296.57	209.19	1,487.93	197.60	133.92	4,712.27
Canadian Presbytery.....	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-total	£ 189,485.31	£ 11,147.21	£ 28,841.79	£ 8,305.44	£ 6,548.24	£ 9,743.54	£ 6,757.37	£ 6,181.40	£ 267,010.30
Eastern Europe Fund.....									9,284.36
Donations.....	898.52	15.00	10,924.43	41.00	0.00	1,215.00	22.00	20.00	12,935.95
GRAND TOTALS	£ 190,183.83	£ 11,162.21	£ 39,766.22	£ 8,346.44	£ 6,548.24	£ 10,958.54	£ 6,779.37	£ 6,201.40	£ 289,230.61

* The following sums were contributed to the local Australia & N.Z. Sustentation Fund:

Auckland	NZ\$	4,764.00	Grafton	AUS\$	17,752.32
Gisborne	NZ\$	10,800.00	Sydney	AUS\$	1,500.00
Hastings	NZ\$	1,500.00			
Wellington	NZ\$	1,358.00			

baptism which God blesses must be a baptism accompanied by prayer. The sprinkling of water is not sufficient. The use of the name of the blessed Trinity is not enough. The form of the sacrament alone conveys no grace. There must be something else beside all this. There must be "the prayer of faith". A baptism without prayer, it may be confidently asserted, is a baptism on which we have no right to expect God's blessing.

Why is it that the sacrament of baptism appears to bear so little fruit? How is it that thousands are every year baptized, and never give the slightest proof of having received benefit from it? The answer is short and simple. In the vast majority of baptisms there is no prayer except the prayer of the officiating minister. Parents bring their children to be baptised, without the slightest sense of what they are doing . . . in evident ignorance of the nature of the ordinance they are attending, and as a mere matter of form. What possible reason have we for expecting such baptisms to be blessed by God? None! None at all . . . They are not baptisms according to the mind of Christ. Let us pray that the eyes of Christians on this important subject may be opened. It is one on which there is great need of change.

From Expository Thoughts on the Gospels by J.C. Ryle

John Welsh

Rev. K.D. Macleod

Continued from page 53 of the February issue

8. Almost Swallowed up with Sorrow

Banished in 1606, for the sake of the gospel, from Scotland to France by the Privy Council, at the command of the King, Welsh landed in Bordeaux. In the hope that a door would be opened for him to preach the gospel regularly in France, he went to La Rochelle to attend the National Synod of the Reformed Church of France, but was disappointed and had to return to Bordeaux.

There were several reasons for returning to Bordeaux. First, Welsh was expecting his wife at any time; for all he knew she might already be waiting for him. Then there was a nearby spa which had been recommended to him for his health; in particular he hoped that it might be of benefit to a limb which was described as palsied, possibly the result of the dampness of his cell in Blackness. And there was the opportunity for preaching - to the large numbers of Scots and English, probably seamen and traders who, especially in the summer months, gathered in that port. When Welsh, who

was of course not in the best of health, arrived in Bordeaux he was completely exhausted. But as soon as possible he began to preach in English. He did not wait for a licence from the government, and nobody objected to him preaching without one. Before another Sabbath came, however, he was unfit for preaching; in his own words, he was "under the hands of mediciners".

He was also lonely, and doubtless concerned that his wife had not yet come, several weeks after he expected her arrival. He confided to his friend Robert Boyd, "O what joy and comfort were it to my soul to have one, in whose bosom of true commiseration and love I might pour out the distress of a wounded and bleeding soul that sometimes refuses to be comforted, and is troubled when a divine Majesty is thought upon! Dear and loving brother, my soul is wearied, and faints and longs for the day of deliverance, the which I apprehend not to be very far off from me, the which is not the meanest of my comforts, for I have given over looking for rest or consolation. . . . But the Lord's appointed time is the best, the which, with patience and contentation, I would wait, having this for my consolation first, that it pleased my God to put me in His service . . . and still more, that it is His cross that I bear for His crown and kingdom." News from Scotland added to his sadness: Andrew Melville had been removed from his university post in St Andrews, and the bishops were carrying everything before them. Then, six months after Welsh had left Scotland, a ship sailed into the harbour of Bordeaux carrying his wife and children. A true daughter of John Knox she was, and her husband could write about her, "I thank my God she bears the cross with comfort and contentation, the which unto me is no small comfort."

Welsh spent nine days at the spa of Encausse, and when he returned to Bordeaux he was feeling much better and able to resume preaching. In July 1608 Welsh was appointed minister of Jonsac, a small town near Bordeaux. He was inducted there towards the close of the year. Welsh does not seem to have been happy in Jonsac, though he did write soon after going there: "I thank my God in Jesus Christ, who had made me to find mercy, and has not only opened the door, but also has poured some blessing upon the small beginnings." It was at first a temporary appointment, but the next year the provincial Synod, against Welsh's wishes, made it permanent. He put his reactions in writing: "My uneasiness is great and I scarce know what I should do. Sometimes it appears best to me to leave this country rather than to be thus constrained by difficulties almost unsupportable. I cannot write what I would, but I am in exceeding great anguish. . . . My troubles are

greatly multiplied upon me. I think they will, at least, shorten my life, for I have never had the like." Welsh appealed against the decision of the provincial synod to the National Synod, who, without reversing the decision, did ask the lower courts to provide him another charge if he was still unhappy in Jonsac.

More than one other congregation expressed interest in having Welsh as their minister, but for one reason or another nothing came of these suggestions. But his reputation in France was increasing, even although he had to preach in what was to him a foreign tongue. Comment was passed on his boldness and authority when preaching before the University of Sedan, where Andrew Melville, *persona non grata* in his native Scotland, was now a professor. It was a learned congregation, but Welsh addressed them in the same way as he would have preached to an ordinary, uneducated gathering in Selkirk or in Ayr. Boyd recorded in his commentary on Romans: "Concerning . . . the thought of God's presence inspiring His servant with confidence before men, I shall certainly never forget the answer of a worthy man and excellent minister (John Welsh was that person) who, when I observed the liberty which he used in proclaiming God's Word in a foreign country, in a foreign language, and to a foreign nation, and ingenuously professed to him my admiration of so great boldness, thus replied from the bottom of his heart, and with a countenance indicating sympathy and compassion, not contempt or disdain: 'Ah, how can I take into account, or fear, the face of man when I reflect, and consider myself, as standing in the presence of that holy and gracious Majesty, whose Word I declare, under His eye, to His servants and creatures?'"

Welsh was very anxious to move from Jonsac. None of the family enjoyed good health there, perhaps due to the miserable accommodation provided for them. But no one showed any concern, and no one bothered to get them somewhere better to live. Nor was he paid properly. He told Boyd, "My family have been, and yet are exercised with continual affliction. I am almost swallowed up with sorrow; one grief tumbles on upon another. . . . I have none unto whom I may communicate them, and from whom I may receive any consolation. I know it is the hand of the Almighty. The cup is bitter, but I trust the fruit will be sweeter. . . . My soul is consumed and withered, but the Lord will send deliverance when it shall please Him. . . . You will pity my sorrows and recommend them unto Him who is the God of consolation and knows how to comfort the abject and humble." And two months later: "Besides many sad things within, I have to bear much from without, from the ingratitude of this people with whom I am, and whom I

have served, and whom I think I shall be constrained to leave." He was looking for the opening of a door elsewhere, to a congregation where he would be in a better position to advance the kingdom of God.

Although he felt so strongly about the treatment he was receiving in Jonsac, Welsh did not retreat into lethargy. In 1612 he published a book in French, entitled, *The Armageddon of the Apocalyptic Babylon*. His purpose was, to quote his own words, "to consider the resemblance between the Romish Church and the figures divinely appointed to symbolise her, and to make known her character. She is symbolised by a city and a great city, by Sodom, by Egypt, by the place where Christ was crucified, and by Babylon." Welsh complained about the mistakes made by the printer, but it is said that the author's use of the French language was excellent. And, before he sent the book to the printer, he showed it to some of his French ministerial brethren, who earnestly encouraged him to proceed with its publication as soon as possible.

(To be continued)

Book Review

The Doctrine of Repentance by *Thomas Watson*. The Banner of Truth Trust. Paperback, 122 pages. Price £1.95 from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE.

THE writings of Thomas Watson (c1620-1686) are characterised not only by scriptural soundness and spiritual richness but also by clarity, conciseness, pithiness, and striking illustrations. This is evident in this little book about repentance, which the publishers first reprinted in 1987 (and from which we give some extracts in another part of this issue).

As would be expected from this illustrious minister, the truth is presented in a most balanced manner. He shows that repentance is both a grace and a duty, as he deals with 'Counterfeit Repentance', 'The Nature of Repentance', 'Reasons Enforcing Repentance', 'Exhortations' and 'Motives to Repent', the 'Trial of our Repentance', 'The Removing of Impediments to Repentance' and 'Means for Repentance'.

He leaves the reader in no doubt that sinners are commanded by God to repent: that they not only have a great need, but also a solemn responsibility, to repent - and to repent without delay. At the same time he shows that repentance is a gift, and that we must have recourse to God for it. "It is His gift... The Arminians hold that it is in our power to repent. We can harden our hearts, but we cannot soften them. This crown of free-will is fallen from our

head... Therefore beg of God a repentant heart."

He says about the inseparable connection between repentance and faith, "There can be no separation from sin till there be union with Christ. The eye of faith looks on mercy, and that thaws the heart. Faith carries us to Christ's blood, and that blood mollifies. Faith persuades of the love of God, and that love sets us a-weeping." Which comes first, faith or repentance? "I am apt to think," he says, "that the seeds of faith are first wrought in the heart. As when a burning taper is brought into a room the light shows itself first, but the taper was before the light, so we see the fruits of repentance first, but the beginnings of faith were there first."

Here is a book for both unconverted people, who yet love and live in sin, and believers, who "must offer up a daily sacrifice of tears" because "the issue of godly sorrow must not be stopped till death". The minister of the gospel who is familiar with Thomas Watson's works can testify to the fact that they are stimulating and suggestive. A little of Watson's writing goes a long way. We hope that this reissued title will be spiritually profitable to many.

N.M.R.

Thomas Watson on Repentance

The following sayings have been taken from Watson's *Doctrine of Repentance*, published by the Banner of Truth, a review of which appears above. - Ed.

Repentance, says Watson, is a great duty incumbent upon men; 'Repent therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out' (Acts 3:19). "Repentance is a grace required under the Gospel. Some think it legal; but the first sermon Christ preached, indeed, the first word of His sermon, was 'Repent' (Mat 4:17). . . Repentance is a grace of God's Spirit whereby a sinner is inwardly humbled and visibly reformed."

In speaking about repentance being wrought by the word and Spirit of God, and the different effects the word has upon men, he asks what is the reason the word works so differently. "It is because the Spirit of God carries the word to the conscience of one and not of the other. One has received the divine unction and not the other (1 John 2:20). O pray that the dew may fall with the manna, that the Spirit may go along with the word. The chariot of ordinances will not carry us to heaven unless the Spirit of God join Himself to this chariot (Acts 8:29)."

In describing the "special ingredients of sin", he says about the need to

have a "sight of sin": "Many who can spy faults in others see none in themselves... They are veiled over with ignorance and self-love; therefore they see not what deformed souls they have. The devil does with them as the falconer with the hawk; he blinds them and carries them hooded to hell."

With regard to "sorrow for sin", another special ingredient, he says, "A true penitent labours to work his heart into a sorrowing frame. He blesses God when he can weep; he is glad of a rainy day, for he knows that it is a repentance he will have no cause to repent of." On the other hand, some people "cannot endure a serious thought, nor do they trouble their heads about sin... They spend their days in mirth; they fling away sorrow and go dancing to damnation."

Those who do not have the ingredient of "shame for sin" are also far from repentance. "The devil has stolen shame from men." Many are like "one of the persecutors in Queen Mary's time, who when he was upraided for his bloodiness to the martyrs, replied, I see nothing to be ashamed of.'... There is no creature capable of shame but man. The brute beasts are capable of fear and pain, but not of shame. You cannot make a beast blush. Those who cannot blush for sin do too much resemble the beasts."

The ingredient of "turning from sin", like the other ingredients, is present when there is a change wrought by the Holy Spirit. "A ship is going eastward; there comes a wind which turns it westward. Likewise a man was going hellward before the contrary wind of the Spirit blew, turned his course, and caused him to sail heavenwards."

Being merely morally upright and "civil" (in the old sense of orderly, sober, decent) is insufficient. "They are but half-turned who turn only from gross sin but have no intrinsic work of grace. They do not prize Christ or love holiness. It is with civil persons as with Jonah; he got a gourd to defend him from the heat of the sun, and thought he was safe, but a worm presently arose and devoured the gourd. So men, when they are turned from gross sin, think their civility will be a gourd to defend them from the wrath of God, but at death there arises the worm of conscience, which smites this gourd, and then their hearts fail, and they begin to despair."

National turning from sin is required as surely as personal. "It is to be feared that England is in God's black book... Indeed, men's sins are grown daring, as if they would hang out their flag of defiance and give heaven a broadside. The sinners in Britain even send God a challenge. They strengthen themselves against the almighty, they run upon... the thick bosses of his bucklers' (Job15:25,26). The bosses [the protruding knobs] in a buckler [shield] are for offence in war. Gods precepts and threatenings are,

as it were, the thick bosses of His buckler whereby He would deter men from wickedness. They regard not, however, but are desperate in sin and run furiously against the bosses of God's buckler."

In exhorting to repentance he insists that "repentance is necessary for God's people" as well as others. "Repentance is a continuous act... Search with the candle of the word into your hearts and see if you can find no matter for repentance there. Repent of your rash censuring... Repent of your vain thoughts... of your vain fashions... of your decays in grace... of your non-improvement of talents... of your forgetfulness of sacred vows... of your unanswerableness to blessings received. May not God sue you at law for your unthankfulness... Repent of your worldliness... your divisions... the iniquity of your holy things."

It is a "powerful motive to repentance" that there is "none so joyful as the penitent. Tears, as the philosopher notes, have four qualities: they are moist, salt, hot and bitter. It is true of repenting tears. They are hot, to warm a frozen conscience; moist, to soften a hard heart; salt, to season a soul putrifying in sin; bitter, to wean us from the love of the world. And I will add a fifth. They are sweet, in that they make the heart inwardly rejoice: and sorrow shall be turned into joy' (Job41:22)."

In several allusions to David's prayer in Psalm 56:8, '...put thou my tears into thy bottle...', Watson says: "Worldly tears fall to the earth, but godly tears are kept in a bottle... Some have lived many years, yet never put a drop in God's bottle, nor do they know what a broken heart means... We should repent now, that we have sinned so much and wept so little: that God's bag (Job14:17) has been so full and His bottle so empty... When we put water into the pump, it fetches up only water, but when we put tears into God's bottle, this fetches up wine."

Then, at last, "God will lead his penitents from the house of mourning to His banqueting house." "To conclude," says Watson at the end of one chapter, "the true penitent may look on death with comfort. His life has been a life of tears, and now at death all tears shall be wiped away."

Mission News

For the last four months Ingwenya Mission has experienced several sudden deaths of workers, very closely associated with the Mission and school for many years.

In mid-January the community at Ingwenya was shocked and saddened by

the sudden death of an old, respected elder, Joseph Mazwi Sibanda, who lived at Libeni, which is about five miles from Ingwenya and where we have a church which is part of the Ingwenya congregation. Formerly Mr. Mazwi had served the Mission for many years as a builder but it is as one of the church leaders he will be remembered.

He took an active part in church work, sometimes taking services at Ingwenya, but particularly at two outstations, Gadade and Inyathi. He was a familiar figure as he cycled to Gadade, which is several miles distant from his home.

Mr. Mazwi often spent a week-end at Inyathi, staying with his son and family who live there, and conducting the services at the church. (Our church at Inyathi was opened a number of years ago and is in a district not far from what was the London Missionary Society station which Robert Moffat helped to establish in 1860).

Many of our people in Scotland will remember having seen or met Mr. Mazwi, a tall, spare man with a pleasant expression, at the time of his being a representative elder at the Synod Meetings in Scotland in 1988. It was a most enjoyable and memorable visit for him.

Last September, Mr Mazwi attended the Communion services which were held at Ingwenya and at which the minister of the congregation, Rev Aaron Ndebele, was assisted by Rev. Neil Ross. Mr. Mazwi commented on how much he had enjoyed the Communion. It was to be his last.

His wife died a few months before him. Two of his sons, Philip and Samuel, have worked on the Mission for many years. May the Lord bless the voice of death in his family, in the school, and to us all in the congregation.

(Miss Katie Macaulay has kindly supplied the above notes on Mr. Mazwi).

A longstanding member at Ingwenya, Mrs. Pepheta, passed away recently. She had been a pupil in the school in the early days (1933) and was very good at answering Bible questions. She had the great privilege of having a gracious mother. Because she was concerned that her large number of grandchildren would learn as many Scripture verses as possible she was anxious to have a new Sindebele Bible to replace her old one which was in tatters. Sindebele Bibles were difficult to obtain at that time so she had to go to great lengths in trying to secure a copy.

The staff in the boarding school were shocked when a young assistant cook, in his late twenties, passed away suddenly at the end of last year.

During the December school holidays Miss Norma McLean visited our Mbumba mission station. She was driven there by Mr. James Mpofu, who is

now Building Works Manager in the place of the late Mr David Ndlovu. Because there had been a very heavy rainfall for some days previously and the side roads were almost impassable it was necessary to continue on the main road until they had reached Inkayi, 80 miles north-west of Ingwenya. Mr. Mpofu's home is at Inkayi, so he took the opportunity to show Norma the spot where his grandfather, John Mpofu, had begun missionary work in Rev. J.B. Radasi's day, about 1922. John Mpofu and his son Alexander (Mr. James Mpofu's father) travelled on foot for four days from Ingwenya to reach the place. The local people resented the arrival of strangers and burnt the thatch of their houses three times, but they persevered in the work. Eventually, in the goodness of the Most High, they established a church and had a good number of converts, old and young. Norma wrote: "It was wonderful how the Lord worked in that primitive place, and how the work extended to Zenka, where eventually there was a Teacher-Training school which continued until Mr. Fraser's death. From there the work spread to Mbuma. Not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord'. If we would be remembering that the work is the Lord's and that He will continue it according to His good pleasure and for His own glory we should be much calmer and more confident in the face of difficulties."

J.N.

Protestant View

Roman Catholic Chaplain for the Queen

ROMAN Catholicism in our nation received another boost when one of its leading clergymen was appointed recently as an honorary Chaplain to the Queen. Monsignor Noel Mullen, principal chaplain to the Royal Navy, is the first Roman Catholic to receive this honour which was conferred on him by the Queen at the end of January.

While this appointment brings Romanism yet closer to the Royal Family and gives Rome greater opportunity for influence in royal circles, it also is contrary, we believe, to the Coronation Oath and to the enactments referred to in the Oath which provide specifically for a Protestant Throne. It is this fact which is of most concern to those who seek the preservation of the Protestant nature and foundation of the British Throne.

The Queen, in taking the Coronation Oath, has declared, "I do solemnly, and in the presence of God profess, testify, and declare that I am a faithful Protestant, and that I will, according to the true intent of the enactments which

secure the Protestant Succession to the Throne of my Realm, uphold and maintain the said enactments to the best of my power according to law." One of those enactments is the Bill of Rights which forbids, among other things, that the Monarch shall be reconciled to, or shall hold communion with, the see or Church of Rome.

The Queen's attendance at a Roman Catholic service

IT is with sadness that we record that the Queen became the first reigning monarch since the Reformation to make an official visit to a Roman Catholic service when she attended a commemorative service at the end of November at Westminster Cathedral to mark the centenary of its foundation. This was an action, we believe, which was contrary to the terms of the Coronation Oath. At her Coronation, the Queen promised to maintain to the utmost of her power "the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel and the Protestant Reformed religion established by law."

In its letter of 20th October to the Queen, our Religion and Morals Committee said, among other things, "...We fear that Your Majesty's presence will encourage the people of our United Kingdom to think that the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church may be accepted with confidence and that the old Reformation barriers may now safely be taken down. Rome continues to maintain that the authority of the Church is above or equal to that of the Bible, and upholds a Papacy which usurps the prerogatives of Christ, commanding the universal subjection of rulers and nations and insisting on the manifestly erroneous doctrines of papal infallibility, transubstantiation, a celibate clergy and the worshipping of saints and relics. These traditions of men obscure the only way of salvation by true faith in Jesus Christ our Saviour...

"It is because we desire the Christian good of all peoples, the salvation of sinners and the restoration of Christian principles in our society that we respectfully urge Your Majesty not to attend this event...."

The reply from a member of the Queen's staff to the Committee Clerk, Rev John Goldby, stated, "...The Queen noted carefully the views expressed in your letter. I should say, however, that this centenary anniversary service will be ecumenical in nature. As such, it will be attended by representatives of various Christian faiths. Furthermore, in the past The Queen has attended many other such ecumenical events in this country and abroad; similarly Cardinal Hume has attended many services at which The Queen, as Sovereign Head of the Church of England, was present...."

Her Majesty has indeed been ill-served in being advised by the

Archbishop of Canterbury to attend this service. Rome regards the presence of the Queen at this very significant anniversary service, in the cathedral which it calls "the mother church of Catholicism in this country", as yet another victory in its advance against Protestantism - yet another gain in its unremitting push for power. In the Roman Catholic newspaper, *The Universe*, of 17th December 1995, an article entitled: "The Bold Step Taken by Elizabeth II", begins thus, "Make no mistake - when the Queen entered Westminster Cathedral to attend vespers last week it was the single most important constitutional act for the Catholic Church in England since the Catholic Emancipation Acts of the last century."

Let us be seeking earnestly that the Lord will preserve our Protestant constitution and prevent our decline into pre-Reformation darkness.

Notes and Comments

Obscene magazines aimed at young teenage girls

MR Peter Luff MP had much support in the Commons last month for his Periodicals (Protection of Children) Bill, which is intended to control the sale of certain widely sold teenage girls' magazines which have most offensive and explicit sexual contents. The Bill gained a first reading but it does not appear that it will become law. The Government will not be supporting it through the Commons, said a Government source, because it is impracticable, but Home Office Ministers will be speaking to the publishers about the matter; in any case it is up to parents to decide what their children have access to. This response is an abnegation of governmental responsibility.

The publishers claim that the magazines (such as *It's Bliss*, and *More!*), provide useful information for young girls, but their claim highlights, rather than hides, their cynical and self-serving manipulation of impressionable adolescents. The London Times rightly condemns the publishers as being highly irresponsible in encouraging "a hedonistic attitude to sex when teenage pregnancies are still too high and evidence strongly suggests that early sexual activity increases the risk of cervical cancer".

Our Religion and Morals Committee sent one of these obscene magazines to the Northern Constabulary last October, requesting it to refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal. The Chief Constable replied, "Notwithstanding the fact that I fully share your concerns regarding the content of the magazine and that it has the potential to corrupt, I am inhibited from taking any definitive action on advice from the Procurator Fiscal that

he would not be prepared to institute proceedings under the Act as he is of the opinion that the magazine is no more pornographic than many others openly for sale in newsagents throughout the country."

Matters have sunk to a very low ebb when the hands of the police are tied by higher official policy which says, as it were, about such a serious breach of the law: "The crime is no worse than similar others which are being widely committed; therefore take no action." We have great reason to cry to God that He would deal with this "wicked and adulterous generation" in mercy, and not in judgement, so that we would repent of the immorality which pervades the country, and become a godly nation.

The true face of Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army

THE IRA has shown its true colours once again by its London bombings. The affrontry, duplicity and cold-blooded cynicism of the leaders of Sinn Fein and the IRA in saying that the break-down of the "peace process" was the fault of the British Government is almost incredible, but we need not be surprised by their statement.

How is the Government at fault in their eyes? It has asked them to surrender their weapons of murder before joining any peace negotiations - but they insist on holding on to them while sitting at the table. It has called for elections in Northern Ireland - but they know that the world will then see that they have the support of less than 10 per cent of the electorate, and they are resolved that the bullet and the bomb will win the day for them.

While they talked about the need to achieve peace, and even before the Mitchell Commission reported on terrorist weapons, they were implementing their plans for the London bombing.

We cannot see that the Ulster problem admits of any just solution by political negotiations; nor can we see any significant betterment in the situation as long as the Government refuses to act decisively against republican armed forces which are enemies of Britain. The only solution which will appease Sinn Fein and the IRA is that Britain surrender Ulster and its British citizens to Ireland.

We are quite sure however, that God is able to divide and scatter these enemies of Protestantism and democracy and to bring stability to this troubled part of the United Kingdom. The ideal solution - and one that is prayed for by the Lord's people - is that God would pour out his Spirit upon the land so that Roman Catholics and unconverted Protestants would turn from their errors and sins and be joined together in the bonds of gospel truth, repentance, faith and love.

Church Information

Eastern Europe Mission visit

PENDING my obtaining leave of absence from my Presbytery, I hope to visit Eastern Europe, along with Mr Alastair MacRae, Inverness, for two and a half weeks. We intend to take our usual vehicle, well-laden with humanitarian aid, Bibles and Christian literature, and visit our friends and contacts mainly in Kishinev in Moldova and Kiev in Ukraine. God willing, we plan to leave on Tuesday, 19th March, and cross from Ramsgate to Oostende on the Sally Line ferry, and then to return on Friday, 5th April.

Our giving humanitarian aid, which is a christian duty of course, is not our principle aim in visiting Eastern Europe but to bring the Scriptures to those who are yet in spiritual darkness. To distribute the Word of God is to distribute the most important of all writings, because it is the very "word of truth" from the mouth of God - the "word of salvation" which alone holds forth the remedy for lost, ruined sinners. Its teachings are always relevant to all classes of people in every place throughout the world.

We believe that at present God in His providence directs our Church to continue this missionary endeavour in Eastern Europe. We hope therefore that all who read this will pray for the work, seeking that the Lord will bless His word to those into whose hands it comes, and to the few to whom we preach during our visits. We hope also that financial support for the maintaining of the work will be given. This is even more necessary at present because the Eastern Europe Fund expenditure for 1995 exceeded the income.

(Rev) Donald A. Ross

Staff required for African Missions

THE Foreign Missions Committee would be pleased to hear from any suitably qualified persons with a desire to serve the Lord in the foreign mission field in the following areas and positions.

ZIMBABWE

1. Secondary School Ingwenya. Teachers urgently required.
2. Mbuma Hospital, Nkayi. At least four situations vacant.

KENYA

1. Omorembe Health Centre, Sengera. Nurses required immediately.
2. Sengera Mission. Primary or secondary teacher.

Enquiries should be made to the Clerk, Rev JR Tallach, The Free Presbyterian Manse, Raasay, Kyle, Ross-shire, IV40 8PB (Tel and Fax: 01478 660216), in the first instance.

Notice regarding Synod Agenda

CLERKS of Presbyteries, conveners and clerks of Synod committees, and all interested parties should note that all items of business intended to be placed on the Synod Agenda must be in the hands of the Clerk of Synod by Tuesday, 19th March, 1996.

(Rev.) *John MacLeod*
Clerk of Synod

Notice to conveners and clerks of Standing Committees

THE conveners and clerks of all standing committees of Synod should note that all committee reports must be in the hands of the Clerk of Synod by Tuesday, 26th March, 1996, for printing purposes. These reports should contain information about the work of the committees during the year. Recommendations and proposals should be sent as separate items for the Synod Agenda.

(Rev.) *John MacLeod*
Clerk of Synod

Committee Meetings

THE following Synod Committees will meet in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church as follows, God willing:

Tuesday, 19th March

11.00 am - 1.00 pm	Foreign Missions Committee
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	Welfare of Youth Committee
2.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Finance Committee
5.00 pm - 6.00 pm	Sabbath Observance Committee
5.00 pm - 6.00 pm	Outreach Committee
6.30 pm - 8.00 pm	Publications Committee
7.00 pm - 8.30 pm	Dominions and Overseas Committee
8.00 pm - 9.30 pm	Bookroom Committee

Wednesday, 20th March

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Religion and Morals Committee
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Training of the Ministry Committee
11.30 am - 1.00pm	Church Interests Committee

Meetings of Presbytery (D.V.)

SOUTHERN: At Glasgow on Tuesday, 26th March at 6.00 pm.

SKYE: At Portree on Tuesday, 23rd April at 11.00 am.

OUTER ISLES: At Stornoway on Tuesday, 19th June 1.00 pm.

WESTERN: At Laide on Tuesday, 12th March at 6.00 pm.

Editor's return

THE Editor has resumed his duties after having visited our Missions in Zimbabwe and Kenya as a Church Deputy for four months. He thankfully acknowledges the kind providence of the Lord in all his travels. He also thanks Rev. John Macleod and Rev. K. D. Macleod for editing the Magazine during his absence.

Corrections

1. The address of Sengera Mission in Kenya is PO Box 3403, not Box 3401 as was mistakenly shown on the back cover of the last issue.
2. Page 37, February issue. Owen's sermon, "Walking humbly with God," is extracted from volume 9, not 8, of his works.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Anon £45; Anon £29.19; both per LS.

Legacy Reserve Fund: Mrs MM (S. Harris), £20.

Congregational treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Laide: For *Congregational Funds*: Friend Lochcarron £7; Belgium Visitor £2; Dutch Friend £1200; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Aultbea £20; Friend Mellon Udrigle £20 all per Rev DAR; Anon in collection plate, £10; Anon, Aultbea, £10; Friends Laide £50. For *Sermon Tapes*: Friend Gairloch £15 per Rev DAR. For *Magazine Free Distribution Fund*: Friend Aultbea £10 per Rev DAR. For *Council Tax*: Friend £110. For *Car Fund*: Friend Laide £10; Friend Laide £10. For *Church Building Fund*: In collection plate, Anon £20. For *Eastern Europe Fund*: Friend, Lochcarron £10; Friend, Edinburgh £25; Residents in Isle View Home, Aultbea, £14.20; Friend, Laide £50; Residents, Isle View Home, £15; Friend, Lochcarron £60; F.M., £20; W.M., £10; Friend, Aultbea £15; Psalm 145:10.12, £100; Friend, Aultbea, £30; Friends, Udrigle, £20; Friend, Aultbea, £10; Residents, Isle View Home, £16; Residents in Isle View Home, Aultbea, £16; Friends, Inverness, £100, all per Rev DAR. Residents, Isle View Home, £11.50, per IM. Anon, Stornoway £15; Anon £100; Anon, Stornoway £5; In collection plate, Anon, £20; Friends, Laide, £50; In collection plate, Anon, £20; Friend, Laide, £50; In collection plate, Anon, £20. For *Italian Mission*: Anon, £100, per CR.

Larne: *Where most needed*: Anon, £30. *Manse Expenses*: A friend, £30. *Communion expenses*: A friend, £30; NM, £10; A friend, £30. *Congregational Fund*: Anon, Glasgow, £40 per J Freeke.

Lochcarron: For *Congregational Purposes*: January, Friend, Carnoustie, £40. For *Kenya Mission Hospital*: Envelope in collection plate, £20. *Easten Europe Fund*: August, Envelope in collection plate £70. September, Anon, £23. October, Anon £45. December, Anon £15; D.M.C., £32.50; D.T.R., £30; Houston, £20; Anon £55; Anon £50; John Strang, £10. *Where most needed*: Friend, Carnoustie, £40 in October. *Sustentation Fund*: D.G., £1.

Portree: *Congregational Expenses*: Friend £30,000; Friend £48; Tolsta Friend £20. *Sustentation Fund*: A.C., £125; Friend, £10.

South Harris: *Sustentation Fund*: Friend, Strond, £100. *Congregational Fund*: Friend, Leachlee, £20; Friend, Stockinish, £20; Friends, Home of Rest, Leverburgh, £40; Friends, Stockinish, £10; Friend, Leachlee, £20; Friend, Leachlee, £20; Friends, Leverburgh, £500.

Staffin: *Where most needed*: Friend £20, envelope in collection plate.

Kames: M.T.D., £20.