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Capital Punishment

The issue of the death penalty was once again debated in the House of Commons on a motion that the sentence of capital punishment should again be available to the courts. The motion was defeated by a large majority, the Labour Members of Parliament voting almost to a man against it. This result gives a good measure of the prevailing religious and moral outlook of the House of Commons, which is basically anti-biblical and in large part anti-Christian as well. This attitude of the Commons to the death penalty is, so far as can be ascertained, not shared by the people of the country at large, who would require, in the present climate of mounting violence, that the death penalty should be restored.

The question of prime importance in resolving the issue is, what does the Bible say? It is what God says in His Word that is to be the guide to nations and individuals and not mere sentiment. On this subject the Bible speaks unequivocally. To Noah God said: "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man." (Gen. 9:5 and 6). Earlier in the history of mankind when Cain slew his brother Abel, the blood of Abel cried for vengeance, and God pronounced Cain cursed from the earth. He was to be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and be thereby a warning to others. God sent a mark on him as otherwise he would be slain. God was pleased for wise ends, in this instance, to commute the death sentence and sentence him instead to perpetual banishment. But death was to be the ordinary punishment for murder as we see in Noah's day.

In the New Testament we find that God puts the sword in the magistrate's hand, which can only indicate the power he possesses to sentence to death. And what crime is so worthy of such a sentence as that of murder? The magistrate "beareth not the sword in vain: for he is

the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:4). So that Old Testament and New agree in the sentence to be passed on the murderer — that it is to be one of death. What harm is there, some may say, that the death penalty may no longer be executed on the murderer? One evil that flows from the abolition of capital punishment is that it vitiates the whole process of sentencing in courts of law. Crimes of a less serious nature are likely to carry a heavier sentence than that of murder. In this way human life is devalued. Another evil flowing from the abolition of capital punishment is that the guilt of the blood shed by the murderer passes over to the nation and God will require this blood at the nation's hands. A further evil which flows from abolition of capital punishment is the increase of violence. As the sin of murder does not receive the proper check — that is, the execution of the death penalty, others will take liberty from this to murder other of their fellow-creatures. We know that great attempts have been made to prove that murder is not a deterrent but even with the falsification of statistical evidence, it appears unmistakeably true that the abolition of the death penalty has resulted in an increased and increasing number of murders.

At the end of the debate in the House of Commons, Members of Parliament went into the lobbies to vote on the issue. To many, no doubt, it appeared a simple issue of whether or not the murderer should die. The issue, however, was much more solemn than this in view of the increasing instances of murder. The real issue at stake was whether the murderer should die or whether the innocent should die. Those who voted for the death penalty, in effect signed the death warrant of the murderer; those who voted against, in effect signed the death warrant of many innocent persons. A further issue — and one of the highest importance in the administration of justice — to which Members of Parliament did not appear to give much place was the question of whether the Divine law or merely human law was to have the supreme place in the life of the nation. In this instance the divine law was disregarded although it is the only proper basis for the administration of justice.

The failure of the House of Commons to live up to its responsibilities bodes ill for the life of the country. Until Parliament restores the ultimate sanction to its proper place, we have little hope of other measures taken to combat crime and violence having the desired result. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20).

Sermon

by Rev. A. B. Ndebele

(This sermon was preached by the Rev. A. B. Ndebele at Ingwenya on Thursday, 14th December 1978, at the Prayer Meeting).

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the House of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Peter 4:17, 18).

In the words before us, the Apostle Peter brings to our notice two points which I would like to deal with, as the Lord may help us by His Spirit.

1. The fact that God is to judge his creatures beginning at His own House.
2. The questions that arise from so thorough a judgment, by so great a judge.

That God is to judge mankind by that Man Whom He has raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour, is taught in the Scriptures. In as much as in the commercial world, the foot-rule, the weighing scale, the gallon, are used to determine the measure required, so in the spiritual world it is the Word of God that is the measure of man's character, and spiritual state before God. Man either stands or falls by the Word of God, that is, the Bible.

In the message before us Peter says: (1) that the time is come that judgment must begin at the House of God; (2) that the righteous are scarcely saved.

By the House of God we may understand this to be in reference to those men, women and children who no longer live the rest of their time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. It is true that in time past they wrought the will of the Gentiles when they walked in lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings and abominable idolatries. But believers have been washed, have been sanctified, have been justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Among the believers, which people form the House of God, we find Abraham, the father of the Faithful. We have Isaac, the son of Promise, also Jacob, Joseph, David, Job, and among the New Testament saints we find Peter, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, Mary and Martha.

According to the words of our text, even the household of God must be brought under the scrutiny of His Word. When their deeds are thoroughly examined in the light of the strict justice of God, everyone of them fails to reach the standard. Abraham has his faults, one of which is his taking Sarah's maid as his wife, which brought trouble to his home. Ishmael is born, not of promise, and when Isaac, the son of promise, is born there arises endless strife and enmity between the two families. This went on until it was said, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

We have a long history of holy men of God who were laden with sin and iniquity. King David, a man after God's own heart, is found shamefully fallen with Bathsheba; Jacob, whom God loved while he hated Esau, is found guilty of dishonesty when he cheated his father Isaac to obtain a blessing. Job, a man that has no equal in his day as a servant of God, is found cursing the day of his birth.

Coming to the New Testament believers, we meet the disciples who at the call, "Follow Me," left all and followed the Lamb of God whithersoever he went. Yet Peter denies Him, Judas sells Him for thirty pieces of silver, while the rest forsake Him and flee. Martha, who loved the Lord with all her heart, is found complaining of her service. Mary who sat at the feet of the Lord to learn of Him, and is meek and lowly of heart is heard complaining, "They have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him." Mary should have remembered the words of the Lord Jesus that He would arise from the grave in three days.

Yes, my friends, after examining the lives of the holy men and women who make up the House of God, we must come to the conclusion that they could not make Heaven of it, by the deeds of the Law. Not one of them could have been saved by the merits of their own works. They were all saved by the grace of God. Surely it was of God's mercy that they were not consumed with the sinful world around them.

The stains in the lives of the Old Testament and New Testament saints prove positively that they were all *scarcely* saved. Yes, every one of them was as a brand plucked from the burning. They all escaped by the skin of their teeth. Moreover, all the believers that have followed the New Testament saints will sincerely join the Apostle Paul in testifying, "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Those are righteous who come to trust in the finished work of the Cross of Calvary. They are clothed in the righteousness of Christ the Lord, and they all have come to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." They know themselves to be truly sinful, and that their own righteousnesses are but filthy rags. Therefore, they prefer and appreciate salvation by the grace of God. Yes, they are *scarcely* saved, rescued by the Hand of God.

2. The questions which arise from so great a cloud of witnesses surely must be: "If judgment begins in the House of God what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Those who obey not the Gospel defy the calls to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They give a deaf ear to the Gospel which invites sinners to believe in the Lord Jesus and be saved. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

But Gospel rejectors laugh to scorn the faithful saying and despise the only method whereby they could be saved from sin and death. The question is, What will their end be? How shall they appear before the holy and just Judge of the whole earth? He who takes notice of sin in the life, thoughts, and words of His saints, He who found fault with His servant Moses who led His people from Egypt across the Red Sea, through the wilderness, but could not enter the Promised Land. What shall be done with sinners guilty of the most abominable wickednesses? Oh! What will happen to drunkards, harlots, liars, thieves, and all those who forget God?

3. By way of application, and coming closer to yourself — and myself with you — poor sinner, have you ever prayed for the salvation of your immortal soul? If God judges His House, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, what will happen to you? What do you think yourself? If some men and women who are your neighbours worship God daily, and you hear them crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and you have never thought about these things, what will happen to you? When you go to your beer-drinks, they do not go with you. When you worship the spirits of your ancestors, they do not accompany you. How will you stand before a Holy and just God?

We may go on to say that if the men we were speaking about, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Peter and Paul were *scarcely* saved how shall you yourself fare? You know how wicked your deeds are. How can you escape who neglect so great salvation? My friend, begin today. Yes,

begin just now to think about your soul, your sins, your God, and seek the Lord Jesus who says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Do come to Him now, friend. The matter is solemn and urgent. May He add a blessing to His Word.

The Seed of The Woman

by Henry Law, Dean of Gloucester

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

These are the first words of grace to a lost world. When were they spoken? By whom? To whom? — When? Just after sin had come in, and innocence was gone, and man had become a guilty creature before God. One command had been given, for the purpose of seeing whether he would love, and fear, and serve his Maker. That one command had just been trodden under foot.

Pause here for one moment and think. Some dream of earning eternal life by doing God's will. This way has been tried. It failed. The end of it was ruin. Our first parents were innocent, and had no inward movings towards evil, but they rushed into it. We are born with hearts corrupt, and fully bent on sin, and can we keep ourselves holy and spotless? It is a vain thought. Let us cast it away. We cannot continue blameless. Our wicked nature is always drawing us out of the straight path of godliness. We have not stood blameless during one hour of one day of our lives. The charge is true, and every honest conscience will confess it.

By whom were these words spoken? We read, "The Lord God said". What proof is here, that our God is merciful and gracious! Think how He had been offended! Think, with what base ingratitude — with what contempt He had been treated! Satan's lie had been trusted rather than His truth. His easy yoke had been broken, as if it had been some hard restraint. The language of the proud heart had been, "We will not have our God to reign over us".

God, even He, descends. No thunder-bolt is in His hands. No avenging angels follow to sweep the rebels into perdition. The voice which speaks is the voice of mercy. The tidings, which are brought, are the tidings of deliverance.

O my soul, can you consider the Speaker, and not exclaim, Truly, God is good : He willeth not the death of a sinner! Reason as the wife of Manoah did, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not, as at this time, have told us such things as these" (Judges 13:23).

Salvation is of Grace

To whom were these words spoken? Three only were present. First the guilty pair. Mark their state: and learn from it that the first step in the way of salvation is taken by God. We have sure evidence before us. He wills to save, when man wills to die. He moves to save, when man moves to perish. our first parents are before Him, a picture of all fallen sinners who should be born of them. As they were, so are we by nature. They were sinners, blind and hardened. So are we. Blind, I say; for their eyes were not opened to the awful condition into which they had passed, or the awful misery, which was now their lot. Hardened, I say; for they did not confess their sin, or humble themselves, or weep tears of sorrow, or utter prayers for mercy. Just such is man's natural blindness and hardness from that day to this. And still to such God comes in love: to such God speaks of recovery to His favour and His kingdom.

Reader, calmly meditate on this. You will see, that when man is all careless, God is all care; when man can do nothing, God does all; when man deserves nothing, God gives all. Salvation is from first to last of grace. Man rushes to hell. Grace calls to heaven.

Next, another being was present. But there was no hope for him. He was only told that destruction was his doom. We have here a proof, that God makes a difference between offenders. Let us not vainly ask, why mercy yearns over man, and turns from the angels which fell? There can be but one reply, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight". And can we so reply, and not sing praise, that we, who have so sinned, should be so pitied, and have such rich provision of pardon? O my soul think on these things.

Emmanuel, the God-man

But what is this rich provision? We read the answer in the word, "her seed". Here is a promise, that a deliverer should come into this world, who should be born of a woman. If the question be put, "Who is this seed of the woman?" we readily reply — The Lord Jesus Christ. The blessed Saviour. The only Redeemer. The only begotten Son of God Most High. True — The voice of God here promises that Jesus, appointed to save — should be made man — should be one of our family by birth — should be bone of our bones, flesh of our flesh.

The fact is easily stated. But, reader, is it your habit to ponder over the great and precious truths belonging to it? Mark! The mighty God, without ceasing to be God, becomes man to redeem us. Wonder of wonders! The like to this never has been — never could be. Let the greatest king become the meanest beggar: let the richest prince leave his palace for the vilest cell of a loathsome prison; it is as nothing to the act of Jesus, when He left heaven to put on Him the rags of our mortality. The Creator of all things appears a creature! The Almighty is a weak babe! The Eternal is a child of time! The Infinite is contracted into the limits of this poor flesh! Is not this the wonder of wonders? Is not this grace which has no bounds? Reader, do you seriously believe, that Jesus thus humbled himself even for you? If you do, you cannot but feel, that no debt can be like your debt; and that, as heaven is high above the earth, so great is what you owe, beyond what you can ever pay.

In the poor matters of this earth, a prince's or a noble's birth awakens signs of far-extending joy. The banners wave. The steeples sound. The festive board is spread. Shall we then call upon the realm of nature to celebrate with worthy praise this praise-surpassing fact? What! if the sun should hang forth millions of lamps, each brighter in brilliance than itself; what! if each drop of ocean's water could raise a chorus of ecstatic hallelujahs; what! if each leaf of every forest could cast back the pealing shout; it would be shame to offer a tribute so unfit.

But there is a testimony of delight which Jesus seeks. He is repaid, when grateful hearts throw wide their portals to receive Him, and when welcoming praise extols His saving name. O my soul, will you not then bid all that is within you, to clap the hands of loving worship around the manger at Bethlehem?

When Abraham saw the day of Christ afar off, he rejoiced and was glad. The unborn Baptist could not restrain emotion, when the unborn Jesus was brought near.

The beacon-star filled the journeying sages with exceeding great joy. The multitude of the heavenly host, who shared not in redemption's mercies, made heaven's vault to echo with their praises. O my soul, can you be silent? Hear you not the angel's cry? "I bring you good tidings of great joy". Will you not with great joy drink in these tidings? "Unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord". Will you not, in aged Simeon's spirit, clasp Him in the heart of faith, and lift up the hymn of praise?

The Sinner's Substitute

Next, have you, too, seriously pondered for what exact object Jesus became the Woman's Seed? — Our peace and happiness depend on the right knowledge of this. It was just for this purpose, that He might be qualified to stand in the poor sinner's stead; and might be in a condition to represent him. You know, that the Word of God has passed, and cannot be called back: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die". You know, too, that to die, in this sentence, means to suffer for ever the torments of the lost. Under this condemnation you and I are brought by sin. You and I, then, must thus endure, unless God be pleased to take the death of a sinless one in the place of our death. Jesus is willing to bear all for us: how could he do so, without being man? He could not. Therefore, He is made man. So when God's Truth and Justice say — I must have that man's life; Jesus is ready to reply — I am of his nature, here is my life for his. Mark, then, He is the Woman's Seed, that He may have a life to lay down, and have blood to shed, for the ransom of such as we are. See clearly, that Jesus takes man's flesh, that He may redeem from death all of man's family who trust in Him.

Thus, also, in man's nature, He obeys all the commandments of God. But the righteousness thus worked out is not for Himself. It is wrought, that He may make it over to all who come to Him. This He never fails to do. So when the poorest believer presents himself for admission into heaven, he can shew, for his passport, a perfect righteousness placed over him by Jesus. It is so all-sufficient, that, when weighed in the balances of God, it lacks nothing.

I repeat these truths, because they are the ground work of true faith. Jesus was the Woman's Seed, that, being exactly as we are, yet without sin, His death might go for our death — His righteousness might stand for our righteousness.

Reader, are you a poor sinner, feeling your misery and dreading eternal wrath? Flee to the Woman's Seed. There is pardon in Him to wash away all iniquities. The faithful of the old world knew Him by this name, and they believed God, that, in due time, He would come, and thus satisfy for them. They looked to Him who should be born. They looked, and none can look in vain.

Sinners: Come and Welcome

Do you seek after a righteousness to make you fit to appear in heaven? It is all ready in the woman's Seed. Stretch out the hand of faith — take it, and it is yours for ever. Whatever you need dwells richly in

the Woman's Seed. Cast on Him your vileness, and take His purity; cast on Him your poverty, and take His riches; cast on Him your nothingness, and take His fulness; cast on Him your curse, and receive His blessing.

Do you hesitate — do you stagger — fearful to approach one so excellent in holiness? Well might you tremble, if bade to draw near to God in His glory. But He, who calls you, is your Kinsman — the Woman's Seed.

You may fly up to Him on the wings of faith, and embrace Him with the arms of faith, and cling to Him with the hands of faith, and lay your weary head upon His breast, and tell Him all your sorrows; and you will find that His heart is a brother's heart, as tender to compassionate as His power is all-sufficient to save.

Do you still stand doubting? What, when Jesus has come so far for you, will you not stir one step towards Him? When He has stooped so low, will you not ascend to Him? When He brings Himself, in man's form, to your very door, will you not open and welcome Him? Surely there is enough in the Woman's Seed to slay all unbelief; enough to win and conquer every heart. Here we see heaven coming down to earth, that earth may be raised to heaven. Here we see the son of God becoming man, that men may become the children of God. Will not this satisfy — persuade — allure? Surely God could do no more. Man, then, can say no more.

I close with this earnest entreaty; read these few words again and again, until you find the flame of faith and love kindling in your soul; and then, on the bended knees of gratitude, exclaim, I bless Thee, Heavenly Father, for the promise in Eden of the Woman's Seed. I bless Thee, for sending, in the fulness of time, the Woman's Seed I bless Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, for coming to save me, as the Woman's Seed. I bless Thee, Holy Spirit, for revealing to my soul the Woman's Seed.

Letter from Church Deputy

Auckland,
New Zealand.
10th August 1979.

Dear Mr Macleod,

I know you are interested in our movements since leaving Scotland. On the whole we had a comfortable flight: from Prestwick to

Vancouver; from Vancouver to Sydney and thence to Auckland. During this vast journey we had a break of ten days in Vancouver and spent one night in Sydney in the hospitable home of Mr and Mrs A. Shaw.

The friends in Vancouver were wonderful and we thank every one who made our visit there so pleasant. We cannot mention all by name but Mr D. Robertson is due special mention for his dedication to our cause in Vancouver. I preached twice in Vancouver and paid some visits. Among these were visits to the sick, accompanied by the minister, Rev. D. Beattie, whose ministry is appreciated and we believe blessed to some. Our prayer is that both minister and congregation will continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God our Saviour.

The Vancouver elders have, like Timothy, known the Scriptures from their youth. This and their upbringing in the Free Presbyterian Church would explain their appreciation of our heritage as a church. One should remember that two of these elders are the sons of men who rendered excellent service to the church. Alexander MacAskill and Archie Robertson were prominent in their own day and this is reflected in their sons, Allan MacAskill and D. Robertson. The other office-bearers, among whom is Farquhar Matheson, one whose loyalty as an elder is due special recognition, are all trustworthy as members of the church. We pray that the Lord may enable them to uphold the standard set by the fathers, Dr MacDonald and Hugh MacKay, whose loyalty fills us with a sense of genuine admiration.

One feature of the friendliness of our Canadian friends was the large representative body of well-wishers, who met us at the airport. I am unable to give figures but it was a very considerable number. Seen off on 19th July by fewer friends, because it was early in the day, we left Canada en route for Sydney, Australia, where we were met at the airport by Mr and Mrs A. Shaw and Miss Shaw. After our night's rest in our hospitable hosts' home, we joined the plane for Auckland and after a comparatively short flight over the Tasman Sea, we arrived at Auckland Airport and thence to the manse at 10 Brouder Place, where we have been comfortably placed since. This was on Saturday, 21st July, but notwithstanding the fact that we had flown for 8,000 miles or more, we were remarkably fresh and I was able to conduct both services on the Sabbath.

Our stay in Auckland is very pleasant. The church people show deep appreciation of the church's interest in them by sending a deputy and we benefit by this. Kindness is heaped on us. The services are well attended and keen interest is shown in the preached word.

Auckland congregation has three elders, Donald Beaton, Edward Christensen and Kenneth van Kralingen. In these gracious men, the church has trustworthy representatives and the congregation has devoted fathers. The congregation is loyal to the testimony raised in Scotland in 1893 and this applies, not only to the members who inherited the testimony, but also to those who acquired this precious heritage. In addition to the three elders there are five male members and several female members. The spiritual life of the congregation is reflected in its uncompromising adherence to the fundamentals in doctrine and practice: also in its desire to have a minister loyal to the pattern generally observed throughout the church. Here the services are conducted strictly in accordance with the form of worship at home. We earnestly hope that a minister will be settled here soon. Pray for this. Financially the congregation has achieved, in the form of property and funds, what can only be described as spectacular. We cannot be too thankful to the Lord for the evidence of His goodness to the Free Presbyterian Church overseas.

We leave for Gisborne and Wellington next week (D.V.)

With Warmest Regards,

Yours sincerely,

D. Campbell.

Are You Happy?

by Bishop J.C. Ryle

(continued from page 240)

II. In the next place *let me expose some common mistakes about the way to be happy.*

There are several roads which are thought by many to lead to happiness. In each of these roads thousands and tens of thousands of men and women are continually travelling. Each fancies that if he could only attain all he wants he would be happy: each fancies, if he does not succeed, that the fault is not in his road, but in his own want of luck and good fortune; and all alike seem ignorant that they are hunting shadows. They have started in a wrong direction: they are seeking that which can never be found in the place where they seek it.

Suffer me, reader, to mention by name some of the principal delusions about happiness. I do it in love, and charity, and compassion to your soul: I believe it to be a public duty to warn people against cheats, quacks, and impostors. Oh, how much trouble and sorrow it might save your heart, if you would only believe what I am going to say!

It is an utter mistake to suppose that *rank and greatness alone* can give happiness. The kings and rulers of this world are not necessarily happy men. They have troubles and crosses, which none know but themselves; they see a thousand evils, which they are unable to remedy; they are slaves working in golden chains, and have less real liberty than any in the world; they have burdens and responsibilities laid upon them, which are a daily weight on their hearts. The Roman Emperor Antonine often said, that "the imperial power was an ocean of miseries." Queen Elizabeth, when she heard a milk-maid singing, wished that she had been born to a lot like her's. Never did our great Poet write a truer word than when he said,

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

It is an utter mistake to suppose that *riches alone* can give happiness. They can enable a man to command and possess everything but inward peace. They cannot buy a cheerful spirit and a light heart. There is care in the getting of them, and care in the keeping of them, care in the using of them, and care in the disposing of them, care in the gathering, and care in the scattering of them. Oh, he was a wise man who said that "money" was only another name for "trouble," and that the same English letters which spelt "acres" would also spell "cares."

It is an utter mistake to suppose that *learning and science alone* can give happiness. They may occupy a man's time and attention, but they cannot really make him happy. They that increase knowledge often increase sorrow: the more they learn, the more they discover their own ignorance. It is not in the power of things on earth or under the earth to "minister to a mind diseased." The heart wants something as well as the head: the conscience needs food as well as the intellect. All the secular knowledge in the world will not give a man joy and gladness, when he thinks on sickness, and death, and the grave. They that have climbed the highest, have often found themselves solitary, dissatisfied, and empty of peace. The learned Selden, at the close of his life, confessed that all his learning did not give him such comfort as four verses of St. Paul (Titus ii. 11-14).

It is an utter mistake to suppose that *idleness alone* can give happiness. The labourer who gets up at five in the morning, and goes out to work all day in a cold clay ditch, often thinks, as he walks past the rich man's door, "What a fine thing it must be to have no work to do." Poor fellow! he little knows what he thinks. The most miserable creature on earth is the man who has nothing to do. Work for the hands

or work for the head is absolutely essential to human happiness. Without it the mind feeds upon itself, and the whole inward man becomes diseased: the machinery within *will* work, and without something to work upon, will often wear itself to pieces. There was no idleness in paradise. Adam and Eve had to "dress the garden and keep it." There will be no idleness in heaven: God's "servants shall serve Him." Oh, be very sure the idlest man is the man most truly unhappy!

It is an utter mistake to suppose that *pleasure-seeking and amusement alone* can give happiness. Of all roads that men can take in order to be happy, this is the one that is most completely wrong. Of all weary, flat, dull, and unprofitable ways of spending life, this exceeds all. To think of a dying creature, with an immortal soul, expecting happiness in feasting and revelling, — in dancing and singing, — in dressing and visiting, — in ball-going and card-playing, — in races and fairs, — in hunting and shooting, — in crowds, in laughter, in noise, in music, in wine! Surely it is a sight that is enough to make the devil laugh and the angels weep. Even a child will not play with its toys all day long. It must have food. But when grown up men and women think to find happiness in a constant round of amusement they sink far below a child.

Reader, I place before you these common mistakes about the way to be happy. I ask you to mark them well. I warn you plainly against these pretended short cuts to happiness, however crowded they may be. I tell you that if you fancy any one of them can lead you to true peace, you are entirely deceived. Your conscience will never feel satisfied; your immortal soul will never feel easy: your whole inward man will feel uncomfortable and out of health. Take any one of these roads, or take all of them, and if you have nothing besides to look to, you will never find happiness. You may travel on and on and on, and the wished for object will seem as far away at the end of each stage of life as when you started. You are like one pouring water into a sieve, or putting money into a bag with holes. You might as well try to make an elephant happy by feeding him with a grain of sand a day, as try to satisfy that heart of yours with rank, riches, learning, idleness, or pleasure.

Do you doubt the truth of all I am saying? I dare say you do. Then let us turn to the great book of human experience, and read over a few lines out of its solemn pages. You shall have the testimony of a few competent witnesses on the great subject I am urging on your attention.

A King shall be our first witness: I mean Solomon King of Israel. We know that he had power, and wisdom, and wealth, far exceeding that of any ruler of his time. We know, from his own confession, that he tried

the great experiment, how far the good things of this world can make man happy. We know, from the record of his own hand, the result of this curious experiment. He writes it by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, for the benefit of the whole world, in the book of Ecclesiastes. Never surely, was the experiment tried under such favourable circumstances: never was any one so likely to succeed as the Jewish King. Yet what is Solomon's testimony? You have it in his melancholy words, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Eccles. i.14.)

A famous French lady shall be our next witness: I mean Madam De Pompadour. She was the friend and favourite of Louis the Fifteenth. She had unbounded influence at the Court of France. She wanted nothing that money could procure. Yet what does she say herself? "What a situation is that of the great! They only live in the future, and are only happy in hope. There is no peace in ambition. I am always gloomy, and often so unreasonably. The kindness of the King, the regard of courtiers, the attachment of my domestics, and the fidelity of a large number of friends, — motives like these, which ought to make me happy, affect me no longer. I have no longer inclinations for all which once pleased me. I have caused my house at Paris to be magnificently furnished: well; it pleased for two days! My residence at Bellevue is charming; and I alone cannot endure it. Benevolent people relate to me all the news and adventures of Paris: they think I listen, but when they have done, I ask them what they said. In a word, I do not live: I am dead before my time. I have no interest in the world. Everything conspires to embitter my life. My life is a continual death." To such testimony I need not add a single word. (*Sinclair's Anecdotes and Aphorisms*, p.33)

A famous German writer shall be our next witness: I mean Goethe. It is well known that he was almost idolized by many during his life. His works were read and admired by thousands. His name was known and honoured, wherever German was read, all over the world. And yet the praise of man, of which he reaped such an abundant harvest, was utterly unable to make Goethe happy. "He confessed, when about eighty years old, that he could not remember being in a really happy state of mind even for a few weeks together; and that when he wished to feel happy he had to veil his self-consciousness." (See *Sinclair's Anecdotes and Aphorisms*, p.280).

An English peer and poet shall be our next witness: I mean Lord Byron. If ever there was one who ought to have been happy, according to the standard of the world, Lord Byron was the man. He began life with all the advantages of English rank and position. He had splendid

abilities and powers of mind, which the world soon discovered and was ready to honour. He had a sufficiency of means to gratify every lawful wish, and never knew anything of real poverty. Humanly speaking, there seemed nothing to prevent him enjoying life and being happy. Yet it is a notorious fact that Byron was a miserable man. Misery stands out in his poems: misery creeps out in his letters. Weariness, satiety, disgust, and discontent appear in all his ways. He is an awful warning that rank, and title, and literary fame, alone are not sufficient to make a man happy.

A man of science shall be our next witness: I mean Sir Humphrey Davy. He was a man eminently successful in the line of life which he chose, and deservedly so. A distinguished philosopher, — the inventor of the famous safety-lamp which bears his name, and has preserved so many poor miners from death by fire-damp, — a Baronet of the United Kingdom and President of the Royal Society; — his whole life seemed a continual career of prosperity. If learning alone were the road to happiness, this man at least ought to have been happy. Yet what was the true record of Davy's feelings? We have it in his own melancholy journal at the latter part of his life. He describes himself in two painful words "Very miserable!"

A man of wit and pleasure shall be our next witness: I mean Lord Chesterfield. He shall speak for himself: his own words in a letter shall be his testimony. "I have seen the silly round of business and pleasure, and have done with it all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility and do not regret their loss. I appraise them at their real value, which in truth is very low; whereas those who have not experience always over-rate them: They only see their gay outside, and are dazzled with their glare; but I have been behind the scenes. I have seen all the coarse pullies and dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy machine, and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which illuminate the whole decoration, to the astonishment and admiration of the ignorant audience. When I reflect on what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I cannot persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry of bustle and pleasure of the world had any reality. I look on all that is past as one of those romantic dreams which opium occasions, and I do by no means wish to repeat the nauseous dose for the sake of the fugitive dream." These sentences speak for themselves. I need not add to them one single word.

The Statesmen and Politicians who have swayed the destinies of the world, ought by good right to be our last witnesses. But I forbear, in

Christian charity, to bring them forward. It makes my heart ache when I run my eye over the list of names famous in English history, and think how many have worn out their lives in a breathless struggle after place and distinction. How many of our greatest men have died of broken hearts, — disappointed, disgusted, and tried with constant failure! How many have left on record some humbling confession that in the plentitude of their power they were pining for rest, as the caged eagle for liberty! How many whom the world is applauding as “masters of the situation,” are in reality little better than galley-slaves, chained to the oar and unable to get free! Alas, there are many sad proofs, both among the living and the dead, that to be great and powerful is not necessarily to be happy.

Reader, I think it very likely that you do not believe what I am saying. I know something of the deceitfulness of the heart on the subject of happiness. There are few things which man is so slow to believe as the truths I am now putting forth about the way to be happy. Bear with me then, while I say something more.

Come and stand with me some afternoon in the heart of the city of London. Let us watch the faces of most of the wealthy men, whom we shall see leaving their houses of business at the close of the day. Some of them are worth hundreds of thousands: some of them are worth millions of pounds. But what is written in the countenances of these grave men whom we see swarming out from Lombard Street and Cornhill, from the Bank of England and the Stock Exchange? What mean those deep lines which furrow so many a cheek and so many a brow? What means that air of anxious thoughtfulness which is worn by five out of every six we meet? Ah, reader, these things tell a tale. They tell us that it needs something more than gold and bank notes to make men happy.

Come next and stand with me near the Houses of Parliament, in the middle of a busy session. Let us scan the faces of Peers and Commoners, whose names are familiar and well-known all over the civilized world. There you may see on some fine May evening the mightiest Statesmen in England hurrying to a debate, like eagles to the carcass. Each has a power of good or evil in his tongue which it is fearful to contemplate. Each may say things before to-morrow's sun dawns which may affect the peace and prosperity of nations, and convulse the world. There you may see the men who hold the reins of power and government already; there you may see the men who are daily watching for an opportunity of snatching those reins out of their hands, and governing in their stead. But what do their faces tell us, as they hasten to their posts? What may

be learned from their care-worn countenances? What may be read in many of their wrinkled foreheads, — so absent-looking and sunk in thought? Ah, reader, they teach us a solemn lesson. They teach us that it needs something more than political greatness to make men happy.

Come next and stand with me in the most fashionable part of London, in the height of the season. Let us visit Regent Street or Pall Mall, Hyde Park or Mayfair. How many fair faces and splendid equipages we shall see! How many we shall count up in an hour's time, who seem to possess the choicest gifts of this world, — beauty, wealth, rank, fashion, and troops of friends! But, alas, how few we shall see who appear happy. In how many countenances we shall read weariness, dissatisfaction, discontent, sorrow, or unhappiness, as clearly as if it was written with a pen! Yes: it is a humbling lesson to learn, but a very wholesome one. It needs something more than rank, and fashion, and beauty, to make people happy.

Come next and walk with me through some quiet country parish in merry England. Let us visit some secluded corner in our beautiful old father-land, far away from great towns, and fashionable dissipation and political strife. There are not a few such to be found in the land. There are rural parishes where there is neither street, nor public house, nor beershop, — where there is work for all the labourers, and a church for all the population, and a school for all the children, and a minister of the Gospel to look after the people. Surely, you will say, we shall find happiness here! Surely such parishes must be the very abodes of peace and joy! Go into those quiet-looking cottages, one by one, and you will soon be undeceived. Learn the inner history of each family and you will soon alter your mind. You will soon discover that backbiting, and lying, and slandering, and envy, and jealousy, and pride, and laziness, and drinking, and extravagance, and lust, and petty quarrels, can murder happiness in the country quite as much as in the town. No doubt a rural village sounds pretty in poetry, and looks beautiful in pictures; but in sober reality human nature is the same evil thing everywhere. Alas, it needs something more than a residence in a quiet country parish to make any child of Adam a happy man!

I know these are ancient things. They have been said a thousand times before without effect, and I suppose they will be said without effect again. I want no greater proof of the corruption of human nature than the pertinacity with which we seek happiness where happiness cannot be found. Century after century wise men have left on record their experience about the way to be happy. Century after century the

children of men will have it that they know the way perfectly well, and need no teaching. They cast to the winds our warnings; they rush, every one, on his own favourite path; they walk in a vain shadow, and disquiet themselves in vain, and wake up when too late to find their whole life has been a grand mistake. Their eyes are blinded: they will not see that their visions are as baseless and disappointing as the mirage of the African desert. Like the tired traveller in those deserts, they think they are approaching a lake of cooling waters; like the same traveller, they find to their dismay that this fancied lake was a splendored optical delusion, and that they are still helpless in the midst of burning sand.

Reader, are you a young person? I entreat you to accept the affectionate warning of a Minister of the Gospel, and not to seek happiness where happiness cannot be found. Seek it not in riches; seek it not in power and rank; seek it not in pleasure; seek it not in learning. All these are bright and splendid fountains: their waters taste sweet. A crowd is standing round them, which will not leave them; but, oh, remember that God has written over each of these fountains, "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Remember this, and be wise.

Reader, are you poor? Are you tempted to fancy that if you had the rich man's place you would be quite happy? Resist the temptation, and cast it behind you. Envy not your wealthy neighbours: be content with such things as you have. Happiness does not depend on houses or land; silks and satins cannot shut out sorrow from the heart; castles and halls cannot prevent anxiety and care coming in at their doors. There is as much misery riding and driving about in carriages as there is walking about on foot: there is as much unhappiness in ceiled houses as in humble cottages. Oh, remember the mistakes which are common about happiness, and be wise!

(To be continued)

Breaking Down the Carved Work

By Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale, Skye.

(continued from p.249)

The Free Church

We have shown already in these pages that the purpose of separation in 1893, and the setting up of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, was in order to preserve the carved work of the Church of the Reformation. It was to be expected that in an age of declension it was bound to meet with opposition of the most virile kind. At the very

outset some who, before the separation, professed to be the friends of those who separated, and who spoke so loudly against the Declaratory Act, proved to be among their most bitter enemies. Those who separated from the Declaratory Act of 1892 were deprived of churches and manses, and their one-time friends were as active in their opposition to them as those who never showed them sympathy before the separation. We read of dissents against the Declaratory Act but we look in vain for dissents against enactments of Presbyteries in turning those who remained faithful to the Constitution, on to the hill-side to worship God under the canopy of heaven. On the contrary, there are painful instances of these friends using their influence in Parish School Boards to deprive them of the use of schoolrooms for their services, and that in districts where the followers of the Free Presbyterian Church formed the majority of ratepayers. This clearly manifested that they had no reason to expect mercy from men, but they had the countenance of the Lord. The majority of them were poor, but out of their poverty they were able to build churches and manses, and pay the salaries of an educated and God-fearing ministry, as the Lord was pleased to bestow such ministers on them. As is admitted on all hands, the Declaratory Act of 1892 was passed in order to pave the way for Union with the United Presbyterian Church, which union took place in 1900, with a minority remaining out of it. It is not the purpose of these Articles to enter upon the struggle which took place between the majority and the minority for possession of the property except in so far as that is relevant to the position of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The late Archibald Crawford, Tighnabruaich, who was a far-seeing man, and of whom it could be said that he had "the secret of the Lord" above many, warned some of the ministers of our Church that we would have more trouble from the minority in 1900, than we would have from any other denomination in Scotland. We write this in the full knowledge of what had been published by the Free Church Publication Committee some years ago, and which would give the impression that Mr. Crawford was not satisfied with the position of the Free Presbyterian Church. We deem, however, that this has been sufficiently answered already and needs not to be repeated here. He also devulged that after taking to the Lord in secret the relationship of that minority to the Free Presbyterian Church, the truth which spoke to him was, "Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them." Jeremiah 15:19. It is remarkable that the same truth spoke to two other eminently God-fearing persons as far apart as Lairg and Strathy as to the duty of our Church towards the

present Free Church. Mr. Crawford's prediction has been amply verified to this day. After the House of Lords' decision, which gave the property to the minority who called themselves the Free Church of Scotland, efforts were made by them to get the Free Presbyterian Church to unite with them, and these efforts were countenanced by some of our ministers, who ultimately went over to them. To this day a strong plank in the Free Church platform is that because the Declaratory Act was *ultra vires*, it was not binding on anyone, and that it, in no way, changed the Constitution of the Free Church. This is very different from the view of their lawyers when they contested the property before the House of Lords. Mr. H. Johnston, K.C., in dealing with a certain section of the Declaratory Act, said, "Now we unquestionably object to that provision because it practically sets loose the Confession of Faith and leaves it for the Church of the time to determine what parts of the Confession of Faith remain the faith of this Church, and what parts of the Confession of Faith may be written out of it." *The Free Church of Scotland Appeals*, 3rd.edition,p.257.

It is true that the Constitution of the Free Church, as was shown in the decision of the House of Lords, is unchangeable, but men may, and have, changed their relationship to it. When there was no further hope of repealing the Declaratory Act, those who formed the Free Presbyterian Church showed, by their deeds more than by their words, that they were not to change their relationship to the Constitution of the Free Church, and the only way that they could do so was by separation. There was no use in remaining under it as their one-time friends did for they would have to take part in the ordinations of ministers and elders who would state publicly that they were taking office under the shelter of the relief afforded by the Declaratory Act. No amount of Relieving Acts could save them from such a consequence of the Declaratory Act. Perhaps one of the weakest arguments advanced by those who merely dissented against the Declaratory Act and remained under it, is that, it being *ultra vires*, it could not affect men's relationship to the Constitution, even though it was sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and an overwhelming majority of Presbyteries had favoured it. From its beginning to its end there is not a provision in the Barrier Act to support this view, but the whole tenor of it shows that any legislation sent to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act and afterwards passed into law by the General Assembly, becomes a binding law and constitution of the Church. The only rational conclusion, therefore, that we can come to is, that the Church which adopted the Declaratory Act

has another Constitution than that which it previously had, and that those who remained in it were subject to that Constitution and cannot rightfully, claim to be the Free Church of Scotland. The Lord Chancellor came very near bringing the position of the Free Presbyterian Church into the Case, when he asked Mr. Haldane, the United Free Church Counsel, if people were turned out of their manses for protesting against the Declaratory Act. Mr Haldane, after consultation with his clients, replied, "Not under the Declaratory Act, my Lord, There have been people turned out for heresy, but it has nothing to do with the Declaratory Act." The Counsel for the minority observed a discreet silence, and, probably, breathed a sigh of relief when this manifest falsehood succeeded in diverting the Lord Chancellor from pursuing a line which would ultimately have led him to see that there was another denomination in Scotland which had a better claim to the property than the Pursuers. It is only fair to the United Free Church to state that, in the third edition of their Authorised Report of the Appeal, they state in a footnote on page 531 that "those ministers of the Free Church of Scotland who protested against the Declaratory Act, and formed the Free Presbyterian Church, were not proceeded against for heresy. Actions were raised in January 1894 against two such ministers, to have it declared that, having ceased to be ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, they were not entitled to retain possession of the churches and manses occupied by them." This footnote, significantly, was inserted after the Royal Commission had virtually overturned the House of Lords' decision. Perhaps, if the minority had acted in a more charitable manner towards their Free Presbyterian brethren on the 23rd. day of June 1904 not quite so much of the property would have gone over to the United Free Church.

We often hear it proclaimed loudly, in season and out of season, that the highest tribunal in the land declared the present Free Church to be the sole heirs of the Disruption Church. Of course, it did nothing of the kind. The Law Lords had only the Unionists and the anti-unionists before them, and decided in favour of the latter to the exclusion of the former. The case of the Free Presbyterian Church was never before them, and, therefore, their position was not considered by that tribunal, and from the fore-going facts, it does not appear that it would suit either party that it should be.

The purpose of this paper is now to consider how the Church calling herself the Free Church of Scotland dealt with the carved work of which she claimed to be the sole custodian. When the House of Lords' decision

was announced, it was no doubt hoped that when she would get possession of the New College, Edinburgh, that this College, long a seminary for the dissemination of destructive Higher Criticism, would be restored to its original use as the training-ground of ministers who valued the doctrines of the Bible. Such hopes were doomed to disappointment. The first Professor appointed was Dr. W.M. Alexander who had a long list of letters to his name, but whose book, *Demonic Possession in the New Testament*, published in 1902, showed him to be a very advanced Higher Critic. How did the Free Church deal with him when his unscriptural view were discovered? An indication of this is to be found in a discussion on the book in the Free Church Presbytery of Inverness. One member thought the book should be withdrawn, another said that he read the book, but there was not a word, except, perhaps, a slight expression used in one place, which went to show that Dr. Alexander doubted the infallibility of the Bible. Other two members expressed themselves satisfied with Dr. Alexander's disclaimer. Ultimately the book was withdrawn, not because of the serious errors which it contained, but "in defence to Highland opinion," and Dr. Alexander was allowed to go on teaching the Free Church students, as if nothing had happened.

The manner in which Dr. Alexander and his book on *Demonic Possession* has been dealt with shows what has been asserted over and over again, that the present Free Church does not exercise discipline on its office-bearers as it ought. In the particular matter before us we have a case of the most glaring heresy where the inspiration of the Bible is denied, in spite of a repeated and solemn assertion of belief in that doctrine. We do not find the least expression of regret on the part of the writer, except one expression of regret for having caused uneasiness to others. There was no expression of regret at the dishonour done to God and to His Word. This does not warrant us to conclude that there was the least trace of evangelical repentance, and yet the author was allowed to remain in a most responsible position in the Church to the end of his life, which leads to the inevitable conclusion that discipline is not exercised as it ought to be in the Free Church. It may be observed that discipline was part of the carved work of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland, and its exercise, when necessary, has often been followed by salutary effects. The following statement on church discipline by the godly Robert Murray McCheyne ought to be seriously considered by all to whom it concerns: "When I first entered upon the work of the ministry among you, I was exceedingly ignorant of the vast importance

of church discipline. I thought that my great and almost only work was to pray and preach. I saw your souls to be so precious, and the time so short, that I devoted all my time, and care, and strength, to labour in word and doctrine. When cases of discipline were brought before me and the elders, I regarded them with something like abhorrence. It was a duty I shrank from; and I may truly say it nearly drove me from the work of the ministry among you altogether. But it pleased God, who teaches His servants in another way than man teaches, to bless some of the cases of discipline to the manifest and undeniable conversion of the souls of those under our care; and from that hour a new light broke in upon my mind, and I saw that if preaching be an ordinance of Christ, so is church discipline. I now feel very deeply persuaded that both are of God — that two keys are committed to us by Christ, the one the key of doctrine, by means of which we unlock the treasures of the Bible, the other the key of discipline, by which we open or shut the way to the sealing ordinances of the faith. Both are Christ's gift, and neither is to be resigned without sin."McCheyne's Memoirs, p.73.

This lack of discipline in the Free Church is particularly conspicuous in their disregard of the claims of the Fourth Commandment. Never in its history, since its beginning in 1900, has the Free Church Assembly passed a resolution condemning the use of vehicles run for monetary gain on the Sabbath day. Its members and some of its ministers travel to and from church by means of such transport on the day of rest and worship, and thus help to create a demand which owners and managers of Sabbath trains and buses pretend to a necessity for satisfying. Apart from the running of such vehicles being contrary to the law of God, there is the added sin of depriving the employees engaged in running such transport of the opportunity of rest and worship, for when a passenger pays the fare for a Sabbath bus or train, he is engaging those employed, as his servants, to bring him to his destination. This ignores the command to keep the Sabbath day holy, not only as far as we are concerned ourselves, but also with regard to our man-servant and our maid-servant. Where is the conscience of the minister or church member when they are not rebuked for thus ruining the souls of their fellow-creatures? The professing Church ought to condemn Sabbath labour instead of condoning any breach of the Fourth Commandment which suits the convenience of some of its members. A passage in the Life of the Rev. John Ross of Brucefield, Ontario, ought to be seriously considered in this connection:—"Railway Companies do know that it only requires purpose on the part of the Christian population of the land

to close their Sabbath traffic for ever. But the Christian Church has no purpose in the matter, and even wishes on the subject are weakening. What will she say to her Lord when He makes enquiry after the blood of the thousands of employees who could have been protected in their Sabbaths, but who were not? While the people are busy here and there, building beautiful churches and playing heavenly music, behold, the young men are gone! slipped soul and body under the wheels of the Sabbath trains" — and we may add buses. *The Man with the Book*, p.193. The fact that such conditions exist in the present Free Church, which claims to be the sole heir of the Disruption Church, without the proper exercise of discipline, prove that she "has no purpose in the matter."

(To be continued)

Book Review

Lectures on Revivals by William B. Sprague. Banner of Truth Trust.
Price £4.00

This book consists of nine lectures given by Dr Sprague to his congregation in Albany, U.S.A., in the last century on the subject of revivals of religion. The subject is one of perennial interest and the re-appearance of the book is welcomed. In addition to the lectures there is an appendix, almost as long as the lectures themselves, containing twenty letters written by different ministers in America giving their own thoughts on revivals and based on their own experience of such seasons of blessing. These letters contain matter full of interest and instruction in relation to revivals of religion.

In the lectures in the main part of the book, Dr Sprague goes very systematically into the whole subject of revivals of religion indicating the nature of true revivals, the dangers and difficulties attending them, the means of promoting true revivals and the proper way of handling those who have come under the influence of the truth at such a time. Dr Sprague is not unaware that even where true revivals are found, we may expect to find influences at work to mar and discredit the work, but he does not regard this as a reason why such revivals should be written off as not being of the Lord. We are to expect Satan at such a time to do his utmost to spoil the work and sow tares among the wheat.

The warnings that Dr Sprague gives in his book are most timely for our day as well as his own, and we are happy to commend this book of lectures and letters as conducive to producing sound views on the matter of revivals of religion.

D.B.M.

Notes and Comments

“Let us start talking . . .”

In the June issue of the “Free Church Record” the editor calls for discussions between the Free Church and Free Presbyterian Church with a view to union between the two Churches. The editor alleges that there are no biblical, theological or historical grounds on which the continued separation between the two Churches can be justified.

In the light of this one would expect the tone of the article to be at least conciliatory but this is far from being the case. Professor MacLeod, besides misrepresenting the position of the Free Presbyterian Church, makes statements so objectionable that if they were true the last thing he should be thinking about is union with such a self-deluded body. He attempts to prove that the Free Presbyterian Church has become an “innovating” Church and goes on to surmise that she has had to innovate in order to present to her people “a face that is as different as possible from the face of the Free Church.” This latter notion is so ludicrous as to require no refutation. If the editor really believes this he can believe anything. With regard to the “innovations” he enumerates, he will have to find stronger evidence than that so far produced in order to sustain the charge. If (1) requiring that those who desecrate the Sabbath or connive at its desecration in the use of public transport run in systematic disregard of the Lord’s Day should be dealt with as Sabbath-breakers, (2) recognising that those who repudiate the authority of the Supreme Court of the Church inevitably put themselves out of the Church, (3) accepting the Authorised Version as the most faithful version of the Scriptures in the English language, and having a high regard for the Textus Receptus as representative of the Majority Text — if these are ‘innovations’ then the sooner they are adopted by other Churches the better.

We repudiate the charge that we have departed from the original position of the Free Presbyterian Church. We stand today exactly where the godly fathers of our Church stood in 1893 when they faithfully and courageously separated themselves from the corrupt Declaratory Act Free Church. We have need more than ever of maintaining our distinctive position as declension sets in and the Sabbath and the other Commandments are trampled under-foot and all the doctrines of God’s Word assailed through an ecumenicalism that cares little for the Truth of God: We have a goodly heritage and one that we are not willing to part with and would urge our people to steadfast adherence to it and not

to give any heed to the insinuation of those who manifestly declare themselves to be, not friends, but enemies of the Free Presbyterian Church. For our part we have no intention of accepting an invitation to a meeting on the plain of Ono.

Pope's Visit to Ireland

The Pope is due to visit Eire in September. The question as to whether or not he would visit Ulster was raised in the public press and elsewhere. Protestants in Northern Ireland expressed dismay and utter opposition to the idea of a visit by the Pontiff. The British Minister to the Vatican, Mr Geoffrey Crossley, made it clear that the Pope would be welcome in any part of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister assured Mr Gerry Fitt, a Northern Ireland Roman Catholic Member of Parliament that the Pope would be very welcome if he wished to visit Ulster. Another M.P., Mr John Biggs-Davison, urged that the Queen should welcome the Pope if he visited Ulster.

In this ecumenical age it is thought charitable to welcome the Pope and the height of discourtesy to express any opposition to a visit by him to this country. This is because the present age is blind to the realities of Papal power and intrigue. The Pope can confer no benefit on this country and is doing his best through his anti-Christian system to destroy the inestimable blessings and benefits conferred on our nation through the Reformation of the 16th century. The Pope would do greater service to our nation and the world if he were to stay at home and abandon once and for all his pretensions to be the Vicar of Christ on earth. His interference in Ireland will certainly not bring the day of peace any nearer for that troubled land.

The Media and Terrorism

The B.B.C.'s Director-General expressed regret over an interview given on the B.B.C. with the terrorists who claim to have murdered Mr Airey Neave. More recently the question of pictures of armed terrorists appearing in the daily press has been raised.

The media have a great responsibility laid on them as they represent a powerful force which can be used either for good or evil. It is essential that that force be used for good and not for evil. Consequently whatever would tend to the overthrow of law and order should be given no countenance whatsoever by the media. Publicity given to the terrorists — particularly if it is favourable — can only aid the forces of evil that are abroad today and which are seeking the destruction of all that is good and its replacement by a totalitarian regime.

Vietnamese Refugees

The plight of the Vietnamese refugees has forced itself on the attention of the leaders of the nations of the world. The tragic situation of these boat people, forced to leave their own land in unseaworthy craft for an unknown destination, is almost without parallel in the history of the world. Many of them have perished in a watery grave, while others have been resettled or await resettlement in other lands. Human compassion requires that the nations who are capable of receiving additional immigrants should open their doors to them.

The condemnation of Communism and Communistic regimes is writ large on the tragedy of these boat people. Already in Indo-China Communism has shown its true colours in the barbarities executed by the former regime in Cambodia. Now Communist Vietnam follows suit but adopts its own method of inhuman cruelty. The day is surely coming when God will take vengeance upon His enemies and we can be sure that in that day these perpetrators of fearful crimes against humanity shall not escape.

Roman Catholics and Education

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Glasgow is critical of the Church of Scotland for advocating the end of separate schooling. The Archbishop urged Roman Catholic parents to safeguard a sacred trust and oppose any moves to end the present schooling system in Scotland.

We do not wonder at Archbishop Winning speaking in this way. The Roman Catholic Church secured for itself in education a position which should never have been granted and which should not be tolerated. Roman Catholic schools staffed with mainly Roman Catholic personnel have been provided often at Protestant ratepayers' expense. In these schools the anti-Christian Roman Catholic religion has been taught, religion which in its very nature is subversive of the Protestant constitution of our land. It is easy to see why Archbishop Winning wishes to have them continued but for the good of our nation they should be abolished. The pernicious influence of segregated education in Northern Ireland is well known. Why then should such an obnoxious system be maintained throughout the rest of the land?

Drunk Driving

Alcohol is still regarded as the largest single factor leading to death and injury on the roads. The cost to the country of this must be very high. Many attempts have been made by the authorities to curb drunk

driving and it is evident that more stringent measures must be taken and more effective penalties imposed if this is to be prevented. Too often drunkenness is not regarded as the evil it is and a tolerance is shown towards drunk persons which is not warranted. In charge of a car a drunk driver becomes a potential murderer and ought to be treated so.

Church Notes

Induction at Aberdeen

On the evening of Tuesday, 31st July, 1979, the Rev. John Tallach, M.A., was inducted by the Northern Presbytery to the pastoral charge of the Aberdeen congregation. A large congregation of our people from many parts were present along with some strangers.

The Moderator, Rev. Donald B. MacLeod, preached from the words in Jonah Ch. 3 v 2, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." The sermon was most appropriate and was attentively followed by the congregation.

The main matters dealt with were: (1) The person to whom the call was addressed — this was Jonah who was in a particular sense a prophet; (2) The place to which he was directed to go — it was the great city Nineveh — a place of wickedness; (3) The preaching Jonah was commanded to deliver — "the preaching that I bid thee". At the conclusion of an edifying short discourse the words of Zechariah were quoted: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord". This was appreciated as the words of the prophet were spoken in a day of small things and were to encourage.

After the sermon, the clerk gave a narrative of the steps in preparing the Call, after which Mr Tallach stood and the customary questions were put to him, all of which he answered satisfactorily and he signed the Formula. The Moderator then engaged in solemn prayer and in the name of the Presbytery and by authority of the Divine Head of the Church, inducted Mr Tallach to the charge of the congregation. The right hand of fellowship was given by the Presbytery and associate members.

The Moderator addressed Mr Tallach on the work of the ministry. The public and private duties of his office, the great and responsible task of preaching the Gospel and, finally, how the Lord could use a holy instrument in the work of the Gospel ministry.

The congregation was in turn addressed in suitable words by Rev. Robert R. Sinclair. He pointed out the great and special favour from the

Lord Jesus in that night's settlement of a pastor over them. Believers were told of the encouragement they were to give their pastor in his public and private work. Special mention was made of the relationship between them in the bonds of Gospel love and how this ought to be put into practice. The ungodly were advised as to what their attitude to the Gospel message ought to be for their benefit. Mr Sinclair did not forget the young in his remarks.

The ministers associated with the Presbytery all conveyed their prayerful good wishes and that of their respective presbyteries to Mr Tallach and the Aberdeen congregation.

The Clerk read letters from Revs. A. F. Mackay and D. A. MacFarlane tendering cordial hopes of an abundant blessing upon the ministry and congregation. Reference was made to the young people who had started the congregation in Aberdeen and to Rev. John Tallach's brother in the Far East.

Mr Tallach repaired to the outer door of the church to shake hand with the people as they passed out. The proceedings were brought to a close with the singing of Psalm 126 and the Benediction.

It is gratifying to us to witness this settlement. At the same time we are not without our thoughts for the congregation that has become vacant. May the Lord provide.

We pray that the rich blessing of Heaven rest with Rev. John Tallach and family in Aberdeen. It is our wish that he have in the divine goodness a long, prosperous and happy ministry.

I would, on behalf of the Presbytery, thank Rev. Donald B. Macleod for his work in the congregation during the vacancy as Interim-Moderator. Also those who helped in pulpit supply.

The ladies had been enthusiastically busy. Tea was provided in the hall and fellowship was continued as the company enjoyed the good things so amply provided. I now thank the ladies who prepared and served the tea. It was a labour of love.

D. A. MACLEAN,
Clerk, Pro Tem.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

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

Northern: At Dingwall on 18th September at 2.30 p.m.

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

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

Committee Meetings (D.V.)

The following Committees will meet at Inverness Church:—

Tuesday, 2nd October

9 a.m. - 10 a.m. — Church Extension.

10 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. — Church Magazines.

11.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. — Religion and Morals; Sabbath Observance.

2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. — Finance; Publications.

4.30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m. — Welfare of Youth.

7 p.m. - 9 p.m. — Jewish and Foreign Mission.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The Publications Treasurer, Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, C.A., Hilton of Cadbol, Fearn, wishes to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Publications Fund: Anon £3 per Applecross Congr. Treasurer; Anon £9 per Stornoway Congr. Treasurer.

Free Distribution Fund: A Friend, North Tolsta, £2 per W. D. Fraser.

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

Barnoldswick: Anon £30 per Dr R. K. MacCuish; Registered Post (Inverness) £105; Inverness Friend £10; Inverness Friend £30; Friend, Edinburgh, £5; W. MacB., Strathcarron, £10; Mr K., Leeds, £5; English Friend, £25; from Holland £12 (all for Church Building Fund).

Dumbarton: Friend, Inverness, £5 per T.M.; Mrs J.Y.M.R., £20 (both for Dumbarton Church Extension).

Fort William: Mrs MacL., Tyndrum, £5; Mrs MacD., Tyndrum, £1; Mrs C., Onich, £1; Mr M. MacR. £3; Mrs M. Glenmoriston, £3 (all per Rev. J. A. MacDonald).

Gairloch: Lewis Friends £10 for Sust. Fund, £5 for Car Fund, £5 for Communion Expenses (all per Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald; Anon £10; K. MacK., 15 P.H., £5; J.G. £10 (all for Car Fund); Mrs M., Invermoriston, £5 per T. MacLeod; Mr and Mrs G., Glasgow, £30 per Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow (both for Congr. Purposes).

Inverness: In memory of Mrs Beaton from D.B., Inverness, £50; Miss S., Inverness, £10 (both for Home of Rest); Mrs F., Inverness, £10 for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund; Mrs K., Inverness, £1; Miss MacK., Inverness, £1 (both for Sabbath School Outing Expenses), all per Rev. A.F.M.

Kinlochbervie: The following donations per Rev. J.T. for work in Italy, particularly the circulation of reformed literature: M.N., Ins., £5; A Friend £5; Anon, Ins. post mark, £10; A Friend, Delhi, Ontario, 20 dollars; A Seeker, Stornoway post mark, £10; Collection at meeting held by Rev. Angus Morrison at Chesley, £20; M.M.C., South Harris, £10 per R.W.M.M. for work in Italy.

Kyle: Envelope in plate £5; Mr D.G., Shieldaig, £5 (both per Mr I. MacCuaig); Envelope in plate £10; Anon, Kyle, £100 (all for Kyle Manse Fund).

Laide: Mrs MacK., Ullapool, £20 per W.D.F.; In collection plate £5; Friend, Fort William, £20 (all for Laide Manse Building Fund).

North Harris: A Friend, Leacklee, £5 for Car Fund; Friend, Hyndland, Glasgow, £20 (Sust. £10, J. & F. Miss. £5, Organisation £5, Door Coll. £5, Home Mission £5); Friend, Grosebay, £50 for Stockinish Mission House Maintenance; Friend, Harris House, £2 (both per R. MacCuish; Friend, Harris House, £5 (both for Church Door Coll.); Friend,

Bayhead, Meavag, £5 for Church Repairs; Friend, Kyles, Scalpay, £2 for Church Door Coll. (both per Rev. A. MacKay); Friend, Tarbert (Deed of Covenant) £6.70 for Church Door Coll.; Friend, Tarbet, £13 (£6 for Sust. Fund and £1 each for other funds); Friend, Leacklee, £30 (£17 for Sust. and £13 for Home Mission), last three per Wm. D. Fraser; Friend, Lochportain, Lochmaddy, £50 for Tarbert Church Repairs per J.F. Morrison.

North Tolsta: Mrs H. T. Edwards, Goderich, Ontario, 10 dollars for Congr. Purposes per Rev. D. MacLean; In memory of beloved husband and a dear father, £10 for Congr. Purposes (in Church plate); Wellwisher, £10 for Church Hall (in Church plate); Friend, £30 for Church Hall per Rev. D. MacLean.

North Uist: Envelope in plate £10; Friend £20; Friend £15; Friend £5 (all for Manse Extension); Anon £10; Envelope in plate £10 (both for Communion Expenses; Wellwishers £10 for Congr Purposes; Envelope in plate £5 for Car Fund (all per Rev. A. Morrison).

Oban: Friend £12 for Sust. Fund per Mr J. Morrison.

Portree: Friend £5 for Manse Expenses; M.N. £5 for Braes Church (both per F.M.); Anon £5 for Property Maintenance Fund (in Church plate).

Staffin: J.M., 1 Stenschoel, "For Christ's Cause" £100 per Rev. J. MacD.; Friend £5 for Sust. Fund per M. MacI.; M.N. £5; Friend £5; Friend £1; Mrs Mack., Garos, £10 (last four for Car Expenses per Rev. J. MacD.).

Stornoway: Two Friends £12 for Congr. Funds per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Tain and Fearn: M.M.C., South Harris, £10.

Ullapool: From the estate of the late Mrs M.A. MacIver, Ullapool, £50; K.D.M., Thornliebank, £100; Inverness Friend, £20, for Congr. Purposes per Rev. N.M.R.

Watnish: Anon in loving memory of beloved parents and sister, £10 for Church Funds.

POST OF ADMINISTRATOR/TREASURER IN ZIMBABWE RHODESIA

Jewish & Foreign Missions' Committee

In view of the retirement on 31st December 1979 of Miss Jean Nicolson, M.A., the Committee wish to hear from suitably qualified persons who may wish to apply for appointment to this important and rewarding position in the Church's Mission. Next meeting of Committee is on 2nd October at Inverness (DV). Applications to the undersigned from whom further details of this appointment may be had.

"The British Government warns UK nationals who take up employment in Rhodesia that:

- a) the regime in Rhodesia is an illegal one in rebellion against the Crown;*
- b) consular protection is not available in Rhodesia; and*
- c) the illegal regime has declared a state of emergency and all adult European men resident in Rhodesia are subject to indefinite periods of call-up for compulsory service in the armed forces."*

*Free Presbyterian Manse,
Applecross,
Strathcarron,
Ross-shire.
Tel: Applecross (052-04) 207.*

**ALEXANDER MURRAY,
Clerk to the Committee.**