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The Ingathering of the Jews

It pleased God in His sovereign good pleasure to chose the Jewish nation, the seed of Abraham to be a people for Himself. It was with that nation alone, out of all the nations under heaven, that God entered into a covenant that they should be His people and that He would be their God. On them He bestowed great and precious privileges, such as His Word and ordinances. They were a people near to Him. He redeemed them from the hand of their enemies, preserved them forty years in the wilderness and gave them the land of Canaan for their possession. Of that people it could be said:

“The doctrine of His holy Word
to Jacob He doth show;
His statutes and His judgments He
gives Israel to know.

To any nation never He
such favour did afford;
For they His judgments have not known
O do ye praise the Lord.

Often Israel rebelled against her God and for her sins was brought very low. Yet God remembered her and restored her, even after seventy years in the captivity of Babylon. He put it into the heart of a heathen king, Cyrus, to open the way for the return of the captives to their own land. This was the doing of the Lord and wondrous in their eyes. Jerusalem was rebuilt and the worship of Jehovah set up again in the second temple. This was all preparatory to the coming of Zion's King as Haggai

in prophecy had indicated. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai 2: 6, 7.

And in the time appointed the Desire of all nations did come, The prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Is. 9: 6, 7. "But when the Son of man comes shall He find faith on the earth?" "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." The Jewish nation was not ready for the coming of the Messiah when He appeared, except those few who, like Simeon, were waiting for the consolation of Israel.

What was the tragic outcome of this? Nothing less than the rejection of their own Messiah with the cry "Crucify Him, crucify Him," and again, "His blood be on us, and on our children." Of that city of Jerusalem, the city of the great King, the Saviour had earlier declared: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and ye would not!" So, too, do we earlier find Him when He was come near Jerusalem and beheld it, weeping over it saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Now was to be fulfilled that solemn declaration of the Lord: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Judicial blindness took hold of the nation, under which, as a nation, they still labour, refusing to acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah, the Prince of life and glory. Not all are cast away, for even unto this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace of the sons of Israel who do acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah.

Into that place of privilege and blessing so long occupied by the Jewish nation, the Gentile Nations and especially the Christian Church has come. The casting away of them was the reconciling of the world. The One who is the Glory of His people Israel is the Light to lighten the Gentiles. And how gloriously has that Light shined throughout almost twenty cen-

turies of the world's history. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung out." What countless souls out of the Gentile nations have beheld the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world! How many of them are already on Mount Zion above, praising the Lamb of God, who loved them and who washed them from their sins with His own blood! What a place of privilege and blessing the Gentile nations occupy! Would that they were alive to it! The warning of God to them is clear: "Be not highminded but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

Well might the Jewish nations, seeing the Gentile nations occupying their room, despairingly cry with Esau: "Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father." Well might it be so, were they not beloved for the father's sake. He who cast them off has not cast them off for ever. The Apostle could testify: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is My Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sin." The day is coming and must be fast approaching when the prophecy of Zechariah will be fulfilled with respect to the Jewish nation: "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

If the children of Israel mourned with such a great and very sore lamentation over Jacob at his death that the Canaanites called it the mourning of the Egyptians, and if the mourning in Judah over the death of good King Josiah was so great that no greater mourning for an earthly king could be imagined, what will it be when the Jews are smitten at heart because they crucified the Lord of glory! Will not the sound of their weeping be heard to the ends of the earth? What a glorious day that will be when the Jews embrace Christ! Would you not like to be alive when the New Testament Joseph makes Himself known to His brethren? If so, then pray for the ingathering of the Jews. In so doing you will be hastening not only Israel's release but what will be as life from the dead to the Gentiles as well. "I will yet be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them."

Notes of a Sermon

by Rev. D. A. MacFarlane, Dingwall

(Preached at Edinburgh, 18th November, 1945)

Psalm 72 — Precious Promises.

Verse 5. They shall fear thee. Nature of this fear — filial as opposed to slavish fear.

By nature we are all in bondage and under slavish fear. As soon as Adam sinned, this fear laid hold upon him; he tried to hide himself, at least, as best he could. Why? This slavish fear had set in, yea, had possessed him. All descended from him by ordinary generation are thus the slaves of this slavish fear.

But that is not the fear here referred to. We could take many examples from the precious word to cast light on the fear here spoken of. The one that occurs to us at the moment is the thief on the Cross. As far as we can gather, when these two malefactors — poor creatures — were being dragged out to be crucified, there was not a vestige of filial fear — holy fear — in the soul of either. The account of the conversion — the miraculous, wonderful conversion — of the one is familiar to you all. But let us just briefly for the present seek to enter just a little into that wonderful occurrence on the Cross.

Poor man, he was there, you might say, on the threshold of hell. He had already left this earth and even in a natural way, the soles of his feet would never again tread the soil of earth, and just at that crucial moment, when natural death was about to engulf him — at that moment Christ the Lord, ah! yes, though His earthly tabernacle was on the tree, yet by His Holy Spirit, He entered in as it were by a back door, behind and under the heart of this poor sinner, and there by His secret working, begat this holy filial fear in his soul and immediately there was conviction of sin and a deep blessed realisation, and acknowledgment, that he was there receiving the due reward of his sins, and putting his Amen to the demands of justice, and by the progressive workings of the Holy Spirit he came to see that this man who had done nothing amiss — that here was more than man. He had heard Him praying to the Father to forgive those poor ignorant worms who thought that they had seen the last of the Lord Jesus. Yes, he saw spiritually and intelligently, with a holy understanding, that here was the very Son of God, and indeed though he did not utter words as Peter did, he, no doubt, said in his inner soul,

“Lord, thou knowest all things, and thou knowest that I love thee,” and “Thou art a King, Lord, and Thou art about to enter into Thy kingdom,” and then faith and hope stretch out the hand and he could contain himself no longer — “Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” Ah! yes, I conclude that there was holy, godly, fear there in that poor man’s soul before Christ answered. It is evident that Christ saw, as indeed He sees all things, here he saw the honesty of his confession. Yes, Jesus might have said “I know that what you say is true and from a regenerated heart,” and “To-day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise.” “I am going to Paradise, and you are coming with me.” Ah! yes, friends, and if you can honestly say that you love the Lord Jesus and that He knows you love Him, and though you may feel poor and vile and wretched, and oh! so unworthy, yet you rejoice that God is holy and that Christ is holy, and that the Holy Spirit is holy and you are glad that although you feel yourself so unholy, yet they are what they are — holy and unchangeably so. If you can say that, dear friend, then you have this holy, filial fear. It is the fear of the child — the child of adoption. A dutiful son or daughter naturally seeks, not to cause grief to his or her parent, and so it is spiritually. The children of adoption are anxious lest they should directly or indirectly grieve that Holy Spirit of Promise.

It would indeed be helpful for the individual soul, when he finds a quiet moment in the secrecy of his chamber, to glean in those green pastures of the precious Word — say in this corner of the field and seek to enter into the experiences and soul exercises of the redeemed thief, and seek to trace the begetting, growth and ripening of this holy, filial fear, and by the help of the Holy Spirit, enquire diligently into your own soul to see whether you have any reason to hope that that fear of God is within you. It is the beginning of wisdom, of heart understanding. This is no flippant delusion, as it were, swimming aimlessly in the brain. It is a heart process.

Well, these are just a few thoughts and indeed they are very few, on this word ‘fear’ and the grace of fear.

For the next promise, we can look for a moment at verse 14 — “He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence.” Here again an example from the Word might best serve to cast some light on this truly precious promise. It is one the children very much feel their need of. We could take the case of Mordecai and Haman. Indeed you could profitably gather a few thoughts from there yourselves. For the present we can take the case of David and Saul, and notice how this promise was so minutely fulfilled to David. You have Saul there thirsting after David’s life-blood.

His aim was to make an end of David. He used all the devices at his disposal — nets and snares — and indeed we might compare him to a fowler. He thinks that he has just trapped the bird when suddenly something in the trap snaps and the bird escaped is! That was the way with David — he was here and there and just anywhere, except where Saul could ensnare him. This promise of preservation from violence was being fulfilled. And notice, the awful, terrible devilry of Saul — the poor creature that he was. He knew, he acknowledged, that David would prevail. He knew that he would never ensnare him, even although all the forces of the pit should combine themselves against David. Saul knew very well that David would not fall into his hands, and yet he was so possessed of evil that he continued in his mad pursuit. What, in ordinary conversation, we might call a technical hitch in his devices, was in reality the supernatural intervention of the Most High, fulfilling this promise to His own servant David. It is remarkable, notice, that the deceit of his own heart got the better of David. This wild beast within, whispering — “Thou art King of Israel. You can do what you like and who dare find fault with you, David; you can take your neighbour’s wife and imbrue your hands in Nabal’s blood and who dare challenge you for your conduct.” Friends, David succumbed to the deceitfulness of his own heart though it was not within the power of Saul to entangle him with earthly devices.

These things were written for our edification and it would become us to lay this to heart, that the human heart, we carry within our bosom, is deceitful above all things, and how we should seek to guard against the wily suggestions of our fleshy hearts. Mercifully, and in the gracious dispensation of the Lord, David was blessed with repentance, and that is left on record and his soul was redeemed from deceit — from deceit in his own wicked heart and from deceit in his persecutors.

And the same is true in our day. His promise stands sure — “He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence.” And if you are one of His, He shall redeem your soul and He shall give repentance and more repentance, and is that not just what you want, more and more?

Verse 15. “He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba.” Do you give Him of the gold of Sheba? You will say — “I have no gold — no gold of Sheba.” Well, friends, here it is. (Lifting the Bible). Here’s the gold of Sheba, a gold mine of unsearchable riches — rubies, diamonds, and all manner of precious stones. Here they are in Himself, in the Word. And you will be digging up a jewel now and again, and taking it to Himself, and pleading with Him to make it over to you.

You will be seeking grace and grace for grace, and growth in grace — adding to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge (heart understanding) and to knowledge temperance, etc. (2 Peter 1: 5, 6 and 7). And if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall be, neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And he shall live! Who said that he would not? The chief priests and the council and the multitude stirred up by them, they said it — 'He shall not live — we shall make an end of Him — that of His name there shall no more be mention.' But He shall live and though they crucified Him and buried Him and did their utmost to do away with Him, He rose again and ascended up on high, and there He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

God grant that we may be found in His intercession. We have an Advocate with the Father — Jesus Christ, the Righteous.

Synod Address

by Rev. D. A. MacFarlane

(Spoken in moving adoption of Religion and Morals Report. May 1936)

"It occurred to me in moving the adoption of this Report to offer a word of exhortation. The first outstanding thought which came before me was, the need, the profound need, which each of us has for true religion. The need that my soul has, and that each soul has, going to an endless Eternity, of real religion, reality; and there is no such thing as real religion whatever we may write about it and however we may exhort from the pulpit and otherwise, apart from personal God-given contact with the divine and crucified and risen and adorable Redeemer. The second thought that occurred to me was — let us seek to attend to family worship. May family worship be real to us. See how real food is to us. How readily we would complain and grumble if we rose in the morning and had to go away to our work, to the labour of the day, without any breakfast. If a man came home tired at mid-day from the factory or shipyard and there was no dinner, he would complain. There is reality in the sustenance of the mortal body. May we as individuals and families and congregations and as a Church, seek to attain by the grace of God to family worship, and may that worship be a profound reality. What kind of oddity is that at all — a real reality? Is there an unreal reality? There is love of myself. There is a fool here in the heart. May the Lord help me to crucify the fool. At time of prayer, others may be engaged in prayer, and

we gazing round the room or out of the windows. Let us get to what I might call the invisibles. Family worship is a reality and not a fiasco, not a farce. There was an editorial in one of the papers to-day which is very suggestive. The closing sentence was — 'A Church which has nothing to offer but restrictions, will have little success.' I don't know what Church is being referred to, but may I comment — may we not be such a Church. The destructive side is necessary in its own place, but the constructive side is, I hope and believe, being put before ourselves and our souls. The constructive side is to be preached. but the destructive and the constructive must go hand in hand, and what is the constructive side; God and God in Christ. And that is what will fill His people in time and what will replenish His people throughout all Eternity."

Unwillingness to come to Christ

By Rev. Dr. Alex. Stewart, Cromarty.

And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life. — John 5: 40.

It will be seen by the context that our Saviour was here addressing Himself to Jews, who esteemed the Scripture to be the Word of God. It was, they believed, the record of eternal life, and they searched it avowedly for this purpose. The Messiah is the author and source of eternal life, and of Him these Scriptures testified: and yet He had to complain of those to whom He spoke, 'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.'

We have much cause to beware of a similar and equally fated delusion. The general doctrine of salvation is acceptable to all. Few are disposed to doubt their own willingness to be saved. They love to hear of Christ's receiving sinners, of His divine compassion, of His marvellous condescension and accessibility. But yet may Christ's complaint of the Scripture-searching Jews be as applicable to Gospel-loving hearers, — 'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life. Ye delight to hear the Gospel of salvation; of My ability and willingness to save; to hear that I give life to all who come to Me; and yet ye will not come.'

The prevalent indifference on this subject goes far to explain and justify the Lord's complaint. The subject is life; the life of the soul; its well-being and essential happiness. Yet how little does it occupy our thoughts, conversation, or efforts! How slight the hold it has on the

mind! The most trifling subject easily displaces it in our thoughts. How easily could we count the hours and minutes employed in considering it! Does it arouse the mind when flagging? Is it not rather a sedative to conversation?

What a contrast to this is the interest felt in the life and comfort of the body! Much labour is willingly submitted to for its ease and pleasure, but no trouble or labour for the soul. And this indifference is all the more striking when we remember that the only alternative is death. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him' (John 3: 56). Such indifference implies a latent unbelief of danger. Free salvation and a gracious Saviour may be a popular doctrine. There may be many who hear it gladly, as Herod heard John the Baptist, but who yet remain indifferent to its claims. And what is such indifference but a neglect of the great salvation? How truly may Christ complain, — 'Ye like to hear of Me, and yet ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.'

Let us next attend to the thing itself which Christ is so willing to give, and so urgent for us to accept. It is life; salvation from sin, as implied in His own name. 'And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins' (Matt 1: 21). It was this view of our condition that excited the divine compassion of the Saviour. He saw us, the wretched victims of sin and the bond slaves of Satan. I do not say that future misery did not enter into His view. Undoubtedly it did. But deliverance from it is neither life nor salvation, but in part. Man is the subject of sin, miserable and degraded even if left to himself. Hence various passages set forth salvation as consisting in deliverance from the power of sin. 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh' (Ezek. 36: 25,26; Rom. 8: 3-7; Heb. 8: 8). We have many instances of Christ's compassion in this view of our condition. He submitted to death that He might turn us away from our iniquities. The 'remission of sins' was secured to those who believed on the day of Pentecost. Saul of Tarsus was a blasphemer, and was exceedingly mad against the followers of Christ; but yet the divine Saviour had compassion on him and saved him. How divine, how holy, how immense is this compassion! This is the point to which we wish to come. Do we see ourselves to be the proper subjects of this compassion? And is its proper and appropriate gift really an acceptable one? Christ

pities men as in a state of profound and ruinous ignorance. 'They know not what they do.' They are ignorant of God, of heaven and hell; the victims of deception and delusion, cheated and cheating themselves. His impression of this is so strong that He compares it to the darkness of blindness or of the grave. Are we aware of this? Do we think ourselves so very ignorant of the way of salvation? Are we aware of the consequences? If we were, what anxiety would it awaken within us, what efforts, what prayers for the teaching of the Spirit! Why should we cheat ourselves out of salvation by refusing to receive Him who is the Light of the world — the Light of the Gentiles? Because we feel our ignorance to be no evil, we turn away from the Light; we come not to Him who is the true Light of life.

Christ pities man as in a state of bondage to sin — 'dead in trespasses and sins!' If it were bodily disease, blindness, leprosy, fever, palsy, or Egyptian bondage, every one could feel the evil and appeal to His compassion and power, as in the days of His flesh. But how fatally different is the case when the disease is spiritual! Ungodliness, the love of the world, the pleasures of sin, pride, vanity, and passion, — it is not the cure but the gratification of such things that is desired. Sinners are not willing to be made whole. The dead in sin will not come to Christ for life.

Besides this unwillingness to be cleansed from sin, there is also an utter disinclination to accept of life as the gift of Christ. Were life held out as the reward of obedience, faith, or repentance, — were Christ to offer us help to obtain life in this way, it might be acceptable. But if this view of our hearts be correct, we are dead in sin, and have not so much life as to repent and believe. And we must go to Christ for life to begin, continue and consummate this work within us. This is too humiliating for us; our hearts revolt against it; and the complaint of the Saviour is justified, — 'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.'

How just is the condemnation of such as die in their sins! '() Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' (Matt. 23: 37). 'I would, but ye would not,' will be the condemnation of hearers of the Gospel. 'You have let your time pass away, saying, "If we repent, — if we believe, — if we pray, — we shall be saved;" and yet ye never did any of these things. Ye must now die in your sins, because ye would not come to Me and have life.'

But who is there that feels the state of his heart to be one of sore disease and of spiritual death? Is there not involved in this complaint of Christ a most gracious invitation? 'Come to Me, that ye might have life.' 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.' 'I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.'

The Fruits of Unbelief

by Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale

Having on a former occasion (see F.P. Mag., Nov. 1984) noticed something of the power of unbelief a natural consequence is to consider something of its fruits. All who hear the gospel and who continue to the end rejecting Christ will, throughout eternity reap the fruits of unbelief, but its fruits are also in a measure reaped in time. Not only so but even the Lord's own people, and of them those who experience peculiar nearness to Him, do often reap the consequences of unbelief. This was particularly the case with Moses and Aaron at the water of Meribah for we read that "the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." Num. 20: 12. It was unbelief also that caused the whole congregation of Israel to be consumed in the wilderness during their sojourn of forty years so that none of them entered the land of promise except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. This is endorsed in the inspired statement of the Apostle Paul. "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." Heb. 3: 18, 19.

Unbelief was the root cause why the Jews are to this day dispersed throughout the whole world. The Lord Jesus came to them bearing all the marks which the Old Testament Scriptures gave of the promised Messiah, but so confirmed were they in their unbelief that they refused to accept Him, and made choice instead of Barabbas who was a thief and a murderer, and at the same time uttering the fearful sentence against themselves, "His blood be on us, and on our children," which sentence is being executed on them to this day. This the Apostle traces to their unbelief. "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off." Rom. 11: 20.

The Jews, however, are not the only ones who suffer because of unbelief. All are by nature under the power of unbelief so that, if grace

does not prevent it, they will ultimately be lost. In one's younger days the conscience is more tender and the gospel makes more of an impression, which if not accompanied by the Spirit's saving power will gradually wear off, so that many who apparently began well, at last become open enemies of religion. This is often the direct result of harbouring in one's mind doubts about the veracity or inspiration of God's Word, and thinking of certain forms of sin as but little things. There are many who help on, especially the young, in a course of sin, by giving it fair names. Open ungodliness in the young is characterised as 'thoughtlessness' or, 'youthful folly,' and many excuses are found for these excesses, while those who give these names to sin are utterly forgetful that every sinful act, word or thought is a flagrant breach of God's law, and consequently an act, word or thought manifesting glaring dishonour to, and daring defiance of the God who promulgated the law, and a refusal to believe what is so plainly revealed in His Word, that sin shall not go unpunished. This further paves the way for greater hardness of heart and impenitency, making it a seasonable advice what the Apostle says, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Heb. 3: 12.

Again unbelief finds an outlet in persecution of the Church of God. We have examples of this in nations and individuals who believe not the gospel for wherever such are in power they use that power for the suppression of the gospel. It is also true that we find the same thing among nations, churches and individuals who are nominally Christian, and the very fact that they are only nominally so is the cause of it, for, being satisfied with a mere outward form which knows nothing of saving faith, they cannot bear a living religion which condemns mere formality. This was the case when Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica for we read that "the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." Acts 17: 5, 6. History has often repeated itself since then in the persecutions of Pagan and Papal Rome and in, what is known as the "Killing times" in Scotland. Space forbids even to mention various other persecutions which were the direct fruits of unbelief.

In the third chapter of the Epistle of the Colossians the Apostle tells us

that because of "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry," the "wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" or, as the word is elsewhere translated, "unbelief." The wrath of God in time, in giving sinners over to spiritual blindness, hardness of heart and neglect of the means of salvation is a fruit of unbelief which may be, and is often, experienced in this world, while the wrath of God in eternity where there is no ray of hope, nor anything of the nature of mercy, is the fearful experience of all who continue under the power of unbelief till they leave this world. Therefore, "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

We may further notice that unbelief causes condemnation. Many think that they have to wait until they leave this world, if they do so in an impenitent state, in order to be condemned. They are utterly forgetful of the glorious truth revealed that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," which clearly shows that being found in Christ Jesus, is that which delivers them from condemnation, and that all who are not in Him are under condemnation already and stand in need of faith in Him in order to be delivered. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3: 18.

The end of all who continue in unbelief as long as they are in this world is that they shall perish eternally, for we read concerning those who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," that "for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thess. 2: 11, 12. This will put an end to the unbelief of all unbelievers, for though they refused in this world to believe "those things which are most surely believed among us," and which, if they had received them would have put them among "them that believe to the saving of the soul," yet, because they believed them not, they are eternally given their portion where all must believe the truths which they denied in this world, but where, instead of profiting by believing them, their torments will be increased thereby. Let all unbelievers lay seriously to heart the terrible fruits of unbelief.

Question Meeting Notes

(These Notes were taken at a Question Meeting in Greenock some years ago).

The passage of Scripture given out by the late Mr. A. E. Alexander was from Psalm 90 verse 12.

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

Mr We believe that all the Lord's people are a praying people. They are not only praying for themselves but for others. The late Mr. Donald MacKenzie North Tolsta was once out in a boat in a storm, when the boat capsized, and he was thrown into the water; another boat came and rescued Donald, but as soon as he got his breath, he said ‘there are others, there are others,’ and I am sure that this is true of all of the Lord's people. They have to say with the Psalmist ‘I love the Lord because my voice and prayers he did hear’ The Psalmist was praising the Lord that He heard him in distress. The Lord's people had a time when they were praying for deliverance, but when they were delivered from the bondage of sin they did not cease to pray, and never will. A number of our praying people have been taken away lately, and those who are left behind feel cast down. The Truth that was coming to my own mind was ‘Occupy until I come,’ and this is what those who are left must do until they draw their last breath. We are asked to give marks of His people, and the first mark I would give, is that Christ was made precious to them. ‘Unto you therefore that believe He is precious.’ ‘Unless in Thy most perfect law my soul delight had found, I should have perished when as my troubles did abound.’ They go to the Word of God, and sometimes when they read what had at one time given them great comfort, they find nothing now. I used to watch a bee in the summer time going to a flower for a minute, and then away, but after being at a few flowers the bee would go to a flower and go right into it. The bee was getting honey. So with the Lord's people, they get a Scripture and at times they can say ‘This is wonderful.’ I once heard a godly man say that if a stranger came to your door, you would say, ‘where did you come from, and what is your errand, what do you want?’ This is like the word of God when it comes into the mind. It is from heaven, it is a message from the Lord. This people have been brought out of darkness. As the apostle said ‘God commanded the light to shine out of darkness.’ This is wonderful if we can cherish the hope that we have been taken out of fearful darkness, and if this light has shone into the heart, we have that good hope through grace, and when

they come to the end of their days 'their sun shall no more go down.' We believe that those who were brought home are now seeing the glory of Emmanuel's land. There is no end to this! Another mark I would give is that the cause of Christ is precious to this people. They plead that the Lord would raise up witnesses for Himself, but He comes and says 'be still and know that I am God.' Not one given in the eternal covenant will be lost. They will be perfectly holy. No wonder Moses said 'Happy art thou O Israel.'

Mr The Truth tells us that God is the judge of the heart and thoughts. There is no hiding from Him. 'O Lord thou hast me searched and known.' This people had a day when they did not know that God was searching them. Eternity was nothing to them, but a day came when it was made known to them that He searched the heart. They discovered, without me ye can do nothing. We should be numbering our days. We cannot number tomorrow. Our life is uncertain. There is nothing surer in this world than that death and eternity is before us. How hardhearted we are. We are so foolish, promising ourselves many days, unless the Holy Spirit will teach us. O that our hearts and thoughts would be applied unto wisdom. We are so ignorant of the Lord, but we believe that the Truth was made precious to this people. Their desire and prayer is 'O send thy light forth and thy truth.' This is also their prayer 'Whom have I in the heavens high, but thee O Lord alone.' They see the vanity of all that the world can bestow as they come nearer the gates of death. It is their desire that this generation would have the Truth opened up to them. It grieves them when this generation despise the Truth. The prayer of this people is 'When Zion by the mighty Lord built up again shall be.' They believe that there are good days to come, but feel sad in the present day, but they trust in Him.

Mr This prayer is given only to those who are taught by the Holy Spirit. Man by nature will not seek God, and does not want to number his days. The true believer is taught by the Lord that he lives his days in the light of eternity. He discovered that he lost all in his first covenant head. The sinner goes to the Word, and finds that those who trust in Him shall not perish, and that although man has destroyed himself, yet there is One to whom he can go at all times. The Lord's people love the cause of Christ, and would love to see the cause revived. They feel sad when those whom they knew are removed to their rest, but we must not despond, the government is upon His shoulders. He declared 'Ask of me and for heritage, the heathen I'll make thine.' We have such a corrupt nature, that we are apt to forget that we are travelling to eternity. When

Adam sinned, death temporal, spiritual and eternal fell on man. Those who are taught of the Lord die in Christ, sleep in Jesus, and rejoice in hope of a glorious resurrection. Those whom we loved in the world, and were lovely and pleasant in their lives talked of Him, and rejoiced to speak of Him. 'And in old age when others fade, they fruit still forth shall bring.' This people mourn over their own sin and over the low state of the Cause. When the enemy is trying to overthrow the church, the Lord is taking the faithful home from the evil which is to come. But this is our day, may we seek to be faithful to His testimony and His law.

Mr Marks have been asked. Surely this is a mark of this people, that they have a need to be taught. When we think of Moses prayer, we say surely Moses does not need to be taught, but ah yes. A sure mark of the Lord's people is that they are a praying people. Oftentimes they are thinking back to the time when they started to be a praying people. A day came when it could be said of them as it was said of Saul of Tarsus 'Behold he prayeth.' They still have this prayer 'Teach us to pray' . . . Surely they can now rest on their oars — but no — they are a praying people all the day long. What have they to pray for? They don't have to go outside of themselves. They have an evil hard, rebellious heart — a wretched man in themselves, and this sends them to a throne of grace. The Lord's people if rightly exercised will be casting stones at themselves first, instead of seeing the mote in their brother's eye. This people say, 'Try me, examine me, try my reins.' They have an attachment to the word of God. We were thinking ourselves, that we have collected a lot of books — but it comes to this at the end. It is the Truth we need. The books are good but this people rest in the truth of the gospel. Psalm 119 is a wonderful Psalm to them. 'According to thy word' is often said by the Psalmist. There was a day in our experience when we were young and we were often in Psalm 23 and 51, but as we grow in grace we enter into Psalm 119. Let him taste a little of the warfare, and the man will enjoy Psalm 119. 'Make us glad in the day thou hast afflicted us.' Strange to be glad in a day of affliction. This is a distinguishing mark. They will gain in experience and profit from the Lord's dealings with them in the day of trouble great. The Lord's people know something of this in the inner recesses of their heart when the Lord delivers them. This also, while they mourn the lack of faith, yet they have the cry 'Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.' They endeavour to look to Christ through faith, then He manifests that He is the hearer and answerer of prayer. Often they wonder when a portion comes to them — Is this the Truth at all? Then they begin to doubt and say 'that Truth is not for you,' but another

Truth may follow which will seal the first Truth to them, and give them a measure of peace.

Mr The thought occurred to me that it is a common saying, 'true scholarship is knowing less and less about more and more' The more the sinner learns, the more he knows of his ignorance. There are some here tonight who would put their 'amen' to this. The longer they live, the more conscious they are of their ignorance. Their daily prayer is 'teach me.' There was a day when this was not so. They could discuss many things, but they were concerned and convinced, and no one could move them — that God is — that there is an Eternity. They learned that they were on the way to Eternity, and Oh how ignorant! They were, in connection with these things exhausting themselves mentally and physically, but they knew not Christ. I read a sermon today by Ralph Erskine, preaching on Zacchaeus. 'There are some who hang on to the branch of affections. They shed tears under the preaching and in seeking mercy. They think this will make them acceptable to God, but ah, what a slender twig to cleave to — wash not in the puddles of your own tears, but in the precious blood of Christ.' This people were drawn to Him, and seek to cleave more and more to Him. However much they mourn and complain, deep down in their soul there is love to Christ. Many today divorce their Christ from His worship, and try to improve His worship. They will seek to adapt their own commandments, for example the 4th commandment. This people are asking to be taught, and made wise. They desire that He would come in a cloudy day to raise His Cause. It is out of Zion that He will send the rod of His strength.

Mr As already it has been said that those who have this prayer, have great need of what they are to believe concerning God and concerning His way. They have this mark that they are conscious of their need of wisdom and direction how to conduct themselves. Return O Lord how long, and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. Moses conducted a rebellious people through the wilderness. Moses had need to number his days for health and wisdom for his arduous task. Another mark is, that they are dissatisfied with the things of the world. Only the mercy of Christ can satisfy them. The prayer of this people is 'Revive Thy work in the midst of the years.' They believe that there shall be no end to His government. Another mark is that they desire that He would order their goings and uphold them as the breaker up of their way.

Mr No man has this prayer, but one who is taught of the Lord. They are enlightened by the Lord Jesus who came to save them. He saved with an everlasting salvation. The wicked have not this prayer. By nature

they were dead in trespasses and sins. Sin has made fools of us. We are content in this world and quite satisfied. What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and what shall we put on. Those who were enlightened are taught of the Spirit and when this took place in a day of mercy, they were downcast, and seeing themselves undone. He came to rescue them, and as Moses was in the wilderness with a mixed multitude. So we have in our day, but we still have a few of the Lord's people. He has His people in every generation. As was said of the children of Israel 'not a hoof shall be left behind.' They shall be cleansed from all sin and brought home as if they had never sinned. It is the goodness of the Lord that He teaches His own people from Psalm 119, yet at the end He says 'I like a lost sheep went astray.' The Lord's people in this world will be saying that they went astray. Sometimes they do not discern the rod, but they persevere through Him, and they will get portions of Scripture to sustain them. What a blessing that we can think on these words 'the Lord hath done great things for His people' When His people are taken away the world is poorer, but He is able to raise a seed to do Him service. This world will yet blossom as the rose. May we live to see those days. Our prayer should be 'leave us not.'

Mr We heard many precious things tonight. I was thinking of the poor kitchenmaid and the wisdom that was in these few words 'show me myself' Many a day we would be saying this. Our desire should be 'show me Thyself.' As our dear ones are taken away, we should be wishing to 'follow on.' Let us seek to be taught from heaven. 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give the rest.' May we humble ourselves in His presence.

Mr Marks are asked. There are only two classes though there is much profession. God's people and those who are not. They may go as far as to sit at His table but no one should sit there but the Lord must make him a guest by the work of regeneration in his soul, and a look at Jesus Christ. Thereby they are united by faith to the great Head of the church. When we see with our eyes one at the table we conclude that such are the people of God. We must beware that we will not rest in church-going, and Bible reading and yet be deluded for Eternity. For that cause we must make our calling and our election sure. This people felt that they were the chief of sinners. Sin and corruption is not on the wane, but sin is becoming exceeding sinful as they go in the journey. Christ on the cross saw nothing on all sides but sin, and so his people here have this to put up with too. Moreover this mark, they have joy, but they go down to the

depths, but the Lord sets them on the right way. He turns their mourning into dancing. They are enabled to journey on praising God. Honour, praise and majesty be to Thee for evermore, this is the song of the redeemed in glory.

Instrumental Music in Public Worship

by Rev. Dr John Kennedy, Dingwall

Sir,

The Committee appointed by the last General Assembly of the Free Church to consider the question of the propriety of introducing the use of instrumental music in the service of praise, have arrived, after ten months' deliberations, at three conclusions:— (1.) That it is *not unscriptural*, or *that it is scriptural*, to sanction the innovation; (2.) That it is not *unconstitutional*, or ecclesiastically illegal, to give liberty to congregations, when virtually unanimous, to adopt the use of sounding brass, or tinkling cymbals, or a "kist of whistles," in conducting the praises of the sanctuary; and, (3.) That it is *expedient* to grant liberty to Free Church congregations at once to have instruments if, with virtual unanimity, they so incline.

I know not on what grounds they base their first conclusion. But having made an independent study, to some extent, of the question, I am anxious to state the conclusion to which I myself have come, and the grounds on which I am prepared to support it. I do so now, because it is not likely that before the Assembly meets the tenor of the Committee's report can be known; and I am anxious before then to furnish what I can in the way of aid to those who are interested in the question, in attaining acquaintance with the information, to be derived from scripture bearing on the subject.

I can conceive three grades of opinion, regarding the relation to scripture, in which the question of instrumental music stands. Some may hold it to be *scriptural* to use instrumental music in the service of praise, contenting themselves with referring to the use of it in the service of the temple under the Old Testament dispensation. Others may hold it to be *not unscriptural*, meaning that if it is not directly sanctioned as an adjunct of praise in New Testament times, it is not forbidden, and may therefore be introduced. Others still may hold that the use of it is *anti-scriptural*, as a thing forbidden by the Word of God. Among these last

am I, and I am now to state the grounds on which I hold that opinion.

These grounds are these two. I. That the use of it was, by divine appointment, introduced into the symbolic service of the temple. And II. That in the directory given in New Testament scripture, for New Testament worship, it is not only omitted but excluded.

I. It must at once be conceded that instrumental music was used in the temple service. But as to the mode of its introduction, and as to the authority for the use of it, there is a division of opinion. There are some who insist that the use of it was introduced by David, merely because he himself was a great musician, and judged that the use of instruments would make the service of praise more impressive; but that God sanctioned the introduction, though He did not originate it. From this baseless assumption an argument is drawn in favour of the adoption of instrumental music now. Even supposing, they say, that the Lord did not propose the use of instrumental music in New Testament service, may He not be expected to do as He did before, in sanctioning the introduction of it by those who desire it. There are others who think that the introduction of instrumental music into the temple service was suggested to David by God, that it became part of the stated ritual, *according to divine authority*, as surely as the offering of sacrifice, and that as all the temple service was typical, this was so, as all besides, and was, therefore, one of "the carnal ordinances," which were to continue only to "the time of reformation." The proof of this latter position is not difficult, and is furnished by those passages of the Old Testament scriptures which refer to the introduction of the use of instrumental music, and to the relation in which it stands to David and to God.

In 2nd Sam. 22: 1, David is declared to be "the sweet Psalmist of Israel." This designation indicates his position in relation to the service of praise in the temple, and belonged to him as that of the Law-giver of Israel belonged to Moses. The connection of the former with the temple service of praise is placed on the same footing of authority as the connection of Moses with the service of sacrifice, in 2 Chron. 23: 18:— "Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord, *to offer the burnt offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.*" And it is evident, from 1 Chron. 28: 12-13, that David ordained the "rejoicing and singing" as an accompaniment of the sacrificial work, *under divine guidance*. For it is there declared that "David gave to Solomon . . . the pattern of all that he had *by the spirit* . . . for *the courses of the*

priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and *for all the vessels of service* in the house of the Lord.” If he had “by the spirit” a pattern according to which he arranged the courses of the priests and Levites, that pattern extended to the appointment of a course of Levites for the use of instrumental music. This, with all besides, connected with the temple service, “the Lord,” said David, “made me understand in writing by his hand upon me.” And the very instruments, to be employed by these, are repeatedly declared to be “of God,” as surely as they are said to be “of David” — 1 Chron. 16: 42, 2 Chron. 7: 6. There is, therefore, no reason to doubt that the use of instrumental music was ordained by David according to the command and under the direction of God.

But it is quite as evident that it was introduced into the temple service as a part of its symbolical ritual. We cannot wonder that, in the immediate view of the erection of the temple, and by David the King, whose son Messiah was promised to be, there should have been appointed by God, and given to Israel, a pronounced form of praise and thanksgiving. Appended to sacrificing there, we might expect a special service of praise, the matter of which in the “everlasting kingdom” of Messiah “the Prince of Peace,” was to find its fullest illustration in the reign of Him by whom the temple was to be built. Can we wonder then, that Messiah’s first crowned ancestor, who was also to be his type, should have been appointed the Psalmist of Israel, and should have been honoured to provide both for the building of the temple and for the service to be conducted within it? But he received authority from God to act in this matter only in connection with the service of the temple. Therefore, we find that only Levites were appointed to the service of praising by the use of instruments, and their work, according to that appointment, was associated with the sacrificial service of the priests. This form of praise was to accompany the offering of sacrifice according to the law of Moses. It was therefore part of the symbolic ritual which embraced all temple service, and formed, therefore, one of the “carnal ordinances” which were to continue only “till the time of reformation.” This, with all types and shadows besides, was done away in Christ. As well, therefore, introduce into the worship of the New Testament the shedding and the sprinkling of blood, and the burning of slain victims on an altar, as the use of instrumental music in the service of praise.

Let no one venture to say that the use of a musical instrument is a matter of no moment. It was introduced for a temporary purpose by a special revelation from God, and ought not thereafter to be regarded as a

matter of indifference: and the more certain we are of its having been divinely appointed *as a symbol*, and "*till the time of reformation*," the more guilty they appear who, after that time has passed, and God has laid it aside, attempt to find for it a place in the worship of the New Testament Church.

There is no force in the objection that instrumental music was occasionally used before the temple was built, and specially that it was used by David himself before he received the pattern of the temple and of its service from God. This was quite as true, yea more abundantly true, of sacrifice, and yet there can be no warrant for going back to the antediluvian and patriarchal instances of offering sacrifice to justify the slaying of victims now. No more can the occasional use of instrumental music, before its authorised introduction into the temple service, furnish any warrant for the use of it now. Both the occasional sacrifice and the occasional musical performance had a symbolic meaning and without this neither had ever found a place in the ritual of the temple worship. And the previous use of it by David, in connection with worship, *associated it with the ark of the covenant and with sacrifice*, and thus made it such that it cannot be a precedent which may be followed in New Testament times. And David's way of responding to the musical performance, on the occasion of bringing up the ark, must be adopted along with the use of an instrument, if we are to follow the example then set. We can have no right to introduce the organ, without the accompaniment of the *dance*, if the use of musical instruments by David, before its authorised introduction into the temple service, is the precedent by which we are to be guided.

Thus, the more certain it is that instrumental music was part of the temple service, and that its introduction was by divine appointment, the more manifestly illegitimate is the attempt to introduce it into the service of praise in the New Testament Church.

(to be continued)

Book Reviews

The Force of Truth by Thomas Scott, with an Introduction by John E. Marshall. Banner of Truth Paperback. Price £1.50.

The Banner of Truth are to be congratulated on their republishing of this excellent book, which was first published in 1799.

The author, who is principally known for his Commentary on the whole Bible, was ordained to the office of the holy ministry in 1772,

although he was then in an unconverted state. *The Force of Truth*, his spiritual autobiography, embraces the first five years of his ministerial life. It was during these years that gradually but irresistibly he was brought out of darkness into God's "marvellous light." From beginning to end the autobiography bears witness to the gracious, sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, whose office the Saviour Himself describes in these words: "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16: 14).

In Part One Scott relates how for nine years from the age of fifteen he experienced periodic alarms of conscience, which he sought to pacify, aided and abetted by Satan. It was during this period that he read a Socinian comment on the Scriptures; Scott "greedily drank the poison" and lapsed into a false sense of security. This experience is mentioned as a warning, to young people particularly, against the servants of Satan who, in Scott's own words, "invent and propagate those pestilential errors, whether in speculation or practice, that have in all ages corrupted and enervated the pure and powerful doctrine of the gospel."

It was this "pure and powerful doctrine of the gospel" in the hand of the Holy Spirit that was made effectual in the experience of Thomas Scott. In Part Two he describes in gripping detail the history of his spiritual enlightenment while he was a curate in Buckinghamshire. Coincident with this period were his meeting and correspondence with Rev. John Newton, then minister at Olney. Reference must be made to the gracious wisdom and caution exercised by John Newton, who, in the words of John E. Marshall, "recognised the power of the truth and was content to let Scott's spiritual development proceed unimpeded by human meddling." How refreshingly different from the meddling of modern would-be evangelizers, who profess to be able to "talk people into faith"! As Scott was led by the Holy Spirit, ignorance, pride, prejudices, carnal rationalism, unsound and unwholesome views were all gradually overcome by the force of truth, until he was eventually brought to the broad sunny uplands of "the truth as it is in Jesus."

In Part Three Scott makes several observations on the preceding narrative and ends with a heartfelt plea to his readers, beginning with the words: "And now, beloved reader, let me conclude with leaving it upon thy conscience to search for the truth of the gospel in the study of God's word, accompanied by prayer, as thou wouldst search for hid treasure." On this note we wholeheartedly recommend this "literary treasure" to readers old and young. May it enjoy a wide circulation and leave a blessing in its wake.

A. G.

Sermons by Rev. James Battersby, edited by J. C. Forshaw, with a foreword by Francis Coxon. Price £4.95.

Rev. James Battersby died in 1899, having completed fifty years in the ministry, forty-three years of which were spent in Sheffield, where he finished his course. He clearly belonged to the old school of evangelicals in the Church of England: his avowed and prayerful aim was to proclaim the gospel in its purity in consistent conformity with the doctrinal articles of his Church.

The sermons in this publication have been selected from monthly sermons preached in London during the period 1876-1887. They are nine in number and cover a wide range of subjects within the spectrum of Divine revelation. A biographer who wrote during Mr Battersby's lifetime described his preaching thus: "With an attractive lucidity of expression and arrangement he develops the successive points of his argument in the most logical manner, advancing text after text of Scripture in support of each position, and giving from memory both chapter and verse with wonderful exactness. Now and again he interrupts the course of his argument to make a powerful and direct appeal to the hearts of his audience, and then, indeed, the visible earnestness and sincerity of the preacher transfigure his language into more than eloquence."

There are, however, instances of idiosyncratic exposition which readers may find disconcerting and confusing. In the sermon on 2nd Corinthians 5: 17 there is a complex exposition of the following statement: "I look upon the Lord's commands as either *legal* or *evangelical*, as either *general* or *particular*." In the course of his exposition he states, "Now the Gospel has its *commands, counsels, exhortations* and *directions*, but then they are addressed to *life* and to *spiritual men*." Further, in his sermon on Romans 3: 24 he indulges in hair-splitting with regard to pardon of sin and justification. While it is patently obvious, as the preacher declares, that "pardon is not justification; neither is justification pardon," the Westminster divines are quite unequivocal in their definition of justification in the *Confession of Faith* and in the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*. In their eyes pardon of sin is an *integral part* of the act of justification.

These reservations notwithstanding, this publication can be warmly recommended, so savoury and full of Christ are the sermons. Each one is an edifice, every stone in which is underpinned by Scripture proofs.

The book, which contains over 150 pages of clear print, is case-bound

and may be obtained from The Christian Bookshop, 21 Queen Street, Ossett, West Yorkshire, WF8 8AS or Mr J C Forshaw, 3 Hawkins Drive, Ambergate, Derbyshire, DE5 2JN.

A. G.

Jonathan Edwards on Revival. Banner of Truth Trust. £2.45.

This soft back volume of one hundred and sixty pages by Jonathan Edwards — an eminent American divine of the eighteenth century — contains three of his articles.

1. *A Narrative of Surprising Conversions.* This is an account of a spiritual awakening in Northampton, New England in 1734-1735 under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards himself. Northampton was then a town of some two hundred families and he believes that more than three hundred souls were savingly brought home to Christ in that period. The revival spread to other parts of New England. Edwards gives an extended account of the experiences his people had in their conversion, and this is interesting and valuable reading. One is brought to realise the onerous and solemn responsibilities of a pastor in such a situation in guiding and teaching souls under concern regarding their state before God and for eternity. A true revival requires a spiritually taught ministry — it must begin in the pulpit.

It is interesting to note that "there was no book so delightful as the Bible; especially the book of Psalms, the Prophecy of Isaiah, and the New Testament." He follows this account by relating in some detail the conversion of one adult, and of a child who was still alive at the time of his writing in 1736.

He freely admits that there were some who later proved that they were not savingly dealt with at that time but it appears the majority were so. Such was the effect on his congregation that "Both old and young have shown a forwardness to hearken not only to my counsels, but even to my reproofs, from the pulpit."

This section of the book is valuable in setting out the various ways in which the Holy Spirit deals with sinners under concern and could be of help when some are at times questioning the reality of their own change. One last quotation from this part will suffice — "Converting influences very commonly bring an extraordinary conviction of the REALITY and certainty of the great things of religion."

2. *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God.* This was a sermon preached in 1741 and later published, the text being 1 John 4: 1. It was preached to guard against extravagances likely to occur in

movements described above. In the first section he gives nine negative signs or "— What are no signs by which we are to judge of a work —". Of these No. 2 is especially relevant today in the light of Pentecostalism. "A work is not to judged of by any effects on the bodies of men —. We cannot conclude that persons are under the influence of the true Spirit because we see such effects on their bodies —". In the light of the next article the above negative sign merits careful study. Again No. 9 merits singling out for attention — "It is no argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God that it seems to be promoted by ministers insisting very much on the terrors of God's holy law and that with a great deal of pathos and earnestness."

This is followed in the next section with five positive distinguishing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God. He concludes with practical inferences and from this we would take two quotations to illustrate Edward's discrimination:— "God communicates His own nature to the soul in saving grace in the heart, more than in all miraculous gifts," and again "The ordinary sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God are the end of all extraordinary gifts, as the apostle shows in Ephesians 4: 11, 12, 13."

3. *An Account of the Revival of Religion in Northampton in 1740-1742.* This is a brief account of a further revival in the above years, described in a letter to a minister in Boston. On this occasion there was a great deal of what one could call hysteria and his account of this episode leaves one with a strong suspicion that this revival was not scripturally based. He describes "a house full of outcries, faintings, convulsions" as being very frequent, and again "and there were some instances of persons lying in a sort of trance, remaining perhaps for a whole twenty-four hours motionless, and with their senses locked up." These events took place before the movement was affected by outside influences. Altogether this event sounds all too similar to what goes on in Pentecostalism and to what occurred in pseudo-evangelistic campaigns of more recent times.

We would say there is a contradiction in the opening sentence of the first paragraph on page ninety, but it does not affect the writer's argument.

The second article is in our opinion the most valuable in the book. The third article shows the necessity of maintaining discipline when revival comes.

R. K. M.

England's Memorial by Joseph Irons, Founder and for 33 years Minister of Grove Chapel, Camberwell, London. Focus Publications, 6 Orchard Road, Lewes, East Sussex.

This small booklet is a sermon preached by Joseph Irons on the anniversary of the Gun-powder plot — the exact date is not given — and the text is Exodus 12: 14.

He exposes the spirit of Romanism, the corruption of the Church in doctrine and practice, and how even in his time Romish practices had entered Protestant Churches. He urges that the rising generation be taught the mercy of deliverance from this evil system, that we value our privileges of civil and religious liberty, and that we be up and doing in defence of the Cause of Christ. He certainly left his congregation in no doubt of his own position and of their duty.

The sermon is well set out, the headings are clear, and the address can be easily read.

In the present state of the affairs in our land, when Church leaders set such store on developing friendly with the Church of Rome, the publication of this sermon is timely.

R. K. M.

Letter

by Samuel Rutherford

To his Worthy and much Honoured Friend, Fulk Elies.

Worthy and much honoured in our Lord,—Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I am glad of our more than paper acquaintance: seeing we have one Father, it reckoneth the less, though we never saw one another's faces. I profess myself most unworthy to follow the camp of such a worthy and renowned Captain as Christ. O, alas! I have cause to be grieved, that men expect anything of such a wretched man as I am. It is a wonder to me, if Christ can make anything of my naughty, short, and narrow love to Him; surely it is not worth the uptaking. 2. As for our lovely and beloved Church in Ireland, my heart bleedeth for her desolation; but I believe our Lord is only lopping the vine-trees, but not intending to cut them down or root them out. It is true, seeing we are heart-atheists by nature, and cannot take providence aright (because we halt and crook (stoop) ever since we fell), we dream of a halting providence, as if God's yard, whereby He measureth joy and sorrow to the sons of men, were crooked and unjust, because servants are on horseback, and princes go on foot; but our Lord dealeth good and evil, and some one

portion or other to both, by ounce weights, and measureth them in a just and even balance. It is but folly to measure the Gospel by summer or winter weather: the summer-sun of the saints shineth not on them in this life. How should we have complained, if the Lord had turned the same providence that we now stomach at, upside down, and had ordered matters thus, that first the saints should have enjoyed heaven, glory, and ease, and then Methusalam's days of sorrow and daily miseries? we should think a short heaven no heaven: certainly His ways pass finding out. 3. Ye complain of the evil heart-atheism, but it is to a greater atheist than any man can be that ye write to of that. O, light findeth not that reverence and fear, as a plant of God's setting should find in our soul! How do we by nature, as others, detain and captivate the truth of God in unrighteousness, and so make God's light a bound prisoner! And even when the prisoner breaketh the jail and cometh out in belief of a Godhead, and in some practice of holy obedience, how often do we of new lay hands on the prisoner, and put our light again in fetters! Certainly, there cometh great mist and clouds from the lower part of our soul, our earthly affections, to the higher part, which is our conscience, either natural or renewed, as smoke in a lower house breaketh up, and defileth the house above: if we had more practice of obedience, we should have more sound light. I think, lay aside all other guiltiness, this one, the violence done to God's candle, in our soul, were a sufficient dittay (sentence) against us; for there is no helping of this, but by striving to stand in awe of God's light; lest light tell tales of us we desire little to hear; but since it is not without God, that light sitteth neighbour to will (a lawless lord), no marvel that such a neighbour should leaven our judgment and darken our light. I see there is a necessity, that we protest against the doings of the old man, and raise up a party against our worst half, to accuse, condemn, sentence, and with sorrow bemoan the dominion of sin's kingdom; and withal, make law, in the new covenant, against our guiltiness; for Christ once condemned sin in the flesh, and we are to condemn it over again: and if there had not been such a thing as the grace of Jesus, I should have long since given up with heaven, and with the expectation to see God. But grace, grace, free grace, the merits of Christ for nothing, white, and fair, and large, Saviour-mercy (which is another sort of thing than creature-mercy, or law-mercy, yea a thousand degrees above angel-mercy) hath been and must be the rock that we, drowned souls, must swim to; new washing, renewed application of purchased redemption, by that sacred blood that sealeth the free covenant, is a thing of daily and hourly use to a poor sinner: till we be in heaven, our

issue of blood will not be quite dried up; and therefore we must resolve to apply peace to our soul from the new and living way; and Jesus, who cleanseth and cureth the leprous soul, lovely Jesus, must be our song on this side of heaven's gates, and even when we have won the castle, then must we eternally sing, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb, who hath saved us and washed us in His own blood. I would counsel all the ransomed ones to learn this song, and to drink and be drunk with the love of Jesus. O fairest, O highest, O loveliest One, open the well! O water the burnt and withered travellers with this love of Thine! I think it is possible on earth to build a young New Jerusalem, a little, new heaven of this surpassing love. God either send me more of this love, or take me quickly over the water, where I may be filled with His love: my softness cannot take with want; I profess, I bear not hunger of Christ's love fair; I know not if I play foul play with Christ, but I would have a link of that chain of His providence mended, in pining and delaying the hungry on-waiters. For myself, I could wish that Christ would let out upon me more of that love; yet to say Christ is a niggard to me, I dare not; and if I say, I have abundance of His love, I should lie. I am half straitened to complain and cry, Lord Jesus, hold Thy hands no longer. Worthy sir, let me have your prayers in my bonds. Grace be with you.

Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,

S.R.

Aberdeen, Sept. 7, 1637.

Notes and Comments

Sabbath Trading

The attack on the Sabbath takes many forms, the most formidable one at the present time being the increasing desecration of the Sabbath by the opening of shops on that day. In Scotland there appears to be little to prevent large Supermarkets and other Stores opening their doors on the Sabbath. Even the Highlands of Scotland are not immune now from such attacks on their once-prized Sabbaths. The pagan festival of Christmas at the year's end is made an excuse for Sabbath shopping. We understand that the centre of the town of Inverness was like a weekday with milling crowds. Men and women could hardly show more contempt for the God of heaven and for the worship of His sanctuary than this and the Lord takes notice of it. His judgments will surely follow.

Further inroads on the Sabbath are likely to follow the giving in of their Report by the Committee of Inquiry appointed to look into the Shops Act of 1950, which applies to England. It is expected that an

attempt will be made before long to bring in a Bill to abolish all trading restrictions on Sabbath. It is to be hoped that any such attempt may be defeated.

Before Britain entered the European Common Market warning was given by many concerned for the Sabbath, that one result of Britain joining would be the introduction of the Continental Sabbath to Britain. What was feared has now practically taken place, and were the loss of the Sabbath the only adverse result of joining the Common Market, the price paid was infinitely too high. It may be many a day before Scotland recovers what she has lost.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 5th February, 1985, at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 12th February, at 12 noon.

Southern: At Glasgow on 19th February, at 2 p.m.

Post of Doctor at Mbumba Mission Hospital

The Committee feel concerned that no applications have been received for this important work on the Mission field, and with nursing staff at the hospital since May the work is being considerably curtailed in the absence of a doctor. The whole of the Nkai District with a population of 100,000 is presently without the services of any medical practitioner. In Mbumba itself there are some 22,000 persons so deprived.

Post of Teacher of Bible Knowledge at John Tallach Secondary School

A need continues for a teacher qualified at least to university level in some other subject to take up these important duties at Ingwenya. Enquiries to Rev. A. Murray, F.P. Manse, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4EH. Tel: Lairg (0549) 2176.

Wylie's History of Protestantism

The Mourne Missionary Trust, Northern Ireland hope to republish Wylie's History of Protestantism in a 2 volume edition in hard back with pictures as it was last published (about 2000 pages).

The Trust are looking for 400 subscribers to subscribe £22 each. They will receive the two volumes at this price, post paid. After this they will be £30 per set.

Anyone interested in subscribing to this valuable work should contact Mourne Missionary Trust, 4 Church Road, Carginagh, Kilkeel, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

Youth Conference (1985)

The Conference will be held D.V. in Edinburgh University Halls of Residence, from 12 noon on Tuesday, 9th April to 2 p.m. on Thursday, 11th April. The chairman will be Rev. A. Macpherson. It is hoped that a tour of some place of historical interest and a missionary talk will be included in the programme.

The papers will be as follows:—

Communism Versus Christianity Rev. N. M. Ross, B.A.
Evolution and the Bible Rev. Dr. D. Boyd.
Life and Work of Timothy Rev. N.M. Ross, B.A.
The Disruption — Its Relevance for 1985 Rev. Dr. D. Boyd.

The attendance fee will be £6 and applications for places should be made by letter now (by those 15 years old and above) to Rev. Neil M. Ross, F.P. Manse, Ullapool, Ross-shire IV26 2UE.

Ministerial Jubilee of the Reverend D.J. MacAskill MA.

On 12th December, 1984, the Rev. D.J. MacAskill MA completed fifty years in the ministry of the Church and when the Outer Isles Presbytery last met it placed on record its recognition of the long years of devoted and faithful service which he, by Divine grace, has given to the Cause of Christ in our midst.

After graduating from Glasgow University with an Honours Degree in Classics, Mr MacAskill completed his theological studies and was duly licensed to preach the Gospel. On the 12th day of December 1934, he was ordained and inducted to the charge of the South Harris congregation where he was to faithfully carry out the duties of a pastor until his translation to North Uist in May, 1948. After seven years in North Uist, Mr MacAskill was translated to Lochcarron and after some years there and also in Raasay he returned to the Outer Isles Presbytery in December, 1965, when he was inducted to the Uig congregation. In July, 1974, he retired, on health grounds, from the active ministry taking up his residence in Stornoway where he has, as called upon, continued to preach the Gospel.

His brethren in the Presbytery extended to him and his wife their warmest good wishes for continued health and strength.

Acknowledgments of Donations

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

Sustentation Fund. R. MacKay, Harris — £100.

Home Mission Fund: R. MacKay, £50.

Foreign Mission Fund: Bookshop Collection Box, £223; Anon., Canada \$100.00; Anon., Inverness Collection plate, £50; Anon., Raasay, per R. D. MacB., £51, all four for famine relief in Zimbabwe; Anon., Vatten, envelope in plate, £30.

Home of Rest Fund: Anon., £100 (5 x £20); Anon., £60; W. L. Watson, U.S.A., £20 for gifts to residents.

Sydney Building Fund: Wellwisher, Stornoway, £60.

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

Applecross: Seann Chairdean — £30 for Sust. Fund and £20 for "where most needed."

Dingwall: Friend — £50 for Congr. Funds; Mrs T. — £10 for Sust. Fund and £10 for Ethiopian Famine Relief, all per Rev. D. B. M.

Dunoon: Anon. — £35, Inverness Postmark.

Fort William: Friend, Caol — £10 per Rev. J. A. M.; D. R. MacD. — £10, both for Sust. Fund.

Glasgow: Mrs MacK. — (2 donations) £10, Anon. — £40, both for Congr. Fund; Anon. — £5, Anon. — £5, Anon. — £10, J. M. D. — £10, Matt. 6: 3 — £10, Anon. — £10, Anon. — £50 per Rev. D. M., last seven for Bus Fund; Anon. — £2, Anon. — £5, Anon. — £20, Anon. £20, all for Sust. Fund; E. C. — £3 for T.B.S.

Lairg: Friend, Applecross — £10 per Rev. A. M., for Sust. Fund.

Perth: Friend, Chequers — £1, Friend, Chequers — £1, both per Rev. D. J. MacD.; Friend, Perth — £100, per Mr A. McL., all for Perth Congregation.

Portree: Mrs J. R. — £18 per F. M., Anon. — £6 (envelope in plate), both for Ethiopia Relief Fund; 'In loving memory' — £100, C. A. M. — £3 per F. M., both for Manse Repairs; 'In memory of beloved parents' — £100 per F. M., for Sust. Fund; Anon. — £5 (envelope in plate), M. C., Bosville Terrace — £10 per F. M., both for General Purposes; A. C., Budhmer — £60 for F. M., for Sust. Fund; Anon. — £30 (envelope in plate) for Foreign Mission.

Raasay: Friend at communion — £4 per J. M. Macleod; Friend, Raasay — £20, both for Sust. Fund; Anon. — £50 for Zimbabwe Famine Relief; Friend, Portree — £10 for Sust. Fund.

Stornoway: Estate of the late Miss J. Nicholson — £100 for Congr. Fund; Anon., Achmore — £20 for Car Expenses; Anon. Friend — £50; Friend, N.T. — £16 for Sust. Fund, all per Rev. J. Macleod.

Strath: Miss Briggs — £10 per Rev. H. I. Mackinnon for Sust. Fund.