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Glorying in the Lord

As another year opens we have opportunity for reflection on the past and for consideration of the future. As we see our days passing — passing swifter than a weaver's shuttle, as the Word of God describes them — what need there is to stop for a moment and take stock of our situation. What of the past? What of the future?

Reflection on the past recalls, not only the joy of seasons of blessing when the Lord was pleased to favour us in His providence or in His grace, but also those times of adversity through which the Lord saw fit to cause us to pass. Nor can we forget, in contemplating what is past, our many sins and failings and back-slidings. We cannot but have sad reflections on these yet we have reason to rejoice that there is a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. There we may betake ourselves that we may be washed and made clean.

When we turn to the future, we turn to what is yet unknown. We do not know what a day or an hour will bring to pass. What the future is, however, is not hid from God. His people can rejoice in this. Job could say: "He knoweth the way that I take." The people of God might well despair as they look forward to the days or years that lie ahead were it not for the Lord's assurance that He will be with them and go before them. As He led Israel of old by the pillar of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night so He leads His people still.

As we step forth into another year is there some word of direction that might guide us in our walk in this world? We think that Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians is such a word, where he says: "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Putting into practice this motto would surely make our prospects bright. For if we made the Lord the great object of our glorying, everything else would fall into its rightful place.

How far we are from acting in the way that Paul directs — He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord. We glory in the creature. The sin, unbelief and idolatry of our own heart is such that we glory in man. We even glory in ourselves and thereby rob God of His glory. Our object of glorying must not be man but something altogether higher. Our object of glorying must not be earthly for earthly things, indeed all created things, are too unstable to glory in. It is in God that we must glory. Here we have an object upon which we may set our minds and hearts and we can never glory too much in Him.

To glory in God, we must glory in Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in Christ that He makes Himself known as an object of desire. We may glory in Him for what He is in Himself and for what He is in Christ. What avenues open out in this way for glorying in the Lord. He is worthy of our glorying in Him. What a revelation He has given of Himself in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we not glory in Him in every aspect of that revelation? What an Object we have for glorying in the Lord Jesus Christ at all times — in His death, resurrection and ascension. We may glory in the Cross, that is, in Christ in His sufferings and death. The more our minds are taken up with these things, the less will they be set on the things of the world, and the more will we aspire after higher things.

As another year breaks, may we be enabled to say with the apostle: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Let it be our firm resolve in the strength of divine grace as we go forward into another year to endeavour no longer to glory in the flesh, or in man, or in anything of this world, but to glory only in the Lord.

Notes of a Sermon

by Rev. M. MacSween

"Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the days of the gladness of his heart" — Song of Solomon 3:11

There is a sense in which it might be said that God set a crown upon the head of man. At man's creation God gave him an exalted position. He gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air and

fish of the sea. But very specially God created man in his own image, holy, a rational being capable of enjoying the fellowship of his Creator and delighting in it, and in that sense we read that God crowned man with glory and honour (Ps. 8:5). This crown, however, did not rest long upon the head of man for through sin it fell from his head. Man as a sinner has come into a low and lost state. Man as a sinner may now take up the confession of the prophet! "The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned" (Lam. 5:16).

But can that crown of holiness be restored to man? Oh, yes, but only through grace. In Isaiah 62:3 we read of Zion — that is, the Church of Christ, or the Lord's people — "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Again, the honour of the Church of Christ is otherwise expressed in the Word of God thus: "They shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon His land" (Zech. 9:16). The Lord's people, however humble their social position, are so exalted that they are the crown-jewels of the King of heaven.

But what was needed in order that guilty, unholy and unworthy sinners should be so exalted? Oh, it was necessary that God's eternal Son, who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person, should humble Himself! It was of this king, the Gospel Solomon, the Lord Jesus Christ, that it was said: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon, etc."

Soloman was a striking type of Christ.

(a) He was so in his name, Solomon, which is taken from a Hebrew word meaning 'peace'. Thus he prefigures Him who is pre-eminently the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6).

(b) He was a type of Christ in his wisdom, wealth and glory. The text speaks of a king. Now in the Gospel Solomon we have a king who possesses a kingdom and reigns over loyal subjects. It is to Him that the words of Ps. 72 must be applied in the highest sense —

"His large and great dominion shall
From sea to sea extend."

The text speaks of a coronation. In it we have One who is not only a king but a crowned king.

Let us briefly consider: 1 The coronation of Jesus Christ; 2 The exhortation given — "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion and behold king Solomon . . ."

1 The coronation of Jesus Christ. In the Book of Revelation it is said that on His head are many crowns, that is, He has many marks of honour.

(a) The Eternal Father glorified Him in calling Him to be an High Priest, for "Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest" (Heb. 5:5).

(b) The Father glorifies Him in answer to that wonderful intercessory prayer, "Father, glorify Thy Son." The Father did so by sustaining Him in His work.

(c) The Father glorified His Son in raising Him from the dead, and then in exalting Him a Prince and a Saviour, and in committing all power in heaven and on earth into His hand. Oh, what a glorious crown that was! But none of these is the special crown here referred to, for it is, "the crown wherewith his mother crowned Him!" Who is His mother? There is a sense in which we may regard the human race as His mother. And what was the crown which this mother placed on His head? It was a crown of thorns! The soldiers did that literally, and it is virtually a crown of thorns — a crown of dishonour — that the ungodly still seek to place on His head by their sins and rejection of Him. Oh, my friend, every time you reject the offer of the Gospel you seek to place this crown of dishonour upon His head.

But Jesus owns another mother beside her that crowned Him with thorns. Yet she is not another, but that same mother ransomed and renewed, for all who yield themselves to Him for salvation He acknowledges as His "brother, and sister, and mother".

And what is the crown which that mother, that is, every converted soul, places on the head of the Redeemer? Is it not the crown of their indebtedness to Him? The soul that accepts Him as its own personal Saviour places the crown of its own salvation on the head of this glorious One.

And when does this coronation take place? It is in the day of the King's espousals, when the quickened and renewed sinner accepts the Saviour as He is feely offered in the Gospel, and yields himself to Him, soul and body.

2 The exhortation. "Go forth, etc." Only a comparatively limited number of a monarch's subjects receives an invitation to witness his coronation, but in *this* case everyone who hears the Gospel is invited, yea, commanded, for it is a royal command, to behold king Immanuel, and to take part in His spiritual coronation. If you do not place the crown of your own salvation upon His head, you place instead the crown of

rejection and that shall be accounted your greatest sin one day. Oh, if only you saw your own need and His glory you could not reject! Is there anyone saying, "That is what I need — to have my eyes enlightened"? Oh, then, seek that the Lord who can open the blind eyes, would apply the unction that is from the Holy One, and if that is imparted, I do not hesitate to say that you cannot refrain from yielding to Him as your king and accepting Him as your Saviour. Amen.

Christ's Priestly Action in His Death

by Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

While it is undoubtedly true that Scripture is most clear and abundant in its revelation of the truth that Christ's death was priestly *action*, we have a strong conviction that there are, or may be, not a few who acquiesce in the sound and scriptural doctrine of the Atonement, but have not given to the simple proposition which affirms the action of Christ in His own death that attention to which it is gloriously entitled. We are so familiar with the plain statement that Christ was at once the Sacrifice and the Priest — "He offered up Himself" — that we think we have fully mastered its contents, while we may have done little more than skim the surface.

That it must contain great depths of truth should be obvious from the fact that it presents a consideration absolutely unparalleled, and singular and unique. That the man Christ Jesus should both suffer death — and such a death, under the curse of the divine law, and with all conceivable aggravations of woe, and agony, and shame; and *also* that He should sinlessly, yea, obediently and officially, have an active hand in His death — and such a death; ought at once to strike us as passing all comprehension, and as entitled to that thoughtful, prolonged, and reverent contemplation which might enable us, under the teaching of the Spirit of truth, to place the fact before our understandings with the most exact accuracy of thought we can attain; and with the fullest completeness that we can grasp. There is, indeed, good reason to think that the severe mental exercise for which there is in this simple familiar truth such manifest scope, is precisely what has led many minds to pass it by without any attempt to fathom it. That "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures," they are content to believe. But that in this transaction of the death at Calvary He combined the two apparently

antagonistic attitudes of suffering and offering: — *suffering* unto such extent and such intensity as would have quelled all the active powers, not to say the patience, of any but a Divine person; and *offering* also in such activity, and such unquelled and excelling triumphant action, as if no suffering were making a drain upon His active powers at all; — this is the apparent paradox in the death of Christ which many, we fear, have far too lightly considered. And yet, how, without profound consideration and appreciating admiration of it, they can intelligently “glory in the Cross”, it is impossible to see.

That the simple but profound truth on which we are desirous of insisting should have been, at least to some extent, overlooked by many whose views of the Atonement are not incorrect, may in some measure be easily accounted for. Apart from the demand for severely accurate mental action, which the nature of the subject makes on all who would attain to exact theological knowledge of its various elements, several phrases have acquired a currency unfavourable to clearness and comprehensiveness. Among these we may notice what we have long thought the unhappy and not very intelligible expression — “Christ’s active and passive obedience”. No doubt, with explanations, the phrase may be allowed; and, without question, it is with these explanations that sound writers have used it. It has been employed to express the fact, that in Christ’s life and death as our surety, there meet the endurance of the penalty of the law and the inbringing of a positive righteousness. But it may be safely doubted whether the phrase “passive obedience” naturally indicates anything that can be properly called obedience at all; and the use of it in well-known English history is not favourable to the probability of its suggesting very accurate ideas theologically. Moreover, if there is anything in Christ’s interposition for our salvation that may be supposed to be called “passive” obedience, as in express contradiction to “active” obedience, it must be His death: and where this impression prevails, it obviously countenances, and indeed suggests, the idea that His death was exclusively passive — that His own activity or agency is not to be recognised in it.

Then the phrases, “Our Lord’s Passion,” and “The Passion Week,” lead obviously in the same direction. Used exclusively, and used as adequate and complete expressions for the death of Christ, and for that ever-memorable period of His closing sufferings and crowning work as our Redeemer, they evidently concentrate attention disproportionately, and indeed alone, on that aspect in which Christ appears as the piacular victim, or the Lamb of Sacrifice; presenting to the mind no suggestion of

the great truth that in His "passion" He was an official, and obedient, and triumphant agent.

The Paraphrase also — the forty-fourth — which represents "the pale ensigns" of death as overspreading the cheeks and the "trembling lips" of our Lord, while life *forsook* His closing eyes and His drooping head," does most manifest injustice to the condition of our Lord's person on the cross, and is clearly most injurious to the scriptural representations that "He cried with a loud voice" and "gave up the ghost" — *dismissed* His Spirit. The impression which such phrases are fitted to make upon the mind is just this, and nothing more — that our Lord uncomplainingly *endured* inconceivable sufferings — that He was being *subjected* to death as the penalty due to sin. All which is true. But they also suggest the idea, that whereas formerly He had been engaged in positive duty, going about doing good, the time for positive and active duty was now passed, and the time for simply suffering had come.

We must never cease to affirm that this representation of the Cross is most inadequate. It exhibits the Cross as the emblem and scene of patience merely, while it conceals those glorious and glorifying aspects of it in which it is seen to be an altar of priestly agency, a throne of powerful action, and a chariot of victory and triumph. It represents Christ's activity as subdued and overborne, or at least as in abeyance. It pretermits the grand consideration — which direct Scriptural assertions place before us, and which an adoring appreciation of the constitution of Christ's person, and the intrinsic nature of His work necessitate — that Christ's actual forth-putting of power, and His official, and obedient, and positive agency, never were, and could not be, overborne and subdued; but that, on the contrary, they prevailed to put forth their energy, and their grandest energy, precisely against an inconceivable combination of agencies and instruments naturally fitted, had that been possible, to subdue and overbear them. Earth, and hell, and heaven; earth's rulers and her rabble; her kings, and priests, and soldiers, and malefactors assailing Him; her Jews and Gentiles; her dumb creatures even; earth's forests furnishing wood; earth's streams refusing water; earth's bitternesses mingled in vinegar and gall; earth's curse embodied in her thorns, in mockery and pain to crown Him; earth's "founded" steadfastness refusing to support Him, and her firmament to shine upon Him: hell's utmost force and fury gathered up against Him: heaven's sword devouring Him, and heaven's God forsaking Him: — earth, and hell, and heaven thus in conspiring action against Him, unto the uttermost of heaven's extremest justice, and earth's and hell's extremest

injustice: — what is the glory of the Cross, if it be not *this*; that with such action conspiring to subdue *His* action, His action outlasted and outlived them all, and He did not die subdued and overborne into dying, He did not die till He *gave* Himself in death? Emmanuel a mere sufferer in His death? "The Logos (Word) of the Cross is the Power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

The Question Meeting — its Origin, Purpose and Value

by Rev. John Colquhoun

The origin of the Question Meetings, so well-known in connection with Communion seasons in evangelical circles in the Highlands of Scotland is to a large extent shrouded in mystery, and must very much be left to conjecture. Such meetings in various forms, it is very obvious from various sources, were not confined to the Highlands in particular. Dr Kennedy, writing on the rise of the fellowship meeting, says, "It is an interesting fact that on one of the slopes of the Pyrenees, where the Lord has reserved a small remnant of living Christians to Himself, conventicles exactly corresponding to the fellowship meetings of the Highlands of Scotland are held, the only difference being that there they 'speak to the question' in French and not in Gaelic, and that they have no minister to patronise and direct them. So naturally indeed, do such meetings arise out of a healthful state of religious feeling that the communities in which they are wanting are those from whom an apology is required" (*Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*, 5th ed., p. 123). Here we have an example of a fellowship meeting which was conducted in order to keep religion alive where other means were not available, and identical with the conditions which prevailed in the Highlands of Scotland when many parishes were under the blight of Moderatism.

The same conditions prevailed in the South of Scotland after the Revolution Settlement when many withdrew from the National Church because there was no reference made in that Settlement to the attainments of the Second Reformation. These were divided into Societies and met at stated periods to conduct the various matters affecting them in their separation from the State Church. Discipline was rigidly kept and other matters of a more mundane character were attended to. As they continued for many years without even one ordained minister among

them, we find that they held meetings for spiritual conference. At these meetings it was customary to discuss a portion of truth bearing on doctrine or experience. These portions were fixed on at the previous meeting, and thus, those who were to speak had ample time to consider the portion agreed on at the previous meeting. Their position was exceptional for, because of various reasons they could not have a clear mind to sit under ministers who, to their way of looking at matters, were subservient to the State. They felt that their souls could not be fed by such, and therefore they determined that it was more profitable for them to hear the expositions of men who had no such Erastian connections.

Dr Matthew Hutchison says, "All through its past history, this Church (the Reformed Presbyterian Church) had largely depended for its continuance and vigour on the private fellowship meetings of the members. By these the lack of ordinances had been partially supplied in times of destitution, brotherly communion had been fostered, and unity and zeal in the public cause maintained" (*The Reformed Presbyterian Church*, p. 246). These meetings may have been introduced from France by the Huguenots for it is well known that numbers of them, among whom were the Howies of Lochgoin, cast in their lot with the Society people. Again, Baillie, in his letters, refers to private fellowship meetings which were reported to the Aberdeen Assembly of 1640, and which seem to have had their origin in Ireland and were introduced into Scotland by refugees from that country. These meetings were opposed by Alexander Henderson, but supported by such men as Robert Blair, David Dickson, and John Livingstone, but the information about them is so meagre that it is very difficult to say whether or not they were of the same nature as the fellowship meetings which are known to us in our day.

Whether or not our Highland forefathers knew of these meetings cannot now be ascertained, but in many parishes in the North of Scotland the same necessity was laid upon the Lord's people to have conferences of the same nature though in certain respects differing from their brethren in the South. In the Highlands there were many Moderate ministers who knew not the Gospel, and the Lord's people were starved under their preaching so that the only means of nourishing their souls, and their refuge from the blight of the pulpit, was in fellowship with each other. Like those who feared the Lord in the days of Malachi, "they spake often one to another". These conferences they found so profitable and so enjoyable to their souls that they made frequent use of them. At first these meetings were confined to members in full communion, but in process of time they were opened to all who cared to come and, as a

result of which, not only those who were in a state of grace were edified, but many who were in a state of nature were awakened, through seeing that they had not the marks of God's people. Thus the fellowship meetings became a nursery for the Church, and so it seems very clear that the conditions which prevailed in the Highlands of Scotland brought into being the fellowship meetings, especially where the Lord's people were in circumstances where they had no access to pastors who could feed them with knowledge and understanding.

The question may be asked, at what time did these meetings begin? For this no definite answer can be given. Their beginning cannot be confined to any one locality for the need was great in many parishes where the Gospel was not preached, and where there were a few who truly feared the Lord. A Chalmers Lecturer, in dealing with the subject, says in a footnote, "Monthly question meetings were an established institution in Sutherland in 1727 (*Church in the Highlands*, p. 218). This would indicate that the fellowship meetings had their beginnings well back in the previous century. Thomas Hogg, whose labours had been abundantly blessed by the Lord, was ordained at Kiltarn in 1654 and ousted in 1661. Of the fruit of his labours there were many who were eminent Christians who could not be satisfied with his successor who was a creature of the bishops, and we may well believe that such would meet and have fellowship with each other, in discussing portions of Scripture, and this would probably be the beginning of fellowship meetings in that parish, and the godly in other parishes would, no doubt, follow their example. The men who held these meetings were not Separatists in the generally accepted sense of the term. As a rule they never went to hear the Moderate ministers because in their dry essays they could get nothing for their souls, but they countenanced those ministers who truly preached the Gospel, and were a great support to them.

The fact that the Moderate ministers were forsaken, and those who were evangelical supported the fellowship meetings awoke the enmity of the former against these meetings. In the Synod of Sutherland and Caithness a determined attempt was made by the Moderates in the 18th century to put an end to the fellowship meetings. A strong opponent of them was found in the person of the Rev. Murdo MacDonald, Durness, who, in spite of two eulogies composed to his memory by Rob Donn, the Sutherland bard, was a decided Moderate, who, along with others, gave to the world a virulent caricature of these meetings. As this controversy does not come within the scope of this paper it is only mentioned here to show that the very people whose dead preaching was the indirect cause of

these meetings were their most bitter enemies, while those who preached a pure gospel welcomed them, and turned them to an excellent use in connection with the services of the sanctuary.

We now come to consider the purpose and value of the fellowship meeting. We have already noticed that the origin of the fellowship meetings was to supply the defect of the pulpit during the dead days of Moderatism so Evangelical ministers were quick to see that it would be of advantage to the Cause of Christ to make use of it as a means of examination before a Communion Sabbath. Thus it became a regular feature of a Communion season as the Thursday was a day of confession of sin and prayer. Those who were asked to take part were men of experience in the ways of godliness. In the best days of the Church in Sutherland there were three kinds of questions that were very common, or rather, the various questions that were given out fell into one or other of three different categories. One class of questions dealt with the experiences of the sinner in being effectually called, a second class dealt with the experiences of the justified believer from the day of justification till his departure from this world, while a third class dealt with the believer's walk and conversation in the world. In each class of questions marks were asked on those who had what was stated or implied in the portion given out, as distinct from those who had a name to live but showed by their walk and conversation that they were spiritually dead. As a general rule no one who wandered from the particular question given was allowed to escape without notice being taken of it. The minister who closed the question had, as his duty, to sum up what had been said, to confirm the views which were in accordance with the Word of God, and correct what was faulty. If any speaker went out in ways of his own, having little or no bearing on the question given out, there were plenty of men of discernment among the brethren who would soon show him his fault, in such an honest and manly way that, if grace was in exercise in his soul, he would not be ready to repeat the fault on a future occasion.

One of the purposes of the fellowship meeting, whether on the Friday of a Communion season or more frequently in the monthly fellowship meetings of congregations, was to strengthen each other. A child of God might come to these meetings, pressed down with burdens, perplexed with questions as to the reality of the change that came over him, meeting with hard things in providence and seeing the prosperity of the ungodly, as Asaph did, having a rebellious heart, and fretting against the chastisements of his Heavenly Father, all forcing him to the conclusion

that he is not a child of God. One after another of the brethren, in speaking to the question, show that these matters are to be found in the experiences of God's children. Not only so, but they are enabled to speak of the peculiar exercises of the Lord's people under such sad and sore conditions which, he cannot deny, are his own experiences, and thus he is enabled to thank God and take courage, and go on his way rejoicing.

A further purpose was to make the fellowship meeting a means for awakening the careless. This, in all probability, was the reason why these meetings began to be opened to all and sundry. Many would be drawn to them out of curiosity or for some other reason, and, finding that they were destitute of the marks given of the work of grace in the soul, the Holy Ghost would find an avenue to their consciences, and thus begin the good work which He will bring forward to the day of Jesus Christ. It is only the Great Day that will reveal the number who got their first serious impressions at a fellowship meeting, and that is one reason why Satan so much opposed these meetings. In this way the Lord's true people were edified and strengthened and many of the ungodly arrested and brought to realise their need of something which they had not got as they were by nature, thus coming to know the beginning of a work of grace in their souls. From the above we can see that the question meeting became a valuable institution in the Church. It was both a means of strengthening weak believers and awakening those who were at ease in Zion.

In looking back on the history of fellowship meetings, in their best days, we can get a good view of the unity between the ministers and the laity. In the Church of England, for instance, the church is clerical or sacerdotal, and the ordinary layman is interested in it only as a mere member. From its government he is very much excluded in spite of recent changes, and, generally speaking, though with notable exceptions, he does not enter heart and soul into the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, neither does personal religion enter so largely into his outlook as it does with his brethren in the Highlands, and especially under the Presbyterian system. On the other hand, while those who took part in the fellowship meetings gave the respect, due to his office, to an evangelical minister yet there was not such a gulf fixed between the minister and the layman but that they could meet together and experience sweet fellowship in connection with matters which were of mutual interest in the varying conditions of their Christian course. They were drawn together in the bonds of a love which came out clearly in the public fellowship meetings, forging ties between minister and layman which Satan and the world found difficult to break. Thus neither could think evil of the other, and

this love permeated the whole body of those who delighted in the fellowship meeting and increased its value to them as they were getting more conscious of their own failings and weaknesses.

The fellowship meetings were also valuable in that they were largely the means of keeping the gospel unadulterated among the people of the Highlands, especially in places where a pure gospel was not preached from the pulpit. The men who spoke to the question were men who had a thorough grasp of the doctrines of the Bible, and when called to speak one would be sure that nothing unsound would escape from their lips, and thus they leavened the minds of many with the doctrines of God's Word, which caused that even men who could not be looked upon as gracious would not be satisfied with the heterodoxy which proceeded from many a Moderate pulpit, and it is only eternity that will reveal how much these men of God were the means of bringing souls into the way that leads to Zion. Where Bible truth is stored in the mind the Holy Spirit may in His own good time turn it to the salvation of the sinner and to the sweet wine of communion with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The idea among some was, and may still be, that those who spoke to the question at fellowship meetings were ousting the minister out of his proper place. There could not be a greater mistake than this for the men never aspired to such a place in the Church, neither had godly ministers any reason to suspect it. There was a bond of unity between evangelical ministers and the men which was helpful to both. The minister shared largely in their prayers, and they thankfully accepted his counsel and guidance. This kindled a warmth between them which no power could cool. Dr Kennedy says, "The peculiar service of 'the men' was not thrust upon those ministers who were what ministers should be. By such it was freely and deliberately adopted, and none of them had ever cause to regret that it was. 'The men' were never found to be the enemies to due ecclesiastical order, though they failed in learning to submit to undue ecclesiastical tyranny. They were influenced by no feeling of disrespect to the office of the ministry, nor were they disposed to take a place in the house of the Lord not given them by the Lord of the house. It was not in their heart, it is true, to esteem the individuals who found it their interest to hold, while it was their practice to degrade, the office of the ministry; but it is only in their respect for the office itself that the true reason of this can be found. Valuable was the help and cheering the encouragement which a godly minister always received from their prayers, their counsels, and their labours." (*Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*, 5th ed., p. 85-86).

As is well-known, the most eminent of the evangelical ministers of the Highlands would often be away from their own congregations, assisting at Communions, and often it was difficult to get suitable supply to take their places in their own congregations. On such occasions a godly layman would expound a chapter of the Bible to the assembled congregation in a most edifying manner. In such cases the fellowship meeting proved a valuable training school, making the speaker "apt to teach." Grace in exercise in their souls kept them humble and dependent on the Lord, never allowing them to yield to the temptation to outshine their fellows or lord it over God's heritage. This humility and dependence upon the Lord was clearly manifested in their speaking to the question, and it caused them to set a valuable example to their fellows in that they esteemed others better than themselves. In this way the Lord's people had their doubts resolved, their fears alleviated if not banished, and a godly example set before them; the careless were impressed and awakened, and led to the Saviour, and the Church of God strengthened, while Satan's kingdom was being spoiled, and himself deprived of his power to bring them back into his captivity.

To sum up the value of the fellowship meeting and the ability and usefulness to the Cause of Christ of the men we may again quote Dr Kennedy, than whom there was none more qualified to write on religious matters in the Highlands in his day. "Those who required 'the excellency of speech and of wisdom' in order to be pleased, would certainly not be gratified at the fellowship meeting, but those who 'desired the sincere milk of the word that' they 'might grow thereby,' would as certainly be profited. Of such learning as makes one proud, 'the men' had none; but they knew their Bibles as few besides have known them. Their clear views of the Gospel system might bring a blush on the face of some Professors of divinity if they heard and understood them; and some doctors, however learned, might sit at their feet as they spake of the sorrows and the joys of the Christian's life. Some of them were men of distinguished talent, and all their mental vigour, untrammelled by learning, they brought to bear upon the things of God. Never, surely, is there a more attractive exercise of intellect than when, divested of all literary acquirement, it enters directly into 'the mysteries of the kingdom,' and comes forth into a panoply of Scripture truth. Light from Heaven then irradiates all the gifts of the speaker. Traces of learning, mingled with the halo of this light, would be spots of darkness. Some of 'the men' were able speakers. Orators they were, without attempting to be so, and utterly unconscious of their gift, who could powerfully affect the feelings of their hearers.

Some of them gave utterance to sayings that could not be forgotten, and a few of which would earn a fame for genius in a more public sphere" (*Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire*, 5th ed., p. 87-88).

Rev. D. MacFarlane's Separation

In recent times it has been circulated among our people that Mr MacFarlane remained in the Free Church all the time between his Protest in May and the setting up of the first Presbytery on 28th July 1893. That is a false statement. How subtle beyond words is Satan when masquerading as an angel of light. We are told to "try the spirits whether they are of God." There is ample evidence to blast this false charge. We have Mr MacFarlane's own words: "If it be asked, why did it (the separation) not take place in 1892 when the change was made? The answer is, some did speak of separating at that time, but there was a cry among the Constitutionalists to keep together, to act in concert, and to wait until they should exhaust all constitutional means in their power to persuade the Assembly to reconsider their action with a view to the rescinding of the Declaratory Act. At the Assembly of 1893, there was an effort made by the Constitutionalists to this effect, but the Assembly refused to rescind the Act or even to appoint a Committee to consider whether anything should be done with a view to its being rescinded, which was all that the motion of the Constitutionalists craved. The Assembly made it distinctly clear that they would never rescind the Act. There was, therefore, no alternative left for us but to separate. We waited with the Constitutionalists as long as we could, or perhaps longer than we should. We cannot be justly charged with having been too hasty in the step we took, though the charge has often been made" (Memoir of Rev. D. MacDonald, pp. 34, 35).

The Rev. Neil MacIntyre, then a student, was present in the Assembly when Mr MacFarlane tabled his Protest. When Mr MacFarlane left the Assembly, Mr MacIntyre invited him to go to Glasgow with him, and this Mr MacFarlane did. When they arrived in Glasgow there were waiting for them there Messrs Neil Cameron, Alex. MacRae, D. Beaton and others. At 147 Albert Street, Glasgow, Mr MacFarlane addressed them and informed them that he had tabled his Protest and thereby had separated from the Declaratory Act Church and Party for all time. This gave great relief and satisfaction to the above, who were then students, and to others. It was arranged that Mr MacFarlane would go to Tighnabruaich, Kyles of Bute, for the Sabbath. Mr MacIntyre accom-

panied him. This was the first occasion on which he met the late, saintly, Mr Archibald Crawford. It was like two weary travellers meeting in a pleasant oasis with its cooling shades and refreshing fountains.

Mr A. Crawford had read an incorrect account in the press to the effect that Mr MacFarlane had tabled a Protest, took it back, and resumed his seat. When Mr MacFarlane explained the true position to Mr Crawford, the latter asked Mr MacFarlane: "Am I to understand that you tabled a Protest and left it on the table of the Assembly, and that you are separated from that body?" Mr MacFarlane replied in the affirmative, saying: "If the Lord gives me strength, they will never see me in their company again." Mr Crawford uncovered his head, and in an audible voice thanked the Most High for the stand His servant made in defence of the truth, and prayed that Mr MacFarlane might be strengthened by His grace for the solemn duties then confronting him. Mr MacIntyre, who witnessed this, said on more than one occasion that the meeting of these two goldy men was one of the most touching he was ever privileged to witness in this world. It was arranged that the congregation of Millhouse, Kames, should get an opportunity on the following Monday of hearing Mr MacFarlane, and of knowing for themselves what transpired in Edinburgh. The congregation met, and Mr MacFarlane addressed them, explaining to them what he did and where he stood. Mr Crawford also addressed them and said: "I saw this bastard child being formed in the womb of the Free Church when Drs Dods and Bruce were made professors, but seeing that the constitution was not altered, I did not separate. But now that the bastard child is born in the Declaratory Act and her constitution is broken, I am done with the Church, whatever others may do." When the question was put to the congregation whether they would remain in the Declaratory Act Church or not, all present but six declared their adherence to the stand made by Mr MacFarlane. This was the first congregation which stood by the servant of God in defence of truth and righteousness. On his return home to Raasay he called a meeting of his own congregation on the Monday of the Communion (second Sabbath of June). At this meeting he gave a lecture explanatory of the situation. A large congregation was present, gathered from different parts of the West of Scotland. At the end, when all who adhered to the Bible in its entirety as the Word of God, and to the Confession of Faith in all its doctrines as hitherto held by the Free Church, were asked to stand up, all present, with the exception of half-a-dozen stood. Mr MacFarlane then requested the strangers present to sit down so that it might be seen how the Raasay

congregation were. It was then seen that the few objectors, with one exception, belonged not to his own congregation. Immediately after this meeting, a meeting was called at Inverness, and on Tuesday evening following a large gathering assembled. The Rev. Donald MacDonald, Shieldaig, who was present, took his stand with Mr MacFarlane. It was decided that immediate steps be taken to form a Presbytery (see History of the Free Presbyterian Church, pp. 111, 112). And yet in the face of all this, the learned "young men" will hold and circulate that Mr MacFarlane was still in the Free Church until 28th July, 1893, and did not regard himself as separate! The Constitutionals who remained in the Free Church held a meeting at Inverness on 3rd July, 1893. In their speeches they adversely criticised the separation made. Not only did the Free Church hold Mr MacFarlane separate, but they did not even pay him the salary due to him before the meeting of the last Assembly which he attended. Mr MacFarlane told us this. The records, if still extant, will show this to be true.

I hope that I have said enough to enlighten your minds and enable you to follow the Word of God. What Satan may do and say is another matter. You follow the Word of God in faith, love and humility.

(These extracts are taken almost verbatim from articles by the late Rev. James MacLeod hitherto published in the Magazine — W.M.).

Obituary

Mr Ian Graham, Kiltarlity

It was in July 1968, eight years before his death, that Ian Graham professed the Name of the Redeemer — the One whom he had come to know through a gracious spiritual experience. He passed away to his eternal rest at about 11 a.m. on the 27th October 1976, at the age of 75 years.

Ian Graham was born in Lochinver in 1901 and moved to Shieldaig when about 4 or 5 years of age. His father, Rev. Donald Graham, had received a Call at that time to the combined congregations of Shieldaig and Lochcarron. Donald Graham was a gracious servant of Christ whose memory is still fragrant to some of the older people in those parishes where he ministered. His obituary appears in Vol. 31 of the F.P. Magazine.

Ian Graham, then, had the blessing of a godly upbringing and the privilege of being from a very young age a son of the Manse. If these

things would convert a man then Ian Graham would have been a follower of the Saviour from his youth. But grace, while often following in the line of the godly, is not in the blood. Consequently, like many others who enjoyed similar privileges, he gave evidence that the things of God were not his highest concern. Yet it would appear that he was preserved from going to those lengths in sin which men go when left to themselves. This is a mercy which God is sometimes pleased to give even to those who are still far from Him in the spirit of their minds. In his young days Ian would be privileged to hear many of the eminent servants of the Lord, but there is no record that any permanent impression was made other than that a restraining influence was put upon him.

When he left home he went to Glasgow to train as an engineer. After completing his training he set out, like many of his fellow Scotsmen, to work abroad. He returned later and eventually settled down in Glasgow where he found work with the Dunlop Rubber Company. Later on still, he moved to Kiltarlity in Inverness-shire, where he remained until his death. During his time in the North we know that he was highly respected by his business associates. We have no doubt that this was true of him in Glasgow as well, as his promotion in coming North would indicate.

It was during his Glasgow days that he married Miss Rachel Sinclair, a daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs James Sinclair, who proved a true helpmeet to him for the rest of his days. Their home, both in Glasgow and Kiltarlity, was most hospitable and many friends from different parts could be assured of a warm welcome there.

Because of his reticence about his own spiritual experience it is not easy to determine when Ian Graham came to know the Lord, but for many years before he professed he led an exemplary life. The time came when he could no longer deny what the Lord had done for him. In January 1968 he suffered his first heart attack. It was then that he felt that the Lord was laying him low because he was not doing his duty. In July of that year he professed the Lord's Name publicly for the first time. From that time on he took an increasing interest in the affairs of the Lord's Cause in Beaully and Dingwall and before long was elected an elder in that congregation. On occasions he was called on to take a service and this was a duty which he did not lightly undertake.

In May 1976 he went south to attend the meeting of Synod in Glasgow but was only able to attend the first sederunt as he took ill that night. On his return home he had to go into hospital where he received surgery. The doctors at that time gave him only a few months to live. He

continued to attend the means of grace so long as he was able and then in his own home when confined to his bed he continued to conduct family worship to the day of his death. In the interval between his operation and his death his daughter, Marion, came home from the Mission in Rhodesia to see her father for a short period. This, no doubt, was a great uplift to him. He was lovingly nursed at home to the end by his wife, his daughter Jane and his sister Edith. The end came peacefully on 27th October 1976 when he entered, we believe, that place where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick, leaving behind him his sorrowing widow, son, daughters, sisters and brother.

In the congregation the following tribute was read on the Sabbath after his death: "It is with deep sorrow that we refer to the passing of Mr Ian Graham, Kiltarlity, who for the past number of years served as an elder in the congregation of Dingwall and Beaully. Mr Graham was of a humble and gracious disposition and in his life, walk and conversation endeavoured to commend Christ to others. The attendance at his funeral gave an indication of the respect in which he was held by a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

As an elder of the congregation he conscientiously carried out the duties laid on him. It was clear that the services of the sanctuary were his delight. He could say with the Psalmist:

How lovely is thy dwelling-place,
O Lord of hosts, to me!
The tabernacles of thy grace
how pleasant, Lord, they be.

And also:

I joy'd when to the house of God,
Go up, they said to me.
Jerusalem, within thy gates
our feet shall standing be.

His presence will be greatly missed in the congregation and also in the Kirk Session and Deacon's Court. The removal of one who occupied office in the congregation should make us earnest in pleading with the Lord to raise up others in the place of those whom He is removing from time to eternity. We do not sorrow as others who have no hope but our mourning his loss is mingled with the comfort that our loss is his gain and that he has entered into the joy of his Lord."

The esteem in which Ian Graham was held by his brethren in the Presbytery may be gauged from the following extract of a letter sent by the Clerk of Presbytery to Mrs Graham after his death.

"For several years your beloved husband attended the meetings of Presbytery and was able to take a valuable part in the work of the Court and its deliberations. He was highly respected as a God-fearing, humble follower of the Lamb, and although in late years his health was not very robust, he struggled against increasing weakness and illness to carry out the duties of his office in the congregation and Church Courts. He was a warm-hearted friend, of a peaceable disposition and could, especially at the fellowship meeting, give a reason of the hope that was in him with meekness and fear. It is the removal of such men that shows the need of prayer on the part of those who are left: "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." (Ps. 12:1).

In closing this obituary we would pray that the Lord may continue graciously to uphold and bless those who have lost a devoted loved one.

An Treas Rann

'Nuair a tha anam a th' ann an imcheist peacaidh a' cur aghaidh air Dia, is e an ceud ni a tha 'ga thaisbeanadh féin dha, Dia a bhi 'eomharachadh peacaidh o réir riaghailte an lagha; ni dheth féin a tha ullamh air a lionadh le h-eagal agus uamhunn.

Labhraidh sinn beagan uime so an toiseach air a bheachd-achadh ann féin, agus an sin bheir sinn fainear gnothuch an anama sin ann, aig am bheil a chor air a chur an céill ann an so.

Tha an Tighearn a' labhairt mu chuid, 'nuair a tha iad a' cluinntinn focail a' mhallachaidh, a tha gidheadh "gam beannachadh féin," agus ag ràdh, "Bithidh sìth againn," Deut. xxix. 19. Bitheadh daoine a' searmonachadh agus a' labhairt mar is àill leo mu uamhas an Tighearna, ni iad tàir air; muinntir an aghaidh am bheil Dia a' bagradh sgrios iomlain. Agus tha e 'ga chomharachadh a ris mar aingidh-eachd a tha anabarrach, agus mar àirde cruais cridhe, Ier. xxxvi. 24. Ma dh' innsear do pheacaich timchioll feirge Dhé, agus gu'n tig e a thagradh a chùis féin 'nan aghaidh; cuiridh iad mar is tric ann an neo-shuim e, agus gabhaidh iad rompa mar gu'm b' urrainn iad gnothuch a dheanamh ris air bheag dragha. Ach a dh' aindeoin an calmachd, tha là a' teachd anns an dean uamhunn an glacadh, ionnus gu'n glaodh iad, "Cò 'nar measg a ghabhas còmhnuidh maille ri teine millteach? cò 'nar measg a ghabhas còmhnuidh maille ri lasraichibh siorruidh?"

Anns an ni so a tha sinn a' tagradh tha eisempleir comharaichte againn anns a' cheud duine a pheacaich, agus aig an robh an ceud aobhar smuaintean imcheisteach a bhi aige timchioll Dia a bhi

'comharachadh aingidheachd, Gen. iii. 8, "Chual e guth an Tighearna Dé;" mar a chual e riomh gun trioblaid no gun bhuaireas spioraid sam bith. Chruthaich e air son comh-chomuinn ri Dia; agus b'e earrann d'a shonas gu'm bitheadh e 'g éisdeachd a ghutha. Ach a nis a deir e, "Chuala mi do ghuth anns a' ghàradh, agus bha eagail orm a chionn gu'n robh mi lomnochd, agus dh' fholaich mi mi féin." Bha fios aige gu'n robh Dia air teachd *a ghabhail gnothuich r' a pheacadh*. agus bha smuaintean timchioll a bhi coinneachadh ris do-ghiùlainte dha. Nam b' urrainn e a dhol sìos do chridhe na talmhainn o'n d' thugadh e air tùs, agus e féin 'fholach an sin o Dhia, cha-n 'eil teagamh nach deanadh e sin.

Tha e mar an ceudna soilleir o thabhairt an lagha 'na dhéigh sin ciod an toradh a th' air a ghiùlain le bhi 'beachdachadh air Dia mar a tha e 'gabhail gnothuich ri peacaich a réir riaghailte an lagha: Faic Ecsod. xx. 18, 19. Tha tàirneanaich agus dealanaich fathast 'na chomh-chuideachd, mar o shean; agus cha-n fhàilnich e ann a bhi taisbeanadh uamhais an Tighearna do'n anam chiontach.

Dh' fheudamaid eisempleirean fhaotainn am measg nan naomh féin gu bhi 'nochdadh gu'm b' ann mar so a fhuaireadh leò-san e. Tha suidheachadh Iob, agus Dhaibhidh, agus Hemain aithnichte. Cha dean sinn a thoirt fainear ach ann an Criosd féin. Cha robh aobhar riamh aige uaith féin air aon smuain an-shocrach a bhi aige, air bhi dha naomh, agus neo-lochdach, agus neo-thruaillidh. Rinn e gach uile fhilreantachd a choimblionadh, anns na h-uile nithe b' e 'bhiadh agus a dheoch toil 'Athar a dheanamh, agus bha còmhnuidh aige a ghnàth 'na ghràdh. Agus cha b' urrainn so a bhi gun an t-sìth a's ro àirde agus an t-aoibhneas a's ro bheannaichte 'na chomh-chuideachd. Ann an dearbh thòiseachadh a dheuchainnean, bha làn dearbh-chinnt e aige gu'n ruigeadh e crìoch bhudhach: mar a dh' fheudar 'fhaicinn, Isa. 1. 7-9. Gidheadh 'nuair a bha 'anam air a chleachdadh le smuaintibh timchioll Dia a bhi 'comharachadh ar n-aingidheachdan air, bha e "ro bhrònach, eadhon gu bàs;" bha e "fo uamhunn agus anabarra bròin," Marcus xiv. 33, 34. Tha cruaidh-ghleachd 'anama, agus 'fhallus fuilteach, agus 'athchuingean maille ri h-àrd-éighich, 'nuair a ghuidh e a rìs agus a rìs, "Ma dh' fheudas e bhi, rachadh an cùpan so seachad orm;" agus a ghlaodh dheireanach, "Mo Dhia, mo Dhia, c'ar son a thréig thu mi!" — tha so uile, tha sinn ag ràdh, a nochdadh ciod am breithneachadh a bha aige de Dhia a bhi 'comharachadh aingidheachd. Is maith a dh' fheudas peacaich bhochda glaothaich, "A Thighearna, co a sheasas?" 'nuair a chrìothnaich Mac Dhé féin cho mòr fuidhe.

Ann an smuaintibh suidhichte timchioll Dia a bhi 'comharachadh peacaidh, tha e air a thaisbeanadh do'n anam fo na buadhaibh glòrmhor agus eagalach sin uile a tha ullamh air eagal agus uamhunn a mhosgladh ann an cridheachaibh pheacach, 'nuair nach 'eil saorsa sam bith aca o gheallaidhibh a' choimhcheangail ann an Criosd. Tha an t-anam ag amharc air mar Fhear-tabhairt an lagha, Seamas iv. 12, — a tha comasach air gach briseadh a dhìoladh, le corp agus anam a mhilleadh ann an teine ifrinn; tha e 'faicinn gur Dia e a tha glòrmhor ann an naomhachd, aig am bheil a shùilean ni's gloine na gu'n urrainn e amharc air olc; gu bheil e uamhasach ann am mòrachd agus ann an cumhachd, an Dia beò, neach gur eagalach an ni tuiteam 'na làmhhaibh, agus maille ris am bheil ceartas dioghaltach, ag ràdh, "Is leam-sa an dioghaltas, agus bheir mi dloladh uam," Eabh. x. 30. A nis, 'nuair a tha an t-anam a' beachdachadh air Dia, air a sgeadachadh leis gach òirdheirceas eagalach agus uamhasach dhiubh do, agus a teachd a ghabhail gnothuich ri peacaich a réir riaghailte a lagh' theinteich féin, cha-n urrainn e gun ghlaodhaich a mach, mar a rinn Maois, "Tha eagal ro mhòr agus crith orm."

Bheir na nithe so inntinnean pheacach a dh' ionnsuidh a' chomh-dhùnaidh a dh' ainmicheadh roimhe, eadhon, *ma's e's gu'n comharaich Dia aingidheachd a réir riaghailte an lagha, gu bheil slàinte dhaoine gu h-iomlan mi-chomasach*; comh-dhùnadh a bheir criothnachadh air anam sam bith a tha air a chromadh sìos fo mhothachadh a chionta féin.

Protest

(The following protest was drawn up by the Southern Presbytery against the Moderator of the Church of Scotland's attendance at the Pope's inauguration).

30 Barloan Crescent,
Dumbarton.
21st November 1978.

Dear Sir,

I am instructed by this Presbytery to forward you the following protest at your recent attendance at the inaugural mass on the occasion of the inauguration of the new Pope:

"In 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10, we have a distinct forewarning of a major apostasy from the true Christian Faith — of the rise within the visible Church of an apostate power which would oppose God in the name of God; deprive Him of His honour, leaving Him nothing but an empty

title; and transfer the authority of God to itself. This power the Protestant Reformers identified with the papacy. As Calvin says: 'Paul is not speaking of one individual, but of a kingdom that was to be seized by Satan for the purpose of setting up a seat of abomination in the midst of God's temple. This we see accomplished in popery.' (Comm. on 2 Thess. 2:3).

Lest we question the identification, the apostle makes it clear that this power would be characterised by certain distinctive marks by which it may be recognised: firstly, the 2 names here attributed to it — 'man of sin' and 'son of perdition' (vs. 3). The very nature of the papacy, not to mention the lives of some of the moral monsters who have occupied the papal throne, clearly point to the pope as the successor, not of Peter, but of Judas, the other 'son of perdition', for his 2 chief sins are covetousness and a betrayal of Christ.

Secondly, this power is predicted as being the usurper of the authority and honour of the only true and living God (vs. 4). Is it not highly significant that the pope seizes whatever belongs to God and arrogates it to himself? He blasphemously adopts the very names of each Person of the Godhead, being called 'Holy Father', 'Prince of Peace' and 'Vicar of Christ'. He imperiously claims authority over all men, declaring it to be 'necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff' (Bull of Boniface VIII). According to Cardinal Manning, this was unquestionably an 'infallible ex cathedra statement'. He bears rule in the very sanctuary of the visible, professing Church, being worshipped by his devotees as 'our Lord God the Pope'. He professes power over all nations. What is this but a 'sitting in the temple of God' and 'opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God'?

Thirdly, we are informed of the rise and seat of this apostate power (vs. 3a, 5-7). There was to be an apostasy after the planting of New Testament churches throughout the inhabited world, but the process of decay already at work in apostolic times was to be hindered from coming to fruition by another power, which was soon to be removed. The history books tell us of the quiet infusion of heresy and immorality into the early Church, and show how the rise of papal Rome was hindered by the presence of imperial Rome. Not until the empire was in an advanced state of decay did Antichrist seize the capital for himself and claim universal sovereignty.

Fourthly, of the hypocrisy and deceitfulness of this apostate power we are forewarned in verses 9-10. Under an outward show of great humility, this Satanic power would conceal its real aim: universal tyranny, over

men's souls, bodies and possessions. It is also said to be an agent of Satan; i.e. deceiving sinners for eternity, with both false doctrines and false miracles. Of the papacy's many false doctrines, one example may be mentioned: just as the Word of God teaches that 'there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus', so Romanism interposes many mediators even between the Mediator Himself and men! What blasphemy we read in Liguori's 'Glories of Mary': 'Mary so loved the world that she gave her only-begotten Son'; and again: 'O immaculate Virgin, prevent thy beloved Son, who is irritated by our sins, from abandoning us to the power of the devil'. Similarly with respect to miracles: just as the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was confirmed to the heathen world by true miracles, so Romanism confirms her delusive lies with false ones, such as the Wilsnack blood, the Boxley crucifix, and other such mummeries.

Fifthly, we are also told of the influence this separate body would wield over the souls of men (vs. 10-12). Have not whole nations been deceived by her sorceries? (Rev. 18:23). How many thousands of priests submit without question to the popish rule of celibacy, although Peter, the alleged founder of the pope's order, was married (Mark 1:30)? What multitudes of poor benighted papists abstain from meats during Lent, when Scripture tells that God has given us all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17)? What grovelling superstition and craven fear is still attached to the priest in Ireland and South America!

Lastly, what the judgment of a perfectly holy God will be on such a system of iniquity we are told in verse 8. Though the wickedness at the heart of the papacy is concealed from millions, it will all be exposed and condemned at the last day. With the brightness of His coming, Christ will consume the entire system with the breath of His mouth.

In the light of this historically-vindicated identification, and of the alarming growth of popery in our beloved land in our day, the Presbytery would respectfully remind you that despite all profession to the contrary, Rome has not changed her nature. Should she again get power over the nation, we may be sure that the voice of a truly Reformed ministry would be silenced, and her former penal laws re-enacted. As C. H. Spurgeon said a century ago: 'You Protestants who are flinging away your liberties as dirt cheap, will rue the day in which you allowed the old chains to be fitted upon your wrists. Popery fettered and slew our sires, and yet we are making it the national religion'.

Furthermore, we urge you, as the elected representatives of the Established Church in Scotland, to publicly repudiate all sympathy with the

pope of Rome and the pernicious system which sustains him. Your attendance at the Inaugural Mass not only grieves the godly of our land, but also forebodes great danger to both Church and Nation. Never before, since the glorious Reformation, has there been such an unblushing avowal of popish sentiments among churchmen in Scotland, and such shameless departure from the Faith of our fathers, as defined in the Westminster Confession. We need to re-assert today more than ever that 'there is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God' (Ch. XXVI, sect. VI).

The great question before us is: shall Protestantism, or true Biblical religion, live or die? Under God, much depends on the attitude and line of conduct taken up by professing ministers of the Gospel. If you and your colleagues were to do your duty, there would be great hope for the Church of Scotland; but if you compromise, and fraternise with Rome in the interests of a false ecumenicism, there will be no hope at all. It is the rowers of the Church who have brought her into great waters (Ezek. 27:26), and by God's grace, only the rowers can bring her out again. Therefore, 'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues' (Rev. 18:4)."

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN M. BRETNALL.

Book Reviews

Biblical Church Discipline by Daniel E. Wray. Banner of Truth Trust. Price 35p.

This subject of this concise booklet is by no means popular today, but popularity is certainly not the criterion of spirituality, importance or relevance. At all levels of church life the glaring absence of discipline lies at the root of many paralysing problems. With the pendulum swinging towards anarchy and indifference this much neglected function of the church has almost vanished, although Calvin makes the proper exercises of discipline one of the salient features of the true church of God. Very necessary then is this re-affirmation of the church's responsibility in this respect. "It is ironic," says the writer, and rightly so, "that the rejection of church discipline is often justified in the name of love." The contents of this production by D. E. Wray are well arranged and merit most serious consideration in the present climate of false tolerance of evil. On

page 32, however, certain sentiments are expressed with which we cannot agree. The example of Christ and His apostles in lawfully partaking of the Lord's commanded ordinances in the Jewish church, is given as a reason for not separating from a church which allows the profane and scandalous to continue in its fellowship. This inference, in our view, does not carry sufficient weight, and tends to overlook the unique prerogatives of Christ, as well as his ultimate words concerning the Temple — "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate . . ." Further, one of the basic lessons that emerges from a study of the seven churches in Asia is surely a call to the immediate exercise of discipline to avert disaster. Finally, we would simply pose one question to the 'faithful' who remain within the bounds of a corrupt church; are they meeting with any real measure of success in decreasing, let alone in stemming the tide of corruption." If not, what is the proper and effective alternative? F.M.

The Charismatic Movement — Biblical Teaching on Tongues by Rev. John Douglas.

The author of this 63-page booklet is a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland. Concerned about the spread of the Charismatic Movement in its tongues-speaking aspect, he maintains that the power to speak in languages not known among men in this world is a satanic counterfeit of the tongues-speaking of apostolic times. In this connection he expounds 1 Corinthians 14. Mr Douglas believes that the legitimate gift of tongues was the ability to speak in foreign languages as described in Acts 2 v. 3-12. With this he contrasts the unintelligible utterances of modern Pentecostalists which cannot be used to convey scriptural truths to others. So much so, that their missionaries have to learn foreign languages just like others. Their tongues-speaking is done "in the church," which Mr Douglas finds opposed to 1 Cor. 14 v. 22.

The 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians certainly presents difficulties to the reader, and much depends on whether the tongues spoken of here by Paul are regarded as genuine gifts of the Spirit, foreign languages not understood by the worshippers; or, as Mr Douglas thinks, the speakers had no knowledge of what they were doing or saying, nor could anyone know. In fact he takes the tongues in this chapter to be the same spurious, Satan-inspired ones, that he writes to warn Christians about now. If Mr Douglas is in error here (and we think he is), parts of his interpretation of the chapter are invalidated, and his argument spoiled. Which is a pity, for we believe he is right in trying to expose the unscriptural nature of modern speaking with tongues. He correctly views

it as a part of the ecumenical movement, and something used by Rome to regain power over the apostate Protestant churches. Strangely, Mr Douglas thinks that Ananias and Sapphira were true believers!

The booklet has no price marked, but a label says that copies can be had from the Mourne Missionary Trust, 'Hor-kesel,' Church Road, Carginagh, Kilkeal, County Down, Northern Ireland. A. McP.

James by Robert Johnstone, D.D. Pages 444, price £3.50. Banner of Truth Trust.

This volume is a reprint of a course of lectures on the General Epistle of James by a United Presbyterian minister, Rev. Robt. Johnstone, D.D., to the people of his first congregation at Arbroath in 1871, as part of his regular pulpit ministrations. It is not, therefore, a commentary in the ordinary sense of the term but is mainly an exposition of the text although such questions as the writer, date, people addressed, etc., are not overlooked. These matters are considered in the introductory chapter. A few verses are taken up in each lecture and by careful exposition the practical lessons are elicited and applied to the needs of the hearers as the minister takes his people through the chapters of the epistle. No doctrine or lesson that can be fairly deduced from the epistle is neglected but in accordance with the best traditions of the Scottish pulpit, the Word of God is reverently and faithfully examined and explained. The volume is, therefore, of special interest to ministers of the Gospel for, as Prof. Smeaton says in the words quoted on the cover: "Not a single lesson that may arise from any word or position of a word appears to be omitted." There is no display of scholarship but the evidence of wide reading and exact knowledge is apparent everywhere. The severely practical nature of the epistle in its unsparing condemnation of public sins and moral faults is brought out under such headings as: The Genesis of Sin; Spiritual Mirror; Power of the Tongue; Origin of Strifes; Evil Speaking and Judging; Woes of the Wicked; etc. The sins which James condemns, however, are those found mainly among the Pharisees whereas the typical Gentile sins of Idolatry and moral uncleanness are not mentioned, which gives a Jewish flavour to the epistle. Possibly written at Jerusalem, the epistle is addressed to the Jewish Church.

The position of James on the doctrine of faith and works is explained in two helpful chapters on Faith without Works and Justifying Faith, a Working Faith. The passage of the epistle under discussion in these two chapters, James ch. ii, verses 14-26, is thought to bring James into conflict with the Apostle Paul in Paul's treatment of justifying faith in

Romans and Galatians. This was a misconception which led Luther to question the right of the Epistle of James to a place among the inspired scriptures. Dr Johnstone, however, has no difficulty in showing that James treats of faith as the mere intellectual assent which is barren of good fruit — “the devils believe and tremble,” ch. ii, v. 19 — his words are: “the soul-destroying impression that the knowledge of truth, with assent, necessarily constitutes saving faith”; whereas Paul speaks of the evangelical grace of faith which captivates the heart and governs the whole inwards spiritual life, the faith that works by love. There is no evidence in the epistle to show that Romans and Galatians were known to James at the time of writing as they evidently belong to a later date. Nevertheless, James is in perfect agreement with Paul.

This book is a valuable addition to the Banner of Truth publications — it is one of the Geneva Series of Commentaries — and should appeal to the ordinary reader as well as to ministers of religion. The high standard of printing and binding of the Banner of Truth is maintained, the price is low, and the work should prove of great spiritual help in a day of low moral standards and great spiritual declension. A.F.M.

Church Notes

Ordination and Induction at Lochbroom

On Tuesday, 21st November, the Western Presbytery met in the Ullapool Church at 6 p.m. to ordain and induct Mr Neil M. Ross, B.A., Probationer, to the holy ministry and the pastoral charge of Lochbroom. The church building was comfortably full and associated with the Presbytery were Revs. A. F. MacKay, A. MacPherson and D. B. MacLeod of the Northern Presbytery and Rev. F. MacDonald of the Skye Presbytery.

The Presbytery was constituted in the Vestry and the usual proclamation was made at the church door. Thereafter the Moderator, the Rev. Alfred E. W. MacDonald, preached an appropriate sermon from Numbers Chap. 27 vv. 16, 17. The Clerk then gave a brief narrative of proceedings in the Call, which had been signed by 13 members and 43 hearers.

At the request of the Moderator, the Clerk put to Mr Ross the “Questions” appointed to be put to ministers on their induction and Mr Ross signed the Formula in the presence of the congregation. Thereupon with the imposition of the hands of the ministerial members of the Presbytery and with solemn prayer led by the Moderator, Mr Ross was set apart to the office of the ministry. The Moderator then inducted him

to the charge of Lochbroom and the brethren gave to him the right hand of fellowship. The newly-inducted minister was then addressed suitably by his brother, the Rev. J. W. Ross, Lochcarron, and the Rev. A. MacAskill, Lochinver, exhorted the congregation as to its duty in appropriate terms. The Moderator then asked Revs. A. F. MacKay and F. MacDonald to speak, when reference was made, respectively, to Mr Ross's former connection with the Inverness congregation, and that until recently Skye had been part of the Presbytery which had oversight of Lochbroom. The Clerk conveyed to the meeting a message of good-will from the Southern Presbytery. After the Benediction the congregation met its new pastor at the church door.

So there was witnessed in the once highly favoured parish of Lochbroom the beginning both of a new ministry and of a new pastorate to the congregation. May the Lord of the harvest give souls for Mr Ross's hire and may many have to praise God for ever for his labours in these parts!

A.M., Clerk.

Induction at Tain

The Northern Presbytery met in the Tain Church on the evening of Friday, 24th November last for the Ordination and Induction of Mr John Ross as pastor of the Tain and Fearn congregation. The part of the minute calling the meeting was read, the Edict reported as served, the proclamation made thrice at the Church entrance, and then the Moderator went to the pulpit and preached from the words in Isaiah, chapter lxii, verses 1, 6 and 7: "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest . . . I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which will never hold their peace . . . And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." The sermon, listened to by a large, attentive and representative congregation which quite filled the church, was most appropriate for an induction occasion and outlined the settled purpose of Christ for his Church, the appointment of watchmen and their own and the people's relative duties. When public worship was ended, the narrative of the steps taken in the Call was read by the clerk and, when the stated Questions were put and satisfactorily answered, the Formula was signed. Mr Ross kneeled and with imposition of hands by solemn prayer by authority of the Presbytery and in the name of the Divine Head of the Church was set apart to the office of the ministry and settled over the Tain and Fearn congregation as their pastor by the Moderator. Rev. R. R. Sinclair then addressed the newly inducted minister and Rev. J. Tallach the people and their remarks, practical and appropriate, were designed to be helpful to

minister and people. Many of our people had gathered from other parts of the Church and from these the Moderator called upon Rev. A. Murray on behalf of the Western Presbytery to speak, Rev. F. Tallach from the Skye Presbytery and Rev. Ian Tallach from the Southern Presbytery. Rev. R. R. Sinclair had been requested by the office-bearers publicly to thank Rev. D. B. MacLeod for the meticulous way he had carried out his duties as Moderator during the vacancy which Mr MacLeod feelingly acknowledged. The service was then concluded with the singing of a few verses of Ps. lxxii. Rev. J. Ross then went to the door of the Church to shake hands with the people as they departed. His name was added to the Presbytery Roll of members, and he returned to take his place on the court which continued to sit to deal with further Presbytery business.

In the course of the proceedings the Moderator remarked on one striking aspect of that evening's service of Induction, so unusual in the history of the Church, that in the one week two ministerial brothers were settled over congregations of the Church, Rev. N. Ross who was present that evening over the Ullapool congregation on the previous Tuesday, and now later in the week, Rev. J. Ross had become pastor over the Tain and Fearn congregation. It had been the expressed conviction of the previous minister, the late Rev. J. Nicolson, that after his departure the congregation would not have to wait long till a successor would be appointed. It must be strengthening to the hearts of all the friends of the Gospel who love the gates of Zion that in an age of great declension such as ours, the Great Head of the Church has given this undoubted mark of his favour to our Church. May the Lord bless both of these ministers in their new fields of labour.

A.F.M.

Young People's Conference

The Young People's Conference will be held at Kilravock Castle, Croy, Inverness-shire, from Tuesday, 17th April to Thursday, 19th April (D.V.). A fuller notice will appear in February.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern: At Dingwall on 23rd January at 2.30 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 6th February at 11 a.m.

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

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 27th February at 11.30 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 6th March at 11 a.m.

Financial Year End

As the financial year ends on 31st December 1978, Congregational Treasurers and Deacons' Courts are reminded that all Funds in respect

of 1978 should be in the General Treasurer's hands by Saturday, 6th January, 1979, God willing. Funds received after that date will be credited to 1979.

Congregational Financial Statements

By appointment of Synod a copy of all Congregational Financial Statements should be sent to the Finance Committee. Statements in respect of 1978 should be sent to the General Treasurer by 31st March, 1979, God willing.

Letter

by Rev. John Berridge

Dear Brother,

Everton, March 26, 1772

Mr W———— informs me of the loss of your dear wife. You once knew she was mortal; but she has now put off mortality, and is become immortal. Can this grieve you? Oh, that I was where she now is! —

“Safe landed on that peaceful shore,

Where pilgrims meet to part no more.”

She was once a mourning sinner in the wilderness, but she is now a glorified saint in Zion; the Lord is become her everlasting light — the days of her mourning are ended. Does this trouble you? — She was once afflicted with bodily pains and weakness, encompassed with cares, and harassed with a crowd of anxious, needless fears; but she has now arrived at her Father's house, and Jesus has wiped away all tears from her eyes, and freed her in a moment from all pains, cares, fears, and wants. And shall this affect you? — You have not lost your wife; she has only left you for a few moments — left an earthly husband to visit a heavenly Father — and expects your arrival there soon, to join the hallelujah for redeeming love. Are you still weeping? — Fie upon you, brother! — weeping because your wife can weep no more! weeping because she is happy, because she is joined to that assembly where all are kings and priests! weeping because she is daily feasted with heavenly manna, and hourly drinking new wine in her Father's kingdom! weeping because she is now where you would be, and long to be eternally! weeping because she is singing, and singing sweet anthems to her God and your God! — O shameful weeping! Jesus has fetched your bride triumphantly home to His kingdom, to draw your soul more ardently thither, He has broken up a cistern to bring you nearer, and keep you closer to the fountain; has caused a moment's separation, to divorce your affections from the creature; and has torn a wedding-string from your heart, to set it

a-bleeding more freely, and panting more vehemently for Jesus. Hereafter you will see how gracious the Lord has been, in calling a beloved wife home, in order to betroth the husband more effectually to himself. Remember that the house of mourning becomes and befriends a sinner; that sorrow is a safe companion for a pilgrim, who walks much astray until his heart is well broken. May all your tears flow in a heavenly channel, and every sigh waft your soul to Jesus! May the God of all consolation comfort you through life, and in death afford you a triumphant entrance into His kingdom!

So prays your friend and brother in the Gospel of Christ,

John Berridge.

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Ingwenya Mission: Two friends in Achmore, £60, per Miss C. M. MacA.

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

Dumbarton: Friend, £5; Friend, Raasay, £2; both for Manse Fund; Friend, Edinburgh, £10 Dumbarton Church Extension, all per T. MacRae.

Edinburgh: Barnoldswick Congregation, £10 for Gilmore Place Church Roof Repairs; Mrs A. MacG., £5 for Congregational Funds and Communion Expenses.

Kinlochbervie: Inverness Postmark, £40 for work of the Gospel in Italy, per Rev. J. Tallach.

Kyle: A Friend, £5; For Manse, £5; Envelope in plate, £10; all for Manse Building Fund.

Fort William: Glasgow Friend, £5; Mrs C., Onich, £1; Mrs MacD., Tyndrum; MacLeans, Tyndrum, £5; all per Rev. J. MacDonald.

North Harris: Two Friends, Bayhead, Meavaig South, £6 for Communion Expenses; Friend, Harris House, £1 for door collection; Friend, Seadabay, £5 (£3 for Church property, £2 for Car Fund); Two Friends, Carrigreck, £5 (£4 for Church property, £1 for Car Fund); Two Friends, Kennedy Terrace, £4 for Communion Expenses; Two Friends, Leacklee, £5 (£4 for Church property, £1 for Car Fund); last four per Rev. A. MacKay.

Perth: Mrs M. MacI., Thornliebank, £3; Inverness Friend, £5; Stirling Friend, £5.

Portree: In Church plate, £35 (£10 for Home of Rest, £5 each for College & Library, Foreign Missions, F.P. Mag., Y.P. Mag., Aged & Infirm Ministers Fund); Anon., £5, per F.M.; Anon., £5 in church plate, both for Sustentation Fund; Misses C. & M. MacK., Portree, £50 for Congregational Expenses (in Church Plate); Anon., Braes, £3 for Church Bus, per F.M.

Raasay: Mr & Mrs A. N., Balachulish, £5, per M. D. MacKay; J.N., Harris, £5; M. Mach., Inverness, £5; Friend of the Cause, £5; In memory of dear father and grandfather, £5, all for Sustentation Fund, and all per J. M. MacLeod; Same £5 for Church Door Collection, per J. M. MacLeod; Inverness Friend, £1, per M. D. MacKay; J.F., £20; Friend, Raasay, £5; all for Church Door Collection.

Sheldalgi: Anon., Raasay, £4 for Sustentation Fund; Anon., Raasay, £4 for Manse Extension.

Stornoway: Anon., £20 for Church Door Collection.

Strath: Friend: £2, per D. MacKay; Friend, Ardersier, £5 (in plate); both for Sustentation Fund.