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Our Protestant Heritage and Witness

Our nation has been eminently blessed with a Protestant heritage. This is true particularly so far as our religious inheritance is concerned. However it is also true that many of our secular institutions are ours as a direct result of the Reformation from popery in the 16th Century. We enjoy innumerable blessings and benefits whose origin can be traced to that time when Britain and in particular Scotland, threw off the shackles of Rome and a new era dawned in the history of our land.

In our day the importance of the Reformation from popery is being largely discounted. Men are ready to conclude falsely that much good was set aside in that Reformation which should have been retained. This is an idea which it is in the interests of the Church of Rome to promote. Even in Scotland where the Reformation was more thorough than in other places nothing was lost but what merited being discarded — all the abominations and trappings of a corrupt and vicious anti-christian system. Well might it have been said then, as it was said later by Alexander Henderson at the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 when episcopacy was cast out: “We have cast down the walls of Jericho and let him who rebuilds them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite.”

The religious benefits gained by the Reformation from popery are incalculable. In Scotland it resulted in the thorough reformation of the Church from the last vestiges of popery, and the Church restored to its pristine purity and glory. The many precious doctrines of God’s Word for so long discarded or distorted were restored. The way of salvation which had so long been dammed up by encumbrances of man’s making was now opened up in the preaching of a pure Gospel of which Christ was the Author and Centre. The way of salvation through a crucified, risen and exalted Redeemer was now set before sinners, and poor sinners found rest for their weary souls, which they could never have done under the Romish teaching of man’s merits. Salvation by grace, through faith, replaced a system of works. Christ was magnified and sinners saved.

Through the Reformation from popery ignorance was removed, giving place to knowledge and understanding. Spiritual understanding increased through the knowledge of the truth, but also education was promoted so that the minds of the people would not remain enslaved in ignorance. The reading of the Bible was zealously promoted, and so the light of divine teaching spread abroad with all the beneficial influences that this bore along with it. A new day had dawned and people were liberated from the iron shackles of Rome. The Word of God was blessed to many and so the Reformation became firmly established.

The Church in Scotland became moulded to the divine pattern. "See that ye do all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the Mount," it was said to Moses. So in place of popery and episcopacy came reformed teaching and practices. Presbyterianism and purity of worship replaced the aberrations of Romanism. A system in accord with the Word of God replaced a system that had become wholly corrupt. Of the Church in Scotland it could then be said: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" In order to maintain this fair and glorious appearance many battles had to be fought for there were those who sought to mar her glory. In the merciful kindness of the Lord those attempts were ultimately overthrown, and she came forth in her glory once again after two centuries of conflict, in which many sealed their testimony with their blood against Romanist and Prelatic incursion.

Today, how do we see the Church in Scotland? Has it retained its heritage? Does it possess the beauty of its Reformation glory? So far as the greater part of the Church in Scotland is concerned it has long abandoned its adherence to Reformation principles. Three more centuries on from the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the Churches, by and large, give evidences that the principles, formerly so valiantly contended for, are no longer regarded as of any real worth. Where religion has not wholly deteriorated into infidelity, it has backslidden into a system of salvation by works; and where it has not wholly fallen into an aping of the ritualism of the Church of Rome, it has so far abandoned purity of doctrine and worship as to pave the way for a gradual decline from Reformation principles until it be ultimately swallowed up in the Romish Church with all its anti-christian teachings and practices. The ecumenical movement has already made this its goal — one Church — without considering the solemn fact that when it is accomplished the outcome will be a totally apostate Church. Romanism is no longer feared for the enemy it is to truth and righteousness and to the true Church of God. Its anti-

Christian nature has been lost sight of. Even a watered down Evangelicalism which has become widespread in our day, no longer regards the Pope as the Anti-Christ, the Man of sin and Son of perdition, nor is alive to the anti-Christian nature of the system over which he presides. Modern evangelicalism has ceased to be a bulwark against the inroads and pretensions of the Romish Church. To fraternise with its agents is commonplace in evangelical circles, and so opposition to Romanism has been gradually withered down. In the light of this decline how thankful we should be as a Church that the Lord has given us a banner that it may be displayed because of the truth. Included in this banner is the adherence to and display of our Protestant heritage so mercifully handed down to us.

What then is required of us, as a Church in view of the widespread decline in adherence to Protestant belief and witness. The answer given to us by the Word of God is clear — “Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Because over five centuries of Protestant witness has been maintained in our land, we are not now to abandon it but maintain it fully, unequivocally against all efforts that are made by the enemy to overthrow it. We have to stand firm in this dark day, not in carnal strength, but in the strength of divine grace, knowing that failure here will make the enemy victorious. There need be no doubt in anyone’s mind as to what will take place if the Church of Rome becomes ascendant in the land. She will trample the true Church of God under her feet. She will pursue to the death such as will not submit to her blasphemous claims. Very quickly would she throw off her present lamb like appearance and appear in her true colours as a cruel, fierce, tearing and devouring lion. The exhortation of Jude was never more needed than in our day when he called on those to whom he was writing to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.” There can be no turning back. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Notes of a Sermon

**Preached by the Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall
on Sabbath, 8th December, 1918.**

“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” — Isaiah 62: 6,7.

The prophet felt concerned about the Lord's cause, and as a faithful servant in the Church, he resolved to labour by preaching and praying for its success, and he was encouraged to this by the promises given by God concerning the coming of His kingdom. The Gentiles were to be brought in, and the Church was to be made glorious. She was no more to be forsaken. The Lord Himself was to dwell in her and to delight in her. "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (verses 4,5). That these promises might be fulfilled, the Lord set up ministers in the Church, as we have in our text. The Church consists of ministers and people, and in order that it might prosper, both parties have their duties assigned to them, and they ought to perform these duties faithfully.

In the text we shall notice the following particulars:-

I. The watchmen;

II. They that make mention of the name of the Lord; and

III. Their work.

I. The watchmen. Who are the watchmen? Under the Old Testament prophets were watchmen. Under the New Testament the Apostles were watchmen, and after the Apostles left the world, ministers of the gospel were watchmen. All these were set up by God Himself in their office in the Church. They were set up on the walls of Jerusalem. The office of prophets, Apostles, and ministers of the gospel is the highest in the world. It is much higher than the office of kings. As they were set up by God in the Church, they had the highest authority. There were false prophets who were not set up by God, and there were false Apostles, and these would do no good to the people but much harm. And there were, and still are, men in the office of the ministry who were not set up by God, and in our day these are more numerous than the true ministers of Christ. But the Lord had true ministers in His Church in the past till this day, and He will have such till the end of the world. He will take care of His own cause. This should not hinder people from being anxious about His cause in the world. It is a good sign to see people anxious about their own salvation and about the Lord's cause.

The difference between prophets and the Apostles, and ministers of the gospel now, is that prophets and Apostles were inspired men, while ministers are not now inspired, but they are illuminated by the Spirit and

qualified by God for their work. Also the prophets and Apostles had their commission direct from God Himself. There were two things necessary in order to be an Apostle:-

(1) That he had seen the Lord with his bodily eyes; and

(2) That he had his commission direct from Him. Some doubted Paul's right to be called an Apostle, and in self defence, he said, "Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?" (1 Cor. 9: 1); and it is evident that he had his commission direct from the Lord Jesus. The Lord said to Ananias concerning Saul: "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9: 15,16). "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." (Acts 22: 14). Although ministers in the Church after the Apostle's time have not seen the Lord with their bodily eyes, they have seen Him by the eye of faith, and that is as sure as if they had seen Him with bodily eyes; and although they have not their commission direct from Him, they have it from Him through the medium of the Church.

II. — They that make mention of the name of the Lord. These are the praying people. Although these do not occupy the office of the ministry, they have their own place in the Church. And while it is men only that are in the office of the ministry, there are women as well as men in this class of members in it. We shall say more about them when we come to speak of the work of both parties to which we now proceed.

III. Their work.

1. The work of the watchmen. They are to watch day and night, and give warning to the people under their charge when they see any danger approaching, like Ezekiel who was a watchman to warn his people. If he neglected his duty and the people perished, their blood would be required of him. But if he warned them, and if they did not take the warning, their blood was to be upon their own heads. The Apostle Paul was such a faithful watchman that in preaching his last sermon to the Ephesian elders, he said to his hearers, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20: 26, 27). As the office of minister is the highest office, it is a most responsible office, for they have to give an account of their stewardship to Christ at the last day. In order to be faithful, they must watch and warn. Among men if a sentinel who has to watch and warn, sleeps and neglects his duty, the penalty is

death. The jailor at Phillippi knew this, and thinking that his prisoners under his charge escaped, while he was asleep, he took hold of his sword to take away his own life, but Paul prevented him by telling him that they were all there. In order, to be faithful, ministers must not flatter their people by concealing from them the danger to which they are exposed, but warn them of it. What are they to give warning of?

(1) They are to warn them of the wrath which is to come. All the fallen race of Adam are liable to that wrath. John, the Baptist, as a watchman said, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3: 7). By nature we are under the wrath of God, and if we die in that condition, we shall be exposed to His wrath without end. After millions of years are past the wrath of God is a coming wrath. There is no end to it for those that are lost in eternity.

(2) They are to warn them of sin which is the cause of God's wrath. They are to exhort "The wicked to forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and to return to the Lord who will have mercy upon them and abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55: 7). If ministers did their duty in this respect, their hearers would be restrained from open transgression from fear of punishment, if the love of God did not actuate them to lead a holy life. They are to warn them not to "neglect the great salvation". Sin against the gospel is more dangerous than transgression against the law, for it is a sin against the remedy, and if sinners persist in that sin to the end of their life, there is no way of escape from God's wrath. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2: 3). The Apostle warns himself and others of the danger of coming short of salvation, and enforces his exhortation by what happened to others on account of their unbelief. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Hebrews 4: 1,2).

(3) They are to warn their hearers of error in the doctrines to be preached. These doctrines must be scriptural. Paul exhorted Timothy "to preach the word", that is, the doctrines of God's word; and he tells him "that the time was coming when people would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4: 3,4). That time came after the Apostles left the world, and continued till the Reformation in the sixteenth century. And in our own day it is comparatively few that will en-

dure such doctrine, and in order to gratify the carnal craving of these, ministers have framed an unscriptural creed and preach the pernicious doctrines of that creed to their people.

(4) They are to give warning of God's judgments which they see coming upon the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The terrible war that has been raging for several years, and which has now in the Lord's good providence come to an end, was, among other things, a work of judgment on our own nation and other nations for the prevailing iniquity. Some say the war was the work of the Kaiser, but the Kaiser was only a rod in God's hand, and when that rod did its work, it was broken to pieces and thrown away, as the German Emperor is now. Faithful ministers were giving warnings of this coming judgment, and Dr. Kennedy in particular gave many solemn warnings of it. Though this judgment has come, it is lamentable to observe that there are very little signs to be seen in our own nation and in other nations that were engaged in the conflict, of turning to the Lord with repentance. God's goodness in putting an end to the war may lead to repentance, but if not, we may expect another judgment to follow. There were millions of precious lives cut off from the land of the living during the war, some of whom were truly godly and are now enjoying their everlasting rest in heaven, but it is to be feared that the great majority were careless and are now lost in eternity. We sympathise with parents whose sons and other relatives were killed, but parents, who have reason to hope that their sons and other relatives were prepared for death, have no reason "to sorrow like those who have no hope" (1 Thes. 4: 13). God was speaking to us by His works in providence as well as in His written word. "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man." (Proverbs 8: 4). If ministers who are watchmen warn their hearers, and if their hearers do not turn from their evil ways, they shall perish in their sins, and those that warn them shall be free from their blood, but if ministers will not warn their people, and their people die in their sins, their blood shall be required of these ministers. Ministers who neglect their duty in this respect shall be punished not only for their own transgression of God's law, but also for the great sin of being the means of the everlasting ruin of their people. Unfaithful ministers are Satan's nurses, whom he employs to lull asleep poor sinners by crying, "Peace, peace, to them, when there is no peace." They are a curse and a plague in the land. The late Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie of Lochcarron said that the time was coming when unfaithful ministers would be as numerous as the locusts in Egypt, and that the Lord only knew which would be the greater plague of the two.

2. The work of the praying people, men and women. They make mention of the name of the Lord. Ministers have to pray as well as to preach, as Ezekiel was commanded to do in order that the dry bones might be brought to life, but their congregations are not set up in the high office of the ministry. They have their own work to do, and among all their other duties they have to pray, and the praying people are as useful in their own place in the Church as ministers. The more numerous these are in any age, the more abundant the blessing that comes from above. Although the Lord promised to send down the blessing, He was to do so in answer to prayer. Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to His people, but they were to tarry in Jerusalem praying for the fulfilment of the promise, and, in due time, the Spirit was sent. There were more in the upper room waiting for the coming of the Spirit than the Apostles; there were many praying people along with them in the upper room. The praying people spoken of in our text were not like the Quakers, silent; they were commanded not to keep silent, but to speak out the desires of their heart. They were to be earnest and importunate in prayer. They were not to give any rest to the Lord till He answered their prayers by establishing and making His Church a praise in the earth. It was not a trouble to the Lord that they prayed to Him so often. He was not like the unjust judge who granted the request of the widow, lest she should by her coming to him so often trouble him (Luke 18: 5). The Lord gives the Spirit of prayer to His people as the forerunner of a work of revival in His Church on a large scale, but alas, the praying people are very few in our day. Many families go to church who do not keep family worship, and who do not pray that they might receive a blessing in the public means of grace. No wonder although these return home more worldly and harder than before they came to church. But the Lord's people are a praying people. They pray for themselves, for their minister, for their own families, and for their fellow-sinners, wherever they are in the land of the living. The praying people like the watchmen are not to keep silent day nor night; though they need sleep like other people, they pray while others are fast asleep, and they pray sometimes when they themselves are asleep. The Church said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." (Song. 5: 2).

Concluding remarks. — Ministers, that are faithful in the discharge of their office, warn their people of every evil, and such among us are bound by their ordination vows "to assert, maintain and defend the doctrines of God's word as contained in the Confession of Faith and the purity of worship as presently practiced in the Church, and to submit to the government and discipline, and to concur with the

same, and not to endeavour directly or indirectly the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of their power, in their station," to maintain, support, and defend these principles. In addition to this, ministers and other office-bearers of the Free Presbyterian Church are asked at their ordination if they approve of the Deed of Separation, and the same question has been asked parents before they got baptism for their children. And some of the ministers, that have left us*, required of parents to promise to abide by the Free Presbyterian Church to the end of their life. These ministers did not do what they made others promise to do. They left the Free Presbyterian Church, not because of any error in the Church, but it is to be feared, for other motives; some for getting a position and honour, and others, because they went so far in advocating Union with a Church, which was not sound either in doctrine or in practice, that they felt that their usefulness in the Free Presbyterian Church had gone, and that they had lost the confidence of their congregations. They thought, at first, that they could carry our people with them into the union, but the people were more steadfast than themselves. We had only two ministers to begin with, and a large number of missionaries, and the people adhered steadfastly to the Church. Many congregations, for several years, were without a minister, and some are so yet. It was, to say the least, a very mean thing for those that left us to have done so without any real cause. In past years there was none louder in their condemnation of the Church of their adoption than they. If they considered themselves bound to enter into the union in order to have the communion of saints, it would not be likely that they would remain long in the Free Church without seeking to unite with other corrupt Churches, on the ground that their people are baptised, according to the latitudinarian view now held. The communion of saints inculcated in the Word of God is a communion of the people of God who are in some degree sanctified or made holy, and not a communion with all that are baptised. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, addresses his letter, "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (1 Cor. 1: 2). But in the midst of all changes we should resolve and act like Joshua, who said to the children of Israel, "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24: 15).

We would warn our people, young and old, to adhere to the faithful testimony raised in defence of God's truth in 1893, and not to follow the example of ministers who change their position with every wind that blows.

*Four ministers joined the Free Church in November 1918.

These men have done all in their power to pull down our Church which they had a hand in building up in the past, and vowed to defend. In joining the Free Presbyterian Church, they did not count the cost as the man of whom Christ says, "For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest, haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish." (Luke 14: 28, 30). Hence their failure in not continuing in the work which they began to do with us. In changing their position, we are persuaded that outside influences were brought to bear upon them which they failed to resist. Some of them profess to have great happiness in their changed attitude towards our Church, but it is to be feared that their happiness is a delusion, for men cannot have true happiness in doing that which is wrong. These men are now preaching in opposition to us, some of them in our neighbourhood. "But if God be for us, who can be against us?" Notwithstanding all the opposition offered to us for the last twenty-five years, hitherto the Lord hath helped us, and He, that helped us in the past, will help us to the end, and these men who say they have happiness may find out that they may have to sorrow for the inconsistency, before they get to heaven. How often we learn by experience how little confidence we can put in men! But in the midst of all changes, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Let us then adhere to Him and to His truth, although all men would fail us. Let us abide by the testimony we have raised, and it is our belief that that testimony shall be kept up in our Church till the Millenium, "When the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the face of the sea."

The First Recorded Act of Worship

The fall had hardly taken place before God in infinite mercy made known to our first parents that He intended to send a Deliverer from sin and misery called, "the seed of the woman." Adam and Eve were then expelled from Eden, and in due course, two sons were born. Genesis 4: 3, 4 inform us that a time came when these sons, now grown men, offered to God on their own behalf. This was the first recorded act of divine worship, the first we are plainly told of religion as practised by sinful men. Religion, in the proper sense, may be defined as, "the cordial apprehension, under divine illumination, of the truth regarding God, and shows itself by faith, repentance, love, worship, obedience and service."

Anything less than that, or different from it, is not true religion, though it may claim the name.

It must be noted, however, that the recorded beginning of religion was not the actual start. What the two young men came to do when it became their duty, was what their parents had taught them. Worship had been engaged in by Adam and his wife through the years of their sons' childhood and youth. There is little doubt that the beginning of it can be traced to Chapter 3: 21; "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." They were taught to sacrifice, and their first clothing was the skins of the first sacrifices.

When the time came for Cain and Abel to worship individually, they did it together, but each in his own way, with different results. Abel's offering was accepted; Cain's was not. It came to light that one was truly religious; the other was not. Why was that? According to the definition, religion is primarily an attitude of soul. It is, "the cordial apprehension under divine illumination of the truth regarding God," that is, the wholehearted reception of the truth about God."

Consider the case of Adam after his fall. He no longer loved God; consequently, he no longer had right views of God; he feared God because he had a guilty conscience; he tried to avoid God; he even blamed God (3: 12). Adam still knew that God was Creator, Preserver, Lawgiver and Judge, but the spirit of love and worship was gone. Judgment was pronounced, the promise of a Saviour was given, the rite of sacrifice was demonstrated, then Adam was expelled to begin his new hard life as a sinner on a cursed earth. But if we assume that, like his wife, Adam soon underwent a saving change, then he must have come to believe and rejoice in the prospect of a Redeemer whose work would save sinners. And in the rite of sacrifice he would perceive something of the way in which saving grace operates. This important truth he would teach his sons in the prayerful hope that they would become religious like himself.

When the time came for the brothers to offer on their own behalf, only one proved to be truly religious. Cain's offering lacked the symbolism one would look for in a sinner conscious of guilt and depravity, and needing an atoning sacrifice. He was evidently unconscious of his ruined state, and thus felt no need of such a sacrifice. He thought it enough merely to acknowledge God as his benefactor. He had not been enlightened by the Spirit of God; he was spiritually blind; he disbelieved what his parents had learned from God; and so was quite ignorant of God's nature, and capable only of performing an outward ceremony which pleased himself but not God.

In contrast to Abel, Cain's conduct was marked by the absence of faith: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," (Heb. 11: 4). There was no repentance either. So far from feeling chastened at the refusal of his thank-offering, Cain was very wrath. There was no love in Cain's heart either. He had none for his godly brother, so the words in 1 John apply to him: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother also, he is a liar." There was no worship of a sort acceptable to God; and there was no service, for Cain departed from where God was worshipped to set up a worldly branch of the human race. We see, therefore, that Cain's religion revealed its false nature by the absence of faith, repentance, love, worship, obedience and service.

With Abel it was different. In him the Holy Ghost had wrought faith and kindred graces. He became the first martyr, the first of a long line to be hated and slain because they cordially received the truth *re* the God of grace, and worshipped Him accordingly, and lived soberly, righteously and godly.

True religion and false may be identified to this day by the application of the definition we have given. True religion receives God's own truth about Himself through the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It rejects every view of God and his works that is inconsistent with Scripture. It humbly acknowledges man's natural tendency to error, and depends on special revelation, namely God's Word. True religion acknowledges also that man's soul is so dead naturally, that it needs the work of the Holy Spirit to make Scripture luminous to the mind. A person can have extensive knowledge of the Bible and still be ignorant of the God who speaks by it. True religion begins with the new birth.

True religion has its seal in the renewed heart, but reveals itself in words and deeds. Faith in Christ displaces pride and self-righteousness. Repentance unto life is a habit which produces tenderness of conscience and a warfare against all sin. Love manifests itself, not in a sentimental fashion, but in seeking the glory of God and the highest good of men. Worship is indispensable to true religion. Obedience makes it its business to discover and do God's will in all life's affairs. And, completing this third listing of the marks of true religion, there is a desire to serve God in whatever ways we can. The works of the devil are renounced therefore.

Down the centuries since this first recorded act of worship, mankind has divided itself into the emulators of Cain and Abel. We should ask ourselves to which line we belong.

A. McP.

Letter

1049 High Street,
Youngtown,
Ohio.
July 5th, 1920

My dear Malcolm,

I cannot express in words the joy and delight that your letter brought to D.A. and myself. We gathered from Mary's letter that you were troubled in mind in regard to your lost condition and we were very much concerned as to what the outcome would be. D.A. wrote you on receipt of that letter and I hope that you were encouraged by the reading of it. There are very few like D.A. It is now my turn to write you a little.

The Lord be praised you are a new man, a new creation. Think of it — an heir of that glorious inheritance and joint heir with Christ Jesus. You have gone through the severe process of conviction of sin and have found relief in the One who was made sin for us.

My dear Malcolm, there is nothing — that I can say, nothing in the wide world that can bring peace and contentment to a troubled conscience but a sight of the Crucified One. I shall never forget when I got the first sight of Him, and from what I have seen, heard and felt, no one can convince me otherwise. I know it is the same with you and with all those whose eyes have been opened to see the Lord.

Conversion is one thing and growth in the kingdom of grace will follow. We know now only in part. We are simply in the primary grade but where the good work has begun, He will continue it until the day of Jesus Christ. We are, however, told to be diligent in every good word and work. In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not. Let us make good use of the talent that God has given us and at last we shall hear the Master's welcome — Well done, good and faithful servant — and the benediction will come from the King! Come ye blessed of My Father.

Is it not worth while to watch and pray! The tempter will be busy at his old game. He was a deceiver from the beginning and will always be so. You know we cannot rely on our own strength but we have the promise. He is faithful that promised who will also perform it. My strength is made perfect in weakness. Read the following and note the contrast. My God shall supply all your needs. Phil. 4: 19; Ps. 16: 11; Eph. 3: 19 and 1: 23; Col. 1: 19 and 2: 9. Read especially Ephesians and Colossians together. I would suggest that you would put all books aside for some definite time. No matter how religious they might be or how pious their

authors, and confine yourself to the Bible. You will find out that you will be richly repaid for your labour. Afterwards you can take up those other books and read them to advantage. I recently heard Dr. Campbell Morgan of England stating that whatever he had he owed it to the Bible. He locked up all his theological books, magazines, etc. in his bookcase and never opened any other book for two years but the Bible except what was absolutely necessary for the carrying on of his business. This was when he was about 23 years and out of College. He is undoubtedly an authority on the Bible. As a matter of fact he has no time to talk about anything else. His whole time is taken up in the study of the Bible. It pays.

Now dear Malcolm I pray that your faith may be strengthened in the One who is within the veil. Don't hesitate to write D.A. or myself and express your mind.

I hope that the rest of the dear ones are keeping well. How is D.J. getting along. I shall write Mary in the course of a week or so.

My love to each of you and D.A. and his wife joins me.

Your affectionate brother,

D. MacDougall.

(The above letter was written to Mr Malcolm MacDougall, Edinburgh).

Why do we go to Church?

By Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale.

We live in an age when a great many never enter a church from the beginning of the year to the end, but if those who do go were asked their reason for doing so, and if they were to answer honestly, it would be seen how various were the motives people had for going to church. Without taking into account what may be true of Roman Catholics relative to priestly fear and a false sense of devotion, we shall confine our attention to the question as it relates to professed Protestants. Broadly speaking, there are two classes of people among church-goers; there are natural men who have never yet known what it is to be born again, and there are the Lord's people who have passed from death unto life. It is unspeakably solemn to think that these two classes are sitting side by side in the same building, hearing the same gospel, singing the same psalms, professing to worship the same God, and yet their reasons for coming together are as far apart as the North and South Poles.

The worldly man could give many a reason for coming to church. One

may be that otherwise the Sabbath would be intolerable to him. This is true where outward order is kept on the Sabbath, and where people have been taught from their childhood to abstain on that day from works that are lawful and necessary on other days. Where people realise that this is God's command, and believe that to act otherwise would be sinful, their natural consciences keep a check on them, but the period of inactivity which this entails causes them to feel the day long. In their experience the longest day of the week is the Sabbath and they must do something to make it seem shorter. To walk to church and back will pass the time, and, then, if they can get sleeping in their pew they seem to count it less sinful than sleeping at home on that day. If they are not allowed to sleep in church they will spend the time of the services day-dreaming, or thinking of everything but the sermon to which they are professing to listen.

Others go to church in order to be counted respectable. They have neighbours who never go and they look upon them as heathen who are sure to be lost. While they are quite correct in judging that all who will continue to the end to neglect the means of grace will be lost, yet they forget that nowhere in the Bible is it said that the mere attendance on the means of grace will save a person. The Apostle James describes the mere hearer of the Word thus, "For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass? for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." James 1: 23,24. Thus we see that the outward respectability of attending church will not profit one in any way.

Some go to church merely in order to see friends and acquaintances. Christ has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matth. 18: 20, and it should be the desire of all who go to His house to get His presence there. He is the Friend of sinners and He is the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother," but alas! some who go to His house are more desirous of seeing frail, sinful mortals, than they are of seeing Christ and holding converse with Him. What, it may be asked, have they to say to these friends and acquaintances? Do they ask them the searching and all-important question, What think ye of Christ? No, their talk will be of the world and of things that perish.

Again there is a section who go to church out of curiosity. Their ear is open to catch some strange or unusual expression that may fall from the preacher's lips, and when they get any such thing it will amuse them and they make use of it among their fellow-creatures as a matter to laugh at. While this ought to be a warning to preachers of the gospel to be so cir-

cumspect in their language that neither the Lord's people would be justly offended, nor the godless world get a handle against religion, yet such as go to church for the purpose of getting something to laugh at have already begun to sit in the seat of the scorner, which has been aptly described as "the lowest stair to hell". Such will not scruple to criticise the preacher, forgetting that they are thus shutting the door of their hearts against Christ.

The whisperings of the natural conscience will, at times, make a sinner go to church. When he neglects the house of God there is something that tells him that he is not doing right, and he finds this "something" very troublesome. At his work during the week it follows him, at his fireside in the evening it whispers, "You should have been in church last Sabbath," or, on his bed on Sabbath morning it tells him that he is not in the path of duty. This causes the careless sinner to look about for means of silencing conscience, but nothing will silence the natural conscience but to do that, however imperfectly, the neglect of which he is accused of. Where, however, these strivings and warnings are not accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, the person who is the subject of them will be satisfied when he performs his duty, and prides himself on how punctiliously he performs his "good works", utterly forgetful that the Scriptures tell us that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 2: 16.

It is refreshing to turn from these sinful motives for going to church and consider the motives which the Lord's people have for going. The Psalmist says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Psalm 27: 4. We see here that he had a two-fold end in view in going to God's house. He desired to *behold the beauty of the Lord*, and he also went in order *to inquire*. He desired to see the beauty of the Lord in His Word. Many think it not worth their while to go to God's house unless there is someone there who can preach, but the true child of God loves to go there in order to hear the Word read publicly, because he knows by experience that he may meet with Christ in the public reading of the Word, for Christ showed Himself to him in that way before. To the objection that he can read the Word for himself at home he replies that the promise is that where two or three are gathered together in His name He is there. The presence of Christ, therefore, does not depend on the presence of one who can preach, though preaching as a means of salvation is in no way to be despised. Often has the mere reading of God's Word in His

own house been the means of awakening the careless and indifferent, releasing those who were under the spirit of bondage and giving them the Spirit of adoption by which they were enabled to cry, Abba, Father, confirming the weak and causing the lame man to leap as an hart.

While the true Christian values the public reading of God's Word, he, by no means, despises the public preaching of the gospel. The Westminster Divines, who certainly valued the reading of God's Word, laid special emphasis in the Shorter Catechism on the preaching of that Word. In the preaching of the Word there is, broadly speaking, a declaration of man's lost and ruined condition by the Fall, Redemption through Christ, and Sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Here the beauty of the Lord is to be seen in looking upon sinners in their low estate, making provision to meet with their lost condition, and through that provision, causing them to appear before Himself at last without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Neither do they despise the other parts of public worship, such as prayer and the singing of God's praise. They are not uninterested in these exercises, and do not act as if they had nothing to do with them. The unregenerate may stare and look about them during prayer and have a closed mouth during the singing of God's praise, as if prayer and praise were merely the duties of those taking the lead in these exercises, but the case is different with the child of God. Every petition put up finds a response in his soul, re-echoing the desire from which the petition arose. In the praises of the sanctuary when he is able to join skilfully in the singing, his mind is not so occupied with the music as to give a subordinate place to the exercise of soul which one should have in the singing of God's praise, and where the gift of joining skillfully is denied that part of worship is not lost, for it gives an uplift of soul which fits one better for the other parts of worship, and is therefore an aid to seeing the beauty of the Lord.

It has been noticed that the worlding goes to church in order to see friends and acquaintances, but that will not benefit him any. The child of God sees brethren and sisters in Christ when he goes to church, and can enter into Paul's experience at Appii forum when he met the brethren "he thanked God, and took courage". When the true Christian looks on a brother or sister in Christ, he can say that there is so much of Christ dwelling in this world; he can see in that person one for whom Christ died, and to whom the Holy Spirit applied the efficacy of Christ's finished work, and who thus has been made a new creature. Also he can see in him one who has the same faith, hope and love that he has himself, and who is a fellow-sufferer with him in his trials, temptations and fears,

conquering these trials, temptations and fears only through Christ. In short, when he has grounds for looking upon a fellow-mortal as a true Christian he sees in him the beauty of the Lord, and this causes a union to which the world is a stranger. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Ruth 1: 16.

The second motive that a Christian has in going to church is *to inquire*. In the Old Testament the expression, "to inquire of the Lord", is used in connection with seeking the mind of the Lord in any particular matter, and thus we see that the Psalmist in inquiring in the Lord's house, indicates that he was conscious of his needs. The Lord's people are a needy people and they come to Himself with their needs. They need light on the path of duty, for they know that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10: 23. They have problems to solve which no human being can solve for them; they have doubts and fears which clutch at their hearts and make them desolate; they have temptations and trials and other experiences which they cannot tell to their nearest and dearest and these bring them at times to the verge of despair, but in God's house they often get their difficulties met with and they leave in a happier frame of mind than when they went. In this their experiences are similar to that of godly Asaph. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I understood their end." Psalm 73: 16,17.

Those who inquire in God's house inquire for marks of grace on themselves. They see no marks on themselves; they mourn over a desperately wicked heart, they find within themselves a nature that hates God and holiness, and at their elbow they find a tempting devil. The question with them often is, "How can I be right for eternity and these things true of me?" In that condition they go to inquire in God's house and are brought to see in the reading and preaching of the Word the case of others who had similar experiences. It is made clear to them that the people who had these experiences are now on Mount Zion above, and that these very experiences showed them to be the Lord's people. Not only is the similarity between the trials of these people and their own trials giving them hope, but the hatred of sin and everything connected with it manifested by the Lord's people, gives them hope for they have that hatred of sin themselves, though not to the extent which they would wish.

In their inquiring in God's house they are seeking fellowship with Christ. They cannot hold fellowship with the world for they and the world are diametrically opposed. Two cannot walk together unless they

are agreed, and, therefore, because they and the world are not agreed they cannot have fellowship, but they and Christ are agreed. They agree with Him that they cannot do anything to save themselves, and they agree with Him that all the glory of their salvation belongs to Him. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Ps. 115: 1.

It is well for all who go to God's house with this two-fold end in view. They show that a change has come over them, which has made a difference between them and the world. With the world it is a case of approaching God with flattering lips, but with the child of God there is sincerity, and he is bound to Christ, His cause and means as he is bound to no one else. He is his all for time and eternity.

A Happy Death-bed

At the Disruption 1843, Mr John Munro of Halkirk was one of those who left the Established Church, Mr Munro passed to his eternal rest on 1st April 1847. In his death we have a beautiful exemplification of the words of Scripture: "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Dr Ross Taylor, Thurso, who knew Mr Munro so well, gave the following account of his last illness.

"Notwithstanding his advanced age, his public ministrations were continued to the end of his days. He usually preached three times every Sabbath, and he did so, on the Wednesday of the National fast — the last day he was in the pulpit. He was no less indefatigable in the discharge of all his other parochial duties, and as the result of his abundant and faithful labours, not a few had to acknowledge him as their father in Christ Jesus.

On the 25th March, he came to Thurso to attend a meeting of Presbytery, and been suddenly taken ill, was brought to the house of Mr Taylor, Free Church minister, where he remained till his death that day week. During his illness his mind, was quite collected to the last; the manner in which he endured his sufferings, and looked forward to death, was such as might be expected from the tenor of his life. On the evening on which he was taken ill, he suffered much pain, yet his exclamation was — "He hath done all things well; He never did anything wrong. He never shall." "You have much pain," it was said to him. He answered, "John Knox said that he needed not to regret the pain, which would bring the battle to a close." He then mentioned that before leaving home that morning he had read in course in secret the last chapter in Revelation

and that he had much more than usual of a heavenly impression in the words: "Behold I come quickly." During the days that followed he did not speak much, but what he said showed that his mind continued to be kept in a calm, resigned and heavenly frame. Speaking on the text, "They shall mount up on wings as eagles." he said: "I am not mounting up as I would wish, but I am mounting up so as to make me wonder." At another time repeating the text. "Though Abraham be ignorant of us . . ." he went on commenting on it thus: "Though my faith is not like the faith of Abraham, and though I am not a wrestler like Jacob yet "Thou art my Father."

Being asked one morning how he was, he replied solemnly, "My flesh and heart doth faint and fail, but God doth fail me never." Again being asked if he felt comfortable he answered "Yes, I have a good hope through grace." At another time he exclaimed "In what state would I be, had I never thought of Eternity until now, but here I am lying as easy as if I had the promise the thief on the cross had." It was said to him it was believed he had that. He replied, "Well, if I have one I have all."

The night before he died he suffered much. Nature's struggle with death was evidently severe. It was said to him, you appear to be very uneasy. He replied, "The Lord's will." Reference was then made to the Saviour's sufferings, and he exclaimed very distinctly, "He trod the winepress alone." Then in connection with another observation he said, "I shall soon be at my rest." A few hours after he calmly fell asleep in Jesus, April 1847. Thus died a venerable servant of Christ aged 79 and in the forty-first year of his ministry.

From: *Noted Ministers of the Northern Highlands*
by Rev. D. Beaton

Alexander Peden

by Rev. D. Beaton

It has been truly said that "of all the Covenanters who figure in the history of the last persecution, which, with increasing bitterness, extended over the long period of 28 years, from 1660 to 1688, no one had a more remarkable career, or is better or more lovingly remembered in death, than Alexander Peden." He was no ordinary man. No doubt his hair-breadth escapes from his persecutors and his remarkable utterances gave him a place among the people that none of his contemporaries enjoyed. After his death a little book — *Peden's Prophecies* — was published in 1725 and reprinted by Patrick Walker with additions in 1726, and this

had much to do in keeping green the supposed prophetic utterances of Peden. The book is supposed to have been compiled by Patrick Walker, a pedlar, gifted with a remarkable nervous English style as is evidenced by his *Biographia Presbyteriana*. * Walker had little judgment and was very credulous. He did not possess the gift of separating the false from the true with the result that not a few of the stories in the book are recognised now by competent authorities as imaginary. Yet it must be admitted that after the careful pruning there are utterances by Peden and Cameron which cannot be lightly set aside as the deliverances of mere visionaries. These were men who spent days and nights with their God in lonely solitudes and should it be thought a thing incredible that the Holy Spirit would at times give them a sight into the future denied to their contemporaries?

Alexander Peden was born at Auchincloich, in the northern part of the parish of Sorn in 1626. He was educated at Glasgow University. He may have been a student when Robert Bailie and David Dickson were teaching there. He was licensed to preach the gospel in 1659 and in the *Diary of Andrew Hay of Craignethen* (Scottish History Society) there is an account given of his "trial" discourse. Hay gives the following leading ideas in the discourse preached from Acts 5: 23, which were strangely prophetic of Peden's checkered career: "1. That sometimes the Lord makes His enemies errand-bearers of His people's delivery. 2. That wicked men leave no means unessayed to embitter the lot of the righteous. 3. That ordinarily the Lord disappoints the enemies when they think themselves sikker (sure). 4. That it's a hard thing to bear home the conviction of a disappointment on the wicked. 5. That the wicked are so blind as they cannot see most palpable progress of God's power. 6. That God whiles trysts (meets) His people's deliverance with impossibilities." For sometime Peden was schoolmaster, session-clerk, and precentor at Tarbolton about 9 miles to the west of his native place. The minister of the parish at this date was the Rev. John Guthrie, brother of the better known William Guthrie of Fenwick (*pronounced* Finnick), and cousin of James Guthrie, Stirling, the martyr. It was probably before his licensure that Peden held the above offices. It was while at Tarbolton, Peden passed through a fiery trial. A young woman made a cruel charge against him. Peden asserted his innocence and said the Lord would vindicate

*This work was re-issued with notes by Dr. Hay Fleming in 1901 under the title, *Six Saints of the Covenant*, (2 vols.), with the exception of the life of Renwick by Shields.

him. The out-gate from his trouble is thus stated by John Howie in his *Scots Worthies*: "The woman, after suffering many calamities, put an end to her own life, in the very same place where Peden had spent 24 hours seeking the divine direction, while he was embarrassed with that affair." In 1660 Peden was ordained minister of New Luce, in Galloway, sometimes called the Muir Kirk of Glenluce. New Luce did not long enjoy his ministrations for he was evicted in 1663 with the great majority of faithful Presbyterian ministers by a decree of the Privy Council passed at Glasgow on 1st October, 1662, when according to Bishop Burnet the Councillors were "so drunk that they were not capable of considering anything." Episcopacy was now set up and established in Scotland and began that odious career of persecution the memory of which has lingered in the memory of Scotsmen to this very day. The day he bade farewell to his people he preached in the forenoon from the Acts of the Apostles 20: 7, to the end, stressing the words: "Therefore watch and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn," etc. In the afternoon he preached from: "And now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts, 20: 32). The congregation were so overcome that they fell to weeping and it was with difficulty they were persuaded to leave the church. As Peden closed the pulpit door behind him, he knocked upon it three times with the Bible, solemnly saying: "In my Master's name I arrest thee! that none ever enter thee, but such as enter as I have done, by the door." And remarkable to relate no curate or indulged minister entered that pulpit during the ascendancy of Episcopacy in Scotland. From the date of his eviction Peden became a wanderer, hunted, searched for by dragoons, but never falling into his enemies' hands. His life onwards was full of incident with hairbreadth escapes and filled full with marvellous providences. As time went on the fires of persecution began to burn more fiercely and on being summoned to appear before the Privy Council and refusing to attend he was "put to the horn" and later his life and fortune were forfeited. In one of the Government proclamations issued at the beginning of 1666 Peden is described "riding up and down the country with sword and pistols, in gray clothes." After the rising of the Covenanters which ended so disastrously for them at Rullion Green, Peden, with others, is described as the worst of traitors and when captured he and they are to be handed over to the Lords of the Privy Council. In 1667 in a proclamation granting a general pardon Peden is expressly excepted. We now enter on an interesting period of Peden's life when as

a wanderer he figured in those extraordinary escapes which have covered his name with a romantic interest. On one occasion he was hotly pursued by the dragoons and on reaching a swollen stream he urged his horse into the waters and got safely to the other side. On turning round he saw the leader of the dragoons urging his horse into the waters when he arrested him with the words: "Stop man! you have not *my* Ferryman to take you across. Consider where your landing would be. Ye are fighting for the devil, and riding post to him. Oh! think of it." On another occasion when it looked like that he would fall into the hands of his enemies he prayed pathetically to his Lord: "Twine them about the hill, O Lord, and cast the lap of thy cloak over puir auld Sandy." His prayer was immediately answered by the mist coming down and shrouding him from his enemies. He had an uncanny sight into character — "There comes the devil's rattlebag" he said on one occasion as he saw a voluble religious professor approach. The man afterwards became a turncoat and Peden's characterisation stuck to him and to his family. After the Revolution the man complained to his minister but all the comfort he got was: "You well deserve it; he was an honest man that gave it to you; you and your must enjoy the title, there's no help for it."

At length Peden was captured in 1673 at Knockdow, in the parish of Colmonell, in South Ayrshire. He had been holding a conventicle in the neighbourhood and after preaching he retired to the house of Hugh Ferguson, who constrained him to stay for the night. Peden warned his host that it would be a dear night's lodgings to both and so it turned out. Both were apprehended and taken to Edinburgh where Ferguson was fined a thousand merks. Peden was sentenced to imprisonment for several years.

After his release we find him performing the marriage of John Brown (the Christian Carrier) and Isobel (or Marion) Weir in a quiet moorland farmhouse where the hunted minister and the godly couple met for the ceremony which was to make John and Isobel one. When the wedding ceremony was over the young wife listened to ominous, prophetic words from Peden, which must have filled her heart with strange forebodings: "You have got a good husband," he said, "value him highly, and keep linen for a winding sheet beside you, for in a day when you least expect it the Master will take him away from your head." Three years afterwards the young wife saw her husband shot before her eyes by Claverhouse.

(To be continued).

Britain's Peril

(Sidney Collett, the writer of this poem, was the renowned author of "The Scripture of Truth". In his preface to that book he says: "There are yet many who love the old paths and refuse to give up their faith in the Bible as the inspired Word of God." He died in 1941 in his 84th year.)

O Britain! thou privileged nation!
How greatly thy Land hath been blest!
Thou hast, since the great Reformation,
Had liberty, riches and rest.

The Bible laid firm thy foundations,
The Sabbath Day gave thee thy rest;
Though envied by all other nations,
Thy land by no foe was oppressed.

These blessings were not of thy making,
Thy God is the giver of all;
But, if Divine laws thou art breaking,
Like Babylon, thou too shalt fall.

What spirit can now have seduced thee?
What means all this unrest within?
Hath conscience e'en now not accused thee
Of Godless indulgence in sin?

The Bible — God's great revelation —
Thy people neglect and despise;
While doctrines of man's commendation,
Are "highly esteemed" in thine eyes.

Thy Sabbaths — no longer kept holy —
Are given to pleasure and gain;
And thus, with gross, impious folly,
God's rest day thy people profane!

Thy Church, once reformed from Rome's errors,
Is learning those errors again;
Though Rome, 'mid unspeakable horrors,
An Army of martyrs has slain!

The Preachers — how few preach God's Message!
The services "pleasant" are made;
And "Sunday" amusements, all presage
Thy glory beginning to fade.

Thy Leaders — for “party” contending —
Seem blind to the country’s true weal;
On human devices depending,
They promise thy troubles to heal.

Thy people — some drunken with pleasure,
While others with cares are engrossed;
For God — oh! how few can find leisure!
And soon, alas! all will be lost!

Thy army and navy will fail thee,
If thus the Lord God thou forsake;
Political schemes won’t avail thee,
If sacred commandments thou break.

For God has His eyes on this nation;
O, Britain! to thee will be sent
The doom of thy just condemnation,
Except, ah! “except thou repent”.

Then humble thee, proud British nation,
Give diligent heed to God’s Word,
Appoint now a Day of Confession,
And turn from thy sins to the Lord.

For God is a God of compassion,
So, if thou His mercy implore,
He’ll stay thy deserved retribution,
And favour Great Britain once more.

Sidney Collett.

Book Reviews

Christian Experience by Donald MacDonald. Banner of Truth Publications. 145pp. £5.95.

A short biographical account of the life of the late Rev. Donald MacDonald, contained in this book and a selection of his sermons, show him to have been taught of the Lord from his early days. Brought up in the doctrines of the Truth, he came to realise his spiritual ignorance. His inability to believe in Christ was his sin, and his responsibility to believe was his duty. By free and sovereign grace he was enabled to embrace Christ in the Gospel. All the doctrines of the Bible are faithfully

expounded in his sermons. I note that in the sermon "Heaven: the Lamb adored," page 141, there is uncertainty expressed as to whether the wounds, which were in the Saviour's resurrection body are in His glorified body in Heaven. On page 25 a quotation by an English preacher, "I feel that I would not break a promise, not even if it were to the devil I made it" is given. To break promise with unscriptural secret societies, such as Free Masons, is a duty.

I enjoyed reading this edifying book and I gladly recommend it.

A. McK.

No King but Christ by Maurice Grant. Evangelical Press. 274pp. £6.95.

This attractive paperback tells the story of Donald Cargill, the Covenanter, and also gives an outline of the history of the Covenanting period. It is well written and documented but its most attractive feature is the sympathetic spirit in which it is written. Today the Covenanters are looked upon more as a strange band of people who went to extreme lengths in holding to their beliefs and so brought the wrath of the Government upon themselves. It is good to find a writer who sees them as a people who contended for principles that were worth contending for — a people who were valiant for the truth in the earth, and who were ready to seal with their blood the truths to which they adhered. This is a notable period in the history of Scotland and the writer of "No King but Christ" in his study of this period of Church History has come to sympathise with them in their struggle for Christ's Crown and Covenant. We are glad to recommend this book to our readers, which has already been favourably reviewed in the Young People's Magazine.

D. B. M.

The Welsh Revival by Thomas Phillips. Banner of Truth Trust. 147pp. £4.95.

This Banner of Truth hardback deals with the origin and development of the 1859 Welsh Revival. Many parts of Wales were favoured at that time with a copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Many souls were awakened and brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and the people of God themselves were favoured with a gracious reviving in their souls. The only people who had reason to complain were the public house owners whose trade suffered severely and some had to close down altogether. The revival affected all denominations and its effects were permanent in the lives of many, though, as in all revivals, a small number

who at first gave promising signs of conversion afterwards went back. The Welsh revival was largely free of the unusual manifestations that were exhibited in some other revivals and flowed in a relatively calm channel. As with other accounts of revivals, it makes the reader long for the return of such days of spiritual prosperity to Zion.

D. B. M.

Some Favourite Books by John Macleod, Banner of Truth paperback. 125pp. £1.50.

In this book Principal Macleod the author of *Scottish Theology* introduces readers to some of the great classics of Reformed literature. In all he writes on 22 different books and writers. The selection, though a personal one, must be considered a truly representative one in view of Principle Macleod's phenomenal memory and his knowledge of Reformed literature. A book like this is most useful to direct readers to truly worthwhile literature in a day when modern second rate religious books abound. A number of the books reviewed by Principal Macleod are now out of print but may still be obtainable in Church libraries. We are glad to recommend this paperback to readers of the Magazine.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

Sabbath Ferries

Caledonian MacBrayne are still attempting to establish a Sabbath run to the Outer Isles. Because of opposition by the people in Harris to the vessel leaving Tarbert on Sabbath the ferry company are now proposing to sail their ship from Lochmaddy in North Uist. Here, too, considerable opposition to Sabbath sailing has been expressed but no doubt Cal Mac are relying on support in South Uist which is largely Roman Catholic. However throughout the whole of the Outer Isles there is strong opposition to the proposed Sabbath sailings and it is to be hoped that this opposition will be strong enough to make Caledonian MacBrayne alter its plans, otherwise it seems that the Company have neither respect for the Fourth Commandment, nor for the wishes of the majority of the people.

The Bishop of Durham and the Resurrection

Dr. Jenkins has once again spoken out against the physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks instead of a spiritual resurrection. Dr. Jenkins has become notorious by his denial of certain tenets of

the Christian Faith. What he says would not be taken note of at all were it not that he professes to hold the Christian Faith being a Bishop in the Church of England. It is all too evident that Bishop Jenkins, though a professed teacher of others, is in need himself of a spiritual resurrection. Apart from this he can only be a blind leader of the blind and the Scripture is very plain as to where such will land and also those whom they instruct. Sad to say, the Church of England has largely departed from "the faith once delivered to the saints" except for a small band of evangelicals who still endeavour to proclaim the truth and to whom the teachings of Dr. Jenkins are anathema. May the day speedily come when the Church of England will have a rebirth and throw off all the trappings of Rome and all the unscriptural tenets which ungodly men have introduced within her pale! Only the power of the Holy Ghost can accomplish this.

Schoolchildren and T.V.

The National Foundation for Educational Research has come to the conclusion that looking at too much T.V. has affected adversely the performance of British schoolchildren in mathematics and the sciences. It is reckoned that almost half of the schoolchildren in the country spend three or more hours a day watching television. Besides the adverse effect that T.V. watching has on educational performance, it is certain that the moral content of many T.V. programmes can only be destructive of proper moral standards. If the minds of children are fed from an early age with violence and other evils, we need not look far to discover the cause of the alarming state of matters inside and outside the classroom today. The level of violence is said to be shocking. One woman teacher said recently that since the abolition of corporal punishment, teachers had been given no effective sanctions to deal with disruptive pupils.

Church Notes

Meeting of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in the Inverness Church on Tuesday, 23rd May at 6.30 p.m. (D.V.) when Rev. Aaron Ndebele, Retiring Moderator, will preach.

Forthcoming Synod

It is expected that a considerable amount of business will be before the Synod at its forthcoming meeting. Decisions will have to be arrived at on matters which are of considerable importance to the Church. In view of

this we would bring before the praying people of the Church the need for importunate prayer in order that the Synod may be guided by the Lord in all the business that is before it so that all that is done will be to the glory of His Name and for the advancement of His Cause in our midst at home and abroad. A number of ministers and elders from overseas are expected to attend the Synod this year in view of the importance of the business to be attended to during the meeting of Synod. We trust that, in the Lord's kind providence they will be brought in safety to this country and also be brought back to their own countries after the Synod is over.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo on 13th June at 2 p.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 20th June at 2 p.m.

Southern: At Glasgow on 20th June at 6 p.m.

Western: At Laide on 4th July at 6 p.m.

Change of Communion Dates

Would readers please note that, for this May, the dates of the Communion in Toronto and Aberdeen have been changed. The Toronto Communion, instead of being held on the 2nd Sabbath of May, will be held on the 1st Sabbath. The Aberdeen Communion, instead of being held on the 1st Sabbath of May, will be held on the 2nd Sabbath. (This is to make it possible for Rev. M. MacInnes, who is coming over for the Meeting of Synod, to assist at the Aberdeen Communion on this occasion).

J. T.

Proposed Crematorium in Inverness

The Western Presbytery has written to the Chief Executive of Inverness District Council on 17th February in the following terms:

"We understand that there is a distinct possibility that your Council will yet give full permission for the establishing of a crematorium in Inverness. Because the crematorium is to serve the area in which this Presbytery is situated, we wish to state our objections to it.

"Our principal objection is that cremation is against the teaching of Scriptures, which show (and secular history confirms this) that cremation is a pagan method of disposing of the dead. It is therefore condemned by God (Jeremiah 7: 30, 31). On the other hand the Scriptures teach that from the beginning, God's rule in the matter is that the body "return unto the ground," (Genesis 3: 19). Furthermore, to say nothing of the example of Christ's own body being buried in a grave, there is the fact of the sacrosanct union between Christ and the bodies of believers, for, as the Bible says, They 'sleep in Jesus', 'die in the Lord.'

“Our objections, as you know, are by no means new, for burning the dead has always been viewed by Christians as unscriptural, and therefore an alien and horrible practice. We therefore appeal to the District Council to refuse permission and to show its support for that form of Christian burial which is yet the norm in Scotland as well as in the Highlands and Islands.”

Furthermore, the Western Presbytery, at its meeting in March, adopted the following resolution: “The Presbytery calls upon its members to take no part in funeral services where the deceased person has been cremated.”

Neil M. Ross, Clerk of Presbytery

Australia and New Zealand Presbytery Motion

The Australia and New Zealand Presbytery on 24th March 1989 decided to publish the following motion which was unanimously passed at the meeting of Presbytery on 30th January 1989:—

“This Presbytery affirms the position set out in the PRACTICE OF THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND regarding the Election and calling of Ministers to vacant charges —

- (1) This requires that a Presbytery should not proceed to moderate in a call until they have ground to believe that the congregation are, on the whole, very much of one mind as to the person, whom they mean to choose (pp 122, 129, 133);
- (2) This position is in no way inconsistent with Act IV 1859 paragraph 6 which states that a Presbytery shall not sustain a Call unless it be subscribed by a majority of the whole members on the Communicants Roll, i.e. still recognising the principle that requires thorough harmony;
- (3) And that the intrusion of a contrary view that a bare majority in a congregational meeting is sufficient to initiate a call, can only be disruptive of the harmony of a congregation.

J. A. T. van Dorp,
Clerk of Presbytery.

Student Received

At a meeting of the Australia and New Zealand Presbytery on 24th March 1989, Mr Bruce Russell, a member of the Sydney Congregation, was received as a student studying for the ministry.

J. A. T. van Dorp,
Clerk of Presbytery.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Room 7, Seafield House, Seafield Road, Inverness, IV1 1SJ, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:-

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Mr & Mrs Jones, per Rev. D. A. R., £50 for Bibles for Eastern Bloc; Mr & Mrs Brown, N.Z., plus another, £368.97 for Bibles for Russia; A. & C. J., per Rev. D. A. R., £100 for work in Communist countries.

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

Barnoldswick: Anon., £35; Two Friends, Glasgow £10 per Rev. D. MacLean, both for Communion Expenses; Anon., £100; Macedonian Evangelical Trust (Bromley) £100.

Dingwall: Two Friends £100 for Church Funds.

Dundee: Skye Friend £20, where most needed.

Edinburgh: Anon., £10; Anon., £10, both for Communist Mission; Anon., £2 for F. P. Magazine Free Distribution, all by envelopes in plate.

Fort William: Anon., £15, Psalm 133, envelope in plate; Mrs MacC., £10.

Glasgow: Anon., £50, Manse Tel. Acc.; Anon., £10 for Congr. Fund; Anon., £10; Anon., £10; Anon., £20; M. M. A. £10, all for Bus. Fund; Anon., £50; Anon., £50; Anon., £50; Anon., £80; Anon., £200 all envelopes in plate all for T. B. S.; Anon., £10; Anon., £5; both for Sust. Fund; Anon., £30 (2 donations) for African Famine Relief; Anon., £20 for Sponsor a Blind Child per R. A. C.

Laide: Mrs M. £10; Mr A. F. £20.

Larne: Anon., Stornoway £10 where most needed; D. J. C. £150; Anon., £7000 to clear interest-free loan.

North Harris: M. M., Tarbert £10; Friend, Stockinish £10; Anon., £5; Anon., £15, all by envelopes in plate; M. M., Cluer £10; D. & P. A., Grosebay £10, both per J. M. L., all for Communion Expenses; McL., Tarbert £20 for Door Coll., by envelope in plate.

Portree: Friend £20; Tunbridge Wells Friend £15; both for Sust. Fund; Friend £9 for Communion Expenses, all per F. M.; Anon., £20 for Foreign Missions; Anon., £20 for Italian Mission, both by envelope in plate.

Shieldaig: Anon., £25 for Congr. Funds.

South Harris: Friend, Tarbert £10; Friend, Tarbert £10; Friend, Kyles £10; Anon., Friend £50 per Rev. K. MacLeod; Friend of the Cause, late of Quidinish £5 (in plate); In loving memory of Sally Mackay per J. Mackay £500; Friend, Stornoway £5 for Manse Fund per D. MacKenzie.

North Tolsta: Friend £5; Isaiah 40: 8 £20; Anon., £25, all in plate for T. B. S.; Anon., £50 for Congr. Fund per Rev. J. MacDonald; J. A. & M. M. £40 for Manse heating and lighting; In memory of our beloved parents £20 for heating; Anon £5 for Sabbath School; Anon., £10 in plate, for T. B. S.

Raasay: Friend, Raasay, £20 for Sust. Fund; Friend, Raasay £20, for Home Mission; Envelope in plate £10; In memory of loving Aunt £5, both where most needed; Friends, Inverarish £15; Anon., Inverarish £5; MacR., Mill Park, £20; Envelope in plate £10, all for Car Fund.

Stornoway: In Church plate £40 for T. B. S.; Miss K. A. Macleod, The Cottage, Callanish £30 per Rev. J. MacLeod; In Church plate £100 (£60 for Sust. Fund, £20 for Home Mission Fund, £20 for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund.)

Strath: Friends, Rowanbank, Kyle £20 for Fabric Fund, in memory of the late Mr and Mrs L. MacKinnon per J. Van Woerden.