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Communion Seasons

The Lord has been pleased to leave with us still the communion seasons which have been a feature of Scottish Church life, and particularly of Highland Church life, for many generations. These seasons have proved to be on many occasions in the past, seasons of reviving and refreshing to the people of God, as well as times of awakening to sinners still in their sins. Even in the days of declension and backsliding which have come upon the Church of God in our day, the Lord still graciously favours His people with times of blessing as they gather on the mount of ordinances. We have reason then to value the privilege we have in this way of meeting together at such times and of enjoying fellowship and communion with the Lord and His people. We have little doubt that Satan would love to see such times brought to an end because of the opportunity they afford to the Lord's people and to those who are still outside the kingdom to hear the Word of God and to witness, or take part in, the remembrance of the death of Christ.

The several days of the communion seasons, marked out as they are for the various duties required of the Lord's people, that is, humiliation, self-examination, preparation, commemoration and thanksgiving, have proved helpful to the people of God in connection with partaking of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Though the days themselves are not necessarily bound up with the administration of the Sacrament yet these various duties are bound up with it, and consequently, the apportioning of specific days for these duties has not proved unhelpful but rather of considerable benefit. This has been the unvarying testimony of the most spiritually minded of the people of God who have been conversant with this practice.

In this dark day it ought to be a wonder to us to see sometimes two or three hundred people meeting together to attend the worship of the sanctuary. What reason for thankfulness there is that young and old are in this way privileged to hear discourses bearing upon the different

themes applicable to each of the days of the communion. Other churches require to have their conferences, and other rallies and meetings. For our part we have little need of these so long as the communion seasons continue to be frequented by young and old. May it long be so in our midst.

One feature of these seasons which ought not to be overlooked is the opportunity they afford for gathering together at prayer meetings. The morning prayer meetings and the Saturday evening and Sabbath evening prayer meetings are often times of refreshing and when the prayer meetings are lively it is usual to find that the preaching is lively as well. Let us not despise the prayer-meetings. It is in answer to the pleadings of His people that the Lord bestows a blessing. "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them." Ezek. 36:37. "Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me." Is. 45:11. It is certainly encouraging to see the greater part of a large congregation remaining behind after the Sabbath evening service of the communion to attend the prayer meeting which follows it. Satan would have them otherwise occupied if he had his way.

Another feature of these Communion seasons is the hospitality shown to those who came to the Mount. There are still those who have a heart and mind to open their homes to entertain the people of God and all who come to these assemblies. It is a token for good that the Lord gives them a mind to do so and we have every reason to believe that He will reward them for it. The fellowship in these homes in speaking on the truth or in narrating incidents in the lives of the godly of the past can be refreshing indeed.

After attending communion seasons the great question for each one should be—What benefit have I derived from it? If we are still in our sins then the question for us is—Have I obtained spiritual and saving blessings through the Word preached? Have I found Christ for my never-dying soul? If we are in Christ then we must ask ourselves—Have I obtained spiritual good for my soul? Have the graces of the Spirit in me been stirred up into lively exercise? Have I fed spiritually on the Manna which came down from heaven? Has Christ become more precious to me than He ever was? Have I been enabled to die more and more unto sin, and to live unto righteousness? If we were exercised in this way the season of communion and fellowship might prove a blessing to us even after many days.

There are those to whom the Communion seasons mean so much that they take their holiday at that time so as to be privileged to enjoy them without distraction. We would do well to emulate them in this—and if we did so in a right frame of mind, we have little doubt that at the end of the day we would have to say that it was the best holiday we ever enjoyed. Like the eunuch we would go on our way rejoicing, praising God and saying:

How lovely is thy dwelling place

O Lord of Hosts to me

The tabernacles of Thy grace,

how pleasant Lord they be.

Sermon

by Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

(Continued from page 203)

"Make you a new heart and a new spirit"—Ez. xviii. 31.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you"—Ez. xxxvi. 26.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"—Ps. li. 10.

II. We come, then, to the consideration of the Promise.

1. And, *in the first place*, it is obvious that the *wisdom* of God is wonderfully exhibited in bringing in the promise at this precise point. If it had come sooner, the soul would not have been prepared to receive it. If it had come later, the soul would have been already given over to hopeless despair. The promise cannot go before the precept, for then the soul would not feel the need of it, and consequently its value would not be appreciated; and the promise cannot come after the prayer, for then prayer would have no foundation on which to ground her supplication. But the Lord, who knoweth the spirits which He hath made, and who "knoweth what is in man, and needeth not that any should testify unto Him" (John ii. 25), seeth the end of a spiritual conflict from the beginning, and all the parts thereof in their order; and He comes in with His separate dealings at the proper time, and at the proper point. Thus, when the precept has done the preparatory work in righteous authority, the promise begins to reign on the throne of meekness and of mercy. The precept, like affliction, may not have

seemed joyous, but rather grievous; nevertheless it hath wrought the humbling "fruits of righteousness," preparatory to the gifts of mercy, "in them that have been rightly exercised thereby" (Heb. xii. 11). The reign of the precept, if we look not beyond it—if we regard it as an end—may have been a reign of terror. Viewed, however, as a means, as the prerequisite merely to the "better things to be revealed," it has indeed been the reign of grace begun, although the grace as yet has been concealed. But now "the better things themselves" are brought to us by the promise. If the precept could have brought these things, "if that first covenant had," in this respect, "been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second," no room for the promise. But because the precept has a tantalising "shadow" only "of the good things to come, and not the very image of these things," because it can never "make the comers thereunto perfect"—because "the law can make nothing perfect"—therefore "there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof," to make way for "the bringing in of a better hope"—"He taketh away the first that He may establish the second;" and what the precept "cannot do, in that it is weak through the flesh, God" through His own Son can do, by the "promise, which in Him is yea and amen." (Compare Heb. vii. 18 19, viii. 6-13, x. i. 9; Rom. viii. 3). Is the precept then useless? No, by no means. "Is it then against the promise of God? God forbid; for if there had been" a precept "given which could have given life, verily righteousness" and a new heart "should have been by" that precept. "Wherefore then serveth the" precept? "It was added because of transgressions," and nature's helplessness, "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." And its indispensable and blessed, though painful work, is this—that it "hath concluded all under sin" and helplessness, and proved this in their own experience and to their own consciences, "that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before" the promise "came we were kept under the" precept, "shut up unto the" promise "which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the "precept" was our schoolmaster, to bring us to" the promise, and to Him who is "the surety of a covenant established upon better promises," "that we might be justified by faith." (See Gal. iii. 19-24).

Thus there is the economy of a Mosaic dispensation, carried on preparatory to that of a Christian dispensation, in God's dealings with every regenerated soul, as truly and really as in the history of the collective church. This preparation in the church was not more

necessary than it is in the individual heart; and just as there was a Divine wisdom seen in emancipating the Church from the "tutors and governors," at "the time appointed of the Father," when "He sent forth His Son," so there is a "fulness of the time" in the history of every believing sinner, when God sends forth His promise, even the promised Spirit of His Son, into the heart, as faithfully as He sent forth His Son into the world, emancipating the despairing soul as fully in the one case from the grievous bondage of the precept as He freed His people in the other from those beggarly elements, and from that "yoke of bondage which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear." In the days of Moses the Church was not ready for the simplicity, the liberty, the manliness, and the spirituality of the Christian dispensation. And so, at the opening of the soul's spiritual discipline, by reason of its childish ignorance and wayward pride, God introduces a dispensation of precept first; and when this has accomplished the work whereunto He sent it, at the proper point, and at the proper time, He brings in His dispensation of promise. "Surely this also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

2. How is the *grace* of God adored by the fainting soul, when, after the conflict with the precept, the promise comes brightly into view. The *wisdom* of God is seen in the promise, coming at the very time when it was needed. But the grace of God is glorified in bringing in the very gift which was needed. "Make thee a new heart and a new spirit," says the precept. "Ah," replies the sinner, "that is not in my power;" I am carnal; sold under "sin," "dead in trespasses and in sins." I cannot frame my heart otherwise than it hath been formed by iniquity. "I am as an unclean thing, and all my righteousness are as filthy rags. I do fade as a leaf, and my iniquities, like the wind, have taken me away" (Is. lxiv. 6). "A deceived heart hath turned me aside that I cannot deliver my soul" (Is. xlv. 20). In this helpless state is it a partial promise that is given? Is it a greater earnestness to try the work ourselves that God offers to communicate? Does He promise to help us out with the laborious achievement, if we will arise and put our hand to the work ourselves? Does He engage to fill up or supplement our deficiencies? Does He offer to overlook our failures, if only our attempt shall be sincere? Oh no! These may be the doctrines of a wretched Arminianism. These may be the desires of a half-humbled soul. But they are not the promises of God. These would be boons of little value; they would tend to no practical result, no saving issue. There would indeed be mockery in promises like these; for the very condition on which such offers are

supposed to be made, never could be realised in us till the whole work were done. But the very thing that we cannot make ourselves, God promises unconditionally to bestow, freely to bestow, without condition, without money, and without price. The precept, having done its painful work, seems, as it were, recalled, and the form being annulled, but the whole substance retained, it once more returns in the form and the language of peace and hope and joy. Like the same law given to Moses a second time, not amidst thunderings and lightnings, and darkness, and tempest, but amidst light, and peace, and favour, all God's goodness passing by before His servant, sheltered now in the cleft of the rock; so here, the preceptive form, which caused the tempest and the terror in the soul, being all done away, the very same substance, in all its integrity, is restored, but now beaming in the light and lustre of a free and gracious promise, "A new heart will I give unto you, a new spirit will I put within you." It is the very thing required, without restriction, and without abatement, offered freely and without condition, without money and without price.

3. But the *grace* of God is still more wonderfully glorified by the consideration, that, while this is the very thing which we need, and which God offers to bestow upon us, it is also the very thing which we are bound to render unto Him. And here, again, the good fruits of the precept as the forerunner of the promise come clearly into view. The precept teaches that we need this, for it teaches us experimentally our want and our helplessness. But when it teaches our responsibility, our obligation to make us a new heart and a new spirit, our crime and our guilt in not doing so, then we see, not the depth of wretchedness and misery merely, but the essence of rebellion in our inability. Oh! when the responsibility is really felt, as well as the helplessness, how does the manifold grace of God grow before the view of the admiring soul! If I feel that I would be better if I had a new heart, and, at the same time, feel my utter incapacity to make me a new heart and a right spirit, how gracious in the great God to come and offer me the very thing I need—the very thing that I cannot do without! But when, besides this, I feel my deep and unchangeable responsibility to make this new heart which yet I cannot make—when I feel my criminality in delaying every moment to do it, and my criminality in being unable to do it at all, either now or at any future time, oh! how shall I speak then of that grace which pities both my weakness and my guilt, and delivers me most fully from the death-bringing consequences of both. It was much when He "looked upon me in my low estate;" but it was more when He looked upon me in

my lost estate. It was great grace when He, "in due time," pitied me as a weak and helpless sufferer, "yet without strength" (Rom. v. 6); but it was greater far when He pitied me as a daring rebel, "a sinner, an enemy" (v. 8-10). Grace abounded when, sympathisingly, He gave me that new heart which I was unable to make; but grace much more abounded when, forgivingly, He gave me that new heart which I was bound to make, and guilty in my inability to make it. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, for He *healeth* all thy *diseases*; He also *forgiveth* all thine *iniquities*" (Ps. ciii. 2, 3).

4. And now the *sovereignty* of Divine grace can be obscured or concealed no longer. This also the believer is taught to feel and to acknowledge by reason of his previous discipline under the precept. In learning his obligation and responsibility, he at the same time necessarily learned the majesty and kingly authority of God. We have seen that the precept teaches not only the soul's utter helplessness, but also the soul's entire subjection to the righteous justice of the Lawgiver. We are made to feel completely in God's power. We are exposed to His righteous anger, and incapable of effecting our deliverance from threatened wrath. The Lord maintains His right to command, though we have lost our power to obey. Whatever impotency we are groaning under, He is seen to reign as King. He has the destinies of all souls at His own free, unchallenged disposal. He is the Sovereign God : righteous in forsaking all if He will—righteous in pouring out wrath unto the uttermost. What an overpowering dignity is seen in His sovereign majesty, His uncontrollable right and power! How exalted above all created excellence! How full of uncreated, all-governing glory—a glory terrible indeed, if no grace is mingled with it! But if this high Sovereign shall give His gracious promise, then how resplendent is His *sovereign* grace? If He who is the God of all majesty, and excellency, and dignity, and sovereign glory—if He, who ruleth among the armies above, and the inhabitants of this earth below, free and uncontrolled in all His ways, and in all His purposes—if He who is the sovereign disposer of ten thousand times ten thousand angels, and who is sovereign over *me*, as His precept and commandment do fully prove—if He, who as such a sovereign hath the fullest right to execute on me wrath to the uttermost—if He shall single out and distinguish me from among the mass of helpless, dying, daring rebels, and glorifying in His words, shall cry in my astonished and delighted ear, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own name's sake," and as "I am that I am," "a new heart will I give unto thee, and a new spirit will I put within

thee,"—oh! how shall my grateful but too straitened soul ever realise, or comprehend with all saints this mystery of sovereign grace, all made mine in the free and gracious promise of a sovereign God! Wondrous and adorable sovereignty of my God! I quarrel with it no more—I hail it with rejoicing. The Lord is my Sovereign; "the Lord is my Lawgiver; the Lord is my King;" as such "He will save me" (Isa. xxxiii. 22). None can deny His right. Who shall condemn when the Sovereign God hath justified? (Rom. vii. 33). None can resist His power. Who shall stay His hand from working? Who shall say unto Him what doest Thou? How powerful, how authoritative is the grace of this holy Judge—the Sovereign King of Zion!

Behold then, O my soul, how God, by giving thee His precept, first prepares thee for His promise—opens thine eyes to behold His wisdom, enables thee to see His grace, His multitude of tender mercies, begets in thee a deep sense of His righteous authority, which, when the promise comes, is transferred with all its sovereign majesty, to that redeeming love which then excels in glory, and shines forth in dignity and splendour. Thus the creature is abased, and the sovereign God is exalted, and no flesh can glory in His presence. Thus there is glory to God in the highest, and grace to men. The grace is compassed with sovereign glory, and the glory is full of sovereign grace. "O Lord, we beseech Thee show us Thy glory!" Fulfil to us Thy gracious promise! "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

III. We have already made use of the prayer. Indeed we are brought almost insensibly to the third and last link of this beautiful chain—the last line of this threefold cord.

And now, the office which prayer performs in this divine and spiritual economy will be obvious to all. It appropriately comes last, because it is grounded on, and takes its warrant from the promise, pleading the fulfilment of the promise that thereby the object of the precept may be gained. The prayer, when offered, grows out of the promise; the prayer, when answered, satisfies the precept. The precept teaches man that he is helpless; the promise tells him there is help; the prayer secures the help. The precept teaches man that he is responsible and guilty; the promise tells him there is forgiveness; the prayer obtains the pardon. The precept teaches man God's authority; the promise tells of God's grace; the prayer tries and tests God's sufficiency. The precept teaches man his dependence; the promise declares dependence in God well placed; the prayer puts dependence on God accordingly. The precept teaches man humility; the promise gives man hope; the prayer shows man's trust.

The precept gives scope for God's righteous justice; the promise gives scope for God's faithfulness; the prayer gives scope for man's faith. In all cases, the prayer is necessary to complete the cycle; and if the precept and the promise do but graciously exercise the soul, the prayer will and cannot but follow. He who listens to the precept and feels his need, his helplessness, his responsibility, his crime, and then listens to the promise, "counting Him faithful who hath promised, who also will do it," — that man will and must have recourse to the prayer. He is shut up to prayer by every principle in his nature, by his sin and misery, by reason and conscience, by fear and hope. He must pray. He cannot help it. He is carried captive to prayer by a blessed necessity, a willing and therefore victorious and joyful necessity.

To the prayerless, therefore, there is here very clear and simple ground for self-examination and self-condemnation. Dear brethren, matters must stand thus with you; you have received aright neither the precept nor the promise of your God: for they always bring the prayer along with them. No man can put asunder what God hath joined; and therefore if you are living in the habitual neglect of earnest prayer, it must be because you have listened proudly to the precept, faithlessly to the promise. You are quarrelling with the precept, and denying your helplessness; and herein you falsify the word of God, your own experience, and the experience of all the saints and the spirits of just men made perfect. Or you are denying your responsibility and God's authority, "casting His cords away from you," and saying "Who is the Lord, that we should serve Him?" Or you are quarrelling with the promise; either contemning His wisdom by counting His promise worthless, or contemning His faithfulness by insinuating that His truth will fail. One or other of these fearful alternatives you must choose, if you are not habitually plying the throne of grace with prayer; and perhaps the guilt of all these crimes together is cleaving to your consciences. Oh how unprovoked and how God-provoking must be the sin of prayerless lives? Only think how beautifully God has prepared the way for prayer. How much wisdom has he lavished upon this gracious arrangement! How safely and how gently has He contrived to carry you step by step to His throne of grace! The precept tells you that you must obey. Even God Himself cannot release you from that. It is a painful lesson; yet is it not well to know it, while hope yet remains, that it may become a practical lesson? It is mercy in God to speak out ere all hope is gone. The precept tells you of your helplessness, convinces you of this experimentally when you attempt to obey it, and find that you cannot

"make a new heart and a new spirit." Surely it is good to know this truth also. Your ignorance of it would not make it less true, and your knowledge of it will at least turn you away from a fruitless source of labour, and should make you willing to try a "more excellent way" if it can be shown to you. And that this can be done, you need not doubt; for the promise now comes in to show that all may yet infallibly be well, pledging immutable things to your full deliverance and your eternal safety. "What could have been done more to His vineyard that He hath not done to it?" (Isa. v. 4). Will you turn it all into contempt? Nay, rather, I should say, will you yourselves become a contempt and a hissing to all passers-by, through indolence, or pride, or unbelief, or any other miserable habit of your wretched hearts, the very presence of which should only add wings to your haste, and fervour to your prayer. What! shall God do so much for miserable guilty rebels, and will you do nothing, absolutely nothing, for yourselves? Will you not even arise and call upon your God for mercy? How *can* we persuade you? What arguments remain wherewith to ply you? To the authoritative voice of the taskmaster, and the pleasant voice of the charmer, ye are alike deaf. Ye are like sullen "children in the market-place." By the precept we "have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented;" by the promise we "have piped unto you and ye have not danced." One word more, and may the Lord bless it to your souls. Your guilt is now tremendous, because your case is now made so hopeful; and your case is thus hopeful because you have so little to do. Yea, you have only to plead with God to do *all* the work to your hands. Will you cast away eternal joy and court eternal agony by refusing *that*?

How calculated are these imperfect meditations to encourage the hearts of those who are Israelites indeed, princes with God in prayer! Let the precept, and the promise, and the prayer, be alike precious to you, and have your souls disciplined by a due attention to them all. Never think you can obey the precept in your own strength. Never think that your interest in the promise sets you free from the authority of the precept. Never think that prayer can supersede either the precept or the promise. Prayer is hypocrisy except with a view to the obedience of the precept. In all thy ways diligently search for the pure precepts of thy God, crying evermore, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Fear not for thy weakness to know thy duty, though it should be thine in Divine command to remove mountains. "Who are thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, for He shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace, unto it" (Zec. iv.

7). "His grace shall be sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9). His promise is, that "as thy day, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 25). "Yet for all this will he be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them" (Ez. xxxvi. 37). Therefore, let thy duty, and thy weakness, and thy cheering promise, send thee to the throne, for "grace is help in thy time of need" (Heb. iv. 16). "Put him in remembrance" (Is. xliii. 26), saying, "Remember the words unto thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope" (Ps. cxix. 49). Then "Fear not thou worm Jacob; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small" (Is. xli. 41).

Are you happy?

by Bishop J.C. Ryle

Reader,

You see the question which forms the title of this paper. Now listen to a simple story.

An infidel was once addressing a crowd of people in the open air. He was trying to persuade them that there was no God, and no devil, no heaven, and no hell, resurrection, no judgment, and no life to come. He advised them to throw away their Bibles, and not to mind what parsons said. He recommended them to think as he did, and to be like him. He talked boldly. The crowd listened eagerly. It was the blind leading the blind. Both were falling into the ditch.

In the middle of his address a poor old woman suddenly pushed her way through the crowd, to the place where he was standing. She stood before him. She looked him full in the face. "Sir," she said, in a loud voice, "Are you happy?" The infidel looked scornfully at her, and gave her no answer. "Sir," she said again, "I ask you to answer my question. Are you happy? You want us to throw away our Bibles. You tell us not to believe what parsons say about religion. You advise us to think as you do, and be like you. Now before we take your advice, we have a right to know what good we shall get by it. Do your fine new notions give you much comfort? Do you yourself really feel happy?"

The infidel stopped, and attempted to answer the old woman's question. He stammered, and shuffled, and fidgeted, and endeavoured to explain his meaning. He tried hard to turn the subject. He said, he "had not come there to preach about happiness." But it was of no use. The old woman stuck to her point. She insisted on her question being answered, and the crowd took her part. She pressed him hard with her

inquiry, and would take no excuse. And at last the infidel was obliged to leave the ground, and sneak off in confusion. He could not reply to the question. His conscience would not let him: he dared not say that he was happy.

Reader, the old woman showed great wisdom in asking the question that she did. The argument she used may seem very simple, but in reality it is one of the most powerful that can be employed. It is a weapon that has more effect on some minds than the most elaborate reasoning of Butler, or Paley, or Chalmers. Whenever a man begins to take up new views of religion, and pretends to despise old Bible Christianity, thrust home at his conscience the old woman's question. Ask him whether his new views make him feel comfortable within. Ask him whether he can say, with honesty and sincerity, that he is happy. The grand test of a man's faith and religion is, "Does it make him happy?"

Let me now affectionately invite every reader to consider the subject of this paper. Let me warn you to remember that the salvation of your soul, and nothing less, is closely bound up with the subject. The heart cannot be right in the sight of God which knows nothing of happiness. That man or woman cannot be in a safe state of soul who feels nothing of peace within.

There are three things which I purpose to do, in order to clear up the subject of this paper. I ask your special attention to each one of them. And I pray the Spirit of God to apply all to your soul.

I. Let me point out some things which are absolutely essential to all happiness.

II. Let me expose some common mistakes about the way to be happy.

III. Let me show you the real way to be truly happy.

I. First of all I have to point out some things which are absolutely essential to all true happiness.

Happiness is what all mankind want to obtain: the desire of it is deeply planted in the human heart. All men naturally dislike pain, sorrow, and discomfort. All men naturally like ease, comfort, and gladness. All men naturally hunger and thirst after happiness. Just as the sick man longs for health, and the prisoner of war for liberty, — just as the parched traveller in hot countries longs to see the cooling fountain, or the ice-bound polar voyager the sun rising above the

horizon,—just in the same way does poor mortal man long to be happy. But, alas, how few consider what they really mean when they talk of happiness! How vague and indistinct and undefined the ideas of most men are upon the subject! They think some are happy, who in reality are miserable: they think some are gloomy and sad, who in reality are truly happy. They dream of a happiness which in reality would never satisfy their nature's wants. Let me try this day to throw a little light on the subject.

True happiness *is not perfect freedom from sorrow and discomfort*. Let that never be forgotten. If it were so, there would be no such thing as happiness in the world. Such happiness is for angels who have never fallen, and not for man. The happiness I am inquiring about is such as a poor, dying, sinful creature may hope to attain. Our whole nature is defiled by sin. Evil abounds in the world. Sickness, and death, and change are daily doing their sad work on every side. In such a state of things, the highest happiness man can attain to on earth must necessarily be a mixed thing. If we expect to find any literally perfect happiness on this side of the grave, we expect what we shall not find.

True happiness *does not consist in laughter and smiles*. The face is very often a poor index of the inward man. There are thousands who laugh loud and are merry as a grasshopper in company, but are wretched and miserable in private, and almost afraid to be alone. There are hundreds who are grave and serious in their demeanour, whose hearts are full of solid peace. A poet of our own has truly told us, that smiles are worth but little:—

“A man may smile and smile and be a villain.”

And the eternal Word of God teaches us, that “even in laughter the heart is sorrowful.” (Prov. xiv. 13.) Tell me not merely of smiling and laughing faces: I want to hear of something more than that, when I ask whether a man is happy. A truly happy man no doubt will often show his happiness in his countenance; but a man may have a very merry face, and yet not be happy at all.

Of all deceptive things on earth nothing is so deceptive as mere gaiety and merriment. It is a hollow empty show, utterly devoid of substance and reality. Listen to the brilliant talker in society, and mark the applause which he receives from an admiring company: follow him to his own private room, and you will very likely find him plunged in melancholy despondency. Colonel Gardener confessed that even when he was thought most happy he often wished he was a dog. — Look at the smiling beauty in the ball-room, and you might suppose she knew not

what it was to be unhappy: see her next day at her own home, and you may probably find her out of temper with herself and everybody else besides. — Oh, no: worldly merriment is not real happiness! There is a certain pleasure about it, I do not deny. There is an animal excitement about it, I make no question. There is a temporary elevation of spirits about it, I freely concede. But call it not by the sacred name of happiness. The most beautiful cut flowers stuck into the ground do not make a garden. When glass is called diamond, and tinsel is called gold, then, and not till then, your people who can laugh and smile will deserve to be called happy men.*

To be truly happy *the highest wants of a man's nature must be met and satisfied*. The requirements of his curiously wrought constitution must all be filled up. There must be nothing about him that cries, "Give, give," but cries in vain and gets no answer. The horse and the ox are happy as long as they are warmed and filled. And why? It is because they are satisfied. The little infant looks happy when it is clothed, and fed, and well, and in its mother's arms. And why? Because it is satisfied. And just so it is with man. His highest wants must be met and satisfied, before he can be truly happy. All must be filled up. There must be no void, no empty places, no unsupplied cravings. Till then he is never truly happy.

And what are *man's principal wants*? Has he a body only? No: he has something more! He has a soul. — Has he sensual faculties only? Can he do nothing but hear, and see, and smell, and taste, and feel? No: he has a thinking mind and a conscience! Has he no consciousness of any world but that in which he lives and moves? He has. There is a still small voice within him which often makes itself heard: "This life is not all! There is a world unseen: there is a life beyond the grave." Yes: it is true. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. All men know it: all men feel it, if they

*Cervantes, author of Don Quixote, at a time when all Spain was laughing at his humorous work, was overwhelmed with a deep cloud of melancholy.

Molière, the first of French comic writers, carried into his domestic circle a sadness which the greatest worldly prosperity could never dispel.

Samuel Foote, the noted wit of the last century, died of a broken heart.

Theodore Hooke, the facetious novel writer, who could set everybody laughing, says of himself in his diary, "I am suffering under a constant depression of spirits, which no one who sees me in society dreams of."

A weebegone stranger consulted a physician about his health. The physician advised him to keep up his spirits by going to hear the great comic actor of the day. "You should go and hear Matthews. He would make you well." "Alas sir," was the reply, "I am Matthews himself!" — (*Pictorial Pages*).

would only speak the truth. It is utter nonsense to pretend that food and raiment, and earthly good things alone can make men happy. There are soul-wants. There are conscience-wants. There can be no true happiness, until these wants are satisfied.

To be truly happy *a man must have sources of gladness which are not dependent on anything in this world.* There is nothing upon earth which is not stamped with the mark of instability and uncertainty. All the good things that money can buy are but for a moment: they either leave us or we are obliged to leave them. All the sweetest relationships in life are liable to come to an end: death may come any day and cut them off. The man whose happiness depends entirely on things here below, is like him who builds his house on sand, or leans his weight on a reed.

Tell me not of your happiness, if it daily hangs on the uncertainties of earth. Your home may be rich in comforts; your wife and children may be all you could desire; your means may be amply sufficient to meet all your wants: but oh, remember, if you have nothing more than this to look to, that you stand on the brink of a precipice! Your rivers of pleasure may any day be dried up. Your joy may be deep and earnest, but it is fearfully short-lived. It has no root. It is not true happiness.

To be really happy *a man must be able to look on every side without uncomfortable feelings.* He must be able to look back to the past without guilty fears; he must be able to look around him without discontent; he must be able to look forward without anxious dread. He must be able to sit down and think calmly about things past, present, and to come, and feel prepared. The man who has a weak side in his condition, — a side that he does not like looking at or considering, — that man is not really happy. Talk not to me of your happiness, if you are unable to look steadily either before or behind you. Your present position may be easy and pleasant. You may find many sources of joy and gladness in your profession, your dwelling-place, your family, and your friends. Your health may be good, your spirits may be cheerful; but stop and think quietly over your past life. Can you reflect calmly on all the omissions and commissions of by-gone years? How will they bear God's inspection? How will you answer for them at the last day? And then look forward, and think on the years yet to come. Think of the certain end towards which you are hastening; think of death; think of judgment; think of the hour when you will meet God face to face. Are you ready for it? Are you prepared? Can you look forward to these things without alarm? Oh, be very sure if you cannot look comfortably at any season but the present, your boasted happiness is a poor unreal

thing! It is but a whitened sepulchre. — fair and beautiful without, but bones and corruption within; it is a mere thing of a day, like Jonah's gourd: it is not real happiness.

Reader, I ask you to fix in your mind the account of things essential to happiness, which I have attempted to give. Dismiss from your thoughts the many mistaken notions which pass current on this subject, like counterfeit coin. To be truly happy, the wants of your soul and conscience must be satisfied; to be truly happy, your joy must be founded on something more than this world can give you; to be truly happy, you must be able to look on every side, — above, below, behind, before, — and feel that all is right. This is real, sterling, genuine happiness: this is the happiness I have in view when I urge on your notice the question of this paper.

Pause, and consider well whether you know what the first principles of true happiness are. Until you know them, you are not capable of examining the solemn question, "ARE YOU HAPPY?"

God is Judge

Natural men prefer not to believe that there is a God that judges in the earth, whose eyes behold the nations, and who takes notice of the actions and dispositions of all men, high or low, rich or poor. Nevertheless it is abundantly evident from the Scriptures that the God of heaven has a special interest in his own redeemed ones in this world, however poor or despised they are or may have been in the eyes of men of influence or wealth. This is true still in 1979, although darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. For He declares in His word "I am the Lord, I change not," and it is written in Psalm 102 "But from all changes Thou art free, Thy endless years do last for aye." He alone is the proposer and disposer of all things. I hope the following narrative will help to bear this out. The writer is well-acquainted with the places named, having been brought up on a neighbouring farm.

In the parish of Moy there was a farm by the name of Tullochclury. It was most picturesquely situated. Standing in front of the farmhouse one could see the whole length of Loch Moy with its twin islands. At the further end of the Loch, a distance of some two miles, was the home of the MacKintosh of MacKintosh, Chief of the Clan Chattan, and proprietor of the very large and extensive estates of the Moy Hall of those days (1861), of which Tullochclury was a part.

The tenant of this farm was said to be a very godly man, and, as far as can be gathered, a successful farmer. In the providence of the Lord he suffered a mental or nervous breakdown, and as there were no facilities in those days to help anyone suffering from such an affliction we cannot say how long it continued. But there were always plenty of other people able and willing to work for and help out any who were indisposed.

In the year 1861, however, the proprietor, the MacKintosh of MacKintosh, decided that he would dispossess this man of his farm. He had another man by the name of John Smith, who farmed in the parish of Daviot, also on the Moy Hall estate, lined up for the tenancy.

The Reverend Archibald Cook was minister in Daviot in those days. He also had the oversight of the parish of Moy, as that charge was vacant. Mr Cook, anxious for the welfare of the godly but sick farmer of Tullochclury, went to the MacKintosh to plead on his behalf, but he would not listen to his entreaties, and all the more so since they came from a minister to whose denomination he owed no allegiance. He declared that he would have him out, as he was not going to have a madman within sight of his residence, also saying that he could do what he liked with his own property. On his saying this Mr Cook reminded him that it was not his own, but that he was only a steward of all he possessed, and would yet have to give an account of his stewardship when he appeared before the Holy One of eternity. But such talk fell on deaf ears.

Mr Cook then went to see Mr Smith, and pleaded with him not to be a party to dispossessing the godly man of his home. He consented that he would not take the tenancy of Tullochclury, whereon Mr Cook said, "Now give me your hand that you will not do it." This he did, and thus they parted.

Whether Mr Smith was prevailed on to change his mind, or thought it too good a prize to lose we cannot say, but he went back on his solemn word to Mr Cook, and agreed to take over the farm on the 28th of May, 1861, the sick man having to be out by 12 o'clock on that date.

The MacKintosh, at the time of Mr Cook's visit to him, was in good health, and well able to discharge the duties of his vast estates. His sons were strong and healthy boys — the elder coming into his early teens, and everything promised fair for a long time to come, humanly speaking.

It is written that the days of man are determined upon earth, and the One who decreed this visited the MacKintosh of MacKintosh with the last messenger. An illness overtook him affecting his body to such an

extent that nursing him was most unpleasant. He also became so deranged in his mind that it required two men in constant attendance to keep him confined to his room and bed. His language was said to be "awful". He passed away on the 26th of May 1861. The funeral was arranged for the 28th at noon. So that when the godly man of Tullochclury was leaving his home and farm, the MacKintosh's funeral was leaving Moy Hall, the one in sight of the other. . . . "Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwellings of the righteous: spoil not his resting place."

Mr Smith proceeded to take up the tenancy of Tullochclury, but it seems he never had any pleasure in it. It is said that he had great remorse for what he had done. Eventually he became ill, but nobody knew what was really the matter with him. This illness proved to be his last, and on his death-bed when asked if he had pain, all he would say was — "I have no pain but in the hand I gave to Mr Cook", although nobody could see anything wrong with it. He passed away in 1864 at the age of 40, and an only son was born to him one month after his death . . . "Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

His widow kept the farm going until the son was able to take over. Although he was diligent enough and hard-working, yet with crosses and losses he was unable to make ends meet, and was compelled to sell out and to leave the district. The farm was never again let, parts of it being planted with trees. The widow stayed on in the farmhouse and died there in 1899, being 68 years of age. After her another widow occupied it, and finally another family. It is now uninhabited in the midst of a forest, while the land that remained unplanted was sold to a neighbouring farmer.

"Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

W. McQ.

Breaking Down the Carved Work

By Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale, Skye

(Continued from page 216)

We may now consider how the carved work has fared in the Church which adopted the Declaratory Act in 1892. As we have already noticed, the carved work in the Free Church was considerably marred by the introduction of uninspired hymns and instrumental music into the

worship of the sanctuary, but these were not made a part of the constitution as they were not passed through the Barrier Act of 1697. Had this taken place it would have constituted a sufficient ground of separation on the part of those who were opposed to them. It was different in the case of the Declaratory Act for it had been sent down to the Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and the majority of the Presbyteries having approved of it, it became a "binding law and constitution" of the Church, binding upon men what the conscience of some could not tolerate. When all hope of rescinding the Act of 1892 was gone, there arose the need of separation in order that the original constitution of the Free Church, and men's relationship to it would be preserved, and handed down to generations yet unborn.

Those who adopted the Declaratory Act, including those who dissented from it and remained in the Church, were bound by it, whether willing or unwilling. The result was that the down-grade in that Church was greatly accelerated. Heresies were preached unashamedly, without let or hindrance, and even in the congregations of ministers who professed to be conservative, during Communion seasons and on other occasions, these heresies were preached in the hearing of these ministers and they could have no recourse to the Courts of the Church as the offenders were protected by the Declaratory Act. Probationers declaring publicly, before their ordination, that they were taking office under the shelter of the relief afforded by the Declaratory Act had to be ordained, even when the majority, if not all, of the ministers of the Presbytery were dissentients from that Act. In the Colleges the future ministers of the Church were inoculated with the poison the Act of 1892 made lawful, with the result that throughout the whole country men ceased, not only to hear, but to know the gospel in its purity. Practices inconsistent with the gospel were introduced into the most of congregations till these congregations began to vie with places of amusements, and with the merchants stall, in order to keep the people and to collect money in order to support what they were pleased to call "the church." This brought retribution in its trail for men recognised that they could get better value for their money, according to their own estimation, in the theatre, in the dance hall, and the commercial establishments of the country, with the result that churches became empty, those who patronised them having turned away, fully convinced that religion was a sham. In their desperation ministers and elders had again to resort to man-made church unions with a view to reduce the church buildings, fill those that were to be retained, and make the machinery of the Church

more effective. After many years of negotiations the result was the union of the Established Church and the United Free Church of Scotland in 1929 under the name of the Church of Scotland. This, however, did not lessen the number of denominations in Scotland as there was a hard core of Voluntaryism in the United Free Church, taken over from the United Presbyterian Church, to whom any State connection was anathema. These formed the United Free Church Continuing.

This again brings before us the application of axes and hammers to what remained of the carved work in the Established Church. The Established Church, with all its dead Moderatism, had left to it at the Disruption, the Establishment Principle in profession, though with them it developed into a base Erastianism, and an unqualified subscription to the Confession of Faith, on the part of its office-bearers. The Patronage Act had been rescinded in 1874, and ministers were called to congregations by the free vote of the people, which would have been a great advantage and would tend towards church union, had everything else been favourable. The abolition of the Patronage Act was not smiled upon by the leaders of the Free Church. Although Dr Rainy knew well all the harm that Patronage had done, he did all he could privately to prevent it being abolished. It is now well-known that he went to London to persuade Mr Gladstone to oppose the abolition of Patronage, and equally well-known that on an occasion, subsequent to that visit, that influential politician rose in the House of Commons to denounce the Patronage Abolition Bill, declaring that the intention of those who sponsored the Bill was to rob the Free Church of many of her ministers and people, once the Bill was passed.

There was even at this early stage, a modernistic trend appearing in the Established Church. The dead formalism of Moderatism failed to appreciate the inner meaning of the Subordinate Standards, and thus, among the ministers, a generation grew up who did not receive "the things of the Spirit of God," with the result that they were quite prepared to embrace anything for which "advanced learning" was claimed. In 1905 the leaders of the Establishment, taking advantage of the happenings subsequent to the decision of the House of Lords in the Free Church Case, succeeded in getting a clause inserted in the Churches (Scotland) Bill, enabling the Established Church to change its Formula. This was but the fore-runner of other Acts which played an important part in breaking down what remained of the carved work in the Established Church. These Acts were, first, the Act of 1921 anent

spiritual freedom. The freedom sought after, however, was freedom to alter the doctrines of the Church, for it introduced what the Free Church claimed to have already, that is, that it was to be left to the Church for the time being to declare what entered into the substance of the Reformed Faith. The second Act was that of 1925, which by a piece of jesuitical management, enabled the Church of Scotland to retain the emoluments, dependent on a State connection, while they could alter the creed of the Church in a way that would satisfy the most ardent Voluntary in the United Free Church. The Union of 1929, if it can be dignified by that name, took place amongst many bickerings and tremblings, on the part of the Union leaders. There was always the fear that someone might say something that would upset all their plans. For years after 1929 one could see the farce which it was in the spectacle of two congregations in many parishes, and close to each other, under the one minister, ministering on Sabbath morning in the one building, and in the evening in the other building, and hardly one member in the one congregation among the other congregation. The Union, having taken place, it was but the fore-runner of other attempts at Union, and these attempts show the quick steps with which the Church of Scotland travelled on the down-grade.

In 1932 we find ministers of the Church of Scotland fraternising with the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Episcopal dignitaries and, though they disclaimed any intention of Union, yet it was clear that it was the beginning of these negotiations which nearly turned the Church of Scotland into an Episcopal Church of Scotland later. When the "Bishops Report," as it was called, appeared, it was declared that it was with the view of discovering the face of the true Church of Christ in the land, but, in an endeavour to do so, we were significantly counselled not to look to the past. Those who gave this advice had good reason to do so. It was Episcopal Bishops, as the tools of despotic kings, who did most to mar the fair face of the Church of Christ in Scotland, and when they could not do it by Scripture or reason, in their endeavours they had recourse to the brutal atrocities of Claverhouse, Dalziel, and others; the foul dungeons of Blackness and Dunotter, the horrors of transportations to the plantations of Jamaica, and to the excruciating tortures of the boot and the thumbscrews. Truly those who could countenance a union with such a system as our forefathers called "a rotten limb of anti-christ," manifest an inexcusable ignorance of Scottish Church history, and seemed ready to part with our blood-bought principles for the worthless bauble of a bishop's crozier. Though they did not succeed

at the time, they do not mean to give over. Recently there was a Conference held in Durham between Presbyterians and Episcopalians which, according to report, seemed to indicate a very "amicable spirit." At the Conference about a hundred churchmen were present, representing the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of England, and the Episcopal Church in Scotland, and they were in close consultation for three days. In common with other conferences of this nature, which have taken place, it is maintained that church union is not the immediate object, but merely "to get to know each other and to see where the differences really lie." This explanation, however, should not be taken at its face value, but should be treated with extreme caution when one considers that previous church unions arose out of similar conferences, and that men, when they begin on the down-grade, are always too ready to throw away the fundamentals of religion for what, after all, is but "a mess of pottage," and to go to greater lengths than they ever dreamed they would go. As the Episcopalian policy is to concede nothing, the only rational conclusion that one can come to is that all the concessions were on the part of the Presbyterians. Time, however, may reveal what these concessions were, but any concessions on the part of Presbyterians to the Prelatical Church will be another blow to the carved work which was once the glory of the Church of Scotland.

That little or nothing of the carved work of the Reformation is now left to the Church of Scotland is clear from the fact that her ministers fraternise in private conferences with priests of the Church of Rome. In the Spring of 1961 one such conference, perhaps not the first, was held so secretly that news of it did not leak out until a considerable time after it took place, and what took place there is still a closely guarded secret. Following this a more official conference was held in Dowanhill Convent, Glasgow, between representatives of the Glasgow Presbytery of the Church of Scotland and high officials of the Church of Rome, and was presided over by the Abbot of Nunraw. The Press does not say whether or not the proceedings were opened by prayer, but the Abbot's opening words were, "I want to emphasise that this is not a Romeward movement, but a Christward movement. What we are seeking is the truth." Truly these are good words if they could be divorced from their background. That background, however, is the history of the Church of Rome from the beginning of its apostacy to the present time. Where, it may be asked, in all its history did it show any regard for the truth? and its motto being still *semper eadem*, it cannot now be said to have any

regard for the truth. In any report, which we have seen, of these discussions, we failed to have seen any reference on either side of the conference to the Bible as the truth of God. Benedict and Francois Maurice were quoted, and neither of them gave a very high place to intelligence. The latter is quoted as saying, "Intelligence is but an insignificant thing on the surface of our nature; deep down we are emotional creatures." This, of course, is quite in line with the Romish dogma that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," and the truth of God is not what plays on the emotions, but what, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, takes to do with the conscience. Another speaker, on the Romish side, said, in reference to the Second Vatican Council, that the first step, the immediate work, was what the Pope had called, "putting our house in order." He explained this by saying that he did not mean that they were in a state of disorder, but that the organisation of the Church (presumably the Romish Church) was not geared to the world-saving task that lay before it. How few Protestants today realise that this gearing of the Roman Catholic Church is nothing more or less than the swallowing up of all other Churches, and that the Papacy would rule supreme over the whole world. This has been the aim of the Vatican all along, and its organisation can be traced behind every political move of any consequence in our own land and foreign lands. A notable instance of it is to be found in the efforts made to force Britain into the European Common Market, and the separation of her Colonies from her.

All who hold the Cause of Christ dear to them were astounded when, at the General Assembly of 1961, the proposal was made that the Moderator should pay a "courtesy visit" to the Pope, and such a proposal was lauded up to the skies as the quintessence of Christian charity. No doubt this was hailed in Romanist circles as a great step towards the gratifying of the Roman Church's ambition to rule the world. With reference to it a Lecturer to a Summer School for priests in Maynooth College said, "More and more our separated brethren will perceive that they need the successor of St. Peter and will come to him in gradual, perhaps almost imperceptible steps, courtesy visits merging into consultative visits, and these into acceptance of a primacy of precedence in direction and guidance." A Romanist publication, referring to the matter, says, "The Reformation Communion do not have full living relations with the glorified Lord, because they do not receive the nurture from the whole tradition of the Church and from the sacraments." This would mean that Protestants must accept the Romanist way of approach and, thereby, abandon those glorious truths

which the Reformers proclaimed, and by which God revived His Church, and which He acknowledged in the conversion of a countless number from the darkness of a state of nature to the light and liberty which is in Christ Jesus, truths because of which the Church of Rome shed the blood of a noble army of martyrs in Scotland and in other parts of the world, and for the proclaiming of which she follows with the sword of persecution, to this day, Christ's witnesses wherever she holds power.

The proposed visit, in due time, took place, and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland had a thirty-eight minute audience with the Pope, which was marked, according to the Vatican newspaper *Observatore Romano*, "by a spirit of extreme cordiality." In an exchange of gifts the Pope presented Dr. Craig with several Papal medals. It is not irrelevant to ask if, among these medals, there was the one struck in honour of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. It is reported that the Pope told Dr. Craig that "peace was the great necessity of the modern world, but it must be a peace that included liberty and truth." Such a statement reminds one of the reply of Jehu to Joram, "what peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" If the Church of Scotland is still a Christian Church why should her ministers have anything to do with the head of a Church which has the blasphemous sacrifice of the Mass by which she denies the finality and all-sufficiency of Christ's atoning work completed on Calvary, and has burned the Scriptures publicly times without number, and still does that? One may ask, why was it that there was no great outcry against this visit throughout the length and breadth of Scotland? The reason is that the people of Scotland have, over the years that are passed, swallowed the dope which was largely dealt out at the following General Assembly, and which was given support to by the Queen's Lord High Commissioner, the Earl of Mansfield, when he said, "I know full well there are some in our Church—possibly some among you were—who felt uneasy about the meeting between our last Moderator and the Pope. I am convinced that they need have no qualms at all." Now we see the sad spectacle of the Church of Scotland with her carved work broken down, and, as if her leaders were determined that the last vestiges of it should be wholly obliterated, a proposal was made that the Westminster Confession should be re-written. When will the people of Scotland awaken to the solemn and serious fact that the Church calling herself the Church of Scotland is not the Church of their ancestors, but a heterogenous conglomeration sheltering all the heresies which men care to proclaim,

and accepting all the forms of worship which will accord most with the carnal mind of which we read that it is "enmity against God."

(To be continued).

Protest

Bible Christian Unity Fellowship Protest

To Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second,
Buckingham Palace, London S.W.1.

May It Please Your Majesty,

This Annual Meeting of the Bible Christian Unity Fellowship, held in London on Tuesday, 1st May 1979, whose members hold the Bible to be the Inspired and Inerrant Word of God and sole rule of Faith and Practice — have learned with the greatest grief that, according to the Roman Catholic Press, Your Majesty is intending to visit the Roman Catholic flower show in Westminster Cathedral on July 13th 1979.

We humbly submit that this action is to ignore the spirit and letter of the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement prohibiting communion with the Church of Rome. We are persuaded that our distress is shared by countless numbers of Bible-believing and loyal Protestant subjects throughout the United Kingdom and British Commonwealth.

We and they cannot forget that many of the Popes and their Church tortured (especially in the halls of the Inquisition), burnt alive or by crusades and warfare brought to an early and cruel death millions of the most law-abiding and blameless men and women simply because they had read their Bibles and felt that its holy teachings were diametrically opposed to the leading doctrines of the Church of Rome.

The two aforementioned statutes were born of the experience of our forefathers at that time, and also what they heard from their parents and grandparents of how Pope Sixtus V tried to get Queen Elizabeth I assassinated, of how the Pope, using Spanish troops, sought to overthrow the Protestants of the Northern Netherlands but was successfully resisted by the brave Dutchmen under the leadership of their Prince of Orange, of how the French Monarchy under the influence of the priests maltreated their Protestant subjects, massacring on St Bartholomew's Day, 1572, and during the following fortnight, about 70,000 Huguenots, how the Pope Gregory XIII celebrated this awful slaughter by a special singing of the Te Deum and the striking of a medal to commemorate this blow against those he termed 'heretics', and of how King Louis XIV

revoked the Edict of Nantes so that one million of Huguenots had little choice but to flee at terrible risk to their lives their native land and be penniless exiles in another.

Even we who can look back over most of the years of this century can see, unless we are wilfully blind, how the priestly-moulded minds of those of Southern Ireland have acted and are providing an asylum for the priests' pupils, the I.R.A., and kindred groups, who are committing murder and arson in Ulster, as well as giving complete immunity to those who have most deceitfully enticed unsuspecting British soldiers into quarters where the latter could be murdered, after which the former could make good their escape over the border. The Popes have not only not expressed their regret at their predecessor's inhumanity to man, but the Papacy is still as deceitful and drunk with the blood of those she stigmatised as heretics as ever she was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

We therefore humbly pray Your Majesty to be true to your Coronation Declaration 'I am a faithful Protestant' and have no fellowship with Rome (2 Cor. 6:16-18), but to arrest and reverse the Romeward drift both in Church and State, which has been so pronounced in the last hundred years and especially during Your Majesty's reign.

And we shall continue to ask Almighty God to bless you and your family as well as to revive the Protestant Reformed Religion that it may be a power for regeneration and righteousness throughout your dominions.

D. A. THOMPSON, Chairman,
Bible Christian Unity Fellowship.

Young People's Conference — 1979

Over 70 young people of the Church attended the 1979 Young People's Conference, which was held in Kilravock Castle, near Inverness, from Tuesday, 10th to Thursday, 12th April.

The first paper of the Conference was a study of the life and letters of John Huss, the Bohemian Reformer and martyr, by Rev. J. Brentnall, Dumbarton. John Huss (born 1369, died 1415), was one of the noble witnesses whom the Lord raised up on the continent of Europe just before the dawn of the glorious Reformation broke upon a world held under the spiritual and temporal thralldom of the Church of Rome. Although little is known about the early spiritual experience of this man,

his life, doctrine, and labours amongst the people of Prague and Bohemia amply demonstrate that he had been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son in the early years of the 15th century. As he was led into the knowledge of the truth, so he was led to preach the pure doctrines of the Word of God, and to oppose the sloth, avarice, immorality and hypocrisy of the Romish clergy, who kept the truth from the people by the innumerable superstitions, errors, and blasphemous corruptions of the word and worship of God introduced over previous centuries by the Antichrist of Rome. The enemies of the truth opposed Huss and those who were like-minded with him, culminating in a ruthless and merciless persecution, an unjust trial of his beliefs and principles, and his eventual martyrdom by burning at the stake. The specimens of John Huss' letters which were read showed the love he bore to God and the doctrines of His word, and his earnest desire for the glory of God and the welfare of the souls of his fellow-sinners.

"The Value of Creeds to the Christian Church" was the title of a paper given by Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow. Creeds are the expression of the exercise of the faith of the Church, and are based upon the inspired and infallible Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. While creeds are not inspired in the sense that the Word of God is, they are statements of divine truth insofar as they correctly state the doctrines of the Word of God. The arguments of those who, under a show of piety, oppose the use of creeds, was fully refuted. The dishonest and God-dishonouring subterfuge of those who wish to alter the Church's understanding of the Confession (such as the infamous Declaratory Act of 1892 which resulted in the separate existence of the Free Presbyterian Church) was also exposed. The history of creeds and Confessions in the Church of God was considered, and the development of credal statements of the doctrines of the Bible over the centuries was illustrated, amply demonstrating the excellence of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms as setting forth the doctrines of Theology (the doctrine of God), Anthropology (the doctrine of man), Soteriology (the doctrine of salvation), Ecclesiology (the doctrine of the Church) and Eschatology (the doctrine of future things), and refuting the various errors and heresies which have sprung up during the centuries and which continue to plague the Church in our day. The practical value of the Creed to the Church was also considered, as an instrument in the instruction of the people so that they may grow in the knowledge of the glorious doctrines of the Bible, as a means of discriminating the truth from false teaching, and as a bond of Christian fellowship. The Confession is binding upon men's consciences

as it is an expression of the doctrines of the Bible. The relationship of the Confession to members of our Church and especially to office-bearers (who take ordination vows of a solemn and binding nature to own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith) was fully set forth.

Mr I. MacLeod, Dingwall, a former Police Officer, gave a paper entitled "The young Christian's relationship to Law and Order," which dealt with the present state of Law and Order within our society. Reference was made to the sad state of the Laws of our land whereby many sinful practices condemned by the Word of God are permitted, condoned, and even encouraged by our legislators. The point was rightly insisted upon that, when the Law of God comes in conflict with the Law of the Land, then it is the Law of God which must always be upheld, whether in civil or religious matters. Mention was also made of the necessity of complying with laws enacted for the safety and well-being of our citizens, e.g. traffic regulations, and of upholding the standards of the Word of God in our dealings with others.

"Is the Gospel suitable for the Young?", a paper delivered by Rev. D. B. Macleod, Dingwall, considered first of all the woeful condition that all are in by nature through breaking the covenant of works. The nature of the Gospel remedy provided in Jesus Christ for the elect by the covenant of grace was set forth in its fulness, and Scripture proofs were adduced to demonstrate that Christ's finished work is suitable for all. The Scripture doctrines of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility were dealt with. The suitability of the Gospel to all that hear it was considered, firstly in relation to men in general, and then in relation to the young. The absolute need for a genuine work of the Holy Spirit upon the souls of all professing conversion was emphasised.

Rev. D. Ross, Bulawayo, gave a talk on the religious situation in Rhodesia. He detailed the gross darkness which covered Africa before the advent of the Gospel, when the spirits of the ancestors and false gods were worshipped by all. Though much good was effected under the ministry of early missionaries to Africa in the 19th century, the scourge of Arminian teaching by later missionaries brought forth and continues to bring forth its evil fruits in the multitude of false "converts" and those who attempt to mix ancestor worship with the worship of God in the majority of indigenous African churches. There is a great need for the doctrines, form of worship, government and practice of Scripture in Africa, as elsewhere, in our day. The work of our Church's Mission in Rhodesia since its beginning in 1904 under Rev. J. B. Radasi to the

present day was considered. The effects of the current political situation and the harrassment of our people by the terrorists was also detailed and, following the address, slides were shown which illustrated the Mission's work under the present adverse circumstances.

On the final day of the Conference, Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow, preached on Ephesians, chapter 1 vv. 13 and 14, following which the participating ministers answered questions submitted by those attending the Conference on a wide range of topics dealing with the doctrines and practice of the Bible.

Overall, the papers delivered at the Conference emphasised the pressing need for a heartfelt and uncompromising adherence to the doctrines, worship, and practice of Scripture for which our Church has always contended. We are living in a day of generalised religious and moral declension without precedent in recent times. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, both from the world and from carnal professors of religion. It is our Scriptural duty to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints in the strength of grace, for "them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." (I. Sam. 2:30).

R.D.

Book Review

The Happy Man by Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie. Banner of Truth Trust.
Pages 249. Price £2.75.

More than a century-and-a-half has passed since the saintly minister of Lochcarron, Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie, affectionately known as "Mister Lachlan," laboured in this remote parish on the Western seaboard of Ross-shire, yet none among his contemporaries has retained the hold upon the memories or enjoyed such a place in the affections of the people as is still true of this eminent servant of Christ. The handsome volume before us, "The Happy Man" — the title is taken from the opening piece on the pious Christian by Mister Lachlan — may supply the reason. The sermons and comments upon passages of the Word of God contained in the volume, belong to the early period of his ministry when incessant labour and travel allowed him no leisure to write out his sermons in full, and they may lack therefore the vivid illustrations and the efforts of a rich imagination for which he was long remembered. They represent, nevertheless, the fruits of a spiritually minded, exercised, faithful servant of Christ which brought consolation, refreshment and

strength to many a wayfarer on the way to Sion. They do not belie the opinion of Dr Kennedy that Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie was the greatest of the Highland preachers of his day.

For many years very little was known of Rev. L. MacKenzie, apart from anecdotes, traditional sayings which were in circulation among the people, and occasional sermons in Gaelic and English. In 1928 and 1930 respectively, two large volumes of Mr Lachlan's remains were published by one of our Inverness elders, the late Mr James Campbell, who occupied his years of retirement in their preparation for the press. A very fine picture of Mr Campbell appears in the volume. There is a romantic interest attached to the way in which the hamper, thought to contain "the whole of Mr Lachlan's documents," fell into his hands. From these two volumes, the present book is made up with the addition of a sermon on "The Rose of Sharon," from some other source. A short account of Mr Lachlan's life appears as an introduction, followed by sermons, expositions of passages of scripture, and miscellanea which includes Muckle Kate, the Christian's Firm Bank, etc. Some of the remarks in the account of Mr Lachlan's life appear inadequate. A fit of unbelief, to which such a highly gifted but sensitive and temperamental Christian was always liable, such as befell Mr Lachlan in regard to the coming of ministers to assist him at one communion occasion, cannot be explained by saying that his foresight was at fault, that "he was sometimes wrong." A full explanation of the insight into coming events, often granted to the Lord's people, is offered in the sermon by Dr Kennedy on "The Secret of the Lord," in the appendix to the "Days of the Fathers in Ross-shire." It is surely an unnecessary criticism to say that "all aspects of the Christian faith and Christian ministry" may not be expected to be dealt with in Mr Lachlan's ministry. Whose ministry would survive such a test? When the two large volumes of Mr James Campbell are now out of print and hard to get, this volume is all the more prized. No higher commendation is needed than to say that here we have the choice spiritual exercises of the prince of Highland preachers of a past age, printed in a well bound, handsomely produced volume by the Banner of Truth Trust, at a remarkably low price. May it receive a wide circulation and may these rich expositions of God's Word be blessed to many. A.F.M.

The Christian is bred by the Word, and he must be fed by it.

William Gurnall.

Church Notes

Rev. Donald Campbell, Edinburgh, accompanied by Mrs Campbell and their son, Donald, left this country on Monday 9th July for Vancouver, Canada, where they were to spend 10 days. On Thursday 19th July they were to leave for Sydney, Australia. There they were to spend one night before continuing their journey to Auckland, New Zealand. Mr Campbell expects to remain in New Zealand for two months. On Thursday 20th September they expect to cross to Australia and visit Sydney and Grafton before returning to this country on 5th October (D.V.).

We pray that the Lord may put his protecting care over them on their journeyings and that Mr Campbell's labours may be blessed of the Lord in the various places which he visits. We are sure that the visit of the Convener of the Dominions and Overseas Committee to the places in which he has shown such a warm interest will be an encouragement to the people over there, as it will be gratifying to Mr Campbell himself to meet many with whom he corresponded over the years. We trust that in due time they may be brought home safely again to this land.

Perth Communion (D.V.)

The services are as follows:— Thursday, 23rd August 7.30p.m.; Friday, 24th August 7.30p.m.; Saturday 25th August 3p.m. followed by Prayer Meeting; Sabbath 26th August 11 a.m. (Communion) and 6.30 p.m. followed by Prayer Meeting; Monday 27th August 7.30p.m.

All the services will be held in the British Legion Hall, Perth.

Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow, and Rev. John Tallach are expected to assist (D.V.)

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 28th August at 11.30 p.m.

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

Skye: At Portree on 23rd October at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 25th September at 11 a.m.

Gaelic Supplement

We regret that some Gaelic readers have not received the Gaelic Supplements to the Free Presbyterian Magazine. Any Gaelic reader who has not received them should write to the Publications Treasurer who will forward copies of the Gaelic Supplements already issued and will ensure that future issues are forwarded as well. The Supplement is issued free.

Acknowledgment of donations

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

Aged and Infirm Ministers' etc Fund: A. Forgie, Redding £30.

Foreign Mission Fund: A. Forgie, Redding, £30.

Dominions and Overseas Fund: A Seeker, Stornoway postmark, £15 for Fede Viva.

Ingwenya: Winnipeg, \$168.40; Toronto Ladies, \$35.14; Winnipeg, \$101.55; Toronto Ladies, \$45.39; Mbuma Zending, \$32.824.38, all Rhodesian dollars. Vancouver, \$169.20 and \$4846, both per Rev D.A.Ross, in Canadian dollars.

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

Barnoldswick: Two Edinburgh friends £5 for Congr. Fund; M.M., Newcastle £20; Anon £50 per W.D.F., both for Communion expenses; Mrs Kinkham, Leeds £10; Friend, Inverness £50 per Rev. D. MacLean; D.B., Glasgow £25; W.A.F., Inverness £20; A.M., Inverness £10, all for Church Building Fund.

Dumbarton: L.McQ., Glasgow £10; Inverness postmark £10; Psalm 122:6 £5, all for Dumbarton Church Extension; Greenock Friends £4; M.H., Dumbarton £5, both for Manse Fund.

Edinburgh: Friend, Colbost, Skye £5 for Sust. Fund per Rev. D. Campbell; Mrs. Katherine Cummings, in memory of loving parents £600 towards cost of carpeting church.

Fort William: D.C., Lochaline £20; I.C., Lochaline £10; Mrs. C., Onich £10, all per Rev. J.A. MacDonald; Friend, Inverness £5 per Duncan MacNicol; D.MacN., £1 for magazines, per M. Matheson.

Glasgow: I.M.L. £50 for Congr. Fund per W.D.F.; J.C. £2; Anon £2.50; Anon £5, all for Bus Expenses; C.&M., Balfron £5 for Sust. Fund; Anon £5 for General Building Fund.

Inverness: Inverness Sabbath School—£5, Mrs. H. MacLean for books for prizes, per Rev. A.F.M.

Plockton/Kyle: Mr. V.W. £10 for Sust. Fund; Mr. V.W. £5 for Manse Bdg. Fund; Envelope in plate £10 for Manse Bdg. Fund.

Portree: Mr. D.G., Portree £50 for Sust. Fund (in Church Plate).

Prestwick: Anon £20 per W.B., for Church Extension Work in Prestwick.

Shieldaig: Gairloch Friend £5 for Communion Expenses; Anon £1 for Manse Extension; Miss MacK., Newcastle £5 for Communion Expenses.

South Harris: R.M., Lingerbay £5 for Congr. purposes.

Vatten: From Estate of Late Miss Annie MacDonald, Easandubh, Dunvegan, Skye £1,000 for Congregational Purposes.