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Thou God Seest Me

When Hagar, Sarah's maid, fled from the face of her mistress she little understood that the eye of the God of heaven was upon her. Yet this was the case and the Lord was to teach her this lesson. The Lord, whose eye was upon her all the way she went, sent His Angel to her who found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. The words of the Angel to her were: "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands." The Angel also gave her the promise of a seed that would not be numbered for multitude through Ishmael who would be born to her. It was now that Hagar realised that she was under the eye of the God of heaven for she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me.

God is omnipresent and omniscient. The Psalmist had to say concerning Him:

"His eyes do see, His eyelids try
men's sons. The just He proves
But His soul hates the wicked man,
and him that violence loves."

His eyes are upon the righteous and the wicked. So it is written, "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." This is because God sees and knows the sons of men full well. Nothing escapes His notice. He "will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Though God bides His time and delays judgment, it is not because He does not take notice or know what is going on. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." There is no creature that is not manifest in His sight. This is a lesson which we all have to learn: "Thou God seest me."

David in Psalm 139 gives expression to the realisation he had of God's omniscience and omnipresence when he says, "Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." Again he gave expression to similar sentiments in the words that follow a little later:

"From Thy Sp'rit whither shall I go?
or from Thy presence fly?
Ascend I heav'n, lo, Thou art there;
there, if in hell I lie.

Take I the morning wings, and dwell
in utmost parts of sea;
Ev'n there, Lord, shall Thy hand me lead,
Thy right hand hold shall me.

Was it any wonder that he had to say in the midst of it all, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it"?

To the godless this message — Thou God seest me — cannot be a welcome one. The desire of the ungodly is to escape from the eye of God, to hide themselves in secret places where the eye of God cannot behold them. One of these secret places is forgetfulness of God. The thought is that if I forget God, God has ceased to exist for me and can take no notice of me. What foolishness there is in the heart of man! How unreasonable to suppose that because we have closed our eyes that the sun has gone out. Yet such is the perversity of the wicked that they would rather believe this than take cognizance of God's omniscience and omnipresence. Let sinners lay to heart that there is no escape from an all-seeing God, and that when the books are opened at the great day of Judgment everything will be found written therein.

For the gracious soul this message — Thou God seest me — bears a different aspect altogether. How much comfort the tried, afflicted people of God have derived from these words, Thou God seest me. Under oppression, affliction and trouble, as well as in their seasons of favour and blessing, this comforting word holds true. Let them go down into the greatest depths, it is still — Thou God seest me. This was Job's experience: "He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." And so it is in the personal experience of each one of His saints. They are comforted by this knowledge that the Lord is

watching over them for good and that he will uphold them and keep them from falling. So, too, are they comforted in this — that the Lord knows them altogether, their sins, their faults, the corruption that is within them, and that, therefore, in the provision that He has made in Christ for them is provision to meet their every need.

Let us take this word then — Thou God seest me — and endeavour by a believing reception of it to make it our own, and let us hold it ever before our eyes and heart as a warning and as an encouragement day by day to guide us and to keep us in the way. It is a motto suitable for all — Thou God seest me.

Extract from Sermon

by Rev. Donald Macfarlane

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give you rest"

(Exodus xxxiii. 14)

The cloudy pillar by which He led Israel was a visible representation of His presence. The Lord was in that cloud, and the people were guided by this visible sign. In all their movements, during their march as well as in their encampments, they were to be regulated by these means of guidance. Where, and how long, they were to rest was indicated by the resting of the cloud, and when they were to resume their march was made known by the moving of the cloud. They would require, therefore, to have their eye always on the cloud. There might have been other clouds, but this was the only sure means of guidance. But some might mistake a common cloud for the special cloud which was to guide the people. How could the one be distinguished from the other? The common cloud was driven by every wind that blew; the special was moved according to the will of the Lord. He was in that cloud, and directed its motions. The one was dependent on the wind, the other on the will of God. It would be dangerous, then, to mistake the one for the other. The church at present is surrounded by this danger. False teachers are compared to clouds, and there is great need of the warning, "Be not carried about with every wind of doctrine." There are many false teachers occupying high positions in the visible church in this age, who have forsaken the good old way, and have strayed into bye-paths of their own making. Why have they forsaken the good old way? They thought that was too tedious; they tell us they want to make progress. They profess to be "men of progress". It is quite

possible that the cloud driven by the wind would make more progress in one day than the cloud in which the Lord's presence was would make in a month. But what kind of progress would it be? That depended on what direction the wind blew. All the progress depends on that, and on that alone. We are sure that those who follow the tendency that is not according to God's Word make progress backward and not forward. Such is the progress made by the men who profess to be men of progress in our day. It is said that it is because of the great learning of these men they have adopted their new theology. They may have a learning of a sort. But we read in Scripture of some who were "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth". But that the views which they promulgate are an evidence of their learning none can believe but those who are ignorant of the history of the Church. There are no errors introduced now but a schoolboy might know as well as they by reading Dr Owen and other great writers, who discussed and refuted them by the Word of God in their own day. The errors that have been buried in the grave by learned and godly men of the past are now revived in the dark night that has fallen on this generation. There was a time when medical doctors raised dead corpses out of the grave to dissect them so as to acquire skill in their profession, but because the law of the land was against such work they took good care not to do it in the day time — when the sun was up. They did their work in the dark. So it is now. When errors are revived it is a sign that it is night in the church. But there is this sad difference: while it was unlawful for these men to raise dead bodies, the Church has made a law to enable false teachers to revive and teach erroneous doctrines. That law protects them in doing the work of darkness, and they cannot be stopped until the Lord comes in power and causes that Church to bury her dead. Beware of false prophets. Keep close to the Word of God. It is the only rule of faith and practice. As the Lord was in the cloud, He is in His Word. The Word is the outward means of guidance now; and Christ promises His presence with the Church so long as she continues to "teach the people to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded." But whenever she ceases to teach what He has commanded, and begins to teach the commandments of men, He withdraws His presence and leaves her to her own devices. The Word is the sure means of guidance, but the blind cannot see. We need, therefore the inward illumination of the Spirit, that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened in a spiritual knowledge of the outward rule given, and that our hearts may be disposed to follow its guidance.

Holiness

by Bishop J. C. Ryle

Let me try to show what true practical holiness is — what sort of persons are those whom God calls holy.

A man may go great lengths, and yet never reach true holiness. It is not knowledge — Balaam had that; nor great profession — Judas Iscariot had that: nor doing many things — Herod had that: nor zeal for certain matters in religion — Jehu had that: nor morality and outward respectability of conduct — the young ruler had that: nor taking pleasure in hearing preachers — the Jews in Ezekiel's time had that: nor keeping company with godly people — Joab and Gehazi and Demas had that. Yet none of these was holy! These things alone are not holiness. A man may have any one of them, and yet never see the Lord.

What then is true practical holiness? It is hard question to answer. I do not mean that there is any want of Scriptural matter on the subject. But I fear lest I should give a defective view of holiness, and not say all that ought to be said; or lest I should say things about it that ought not to be said, and so do harm. Let me, however, try to draw a picture of holiness, that we may see it clearly before the eyes of our minds. Only let it never be forgotten, when I have said all, that my account is but a poor imperfect outline at the best.

1. Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment — hating what He hates — loving what He loves — and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word. He who most entirely agrees with God, he is the most holy man.

2. A holy man will endeavour to shun every known sin, and to keep every known commandment. He will have a decided bent of mind toward God, a hearty desire to do His will — a greater fear of displeasing Him than of displeasing the world, and a love to all His ways. He will feel what Paul felt when he said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22), and what David felt when he said, "I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right and I hate every false way" (Psalm 119:128).

3. A holy man will strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ. He will not only live the life of faith in Him, and draw from Him all his daily peace and strength, but he will also labour to have the mind that was in Him, and to be "conformed to His image" (Rom. 8:29). It will be his aim to

bear with and forgive others, even as Christ forgave us — to be unselfish, even as Christ pleased not Himself — to walk in love, even as Christ loved us — to be lowly-minded and humble, even as Christ made Himself of no reputation and humbled Himself. He will remember that Christ was a faithful witness for the truth — that He came not to do His own will — that it was His meat and drink to do His Father's will — that He would continually deny Himself in order to minister to others — that He was meek and patient under undeserved insults — that He thought more of godly poor men than of kings — that He was full of love and compassion to sinners — that He was bold and uncompromising in denouncing sin — that He sought not the praise of men, when He might have had it — that He went about doing good — that He was separate from worldly people — that He continued instant in prayer — that He would not let His nearest relations stand in His way when God's work was to be done. These things a holy man will try to remember. By them he will endeavour to shape his course in life. He will lay to heart the saying of John, "He that saith he abideth in Christ ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John 2:6); and the saying of Peter, that "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps" (1 Peter 2:21). Happy is he who has learned to make Christ his "all", both for salvation and example! Much time would be saved, and much sin prevented, if men would oftener ask themselves the question, "What would Christ have said and done, if He were in my place?"

4. A holy man will follow after meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, patience, kind tempers, government of his tongue. He will bear much, forbear much, overlook much, and be slow to talk of standing on his rights. We see a bright example of this in the behaviour of David when Shimei cursed him — and of Moses when Aaron and Miriam spake against him (2 Sam. 16:10; Num. 12:3).

5. A holy man will follow after temperance and self-denial. He will labour to mortify the desires of his body — to crucify his flesh with his affections and lusts — to curb his passions — to restrain his sinful inclinations, lest at any time they break loose. Oh, what a word is that of the Lord Jesus to the Apostles, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life" (Luke 21:34); and that of the Apostle Paul, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27).

6. A holy man will follow after charity and brotherly kindness. He will endeavour to observe the golden rule of doing as he would have men

to do him, and speaking as he would have men speak to him. He will be full of affection towards his brethren — towards their bodies, their property, their characters, their feelings, their souls. "He that loveth another," says Paul, "hath fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). He will abhor all lying, slander, back-biting, cheating, dishonesty, and unfair dealing, even in the least things. The shekel and cubit of the sanctuary were larger than those in common use. He will strive to adorn his religion by all his outward demeanour, and to make it lovely and beautiful in the eyes of all around him. Alas, what condemning words are the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians, and the Sermon on the Mount, when laid alongside the conduct of many professing Christians!

7. A holy man will follow after a spirit of mercy and benevolence towards others. He will not stand all the day idle. He will not be content with doing no harm — he will try to do good. He will strive to be useful in his day and generation, and to lessen the spiritual wants and misery around him as far as he can. Such was Dorcas, "full of good works and almsdeeds, which she did" — not merely purposed and talked about, but did. Such as one was Paul: "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you," he says, "though the more abundantly I love you the less I be loved" (Acts 9:36; 2 Cor. 12:15).

8. A holy man will follow after purity of heart. He will dread all filthiness and uncleanness of spirit, and seek to avoid all things that might draw him into it. He knows his own heart is like tinder, and will diligently keep clear of the sparks of temptation. Who shall dare to talk of strength when David can fall? There is many a hint to be gleaned from the ceremonial law. Under it the man who only touched a bone, or a dead body, or a grave, or a diseased person, became at once unclean in the sight of God. And these things were emblems and figures. Few Christians are ever too watchful and too particular about this point.

9. A holy man will follow after the fear of God. I do not mean the fear of a slave, who only works because he is afraid of punishment, and would be idle if he did not dread discovery. I mean rather the fear of a child, who wishes to live and move as if he was always before his father's face, because he loves him. What a noble example Nehemiah gives us of this! When he became Governor at Jerusalem he might have been chargeable to the Jews and required of them money for his support. The former Governors had done so. There was none to blame him if he did. But he says, "So did not I, because of the fear of God" (Neh. 5:15).

10. A holy man will follow after humility. He will desire, in lowliness

of mind, to esteem all others better than himself. He will see more evil in his own heart than in any other in the world. He will understand something of Abraham's feeling, when he says, "I am dust and ashes;" — and Jacob's, when he says, "I am not worthy of the least of all Thy mercies;" — and Job's, when he says, "I am vile;" — and Paul's, when he says, "I am chief of sinners." Holy Bradford, that faithful martyr of Christ, would sometimes finish his letters with these words, "A most miserable sinner, John Bradford." Good old Mr Grimshaw's last words, when he lay on his death-bed, were these, "Here goes an unprofitable servant."

11. A holy man will follow after faithfulness in all the duties and relations in life. He will try, not merely to fill his place as well as others who take no thought for their souls, but even better, because he has higher motives, and more help than they. Those words of Paul should never be forgotten, "Whatever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord" — "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Col. 3:23; Rom. 12:11). Holy persons should aim at doing everything well, and should be ashamed of allowing themselves to do anything ill if they can help it. Like Daniel, they should seek to give no "occasion" against themselves, except "concerning the law of their God" (Dan. 6:5). They should strive to be good husbands and good wives, good parents and good children, good masters and good servants, good neighbours, good friends, good subjects, good in private and good in public, good in the place of business and good by their firesides. Holiness is worth little indeed, if it does not bear this kind of fruit. The Lord Jesus puts a searching question to His people, when He says, "What do ye more than others?" (Matt. 5:47).

12. Last, but not least, a holy man will follow after spiritual mindedness. He will endeavour to set his affections entirely on things above, and to hold things on earth with a very loose hand. He will not neglect the business of the life that now is; but the first place in his mind and thoughts will be given to the life to come. He will aim to live like one whose treasure is in heaven, and to pass through this world like a stanger and pilgrim travelling to his home. To commune with God in prayer, in the Bible, and in the assembly of His people — these things will be the holy man's chiefest enjoyments. He will value everything and place and company, just in proportion as it draws him nearer to God. He will enter into something of David's feeling, when he says, "My soul followeth hard after Thee." "Thou art my portion" (Psalm 63:8; 119:57).

Nothing to Pay

(Continued from page 129)

In about three weeks from this time I saw Reid again; but how can words describe the change that had taken place in him? On my entering, he looked at me with solemn emotion, and said, "I have seen the Lord — my sins are pardoned — my burden is gone." I stood amazed, as though I had never believed the extent of all I had ever said to him. He then entered into the detail of the Lord's gracious discovery of Himself to his soul, and I soon found our office was changed; he was now the teacher — I was the learner. The Lord had filled his heart with love, and melted every doctrine into rich unctuous experience, while tears of self-loathing fell on a free pardon.

At about an interval of ten days I saw Reid again. It was a solemn season. He said, "You never told me of half the bliss and joy I feel. Did you ever feel as I do? Did any one out of heaven ever enjoy a precious Christ as I do? Was ever a rebel sinner favoured as I am? I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep. I am as afraid of my love as if it was a bird that a wink would drive away. I am filled with the Spirit — I am drunk with this new wine. My poor wife thinks me mad — and well she may. I am beside myself with joy upon times. Nothing troubles me now. There's the infant a-dying; trouble all around me; but I don't give it a thought. Do you know (he continued), my wife's sister sent me some wine, but I won't taste a drop of it, lest they should say 'twas their wine made me happy. 'Tis up there on the shelf, and there it may stay for me. Oh, that everlasting love of God — that precious blood of the Lamb! That's the wine that cheers my heart."

In this frame he continued for weeks and up half his nights reading, praying, and praising God. One day he said to me, "My poor wife is as dead as the table. She is a good wife and mother, but she knows not the Lord." "Do you talk to her about her soul?" I asked. "Yes," he replied; "but I see myself over again in her, for she hates God's truth as I did; and half the Christians that come in to see me don't understand me; and when I tell them what God has done for me, and how I fought against Him, they look at me as if I was mad." After some weeks I perceived his joys gradually abated; and in answer to my inquiries how he was, he used to answer, "Very changeable, but God is just the same."

About six months from my first visit, Reid revived wonderfully — was

able to get to a place of worship — conduct family prayer morning and evening, and work a little in his garden. An opportunity offering of a more comfortable cottage for his family, he removed into it about this time. "Well, Reid," said I, on entering his new habitation, "I am truly glad to see you in so nice a little place. This is a great change for the better." He looked up from under his shaggy eyebrows, and said, "Yes, 'tis well enough." The tone of voice was not one of satisfaction, and a momentary thought of vexation gleamed across my mind at his want of gratitude. "Well," I said, rather reproachfully, "I did think you would have been pleased to get into such a nice place as this." He looked full at me for a minute, and then said, "This cot will never be to me what the other was: that was a heavenly house — a glorious house. There Jesus found me in my sins; there He pardoned me; there He often talked with me. No other house will ever be to me what that house was." His voice faltered as he spoke, and he dashed away a tear that dimmed his eye. I talked a little of the preciousness of an Immanuel — *God with us* — a Jesus ever the same. "Yes," said he; "God can do much for me here, but what I felt there can't be done twice."

Reid's health began again to give way, and his sufferings became most acute. Once I visited him under a violent attack of pain. I inquired how it was within. "Why," he said, "I have no more religion in me than the fender these last two days — my religion is all gone." "Well," I answered, "you are to die with *nothing to pay*; and to the last sand you must learn you have nothing but Christ to glory in." "Yes," he rejoined, "that's true; I have nothing to pay. I am a poor ruined sinner today in myself; all I have is from Jesus. But I have been thinking all this morning 'tis no cheat what I have felt; for now I am left in my feelings, if I was left of God too, Satan would soon overrun my soul, and be too mighty for a fleshly religion." "Well," said I, "if your religion is gone as to happy experience, Jesus says, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee' — 'I am with you always, even to the end'." This seemed to cheer him.

A few days after this interview I sent to know how he was. He said to the messenger, with great solemnity, "When a man comes to die with his sins all pardoned, 'tis no matter then that he can neither read, nor think, nor talk. Jesus has done all, and left me nothing to do." In a few days I saw him again. His agonies were indescribable. He said, "Those two dark days I wanted my wife to kill me, and put me out of my misery; but I am willing to wait the Lord's time now." "How do you feel in your mind?" I asked. "Happy as a child," was his emphatic whisper, and a little smile illumined his rugged countenance as he spoke. The next day I called,

Reid was asleep, and the wife out. The eldest child, a girl about twelve years old, was sitting sewing in the kitchen. From her I learnt her father had passed an awful night of pain. They had all sat up with him. I asked her, "Did he talk at all?" "No," she replied, simply; "he seldom says anything now but, 'I am happy'." Once, and but once more, I saw Reid. When I entered he smiled faintly, and raising himself up in his bed hastily, thrust out his bony hand, and grasped mine. "I have been lying on the brink of the grave since I saw you last," he said; "but I don't dread it. I long to roll in and be at rest; then I shall be with the Lord. Ah," he continued, with affectionate earnestness, while tears of love glistened in his eyes, "I shall see Him for ever who was revealed to me in that house I was so loath to leave. No wonder I loved every stone of it; but I shall soon be above — I shall soon see Him as He is. Oh, what grace it was that enlightened my eyes!" Thus he continued for some time, uttering many precious truths, that refreshed my heart to hear. The Sabbath evening after this he departed. During the day, as the neighbours dropped in, he shook hands with each and all, and said, deliberately and cheerfully, "Good bye; I am going to heaven:" and to his wife many times he said, "Don't trouble; I am going to Jesus." An hour before his death he said to her in a whisper, "Take care of yourself and our dear children. You have been a good wife. God bless you!" These were the last words audible.

I doubt not readers will be found who may denounce my share in these conversations as *unguarded*, *injudicious*, and *dangerous*. Let results speak, and let God's people take encouragement therefrom to tell all they know, whether men will hear or forbear, and leave the God who *gave* the truth to *guard* it.

Obituary

Mrs Essie Green, Finchley, London

There passed away at Killearnan in the Black Isle on 21st January 1977, Mrs Essie Green, wife of Mr Bernard Green, formerly of Finchley, London. Though she and her husband had only come to reside in the North of Scotland a few months before she passed away, yet her passing left a great blank in the area, as those who knew her more intimately can testify.

Essie, as she was familiarly called, was the eldest daughter of the late

Mr and Mrs John MacDonald, Mossfield Drive, Oban. She was born in Beauly on 26th August 1918, one of twins. The other twin subsequently developed meningitis and died, but Essie, who had also been ill earlier, was spared. The purposes of the Lord are from eternity.

For a short time Essie's parents lived in Glasgow but then went to reside in Oban, where they spent most, if not all, of the remainder of their days. Mr John MacDonald, Essie's father, was an elder and also the precentor for many years in the Oban congregation. He was an able speaker and gave help with supply from time to time, especially at Fort William. His supplying of Fort William was done at great inconvenience as he had to be back early on Monday morning for work, but he grudged no effort put out for the furtherance of Christ's Cause. Essie's mother was a professing woman over many years. She did not take that profession lightly, and was eminently a woman of prayer. In this her daughter Essie followed her when she became a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a loss are such mothers in Israel when they are removed!

Essie, then, was nurtured in the Gospel, and had before her eyes in her parents evidence of living Christianity. We have reason to think that she was kept in a measure from the waywardness into which so many fall, even when blessed with godly parents. The concerns of a large household, in difficult and trying times, her parents had to shoulder, and Essie, we know, gave her parents all the help she could, and did so unstintingly. Essie, too, had to share the grief of her parents and the rest of the family when her eldest brother was reported missing, and subsequently presumed killed, in Crete in the Second World War. This blow left its mark on her mother for the rest of her days.

Though Essie had all the benefits of a Christian upbringing, this did not and could not of itself bring her to the Saviour. A change came in her circumstances when on 8th June 1949 she was married to Mr Bernard Green, a Deacon in the Strict Baptist Church. She now went to reside in Finchley, London, where she was to spend the remainder of her days, apart from the last few months of her life. In London she was much attached to Rev. J. P. MacQueen, under whose ministry she sat for many years. It was ten years after her removal to London that she made a public profession of her faith in Christ, receiving encouragement from a sermon preached by Rev. Alex. Morrison, North Uist, from the first chapter in Ruth. That was in 1959. When she actually came to a saving knowledge of the truth is not clear but it was evident for many years before she professed, that she was leading an exemplary life. She took the time of her deliverance to be after she came to London, though her

husband believed that a work of grace was going on before they married. One evidence of it was the concern he saw she had for the glory of God. Also in seeking direction in connection with their marriage he received encouragement from the Word concerning her that she was a vessel of mercy.

The hospitality she saw in her parents home at 11 Mossfield Drive, which would be full of the Lord's people at communion seasons and at other times, and where the songs of Zion were frequently sung, she continued in her own home, along with her like-minded husband. Many who came from Scotland to work in London found a congenial home from home at 8 Cyprus Avenue, Finchley, and not a few, we believe, benefited from the Christian atmosphere they found there and the gracious counsel and advice they received. None could be long with Essie and not know where she stood in the things that mattered. Even those who had not yet come to know the Lord could not but respect her. Indeed she was loved by those who had the privilege of enjoying the fellowship and hospitality of her home. Though never enjoying robust health, yet she remained bright in her disposition, ever welcoming to her home those who loved the gates of Zion, and always seeking to speak a word in season to young and old. To speak a word for Christ was her desire in whatever company she found herself and she did it in so natural a manner that persons could not easily take offence.

During Essie's many years of poor health in London, and though she lived many miles from the hall where our services were held, it was rare for her place to be empty in the House of God. So, too, in the last months of her life she continued to attend the services in much pain and weakness. In this she was a shining example. No frivolous excuse would deter her from attending the public means of grace. She could say:

The habitation of Thy house,

Lord, I have loved well;

Yea, in that place I do delight

Where doth Thine honour dwell.

A poem written by her on one occasion when she was laid aside and unable to attend a sacramental season in the congregation gives expression to her soul exercise over the Lord's dealings with her in thus been prevented from being with the Lord's people on the Mount.

While in London Essie underwent at various times four operations and when she and her husband moved to the North of Scotland in October 1976 cancer was already well advanced in her. There remained for her only a few months of life's journey. When the pain of her trouble grew

more severe towards the end she was confined to the house but enjoyed the visits of some of the Lord's servants and people. She was wonderfully upheld in her suffering, never complaining of the Lord's dealings with her, but often complaining of her own deadness and hardness of heart. Her end was peace. Those who were privileged to see her during her last days saw what grace can do in preparing a child of God for glory. She gave testimony of the grace that was in her. "What a strange thing it must be, to be one moment in time and the next in eternity," she said. "I have nothing to do now but to die. If grace is needed for dying, I think I am getting it now. I feel a peace and confidence." Referring to her family she said, "I feel willing to leave you all in the Lord's hands." "I stand upon His merits, I know no other stand — that is all I can say." She said too, "We cannot imagine the joys and pleasures of heaven although we get tastes of it here." When her husband said, "Soon you will be clothed in the white linen of Christ's righteousness," she added, "without spot, or wrinkle or any such thing." Again, "I never understood what was meant by grace to die; but God, who gave me grace to live, has given me this special grace now for dying." "I feel such submission now: God's will is perfect. The rebellion has gone. God has ordered all things perfectly." "He has spared me through my illnesses," she said to her family, "until you were old enough to look after yourselves. I am so thankful that I am not leaving young children. My motto when you were children and under my care was: 'Them that honour me, I will honour.' God forgave my weaknesses and errors in your upbringing and has given me great joy in my children and to see them walking in the right way."

After the last words of Samuel Rutherford — Immanuel's Land — had been sung, she said, "My prayer is that all those who have visited me these past few days will be with me in Immanuel's land." Her last words were, "Nothing but Almighty Strength has brought me thus far." She passed peacefully away with her loved ones around her on the evening of 21st January 1977, and entered, we believe, that blessed land "where the inhabitant shall never say, I am sick."

To her husband, who remains to mourn the passing of a beloved helpmeet, and to her son and daughters, who have lost a gracious and loving mother, we extend our loving sympathy; also to her four brothers and four sisters, as well as her large family circle; desiring for them all that they may be followers of those who are now inheriting the promises, and that Christ's promise may be fulfilled in them, "They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels."

D.B.M.

Eadar-Mhineachadh Air Salm CXXX

6. Tha a' chrìoch cheudna aig *peacaidhean a ghnìomhaicheadh an déigh rabhaidhean àraidh 'fhaotainn*. Am measg nan iomadh rabhadh àraidh sin a tha Dia a' gnàthachadh a thaobh a phobuill 'nam peacachadh, cha dean sinn ach aon fhear a chomharachadh:—'Nuair a tha anam a' gleachdadh ri ana-miann no ri buaireach éigin, tha Dia 'na fhreasdal, ann an searmonachadh an t-soisgeil no ann am frithealadh aoin air bith d'a òrduighibh, a' toirt focail àraidh am fagus da, a tha air mhodh àraidh freagarrach r'a chor, agus sin aon chuid ann an rathad achmhasain no ìmpidh, air chor as gu bheil e 'deanamh gréim air ionadaibh uaigneach a' chridhe. Cha-n urrainn an t-anam gun an aire a thoirt gu bheil Dia am fagus da, agus a' gairm air gu bhi 'g amharc ris-san air son cuideachaidh. Agus cha tric a tha e toirt an samhail so de rabhaidhibh d'a naoimh nach 'eil e am fagus dhoibh ann an rathad àraidh chum saorsa agus cuideachaidh a thoirt dhoibh, ma's e's gu'm freagair iad agus gu'n cur iad aghaidh air; ach ma bhitheas a chùram agus a chaoimhneas ann an so air an dearmad, bithid an t-achmhasan leis an labhair e 'na dhéigh sin gu tric ni's ro ghéire.

7. Far am bheil *peacaidhean a tha 'toirt maslaidh agus oilbheim*. cha tric a leigeas iad an t-anam as gun doimhneachdaibh. Eadhon ann an peacaidhibh móra, 'nuair a tha Dia 'gan smachdachadh tha e gu tric a' toirt an tuilleadh aire do'n mhasladh na do'n pheacadh féin; mar ann an 2 Sam. xii. 14. Tha mòran luchd-aideachaidh nach 'eil a' toirt ach ro bheag aire d' an saoghaltachd, d'an uabhar, d'an droch nàdur, no d'an teangaigh fada; ach tha an saoghal a' toirt an aire dhoibh, ionnus gu bheil oilbheum air a thoirt do'n t-soisgeul: agus cha'n iongantach ged a bhlaiseadh an anaman féin aig a' chrìch air an toraidhibh searbha o làimh an Tighearna.

Agus tha iomadh an-tromachadh eile peacaidh mar so, a tha 'leasachadh nam brosnachadh sin nach 'eil 'nan nàdur féin cho uamharr ri cuid eile, air chor as gu bheil ciont annta a chuireas anaman anns na doimhneachdaibh. Fòghnadh iad sin a dh' ainmicheadh ann an rathad eisempleir; oir cha robh tuilleadh 'nar n-aire aig an àm, agus uime sin cha leudaich sinn air gach aon fa leth dhiubh.

Air dhuinn cuid a nithe a thoirt fainear a tha 'leasachadh ciont nam peacaidhean so leis am bheil anaman mar is tric air an cur anns a' chor a dh' ainmicheadh, ni sinn an ceann so a dhùnadh suas:—

1. *Tha an t-auam air 'uidheamachadh le gnè nuadh nan gràs, a tha a ghnàth ag oibreachadh chum a bhi 'ga ghleidheadh o'n samhail so de*

pheacaidhibh. Tha an cruthachadh nuadh beothail agus gnìomhach air son a shoirbheachaidh agus a thèaruinteachd féin, a réir nàduir coim, cheangail nan gràs: Gal. v. 17, tha e “miannachadh an aghaidh na feòla.” Cha-n urrainn an t-anam, ma seadh, tuiteam anns na peacaidhibh ribeachail so, gun a bhi gu ro mhòr a’ dearmad gnè nuaidh sin nan gràs a shuidhicheadh ann. Tha miannachadh, agus glaothaich a’ chruthachaidh nuaidh gu léir air a dhearmad. A nis, cha-n urrainn na peacaidhean a dh’ ainmicheadh a bhi air an cur an gnìomh gun a bhi ‘ga lotadh, agus gun a bhi ‘mùchadh a chleachdaidhean a tha ‘g iarraidh slàinte an anama.

2. A mheud ‘s nach ‘eil an cruthachadh nuadh so comasach dheth féin air an t-anam a ghleidheadh o na peacaidhean sin a dheanadh a thilgeadh anns na doimhneachdaibh, *tha làn ulluchadh air a dheanamh ann an Iosa Crìosd chum a bhi ‘leasachadh a ghnàth gach uireasbhuidh a bhitheas air*. Tha ionmhasan saorsa ann an Crìosd a dh’-ionnsuidh am feud an t-anam teicheadh aig àm sam blth, agus cuideachadh ‘fhaotainn ‘an aghaidh ionnsuidh ean a’ pheacaidh. Chum na crìche so tha an t-abstol ‘gar n-earalachadh: Eabh. iv. 16, “Thigemaidd le dànachd gu rìghchaithir nan gràs, chum gu faigh sinn tròcair, agus gu’n amais sinn air ghàs chum cabhair ann an àm feuma.” Ma tha àm feuma gu bràth aig an anam, tha e aige ‘nuair a tha peacaidhean brosnachail a’ toirt ionnsuidh air. Aig a’ shamhuil so a dh’ àm, tha cuideachadh freagarrach, tràthail r’ a fhaotainn ann an Crìosd chum fuasglaidh agus saorsa. Tha an cruthachadh nuadh a’ guidhe, le h-iomadh acain agus osnadh, gu’n deanadh an t-anam aghaidh a chur air. A nis, is brosnachadh ro mhòr da rìreadh e a bhi ‘ga dhearmad maille ris gach ulluchadh gràis a tha aige, am feadh a ta e ‘na sheasamh aig ar dorus agus a’ gairm thugainn, “Fosgail dhomh, oir tha mo cheann còmhdaichte le drùchd, mo chiabhan le braonaibh na h-oidhche;” agus mar an ceudna a bhi ‘deanamh tàir air osnaich a’ phrìosanaich bhochda, an cruthachadh nuadh, a dh’ òrduicheach leis a’ pheacadh chum bàis. Agus cionnus a shaoileas sinn a tha a’ chùis a’ buntuinn ri cridhe Chrìosd, ‘nuair a chi e a chlann féin a’ strìochdadh do pheacaidhibh a bhitheas a’ fàsachadh na coguis, gun aghaidh a chur air airson cuideachaidh agus sìth? Cha-n iad peacaidhean nan anmhuinneachd lathail a th’ ann an so, nach gabh seachnadh; oir tha tomhas mòr no beag de chiont annta o bhi ‘dearmad a’ chuideachaidh a dh’ ulluicheadh dhoibh ann an Crìosd. Tha meadhonan ar gleidhidh uatha annta féin beannaichte, agus dlùth do làimh; tha e’na chùram ro mhòr do Chrìosd gu’m bitheamaid air ar gleidheadh, agus tha e ‘na chùram do-labhairt d’ ar n-anamaibh féin. Uime sin, ma tha sinn a’

dearmad nam meadhonan so, tha an ciont air a dheanamh da rireadh ro chiontach.

Book Review

Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. II. Banner of Truth Trust.
417 pp. Price £4.50.

This second volume of Professor John Murray's collected writings does not contain his class lectures but rather select lectures in Systematic Theology. As Systematic Theology was the subject which Professor Murray taught at Westminster Theological Seminary we may be sure that we have in these lectures the fruit of many years of study in this important branch of the theological disciplines. The book is divided up into seven parts: I Man; II Common Grace; III Salvation; IV Faith; V Sanctification; VI The Church; VII The Last Things.

In the opening chapter Prof. Murray deals with the Origins of Man. In concluding the chapter he poses the question, "Is an evolutionary view of man's origin compatible with the biblical representation?" and answers it with an emphatic "No." And this, he says, is so, no matter what form of evolutionary theory is in view. On page 49, in dealing with the Adamic Administration, he questions the felicitousness of the term 'Covenant of Works.' In the same chapter he also states: "The view that in the Mosaic Covenant there was a repetition of the so-called Covenant of Works, current among covenant theologians, is a grave misconception and involves an erroneous construction of the Mosaic Covenant" (p. 50). In writing on the Fall of Man he does not try to solve the many difficult problems involved but is ready to acknowledge that they are insoluble. "It is not ours," he says, "to scan the reasons of God's unrevealed counsel." In the article on Inability he argues cogently against the objections commonly levelled against the doctrine of man's inability. Rather than hindering evangelism, "it is only on the pre-supposition of total depravity and complete human impotence that the full glory and power of the gospel can be declared" (p. 58). "It is not the conviction of helplessness that keeps men away from Christ; it is the opposite." In dealing with the Atonement, his defence of the Atonement as the provision of the Father's love is particularly impressive. This is true also of his article on the Obedience of Christ.

When he comes to Effectual Calling, Prof. Murray takes issue with the Westminster Divines in their called effectual calling a work (p. 165). He

maintains it should be an act no less than justification and adoption. He says also that the Catechism construes calling as specifically the action of the Holy Spirit, when the Scripture refers it specifically to God the Father. Most, we feel, would differ from the Professor in his view on Effectual Calling and would regard the Westminster Divines statement as an adequate definition of the Scriptural doctrine.

Professor Murray's view of the Church comes through when he questions whether it is right to define the Church, viewed from its visible aspect, in such a way as to include those who are not really members of Christ's body (pp. 376-7). On the question of the unity of the Church he says, "It is a monstrous travesty to make this prayer of Jesus ("that they may be one, as we are one"), the plea and the warrant for the kind of affiliation represented by the World Council of Churches." "To dissociate the unity for which Jesus prayed from all that is involved in believing on Him is to render asunder what our Lord joined together." The Professor then goes on to make a plea for unity among evangelical churches, alleging that "the lack of unity among churches of Christ which profess the faith in its purity is a patent violation of the unity of the body of Christ, and of that unity which the prayer of our Lord requires us to promote."

In the final lecture on The Last Things, Professor Murray distinguishes between the Man of Sin of 2 Thessalonians and the Antichrist to which John refers, and he regards the Man of Sin as a distinct personage who will appear on the scene of this world, just prior to the advent of Christ.

We have only referred to a selection of the thought-provoking material contained in this second volume. Students of theology will need to read it for themselves because of the variety of the material contained in it. We think that, like other of Professor John Murray's writings, it will be read mainly by those who are of a distinctly theological bent.

D.B.M.

Notes and Comments

Child Pornography Bill

A private member's Bill designed to bring about an end to the trade in child pornography has been held up in the House of Commons through the action of Mr Ian Mikardo, a left-wing Labour M.P. It is gratifying to know that the Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, has since then

pledged the Government to do all in its power to see that the Bill becomes law before the end of this session of Parliament. In support of the Bill, Mrs Mary Whitehouse handed in to the Prime Minister a petition bearing one and a half million signatures. It is to be hoped that this despicable trade will be wholly stamped out as a result of these moves.

Abortion Legislation

The Abortion Act, sponsored by Mr David Steel, now leader of the Liberal Party, has been responsible for more than one million abortions in England and Wales since it came into force ten years ago, according to a Press report. The full effects of this piece of legislation in the murder of unborn children, and in its effects on the mothers who consent to this unnatural act, and on the doctors who participate in these operations, will not likely be known until the secrets of men will be revealed before the Judge of all the earth at the great day of judgment. Then shall the earth disclose her blood; then shall men see what inhuman monsters human beings can become when the restraints of God's Spirit are withdrawn. What enormity will not man perpetrate if left to himself! The blood of those 'innocents' who have been cut off in the womb will yet be required of this nation of ours. May the Lord in His mercy speedily visit our nation so that the compassion shown to expectant mothers and to the unborn would not be the perverted 'compassion' of destroyers of life but the compassion of promoters and preservers of life.

Birching

The Isle of Man has figured prominently in the news recently because of a case brought against the Island at the European Court of Human Rights. That Court has now ordered the Isle of Man to abandon the use of the birch for the punishment of juvenile crime, stigmatising its use as a "degrading punishment." The interference of the European Court of Human Rights in the matter is to be deplored. One would think that the judges in that Court had never read in the Bible, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Even on the ground of an effective deterrent, the birch rates very high, as the Isle of Man has little violent juvenile crime; different to the mainland where there is no birch deterrent and juvenile crime is rife. Let the European Court deal with cases that are worthy of its consideration. We do not regard this as one of them.

Letter from Rhodesia

Dear Friends,

At the time of writing (12 April 1978) twenty of our schools are closed due to terrorist activity. Gwampa, the last of our out-schools, is still open, for how long we cannot tell. Ingwenya Primary and Secondary Schools still function and have as yet been saved from the close proximity of terrorism. On the medical side we are able to engage in clinical work. The clinic is situated in the grounds of the former hospital at Mbumba, and deals with minor ailments, while any serious cases are taken by Mission transport to either Nkai Hospital or Mpilo, depending on the nature of the illness.

Terrorists have done considerable damage to some of our schools, burning these to ashes as also school books and Bibles, but for most our schools simply close down, and this not without threats to teachers of one kind or another.

In the purge by terrorists, some of our church people have been beaten. However, other poor Africans outwith our Church and in our area of activity have had a sad and terrible end: burnt alive, beaten to death, others slowly mutilated to die a terrible death. To the terrorist, life is cheap, but little wonder when communistic philosophy is that man is nothing more than an animal, hence with the greatest of ease, sinful man can promote his "bloody revolution." One sad aspect of the present situation is that civilians become entangled between terrorists and security forces. We read too in the Press, of poor Africans killed in the cross-fire of Security Forces and terrorists or killed while running with and assisting terrorists. For many Africans it is death in one form or other. How tragic, but sad, that of those who escape, so few turn to God in their trouble, and some are ready to forsake the little religion they have.

One alarming aspect of terrorist activity in Rhodesia is the report that terrorists are advocating that the Church is for old people and that the young should not be asked or encouraged to go to Church, but lead the life they wish, a sign surely of communistic indoctrination. Another sign of communistic activity in Rhodesia is the attempted total destruction of civilisation in every form, no doubt with the intention to raise from the ashes their own corrupt form of government.

However, although we are beset on every side with evils of various kinds, and the gospel hindered in a variety of ways, it is cause for thankfulness that the gospel is still preached. Of the gospel preached

perhaps a synopsis from the Bulawayo Communion services would be of interest to our readers.

At our communion in December 1977, Rev. A. Ndebele preached on Thursday from Jer. 14:7-8. "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us and we are called by thy name, leave us not." Sin brings the wrath of God, manifested in the sufferings of mankind; but, worse still, God has to a great degree forsaken His Church. So few born again, so few who are truly converted. Yes, we are known as a faithful Church, preaching the Word according to the Scriptures. Yet why are so few turned to God? Because of our sin. In the midst of this our trouble, believers continue to cry to God: "Leave us not."

Rev. P. Mzamo preached on Friday from Luke 10:42. "But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." The necessity to be at the feet of Jesus. There was a degree of worldliness in Martha's heart, and therefore she was over careful about lawful engagements. This spirit kept her from the feet of Jesus. Mary at the feet of Christ signifies how she was fully satisfied with Christ. All who are at the feet of Christ manifest their desire for holiness. By being at the feet of Jesus, we will there grow in grace and obtain strength to stand faithful to Christ.

The Fellowship meeting was from Romans 8:5. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Some of the remarks on this portion were as follows.

The person born again hungers after the things of heaven. Such are called by the Word of God and by the Spirit of God. They feel so sinful that they think themselves no better than dogs. They crave the blessing of God on all they do, even when they go to their fields. Those of the flesh when they are afraid, some of them like Saul will go to the diviners, others like Judas will hang themselves, others like Adam will hide themselves, but those born of the Spirit when they are afraid they will like David and Peter turn to the Lord. Hypocrites mind the things of the flesh, although it may appear they do not, but basically they seek all things for themselves — the flesh. They will not say so, but this is their nature. When hypocrites are caught in open sin, they will make a big noise, call for witnesses, deviate, cheat. But what of the child of God? He will be as the Publican, no noise, simply "God be merciful to me a sinner."

On Saturday, Rev. A. Ndebele spoke from Matt. 25:6. The parable of

the five wise and five foolish virgins. The five foolish virgins are the false professors of religion and like the falling star on the horizon will never be seen again. Many Missions come to Africa in the name of Christ, but only to take Africans from one dismal darkness (ancestor worship) into another dismal darkness (a false profession of religion). The five wise virgins were born of the Holy Spirit. The solemn accusations of the Word of God, they pin these to themselves; "Thou art the man." But they find safety in Christ Jesus.

On Sabbath morning Rev. P. Mzamo preached from John 17:4. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." From the womb to the tomb Christ gave glory to His Father. Christ has come into the world to restore that which He has not taken away. He suffered and died for His people, He paid their debts, He saved them. He restored to them a lost glory.

After the action service there was a "fence" set round the Lord's Table which Rev. Mzamo said was the Word of God, debarring the unconverted, and encouraging the converted to sit at the Lord's Table. He spoke particularly of the murmurings of the Pharisees and their fault finding. Would we find fault with the Word of God, the Gospel, the Law of God, with Christ as the Son of God and as the Son of Man, His miraculous birth, His finished work? — then stay away from the Lord's Table. Those who maintain that the African way to worship is by the Spirits of the Ancestors, and the European way to worship God is by Christ Jesus are debarred from the Lord's Table. Those who find the Free Presbyterian Church too strict and are not happy with the way the Church keeps the Lord's Day, allowing no Sabbath travelling, no visiting, no work, yet you admire other Churches that allow all these: you are debarred from the Lord's Table. On the other hand those who have no fault to find with the Gospel, rather they find fault with themselves and mourn over sin in themselves, and complain over their carnality. They never find fault with Christ. They wish to worship God through Christ. Such may come to the Lord's Table.

Rev. A. Ndebele on Sabbath evening preached from Psalm 102:13, "Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Zion: for the time to favour her yea, the set time, is come." Zion, the Church, is despised by the world. It often happens that the world sees sin in the Church. There are those who start out well, and yet go back to the world. There are ministers who leave the Church and seek greatness in the world. These are false professors, and because of this, Zion has become despicable in the eyes of the world and is despised. But when the Lord will arise to have mercy

on His Church, by His Holy Spirit He will raise up truly converted sinners, and send converted ministers to the Church. The Word of God says that Jesus is mighty to save. He will yet arise and have mercy on His Zion: will you not come with us. Oh, come to Christ. The door is open to the worst of sinners. Come as you are; not trying to improve yourself; come even smelling of sin.

On Monday, Rev. P. Mzamo preached from Rev. 2:10, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The fears of the Church; the fear caused by irregularities in one's own life, and the fear caused by persecution. The call is for us to be faithful in every situation. Nothing disgraces the Church more than when professing people fall into sin, or when elders and ministers backslide. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." —

Yours sincerely,

DONALD A. ROSS.

Church Notes

Southern Presbytery Tribute to the late Rev. M. MacSween

The Rev. Malcolm MacSween was born on January 10th, 1904, at Marches Cottage, Carminish, Strond, Harris. While yet a child, his parents moved to Portree and then to Raasay, where his father was a missionary of the Church for many years. In 1919, Malcolm returned to Portree to pursue his secondary education at Portree School. On completing his course there six years later, he proceeded to the West of Scotland Agricultural College in Glasgow, where he qualified with the College Diploma in Agriculture. The year 1929 saw him take up the post of Estate Manager in British Central Africa. It was during his stay in that dark continent that he became convinced, not only of his need of God's constant care and protection, but also of the vanity of everything under the sun apart from the salvation of his soul. Having left his native country fired with the ambition of making a fortune, Malcolm returned to Raasay in 1932 a new man in Christ Jesus, an heir of eternal life. Two years later, he was received into full membership of the Raasay congregation. Soon afterwards, he had a compelling desire to offer himself as a candidate for the ministry in the Church, and accordingly he was received as a student by the Western Presbytery at Applecross in

September, 1935. The following month, he began his Arts course in Glasgow University, where he graduated M.A. in 1938. In November of that year, he proceeded to the Divinity course in Oban, which he completed three years later in Dingwall. On July 21st, 1942, he was ordained and inducted to his first charge, at Bracadale, Isle of Skye. There he laboured for fourteen years with diligence and acceptance until his transference to Oban. During this period of his life, Mr MacSween served as Church Deputy to Canada and the U.S.A. in 1946-47, and as Moderator of Synod in 1949-50, and was appointed Theological Tutor in Hebrew and Church History in May, 1952. On December 19th, 1956, he was inducted to the charge at Oban, where he laboured until his sudden death on March 29th, 1978. Between 1957 and 1974, Mr MacSween served as Clerk of the Southern Presbytery, and for a period from 1958, he was Convener of the Sabbath Observance Committee. In both Bracadale and Oban, he was loved by his congregations and respected by the communities.

As a pastor, Malcolm MacSween fed the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer with the sincere milk of the Word. Well equipped both spiritually and intellectually, his exercises were of a high standard — clear yet profound. The main theme of his preaching may be described in the divinely-inspired words: 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound' (Rom. 5:20). He discovered not only the enormity of sin but also the all-sufficiency of Christ to save. To him, Christ was all and in all.

As a man, Mr MacSween was endowed with an amiable disposition, and other characteristics which endear a man to his friends. He was a man of peace, who abstained from all appearance of evil. As a Christian, he was deeply exercised though naturally reserved — he would not cast his pearls before swine. He adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour. In the general administration of the Church he took an active part, with characteristic competence and thoroughness. As a tutor he rendered excellent service, for which the whole Church should thank God. His students loved and admired him, and the knowledge he imparted is reflected in their exercises.

To his sorrowing widow, son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren, we extend our sincere sympathy. To his congregation, we offer our condolence in their great loss.

'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace' (Psalm 37:37).

Induction at Glendale

Under most favourable weather conditions, a large congregation from many parts of Skye and some from the mainland, gathered in the Glendale Church on Tuesday, 25th April 1978. The occasion was the induction of the Rev. Donald Nicolson to the pastoral charge of the Duirinish congregation. The congregation had been vacant since the retiral of the late Rev. John Colquhoun in 1974.

The proceedings followed the normal pattern for such a service. The unanimous decision made at the previous meeting of Presbytery to induct Mr Nicolson was read, the Edict was returned, duly served, and proclamation was made in the usual manner at the door of the Church.

The presence of Rev. Alexander Murray, Clerk to the Western Presbytery, with that of Rev. J. W. Ross, reminded the Court of its previous links with the 'parent' presbytery. Rev. Fraser Macdonald preached from 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 verse 5; after which the Moderator gave a summary of proceedings relative to filling the vacancy. Mr Nicolson then stood, and the Moderator asked him the questions required to be put to ministers at the time of their induction to a charge. Mr Nicolson answered these questions satisfactorily; thereafter he signed the Formula in presence of the congregation. After solemn prayer by the Moderator, Mr Nicolson was inducted by authority of the Divine Head of the Church, and in the name of the Presbytery to the pastoral charge of the Duirinish congregation, and given the right hand of fellowship by all his co-presbyters. Rev. D. J. Macdonald addressed the newly inducted minister in apposite terms, and Rev. S. F. Tallach suitably exhorted the favoured congregation.

At the close of the service the congregation were given the opportunity to shake hands with their newly inducted pastor.

Our satisfaction over the settlement was tinged with sympathy for the Raasay congregation now bereft of a faithful minister of the Gospel. It is our fervent prayer that the ministry begun in Duirinish will be greatly owned of the Lord in the awakening of sinners, and the edification of saints.

FRASER MACDONALD (Clerk, Skye Presbytery).

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Western: At Laide on 6th June at 12 noon.

Southern: At Glasgow on 13th June at 6 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 20th June at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 20th June at 11.30 a.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 20th June at 6 p.m.

Barnoldswick Communion

Services for the Barnoldswick Communion will be as follows, (D.V.): Thursday, 8th June, 7.45 p.m.; Friday, 9th June, 7.45 p.m.; Saturday, 10th June, 3 p.m.; Sabbath, 11th June, 10.45 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Monday, 12th June, 7.45 p.m. The ministers expected are Rev. J. MacLeod, Stornoway and Rev. J. Brentnall, Dumbarton (D.V.). Will anyone wishing to have accommodation provided please contact Rev. J. Brentnall in good time.

Helmsdale Communion

The Helmsdale Communion will be held (D.V.) on the 2nd Sabbath of June. The services are as follows:—Thursday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 12 noon; Sabbath 12 noon.

Southern Presbytery Letter on Religious Education

Dear Madam,

I am instructed to express the deep concern of this Presbytery over your proposed termination of compulsory Religious Instruction in schools. Our education system has already capitulated in many areas to humanism and multi-racialism by failing to provide a specifically Christian education in practice. It is now to be further corrupted by seeing the law changed in favour of non-Christian religions and philosophies which had been admitted illegally into our schools. This Presbytery therefore opposes the proposed Act on the following grounds:

1. It is morally indefensible to change the law in favour of law-breakers rather than enforce the law by punishing them. Should your proposed action take place on behalf of thieves and murderers, nothing but moral anarchy would ensue. When the law is changed for the sake of non-Christian religions and philosophies, nothing but spiritual anarchy can be expected.

2. We are bound as a nation, both by the dictates of natural and revealed religion, and by our constitution, to worship the only true and living God. By admitting the worship of false gods into the land, and by providing for instruction in false religion, we are countenancing idolatry and superstition; and by giving a place to anti-Christian philosophies, we are paving the way for skepticism, polytheism and even atheism. In ancient Israel, whose constitution was the model for our own, every adopted stranger or alien was required to profess the religion of the land of his adoption; so should it be with us. In both the Old Testament and

the New (Deut. 17:18-20 and Rom. 13:1-4), national rulers are enjoined to exercise their God-given authority only in the interests of true religion, and to remove idolatry from the nation over which God has placed them.

3. The proposal to divorce ethics from Christian doctrine is contrary to the teaching of the whole Bible, as is clear from the Preface to the Ten Commandments, where the knowledge of the true God is made the basis of Israel's obedience to Him (Exod. 20: 1-3), from the Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, where discipleship is presupposed as the ground of Christian behaviour (Matt. 5-7), and from the Epistles of Paul, where a belief of true doctrine provides the foundation for all his subsequent ethical teaching (Rom. 1-11, 12-16; Eph. 1-3, 4-6).

In the light of these fundamental educational principles, this Presbytery urges you to abandon all plans to legalise the teaching of false religions, and to implement the present law by ensuring that the religion of the Bible is taught in all our schools. — Yours sincerely,

J. M. BRENTNALL.

Reply from the Department of Education and Science

Dear Mr Brentnall,

Thank you for your letter of 23rd January, addressed to the Secretary of State, about Religious Education in schools.

I can assure you that there is no substance in the claim made in recent newspaper reports that the requirements for Religious Education in schools are to be changed.

In reply to a question in the House of Commons on 13 January 1978, the Secretary of State stated 'I have repeatedly made clear that I have no plans at present to change the law in this respect'. — Yours sincerely,

(Mrs) K. F. Briggs, Schools Branch III.

CHURCH MAGAZINES

The following bound volumes of the F.P. and Y.P. Magazines are available from the Church Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE:—

Free Presbyterian Magazines Volumes 59 (1954) - 71 (1967) — Price 40p per volume.

Young People's Magazines Volumes 21 (1956) - 30 (1966) — Price 25p per volume.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

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

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Kyle: Portree Restaurant, £2; Wellwisher, £30; envelope in plate, £10; Anon., £2 (all for Manse Fund).

Lochcarron: Minister's Car, £5; £2; £2 in memory of loved one; £5; £2. Church and Manse Building Fund, £2; £2; £1; £2; £5; £6 Anon., Bracadale; £3; £5; £10 in memory of loving parents; £5 Friend of cause; £2; £2; £5; £3; £2; £20 Friend per K.M. for Painting; £10; £10; £10. Sustentation Fund, £10 in memory of loving parents; Perth Manse, £5.

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South Harris: Anon. Friend, £200 per N. MacKay, Geocrab, for South Harris Congregational Purposes.

Lochcarron Congregation Funds for year ending December, 1977. The funds for this congregation were not sent to the General Treasurer in time to be included in the March issue of the Magazine. They are as follows:—

Sustentation £900; Home Mission £140; Jewish & Foreign Mission £161; Aged & Infirm etc. £38.10; College and Library £27.57; General Building £37.70; Dominion and Overseas £48.76.