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**THE PROVIDENTIAL
PRESERVATION OF THE
GREEK TEXT OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT**

PREFACE

“**T**he Providential Preservation of the Greek Text of the New Testament” has been compiled from the writings of distinguished scholars, in defence of the integrity and providential preservation of the Greek Text underlying the Authorised Version of the English Bible. The extracts in the main are from the following sources:

1. “The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established” by Dean Burgon of Chichester, completed and edited by the Rev. Edward Miller, Prebendary of Chichester after Dean Burgon’s death. This is a standard work. The learned Dean’s Vindication—‘that grand scholar’ to use Dr. Scriviner’s phrase—is unanswerable.

2. “The King James Version Defended. A Christian View of the New Testament Manuscripts” by Dr. E. F. Hills, first issued in 1956¹. The Rev. Donald MacLean, Theological Tutor, Glasgow, in his review writes, “The refreshing title given to his book shows that Dr. Hills has no dubiety about the superiority of the Textus Receptus to other texts. We are not acquainted with Dr. Hills’ theological position, but he is evidently a firm believer in the inspiration and infallibility of

1 The Christian Research Press, P.O. Box 2013, Des Moines, Iowa, U.S.A.

the Bible, and a strenuous opponent of the modern critical methods which have so disastrously ruined the authority of the Word of God in the consciences of sinners. It appears, too, that Dr. Hills is a scholar of considerable ability. 'It is evident,' says President R. B. Kuiper of Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, in the Preface, 'that Dr. Hills is entitled to a hearing because of his scholarship. I think it is no less evident that he deserves a respectful hearing because of his theological convictions.' Prof. F. F. Bruce of Sheffield University, who does not agree with Dr. Hills' point of view, says of him 'a well known textual critic and probably the most distinguished contemporary defender of the superiority of the Byzantine text-type.' It is encouraging to read one of Dr. Hills acknowledged ability being such a whole-hearted defender of the King James Version.

"It would be out of place in a magazine of this kind to enter into a detailed discussion of the reasons given by Dr. Hills for accepting the Textus Receptus, but some indication may be given of his views on a proper approach to the subject. These stem from two positions which he considers to be absolutely necessary for one to have a proper view of the text of the Bible. The first of these is belief in the divine inspiration and the consequent infallibility of the Word of God. Anyone who looks upon the Bible as a divine revelation cannot approach it as he would any other book, written by a human author. The second position taken by Dr. Hills is that the Scriptures have been preserved by God in His providence so that the Church would always have the Word as a light to her feet and a lamp to her path. Both these positions are contained in the admirable statement in the Westminster Confession of Faith, in which the Scriptures are maintained to have been "immediately inspired by God and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages." (Ch. 1, Sec. 8).

"Liberal scholars, of course, reject the doctrine of divine inspiration which makes God the Author of His Truth, and constitutes the Bible an infallible revelation of His mind.

Conservative scholars, while accepting divine inspiration, have been lamentably weak on the second position concerning God's singular care and providence in keeping the Scriptures pure in all ages. This reviewer was very pleased with Dr. Hills' sharp criticism of Dr. B. B. Warfield on this aspect of the subject. Although Warfield was an evangelical scholar of great erudition, and an able opponent of Liberalism, he failed to show a similar consistency in the sphere of Textual Criticism. His view of God's singular care was that copies of the Scriptures had been multiplied and scholars raised up to collect and collate the various manuscripts and give us the Word of God. In this way he looked upon critics such as Westcott and Hort as instruments of God's singular care in keeping the text pure. He did not seem to see that the tendency of critical methods which looked upon the Bible as any other book, was not to preserve the Text but to destroy it, by making additions to and subtractions from it according to the subjective view of any particular critic.

"While the true Christian is not dependent upon the fluctuating opinions of men for his belief in the Scriptures—(this comes from the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit)—yet he cannot fail to be interested in attempts made to defend the Word of God against the inroads of unbelieving criticism. Dr. Hills' book is a fine attempt to do this and we look forward to further books from his able and well informed pen."—Donald MacLean. (*Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Magazine*, June 1960).

3. "The Doctrinal Deficiencies of the Modern Versions Traced to Their Sources, With Special Reference to the Revised Version and the Revised Standard Version" by the Rev. Terence H. Brown, a copy of which Mr. Brown sent to the Westminster Standard, Gisborne, and in his accompanying letter kindly said, "We would like you to feel free to use this material at your discretion." Mr. Brown's article has been incorporated in this tractate with the exception of the list

of significant passages, denying the eternal deity of Christ, which he quotes from the Revised Standard Version.

Mr. Brown is the Secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society, London, a Society which prints and circulates the Authorised Version only. Mr. Brown is an authority on New Testament Manuscripts. His critique of the New English Bible—"The New Translation of the New Testament, A Detailed and Critical Examination of the Text" has had a world-wide circulation. With admirable clearness and precision he demonstrates how disastrously the translators have failed to substantiate the claims advanced for their translation that the work of the Church was hindered by the archaic language of the Authorised Version of 1611, and the Revised Version of the 19th Century.

The aim of this tractate is to counteract the insinuations and avowed attacks on the integrity of the text on which the Authorised Version is based.

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." 2 Corinthians 2:17.

Rev. W. MacLean
Free Presbyterian Manse
Gisborne, NZ

THE PROVIDENTIAL PRESERVATION OF THE GREEK TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

“Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.” (The Westminster Confession of Faith, ch. 1, section 2 and 3.)

“No sooner,” writes Dean Burgon, “was the work of Evangelists and Apostles recognised as the necessary counterpart and complement of God’s ancient Scriptures and became the ‘New Testament,’ than a reception was found to be awaiting it in the world closely resembling that which He experienced Who is the subject of its pages. Calumny and misrepresentation, persecution and murderous hate, assailed Him continually. And the Written Word in like manner, in the earliest age of all, was shamefully handled by mankind. Not only was it confused through human infirmity and misapprehension, but it became also the object of restless malice and unsparing assaults. (“The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established” p. 10.)

Behind this restless malice and unsparing assaults is the enmity of him who “was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.” (John 8:44). And never was there a time in which Satan’s restless malice and unsparing assaults are so directed against the Written Word, through his agents under the cloak of religion and scholarship so-called, than in this our day of blasphemy and rebuke.

“Before our Lord ascended up to heaven,” continues Dean Burgon, “He told His disciples that He would send them the Holy Ghost,

who should supply His place and abide with His Church for ever. He added a promise that it should be the office of that inspiring Spirit not only to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever he had told them, but also to guide His Church ‘into all Truth’ or ‘the whole Truth.’ (John 16:13). Accordingly, the earliest great achievement of those days was accomplished on giving to the Church the Scriptures of the New Testament, in which, authorised teaching was enshrined in written form. There exists no reason for supposing that the Divine Agent, who in the first instance thus gave to mankind the Scriptures of Truth, straightway abdicated His office; took no further care of His work; abandoned those precious writings to their fate. That a perpetual miracle was wrought for their preservation—that copyists were protected against all risk of error, or evil men prevented from adulterating shamefully copies of the Deposit no one, it is presumed, is so weak as to suppose. But it is quite a different thing to claim that all down the ages the sacred writings must needs have been God’s peculiar care; that the Church under Him has watched over them with intelligence and skill; has recognised which copies exhibit a fabricated, which an honestly transcribed text; has generally sanctioned the one, and generally disallowed the other.”

The great theologian Dr. John Owen in the “Divine Original of the Scripture,” states, “The providence of God hath manifested itself as no less concerned in the preservation of the writings than of the doctrine contained in them; the writing itself being the product of His own eternal counsel for the preservation of the doctrine, after a sufficient discovery of the insufficiency of all other means for that end and purpose. And hence the malice of Satan hath raged no less against the Book than against the truth contained in it.” (p. 300).

“The doctrine of the providential preservation of the Scriptures,” writes Dr. F. F. Hills, “was not explicitly stated in any creed until the seventeenth century, when two formulations appeared, the

one in the Westminster Confession (1646) and the other in the Swiss Declaration (1675). The Westminster Confession affirmed that ‘the Scriptures were immediately inspired by God, and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages.’ And the Swiss Declaration developed this same doctrine more fully in the following words: ‘Almighty God not only provided that His Word which is a power to every one who believes, should be committed to writing through Moses, the Prophets, and Apostles, but also has watched over it with a fatherly care up to the present time, and guarded lest it might be corrupted by the craft of Satan or any fraud of man.’

“But the doctrine of the providential preservation of Scripture is not merely a seventeenth century doctrine. It is the doctrine of the Scriptures, and of Christ Himself. Our Lord evidently believed that the Old Testament had been thus preserved. There are two passages especially which clearly indicate this. The first is Matt. 5:18: “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” And the second is Luke 16:17: “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” Here Jesus attributes greater stability to the text of the Old Testament than to the heavens and the earth.

“Christ also taught that the same divine providence which had preserved the Old Testament would preserve the New Testament, too. In the concluding verses of the Gospel of Matthew we find His “Great Commission” not only to the twelve apostles but also to His Church throughout all ages, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations.” Implied in this solemn charge is the promise that through the working of God’s providence the Church will always be kept in possession of an infallible record of Christ’s words and works.

“The providential preservation of the Scriptures is also a necessary consequence of their divine inspiration. The God who inspired the Scriptures and gave them to His people to be an authoritative guide

and consolation cannot allow this perfect and final revelation of His will to perish. Because God has inspired the Scriptures, He has also preserved them by His providence.”

“The very concept of God’s providential preservation of Scripture,” continues Dr. Hills, “involves this basic idea, that God authenticates as well as preserves, that He has placed His Church in actual possession of the genuine text. God chose the Jewish Church to be the guardian of the Old Testament Scriptures and the Greek Church to guard the New, and at the time of the Reformation, Protestants received from the Jews and the Greeks the genuine texts of holy Scripture. Therefore, if the New Testament really has been divinely inspired and providentially preserved, the theory of Westcott and Hort cannot be correct because it has neglected the two special factors which make the textual criticism of the New Testament different from that of all other books.

“Since, therefore, God controls and directs all the activities and processes of the universe, even the smallest, surely the transmission of the New Testament down through the ages must always have been the object of God’s special care and guidance. The nature and results of this providential preservation of the New Testament text can be summarized in the six following axioms of consistently Christian New Testament textual criticism—(a) The purpose of the providential preservation of the New Testament is to preserve the infallibility of the inspired original Text, (b) This providential preservation concentrated itself on the *Greek* New Testament text. (c) This providential preservation operated within the sphere of the Greek Church. (d) This providential preservation operated through the testimony of the Holy Spirit, (e) The text of the majority of the manuscripts is the providentially preserved and approved text. (f) The text of the majority of the manuscripts is the standard text.”

“The New Testament text, therefore, which is found in the vast majority of the extant manuscripts is the providentially preserved

and approved text, the text upon which Almighty God, expressing Himself providentially in the usage of the Greek Church, has placed His divine sanction. This text is usually called the *Byzantine Text*, because it was the text of the whole Greek Church during most of the Byzantine Period (312-1453). It is found not only in the vast majority of the extant New Testament manuscripts but it is also very familiar to the vast majority of Bible readers all over the world, for it is the text of the King James Version and of the other early Protestant translations.”

“The Byzantine text then, found in the vast majority of the New Testament manuscripts, is the text upon which God, working providentially through the usage of the Greek-speaking Church, has placed the stamp of His approval. It is the best extant text. It represents the inspired original text very accurately, more accurately than any other New Testament text which survives from the manuscript period. In other words, *the Byzantine Text is the Standard Text*. ”² (Extracts from ch. 2 of “The King James Version Defended!”)

PROOFS VINDICATING THE TRADITIONAL OR STANDARD TEXT

1. Printed Editions of the Greek New Testament

“For many centuries before the Reformation,” writes the Rev. T. H. Brown, “Greek Scholarship was virtually nonexistent in Western Europe. In 1453 Constantinople, the eastern capital of the eastern part of the Empire and the centre of the Eastern Church, fell to the Moslem invaders. One far-reaching result of this calamity was that Christian scholars with a knowledge of Greek, and with Greek copies of the Holy Scriptures in their possession, fled to Western Europe

2 See Appendix II

where their influence gave a new impetus to the study of the Greek language. It has been said of this period that ‘Greece rose from the grave with the New Testament in her hand.’

Among the next generation of Greek scholars was Erasmus of Rotterdam, who prepared an edition of the Greek New Testament from five manuscripts in repute at that time. This edition was printed in 1516 and was followed by four later editions. At Alcalá (Complutum) University, in 1502, Cardinal Ximenes gathered manuscripts and men under the direction of Stunica, who published the “Complutensian Polyglot” in 1522, again from comparatively few manuscripts. Robert Stephens, relying largely upon Erasmus and Stunica, and with a possible sixteen manuscripts at his disposal, produced editions of the Greek text in 1546, 1550, 1551 and 1559. In 1552 he withdrew to Geneva and joined the Protestant cause. Theodore Beza produced five editions of the Greek between 1559 and 1598. These followed Stephens fairly closely, although Beza had some ancient manuscripts not available to Stephens. The Elzevir Brothers’ 1624 edition printed at Leyden has much in common with those of Stephens and Beza. The Elzevir text announced itself as the “Textus Receptus” (Received Text) and since that time Stephens’ 1550 edition has been known as the “Received Text” in England, while the Elzevir edition of 1624 has had this title on the Continent.

2. The Protestant Translations

The Protestant versions in England and on the Continent in the 16th and 17th centuries were based on these editions of the Greek text. These early printed Greek editions were themselves based on comparatively few manuscripts, which have nevertheless proved to be representative of the Greek text embraced many centuries earlier throughout the Greek Church.

The English versions of Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthews (or Rogers), the Great Bible, the Geneva Bible, the Bishops' Bible and the Authorised Version were all based upon this little company of Greek documents, *in which was preserved the Greek Text generally received throughout the Greek Church since the Apostolic ages.*

The Authorised Version

At the Hampton Court Conference of 1604 the Puritan leader Reynolds made the suggestion—which was first opposed and then adopted by the Conference with the enthusiastic approval of King James I—that there should be a new translation of the Holy Scriptures in English, to replace the different versions then in common use. Fifty-four men, including High Churchmen³ and Puritans, the greatest Hebrew and Greek scholars of the age, formed six companies to undertake the task. Using their Greek sources and the best commentaries of European scholars, and referring to Bibles in Spanish, Italian, French and German, they expressed the sense of the Greek in clear, vigorous and idiomatic English. In 1786 Dr. Geddes wrote, “If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent.” Bishop Lightfoot affirmed that this version was the storehouse of the highest truth and the purest well of our native English. “Indeed,” he wrote, “we may take courage from the fact that the language of our English Bible is not the language of the age in which the translators lived, but *in its grand simplicity* stands out in contrast to the ornate and often affected diction of the literature of the time.”

3 Not to be confused with Anglo-Catholics.

3. Recent Discoveries and Textual Criticism

During the next three hundred years vast numbers of documents were brought to light and Biblical scholars made many attempts to reconstruct the Greek New Testament. There are now about 4,500 Greek manuscripts, including 170 papyrus fragments (2nd-7th century); 212 Uncial copies (4th-10th century); 2,429 Minuscules (9th-16th century) and 1,678 Lectionary copies. The *overwhelming majority* of these manuscripts agree so closely that they may be said to present the same Greek Text, called by some the “Byzantine Text” because it prevailed throughout the Church in the Byzantine period A.D. 312-1453 (and long after).

4. The Versions

In addition to these Greek sources scholars have recovered copies of ancient *translations* in Latin, Syriac, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Armenian, Gothic, etc. Some of these originated before our oldest existing Greek copies and thus testify to the contents of still earlier manuscripts. *The great weight of this evidence is favourable to the “Received Text” underlying the Authorised Version.*

5. Early Greek and Latin Writers—The “Fathers”

The writings of early champions of the truth (and heretics) contain copious references to the Scriptures and again testify concerning the Greek text as it was in the 2nd century onwards—in a period earlier than our oldest copies. The *majority* of these witnesses support the so-called “Byzantine” or “Received” or “Traditional” text underlying the Authorised Version, and *they establish the antiquity of this text and its superior acceptance in the earliest period.*

6. The Papyri

It is alleged that the most ancient papyrus fragments are hostile to the Received Text, but it must be remembered that the fragments that remain are few in comparison with the many that must have perished through long and frequent use. It is probable that the surviving minority survived because they were not much used and that they fell into disuse because of their deficiencies. Twenty-nine papyri of the 6th and 8th centuries do not contain a distinctively “Byzantine” type of text, although it is beyond question that the “Byzantine” text was dominant in that period. These papyri are surviving representatives of a defective and discarded text.

7. Favourable Evidence of the Papyri

Some of the papyrus fragments of earliest date do contain readings which 19th century scholars had wrongly rejected as belonging to a late “Syrian” or “Byzantine” revision. This is true of the document known as Papyrus Bodmer II (A.D. 200?) which contains John chapters 1-14 including 13% of the readings rejected by the 19th century scholars as “late Byzantine.”⁴

ATTACKS ON THE TRADITIONAL OR RECEIVED TEXT

The Manuscripts

The attacks on the Received Text are based on the assumption that the new versions of the Bible are based on more reliable manuscripts than those available in the 16th and 17th centuries. But this claim

4 All the sections from “Printed Editions of the Greek New Testament” to “Favourable Evidence of the Papyri “ are from the Rev. T. H. Brown’s Article.

is not supported by the facts. "It may be admitted," writes the Rev. Terence Brown, "that the earlier translators had fewer manuscripts at their disposal, but the vast majority of the documents discovered since exhibit the same kind of Greek text as that which underlies the Authorised Version. There are now about 4,500 manuscripts of the New Testament, varying greatly in their age, extent and state of preservation. The bulk of these documents contain the Greek text in a form similar to that found in the copies available in A.D. 1516 or A.D. 1604.

The Dissenting Minority

"A small minority of ancient manuscripts contain a very large number of readings different from those found in the great majority. In the 19th century it became the fashion among Biblical scholars of the schools of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort, to evaluate this small cluster of ancient but defective manuscripts to a position of supreme and infallible authority. *Five of these copies were held to be of greater weight than one thousand or more documentary witnesses arrayed against them.*" (Rev. T. H. Brown.)

"Manuscript copies" writes Dean Burgon are commonly divided into Uncial, i.e. those which were written in capital letters, and Cursive or "minuscule," i.e. those which were written in running or small hand. This division though convenient is misleading. The earliest of the "Cursives" are more ancient than the latest of the "Uncials" by fully one hundred years. The later body of the "Uncials" belongs virtually, as will be proved, to the body of the "Cursives." There is no merit, so to speak, in a MS. being written in the Uncial character. The number of the Uncials is largely inferior to that of the Cursives, though they usually boast a much higher antiquity. Now it is not so much an exaggerated, as an utterly mistaken estimate

of the importance of the textual decrees of the five oldest of these Uncial copies, which lies at the root of most of the criticism of the last fifty years. We are constrained in consequence to bestow what will appear to some a disproportionate amount of attention on these five codices: viz. The Vatican Codex (also known as Codex B) and the Sinaitic Codex (also known as Codex Aleph) which are supposed to be both of the fourth century; the Alexandrian Codex A, and the fragmentary Parisian Codex C, which are assigned to the fifth; and lastly D, the Codex Bezae at Cambridge, which is supposed to have been written in the sixth. It will be found in the end that we have been guilty of no exaggeration in characterising B, Aleph and D at the outset as three of the most corrupt copies in existence. Let not anyone suppose that the age of these five MSS. places them on a pedestal higher than all others. They can be proved to be wrong time after time by evidence of an earlier period than that which they can boast." (The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels, p. 24, 25.)

"These few ancient MSS. hostile to the true text abound in omissions, alterations and transpositions of words and phrases, and have no valid title to be regarded as the sole trustworthy guides to the text of Holy Scripture. Mere antiquity is no guarantee of authority. These are old copies but they are bad copies and the Greek Church as a whole in the 4th century rejected their unreliable testimony and permitted them to sink into undignified oblivion. They have been recently disinterred and permitted to foist their ancient errors upon undiscerning readers of our own times." (Rev. T. H. Brown.)

The Vatican and Sinai Manuscripts

In the 1860's the Codex Sinaiticus and the Codex Vaticanus became available to Biblical scholars, and in 1881 Westcott and Hort

advanced the theory that the New Testament text was preserved in an almost perfect state in these two fourth century manuscripts.⁵ The Codex Sinaiticus derives its name from the fact that it was discovered by Dr. Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai in a basket full of old parchments to be used as fuel. This Codex is also known as Aleph. The Codex Vaticanus, Codex B, also dating back to the fourth century, has been in the custody of the Vatican for over 500 years. "Hort made a distinction," writes Dr. Hills, "between B and all the other manuscripts commonly classed as Alexandrian. He believed that B contained a singularly pure text to which he gave the name 'Neutral' (uncontaminated). This theory of the unique excellence of Codex B was enthusiastically upheld for many years by Hort's followers especially in England and America."

In connection with Westcott and Hort's theory Dean Burgon writes, "We oppose facts to their speculation. They exalt B and Aleph and D because in their own opinions those copies are the best. They weave ingenious webs, and invent subtle theories, because their paradox of a few against the many requires ingenuity and subtlety for its support. Dr. Hort revelled in finespun theories and technical terms, such as "Intrinsic Probability," "Transcriptional Probability," "Internal evidence of Readings," "Internal evidence of Documents," which of course connote a certain amount of evidence, but are weak pillars of a heavy structure. Even conjectural emendation and inconsistent decrees are not rejected. They are infected with the theorising which spoils some of the best German work, and with the idealism which is the bane of many academic minds especially at Oxford and Cambridge. In contrast with this sojourn in cloudland, we are essentially of the earth though not earthy. We are nothing if we are not grounded in facts: our appeal is to facts, our test lies in

5 See Appendix III

facts, so far as we can we build testimonies upon testimonies and pile facts on facts. We imitate the procedure of the courts of justice in decisions resulting from the converging product of all evidence, when it has been cross-examined and sifted.

“I proceed to offer for the reader’s consideration seven tests of Truth concerning each of which I shall have something to say in the way of explanation by-and-by. In the end I shall ask the reader to allow that where these seven tests are found to conspire we may confidently assume that the evidence is worthy of all acceptance, and is to be implicitly followed. A reading should be attested then by the seven following: 1. Antiquity or Primitiveness; 2. Consent of Witnesses, or Number; 3. Variety of Evidence, or Catholicity; 4. Respectability of Witnesses, or Weight; 5. Continuity, or Unbroken Tradition; 6. Evidence of the Entire Passage, or Context; 7. Internal Considerations, or Reasonableness.”

In the balances of these seven Tests of Truth the speculations of the Westcott and Hort school, which have bewitched millions are ‘Tekel,’ weighed in the balances and found wanting. “I am utterly disinclined to believe,” continues Dean Burgon, “so grossly improbable does it seem—that at the end of 1800 years 995 copies out of every thousand, suppose, will prove untrustworthy; and that the one, two, three, four or five which remain, whose contents were till yesterday as good as unknown, will be found to have retained the secret of what the Holy Spirit originally inspired. I am utterly unable to believe, in short, that God’s promise has so entirely failed, that at the end of 1800 years, much of the text of the Gospel had in point of fact to be picked by a German critic out of a wastepaper basket in the convent of St. Catherine; and that the entire text had to be remodelled after the pattern set by a couple of copies which had remained in neglect during fifteen centuries, and had probably owed their survival to that neglect; whilst hundreds of others had been thumbed to pieces, and had bequeathed their witness to copies

made from them. Happily, Western Christendom has been content to employ one and the same text for upwards of three hundred years. If the objection be made, as it probably will be, "Do you then mean to rest upon the five manuscripts used by Erasmus?" I reply that the copies employed were selected because they were known to represent the accuracy of the Sacred Word; that the descent of the text was evidently guarded with jealous care, just as the human genealogy of our Lord was preserved; that it rests mainly upon much the widest testimony; and that where any part of it conflicts with the fullest evidence attainable, there I believe it calls for correction."

"Professor P. Glaue of Jena," writes Dr. Hills, "in a posthumous article recently published (1954) attacks the text of B and Aleph pronouncing it to be a "learned recension," which was produced in the first half of the fourth century, and which contains arbitrary (and even capricious) corrections of the text. Glaue believed that the Western text is the oldest text and the only text that has not been revised. In order to obtain the best possible edition of the New Testament, he argued, we must abandon our reliance on the text of B and Aleph and turn to the Western text, especially that found in D. This we must endeavour to purify through the use of conjectural emendation." (p. 63)

An Error of Judgement⁶

"The discovery of these MSS, the Vatican (B) and the Sinai (Aleph)," writes the Rev. Terence Brown, "betrayed many Biblical students into a lamentable infirmity of critical judgment. Tischendorf himself, the discoverer of the Sinai Codex, amended his eighth edition in at least

6 All the sections from "An Error of Judgment" to "The Unitarian Bias of the R.S.V." are from the Rev. T. H. Brown's article.

3,505 places in conformity with new readings which he found in this document. The Codex Vaticanus exercised a similar mesmeric influence on the minds of many nineteenth and twentieth century scholars. The Revised Greek Text underlying the modern versions has the support only of that very small minority of the available MSS. which are in some respects in agreement with the unreliable text of the Sinai and Vatican Codices.

An Elaborate Theory

Westcott and Hort devised an elaborate theory, based more on imagination and intuition than upon evidence, elevating this little group of MSS to the heights of almost infallible authority. Their treatise on the subject and their edition of the Greek N.T. exercised a powerful and far-reaching influence, not only on the next generation of students and scholars, but also indirectly upon the minds of millions who have had neither the ability, nor the time, nor the inclination to submit the theory to a searching examination.

A Fundamental Error

Those who do so will find that the whole theory was based upon a fundamental error, namely the assumption that the reliability of these fourth century documents was in proportion to their age. There were no doubt bad copies in every age, some corrupted by accident, some by ignorance and some by design. These two exhibit the most amazing number of incorrect readings.

Deficiencies of These MSS

These two MSS and a few others containing a similar text, present in a weakened form, many of the passages of Holy Scripture which

speak most plainly of the deity of the Son of God. The trend of Biblical scholarship in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been towards a 'humanitarian' view of the person of Christ. It does not surprise us that many modern scholars should welcome the support of these two ancient documents, but it saddens us to see so many earnest evangelical Christians ready to accept without question a theory so destructive of the faith once delivered to the saints.

Rejecting the Evidence

In the words of a great nineteenth century scholar "To cast away at least nineteen twentieths of the evidence, and to draw conclusions from the petty remainder is not less than a crime and a sin, not only by reason of the sacrilegious destructiveness exercised upon the Holy Scriptures, but because such a treatment is inconsistent with conscientious exhaustiveness and logical method."

The True Text

The Sinai and Vatican manuscripts represent a small family of documents containing various readings which the Church as a whole rejected before the end of the fourth century. Under the singular care and providence of God more reliable MSS were multiplied and copied from generation to generation, and the great majority of existing MSS exhibit a faithful reproduction of the true text which was acknowledged by the entire Greek Church in the Byzantine period A.D. 312-1453. This text was also represented by the small group of documents available to Erasmus, Stephens, the compilers of the Complutensian edition and other sixteenth century editors. This text is represented by the Authorised Version and

other Protestant translations up to the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The Revised Version of 1881

This version was intended to embody the testimony of the newly discovered manuscripts and the fruits of scholarly research in the Greek language, but the whole undertaking was so dominated by the mistaken textual theories of Westcott and Hort, that the years of labour produced an unreliable translation based upon an unreliable text.

Influence of Westcott and Hort

When the Revision Committee met, each member was given an advance copy of the edition of the Greek N.T. prepared by Professor Westcott and Professor Hort. These scholars had both persuaded themselves that the true text of the N.T. was preserved in its purest form in the Codex Vaticanus and that the testimony of this manuscript or the Codex Sinaiticus supported by one or more of a small company of documents exhibiting the same kind of text must be regarded as almost infallible in all cases where the available manuscripts presented a variety of readings.

Among the Revisers there was only one other who could lay claim to experience and ability in the realm of textual criticism, namely Prebendary Scrivener. As the revision proceeded textual matters were discoursed upon in turn by these three men and in many cases the more conservative opinions of Scrivener were set aside under pressure from Westcott and Hort. The majority of the Revisers were disposed to be influenced by the judgment of the two professors and the wiser and more judicious minority were constantly overruled in this way.

The Revisers' Greek Text

After the publication of R.V. Scrivener was commissioned to prepare an edition of the Greek Text which had been followed by the Revisers. This text was not identical with that of Westcott and Hort but it owed much to their dominant influence and followed their lead in most matters of major importance. In this edition Scrivener was bound to reproduce a Greek text in which there were many features which were repugnant to his own wiser judgment. In his own works, particularly the learned Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament (which went through numerous editions including what might be termed a definitive edition by Miller), and Scrivener's Six Lectures on the Text of the New Testament, Scrivener dissented from many of the conclusions of the Revisers.

The crux of the matter is Westcott and Hort's insistence upon the superiority of the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus and a few kindred documents. The worst corruptions of the Greek text appeared before the end of the second century and it is generally agreed among critical scholars that the few manuscripts available to Stunica, Erasmus and Stephens were infinitely better than many of the earliest period. Some of these ancient but imperfect manuscripts were progenitors of documents like the Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, but side by side with them were other MSS exhibiting the text more or less as represented by the so-called Received Text and Authorised Version. The most ancient writers and the translators of the most ancient versions were apparently acquainted with both kinds of text.

The Antiquity of the Received Text

This fact is admitted by Bishop Ellicott the chairman of the revisers in his pamphlet, "The Revisers and the Greek text of the N.T. by

two members of the N.T. Company,” pp. 11, 12. “The manuscripts which Erasmus used differ, for the most part only in small and insignificant details from the great bulk of the cursive MSS. The general character of their text is the same. By this observation the pedigree of the Received Text is carried up beyond the individual manuscripts used by Erasmus. . . . That pedigree stretches back to remote antiquity. The first ancestor of the Received Text was at least contemporary with the oldest of our extant MSS, if not older than any one of them.”

It must be emphasised that the argument is not between an ancient text and a recent one, but between two ancient forms of the text, one of which was rejected and the other adopted and preserved by the Church as a whole and remaining in common use for more than fifteen centuries. The assumptions of modern textual criticism are based upon the discordant testimony of a few specimens of the rejected text recently disinterred from the oblivion to which they had been deliberately and wisely consigned in the 4th century.

The “Syrian Recension” Theory

Being convinced that the Vatican/Sinai type of text was the most ancient and most pure, Westcott and Hort assumed that there must have been a “Syrian Recension” of the Greek text some time between A.D. 250 and A.D. 350 and that this recension was the progenitor of the “Received Text.” In their Introduction to the Greek N.T. these two scholars spun a web of theories to advance the claims of their favourite manuscripts to the highest antiquity. One great obstacle was the frequent agreement of the Peshitto Syriac with the Greek Textus Receptus. This obstacle was removed by the simple expedient of changing the relative dates of the Peshitto and Curetonian Syriac, calling the latter the “Vetus” and the former the “Vulgate” Syriac.

In his book on the N.T. Canon (1855), Westcott himself saw “no reason to desert the opinion which has obtained the sanction of the most competent scholars, that the formation of the Peshitto Syriac was to be fixed within the first half of the second century. The very obscurity which hangs over its origin is *proof* of its venerable age, because it shows that it grew up spontaneously among Christian congregations. . . . Had it been a work of later date, of the 3rd or 4th century it is scarcely possible that its history should be so uncertain as it is.” In the “Introduction to the N.T. in Greek,” 1882, Westcott contradicted himself on all these points and contended that Curetonian Syriac was of greater antiquity, and that the Peshitto was an authoritative revision in the latter part of the 3rd or 4th centuries.

Although entirely lacking in historical evidence, the Syrian Recension theory was particularly attractive because it appeared to give some semblance of authority to those engaged in the process of recasting the Greek Text in the mould of the Vatican/Sinai MSS. These documents belong to a small group exhibiting the kind of Greek text familiar to and generally approved by Origen, whose pronounced Arian tendencies sufficiently explain his preference for MSS of this character. In many passages relating to the Person of Christ this type of text dilutes the testimony of the Holy Scriptures to our Lord’s deity. (Some of these passages are commented on below.)

The Deity of Our Lord

In his Bampton lectures on the Divinity of our Lord, delivered in the year 1866 Canon Liddon gave a timely and solemn warning of the perils which then beset the Church of Christ through the denial of our Saviour’s essential and eternal deity. The detractors of this vital truth of God’s Word have found a powerful ally in the modern versions which have been based upon the pro-Arian type of Greek Text exhibited by MSS of the Vatican/Sinai group. Perhaps the most

powerful Unitarian assailants of the true doctrine of Holy Scripture to-day are the so-called “Jehovah’s Witnesses.” It is significant that their own version follows this type of text and that they are generally disposed to welcome versions like the R.S.V. and N.E.B. which display similar deficiencies and rest upon the same unsound foundation.

Most people to-day, including theological students, teachers and ministers, are prepared to adopt the attitude that the “scholars” must be right and that matters relating to the Greek Text must be left in the hands of “experts.” The evangelical professes to stand firm by the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, the equal and eternal deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the atonement and other vital doctrines, but hopefully surrenders both text and translation to the biased judgment of unsound scholars and meekly allows the text of Holy Scripture to be arbitrated by a group of ancient but unreliable documents.

The American Standard Version

After the English Revisers had completed their task the American Revision Committee continued its deliberations for some years and published the fruit of their labours early in the present century. This version was in many respects very similar to the English Revised Version, although diverging from it in hundreds of details of varying significance.

The Revised Standard Version (R.S.V.)

This version which is a revision of this “Standard Version” is the property of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., has achieved a measure of popularity in the English-speaking world, and some of the Bible Societies have amended their

constitutions in order to permit its circulation. Its general adoption by English readers was commented on without disapproval by Professor Bruce in his article entitled, "One Bible Many Versions" in "The Christian" on 9th October, 1964. It is quoted by evangelical preachers and writers and widely circulated by evangelical organisations.

Notwithstanding its present popularity and the misleading and sometimes ill-informed testimonials to its excellence, there are very good reasons why discerning Christians with a reverent regard for the divine inspiration, authority and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures should exercise great caution in the use of this version and refrain from encouraging its general use by undiscerning readers.

The Translators

Some of the translators have written articles which indicate that they do not acknowledge the Bible doctrines of the Deity of Christ, His Pre-existence, His Virgin Birth, His Atoning Sacrifice and present intercession in Heaven. A translator who has adopted an entirely "humanitarian" view of the Son of God, and is prepared to respect His ideal humanity and to disregard His claims to full deity, is likely to betray his erroneous dogma in his translation. That this deficiency is apparent in the R.S.V. is demonstrated by the examples given later in this article.

Socinianism

The last 150 years have witnessed a great resurgence of ancient heresies relating to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and these errors have left their mark on modern translations of the Bible.

The translator, as well as the reader, is confronted with the vital

question, “Whom do men say that I am?” The Ebionite of old, and later the Socinian, asserted that Jesus was merely man, whether supernaturally born, or as modern rationalists generally maintain, subject in all respects to ordinary natural laws. They contended that His moral eminence alone entitled the enthusiastic admirer to call Him “divine.” Socinianism will confess Christ’s “divinity” if this involves nothing more emphatic than an acknowledgment of certain moral features of the Divine Being displayed in the human life of Christ.

Modern Humanitarianism

In modern days this phenomenon of “humanitarianism” is reproduced by writers who use language which seems to do justice to Christ’s deity. They recognise Him as the “perfect revelation of God” and the “true head and Lord of human kind,” but they deny the existence of a Trinity in the Godhead, and recognise in God no pre-existent Personal Form as the basis of His self-manifestation to man. They therefore avoid any plain assertion that Christ is God.

Arianism

Arians maintain that our Lord Jesus Christ existed before His Incarnation and that by Him, as by an instrument, the Supreme God made the worlds, and that He is to be “worshipped” only as the highest creature. They insist that there was a time when He did not exist, that He had a beginning of existence and cannot be called God in the sense in which the Name is applied to the Supreme Being. This view of the Redeemer satisfies neither reason nor faith and has been well described as a resting point for minds which are sinking from a profession of Christian faith downwards to pure humanitarianism. Some of the translators have embraced and

expressed unscriptural views akin to these, in contrast to the faith of the whole Church of Christ, which acknowledges the pre-existent and eternal deity of the only-begotten Son of God, His equality with the Father, His miraculous incarnation, his atoning death and physical resurrection.

Doctrinal Changes

The advocates of the R.S.V. endeavour to assure their readers that the numerous changes in the text do not affect any fundamental doctrine. They allege that the alterations are exclusively dictated by newly discovered manuscripts and by the gains of scholarly research in the Biblical languages. These assurances are not in accordance with the facts. Fundamental doctrines relating to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are weakened and obscured in the R.S.V. and the translators appear to have made some changes on dogmatic rather than linguistic or documentary grounds.

A Jewish Scholar Among the R.S.V. Translators

The translation committee included in its membership a Jewish scholar, Mr. H. M. Orlinsky of the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. This man would not accept the deity of Christ, but would favour a “Unitarian” emphasis in any passage referring to the Messiah.

For example, the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 was altered to read “A young woman shall conceive and bear a son.” The correct reading is, “A virgin shall conceive” The erroneous reading in the R.S.V. makes it possible to dissociate this prophecy from the record of our Lord’s miraculous birth of the virgin Mary in the New Testament.

The Comment of a Jewish Rabbi

The corrupted text met with the warm approval of Rabbi Balfour Brickner of Temple Sinai, Washington, who declared, "I am delighted to know that at last this great error of translation has been finally corrected, and that at last some elements of the Christian world no longer officially maintain that Isaiah 7:14 is a prediction that Jesus was to be born of the virgin Mary."

The Unitarian Bias of the R.S.V.

Shortly after the R.S.V. New Testament was published its deficiencies were exposed in an article by Dr. R. C. Foster, Professor of Greek & N.T. in Cincinnati Bible Seminary, Ohio. His treatise was published in 1946 in the July issue of the "Church News Letter." After presenting a careful study of the numerous changes in the text, he wrote, "The Revised Standard Version is frankly Unitarian and offers a very subtle attack upon the deity of Christ ... It is as if the scholars were saying—This stubborn and unscientific generation of the 20th century insists on maintaining that Jesus was God in the flesh, but by the use of a literary device we will put words into their mouths as they read this version so that they will consciously or unconsciously admit that Jesus is not God but man."

ATTACKS ON PARTICULAR PASSAGES OF GOD'S WORD

The Aleph and B Codices as has been shown, have no valid title to be regarded as the sole trustworthy guides to the text of Holy Scripture. "They abound" says Dean Burgon, "with so much licentiousness or carelessness as to suggest the inference that they are in fact indebted for their preservation to their hopeless character. Thus it would appear that an evil reputation ensured their neglect in ancient times; and has procured that they should survive to our own, long after

multitudes which were much better had perished in their Master's service." It is not surprising, therefore, that omissions occur in these Codices. The fact that they occur in these Codices, oracular in the estimation of the Westcott and Hort school, is sufficient to daub their appearance in the "Textus Receptus" as interpolations and forgeries. Reference to two passages will suffice to show how daringly men take from the Word of God.

1. The Last Twelve Verses of Mark's Gospel

"These verses," writes Dr. Hills, "have an enormous weight of testimony in their favour, which cannot lightly be set aside. They are found in all the Greek manuscripts except B and Aleph and all the Latin manuscripts except k. And even more important, they were quoted as Scripture by early Church Fathers who lived one hundred and fifty years before B and Aleph were written; namely Justin Martyr (c. 150), Tatian (c. 175), Irenaeus (c. 180), and Hippolytus (c. 200). Thus the earliest extant testimony is on the side of these last twelve verses. Surely the critical objections against them must be exceedingly strong to overcome the evidence for their genuineness. It is necessary, therefore, to hear the most important of these objections against Mark 16:9-20 and to judge of their validity." Dr. Hills deals with these objections and concludes as follows: "The modern critical attack upon the last twelve verses of Mark must be judged a failure for three reasons. (a) No satisfactory theory has been advanced to explain how Mark's Gospel could have ended at chapter 16, verse 8. (b) No objection has been raised against Mark 16:9-20 which cannot be readily answered. (c) There is no counter-consideration which can avail to set aside the tremendously weighty evidence in favour of this concluding section of Mark, the evidence of all the Greek manuscripts and of four Church Fathers of the second century."

Dean Burgon's book "The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to Mark, Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors and Established," a classic on the subject, received the following favourable review from Dr. Scrivener, "Dean Burgon's brilliant monograph has thrown a stream of light upon the controversy; nor does the joyous tone of his book mis-become one who is conscious of having maintained a cause which is precious to him. We may fairly say that his conclusions have in no essential point been shaken by the elaborate and very able counter-plea of Dr. Hort."

2. 1 John 5: 7

This verse, often referred to as the *Johannine comma* is regarded by the critics as a forged entry. "As to its being wanting" wrote the learned Dr. Gill in his Commentary, "in some Greek manuscripts, as the Alexandrian and others, it need only be said that it is to be found in many others; it is in an old British copy, and in the Complutensian edition, the compilers of which made use of various copies; and out of sixteen ancient copies of Robert Stephens', nine of them had it: and as to its not being cited by some of the ancient Fathers, this can be no sufficient proof of the spuriousness of it, since it might be in the original copy, though not in the copies used by them, through the carelessness or unfaithfulness of transcribers; or it might be in their copies, and yet not cited by them, they having Scripture enough without it to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ: and yet after all, certain it is, that it is cited by many of them: by Fulgentius in the beginning of the sixth century, against the Arians, without any scruple or hesitation: and Jerome, as had been observed before has it in his translation made in the latter part of the fourth century. In his epistle to Eustochium prefixed to his translation of the canonical epistles, he complains of the omission of

it by unfaithful interpreters. It is cited by Athanasius about the year 350; and before him by Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, about the year 250; and is referred to by Tertullian about the year 200; and which was within a hundred years, or little more, of the writing of the epistle: which may be enough to satisfy anyone of the genuineness of this passage: and besides there was never any dispute over it till Erasmus left it out of the first edition of his translation of the New Testament; and yet he himself upon the credit of the old British copy before mentioned, put it into another edition of his translation.”

CONCLUSION

“We have seen,” writes the Rev. T. H. Brown in the conclusion of his article, “that a small group of ancient but untrustworthy manuscripts are at variance with the vast majority of the documents now at the disposal of Biblical scholars. It has become the vogue to refer to the few as “the best manuscripts,” whereas in reality they contain some of the worst corruptions of the ancient text. Some of these documents, particularly the Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus were produced at the time when the most dangerous heresies prevailed in the Church with regard to the Person of Christ and His relationship to the Father. This little group proved specially attractive to those modern scholars who were disposed to adopt very similar erroneous views themselves.

“Westcott and Hort in the last century endeavoured to make this deficient minority of the manuscripts respectable by propounding a theory that the majority of the N.T. documents were derived from copies which had been deliberately “edited” and embellished, implying that their conformity with the Trinitarian doctrine embraced by the Church was artificial and not original. There is in fact no historical evidence for any such revision, but this groundless

and dangerous theory has cast its long shadow over the whole field of Biblical scholarship right down to our own time.

“The Bible testifies to the eternal deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of the Eternal God. The modern versions and the defective manuscripts upon which they rely, obscures this vital testimony, which the Authorised Version faithfully preserves.”

One of the many proofs of the appalling apostacy of our day from the faith once delivered to the saints is the eagerness shown to discredit the Authorised Version of the English Bible on the one hand, and to popularise on the other, modern versions based on untrustworthy manuscripts whose translators have proved themselves unfaithful to the Received or Standard Text underlying the Authorised Version, which text through the special providence of God, has been preserved down through the ages from apostolic times. One of the stock arguments of the Jehovah’s Witnesses in defence of their blasphemy is that the text of the Authorised Version is unreliable, and that the true text of the New Testament is to be found in the modern versions which deny the eternal deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Upon the Authorised Version the Lord has manifestly set the seal of His approval in imparting the blessing of eternal life through both the reading and preaching of it. The Lord in His mercy deliver us, and the rising generation, from the wolves in sheep’s clothing who would rob us of this priceless heritage, and who by their carnal and unwholesome views foul the pure waters of divine revelation. “From such,” it is written, “withdraw thyself.” (1 Timothy 6:5). Instead of listening to the “perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,” let us rather give heed to what the Faithful and True Witnesses say, “Because thou hast kept the Word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” (Rev. 3:10).

“Buy the Truth and Sell It Not”

“The Christian who rejects the King James Version,” writes Dr. Hills in the conclusion of his excellent book, “and adopts one of its modern rivals, by this very action places himself on the high road to modernism. For along with the King James Version he has rejected the only concept of the providential preservation of Scripture which gives him any assurance that a pure New Testament text has been preserved down through the ages and is obtainable to-day. He has rejected the view that the special providence of God has operated in the sphere of the Greek Church and expressed itself in its usage and that therefore the Byzantine text, found in the vast majority of New Testament manuscripts, is a trustworthy representative of the divinely inspired original text and the best of all extant texts. And not only this, but he has adopted other concepts of the providential preservation of Scripture, concepts which suggest that God does not really care whether or not a pure New Testament text is available to His people, or whether or not His people have any assurance concerning the purity of the New Testament texts available to them. For, according to the best of these concepts, God has done nothing more than to preserve the true New Testament text somewhere amid the extant manuscripts, leaving the scholars the task of finding it, if they can. According to the others God may not even have done this. Nay, it may even have been the purpose of God to allow a considerable degree of corruption to make its way into all the extant New Testament manuscripts.

“These faulty concepts of the providential preservation of the New Testament lead speedily to a faulty concept of the original inspiration of the New Testament. For if God has been careless in the preservation of the New Testament, it is hard to see why He should have been scrupulously careful in the original writing of the New Testament. If God has preserved the New Testament in such a way

that it is impossible to obtain assurance concerning the purity of this text, then there is no infallible New Testament to-day, and if there is no infallible New Testament to-day, it may very well be that there never was an infallible New Testament. If God has allowed the New Testament to lose its infallibility, why should we suppose that He created it infallible in the first place? Thus the rejection of the King James Version for one of its modern rivals leads first to the rejection of the doctrine of the providential preservation of Scripture, then to the rejection of the infallibility of Scripture, and finally, to the adoption of a modernistic religion which rests not on the authority of Scripture but on human reason.

“Not all those who have thus rejected the King James Version have followed out the logic of their action to its final conclusion but they are always in danger of doing so. It is the purpose of this book, therefore, to lead such persons away from this danger back to the Byzantine Text, found in the vast majority of the New Testament manuscripts, to the Reformation Text (*Textus Receptus*), which is the historic printed edition of the Byzantine Text, and to the King James Version, which is the classic English translation of the Reformation Text.” (Dr. Hills).

The Inspiration of the Scriptures

“We take this opportunity to point out to our members and adherents at home and abroad two of the main doctrines which are essential for the establishment and progress of the Kingdom of Christ on earth. These two are (1) The Inspiration of the Scriptures, and (2) The need of an enlightened heart to receive unto salvation the divine truth of the Inspiration of the Rule of Faith.

There is no occasion here to present any detailed statement of the truth of the Inspiration of the Word. Such statements can be got in appropriate books, specially for ordinary, popular purposes,

in the writings of Halyburton. All that we have in view is to lay emphasis on the Confessional statement. The ultimate ground of receiving the Rule of Faith as inspired is not evidently the majesty of the whole and harmony of the parts—useful though these and other parts are—but that the Scriptures are self-evidencing. This implies that while men are unregenerate, they cannot spiritually discern the inspired rule to be inspired at all. No one, therefore, apprehends in a due manner, the self-evidencing light of Scripture, but those belonging to the Israel of God. It is essential for a soul to be divinely illuminated to appreciate savingly the Scriptures. These two fundamental doctrines of inspiration and internal illumination embrace, in their implications, all the confessional doctrines.

A common objection is that, owing to the transcription of manuscripts down the ages, the Church lacks the original copies. The view of the Reformed Church regarding this is that God's special providence watched over Scripture. Moses Stuart points out that about 95 per cent, of the existing variations have about as much significance as the question whether "honour" should be spelled with or without the letter "u." Although there are "various readings" yet "not one doctrine of religion is changed," says Stuart. "Not one important fact altered by the whole of the various readings collectively taken." Apart from the relatively few and unimportant variations, which are perfectly evident, we are in possession of the inspired Word of God. We therefore earnestly direct the attention of our people to these two fundamental doctrines of the Westminster Confession, namely, that Scripture is self-evidencing, or seen to be the Holy Infallible Word in its own light, while, at the same time, it cannot be savingly discerned as such, apart from the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit. To be established in these two complementary doctrines leads on to being rooted and grounded in the other doctrines of the one, holy, supreme rule given for

the salvation of immortal souls.” (Rev. D. A. MacFarlane, M.A., Dingwall, Theological Tutor, Extracted from “Proceedings of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland Synod” May 1954.)

“The Bible reveals the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are unchangeable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the Christian’s charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. CHRIST is its GRAND SUBJECT, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened in the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labour, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents.”

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” (2 Timothy 3:16.)

Rev. W. MacLean

APPENDIX I

The Hebrew Text of the Old Testament Vindicated

It was in connection with the Old Testament Scriptures that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Faithful and True Witness declared, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in

no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matt. 5:18), and again, “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

“For Christians it will be enough to know that our Lord Jesus Christ has set the seal of His infallible sanction on the whole of the Old Testament,” wrote the late canon H. P. Liddon who was professor of Exegesis in the University of Oxford during the last part of the last century, when the heretical and destructive views of the Higher Critics were in the ascendancy. “He (Christ) found the Hebrew canon just as we have it in our hands to-day, and He treated it as an authority which was above discussion—nay, more, he went out of his way, if we may reverently speak thus, to sanction not a few portions of it which our modern scepticism too eagerly rejects. When He would warn His hearers against the danger of spiritual relapse, He bade them to remember Lot’s wife. When He would point out how worldly engagements may bind the soul to a coming judgment, He reminds them how men ate, and drank, and married, and were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered into the Ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. When He would put his finger on a fact in past Jewish history, which, by its admitted reality, would warrant belief in His own resurrection, He points to Jonah, three days and three nights in the whale’s belly. When standing on the Mount of Olives, with the Holy City at His feet, He would quote a prophecy, the fulfilment of which would mark for His followers that its impending doom had at last arrived, He desires them to flee to the mountains, when they ‘shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place.’ . . . Yes, the trustworthiness of the Old Testament is, in fact, inseparable from the trustworthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, if we believe that He is the true light of the world, we shall resolutely close our ears against any suggestions of the falsehood of those Hebrew Scriptures which have received the stamp of His divine authority.”

Professor Robert Dick Wilson, M.A., Ph.D., Princeton, who died in the first part of this century was a staunch defender of the doctrine of the Verbal Inspiration of Holy Scripture and claimed, with justice, to be an expert in all the questions involved in such a belief. Through long years of continuous study he mastered all the ancient languages and dialects needed to read the manuscripts of the Bible. In order to master the Babylonian language, not taught in any American University, he had to travel to Germany and study at the University of Heidelberg. To Babylonian he added Ethiopic, Phoenician, various Aramaic dialects, etc., until he had mastered 45 ancient languages and dialects. In his book "Is The Higher Criticism Scholarly?," he writes, "I have seen the day when I set out on some Bible research with fear and trembling—wondering what I should discover—but now all that fear has passed."

The following are selections from an address by Prof. Wilson on *What is An Expert?*

"If a man is called an expert, the first thing to be done is to establish the fact that he is such. One expert may be worth more than a million other witnesses that are not experts. Before a man has the right to speak about the history, the language, and the paleography of the Old Testament, the Christian church has the right to demand that such a man should establish his ability to do so. For forty-five years continuously, since I left college, I have devoted myself to the one great study of the Old Testament, in all its languages, in all its archaeology, in all its translations, and as far as possible in everything bearing upon its text and history. I tell you this so that you may see why I can and do speak as an expert. I may add that the result of my forty-five years of study of the Bible has led me all the time to a firmer faith that in the Old Testament we have a true historical account of the history of the Israelite people; and I have a

right to commend this to some of those bright men and women who think that they can laugh at the old-time Christian and believer in the Word of God.

You will have observed that the critics of the Bible who go to it in order to find fault have a most singular way of claiming to themselves all knowledge and all virtue and all love of truth. One of their favourite phrases is, "All scholars agree." When a man writes a book and seeks to gain a point by saying "All scholars agree," I wish to know who the scholars are and why they agree. Where do they get their evidence from to start with?

I remember that some years ago I was investigating the word "Baca," which you have in the English Bible—"Passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well." I found in the Hebrew dictionary that there was a traveller named Burkhart, who said that "Baca" meant mulberry trees. That was not very enlightening. I could not see how mulberries had anything to do with water. I looked up all the authority of the scholars in Germany and England since Burkhart's time and found they had all quoted Burkhart. *Just one scholar at the back of it!* When I was travelling in the Orient, I found that we had delicious water here and there. The water sprang up apparently out of the ground in the midst of the desert. I asked my brother who was a missionary where this Water came from. He said, "They bring this water from the mountains. It is an underground aqueduct. They cover it over to prevent it from evaporating." Now the name of that underground aqueduct was Baca.

My point is that you ought to be able to trace back this agreement among scholars to the original scholar who propounded the statement, and then find out whether what that scholar said is true. What was the foundation of his statement?

I have claimed to be an expert. Have I the right to do so? Well, when I was in the Seminary I used to read my New Testament in nine different languages. I learned my Hebrew by heart, so that

I could recite it without the intermission of a syllable; and the same with David, Isaiah and other parts of Scripture. As soon as I graduated from the Seminary, I became a teacher of Hebrew for a year and then I went to Germany. When I got to Heidelberg I made a decision. I decided and I did it with prayer to consecrate my life to the study of the Old Testament. I was twenty-five then; and I judged from the life of my ancestors that I should live to be seventy; so that I should have forty-five years to work. I divided the period into three parts. The first fifteen years I would devote to the study of the languages necessary. For the second fifteen I was going to devote myself to the study of the text of the Old Testament; and I reserved the last fifteen years for the work of writing the results of my previous studies and investigations, so as to give them to the world. And the Lord has enabled me to carry out that plan almost to a year.

Most of our students used to go to Germany, and they heard professors give lectures which were the results of their own labours. The students took everything because the professor said it. I went there to study so that there would be no professor on earth that could lay down the law for me, or say anything without my being able to investigate the evidence on which he said it.

Now I consider that what was necessary in order to investigate the evidence, was first of all, to know the language in which the evidence is given. So I went to Berlin, and devoted myself almost entirely to the study of the languages bearing upon the Bible; and determined that I would learn all the languages that throw light upon the Hebrew, all the cognate languages, and also all the languages into which the Bible had been translated down to 600 A.D., so that I could investigate the text myself.

Having done this I claim to be an expert. I defy any man to make an attack upon the Old Testament on the ground of evidence that I cannot investigate. I can get at the facts if they are linguistic. If you

know any language that I do not know, I will learn it. Now I am going to show you some of the results.

After I had learned the necessary languages I set about the investigation of every consonant in the Hebrew Old Testament. There are about a million and a quarter of these; and it took me many years to achieve my task. I had to read the Old Testament through and look at every consonant in it; I had also to observe the variations of the text, as far as they were to be found in the manuscripts, or in the notes of the Massorettes,⁷ or in the various versions, or in the parallel passages, or in the conjectural emendations of critics; and then I had to classify the results. I prize this form of textual research very highly; for my plan has been to reduce the Old Testament criticism to an absolutely objective science; something which is based on evidence, and not on opinion. I scarcely ever make a statement which rests merely on my own subjective belief.

In order to be a textual expert of this kind it is necessary to be a master of paleography (the science which deals with ancient writings) and of philology; to have an exact knowledge of a dozen languages at least, so that every word may be thoroughly sifted. To ascertain the true text of the Old Testament is fundamental to everything concerning Bible history and Bible doctrine.

The result of those thirty years' study which I have given to the text has been this. I can affirm that there is not a page of the Old Testament concerning which we need have any doubt. We can be absolutely certain that substantially we have the text of the Old Testament that Christ and the Apostles had, and which was in existence from the beginning.

7 The Massorettes were a body of Jewish scholars who made it their business to hand down what they believed to be the true text of the Old Testament.

I would like to give a few other examples of true Biblical criticism. I can remember when it was thought very unprofitable to read the long genealogies found in the first chapters of First Chronicles—nine chapters of proper names. But to-day, in the scientific criticism of the Old Testament, proper names are of the profoundest importance. The way in which they are written—indeed, all that is connected with them—has come to be one of the very foundations upon which scientific criticism of the Old Testament is built. Take the following case. There are twenty-nine ancient kings whose names are mentioned not only in the Bible but also on monuments of their own time; many of them under their own supervision. There are one hundred and ninety-five consonants in these twenty-nine proper names. Yet we find that in the documents of the Hebrew Old Testament there are only two or three out of the entire hundred and ninety-five about which there can be any question of their being written in exactly the same way as they were inscribed on their own monuments. Some of these go back for two thousand years, some for four thousand; and are so written that every letter is clear and correct. This is surely a wonder.

Compare this accuracy with that of other writings. I have been blamed for not referring to the classical writings more frequently in my book on *Daniel*. Here is the reason.—Take the list made by the greatest scholar of his age, the librarian at Alexandria in 200 B.C. He compiled a catalogue of the kings of Egypt, thirty-eight in all; of the entire number only three or four of them are recognisable. He also made a list of the kings of Assyria; in only one case can we tell who is meant; and that one is not spelt correctly. Or take Ptolemy, who drew up a register of eighteen of the kings of Babylon. Not one of them is properly spelt: you could not make them out at all if you did not know from other sources to what he is referring. If any one talks against the Bible, ask him about the kings mentioned in it. There are twenty-nine kings of Egypt, Israel, Moab,

Damascus, Tyre, Babylon, Assyria, and Persia, referred to, and ten different countries among these twenty-nine; all of which are included in the Bible accounts and those of the monuments. Every one of these is given his right name in the Bible, his right country, and placed in the correct chronological order. Think what that means!

Here is yet another case in which the labours of the expert are needed. It is the contention of the critics that the presence of Aramaic⁸ words in the Old Testament books is a clue to their date. I came to the conclusion that the critics said much about the Aramaisms that they could not substantiate. So I took a Hebrew dictionary and went through it from the first word to the last, and gathered up the results. Then I went to the Aramaic, and did the same. I compiled a list of all the relevant words and compared them with those in the Babylonian language. By carrying on the investigation in this scientific manner I found that, as a matter of fact, there is very little in the argument built on the presence of Aramaisms in the Old Testament. There are only five or six of these words in the whole of the book that could even be considered doubtful. The truth is that a century ago there was no Babylonian known; and when people found the Old Testament form of a noun or a verb that did not suit the Hebrew, they said it was Aramaic, and that the book which contained it was of a later date than it claimed to be. But since then God has given us a knowledge of Babylonian, with this result. Certain Aramaic nouns end in *ooth* (rhyming with “booth”) and it was thought that this was peculiar to that language. But now we know that this is found in both Babylonian and Hebrew. The Babylonian records take us back before the time of Abraham; and from thence onward, until the Babylonian kingdom came to an

8 Aramaic was the language of Mesopotamia and adjacent lands.

end, we find this noun-ending recurring. Thus the foundation of the old argument fell to pieces.

In closing, I desire to call attention to the fact that while the study of the religious systems of the ancient peoples has shown that there was amongst them a groping after God, nowhere is it to be seen that they reached any clear apprehension of the One True God, the Creator, Preserver, Judge, Saviour and Sanctifier of His people. Their religions were of an outward kind; the Old Testament religion is essentially one of the mind and heart; a religion of love, joy, faith, hope, and salvation through the grace of God. How can we account for this?

The prophets of Israel declared that their teaching came from God. The modern critical school is antagonistic to this claim. They say that the prophets gave utterance to the ideas of their own time, and that they were limited by their environment. But if this is so how does it come about that neither from the oracles of Thebes and Memphis, nor from Delphi and Rome, nor from Babylon, nor from the deserts of Media, but from the sheep-folds and humble homes of Israel, yea, from the captive by the river of an alien land, came forth those great messages of hope and salvation? One of the mighty phrases of Scripture is that of "God with us"; this is the key which unlocks the mysterious chambers of the Old Testament, and opens to us their rich and enduring treasure."

—Bible League Quarterly, 1955

The late scholarly Principal J. Willoughby, a former President of the Sovereign Grace Union, wrote: "In recent times many scholars have attempted to discredit the written Word, especially of the Old Testament. Many other scholars of repute, however, have found that the evidences on which the destructive critics base their conclusions are utterly worthless. The late Professor Dick

Wilson was a scholar of massive learning. At the age of twenty-five he could read the New Testament in nine different languages. He could repeat from memory a Hebrew translation of the entire New Testament without missing a single syllable. He could do the same thing with large portions of the Old Testament also. He says: 'For forty-five years continuously since I left college I have devoted myself to the one great study of the Old Testament in all its languages, in all its archaeology, in all its translations, and, as far as possible, everything bearing upon its text and history.' He was acquainted with about forty-five languages and dialects. He probably knew more about the Old Testament and everything connected with it than did all the destructive critics put together. Professor Wilson, having long and thoroughly examined the evidence on which the destructive critics base their conclusions, found that it was utterly worthless. Concerning the evidence for the orthodox position he writes: "The evidence in our possession has convinced me that "at sundry times and in divers manners God spoke unto our fathers through the prophets," and that the Old Testament in Hebrew, "being immediately inspired by God," has "by His singular care and providence been kept pure in all ages."

APPENDIX II

God in His mercy did not leave His people to grope after the true New Testament text. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit He guided them to preserve it during the manuscript period. God brought this to pass through the working of His preserving and governing providence. *First*, many trustworthy copies of the original New Testament manuscripts were produced by faithful scribes. *Second*, these trustworthy copies were read and recopied by true believers down through the centuries. *Third*, untrustworthy copies were not so generally read or so frequently recopied. Although they

enjoyed some popularity for a time, yet in the long run they were laid aside and consigned to oblivion. Thus as a result of this special providential guidance the true text won out in the end, and today we may be sure that the text found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts is a trustworthy reproduction of the divinely inspired original text. This is the text which was preserved by the God-guided usage of the Greek Church. Critics have called it the *Byzantine* text, thereby acknowledging that it was the text in use in the Greek Church during the greater part of the Byzantine period (452-1453). It is much better, however, to call this text the *Traditional* text. When we call the text found in the majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts the Traditional text, we signify that this is the text which has been handed down by the God-guided tradition of the Church from the time of the Apostles unto the present day.

A further step in the providential preservation of the New Testament was the printing of it in 1516 and the dissemination of it throughout the whole of Western Europe during the Protestant Reformation.

This printed text is commonly called the *Textus Receptus* (Received Text). It is the text which was used by the Protestant Reformers during the Reformation and by all Protestants everywhere for three hundred years thereafter. It was from this Textus Receptus that the King James Version and the other classic Protestant translations were made. In the Textus Receptus God provided a trustworthy printed New Testament text for the Protestant Reformers and for all believing Christians down to the present day. Thus the printing of it was, after all, no accident but the work of God's special providence.

(Believing Bible Study by Dr. E. F. Hills.)

APPENDIX III

WESTCOTT AND HORT

These two men were, Dr. (afterwards Professor) F. J. A. Hort (1828-1892) a very aggressive personality, and his friend Professor (afterwards Bishop) B. F. Westcott (1825-1901) both of Trinity College, Cambridge. *In doctrine they favoured the Romanising movement in their church, the 'Larger Hope' (of F. D. Maurice and Dean Farrar), the Darwinian hypothesis and the Old Testament Higher Criticism.* They had been those who had turned from the Textus Receptus and had become infatuated with the Codex Vaticanus (B) and the other four oldest manuscripts (Codices Sinaiticus (Aleph), Alexandrinus (A), Ephraemi (C), and Bezae (D). They had come to feel that these, being the most ancient copies of the Scriptures known, must be the most accurate. For some years they had been at work on a re-construction of a new Greek New Testament text on this basis.

The Vaticanus, the Sinaiticus and the Bezae codices, Dean Burgon considered the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversions of truth, which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God. Like many scholars before him, he became convinced that these manuscripts survived, only because they were full of mistakes and little used.

Dean Burgon in his classic, the *Revision Revised*, deals with several hundred omissions and alterations Westcott and Hort made in their Greek New Testament.

“Shame—yes, shame on the learning,” the Dean exclaimed, “on the learning which comes abroad only to perplex the weak, and to unsettle the doubting, and to mislead the blind! Shame—yes, shame on the two thirds majority of well-intentioned, but most incompetent

men, who—finding themselves (in an evil hour) appointed to correct ‘plain and clear errors’ in the English ‘Authorised Version’—occupied themselves instead with falsifying the inspired Greek Text in countless places, and branding with suspicion some of the most precious utterances of the Spirit! Shame—yes, shame upon them!”

Extracts from “The Greek New Testament and The Modern Versions” by Bishop D. A. Thomson. (*The Reformation Link*, Dec. 1967 and *The Bible League Quarterly*, Jan.-March 1968).

Let the Reformed Church in New Zealand and also all professedly evangelical bodies holding to the Westcott and Hort school take note!

APPENDIX IV

Bishop D. A. Thomson in his article “The New Testament Text and Early Church History” in “The Bible League Quarterly” (April 1968), refers to the rise and spread of Gnosticism in the 2nd century. “It began as ‘cells’ within the Church,” Bishop Thomson writes, “expanded rapidly and widely, and took different forms according to place and leadership. . . . The orthodox leaders who attacked Gnosticism were Justin Martyr (c. 100-165), Irenaeus (c. 130-200), Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215), Tertullian (c. 162-200), Origen (c. 185-254) and Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260-340).

This brief reference to Gnosticism has been made so that the controversy concerning the Greek text of the New Testament may be followed more clearly. It highlights the fact that throughout the second century there was very powerful propaganda, sometimes even from within Christian circles, which was thoroughly unsound with respect to the Person of Christ. There was the denial of His essential Deity and perfect manhood. Moreover some of the Gnostics did not scruple to tamper with the text of the gospels and

the epistles, deleting or altering a scripture in the interest of their heretical views.⁹ Hence the number of corrupt copies of portions of the New Testament began to multiply at an alarming rate. So much was this the case, that Dr. F. H. A. Scrivener declared, "It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound, that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed; that Irenaeus and the African Fathers, and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica, or Erasmus, or Stephens thirteen centuries later, when moulding the Textus Receptus."¹⁰ The detractors of the work of Erasmus, of the Textus Receptus and of the A.V. should weigh well this considered judgment of the leading textual critic of the generation that saw the production of the R.V. of 1881.

Fortunately the Orthodox leaders were alive to this menace of the corrupting of Scripture engendered by the Gnostic movement. They exposed the corruptions and the corrupters. Then the Gnostic movement began to wane and with it the production of faulty copies of Scripture. It seems that only those survived which were hidden away and not used. Meanwhile an increasing number of accurate copies came into circulation.

By the middle of the 4th century the Traditional Text was

9 Tertullian accused Marcion of issuing a mutilated Gospel according to Luke. We have already noticed instances of serious omissions reproduced in this gospel by WH (pages 93-95). Other heretics altered the text of the other gospels. Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Jerome bear witness to this. See **Traditional Text of the Holy Gospel**, by Burgon and Miller, pages 287-291, and **Believing Bible Study**, by Dr. E. F. Hills, pages 129-135.

10 Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, Third Edition, page 511.

prominent and shortly afterwards predominant. It held on its way without any serious challenge in the east, until in the 16th century it issued from the printing press and later was called the Textus Receptus and the Reformation Text. From it all the Protestant Versions of Europe, including our Authorized Version, were made.

Just as there are still scholars and commonsense, well-read Christians who reject the Higher Criticism and believe the Bible to be the fully inspired and inerrant Word of God, so there is a similar group who are satisfied that this Textus Receptus is the descendant of a long line of pure copies made from still earlier accurate manuscripts taken in the first instance from the original New Testament writings. They consider that the oldest manuscripts (the Vaticanus, the Sinaiticus, the Bezae, etc.), because of their inconceivably large numbers of discrepancies, obvious inaccuracies and omissions, should not be styled “the best.” They feel that they are amongst the worst and are probably copies of some of the corrupt gospels and epistles, which in the 3rd and early 4th centuries were still circulating as the legacy of Gnosticism. They suggest that these most ancient codices have only survived the ravages of time because they were recognised as inaccurate and were laid aside and neglected.¹¹

11 Since Dean Burgon’s time some sixty-eight New Testament papyri have been discovered in Egypt and the East. Most are fragmentary. Their texts seem very mixed. It had been claimed that they witness against the early date of the Traditional Text. Dr. Hills dissents from this verdict. He points out that papyrus Bodmer II, written it is believed at the latest A.D. 200, and so having the distinction of being the oldest N.T. MS. now known, while being textually mixed, contains a fair proportion of distinctively Traditional readings. See Dr. Hills’ Introduction to Dean Burgon’s **The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark, Vindicated against critical objections, and Established**, pages 44-67.

Had they, after they had been made, been used to any extent, they would have become worn-out and perished long ago, as has been the fate of hundreds, if not thousands, of others. Their age, considered in conjunction with the aforementioned other factors, witnesses rather to their corruption than to any special purity of text.

The thoughtful and the studious who hold these views are confirmed in their convictions by noticing a parallel. In their judgment there is a similar work of Grace and Divine Providence in the giving and preserving of this Text of Inspiration to that in the long series of events making up the History of Redemption. Grace and Providence have issued in Faith—begotten and lived out. To them it is significant that loyalty to the Traditional Text and its translation into many other tongues in Europe and further afield has been accompanied by many manifestations of faith, whereas the discarding of this text and the issuing of the modern versions to which reference has been made, has many associations with the rejection of the historic Christian Faith and of positive unbelief.

(Printed with the kind permission of Bishop Thomson)

APPENDIX V

When we regard the New Testament manuscripts from the believing point of view, we see that they confirm the orthodox Christian faith. We perceive that the Traditional text found in the vast majority of the Greek manuscripts is the true text which Christ has promised always to preserve in His Church. But there are many scholars today who claim to be orthodox Christians and yet insist that the New Testament text ought not to be studied from the believing point of view but from a neutral point of view. The New Testament text,

they maintain, ought to be treated just as the texts of other ancient books are treated. And in this they are followers of Westcott and Hort (1881), who laid down their basic principle in the following words: "For ourselves we dare not introduce considerations which could not reasonably be applied to other ancient texts, supposing them to have documentary attestation of equal amount, variety, and antiquity."

In this present chapter we will endeavour to point out the error of this neutral, naturalistic Bible study and also the error of the modern, neutral world-view which underlies this false method of handling the holy Scriptures.

Why is it that the neutral method of Bible study has always this tendency to breed scepticism concerning the text of the Bible? The reason is plain. The reason is that it is not really possible to be neutral about the Bible. If you try to be neutral, if you ignore the divine inspiration and the providential preservation of the Bible and treat it like an ordinary human book, then you are ignoring the very factors that make the Bible what it is. If you follow such a neutral method of Bible study, you are still playing about on the surface and have failed to come to grips with the very essence of the Bible. In your textual criticism you have not yet dealt with the real, divinely inspired and providentially preserved Bible but with a false, purely human Bible of your own imagination. And since you are dealing with a false, purely human Bible, doubts as to the purity of its text must necessarily arise in your mind, doubts which you can find no means of banishing.

But if by the grace of God you drop your neutral position and take your stand on the Bible as God's infallible Word, inspired by His Holy Spirit and preserved by His special providence, then it becomes evident to you that the true New Testament text has been preserved in the God-guided usage of the Church. Hence this true text is to be found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament

manuscripts, in the Textus Receptus, and in the King James Version and the other classic Protestant translations.

(Believing Bible Study by Dr. E. F. Hills.)

THE WONDER OF THE BOOK

The wonder of the Book grows upon us as our experience is enlarged, for the more deeply we search it, the more we feel that the Bible is not merely a book, but The Book. It alone is the universal Book, the eternal Book, the Book for all time. It is the voice of the Lord. It stands alone, unapproachable in its grandeur, as high above all other books as heaven is above earth, or as the Son of God is above the sons of men.

The Wonder of its Unification

The Bible, though regarded as a Book, is in fact a library of sixty-six volumes, written by between thirty and forty different authors, in three languages, on totally different topics and in extraordinarily different circumstances. One wrote history, another biography, one wrote on theology, another poetry, another prophecy, others on philosophy, jurisprudence, genealogy, ethnology, and narratives of wonderful journeys. Here in the Bible we have them all, in a little Book that a child can carry in its little hand. The strangest thing of all is that, although their subjects are so diverse and difficult, and although it was impossible for the man who wrote the first pages to have the slightest knowledge what others would write 1500 years later, yet this collection of writings is not only unified by men in one Book, but so unified by God, the Author, that we can never think of it today as anything else but one Book! And one Book it is indeed—the miracle of all literary unity.

The Wonder of its Preservation

The Bible has withstood ages of ferocious and incessant persecution. Century after century men have tried to burn it and to bury it and to extirpate it. Kings of the earth set themselves and rulers of the church have taken counsel together to destroy it. Diocletian the Roman Emperor inaugurated in AD 303 a terrific onslaught upon the Book. Bibles were destroyed, Christians were slain, and the Emperor boasted that the very name of the Christians was blotted out, and yet after a few years, the Bible came forth as Noah from the ark to repeople the earth, and in AD 325 Constantine enthroned the Bible as the Infallible Judge of Truth in the great council of the Church held in that year.

Later the Church of Rome denied the Scriptures to the people and for ages the Bible was practically an unknown book. Martin Luther was a grown man when he said that he had never seen a Bible in his life. No jailor ever kept a prisoner closer than the Church of Rome kept the Bible from the people.

The worst opposition of all has been during the last two hundred years, with rationalism and modernism seeking to undermine the authority, inspiration and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. It was Voltaire's boast that within one hundred years of his death not a Bible would be found save as an antiquarian curiosity. Many more than one hundred years have passed, and other pens and other voices have joined in the attack, but the Bible remains and is being more widely distributed and used than ever before.

The Bible is Self-Authenticating

You need no historical critic for God's own Word. The Holy Spirit, who is the Author of the Book, makes it speak to our souls in such power as to give divine conviction. Men may arise to unsettle and destroy, but the Spirit of Christ comes to validate and confirm, with a

certainty that is incommunicable by mere reason, and is impervious to the assaults of doubt. Spurgeon spoke of a poor woman who was challenged by an agnostic to prove that the Bible in her hand was God's Word. She pointed to the sun and said, "Can you prove that there is a sun in the sky?" The unbeliever answered, "Of course, the proof is that it warms me and I see its light." "That is it," she replied, "and the best proof that this Book is the Word of God is that it warms and lights my soul."

It Cannot Be Improved

We do not gild gold. We do not paint rubies. We cannot brighten diamonds. Neither can any artist add any final touch to this finished Word of God. It stands as the sun in the sky and this proud age can add nothing to it. It has the glory of God and any attempt to improve it can but disfigure it. It speaks with authority and breaks upon you as the Voice from heaven. Five hundred times in the Pentateuch, three hundred times in the following books and twelve hundred times in the prophets, the declarations are prefaced or concluded with such expressions as "Hear the Word of the Lord," or "Thus saith the Lord." No other book dares thus to address itself to the universal conscience. No other speaks with such a binding claim or presumes to command the obedience of all mankind. The book speaks to the inner conscience with the authority of God Himself.

It reveals Christ

The supreme wonder of the Book is Christ, Who is its fulness, its centre, its great subject. Of the whole Book it may be said, "The glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." As long as men live upon the face of the globe, the Book that tells of Christ the Revealer, Redeemer, the Risen, Reigning, Returning Lord will draw

men's hearts like a magnet, and men will stand by it, and live for it, and die for it.

Do not think that we ought to read this Book as we read any other book, and study and analyse it just as we do any text book in literature or science. No! When you come to this Book, come to it with reverence. Read it with a plea for the Spirit's help. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Other books are of the earth. This is from heaven, it is the living Word of the Living God, supernatural in origin, divine in authorship, regenerative in power, infallible in authority, personal in application, inspired in its every part.

Summarized and selected from "The Wonder of the Book"
by Prof. Dyson Hague, M.A.

THE PAGANISM OF CREMATION

1. AN ABOMINATION TO THE LORD.

Cremation is of pagan origin. To burn their dead was and still is the recognised custom of heathen peoples. Cremation was virtually unknown in Britain until late in the 19th century, and did not obtain legal sanction until early in the 20th century. Its introduction coincides with the apostasy of the latter days, “when men will not endure sound doctrine—and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:3, 4). Hence the paganism of our day, of which cremation is one of the proofs. Cremation belongs to the worship of Molech, all the rites of which were an abomination to the Lord. Against them He gave repeated warnings to His people Israel. “Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 18:30). The rites of Molech worship are specifically mentioned as “one of these abominable customs.” (v. 21). How solemn the judgments threatened! “For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people” (Lev. 18:29). “And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off

from among his people; because he hath given his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name.” (Lev. 20:3). Hundreds of years afterwards the prophet Jeremiah declares, “For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire: which I commanded them not neither came it into my heart.” (Jer. 7:30, 31).

Families and individuals may consider themselves modern, and abreast of the times in having their dead cremated, but neither the fatuities of modernism, nor the worthless prayers of ministers officiating at cremation services, can avert the judgments of the Most High. What God has said shall stand: “And I will set my face against that man.”

2. EXCUSES FOR CREMATION.

Two main stock arguments are put forward by the advocates of cremation, writes James Griffin in “Cremation Historically and Theologically Considered.” These are: (1) Sanitation. (2) Land accommodation.

1. Human and communal experience throughout the centuries belies the “Sanitation” argument, which resolves itself into mere theorising without a vestige of fact to support it. In many of our ancient churches lie buried some members of eminent families of long ago, but there is no evidence whatsoever of any worshipper in those churches ever having contracted any kind of infectious disease with the added danger of spreading an epidemic. Nor are there any authentic instances of pollution of water supply such as to provoke epidemic diseases in people living in close contiguity to a cemetery or a graveyard. It is reasonable, therefore, to maintain that, having

through the centuries in which there were neither legal obligation nor legislative and administrative activities to enforce laws of sanitary procedure, the nation escaped without any recorded outbreak of diseases from the incidence of public burials, the possibility of any such experience in these days of advanced knowledge in the science of sanitation would surely be exceedingly remote.

2. Land is available for extension of pleasure pursuits, for building purposes and for various forms of industrial and social development. Why land for burials should be excluded from the category of uses for which land is unrestrictedly obtainable, requires some adequate explanation. It would be a staggering revelation to consider, and to compute, how many bodies could be buried in the acres which the crematoria of this country now cover! Those acres alone, if applied to burials instead of buildings, would undoubtedly provide sufficient burial space for generations yet unborn!”

3. BURIAL SCRIPTURALLY DEFENDED.

“There is no trace of cremation in the Word of God,” writes A. J. Pollock in “Pagan Cremation or Christian Burial.” For human beings to be burned with fire, according to the Scriptures is reserved as a punishment for the wicked, and not an act of respect of the living to the dead, as Christian burial is.

“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou RETURN unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen. 3:19). These were the words of God addressed to Adam, and form part of the sentence He passed upon him for his sin in partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is plainly stated that death is the penalty of sin. It is as plainly stated that just as Adam was created out of the ground so he is to RETURN unto the ground. God ordained burial in the earth as the way of the disposal of the bodies of the dead. “TILL THOU

RETURN UNTO THE GROUND” was and is God’s decree for sinful men. Cremation goes dead against this basic law of God and THEREBY STANDS CONDEMNED FOR ALL TIME. Let there be no mistake about that. (p. 9).

“The late Dr. Edwin Slossen (a chemist of international fame) has recorded his conviction that ‘the greatest miracle of the Bible is its chemical accuracy. The first book of the Bible says man was made out of dust of the earth and this is literally and scientifically true. In the dust of the earth there are 14 different chemical elements and in the body of man there are those same 14 chemical elements.’ The perfect correspondence suggests that for some purpose or reason which none can precisely fathom, God ordained that the body with its elemental correspondences with the soil shall ‘return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return’.” (Gen. 3:19). “Cremation Historically and Theologically Considered,” by James Griffin (p. 7).

There is not a single instance of any of the Lord’s people in either the Old Testament or the New being cremated. They were all reverently buried. We read that Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab against Beth-peor BY GOD HIMSELF (Deut. 34:6). The divinely-inspired Apostle, in writing of the resurrection body of believers, says: “It is sown (not cremated) in corruption: it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness: it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body.” (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

“Know ye not,” said the apostle to the Corinthians, “that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.” (1 Cor. 6:15). Cannot the question be pertinently put. Shall I then take the members of Christ, and prostitute them at death to pagan form of burial? God forbid. In either case the giving over of the body to fornication or to cremation is a shameful and gross violation

of God's revealed will. Flowers and prayers and beautiful singing cannot alter the solemn fact that cremation is an ABOMINATION in God's sight, a pagan practice to be shunned and abhorred.

Surely the burial of the Saviour in the grave is the last word on the subject for any believer! The Church of God has in the infallible Word an account of the burial of the Lord. Through His death and resurrection He robbed death of its sting and the grave of its victory. The grave, He has bequeathed as a place of rest for the bodies of His people until the resurrection of the Last Day (John 6:40), when "all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28, 29).

"Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain." (Jer. 10:2, 3). Let us rather learn of Him who hath said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love Him and will manifest Myself to him." (John 14:21).

W. MacLean

CHRIST OR FREEMASONRY

1. THE GOD OF FREEMASONRY

The god of Freemasonry—"The Great Architect of the Universe"—is not the one living and true God, but a false god, a dumb idol of man's creation. His name, "The Great Architect of the Universe," is given in the first degree only, to go on with or to bluff outsiders. The real name of their god is only known to Freemasons who are members of the so-called "Holy Royal Arch."

Running through the Rituals of Masonry is the idea that the name of God has been lost. "All Masonry," writes the Rev. C. P. Hunt, "is the quest of the lost Name, occasioned by the murder of the architect, Hiram Abiff, at the time of Solomon's Temple. On the rediscovery of the lost Name, the Mason is brought into a perfect relationship with the Deity. The earlier degrees are preparatory to the climax reached in the Degree of the Holy Royal Arch. His secret name is JAOBULON, usually represented by the letters J.B.O. J stands for Jehovah, B for Baal and O for On or Osiris, one of the gods of Egypt.

"So the central thing in Masonic ritual—the **raison d'être** of the whole business—is the amazing discovery of the grand secret that God is worshipped not through Jesus Christ, but through the union of Jehovah, Baal, Osiris. And the ritual of this degree actually claims

that ‘The Supreme Being inspires its members with the most exalted ideas of God.’ Of course this marvellous Name is not revealed to Masons of the first degree. The process of degradation has to be gradual.”—The Menace of Freemasonry to the Christian Faith (p. 14), by Rev. C. P. Hunt, B.A.).

All who submit to such teaching are guilty before God of trampling underfoot the First Commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,” and of repudiating the supreme claim of the Almighty. “I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” (Isa. 42:8).

“Dr. Fort Newton, late Unitarian minister of the London City Temple, and an authoritative exponent of Freemasonry, wrote, ‘Masonry is not a religion but **it is Religion**, a worship in which all good men may unite’—the ‘good men’ being Unitarians, Hindus, Jews, nominal Christians, Moslems, Theosophists, etc. For a Christian then to be a Freemason is ‘to be unequally yoked with unbelievers,’ a thing expressly forbidden.” (Heresies Exposed, by W. C. Irvine, p. 96).

2. THE PLACE GIVEN TO CHRIST IN FREEMASONRY

In the Masonic Lodge the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is forbidden, except on the same level with Buddha, Zoroaster, Mahommed, Osiris, etc. “There is so-called ‘worship’ in the Masonic Lodge,” writes Rev. A. W. Rainsbury, M.A., in *Freemasonry of God or the Devil?* “but from that ‘worship’ Jesus Christ is deliberately excluded. There is so-called ‘prayer’ in the Masonic Lodge, but it is not offered in the Name of Jesus Christ—through Whom alone prayer is acceptable to God. His Name is deliberately excluded even from prayers where it is normally found. There is so-called ‘praise’ in the Masonic Lodge, but the precious Name of Jesus is excised from every hymn.”

“In every ‘form of service used at Masonic services in churches we have passages of Scripture having an ethical significance used, but in every case torn away from the evangelical context. Even the Beatitudes are mutilated—the last sentence omitted—‘persecuted for My Name’s sake’.” (The Menace of Freemasonry to the Christian Faith, p. 42, by Rev. C. P. Hunt, B.A.).

In “Encyclopedia of Freemasonry,” the author, Dr. A. C. Mackey, writes: “If Masonry were simply a Christian Institution, the Brahman, the Moslem and the Buddhist could not conscientiously partake of its illumination, but its **universality** is its **boast**; in its language, citizens of every nation may converse; at its altars all religions may kneel, and to its **creed** every faith may subscribe.”

In connection with the boast of Freemasonry in the universality of its creed, George L. Hunt, in “Secret Societies,” says: “No Christian can stand on that platform of universality. The moment he admits the equality of other religions with Christianity, he has denied the fundamental tenet of his faith: ‘Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST’ (1 Cor. 3:11 and Acts 4:12). When a minister becomes a Mason he takes his stand that one foundation is as good as another, one religion as good as another—Buddha, Mohammed, etc.—are as good as Jesus Christ. Masonry, like Odd-fellowship, boasts in its universality, boasts that it is NOT Christian. It glories in the fact that Jesus Christ is excluded, and thereby no offence is given to the Jew, the Brahman or the Moslem. Yet it claims to be a universal system of religion that brings its votaries safe within the walls of heaven—and that without the help of Jesus Christ. Masonry excludes the name of Christ from prayer. His name is cut out of every passage of Scripture read in the Order in all degrees this side of the Knights Templar, and there it is only thrown in because the Order is the outgrowth of the Crusaders of the twelfth century, and not because it has anything to do with Jesus Christ as a Saviour of lost men.”

3. FREEMASONRY AND THE BIBLE

The following extract is from “The Menace of Freemasonry to the Christian Faith” (pages 31-33). “It is generally assumed that one of the chief recommendations of the Craft is the honour shown in every lodge to the Bible. The open Bible, on which are placed the Square and Compasses, is part of the essential equipment of every lodge. At least so the outsider is led to believe. But if a Mason does more than take things for granted and inquires into the matter, he will receive a rude shock. This Bible they call the V.S.L. (i.e., Volume of Sacred Law). I pass over the point that it is not called the Volume of Grace and Redemption and if the Bible is not so regarded it is lying to assert that it is honoured.

“I have already, incidentally, remarked upon the fact that Freemasonry’s fundamental principle is that the Deity is truly worshipped when all the pagan names for God—Baal, Osiris, Vishnu, etc.—are united. That alone means that all the Old Testament and the Ten Commandments stand for, goes by the board. They reject even the ‘Sacred Law’ of the Old Testament, to say nothing of Grace and Redemption. No loyal Jew could be a Mason. And I have already complained that they prostitute all the passages respecting the Temple and God’s House and apply the same to the lodge instead of the Church, and that in claiming faith in the Fatherhood of God and excluding Christ, they have no room at all for the New Testament, which states ‘He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father.’

“Now we come to something more serious still—a piece of sophistry which enables them to take up a position the very opposite to that which they pretend to the outsider. Everything in the Lodge is symbolical. Square and Compasses do not mean—square and compasses—or what they mean to a schoolboy. In the Lodge a square does not mean a square. It symbolises something else. Square

and Compasses may symbolise Spirit penetrating Matter or Vesica Piscis or a number of other things. Similarly, if the Bible is there, it cannot mean the Bible. That would be taking things far too literally. Everything is symbolical. In *Brothers and Builders*, published in London by Dr. Fort Newton, p. 25, we read: “Like everything else in Masonry, the Bible, so rich in Symbolism, is itself a symbol—of the perpetual revelation of Himself which God has made and is still making in every age and land—through Old Testament—Koran—Vedas, etc.” Dr. Fort Newton is quite right. Everything in the Lodge is symbolical.

The Oxford University Press has just issued a special edition of the Bible for presentation to the candidate on the occasion of his initiation. The first page contains the “Mason’s Charge,” which implicitly condemns the work of Christian Missions. “It (Masonry) encourages each man to be steadfast in the faith his heart loves best.” Later pages contain an article on the Masonic use of the Bible by Dr. Fort Newton, which states that the Bible “is itself a symbol—that is, a part taken for the whole.” The whole includes the Koran and Vedas, etc. Thus BY AN OFFICIAL ACT the candidate is presented with a printed document which repudiates the work of Foreign Missions, and which reduces the Scriptures to a fragment of the “Book of Truth.”

4. THE OATHS OF FREEMASONRY

“How can it be of the mind of Him who says, ‘Swear not at all’ (Matt. 5:34) to take solemn oaths not to divulge a secret, still unknown, and to call down on one’s person blood-curdling oaths in case of failure to keep the oaths? The ritual is really Hindu, with Bible names substituted. As the degrees advance the penalties increase. For the first degree, your tongue is torn from its roots; for the second, your heart; for the third, your bowels, and then burnt, etc., etc., and you pray that it may be so.” (*Heresies Exposed*, p. 95).

“The candidate for the first degree,” writes Rev. C. P. Hunt, “is introduced in a semi-naked state, blindfolded, with a cable tow round his neck, and a sharp instrument pointed at his naked left breast to indicate the peril he runs in seeking “Light.” He states that he wishes to be ‘admitted to the mysteries and privileges of Masonry by the help of God.’ Note the frequent use of God’s name in association with the futilities. He is led in darkness to a kneeling-stool. The deacons join their wands over his head. This forms the sign of the Viscera Piscis of the ancient pagan rites—the phallic sign of the womb—to indicate that the candidate is now being born again (so Masonic writers tell us). A prayer is offered with the words ‘that assisted by the secrets of our Masonic art, he may the better be enabled to unfold the beauties of true godliness, to the honour and glory of Thy Holy Name.’ Later, the candidate takes the Oath not to betray the secrets of this degree ‘under no less a penalty—than that of having my throat cut across, my tongue cut out by the roots, and my body buried in the sands of the sea at low water mark. So help me God.’ After that the candidate is ‘restored to light’ He is now a regenerated being.” (The Menace of Freemasonry to the Christian Faith, p. 43).

“The glory of Christianity is AN OPEN BIBLE. Freemasonry on the contrary has secret signs, and the ritual of the Lodges is a secret code. Our Lord tells us that there is nothing secret that shall not be revealed, and instructed His disciples, ‘What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house tops’.” (Matt. 10:27). (Reasons Why a Christian Should Not be a Freemason, p. 10, by A. J. Pollock).

5. LODGE CHARITIES

Next to the charm of secrecy, perhaps one of the strongest inducements held out to men, is that of receiving help when in need. “Death benefits,” “Sick benefits” are promised and paid by

most Orders. It is just here that they challenge comparison with the churches and Christianity. They claim to be acting like “the good Samaritan.” But whom do they benefit? to whom do they show charity? Only to members of their Order who have paid up their dues. In other words, they simply do what any insurance company does, and for the same business reasons. There may be on the part of individuals in the orders kindness to the needy, but that is only what we will find in any kind-hearted person, and the system is not to be credited with it. (Extract from *Secret Societies* by George L. Hunt).

6. FREEMASONRY AN EXPENSIVE AFFAIR

Here is an extract from that Masonic enthusiast—Rev. J. T. Lawrence’s *Keystone* (p. 303): “A person . . . contemplating seeking admission to the Craft should consider not only whether he can afford it, but whether it is fair to his wife and children that he should incur that . . . entirely selfish expense. His proposer ought to tell him about this, and ought to do so very faithfully. Proposers are not always as faithful as they should be in this matter—and then there come expensive dinners, one probable result of which will be a very rigid economy at home—there are testimonials, excursions, entertainments, all of which it requires a considerable amount of moral courage to withstand. And the accessories are such as to occasion thought. Masonic clothing and the consequent jewelry—by no means inexpensive items—the multiplication of Lodges and the consequent dining out, and the additional time involved in attendance at committees and boards will soon leave a brother with but the fag end of his leisure for other and possibly more urgent purposes.” In the same author’s “*Sidelights on Masonry*” (p. 221) we read this: “The new member need not dine, he need not contribute to the charities on the same scale as the rest; but he will soon find

that he might as well not be a member of the Lodge at all.” (The Menace of Freemasonry, etc., p. 56).

All this time and expense wasted on the upkeep of a system that is pagan, idolatrous and anti-Christian!

7. THE ORDER OF ODDFELLOWS A BLASPHEMOUS ORDER

“Take the Oddfellows manual written by A. B. Grosh, which is dedicated to all inquirers who desire to know what the Order is, and this has, I understand, been endorsed by the Grand Lodge, and hence is the expression of the Lodge itself. It says on page 297, ‘Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism recognise the only living and true God; followers of different teachers, ye are worshippers of one God who is Father of all, and therefore ye are brethren.’ (p. 298). This reduces Christ to a mere teacher, and then puts Him on a common level with Mohammed; and every professed Christian member not only says ‘Amen’ to this, but links himself in a common brotherhood with the haters, revilers and murderers of his Christ, for such is and has ever been the attitude of Jew and Mohammedan.”

The Grand Lodge of Oddfellows for the State of Massachusetts asked the following question of the Sovereign Grand Lodge of the World, Feb. 14th, 1889 (Report page 336): “Is it lawful for a chaplain to commence and finish his prayer in the name of Christ?” Here is the answer of the Lodge on this vital question.

“Our Order only requires belief in the existence of the Supreme Being as a qualification for membership, and has no affinity with any religious sect or system of faith; hence everything savouring of sectarianism is not to be tolerated. The words ‘system or sect’ do not have reference merely to the sects within the pale of Christianity, but have a far broader significance and include all the religions of the world. In this sense Christianity is a sect; hence it is inexpedient,

and I think unlawful, to make prominent reference to it in Lodge work. We have Jews, and may have Mohammedans and others of non-Christian sects within our Order, and the rule applies to them equally with members of the Christian faith.”

Could language be plainer? Anything savouring of Christ “is not to be tolerated.” Unlawful to make prominent mention of the name of Christ in opening and closing a prayer! This is nothing but “crucifying Christ afresh” so far as Oddfellowship is concerned. (Extract from Secret Societies, pp. 7 and 8, by George L. Hunt).

8. CONCLUSIONS

1. Both Freemasonry and Oddfellowship are satanic organizations. The Scriptural reasons for rejecting Freemasonry apply equally to Oddfellowship, and also the following observations respecting churches, ministers, etc.
2. Churches, whatever their claim to orthodoxy which admit Freemasons to the privileges of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, are openly countenancing what is an abomination in God’s sight. “But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table and of the table of devils.” (1 Cor. 10:20, 21).
3. Ministers who are Freemasons, or who either support or condone Freemasonry are not ministers of Christ, but wolves in sheep’s clothing.
4. Freemasons rob Christ of the glory which is His due. By putting Him, who is the image of the invisible God, on the same level with Mohammed, Buddha, etc., they are coming dangerously near the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which there is no forgiveness. They also prove their rejection of Him and their

want of love to Him. But “if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha”—let him be accursed. (1 Cor. 16:22). “No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:13). It is Christ or Freemasonry. Choose Freemasonry and you reject Christ. Reject Christ and you shall be damned. “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” (Ps. 2:12). “And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17).

W. MacLean

THE MILLENNIUM

JONATHAN EDWARDS

PREFACE

There are three main views regarding the Second Coming of Christ: (1) The A-Millennarian; (2) the Pre-Millennarian; (3) the Post-Millennarian. (1)) The A-Millennarians deny the doctrine of an earthly Millennium. Both Pre-Millennarians and Post-Millennarians hold that the Millennium is on earth, while the A-Millennarians hold that the thousand year period is symbolic of the completeness of the rest of God's saints in their intermediate state—from the time of their souls entering heaven until the Resurrection of the Great Day, when soul and body shall be re-united. The Millennium of the A-Millennarians is not on earth but in heaven. The A-Millennarian view is as the name indicates, purely negative, a theory of gloom and pessimism as far as the future of the Cause of Christ in this world is concerned. The usual A-Millennarian interpretation of Revelation 20:2, is that the "binding" of Satan took place at the first advent, and that it was accomplished when Christ triumphed over him at the cross. The Scripture cited to prove this is Matthew 12:29: "How can one enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house." "The statement that he is to be bound and cast into the abyss," writes Loraine Boettner in his excellent book, 'The Millennium,'¹² "so that

12 "The Millennium," an exhaustive handling of all aspects of the subject running into 380 pages, printed in 1958 by The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia, USA.

he can no longer deceive the nations,” teaches that this restraint is to be placed on him during the course of this present world, that is during the Gospel age while the nations still are in existence. It cannot relate to the intermediate state, as some say, nor to the eternal state, as others say, for in neither of those cases will the nations have any meaning. Furthermore, the angel who was to bind Satan was seen ‘coming down out of heaven’ to the earth. (Rev. 20:1). The A-Millennarian interpretation that the binding of Satan took place at the first advent of Christ seems rather far-fetched and unconvincing. It is open to the objection that if that is the meaning of the “binding” of Satan, then the ‘loosing’ spoken of in Revelation 20.3, 7, which is the opposite of binding, must mean the reversing of the work of Christ, that is the annulment of the atonement, or at least a time when it becomes ineffective. But that is impossible even for a little time. We prefer to take Matthew 12:29 as a simple statement of the superiority of Christ over the Devil, and the casting out of the demon recorded in the same context as a proof of the Deity of Christ.” (The Millennium, pp. 125, 126).

1. The A-Millennarian view was set forth most clearly by a German theologian, Kliefoth (1874). He held that Revelation 20 follows chronologically after Revelation 19. But not finding what he believed to be a Scriptural support for a Millennium on earth, he concluded that the reign of the saints with Christ could only relate to the intermediate state.—A-Millennarianism has been most fully developed by the Dutch theologians, Drs. Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck and others. It is the official view of the conservative Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, which has a membership of more than 2,000,000 and sponsors a world-wide “Lutheran Hour” radio programme. It is also the view of the equally conservative Christian Reformed Church, likewise sponsoring an extensive radio programme known as the “Back To God Hour,” and by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. (See “The Millennium,” p. 112).

2. Pre-Millennarianism holds that Christ is to return to this world, resurrect the righteous dead according to its interpretation of the first resurrection mentioned in Revelation 20, sets up His seat of Government in Jerusalem, ushers in the Millennium represented as a time of great prosperity and blessedness during which time the Jews will enjoy special pre-eminence and honour above the Gentile Christians. After the thousand years are finished the rest of the dead shall rise. This the Pre-Millennarians hold is the second resurrection mentioned in Revelation 20. Christ will then judge the world. That the “first resurrection” cannot be understood in a literal sense as the Pre-Millennarians hold is evident from what the Lord Jesus Christ says on four different occasions that He would raise up those who believe in Him at the last day (John 6:39, 40, 44, 54). “Clearly,” as Dr. Boettner observes, “there can be no other days after the last day.” (“The Millennium,” p. 169).

Dispensationalism, which is also Pre-Millennarian, differs in certain respects from the generally accepted Pre-Millennarian position and is a fairly modern system of Bible interpretation represented by the writings of J. N. Darby and the Scofield Reference Bible. Despite its apparent Scriptural plausibility, Dispensationalism is a subtle perversion and subversion of the doctrines of free and sovereign grace. In Dispensationalism, Satan appears as an angel of light in a distinctly evangelical garb. Philip Mauro says: “Dispensationalism may be fascinating as a work of art, but as a revelation it rests upon a foundation of sand. The entire system of dispensational teaching is modernistic in the strictest sense: it is modernism, moreover of a very pernicious sort, such that it must have a Bible of its own (i.e., the Scofield Reference Bible) for the propaganda of its peculiar doctrines since they are not in the Word of God.”

When George Muller, of Bristol, came up against the

dispensationalist doctrines of the Brethren Movement he severed all connection with it. "The time came," he said, "when I had either to part from my Bible or part from John Darby. I chose to keep my precious Bible and part from John Darby,"

In connection with the Scofield Bible—the Bible of Dispensationalism—it has been rightly said: "It is a matter of great concern to many Christians that a book should exist, and be offered for sale, wherein corrupt words of mortal man are printed and set forth as positive statements in the midst of the Holy Word of God Almighty. Is not this an affront before God Himself? "Let God be true and every man a liar." (Rom. 3:4).

It is to be noted, however, that while Dispensationalism is Pre-Millennarian, all Pre-Millennarians are not Dispensationalists, and many of them refute and reject the tenets of Dispensationalism. Dispensationalism only includes those Pre-Millennarians who follow the erroneous teachings of Darby and Scofield.

The Post-Millennarian view (so called because it asserts that the Second Coming of Christ is after the Millennium at the Great Day of Judgment), is that the Millennium shall be ushered in through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, blessing the everlasting gospel of the grace of God in all lands. In the words of the theologian, Dr. Charles Hodge, this has been "the common Church doctrine." Bound up with the Millennium is the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding the destruction of the Anti-Christ, of Mahommed the false prophet, and of all false religious systems; and the ingathering of the Jews. The conversion of the Jews as Dr. C. Hodge observes will be national. As their casting away was national, although a remnant was saved, so their conversion, although some may remain obdurate. The "first resurrection" of Revelation 20 is understood not literally but in a spiritual sense. The main tenets of the Post-Millennium view—"the doctrine commonly held

by the Church”—are set forth in the following extracts from the “History of Redemption” by Jonathan Edwards on the subject of the Millennium.

Rev W. MacLean

His name for ever shall endure;
 Last like the sun it shall:
Men shall be bless'd in him, and bless'd
 All nations shall Him call.
Now blessed be the Lord our God,
 The God of Israel,
For He alone doth wondrous works,
 In glory that excel.
And blessed be His glorious name,
 To all eternity:
The whole earth let His glory fill,
 Amen, so let it be.
 Psalm 72:17-19 (Metrical version)

THE MILLENNIUM

(Extracts from *The History of Redemption*)

I now come to show how the success of Christ's redemption will be carried on from the present time, till Anti-Christ is fallen and Satan's visible kingdom on earth is destroyed. . . . I would observe some things in general concerning it.

The Darkness Before the Dawn

We have all reason to conclude from the Scriptures, that just before this work of God begins, it will be a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion in the world. It has been so before preceding glorious revivals of religion. When Christ came, it was an exceedingly degenerate time among the Jews; and so it was a very dark time before the Reformation. And not only so, but it seems to be foretold in Scripture that it shall be a time of but little religion, when Christ shall come to set up His kingdom in the world. Thus when Christ spake of His coming, to encourage His elect, who cry to Him day and night, in Luke 18:8, He adds, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" which seems to denote a great prevalency of infidelity just before Christ's coming to avenge His suffering Church. Though Christ's coming at the last judgment is not here to be excluded, yet there seems to be a special respect to His

coming to deliver His Church from their long-continued suffering, persecuted state, which is accomplished only at His coming at the destruction of Anti-Christ. Then will be accomplished the following passages, Rev. 6:10; “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” and Rev. 18:20: “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.”

It is now a very dark time with respect to the interests of religion, wherein there is but a little faith and a great prevailing of infidelity on the earth. There is now a remarkable fulfilment of that in 2 Peter 3:3, “Knowing this, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.” And so Jude 17, 18, “But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.” Whether the times shall be any darker still, or how much darker, before the beginning of this glorious work of God, we cannot tell.

There is no reason from the Word of God to think any other, than that this great work of God will be wrought, though very swiftly, yet **gradually**. As the children of Israel were gradually brought out of the Babylonish captivity, first one company, and then another, and gradually rebuilt their city and temple; and as the heathen Roman Empire was destroyed by a gradual, though a very swift, prevalency of the gospel; so, though there are many things which seem to hold forth that the work of God would be exceeding swift—and many great and wonderful events should very suddenly be brought to pass; and some great parts of Satan’s visible kingdom should have a very sudden fall—yet all will not be accomplished at once as by some great miracle, like the resurrection of the dead. But this work will be accomplished by **means**, by the preaching of the gospel and the use of the ordinary means of grace and so shall be gradually brought to pass. Some shall be converted and be the

means of others' conversion. God's Spirit shall be poured out first to raise up instruments and then those instruments shall be used with success. And doubtless one nation shall be enlightened and converted and one false religion and false way of worship exploded after another. By the representation in Daniel 2:34, the stone cut out of the mountain without hands gradually grows. So Christ teaches us, that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, Matt. 13:31, 32, and like leaven hid in three measures of meal, verse 33. The same representation we have in Mark 4:26, 27, 28 and in the vision of the waters of the sanctuary, Ezek 47. The Scriptures hold forth, that there should be several successive great and glorious events by which this glorious work should be accomplished. The angel speaking to the prophet Daniel of those glorious times, mentions two glorious periods at the end of which glorious things shall be accomplished, Daniel 12:11, "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." But then he adds in the next verse, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days"; intimating, that something very glorious should be accomplished at the end of the former period, but something much more glorious at the end of the latter.

The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

I now proceed to show how this glorious work shall be accomplished.

The Spirit of God shall be gloriously poured out for the wonderful revival and propagation of religion. This great work shall be accomplished, not by the authority of princes, nor by the wisdom of learned men, but by God's Holy Spirit: Zech. 4:6, 7, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a

plain, and he shall bring forth the head stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." So the prophet Ezekiel, speaking of this great work of God, says, Chap 39:29, "Neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." We know not where this pouring out of the Spirit shall begin, or whether in many places at once; or whether, what hath already taken place, be not some forerunner and beginning of it.

This pouring out of the Spirit of God, when it is begun, shall soon bring great multitudes to forsake that vice and wickedness which now so generally prevails; and shall cause that vital religion, which is now so despised and laughed at in the world, to revive. The work of conversion shall break forth, and go on in such a manner as never has been hitherto; agreeable to Isaiah 44:3, 4, 5. God, by pouring out His Holy Spirit, will furnish men to be glorious instruments of carrying on this work; will fill them with knowledge and wisdom and fervent zeal for the promoting of the kingdom of Christ, the salvation of souls and propagating the gospel in the world. The gospel shall begin to be preached with abundantly greater clearness and power than had heretofore been. This great work of God shall be brought to pass by the preaching of the gospel, as is represented in Rev. 14:6, 7, 8, that before Babylon falls, the gospel shall be powerfully preached and propagated in the world.

This was typified of old by the sounding of the silver trumpets in Israel in the beginning of their jubilee: Lev. 25:9, "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." The glorious times which are approaching, are the Church's jubilee, which shall be introduced by the sounding of the silver trumpet of the gospel, as is foretold in Isa. 27:13, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in

the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.” And there shall be a glorious pouring out of the Spirit with this clear and powerful preaching of the gospel, to make it successful for reviving those holy doctrines of religion which are now chiefly ridiculed in the world, turning many from heresy, from popery and from other false religions; and also for turning many from their vice and profaneness and for bringing vast multitudes savingly home to Christ.

The work of conversion shall go on in a wonderful manner and spread more and more. Many shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, one multitude after another continually, as in Isa. 60:4, 5: “Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together.” And so (verse 8), “Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?” And as the gospel shall be preached to every tongue, and kindred, and nation, and people, before the fall of Anti-Christ; so we may suppose, that it will be gloriously successful to bring in multitudes from every nation: and shall spread more and more with wonderful swiftness (see Isa. 66:7-9).

The pouring out of the Spirit of God will not affect the overthrow of Satan’s visible kingdom, till there has first been a violent and mighty opposition made. In this the Scripture is plain, that when Christ is thus gloriously coming forth, when the destruction of Anti-Christ is readily at hand and Satan’s kingdom begins to totter, the powers of the kingdom of darkness will rise up and mightily exert themselves. Thus after the pouring out of the sixth vial, which was to dry up the river Euphrates to prepare the way for the destruction of spiritual Babylon (Rev. 16), the powers of hell will be mightily alarmed and will stir up themselves to oppose the kingdom of Christ before the seventh vial shall be poured out, which shall give them a final and complete overthrow. The beloved disciple informs us (verses 13, 14)

that “three unclean spirits like frogs shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” This seems to be the last and greatest effort of Satan to save his kingdom from being overthrown; though perhaps he may make as great an effort towards the end of the world to regain it.

When the Spirit begins to be so gloriously poured forth, when the devil sees such multitudes flocking to Christ in one nation and another, when the foundations and pillars of his kingdom are ready to come to swift and sudden destruction, all hell will be greatly alarmed. Satan has ever had a dread of having his kingdom overthrown and has been doing great works to prevent it, especially since the day of Constantine the Great. To this end he set up those mighty kingdoms of Anti-Christ and Mahomet and brought in all the heresies, superstitions, and corrupt opinions in the world.¹³ But when he sees all begin to fail, it will rouse him exceedingly. If Satan of old dreaded being cast out of the Roman Empire, how much more does he dread being cast out of the whole world!

It seems, in this last great opposition, all the forces of Anti-Christ, Mahometanism and heathenism will be united; all the forces of Satan’s visible kingdom through the whole world of mankind. And therefore it is said, that “spirits of devils shall go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” Rev. 16:14. And these spirits are said to come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; i.e., there shall be the spirit of popery, the spirit of Mahometanism, and the spirit of heathenism all united. By the beast is meant Anti-

13 Since the days of Jonathan Edwards there has been a phenomenal growth of false sects—Mormonism, Jehovahs Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, Christian Scientists, Modernists, etc.

Christ; by the dragon, in this book, is commonly meant the devil, as he reigns over his heathen kingdom; by the false prophet, is sometimes meant the Pope and his clergy; but here an eye seems to be had to Mahomet, whom his followers call the great prophet of God. This will be as it were the dying struggles of the old serpent; a battle wherein he will fight as one that is almost desperate.

We know not particularly in what manner this opposition shall be made. It is represented as a battle; it is called “the battle of the great day of God Almighty.” There will be some way or other a mighty struggle between Satan’s kingdom and the Church and probably in all ways of opposition that can be; and doubtless great opposition by external force. The princes of the world who are on the devil’s side shall join hand in hand, for it is said: “The kings of the earth are gathered together to battle,” Rev. 19:19 And probably there will be great opposition by subtle disputers and carnal reasoning, persecution, virulent reproaches, craft and subtlety. The devil now doubtless will ply his skill as well as his strength to the utmost; and those who belong to his kingdom will everywhere be stirred up and engaged to make a united violent opposition against this holy religion, which they see prevailing so mightily in the world, but Christ and His Church shall in this battle obtain a complete and entire victory over their enemies. They shall be totally routed and overthrown in this their last effort. When the powers of hell and earth are thus gathered together, Christ and His armies shall come forth against them by His Word and Spirit, in how august and glorious a manner is this advance of Christ with His Church described, Rev. 19:11, etc. And to represent how great the victory they should obtain and how mighty the overthrow of their enemies, it is said (verses 17, 18) that “all the fowls of heaven are called together, to eat the great supper given them, of the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men,” etc., and then, in the following verses, we have a distinct account of the victory and overthrow.

In this victory the seventh vial shall be poured out. It is said in Rev. 16:16, of the great army that should be gathered together against Christ: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon"; then it is said, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, it is done." Now the business is done for Satan and his adherents. When this victory is obtained, all is in effect done. Satan's last and greatest opposition is conquered; all his measures are defeated; the pillars of his kingdom broken asunder and will fall, of course. The devil is utterly baffled and confounded and knows not what else to do. He now sees his Anti-Christian, Mahometan and heathenish kingdoms through the world all tumbling down. He and his most powerful instruments are taken captive. Now that is in effect done, for which the Church of God had been so long waiting and hoping, and so earnestly crying to God, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true?"

The angel who set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, etc., that when the seventh angel should come to sound, time should be no longer. And now the time is come; now the seventh trumpet sounds and the seventh vial is poured out, both together; intimating that now all is finished as to the overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth. This victory shall be by far the greatest that ever was obtained over Satan and his adherents. By this blow with which the stone cut out of the mountain without hands shall strike the image of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and clay, it shall all be broken to pieces. This will be a finishing blow to the image, so that it shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

In this victory will be a most glorious display of divine power. Christ shall therein appear in the character of King of kings, and Lord of lords, as in Rev. 19:16. Now Christ shall dash His enemies,

even the strongest and proudest of them in pieces; as a potter's vessel shall they be broken to shivers. Then shall strength be shown out of weakness and Christ shall cause His Church to thresh the mountains as in Isa. 41:15: "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." And then shall be fulfilled Isa. 42:13-15.

The Destruction of Satan's Kingdom

Consequent on this victory Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall be destroyed. When Satan is conquered in this last battle, the Church of Christ will have easy work of it; as when Joshua and the children of Israel had obtained that great victory over the five kings of the Amorites. When God sent great hailstones on their enemies, they had easy work of subduing the cities and country to which they belonged. So it was also after the other great battle that Joshua had with a great multitude at the waters of Merom. After this glorious victory of Christ and His Church over their enemies, the chief powers of Satan's kingdom, they shall destroy that kingdom in all those cities and countries to which they belonged. After this the Word of God shall have a speedy and swift progress through the earth; as it is said, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, "the cities of the nations fell, and every island fled away, and the mountains were not found," Rev. 16:19, 20. When once the stone cut out of the mountain without hands had broken the image in pieces, it was easy to abolish all the remains of it. The very wind will carry it away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor (Daniel 2:34,35). Because Satan's visible kingdom on earth shall now be destroyed, therefore it is said, that the seventh vial by which this shall be done, shall be poured out into the air; which is represented in Scripture as the special seat of his kingdom; for he is called "the prince of the power of the air," Eph.

2:2. Now is come the time for punishing leviathan, that piercing serpent, of which we read in Isa. 27:1: "In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan, that crooked serpent, that He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

Concerning this overthrow of Satan's visible kingdom on earth, I would show wherein it will chiefly consist, with its extent and universality. I shall mention the particular things in which it will consist, without pretending to determine in what order they shall come to pass, or which shall be accomplished first, or whether they shall be accomplished together.

1. Heresies, infidelity and superstition among those who have been brought up under the light of the gospel, will then be abolished; and particularly deism¹⁴ which is now so bold and confident in infidelity shall be driven away and vanish to nothing. All shall agree in the same great and important doctrines of the gospel; Zech. 14:9: 'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord and His name one.' Then shall be abolished all superstitious modes of worship and all shall cordially agree in worshipping God in his own way; Jer. 32:39: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

2. The kingdom of Antichrist shall be utterly overthrown. His dominion has been much brought down already by the vial poured out on his throne in the Reformation; but then it shall be utterly destroyed. Then shall be proclaimed, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." When the seventh angel sounds, "time, times, and half a time," shall

14 A deist is one who believes in the existence of a God or supreme being, but denies revealed religion, basing his belief on the light of nature and reason.

be run out; and time shall be no longer.” Then shall be accomplished concerning Antichrist the things which are written (Rev. 18) of the spiritual Babylon, the idolatrous Roman government, that has for so many ages been the great enemy of the Christian Church, first under heathenism, then under popery. That proud city which lifted herself up to heaven, in her pride and haughtiness; that cruel, bloody city, shall come down to the ground. Then shall that be fulfilled, Isa, 26:5: “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust.” She shall be thrown down with violence, like a great millstone cast into the sea, and shall be found no more at all, and shall become a habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (Rev. 18). Now shall she be stripped of all her glory and riches and ornaments; and shall be cast out as an abominable branch and shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets. All her policy and craft, in which she so abounded, shall not save her. All the strength and wisdom of this great whore shall fail her and there shall be none to help her. The kings of the earth, who before gave their power and strength to the beast, shall now hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire (Rev. 17:16).

3. Satan’s Mahometan kingdom shall be utterly overthrown. The locusts and horsemen in the 9th of Revelation have their appointed and limited time set them there and the false prophet shall be taken and destroyed. And then—though Mahometanism has been so vastly propagated in the world and is upheld by such a great empire—this smoke, which has ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall be utterly scattered before the light of that glorious day and the Mahometan empire shall fall at the sound of the great trumpet which shall then be blown.

4. Jewish infidelity shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have been now for above seventeen hundred years in their

rejection of Christ and however rare have been the instances of individual conversions, ever since the destruction of Jerusalem—but they have, against the teachings of their own prophets, continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying Christ—yet, when this day comes, the thick veil that blinds their eyes shall be removed, 2 Cor. 3:16 and divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, “and they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.” Zech. 12:10, etc. Then shall the house of Israel be saved. The Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity and shall have their hearts wonderfully changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy. They shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly and joyfully, owning Him as their glorious King and only Saviour and shall with all their hearts, as with one heart and voice, declare His praises unto other nations.

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews in Romans 11. There are also many passages of the Old Testament which cannot be interpreted in any other sense, which I cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable providential seal of the fulfilment of this great event by a kind of continued miracle, viz., there being preserved a distinct nation in such a dispersed condition for above sixteen hundred years. The world affords nothing else like it. There is undoubtedly a remarkable hand of providence in it. When they shall be called, that ancient people, who alone were God’s people for so long a time, shall be His people again, never to be rejected more. They shall then be gathered into one fold together with the Gentiles. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, that in the future glorious times of the Church, both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together and shall be united as one people, as they formerly were under David and

Solomon (Hos. 1:11, etc.). Though we do not know the time in which this conversion of Israel will come to pass, yet thus much we may determine by Scripture, that it will be before the glory of the Gentile part of the Church shall be fully accomplished, because it is said, that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:11, 12, 15).

5. Then shall also Satan's heathenish kingdom be overthrown. Gross heathenism now possesses a great part of the earth and there are supposed to be more heathens now in the world than of all other professions taken together. But then the heathen nations shall be enlightened with the glorious gospel. There will be a wonderful spirit of pity towards them; and zeal for their instruction and conversion put into multitudes; and many shall go forth and carry the gospel unto them. Then shall the joyful sound be heard among them and the Sun of righteousness shall arise with His glorious light shining on those vast regions of the earth that have been covered with heathenish darkness for many thousand years. Many of them doubtless ever since the times of Moses and Abraham, have lain thus in a miserable condition, under the cruel tyranny of the devil, who has all this while blinded and befooled them, domineered over them, and made a prey of them. Now the glad tidings of the gospel shall sound there and they shall be brought out of darkness into marvellous light.

It is promised that heathenism shall thus be destroyed in many places. God has said, That the gods that have not made these heavens and this earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, Jer. 10:11, and that He will utterly abolish idols, Isa. 2:18. Then shall the many nations of Africa, who now seem to be in a state but little above the beasts and in many respects much below them, be visited with glorious light and delivered from all their darkness and shall become a civil, Christian, understanding and holy people. Then shall the vast continent of America, which now in great part is covered with barbarous ignorance and cruelty, be

everywhere covered with glorious gospel-light and Christian love; and instead of worshipping the devil as now they do, they shall serve God and praises shall be sung everywhere to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of the world. So we may expect it will be in that great and populous part of the world; the East Indies, which are now mostly inhabited by the worshippers of the devil. Then the kingdom of Christ will be established in those continents which have been more lately discovered towards the North and South Poles, where men differ very little from the wild beasts, except in impiety. The same will be the case with respect to those countries which have never yet been discovered. Thus will be gloriously fulfilled Isa. 35:1: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." (see also verses 6, 7).

Having thus shown wherein this overthrow of Satan's kingdom will consist, I come now to observe its universal extent. The visible kingdom of Satan shall be overthrown, and the kingdom of Christ set up on the ruins of it, everywhere throughout the whole habitable globe. Now shall the promise made to Abraham be fulfilled, that in him and in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed; and Christ now shall become the desire of all nations, agreeable to Haggai 2:7. Now the kingdom of Christ shall in the most strict and literal sense be extended to all nations and the whole earth. There are many passages of Scripture that can be understood in no other sense. What can be more universal than Isa. 11:9: "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." As much as to say, as there is no part of the channel or cavity of the sea, but what is covered with water, so there shall be no part of the world of mankind but what shall be covered with the knowledge of God. So it is foretold in Isa. 45:22 that all the ends of the earth shall look to Christ and be saved. And to show that the words are to be understood in the most universal sense, it is said in the next verse, "I have sworn myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in

righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” So the most universal expression is used, Dan. 7:27: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God.”

When the devil was cast out of the Roman empire, because that was the highest and principal part of the world and the other nations that were left were low and mean in comparison, it was represented as Satan’s being cast out of heaven to the earth, Rev. 12:9; but it is represented that he shall be cast out of the earth too and shut up in hell, Rev. 20:1-3. This is the greatest revolution by far that ever came to pass; therefore it is said in Rev. 16:17, 18, that on the pouring out of the seventh vial, “there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.” And this is the third great dispensation of Providence which is in Scripture compared to Christ’s coming to judgment, Rev. 16:15. There, after the sixth vial and after the devil’s armies were gathered together to their great battle, and just before Christ’s glorious victory over them, it is said, “Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.” So it is called Christ’s coming, 2 Thess 2:8. Speaking of Antichrist it is said, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.” See also Dan. 7:13, 14, where Christ’s coming to set up His kingdom on earth, and to destroy Antichrist, is called coming with clouds of heaven. And this is more like Christ’s last coming to judgment than any of the preceding dispensations which are so called. The dispensation is so much greater and more universal, and so more like the day of judgment, which respects the whole world. The great spiritual resurrection of the Church of God accompanying it, resembles the general resurrection at the end of the world more than any other (see Rev. 20:4).

Terrible judgments and fearful destruction shall now be executed on God's enemies. There will doubtless at the introducing of this dispensation be a visible and awful hand of God against blasphemers, deists, obstinate heretics, and other enemies of Christ, terribly destroying them with remarkable tokens of wrath and vengeance. More especially will this dispensation be attended with terrible judgments on Antichrist; the cruel persecutors who belong to the Church of Rome, shall in a most awful manner be destroyed, which is compared to a casting of Antichrist into the burning flame, Dan. 7:11, and to casting him alive into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, Rev. 19:20.

Then shall this cruel persecuting Church suffer those judgments from God, which shall be far more dreadful than her persecutions of the saints, agreeable to Rev. 18:6, 7. The judgments which God shall execute on the enemies of the Church are so great, that they are compared to God's sending great hailstones from heaven upon them, every one the weight of a talent, as it is said on the pouring out of the seventh vial, Rev. 16:21. "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail; for the plague thereof was exceedingly great." And now shall be that treading of the wine-press spoken of, Rev. 14:19, 20.

This shall put an end to the Church's suffering state, and shall be attended with their glorious and joyful praises. The Church's afflicted state has been continued, excepting some short intermissions, from the resurrection of Christ to this time; but now shall a final end be put to her suffering state. Indeed after this, near the end of the world, the Church shall be greatly threatened; but it is said, it shall be but for a little season, Rev. 20:3, for as the times of the Church's rest have been but short, before the long day of her afflictions are at an end; so whatever affliction she may suffer after this, will be very short, but otherwise the day of the Church's afflictions and persecution shall

now come to a final end. The Scriptures, in many places, speak of this time as the end of the suffering state of the Church. So Isa. 51:22: "Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of My fury; thou shalt no more drink it again." Then shall be proclaimed to the Church, Isa. 40:1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Also Isa. 54:8, 9 and 60:20 belong to this time. "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." And so Zeph. 3:15: "The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, He hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more."

The time before this had been the Church's sowing-time, wherein she sowed in tears and in blood; but now is her harvest, wherein she will come again rejoicing, bringing her sheaves with her. Now the time of travail of the woman clothed with the sun is at an end; now she hath brought forth her son, for this glorious setting up of the kingdom of Christ through the world, is what the Church had been in travail for, with such terrible pangs, for so many ages, Isa. 26:17. "Like as a woman with child that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs: so have we been in Thy sight, O Lord." (See Isa. 60:20 and 61:10, 11). And now the Church shall forget her sorrow, since a man-child is born into the world; now succeed her joyful praise and triumph. Her praises shall then go up to God from all parts of the earth (as Isa. 42:10-12); and praise shall not only fill the earth, but also heaven. The Church on earth and the Church in heaven shall both gloriously rejoice and praise God as with one heart on that occasion. Without doubt it will be a time of very distinguished joy and praise among the holy prophets and apostles and the other saints in heaven, Rev.

18:20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." See how universal these praises will be in Isa. 44:23. "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel." See what joyful praises are sung to God on this occasion by the universal Church in heaven and earth, in the beginning of the 19th chapter of Revelation.

The Prosperous State of the Church

I would speak of the prosperous state of the Church through the greater part of this period. And in general, I would observe two things:

1. That this is most properly the time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Though the kingdom of heaven was in a degree set up soon after Christ's resurrection and in a further degree in the time of Constantine; and though the Christian Church in all ages of it is called the kingdom of heaven, yet this is the principal time of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the time principally intended by the prophecies of Daniel whence the Jews took the name of the kingdom of heaven.

2. Now is the principal fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament which speak of the glorious times of the gospel in the latter days. Though there has been a glorious fulfilment of those prophecies already, in the times of the apostles and of Constantine, etc.; yet the expressions are too high to suit any other time entirely, but that which is to succeed the fall of Antichrist. This is most properly the glorious day of the gospel. Other times are only forerunners and preparatory to this; those were the seedtime, but this is the harvest. But more particularly,

(1.) It will be a time of great light and knowledge. The present are days of darkness in comparison of those days. The light of that glorious time shall be so great that it is represented as though there should then be no night, but only day; no evening nor darkness. So Zech. 14:6, 7: "And it shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day, which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening-time it shall be light." It is further represented, as though God would then give such light to His Church, that it should so much exceed the glory of the light of the sun and moon, that they should be ashamed, Isa. 24:23, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously."

There is a kind of veil now cast over the greater part of the world, which keeps them in darkness; but then this veil shall be destroyed, Isa. 25:7, "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." Then all countries and nations, even those which are now most ignorant, shall be full of light and knowledge. Great knowledge shall prevail everywhere. It may be hoped that then many of the Negroes and Indians will be divines and that excellent books will be published in Africa, in Ethiopia, in Tartary, and other now most barbarous countries; and not only learned men, but others of more ordinary education, shall then be very knowing in religion. Isa. 32:3,4 "The eyes of them that see, shall not be dim; and the ears of them that hear, shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge." Knowledge then shall be very universal among all sorts of persons, Jer. 31:34 "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

There shall then be a wonderful unravelling of the difficulties in the doctrines of religion and clearing up of seeming inconsistencies; so crooked things shall be made straight, and rough places shall be made plain, and darkness shall become light before God's people. Difficulties in Scripture shall then be cleared up and wonderful things shall be discovered in the Word of God which were never discovered before. The great discovery of those things in religion which had been before kept hid, seems to be compared to removing a veil and discovering the ark of the testimony to the people, which before used to be kept in the secret part of the temple and was never seen by them. Thus at the sounding of the seventh angel, when it is proclaimed, "that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ," it is added, that "the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament." So great shall be the increase of knowledge in this time, that heaven shall be as it were opened to the Church of God on earth.

(2.) It shall be a time of great holiness. Now vital religion shall everywhere prevail and reign. Religion shall not be an empty profession as it now mostly is, but holiness of heart and life shall abundantly prevail. Those times shall be an exception from what Christ says of the ordinary state of the Church, viz., that there shall be but few saved; for now holiness shall become general, Isa. 9:21 "Thy people also shall be all righteous." Not that there will be none remaining in a Christless condition; but that visible wickedness shall be suppressed everywhere and true holiness shall become general, though not universal. It shall be a wonderful time, not only for the multitude of godly men, but for eminency of grace, Isa. 65:20 "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed"; Zech. 12:8 "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and

the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.” And holiness shall then be as it were inscribed on everything, on all men’s common business and employments, and the common utensils of life. All shall be dedicated to God, and applied to holy purposes; everything shall then be done to the glory of God, Isa. 23:18 “And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord.” (And so Zech. 14:20, 21). And as God’s people then shall be eminent in holiness of heart, so they shall be also in holiness of life and practice.

(3.) It shall be a time wherein religion shall in every respect be uppermost in the world. It shall be had in great esteem and honour. The saints have hitherto for the most part been kept under and wicked men have governed. But now they will be uppermost. The kingdom shall be given into the hands of the saints of the “most high God,” Dan. 7:27. And “they shall reign on the earth,” Rev. 5:10. They shall live and “reign with Christ a thousand years,” Rev. 20:4, In that day, such persons as are eminent for true piety and religion shall be chiefly promoted to places of trust and authority. Vital religion shall then take possession of kings’ palaces and thrones; and those who are in highest advancement shall be holy men, Isa. 49:23. “And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” Kings shall employ all their power and glory and riches for the advancement of the honour and glory of Christ and the good of His Church, Isa. 60:16 “Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings.” And the great men of the world and the rich merchants and others who have great wealth and influence, shall devote all to Christ and his Church, Psalm 45:12 “The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour.”

(4.) Those will be times of great peace and love. There shall then be universal peace and a good understanding among the nations of

the world, instead of confusion, wars and bloodshed, Isa. 2:4 “And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” It is represented as if all instruments of war should be destroyed, having become useless, Psalm 46:9 “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.” (See also Zech. 9:10). Then shall all nations dwell quietly and safely, without fear of any enemy, Isa. 32:18 “And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.” (Also Zech. 8:10,11).

Then shall malice, and envy, and wrath, and revenge be suppressed everywhere; and peace and love shall prevail between one man and another, which is most elegantly set forth in Isa. 9:6-10. Then shall there be peace and love between rulers and ruled. Rulers shall love their people and with all their might seek their best good; and the people shall love their rulers, shall joyfully submit to them and give them that honour which is their due. So shall there be happy love between ministers and their people, Mal. 4:6 “And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.” Then shall flourish in an eminent manner those Christian virtues of meekness, forgiveness, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness and brotherly-kindness, those excellent fruits of the Spirit. Men, in their temper and disposition shall then be like the Lamb of God, the lovely Jesus. The body shall be conformed to the head.

Then shall all the world be united in one amiable society. All nations, in all parts of the world, on every side of the globe, shall then be knit together in sweet harmony. All parts of God’s Church shall assist and promote the spiritual good of one another,

a communication shall then be upheld between all parts of the world to that end; and the art of navigation, which is now applied so much to favour men's covetousness and pride and is used so much by wicked debauched men, shall then be consecrated to God and applied to holy uses. (See Isa. 60:5-9). And then men will be abundant in expressing their love one to another, not only in words, but in deeds of charity, Isa. 32:5 "The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful; "but (verse 8) the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

(5.) It will be a time of excellent order in the Church of Christ. The true government and discipline of the Church will then be settled and put into practice. All the world shall then be as one Church, one orderly, regular, beautiful society. And as the body shall be one, so the members shall be in beautiful proportion to each other. Then shall that be verified in Psalm 112:3, "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together."

(6.) The Church of God shall then be beautiful and glorious on these accounts; yea, it will appear in the perfection of beauty, Isa. 9:1 "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isa. 61:10 "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." On these accounts, the Church will then be the greatest image of heaven itself.

(7.) That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity. Such a spiritual state as we have just described has a natural tendency to health and long life; and that this will actually be the case, is evident by Zech. 8:4 "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age." It has also a natural tendency to procure ease, quietness, pleasantness and cheerfulness of mind;

also wealth, and a great increase of children, as is intimated in Zeeh. 8:5 “And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.” But further, the temporal prosperity of the people of God will also be promoted by a remarkable blessing from heaven, Isa. 65:21 “They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” And in Mic. 4:4 “But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid.” Zech. 7:12 “For the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.” (See also Jer. 21:12, 13 and Amos 9:13). Yea, then they shall receive all manner of tokens of God’s presence, acceptance and favour: Jer. 33:9 “And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.” Even the days of Solomon were but an image of those days as to the temporal prosperity which shall be obtained in them.

(8.) It will also be a time of great rejoicing: Isa. 35:10 “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Chap. 55:12, “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you.” Chap. 66:11 “That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations: that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” Chap. 12:3 “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” That will be the Church’s glorious wedding-day with Christ upon earth: Rev. 19:7 “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself

ready.” Verse 9 “Blessed are they which are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.”

The Scriptures everywhere represent this prosperity to be of long continuance. The former intervals of rest and prosperity, as we before observed, are represented to be but short; but the representations of this state are quite different. Rev. 20:4 “And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus—and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Isa. 60:15 “Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.” This may suffice as to the prosperous state of the Church through the greater part of the period from the destruction of Satan’s visible kingdom in the world to Christ’s appearing in the clouds of heaven to judgment.

The Final Apostacy

I now come to speak of the great apostacy there should be towards the close of this period and how the Church should, for a short time, be threatened by her enemies. And this I shall do under three particulars.

1. A little before the end of the world, a great part of the world shall fall away from Christ and His Church. It is said, Rev. 20:3, that Satan should be cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up, and have a seal set upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and that afterward he must be loosed out of his prison for a little season. Accordingly we are told (verses 7, 8) that when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog. This intimates that the apostacy would be very general. The nations of the four quarters of the earth shall be deceived; and the number

of those who shall now turn enemies to Christ shall be vastly great, as the army of Gog and Magog is represented in Ezekiel. It is said (Rev. 20:8) that the number of them is as the sand of the sea, and that they went up on the breadth of the earth, as if they were an army large enough to reach from one side of the earth to the other.

Thus after a happy and glorious season, such a long day of light and holiness, of love and peace and joy, it shall again be a dark time. Satan shall begin to set up his dominion again in the world: and this world shall again become a scene of darkness and wickedness. The bottomless pit shall be opened, and devils shall come up again out of it and a dreadful smoke shall ascend to darken the world. And the Church of Christ, instead of extending to the utmost bounds of the world as it did before, shall be reduced to narrow limits. The world of mankind being continued so long in a state of great prosperity shall now begin to abuse their prosperity, to serve their lust and corruption. This we learn from Luke 17:26, etc.

2. Those apostates shall make great opposition to the Church of God. The Church shall be threatened with a sudden and entire overthrow by them. It is said, Satan shall gather them together to battle, as the sand on the seashore; and they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. Rev. 20:8,9. So that this beloved city shall seem just ready to be swallowed up by them, for her enemies shall not only threaten her, but shall actually have gathered together against her; and not only so, but shall have besieged her, shall have compassed her about on every side. However, there is nothing in the prophecy which seems to hold forth that the Church had actually fallen into their hands, as it had fallen into the hands of Antichrist, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. God will never suffer this to take place after the fall of Antichrist.

3. Now the state of things will seem most remarkably to call for Christ's immediate appearance to judgment; for then the world shall be filled with the most aggravated wickedness; for much the greater part of the world shall have become visibly wicked and open enemies to Christ, and their wickedness shall be dreadfully aggravated by their apostacy. Before the fall of Antichrist, most of the world was full of visibly wicked men. But the greater part of these are poor heathens, who never enjoyed the light of the gospel; and others are those that have been bred up in the Mahometan or popish darkness. But these have apostatised from the Christian Church, the visible kingdom of Christ, in which they enjoyed the great light and privileges of glorious times, which shall be incomparably greater than the light and privileges which the Church of God enjoys now. This apostacy will be most like the apostacy of the devils or any that ever had been before, for the devils apostatised and turned enemies to Christ, though they enjoyed the light of heaven; and these will apostatise, and turn enemies to Him, though they have enjoyed the light and privileges of the glorious times of the Church. That such should turn open and avowed enemies to Christ and should seek the ruin of His Church, will cry aloud for such immediate vengeance as was executed on the devils when they fell.

The wickedness of the world will remarkably call for Christ's immediate appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on them, because of the way in which they shall manifest their wickedness. This will be by scoffing and blaspheming Christ and His Holy religion; and particularly they will scoff at the notion of Christ's coming to judgment, of which the Church shall be in expectation. For now doubtless will be the greatest fulfilment of 2 Pet. 3:3,4: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue

as they were from the beginning of the creation.” They shall be in no expectation of the coming of Christ to judgment, and shall laugh at the notion. They shall trample all such things underfoot, and shall give up themselves to their lusts, or to eat and drink and wallow in sensual delights, as though they were to be here for ever. They shall despise the warnings the Church shall give them of the coming of Christ to judgment, as the people of the old world despised what Noah told them of the approaching flood; and as the people of Sodom did when Lot said to them, The Lord will destroy this city. Their wickedness on this account will cry aloud to heaven for Christ’s appearing in flaming fire to take vengeance on His enemies; and because they shall exercise their wickedness in a wicked design and violent attempt against the holy city of God, wherein for so long a time so much of the religion of Christ had been seen.

And the great number of the wicked is another thing which shall especially call for Christ’s coming, for the world then will doubtless be exceeding full of people, having continued so long in so great a state of prosperity, without such terrible desolating extremities as wars, pestilences and the like to diminish them. And the major part of this world, which shall be so populous, will be wicked contemptuous apostates from God. Undoubtedly the world will then be by far fuller of wickedness than ever it was before, from its foundation. And if the wickedness of the old world, when men began to multiply on the earth, called for the destruction of the world by a deluge of water, this wickedness will as much call for its destruction by a deluge of fire.

Again, the circumstances of the Church at that day will also eminently call for the immediate appearing of Christ, as they will be compassed about by their blasphemous murderous enemies, just ready to be swallowed up by them. And it will be a most distressing time with the Church, excepting the comfort they will have in the

hope of deliverance from God, for all other help will seem to fail. The case will come to the last extremity; and there will be an immediate need that Christ should come to their deliverance. And though the Church shall be so eminently threatened, yet so will Providence order it, that it shall be preserved till Christ shall appear in His immediate presence, coming in the glory of His Father with all His holy angels. And then will come the time when all the elect shall be gathered in. That work of conversion, which has been carried on from the beginning of the Church after the fall, through all those ages, shall be carried on no more. There never shall another soul be converted. Every one of those many millions, whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world, shall be brought in; not one soul shall be lost. And the mystical body of Christ, which has been growing since it first began in the days of Adam, will be complete as to the number of parts, having every one of its members. In this respect, the work of redemption will now be finished. And now the end for which the means of grace have been instituted shall be obtained. All that effect which was intended shall now be accomplished.

APPENDIX

I. Postmillennarianism Generally Recognised by the Whole Church.

Dr. A. A. Hodge in his critical remarks of the Premillennarian view says that the apostolical fathers of the Jewish Christian branch of the Church, such as Barnabas, Hermes and Papias, adopted it. It prevailed generally throughout the Church from A.D. 150 to A.D. 250, being advocated by Irenaeus and Tertullian. Since that time the doctrine taught in this chapter (the Postmillennarian view) has been the one generally recognised by the whole Church, while Millennarianism or Chiliasm (from the Greek Chilias, a thousand)

has been confined to individuals and transient parties. Its advocates based their doctrine on the literal interpretation of Rev. 20 (1-10), (*Outlines of Theology*, p. 569).

Among Postmillennarians should be mentioned the great Augustine, whose eminently sound interpretation of Scripture set the standard for the church for nearly a thousand years (*The Millenium*, p. 10).

II. How did the Westminster Divines Understand the Coming of Christ's Kingdom?

Q. What do we pray for in the second petition?

A. In the second petition (which is "Thy kingdom come") acknowledging ourselves and all mankind to be by nature under the dominion of sin and Satan, we pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; the Church furnished with all gospel-officers and ordinances, purged from corruption, countenanced and maintained by the civil magistrate—that Christ would be pleased so to exercise the kingdom of His power in all the world, as may best conduce to these ends." (*The Larger Catechism*, Q. 191).

The petition, "Thy kingdom come," will be fulfilled when, and where, and in proportion as the conditions implied in the words which follow ("Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven") are fulfilled by men—The prayers, hopes and labours of every Christian and of every Christian body ought to be directed to this end, that the revealed will of God should control all that is done by men on earth. Then only will the kingdom which is already established be fully manifested in all its glory and power. ("Israel and the New Covenant" by Roderick Campbell, p. 135).

Matthew Henry on "Thy kingdom come" quotes Vitringa, the

noted Dutch divine of the 17th century: "Let the bounds of the gospel church be enlarged, the kingdom of the world be made Christ's kingdom, and all men become subjects to it, and live as becomes their character."

III. The Parable of the Leaven.

"Another parable spake He unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." This parable relates also to the marvellous increase of the kingdom of God; but while the last (the parable of the mustard seed) sets forth its outward visible manifestation, this declares its hidden working, its mysterious influence on the world which on all sides it touches. While the leavening of the mass has never ceased to go forward, yet the promise of the parable has hitherto been realised only in a very imperfect measure; nor can we consider these words, "till the whole be leavened," as less than a prophecy of a final complete triumph of the Gospel that it will diffuse itself through all nations, and purify and ennoble all life." (Archbishop Trench).

"By 'the three measures' is meant," writes Jonathan Edwards, "the whole world: the progeny of the three sons of Noah who settled in the three parts of the world, Shem Asia and Ham Africa and Japheth Europe."

IV. The following extracts from John Calvin's Commentary on Isaiah, ch. 60, clearly point to the millennial glory of the Church in this world. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (v. 3). He alludes to the dawn; for, as the morning-star begins the day in one quarter only of the heaven and immediately the sun enlightens the whole world, so the daybreak was first in Judea, from which the light arose and was afterwards diffused throughout the whole world; for there is no

corner of the earth which the Lord has not enlightened by this light. He mentions "kings," that they might not imagine that none but the common people would come to this light, but princes and nobles, who in other respects are greatly delighted with their high rank. But now he confers on the Church the very highest honour, that she shines with such brightness as to attract to herself nations and princes. He calls it "the light" of the Church; not that she has any light from herself, but borrows it from Christ, as the moon borrows from the sun.

"Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." (v. 4). "I consider the plain meaning to be that both sons and daughters shall run together to the Church; that is, that the Church shall have sons and daughters, not only at home but abroad, and in the most distant part of the world; that the womb of the Church shall not be limited to any corner of the world, but shall be extended as far and wide as there shall be space throughout the whole world.

"Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear (or tremble) and be enlarged." (v. 5). He now mentions "trembling" and connects it with splendour or joy; and this may appear to be inconsistent with the meaning assigned to the former clause. But I have no doubt that he intended by this word to express the astonishment and even amazement with which the Church shall be seized, when she shall perceive that this strange and unexpected honour has been obtained by her, and that she has been elevated to so high a rank of honour, as if He had said, "The extent of the work will be so great as to exceed thy expectation." It is not, therefore, the "trembling" which is produced by some danger or some melancholy event, but such as commonly arises in matters of great importance, which exceed the capacity of our understanding, when we are struck with amazement and almost think that we dream; and this "trembling" agrees very well with joy.

“Surely the isles shall wait for me.” (v. 9). “They shall wait for,” that is, they shall observe my will; as servants are wont to comply with the will of their masters. Do not wonder, therefore, that so many shall flow into the Church; for “the islands,” which at present sometimes despise and sometimes fight against me, shall be so attentive to me as to execute whatever I shall command. And indeed from the remainder of the verse it is manifest that he now speaks of that kind of obedience.

“Therefore thy gates shall be open continually, etc. (v. 11). The gates shall be open, that riches may be brought into the city from every quarter. And as burdens are usually carried in the daytime, “the day,” he says, “will not be enough, so vast shall be the crowd of those who bring into it precious treasures, and therefore the carrying will be so constant that it will be necessary to keep the gates open night and day.”

When he says that the riches of the Gentiles shall belong to the Church, let us not view this as referring to carnal luxury, but to obedience, which the whole world shall render to God in the Church; for he says that what is offered to God belongs to the Church, because here God has nothing separate from it.

“Before all the nations.” Isa. 61:11. He again shews that the boundaries of the Church shall no longer be as narrow as they formerly were, for the Lord will cause her to fill the whole world.

“I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory.” (Isa. 66:18). He means that the knowledge of God shall be spread throughout the whole world; for the Greeks, Italians, Parthians, Cilicians, and other nations had heard nothing about pure religion and the true worship of God; and the whole world was plunged in the deepest darkness of ignorance. He therefore promises that the glory of God shall be known in every part of the world. The word “nations” is emphatic; for at that time the Lord was known to not more than one people, but now he has revealed himself to all.”

V. The Conversion of the Jews and the Fullness of the Gentiles

(By Hermann Witsius, D.D. (1636-1708), Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Utrecht and Leyden).

From what we have said before, it appears that they depart from the apostle's meaning, who, by all Israel (Rom. 11), understand the mystical Israel, or the people of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, without admitting the conversion of the whole Jewish nation to Christ, in the sense we have mentioned. Notwithstanding, this may be confirmed by the following arguments. First, the apostle speaks of that Israel, to whom he ascribes his own pedigree, ver. 1, whom he calls his flesh, that is, his kindred, ver. 14, and the natural branches, ver. 21, whom he constantly distinguishes from the Gentiles; to whom he testifies, blindness is happened. All this is applicable to Israel properly so called. Secondly, he lays before us a mystery but it was no mystery, that a very few Jews were converted to Christ together with the Gentiles; for we have daily instances of that. Thirdly, he reminds the Gentiles, not to exult over, or despise the Jews, from this argument, that, as they themselves were now taken in among the people of God, so, in like manner, the Jews were in due time to be taken in again. But if the apostle meant that the body of the Jewish nation was to continue in their hardness; and but a few of them to be saved, who, joined to the Gentiles should form a mystical Israel, the whole of that discourse would be more adapted to the commendation of the Gentiles, than of the Israelites; and encourage rather than repress the pride of the Gentiles. Fourthly, as the fall and diminishing of Israel, ver. 12, and their casting away, ver. 15, are to be understood; so likewise the receiving and saving them, for here the rules of a just opposition must be observed. But the fall, diminishing and casting away of Israel are to be understood of the generality of the Jewish nation; therefore the receiving and saving of Israel in like manner, (p. 414).

To this restoration of Israel shall be joined the riches of the whole church, and as it were, life from the dead, Rom. 11:12 “Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?”; and ver. 15, “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world; what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” The apostle intimates that much greater and more extensive benefits shall redound to the Christian Church from the fulness and restoration of the Jews, than did to the Gentiles from their fall and diminution; greater, I say intensely, or with respect to degrees, and larger with respect to extent.

As to intenseness or degrees, it is supposed that about the time of the conversion of the Jews, the Gentile world will be like a dead person, in a manner almost as Christ describes the church of Sardis, Rev. 3:1,2, namely, both that light of saving knowledge, and that fervent piety, and that lively and vigorous simplicity of ancient Christianity, will in a course of years be very much impaired. Many nations, which had formerly embraced the gospel with much zeal, afterwards almost to be extinguished by the venom of Mahometanism, Popery, Libertinism and Atheism, would verify his prophecy; but upon the restoration of the Jews these will suddenly arise, as out of the grave; a new light will shine upon them, a new zeal be kindled up; the life of Christ be again manifested in His mystical body, more lively, perhaps, and vigorous than ever. Then, doubtless, many scripture prophecies will, after their accomplishment, be better understood and such as now appear dark riddles, shall then be found to contain a most distinct description of facts. Many candles joined together give a greater light; a new fire laid near another, gives a greater heat. And such will the accession of the Jews be to the church of the Gentiles.

And not only so, but also many nations among whom the name of Christ had long before been forgotten, shall be seen to flock again to

the standard of salvation then erected. For there is a certain fulness of the Gentiles to be gathered together by the successive preaching of the gospel, which goes before the restoration of Israel, as in verse 25, *and another richness of the Gentiles, that comes after the recovery of Israel*. For, while the gospel for many ages was published, now to this, then to that nation, others gradually departed from Christ; but when the fullness of the Jews is come, it is altogether probable that these nations will in great numbers return to Christ. An almost innumerable multitude of Jews reside in Asia and Africa, among the Persians, Turks, Indians, Chinese, Japanese and Tartars. When therefore by the almighty hand of God these shall be brought to the communion of the Messiah, their love to Him will be the more ardent, as their hatred against Him had been formerly more bitter. And is it not more than probable, that the nations among whom they live were being excited by their example and admonitions, shall come into the fellowship of the same faith? Certainly the words of the apostle lead us to this.

Agreeably to which James has said, Acts 15:15-17, “And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doth all these things.” The reparation of the fallen tabernacle of David signifies the restoration of true and spiritual worship among the Israelites. And when that shall come to pass, the rest of mankind, who never gave up their names to Christ, and the nations, upon which His name was formerly called, but which by their falling away lost the benefit of the gospel will then with emulation seek the Lord.

And what is more evident than that prophecy in Isaiah? The prophet, in chap. 59:20-21, having foretold the restoration of Israel,

according to the apostle's commentary, immediately, in chap. 61:1 exclaims, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee"; in ver. 3 "and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," etc. Moreover, the riches of the church at that time are described in ver. 17, "for brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood, brass, and for stones, iron"; the most magnificent words to the same purpose follow these. From the consideration of which Peter Martyr has said, "that, indeed, according to almost all the prophets, especially Isaiah, the happiness of the Church will be great: which it has not yet attained to, but it is probable that it will then (on the conversion of the Jews) attain to it." pp. 419-421 (*The Economy of the Covenants*, Book 4, ch. 15).

VI. Dr. John Owen on Premillennarianism.

Should the Lord Jesus now appear to any of us in His majesty and glory, it should not be unto our edification nor consolation. For we are not meet nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received or can receive to bear the immediate appearance and representation of them. His beloved apostle John had leaned on His bosom probably many a time in his life, in the intimate familiarities of love; but when He afterward appeared unto him in His glory, "he fell at His feet as one dead." And when He appeared unto Paul, all the account he could give thereof was "that he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun"; whereon he, and all that were with him, "fell to the ground."

And this was one reason why in the days of His ministry here on earth, His glory was veiled in the infirmities of the flesh and all sorts of sufferings, as we have before related. The church in this life is no way meet, by the grace which it can be made partaker of, to converse with Him in the immediate manifestations of His glory. And

therefore those who dream of His personal reign on the earth before the day of judgment, unless they suppose that all the saints shall be perfectly glorified also (which is only to bring down heaven to the earth for a while, to no purpose), provide not at all for the edification or consolation of the church. For no present grace advanced unto the highest degree whereof in this world it is capable, can make us meet for an immediate converse with Christ in His unveiled glory. ("Glory of Christ").

VII. Samuel Rutherford on the Millennium.

I shall be glad to be a witness, to behold the kingdoms of the world become Christ's. I could stay out of heaven many years to see that victorious triumphing Lord act that prophesied part of His soul-conquering love, in taking into His Kingdom the greater sister, that kirk of the Jews, who sometime courted our Well-beloved for her little sister (Song, 8:8); and to behold Him set up as an ensign and banner of love to the end of the world (From Letter No. ccxcvi).

"The rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth."

He effectually does this when He leads them in triumph off the earth—But I cannot but think that there is a sense in which the visible Church of Christ shall, on the earth, enjoy the fulfillment of this promise. The time is coming when she shall possess in Christ's name the whole earth, the power of the Lord subduing all nations into "the obedience of the faith," as He extends to them by means of a preached gospel, the rod of His strength from Zion. Then the spirit of persecution shall have been quelled, and there can be no fear of death "for righteousness sake" to the followers of Christ. Many causes of sorrow which through preceding ages made mournful

the faithful shall then be removed. No longer can the perishing of the people, “where there is no vision,” afflict them. No longer do they suffer because of opposition to the spread of the gospel and to the progress of the work of God, and no longer are they mourners because of a bounding iniquity around them. Jehovah God shall then wipe tears from off all faces, if not all tears from faces. And with the mountain of the Lord’s house exalted above all hills, there shall be no reproach to be borne by the children of Zion. “For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it,” and that suffices to warrant the expectation of all that is embosomed in the promise. He hath spoken it, for whom it is impossible to lie, and all His resources are pledged to the fulfilment of the word of His mouth. From His mouth came great words, from His heart great grace, from His hand great acts. And these three are so connected that they cannot be separated. His word promises what His grace will supply and his right hand accomplished. Do not shrink, then, believer, from expecting unspeakably great things from Him who is “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think.” Expect much, because of what the Lord hath spoken, for yourself, for the Church on earth, and for all the ransomed of the Lord in heaven for ever.” (Extract from sermon on Isaiah 25:8-9, preached on 12th August, 1883, by the eminent Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., Dingwall, Scotland).

VIII. The Millennial Glory of the Church Depicted in Revelation, ch. 21.

There is one text in the Revelation that speaks of the glorious condition of the Church that is likely to be here even in this world: “And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:22). They had

no need of the sun or moon. It speaks of such a glorious condition that the Church is likely to be in here in this world; this does not speak of heaven, but of a glorious estate that the Church shall be in here, in this world; and that appears plainly, for it follows immediately in the 24th and 26th verses, “And the Kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it”; why, the kings of the earth shall not bring their glory and honour into heaven, but this is such a time, when the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour to the Church. And in the 26th verse, “And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it”; therefore here it must mean this world and not heaven (“The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment” (p. 67), by Jeremiah Burroughs, Puritan Divine).

IX. The Bonar Brothers and Premillennarianism.

“The members of this school,” wrote Principal John MacLeod, D.D., in his “Scottish Theology,” “were men like the brothers, Andrew Bonar, who wrote the life of McCheyne and who edited Rutherford’s Letters, and Horatius Bonar, the hymn writer; these were the best known of the Chiliasts. In the formative years of their college career they came under the spell of the meteoric message of Edward Irving before his excesses in doctrine led him far away from the beaten track. And as he laid stress on the Premillennial dating of the Second Advent they imbibed this form of the Chiliastic hope—The older Evangelicals used to call the young Premillennial set The Evangelical Light Infantry.—A man would not be far out in saying that the ordinary Scottish view of the glory of the First Resurrection of Revelation 20 was that given in substance by James Durham in the 17th century, which saw in it the resurgence in power of the truths and principles for which the martyrs had laid down their lives.” (p. 277).

X. "The Thousand Years."

In his book, "The Apocalypse; Its Structure and Primary Predictions," Dr. David Brown, whose earlier work "The Second Advent" is a recognised standard work in defence of the Post-millennarian doctrine, puts the question, "Is the 'thousand years' to be taken as a definite for an indefinite period? I answer, certainly not: (1) because the contrary is clearly implied in the announcement that his (Satan's) confinement is limited to a fixed **period**, at the close of which he is to be set at liberty; and (2) because this period is expressed, not at all symbolically, like that other famous period of the unbroken reign of Antichrist in three different ways—"a thousand two hundred and sixty days"; "forty and two months"; "a time, and times, and half a time"—but nakedly in "years" (p. 177).

XI. "The First Resurrection" (Rev. 20).

"The glory and happiness of this thousand years' reign of the saints is to be understood, not literally but spiritually and figuratively, according to the common style of the book. It could not consist with the happiness of the saints to leave the heavenly mansions, and live in bodies needing meat and drink; nor, if their bodies were raised spiritual and incorruptible, would they need any such thing; and in vain would Satan instigate the wicked to war against, and cut off, spiritual and incorruptible bodies. The dead in Christ are also represented as all rising together at the last day. And a proper resurrection is never in Scripture represented as a reviving or living again of the soul, but of the body. The resurrection of the martyrs' and confessors' souls here spoken of must therefore mean, not the resurrection of these deceased persons; but the remarkable reformation, deliverance, comfort, and activity of the Church in their successors. (Rom. 11:15; Ezk. 42:1-14; Psalm 85:6; Hosea 6:2-3; Zech. 10:1). And as Elijah is represented as living in John the

Baptist, and Anti-Christian Rome is called in this Book, Sodom, Egypt and Babylon, on account of her likeness to them in luxury, cruelty, pride, and idolatry, so the ancient martyrs will live in the Christians of this period (the Millennium) being united to the same Head, members of the same body, and of the same temper, faith, patience, zeal and fortitude, and professing the same Gospel truths. And this restoration of the church to this peaceable and glorious state, after a long death under the reign of Anti-Christ, in which multitudes of Jews and Gentiles shall be converted to Christ, and shall enjoy much spiritual, delightful and honourable fellowship with Christ, and with one another, and have the governing power in the earth, is called 'the first resurrection,' as it is a figure and pledge of the general Resurrection of the saints to eternal life at the last day. The wicked will not live again till the end of the thousand years, that is, they will be reduced to the same condition in which Christ's slain witnesses were a little before (Chapter 11:7-9), having no authority, power or activity, to make head against Christ and His Cause.

"Gog and Magog here include the wicked everywhere in the world, instigated by Satan to embolden their spirits and combine in a furious and desperate attack upon the Church, which shall issue in a manner more or less dreadful than the last efforts of Anti-Christ." (By Professor John Brown of Haddington).

"The souls of them that were slain for the witness of Jesus shall rise all over Europe. Huss and Jerome shall come from their stake; Hamilton and Wishart, Cranmer and Ridley shall revive from their ashes, and Luther, Calvin and Knox shall stand up from their graves. The martyrs shall arise from the plains of France, from the snows of the Alps, from the lagunes of Venice, from the fens of Holland, and from the moors of Scotland, not in their bones and dust, but in their spirit and power. They will rise in their memories, that these may be vindicated, and that the cruel sentences, which assigned them

to the fire, may be reversed. They will rise in their principles, that these may be justified as righteous and holy. They will rise in their cause, that it may be acquitted from the condemnation passed on it by man; and, in the triumph of the systems and churches founded on the principles for which they died, they will enjoy a lasting and glorious reign with Christ their Head. On that day God will roll away the cloud of obloquy that rested above their graves; their stakes will be converted into thrones; their names will emerge from the black cloud in which they set; and, through all the ages of the future, they will be honoured as the world's greatest benefactors who handed down the truth by their sufferings and blood." (The Great Exodus, p. 79, by Rev. J. A. Wylie, LL.D., author of "The History of Protestantism").

XII. "At Eventide it shall be Light."

In his sermon published in 1918 on Zech. 14:6, 7, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light," the late Rev. Donald Macfarlane whom the Lord so signally honoured for the upholding of His Truth in Scotland, has for his 3rd heading "The wonderful change that was to take place at the evening of that day."

"At eventime it shall be light." The evening of this day was to be the brightest part of the day of the New Testament Church. In the evening of the day the sun was low in the firmament, and according to appearance ready to set and disappear, but the sun that rose at the resurrection of Christ never set since that event. It gave light to the Church, however dim at times. The Lord never left His Church to descend into the darkness of midnight, nor did He allow any particular believer or member of the Church to fall

into the darkness of despair, however low that person might come. "Light is sown for the righteous" (Ps. 97:11), and that light will arise to give light when he is in darkness. If you saw the natural sun in the evening so low in the horizon that you were thinking that it would soon disappear and leave you in the darkness of night, and the next time you looked you saw the sun rising in the east as if it were the morning of the day, would you not say that that was a wonderful sight? Now this is how it shall be at the evening of the day spoken of in our text. It is in the evening of this day the millennium shall begin, and the light shall be so clear and so bright that none who has the sight of his eyes can have any doubt but it is day and not night. It looks more like the morning than the evening. As the natural sun rises and advances to its meridian height, so does the spiritual sun in that glorious period. The work of enlightening all the nations of the world shall begin on a small scale, and shall go on gradually "till the earth is full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." It may be asked, by what means shall this be brought about? We answer, by the preaching of the Gospel, and by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men through the Word preached. The first to be converted are young men who are to become ministers in the Church. We find that this was the case in Christ's personal ministry on earth. He converted those whom He afterwards commissioned to go into the world and to preach the Gospel to every creature. At the millennium there shall be a great multitude of such ministers, and it is not at all probable that there shall be any unconverted minister in the sacred office of the ministry then. If an unconverted man were asked to study for the ministry, he would refuse, saying, "I am no prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth" (Zech. 13:5), or some other occupation. The millennium will begin first in the pulpit, then it shall proceed! to the eldership. It is not likely that there shall be any unconverted

man holding that office, whereas previous to that glorious period graceless men who were wealthy and in high positions in society were put in that office. The light of the millennium shall descend to the pew, and it is not likely that any unconverted person shall be admitted to Church membership, or that any such shall dare ask to be admitted to the Lord's Table. The good work shall go on apace till all the nations of the world are enlightened by the Gospel. The Jews, who had been so long under the veil of unbelief, shall be converted to the Christian religion. They shall be brought in, in connection with the fulness of the Gentiles, and those of them who shall be ministers shall be the greatest preachers of the Gospel since the days of the Apostles. The Mahomedans shall be converted and shall believe in Christ as their Saviour. The Papists shall be converted and cast off their superstitions and worship and serve God only. The Hindoos, the Chinese, and all other nations shall become Christians. Although we have no warrant that every individual in the world then shall be converted, we may safely say that the unconverted shall be very few. As nations shall be converted, kings shall be converted too. During a thousand years, probably all kings will be godly and will give the revenue of their kingdoms towards the maintenance of the Church. Kings shall be nursing fathers and queens shall be nursing mothers to it (Is. 49:23). Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and the Church shall have peace during that long period; there shall be no persecution from without or discord within the borders of the Church; there shall be no war among nations, no training of soldiers. "They shall learn war no more" (Is. 2:4). There shall be no need for sword or spear—these instruments of war shall be turned into ploughshares and pruning hooks. They shall be used, not as now, to tear the flesh of their fellowmen, but to tear or till the earth in order to yield food for man and beast. There shall be no famine or pestilence, for God's wrath is turned away from the world, and He bestows an

abundance of spiritual and temporal blessings on the inhabitants of the earth.

In the chapter in which we have our text it is said “that there shall be one Lord and His Name one”—that is, God shall be acknowledged by all nations as the one Lord whom they shall serve, and as His Name is one there shall not be different opinions about Him, or different modes of worship—all shall worship Him according to the rule of His Word, whereas there are now different denominations in the visible Church. There shall then be only one denomination. There shall be no room to ask to what church do you belong, for there is but one Church, as was the case in the days of the Apostles; and as there is but one Church there is but one creed, and we believe that the creed shall be that which is contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and we are sure that the Church shall be Presbyterian in her government, doctrine and discipline. We are sure of this because the Church in the days of the Apostles was Presbyterian. Peter calls himself a presbyter (1 Peter 5:1). It was parting from the order of things in the times of the Apostles that caused different denominations among professing Christians, but at the millennium there shall be a return to that order, and on that ground we conclude that the Church shall be Presbyterian¹⁵ in her government.

15 It must be observed, that the religious body once known by the name of Puritans, became Presbyterians both in principles and practice, partly before, and thoroughly during the time of the Westminster Assembly. Against them, accordingly, as Presbyterians, was the force of persecution directed, although the demands and the penalties of the Act of Uniformity were equally applicable to the Independents and all other sects of Dissenters; and of the whole two thousand who were ejected by that Act **above nine-tenths were Presbyterians**. (History of the Westminster Assembly by W. H. Hetherington, D.D.L.L.D. p. 325).

When the millennium shall come, God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. There shall be no Sabbath-breaking or open transgression of His law. The power of godliness shall be so great and universal that the few who are not converted shall be found walking in the ways of His commandments outwardly, so that one would think that they were godly persons. They would feel ashamed if any of the Lord's people would see them breaking God's commandments. The Gospel shall have a moral influence on these so that they do not desire to trample upon God's law. What a contrast to the present time when so many transgress His law without shame; and worse than that, in order to grieve the Lord's people who rebuke them for their sins; but at the millennium even those that are not converted shall respect the Lord's people and thank them for their good advice.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT —A CHRISTIAN DUTY

Life is most valuable and precious. Unlike many other things, once lost or destroyed, it cannot be restored. The loss of it is an irreparable loss as far as this life is concerned. It therefore demands the highest possible protection and the strongest deterrent to keep in check those who do not truly value it.

The following articles, reprinted with permission, seek to dispel the misunderstanding that exists on the subject and to make clear that capital punishment is indispensable both as a safeguard and duty.

I

Considerable attention has again been revived in Capital Punishment, particularly since the bishops' recent vote for its abolition. It is, therefore, most important that professing Christians should hold clear views on so important a matter, and know why they hold them. And the only source from which they would expect to get a clear and decisive ruling is, of course, the Word of God: not a few texts here and there, but the *Word as a whole*.

Clergy, psychiatrists, anthropologists, statisticians, prison officials, foreign countries, have all been consulted, but barely any

appeal to the Bible, in which it is clearly laid down that “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man” (Gen. 9:6). The Divine antidote for killing—as murder—is killing. And the Commandment “thou shall not kill” (or do no murder) serves only to magnify the heinousness of the crime in God’s sight. To quote it, therefore, as some do, in support of the abolition of capital punishment, is blindly to ignore many other equally authoritative Divine commands.

The Old Testament was Christ’s Bible and He endorsed it in its entirety by saying, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:18). Let therefore those who say “let’s live by the Sermon on the Mount” remember that that is part of it! And when, in that Sermon, Jesus quoted the Old Testament Law, and added “but X say unto you . . .” He was not saying that law was wrong, but was referring to personal revenge as being wrong, and revenge has no part in capital—or corporal—punishment. There is no question of Society “getting its own back”. Christ did not come to abrogate, supersede, or improve upon the Old Testament, but to fulfil it. And this He did to the very letter in His own Person. Those, therefore, who quote one text or clause of the Divine Law, in doing so give tacit assent to the whole—We can’t pick and choose, and say “This is of God, but not that.”

Neither a hangman nor a soldier act as individuals. They are instruments of the law, like a judge or magistrate, or policeman. A murderer, on the other hand, acts as an individual, and is actuated by personal hostility to, or hatred of another person, whom he wants to get out of his way. The soldier acts impersonally under the law, and cherishes no hatred for another soldier—or civilian. “Mass murder” is therefore a meaningless term. There is no such thing.

Deterrents. Undue prominence is also given to the value of

punishment (of all kinds) as deterrents. That it should have a deterrent effect is, of course, essential to public safety; but it is quite erroneous to make the protection of society (i.e. if we adopt the Christian attitude) the sole reason for punishment of wrongdoers. The primary (and Biblical) reason for punishment for all law-breaking is the expiation of the sin, and the cleansing of the nation defiled by it. That cannot be achieved by molly-coddling the law-breaker, but only by his receiving in his own person a comparable (if not equivalent) suffering to that which he has inflicted. But as all sin is first and foremost, sin against God (“against Thee only have I sinned” Psalm 51) only God’s prescribed means of expiation (or wiping it out) can be efficacious—Thus to harbour a murderer on humanitarian grounds—even if he be “rehabilitated”—is to retain in society a person guilty of another person’s blood, “Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses . . . so ye shall not pollute the land; for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it” (Num. 35).

Any nation therefore, which tolerates murder by allowing the murderer to live in its midst is held guilty before God of that very crime, and the land (e.g. Britain) “cannot be cleansed” until the murderer is executed. (This is a point which might be borne in mind by the magistracy.) Capital punishment ought, therefore, to be retained on the Statute Book even in the unlikely event of no murders being committed. Christ Himself stated “out of the heart proceed murders,” and did not divide them up into different psychological groups, or “degrees”. From Almighty God’s point of view, murder is murder, and His verdict upon it should stand for all time, and not be overruled by a perverted humanitarianism and a warped sense of mercy. Execution for murder may deter, or it may not. That’s not the point—The point is the whole nation’s

relationship to God, and those who agitate for its abolition are in error.

(By the Rev. S. E. Pulford, Rector of Linton and Upton Bishop,
Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, England.)

II

As the sixth commandment forbids malicious homicide, it is plain that the infliction of capital punishment is not included in the prohibition. Such punishment is not inflicted to gratify revenge, but to satisfy justice and for the preservation of society. As these are legitimate and most important ends, it follows that the capital punishment of murder is also legitimate. Such punishment, in the case of murder, is not only lawful, but also obligatory.

1. Because it is expressly declared in the Bible, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Gen. 9:6). That this is of perpetual obligation is clear, because it was given to Noah, the second head of the human race. It was, therefore, not intended for any particular age or nation. It is the announcement of a general principle of justice—a revelation of the will of God. Moreover the reason assigned for the law is a permanent reason. Man was created in the image of God, and therefore, whoso sheds his blood, by man shall his blood be shed. This reason has as much force at one time or place as at any other. This is a very solemn consideration, and one of wide application. It applies not only to murder and other injuries inflicted on the persons of men, but also to anything which tends to degrade or to defile them. The Apostle applies it even to evil words, or the suggestion of corrupt thoughts. If it is an outrage to defile the statue or portrait of a great and good man, or of a father or mother, how much greater is the outrage when we defile the imperishable image of God

impressed on the immortal soul of man. We find the injunction, that the murderer should surely be put to death, repeated over and over in the Mosaic law. (Ex. 21:12, 14; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:21; Deut. 19:11, 13).

There are clear recognitions in the New Testament of the continued obligation of the divine law that murder should be punished with death. In Romans 13:4, the Apostle says that the magistrate “beareth not the sword in vain.” The sword was worn as the symbol of the power of capital punishment. Even by profane writers, says Meyer, “bearing the sword” by a magistrate was the emblem of the power over life and death. The same Apostle said (Acts 25:11): “If I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die;” which clearly implies that, in his judgment, there were offences, for which the appropriate penalty is death.

2. Besides these arguments from Scripture, there are others drawn from natural justice. It is a dictate of our moral nature that crime should be punished; that there should be a just proportion between the offence and the penalty; and that death, the highest penalty, was the proper punishment for the greatest of all crimes. That such is the instinctive judgment of men is proved by the difficulty often experienced in restraining the people from taking summary vengeance in cases of atrocious murder. So strong is this sentiment that a species of wild justice is sure to step in to supply the place of judicial remissness. Such injustice, from being lawless and impulsive, is too often misguided and erroneous, and, in a settled state of society, is always criminal. It being the nature of men, that if the regular, lawful infliction of death as a judicial penalty be abolished, it will be inflicted by the avenger of blood, or by tumultuous assemblies of the people, society has to choose between securing to the homicide a fair trial by the constituted authorities, and giving him up to the blind spirit of revenge.

3. Experience teaches that where human life is undervalued, it is insecure; that where the murderer escapes with impunity or is inadequately punished, homicides are fearfully multiplied. The practical question therefore is. Who is to die? the innocent man or the murderer?

(From “Systematic Theology” by Charles Hodge, D.D.)

III

What is the proper punishment for the murderer—that person who deliberately takes away the life of another? If we reply: “Let him be put to death”, some people will draw a harrowing picture of the criminal sitting in his cell waiting for the inevitable approach of the execution date. They will tell us of the strain it puts upon the officials, and upon the other prisoners. All you have to do is to allow yourself to imagine it all, and you will immediately cry out: “Oh, it is too horrible! Let us stop it”

But there is another field for the exercise of our imagination. A widow sees her only daughter leave home happy and full of life. She fails to return, and a search is made, and her body is found—she has been strangled. Try and imagine something of that girl’s last moments—her terror and her struggles. Think of the ache in that mother’s heart as she faces a lonely existence for the remainder of her life. Let us suppose that some of the searchers had discovered the killer at his murderous work; would they not have felt like taking the law into their own hands, and killing him there and then?

There is one authoritative voice that should be listened to in this matter—the Holy Bible. Some will object that the Bible is old-fashioned, and that in this enlightened age we should attend to the voice of “the Christian conscience”, whatever that may be. But has not our so-called enlightenment brought us to the brink of

complete annihilation? The necessities of life are old-fashioned—light, fresh air, food and water, yet we cannot replace them by any new-fashioned discoveries. The enemies of our old-fashioned Bible very often forget one indisputable fact—it has never been PROVED wrong.

Turning to the Old Testament we learn that Cain, the eldest son of Adam, was the first murderer. God punished him, but protected him from human vengeance. It should be remembered that Abel's death was probably the first that ever occurred, and that in those early days of history we cannot expect the complete legal system of later times.

Hundreds of years passed by, and the earth “was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence”. On account of such wickedness God sent a widespread flood, and only eight people were left alive. To this remnant of the human race was given the very clear command: “Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Gen. 9:6).

When God chose the nation Israel for His special people He gave them laws which imposed the death penalty for other crimes, such as adultery, blasphemy, and sabbath-breaking. But these regulations were only in force “until the time of reformation” (Hebrews 9:10). The rending of the Temple veil, and the dispersion of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, plainly indicate that these laws are no longer binding upon us; “not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require” to use the language of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

But the law protecting human life by death of the murderer was given by God to Noah (Gen. 9:6), and was not part of the civil and ceremonial regulations delivered to the nation Israel. There is no indication anywhere in the Bible that it has been cancelled.

Capital punishment for murder was commanded by God because man was made in the Divine image—“for in the image of God

made he man”. According to James 3:9 men are still “made after the similitude of God” Surely then the death penalty for murder continues to have Divine authority.

Some will impatiently exclaim: “We live now in New Testament times. We must forgive; we must follow the teaching of Jesus Christ”. Behind such sentiments lies the idea that the Old Testament is harsh, but the New Testament is kind. The Sermon on the Mount is often referred to in this connection. In that wonderful address recorded in Matthew, chapters five to seven, our Lord declares: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil”. He then proceeds to give the Law its full meaning, and in doing so He does not condemn the principle of “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth” in public justice, but He does disapprove of it as an excuse for private revenge. In doing so He bears out the teaching of Proverbs 25:21-22: “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.” Leviticus 19:18 is another example of the graciousness of the Old Testament: “Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.”

Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament approve of malice, hatred or revenge, but they both recognise that public justice can only be based upon the principle of “Suit the punishment to the crime”, that is. “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.”

Our Lord and His Apostles did not repeal the death penalty for murder.

They confirmed it.

(Should the Murderer be put to death?
by Rev. W. J. McDowell)

IV

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland convened at Glasgow this 23rd day of May, 1962, note with disfavour the impression given by various religious bodies, such as the Convocations of Canterbury and York and the British Council of Churches, that Capital Punishment is Unchristian.

The Synod would point out that this misconception generally arises from a failure to distinguish between those principles laid down in the Bible governing Christian conduct between man and man as neighbours, and these principles which refer to the administration of law and justice through properly constituted courts. The question is further confused by discussions with regard to the use of Capital Punishment as a deterrent and also the need for the reformation of the criminal. It is quite true that both these matters require careful attention. But the raising of them in the context of Capital Punishment only serves to cloud the real issue, which is the laying down of the proper punishment for the crime of murder.

The Synod would further remind all concerned that the clear Scriptural teaching with regard to sin is that it must be punished. This arises from the fact that God is just and that the claims of His law and justice must be satisfied. Unless this principle is emphasised in a clear way, the lawbreaker can have no respect for the law or the Lawgiver. It is quite true that God's punishment of sin may and does serve to deter men from continuing in a course of evil. It is further true that the threat of being visited with condign punishment may cause men to reform their ways. But these two latter issues do not affect the fundamental Scriptural principle that sin must be punished in accordance with law and justice.

The authority of the civil magistrate to rule and to exercise his power in the punishment of evil-doing and in the protection of those who do good arises from the authority of God, "The powers that be are ordained of God". It is further a Biblical principle that

the power of the sword clearly involves the taking away of life in the exercise of justice, should the crime deserve that punishment. The Scriptural basis for this authority is to be found in the words of Genesis 8. verse 6. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man.” It will be remembered that this portion of truth was given to mankind in the time of Noah, when, after the destruction of that evil generation by the flood a new beginning was given, as it were, to the human race. It is plain beyond all doubt that this scripture was given for the express purpose of governing the conduct of the human family with regard to the punishment of murder down to the end of time. An attempt is sometimes made to confuse the issue by saying that laws which were suitable for the theocratic government of Israel are no longer suitable for the present day. This argument proceeds on an ignorance of the Word of God, because Noah lived long before Moses.

It is exceedingly important to notice that the reason given in the Scripture for the taking away of life for the crime of murder is in the words, “For in the image of God made he man.” This was true in Old Testament times; it is also true in New Testament times, that man is still a creature who was created in the image of God. Therefore the reason for punishing the murderer with death in New Testament times is exactly the same as the reason for punishing such a criminal in Old Testament times.

The New Testament is equally clear and emphatic on this particular matter. In Romans, chapter 13, already referred to, we read with regard to the civil magistrate in verse 4. “For he is the minister of God to thee for good; if thou do that which is evil be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.” We read again in 1 Peter, chapter 2, verse 13, “Submit yourselves unto every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake,

whether it be unto the King as supreme or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well.” It is abundantly clear from these passages that the magistrate derives his authority from God to exercise the sword in the punishment of evil doing. Consequently, he ought to exercise that sword according to the Word of God, and, in connection with the punishment for murder, he should exercise the sword in the execution of the sentence of death.

The Apostle Paul, whose outstanding labours in advancing the cause of Christ in his day and generation have their renown throughout the Churches of Christ, said on one occasion, “I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat where I ought to be judged,” This statement was made when he was before Festus, and he continues to state with regard to his position, “for if I be an offender and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die.” (Acts 25, verse 11). From these words it is perfectly plain that Paul recognised the fact that the magistrate had the power to execute the death sentence if the crime was worthy of death. It is clear, therefore, from this expression of the Apostle’s that he recognised the validity of the death sentence in New Testament times.

From the above instances, it is evident that the infliction of the death penalty on the murderer by the civil magistrate is a punishment which is based upon the divine revelation of God’s mind in the Holy Scriptures. The matter is solemn, and dreadful, and serious, and the Government of this country should not be swayed to depart from Holy Writ on this particular matter, or any other matter, by those who have no clear understanding of the scriptural principles involved. Other arguments, however plausible they may seem in themselves, can only bring forth evil fruits, the inevitable result of departing from the fountain of Divine Wisdom found in the Word of God. The Synod, therefore, appeal to the British Government to retain the death penalty for the crime of murder, as the abolition of

Capital Punishment would be an insult to the Majesty of Heaven and the cause of bringing Divine displeasure upon our beloved land.

(Resolution re Capital Punishment)

V

God gave forth the unrepealed command, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed.” Nor should it be forgotten, as sufficient forever to silence the advocates for the abolition of capital punishment, that God has not only given an unrepealed command which He might have been pleased to rest on His own authority and will alone, but He has condescended to give the ground and reason for it; and so long as both the command remains unrepealed and the reason remains a fact, so long is the proposed abolition of capital punishment a daring insult against the Most High.

God hath given us the reason why the shedding of man’s blood must be avenged by the murderer’s death—“for in the image of God made he man”, and until this truth becomes untrue, that is, until man ceases to be a free, intelligent, responsible being—fallen indeed, and in a vast multitude of cases, alas! unrenewed, yet still responsible, intelligent and free—capital punishment both by God’s commanding will, and by God’s commanding reason, is the murderer’s doom. And nature and reason sanction the sentence.

(“The Prophet Jonah” by Hugh Martin, D.D.)

A REAL HINDRANCE

A sweet sin harboured in the heart, will prevent a soul from laying hold upon Christ by faith. The Lord Jesus has come to save us from sinning; and if we are resolved to go on sinning, Christ and our souls will never agree. A drunkard will be saved by believing in Christ—that is to say, he will be saved from being a drunkard; but if he determines still to make himself intoxicated, he is not saved from it, and he has not truly believed in Jesus. A liar can by faith be saved from falsehood, but then he leaves off lying and is careful to speak the truth. Anyone can see that he cannot be saved from being a liar, and yet go on in his old style of deceit and untruthfulness. A person who is at enmity with another will be saved from that feeling of enmity by believing in the Lord Jesus; but if he vows that he will still cherish the feeling of hate, it is clear that he is not saved from it, and equally clear that he has not believed in the Lord Jesus unto salvation. The great matter is to be delivered from the love of sin, this is the sure effect of trust in the Saviour; but if this effect is so far from being desired that it is refused, all talk of trusting in the Saviour for salvation is an idle tale. To pretend to trust Christ to save you from sin while you are still determined to continue in it, is making a mock of Christ. I pray my reader not to be guilty of such profanity. Let him not dream that the Holy Jesus will be the patron of iniquity. If the sinner will keep his sin, he must die in it; if he is

willing to be rescued from his sin, the Lord Jesus is able to do it if he commits his case to his care.

What, then is your darling sin? Is it any gross wrong doing? Then very shame should make you cease from it. Is it love of the world, or fear of men, or longing for evil gains? Surely, none of these things should reconcile you to living in enmity with God, and beneath his frown. Is it a human love, which is eating like a canker into the heart? Can any creature rival the Lord Jesus? Is it not idolatry to allow any earthly thing to compare for one instant with the Lord God? "Well," saith one, "for me to give up the particular sin by which I am held captive, would be to my serious injury in business, would ruin my prospects, and lessen my influence in many ways." If it be so, you have your case met by the words of the Lord Jesus, who bids you to pluck out your eye, and cut off your hand or foot, and cast it from you, rather than be cast into hell. It is better to enter life with one eye, with the poorest prospects, than to keep all your hopes, and be out of Christ. Better be a lame believer than a leaping sinner. Better be in the rear rank for life in the army of Christ than lead the van and be a chief officer under the command of Satan. If you will win Christ, it will little matter what you lose. No doubt many have had to suffer that which has maimed and lamed them for this life; but if they have thereby entered into eternal life, they have been great gainers. It comes to this, my friend, as it did with John Bunyan; a voice now speaks to you and says—WILT THOU KEEP THY SIN AND GO TO HELL? or LEAVE THY SIN AND GO TO HEAVEN?

The point should be decided before you leave the spot. In the name of God, I ask you, which will it be—Christ and salvation, or the favourite sin and damnation? There is no middle course. Waiting or refusing to decide will practically be a sure decision for the evil one. He that stands questioning whether he will be honest or not, is already out of the straight line; he that does not know whether he wishes to be cleansed from sin gives evidence of a foul heart. If

you are anxious to give up every evil way, our Lord Jesus will enable you to do so at once. His grace has already changed the direction of your desires. Therefore, rest on him to strengthen you to battle with temptations as they arise, and to fulfil the Lord's commands from day to day. The Lord Jesus is great at making the lame man leap as an hart, and enabling those who are sick of the palsy to take up their bed and walk. He will make you able to conquer the evil habit. He will even cast the devil out of you. Yes, if you had seven devils, He could drive them out at once; there is no limit to his power to cleanse and sanctify. Now that you are willing to be made whole, the great difficulty is removed. He that has set the will right can arrange all your other powers, and make them more to his praise. You would not have earnestly desired to quit all sin if He had not secretly inclined you in that direction. If you now trust him, it will be clear that He has begun a good work in you, and we feel assured that He will carry it on.

C.H. Spurgeon

**CHRIST'S KINGSHIP OVER
THE NATIONS MAINTAINED
AND DEFENDED IN THE
ESTABLISHMENT PRINCIPLE**

OR

**THE PRINCIPLE OF THE NATIONAL
RECOGNITION OF RELIGION**

The Prince of the Kings of the Earth. (Rev. 1:5)

The Establishment Principle

The Establishment Principle, or the Principle of the National Recognition of Religion maintains the scriptural view of the universal supremacy of Christ as King of Nations as well as King of saints, with the consequent duty of nations as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, to honour and serve Him by recognising His Truth and promoting His cause. Voluntaryism or the voluntary principle on the other hand denies the moral nature and obligation of civil rulers and governments to uphold, defend and advance the Cause of Christ in the world. In the words of Dr. Begg, "it confounds 'the state' with 'the world, forgetting that the civil government is a divine ordinance, and that the magistrate is

a ‘minister of God’ unto the people for good,” “It is questionable,” continues Dr. Begg, “whether Popery itself more directly robs Christ of His glory—the glory of having ‘all power in heaven and on earth.’ It sets aside the true theory of free and scriptural government. Upon pretence of great spirituality it will have nothing to do with the state.” “Voluntaryism,” to quote Principal Cunningham, “amounts in substance to this—that the only relation that ought to subsist between the state and the church—between civil government and religion—is that of entire separation.”

The duty of the civil magistrate towards the Church of Christ is set forth in Chapter 23 of the “Westminster Confession of Faith”—“The Civil Magistrate.” The term “magistrate” or “civil magistrate,” is used to designate the authority possessed by the supreme civil power, and entitled to frame laws and to regulate the whole proceedings of the nation.

Dr. McCrie’s “Statement”

The ablest exposition in the English language of the Establishment Principle is Dr. Thomas McCrie’s “Statement,” first published in April 1807. In 1871 a new edition appeared with a preface by the late Dr. Smeaton of the New College Edinburgh. Dr. Smeaton describes the “Statement” as a masterly defence of the principles of establishments as a Scripture truth: and *the most complete vindication ever given to the world of the position occupied by the Reformed Church of Scotland, on the whole subject of national religion and the magistrates’ legitimate power in promoting it.* “The same thoroughness,” wrote the late Rev. D. Beaton, “which gave such abiding value to his great biography of Knox, is shown in this, his less known work.” (The Great Classic on the Establishment Principle—Dr. McCrie’s “Statement” by the Rev. D. Beaton, Free Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 11, p. 192).

The Unanimous Testimony of the Reformers

Dr. McCrie in his "Statement," shows that all the Confessions of the Protestant and Presbyterian Churches of the Reformation, both in Britain and on the Continent of Europe, held and maintained the Establishment Principle. "These harmoniously agree in declaring as with one mouth," he writes, "that civil authority is not limited to the secular affairs of men, and that the public care and advancement of religion is a principle part of the official duty of magistrates." He goes on to give extracts from "The Confession of Helvetia"; "The Confession of Bohemia," called also "The Confession of the Waldenses"; "The Confession of Saxony"; "The French Confession"; "The Belgic or Dutch Confession"; "The Confession of the English Congregation in Geneva"; "The Scots Confession" and "The Westminster Confession of Faith." "Such is the harmony of doctrine in the Protestant churches on this head," he remarks, "expressed in their confessions and public formularies drawn from the Word of God; a harmony which deserves great attention, and from which none should rashly depart." In a foot note he quotes the following extract from "Wilson's Defence of National Churches"—"That harmony is beautiful which we may observe amongst the several Confessions of the Reformed Churches, and an evidence that there was a special presence of God with them, and also a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit upon them; it is likewise a hopeful presage, that when the Lord turns again the captivity of Zion, and when His holy arm shall give the blow to the throne of the beast, the several churches and their watchmen shall see eye to eye, and with one voice together shall they sing."

The Authority of the Civil Magistrate

Section 3 of Chap. 23 of the Westminster Confession of Faith on "The Civil Magistrate" states: "The civil magistrate may not assume

to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.”

Two noted instances of synods being called by the “Civil Magistrate” is that of the illustrious Synod of Dort on the authority of the States-general in 1618, and of the Westminster Assembly convened by an Ordinance of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament in London on 12th June, 1643. In the Ordinance, Parliament declares that “the present church government of archbishops, their chancellors, deans and chapters, archdeacons, etc., is evil, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom etc.” and that Presbyterianism be established instead. The Ordinance is printed in full in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

“The last part of the section asserting the magistrate’s right to call synods etc. is limited,” wrote the late Rev. D. Beaton, “by the Act of Assembly of 1647 to kirks not constituted and settled. The word “settled” here means “fixed by legal sanction,” according to the phraseology of formal state and church documents of the Westminster period. The whole section has been charged as pure Erastianism¹⁶, and was appealed to in connection with the state’s

16 Erastianism, so named after Erastus, a celebrated physician and professor at Heidelberg about 1580, maintains that the State is supreme and that the Church is subject to the State.

interference in the Disruption struggle. That charge has abundantly and satisfactorily been answered by Principal William Cunningham in his "Remarks on the Twenty-Third Chapter of the Confession of Faith as Bearing on Existing Controversies," and reprinted in his "Discussions on Church Principles," chapter eight. How anyone reading the statement of the Confession on the Civil Magistrate in chapters twenty-five, thirty and thirty-one, could assert that chapter twenty-three taught Erastianism is unexplicable unless he boldly and ignorantly asserts that the divines glaringly contradicted their own teaching."

In a recently published study manual on "The Confession of Faith" the author asserts that these chapters contain a "direct contradiction," and "irreconcilable principles." The learned Westminster divines saw no "direct contradiction," neither did the learned Dr. McCrie, Principal Cunningham, Dr. Begg, Professor Smeaton and the worthy fathers who valiantly upheld the Confession's scriptural teaching on the duty of the civil magistrate toward the Cause of Christ.

"This section of the Confession," continues the Rev. D. Beaton, "was also attacked by the Voluntaries, who maintained that it gave the Civil Magistrate power to exercise authority or jurisdiction in religious matters and over the concerns of the Church. Dr. Cunningham points out, however, the definition of the Establishment Principle held that there was a plain distinction between the object of the magistrate's care, and the sphere or subject of his jurisdiction; for while he was bound to aim at the well-being of the Church, he had no jurisdiction or right of authoritative interference in religious matters. Both Dr. Cunningham and also Dr. Bannerman in his "Church of Christ" explain the technical meaning of "take order." It was a common phrase, it seems, in the controversial theology of the times of the Westminster Assembly." (Extracts from "The National Recognition

of Religion” and “The Headship of Christ” by the late Rev. D. Beaton.)

The Establishment Principle Proved from the Old Testament

Dr. McCrie in his “Statement” gives the following extract from the writings of the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy: “Christian magistrates in their character are to maintain and defend the faith of Christ. We do not mean that they are to propagate the religion of Jesus by sword, fire and faggot, but the Christian States are to employ their *power* and *authority* for the support of the *worship* and service of God, as well as for regulating our behaviour to our fellow-creatures. Both precepts and examples under the Old Testament are strong and clear to this purpose; and these were not *temporary* laws, but founded upon *perpetual* and *moral grounds*, such as the peace of societies, the good of men’s souls; the duty of all dependent beings to pay homage to their Creator, in the manner Himself has prescribed; and the duty of all magistrates, the ministers and delegates of the great God, to vindicate and maintain His honour among men. No doubt magistrates have mistaken error for truth, and made a bad use of their power upon many occasions; but if the *abuse* of a power take away the *lawful* use of it, mankind will be in a strange and unheard of situation.” (Moncrieff’s Practical Works, Vol 1, pp. 27-28). The same learned and pious author, in another part of his works, gives a very perspicuous and succinct statement of the difference between civil and ecclesiastical authority, and of the power which Presbyterians allow to magistrates respecting synods and matters ecclesiastical, in opposition to Erastian and Sectarian extremes. With this doctrine his son Rev. William Moncrieff of Alloa agrees: “It has been proved (says he) by such divines as have written against Erastians—that though the Christian magistrate has power *circa sacra* (about holy

things); yet he has no power *in sacris* (in holy things); that it belongs to the Church in her judicatures to judge of religious matters; and the magistrate is to strengthen the Church's hands by giving the civil sanction (so far as proper) to their determinations."

"The Rev. William Wilson of Perth in his "Defence of National Churches" pronounces the legal or civil establishment enjoyed by the Church of Scotland, 'good in itself' although it was at the time abused by the Jurisdiction. We will readily agree (says he) that the countenance of civil authority is not necessary to the being of the Church, though it is *very profitable* and *useful* to her outward peaceable being; as also that the countenance and protection of the civil magistrate, given unto the judicatories of the Church, in the faithful discharge of their duty, is an outward blessing, promised unto her in New Testament times, Isaiah 49:23 and 60:5, 10. Having mentioned a number of the peculiar and distinguishing "principles" of the Anabaptists and Brownists among which the following, 'they affirmed, that the Christian magistrate had no right to meddle at all with any matters of religion; and they plead for a universal toleration under the specious pretence of liberty of conscience.' Mr. Wilson adds, 'Against the above extravagant principles our reformed divines employed their pens, and discovered the contrariety of them to the Holy Scriptures, and their affinity to several of the gross principles of the ancient Donatists and Novatians. The greatest deceits (continues he) have been brought into the world under the name or notion of new lights. It is to be regretted that such new lights have appeared on our horizon, who plead against the establishment of confessions of faith etc. by the laws of the land."

The Kingship of Christ Over the Nations in Psalm 2

"In Psalm 2," continues Dr. McCrie, "we have the Father's solemn introduction of Christ, as His King whom He had set "upon His holy

hill of Zion," unto the kings and rulers of the earth, with injunctions to them to serve Him in this character. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way." (v. 10-12). This is an exhortation and command to the rulers, to lay aside that enmity and opposition which they had managed against Christ and His kingdom, and to do homage and service to Him. If the question be asked, in what *character* are they to serve Christ? It may be answered by proposing another. In what character did they *oppose* Him? Was it not in their *public* character, as rulers? "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.' v. 2, 3. 'Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings,' etc. Shall we suppose, when they are reprehended in their public character for opposing Christ, that the exhortation to "serve" Him respects merely their private character as individuals? Shall not the honour and homage to be paid to God's own King, be as conspicuous and decided as the ignominy which was poured upon Him was?"

"It is the unanimous opinion of divines (says Walaëus, in a treatise against Erastian tenets) that the declaration of the royal prophet in Psalm 2 is applicable to kings under the New Testament."

"Judges and rulers, AS SUCH, must kiss the Son (says Dr. Owen, in his sermon preached before the parliament of England), and own His sceptre, and advance His ways. Some think, if you were well settled, you ought not, *as rulers of the nation*, to put forth your *power* for the interest of Christ. The good Lord keep your hearts from that apprehension!" (Dr. Owen).

"The wicked import and effect of this new scheme (Voluntaryism) means an abolishing of all Scripture-precepts, promises and prophecies about the state of the gospel church with regard to civil powers. For according to this scheme, kings are not to be wise now,

nor are the judges of the earth to be instructed, that they should serve the Lord, the King upon the holy hill of Zion! No kings, in their kingly state, should fall down before Him; no nations in their national state, should serve Him! It is to be of no consequence to the church, that the Lord hath said, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers nor is it to be admitted of, according to any intelligible use of words, that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ!"

The Kingship of Christ Over the Nations in Isaiah

"And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." (Isa. 49:23). "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob" (Isa. 60:12 & 16). "The Hebrew word," says Wallaeus, "which is rendered *nurse*, is from the root *aman*, and properly signifies to *strengthen* and to *establish*. Therefore the breasts of kings and queens, which the church sucks, are nothing else than the *authority and power of magistrates*, by which the church of God is strengthened; as the child is by the milk of the nurse. "These promises (says Dr. Owen) assert, that magistrates shall put forth their *power* for the welfare of the church. Kingdoms are said to serve the church: and how can a kingdom as a kingdom serve the church, but as putting forth *its power* and strength on *her* behalf? What God hath promised, kings, magistrates, rulers, nations shall do, that is their duty to do. Surely these promises will scarcely be accomplished in bringing commonwealths to be of Gallio's frame, to take care for none of these things." (Dr. Owen).

"We might have urged here, that the whole tenor of the declarations, promises and predictions of the Old Testament, lead

to the conclusion that Christianity shall be owned, countenanced, and supported in a *national* way. God addresses the nations in a collective capacity, reproves them for their idolatry, and calls them to His worship, Isa. 34:1, 41:1, 21-29. He proposes Christ, as His anointed servant, to them, ch. 42:1; declares that He has given Him the nations for His inheritance, and that He shall inherit them all. Ps. 2:8, 82:8, Isa. 52:15, 55:5. Christ addresses Himself not only to individuals, but to whole islands, Isa. 49:1; nations join themselves to Him, own and worship Him, Isa. 2:2, Mic. 4:1, 2, Zech 2:11, 8:20-22, bless themselves, and glory in Him, Jer. 4:2; all nations and dominions serve Him, Dan. 7:14, 27, they consecrate all things in them, and employ them in His service, Is. 60:6-12, Zech. 14:20, 21; He owns these nations as His, and blesses them, while He breaks in pieces and wastes others, Ps. 33:12, 140:15, Isa. 19:25, Ps. 2:9, 12, Isa. 60:12.

The force of the argument arising from these and similar promises and predictions is such that Mr. Edward Williams, although an Independent, acknowledges that they imply a national profession and establishment of Christianity. In answer to the objection, 'If the above prophecies refer to *national conversions*, does not that lead to *national churches*?' He replies, 'that a national establishment, if WELL ORDERED, appears more agreeable to the prophetic passages we have been considering, than the Anti-paedobaptist plan; nay, more agreeable to the general tenor of revelation' (Williams' *Anti-paedobaptism Examined* Vol. 1, p. 273).

The Establishment Principle Proved from the New Testament

"It is commonly pleaded," writes Dr. McCrie, "that there is nothing in the New Testament which countenances a national religion, or proves that magistrates as such, have any concern with the interests

of religion and the church of Christ; and those who maintain this are often triumphantly asked to produce proof of it from the New Testament. This plea is neither relevant nor well founded. It is irrelevant. For if the Old Testament is a rule of faith and manners to us, as well as the New, it is sufficient that what we plead for is warranted by the former, although it should not be expressly mentioned in the latter. We have showed that the power in question is warranted by the Old Testament, and that it records approved examples of its exercise which proceeded upon moral grounds. Those who affirm that it is abrogated, or has ceased, under the New Testament, must produce proof of this. We deny that it is, our adversaries in this matter must affirm that it is, otherwise, they do not so much as enter into the question of the controversy. And it is incumbent on those who take the affirmative side of a question to prove their assertion, (*Affirmanti incumbit probatio*). It is contrary to the rules of just reasoning to tell us, that we cannot instruct the warrantableness of the magistrate's power about religion, unless we produce a positive institution of it in the New Testament, if the whole word of God be the rule of our faith and practice. The apostle declares, that "rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Both by the law of nature and the law revealed in the Old Testament, magistrates had power to restrain and punish evil works, against the first as well as the second table of the law. Let those who affirm, that the magistrate's power is, under the gospel, restricted to the second, prove their assertion. The same apostle asserts, that the magistrate is "the minister of God—for good." We have seen, that by the law of nature and the Old Testament, he is bound as such, to maintain the honour of God and to countenance religious institutions for the good of his subjects. Let it be proved that this has been abrogated or is inconsistent with the gospel dispensation. Besides we have already shown that there are manifold passages to this purpose in the Old Testament, evidently respecting New Testament times. If

any will not believe the Old Testament to be obligatory upon us, even wherein it has a declared respect to the New Testament times, they may with equal reason deny both.

But neither is the plea well founded. It is true that the New Testament does not give express commands or direction to Magistrates as such, either as to civil or religious matters; the apostles, in their epistles, inculcating chiefly the duties incumbent upon Christians in those stations in which they were at that time placed. Any thing this way is to be found connected with the duties incumbent upon Christians to rulers. The apostle in 1 Tim. 2:1 exhorts, that prayers be made by Christians “for kings, and for all in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” What Christians are here to pray for, that, magistrates must be bound to promote as their end; and this is not simply “a quiet and peaceable life,” but “in all godliness and honesty.” Rulers are not in their official capacity, to be indifferent to *godliness* any more than to *honesty*; both are to be countenanced and promoted by them, Ezra 6:8-10.

The New Testament also contains, as well as the Old, predictions and promises which confirm what we maintain. When the seventh angel sounded, “there were voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ.” Rev. 11:15. ‘On the accomplishment of the promises’ formerly mentioned (says Dr. Owen), kingdoms ‘are said to become the kingdoms of the Lord Christ,’ because *as* kingdoms, they serve Him with their power and authority. There is not the least colour left for turning off and rejecting all these promises, as if they were merely metaphorical, shadowing forth spiritual glories, neither their beginning nor ending will bear any such corrupting interpretation. They had formerly been the kingdoms of the Antichrist, not merely by having his ordinances set up in them, by the greater part of the people submitting to these, but by a public and national acknowledgment of his authority, and

subjection to him. But they should now acknowledge and submit to the Lord. Their kings had formerly given their power to the beast; but now they should withdraw it, and employ it on the side of the Lamb. "It imports" (says Willison in his "Defence of National Churches p. 53), "their becoming Christ's, as formerly they had been Antichrist's. As the Nations, under Antichrist, did acknowledge and submit to Antichrist in a National way, so shall they as solemnly reject Antichrist, and take Christ in his room, and become His people in a National capacity."

Again in describing the glory of the church in the latter days, it is said, "the kings of the earth did bring their glory and honour into it, and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it," Rev. 21:24, 26. The following is the explication of that passage by Vitringa in his "Apocalypsin" p. 1215-16:—"Then also Princes, Kings, Emperors, shall serve Christ and His church, shall bring their glory, majesty and power into it; that is, shall convert them to their use and advantage: they shall publicly celebrate the true religion, honour its ministers, and by their authority and power maintain and defend the same; which the church hath already experienced in part from the time of Constantine, and lately from the period of the Reformation; and partly as yet to look for. There is a reference here to Isa. 60:10, 11 and 49:22, 25. It appears very clearly from this place that this vision refers to the state of the church *on earth*. Pious princes and kings in the state of perfection shall not *bring* their glory to her, but shall *receive* it. The titles and external prerogatives, which distinguish men in civil and sacred societies shall be then abolished.' And on verse 26 he says, "The meaning is, that whatever is eminent, beautiful, splendid, or praise-worthy among the nations, shall be consecrated to the use of the church of Christ. The command of wealth and of earthly prerogatives, the gifts of erudition, prudence, eloquence; the dignity of nobles, the majesty of kings and princes shall promote the interests of the church."

Objections Answered

"It is readily granted," continues Dr. McCrie, "that many specious objections may be started against this, as well as every other truth and duty. And when great industry is used to misrepresent it, and these objections are urged by multitudes from different quarters, and by those to whom persons look upon as teachers, they may gain an easy and general belief. But, if we are to be staggered in our belief of every thing, against which difficulties may be raised, upon which persons can declaim with great ease, assurance, and plausibility, we may reject the most important articles of religion and revelation.

I

It is objected that the power in question is very liable to be abused, and has been abused in all ages; and that, if we give power to magistrates about religion, they will employ it for the support of a false religion as well as the true. This is an objection which has the greatest influence upon the ignorant, and is accordingly most frequently urged, and represented with all possible aggravations. It will not however bear examination. *Ab abusu ad usum non valet consequentia*. It is not just reasoning to argue from the ABUSE of any thing, against its USE. What power is there among fallible and corrupt men which is not liable to be abused, greatly abused, which has not been abused in every age, which is not daily abused by many. Some kinds of power may be more liable to be abused than others, or when abused, may be productive of worse consequences. (*oriuptio optimi, pessima*, is a common maxim: *the corruption of the best things is worst*.) Shall we therefore abolish and reject these altogether, on account of their abuse? It is well known that the power committed to Christ to the office-bearers of His church has been very grossly abused. Great and highly culpable as the encroachments of civil rulers upon the prerogatives of Christ and the consciences of men

have been and are, let us not forget that the greatest enemy on earth that ever the church of Christ saw, or will see, was a power not civil, but spiritual or ecclesiastical, "sitting in the temple of God," which, principally by claims of a spiritual kind, rose to such a surprising ascendancy, as to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is "worshipped," and during so many ages usurped the supremacy of Jesus Christ, the prerogatives of princes, and the rights of mankind. It is not uncommon with many, from this abuse, to disclaim against and decry all church-power, and Presbyterian courts in particular, as proceeding upon the same principles, and liable to similar abuses. This is unreasonable. And it is equally unreasonable to confound the power allotted by Presbyterians to magistrates with that which has been claimed or exercised by persecuting, tyrannical, Popish or Erastian governments; or to discard the exercise of civil authority about religion, when duly limited, from a dread of the wildest excesses which have been committed by the rage of tyranny, bigotry, or fanaticism. There is no more affinity between these, than there is between the legitimate principles of government or of necessary defence, and the unjust wars, massacres, rapine, and oppression, which have been practised in all ages by nations and their rulers. The misapplication of civil power to the support of a false religion, is common to it with all other power among men. The true religion must still continue to have the only just claim to support, although its rivals may often supplant it; nor are we to go over to the camp of *scepticism*, by representing it as impossible to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the matter. The objection drawn from abuse was as strong against the power of the Jewish kings. "We do not deny (says Dr. Rivet) that by the abuse of this power, the church may be disturbed, and the true worship of God overturned; which also happens from the abuse of the ecclesiastical power. In the kingdom of Judah, within a very short space, king Ahaz burned incense in the high places; what his son Hezekiah abolished, Manasseh restored

that which Josiah his grandson again restored. But these changes did not derogate from the Regal power in matters of religion; nor do we ever hear that the prophets contended against this power, although they, in the name of God, severely reprov'd the abuses of it." (Oper. Tom. 1, p. 1375).

II

But it is objected, that the principle itself involves, or necessarily leads to persecution. For if magistrates have a power about religion, they must also have a right to punish those who do not comply with what they enact, command, or prohibit, in these matters. When they make laws ratifying a particular profession of faith, form of worship, etc., does it not follow that they have a right to secure obedience to these by civil penalties, in the way of making their subjects to profess and worship accordingly? To this we answer, that there are many things here confounded which are essentially distinct, both as to religion and the operation of laws. There are various actions of men about religion, respecting which magistratical authority may be justly employed in the way of restraint and punishment. Such as blasphemy, the open contempt of religion, or even of Christianity and the Bible, in Christian states the profanation of the name of God, of divine ordinances, and of the Sabbath. These and similar practices, we are of opinion, magistrates in virtue of their office, may restrain or punish, according as the nature of the offence and the good of society may require, without being chargeable with any persecution.

But it will not follow from this, or from any regulations and restrictions which may be necessary in the reformation or settlement of religion in a nation, that magistrates are warranted forcibly to impose a profession of faith upon their subjects, or to oblige them to worship God in a certain mode, under civil penalties to be inflicted

upon all who dissent or refuse compliance. Nor is any thing of this kind necessarily implied in laws which recognise, establish, and support, a particular profession of Christianity and church-state. It is of no avail to plead here, that the magistrate's power is compulsory, and that, if it be interposed at all about religion, it must ultimately force it, as a compulsory power must always be supposed at hand to secure respect to the law. We readily grant that the magistrate's power is compulsory, and that a compulsory power is employed about religion. But the question is, *How* is this power employed, and upon *whom* does the penalty fall? Is it employed in compelling men to believe, profess, worship, etc., and in punishing those who may think, profess or act in any way different from the national establishment? This is what we deny, and what ought to be proved as a necessary consequent. It is so, indeed, with those laws which are intended to gain the end, directly and immediately, by their own influences. But it is quite otherwise with those laws which are intended to accomplish the ends by the intervention of institutions, and means adapted unto them. In this case, the law is directly employed in sanctioning, securing, providing for the public support and maintenance of these institutions; and the penalty falls upon those who shall attempt, in a factious, disorderly, or turbulent manner, to prevent their being carried into execution, or to interrupt, hinder, disturb, or overturn them. This is the case with many of those laws which are calculated to promote religion, morality, education, arts and sciences, with other things connected with the public good of a nation. Those must be strangers to the operation of Government, who do not know how many laws are enacted, and carried into execution from time to time, for promoting public improvements and institutions, where neither the private judgment nor public conduct of men are controlled, with respect to any thing necessarily connected with true liberty. When laws are enacted for promoting certain arts and sciences, a compulsory power is employed about

them. But are men forced to become artificers and philosophers or are these things promoted by fines and imprisonments? When laws are enacted for promoting education, and for erecting schools and colleges, as seminaries of national instruction, sanctioning their internal regulations, endowing them, and granting them certain immunities and privileges, a compulsory power is in like manner employed. It is the same as to an establishment of religion. A compulsory power is exercised in various ways about the established Church of Scotland; but is it by compelling all to become members of that church, or of inflicting penalties upon those who dissent? When a particular profession, or confession of faith, form of worship and ecclesiastical government obtain the formal sanction of civil authority, they are recognised by the legislature, as declaratory of that religion which obtains the national countenance and support, and according unto which the legal privileges and emoluments appropriated for this purpose are to be conferred and enjoyed. But this by no means implies that all shall be obliged under civil pains, to conform unto this establishment, or be punished for dissenting from it. There is a wide and essential distinction between *the exercise of a compulsive power about religion, and compulsion in religion*. Yet there are *masters in Israel* who can magisterially decide this controversy, without having learned its *first principles*, or attending to the most necessary distinctions on the subject."

Dr. McCrie goes on to deal with several plausible objections usually advanced against the national establishment of religion, and on the grounds of Scripture and reason shows how unwarrantable and unfounded they are. We shall quote two of them.

III

It is objected, that the kingdom of Christ is wholly of a spiritual and heavenly nature; and cannot be promoted by the secular power.

In proof of this we are referred to our Lord's declaration: "My kingdom is not of this world," John 18:36. Those must surely have read or thought superficially upon this subject, who imagine that this declaration determines the present controversy. The kingdom of Christ, though spiritual and heavenly, and different from the kingdoms of this world, in its origin, laws, immediate objects and ends, has still in various respects a connection with the things of this world, as visibly erected in it, and is capable of standing in a friendly relation with earthly kingdoms, and of receiving benefit from them. Has not the church external privileges, which are capable of being secured? Has she not external ordinances, assemblies, courts, etc., which need to be celebrated and held? Are there not various means and encouragements of an external and worldly nature, which she needs, and is capable of receiving, by which religious knowledge may be more extensively diffused, and the dispensation of all divine ordinances maintained? And may she not receive the countenance and aid of civil government in all these, and in similar respects?

IV (a)

There are some texts which are commonly urged, as unfavourable to the employment of civil power in the support of religion. One of these is Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." From these words it is inferred that *civil* power ought not to be employed in promoting religion. Let us enquire if this is a just or a forced inference. These words were spoken to Zerubbabel, the governor of the Jews, and primarily referred to the building of the second temple. The people engaged in the work were few, destitute of might and power, and despised by their numerous and powerful enemies, who scoffingly said, "What do these feeble Jews? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in

a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt?" The Jews themselves were greatly discouraged, and had repeatedly desisted from the work saying, "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." But amidst these discouragements, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,' i.e. although ye are destitute of might and power for this work, the success of it does not depend upon these; My Spirit remaineth among you, fear ye not, He will carry on and consummate the work. But was this declaration made to Zerubbabel to cause him to drop the sceptre from his hands, and take no direction in the work, lest there should be an appearance of any human authority about it? Or, was it any contradiction of it when the Spirit of the Lord "turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them to STRENGTHEN THEIR HANDS in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel"? Ezra 6:22. We do not mean, that the application of this passage is confined to the rebuilding of the temple. We consider it as applicable to the advancement of the work of God under the New Testament. All that we plead is, that the proper import of the words, as ascertained by the circumstances in which they were spoken, be preserved; and that a sense inconsistent with this be not imposed upon them. In this view, the words contain a glorious and comfortable truth, particularly encouraging to the friends of religion, when its interests are low, and they may be destitute of means for supporting or reviving them. The work is the Lord's; the success of it depends upon His Spirit; He has engaged to carry it on, and He will do it, (as He has formerly done) not only without, but in opposition to the power of authority, numbers, wealth, learning, eloquence, etc. But what God *does* is one thing, what men *ought* to do is another; nor, because He may proceed in one way at one time, are we to limit Him to the same mode of operation at all times: "For who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor, hath taught Him?"

IV (b)

Another passage of scripture often quoted on this subject, is, 2 Cor. 10:4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds." That the weapons which belong to the church, her ministers and members, as such, are not carnal, what Presbyterian does not allow? If we pleaded for the substitution of carnal weapons in the place of these, or for the employment of them by magistrates for the same purposes and ends; if we pleaded for their being used as means adopted to the conversion of sinners, or spiritual edification, and that the gospel ought to be propagated and religion imposed upon men by force;—there would be propriety in urging these texts. "These texts (says Mr. Willison), are grossly perverted by some beyond their scope; for seeing our Lord in other plain texts approves of the Magistrate's using his power for the good of the church, it was not His design to condemn it in these texts in the least. Nor can any just inference be made to this purpose, seeing the Magistrate's acting in his sphere for the Church's good, is in no ways inconsistent with the spirituality of Christ's kingdom. For we do not at all plead for the Magistrate's power to be employed by methods of force and violence to set up Christ's spiritual and eternal kingdom in men's hearts, or to oblige men's consciences to receive His laws, as the kings of the world do force their conquered subjects to receive and obey theirs. No, this spiritual kingdom of Christ is set up in the souls and consciences of men by means and weapons of a spiritual nature, as the apostle tells us, 2 Cor. 10 viz:—by the preaching of the gospel, and the working of the Spirit of God therewith" (*Defence of National Churches*, p. 210). But, besides those means which are properly spiritual, and which conduce directly to the promotion of spiritual ends, there are others of an external kind, which tend to promote the more free, convenient, extensive and permanent use of the spiritual means. Money, for example, is not adapted to convert or edify the souls

of men, but it is necessary and useful for building churches and supporting religious ordinances. Civil authority belongs to this class of means; to represent it as inconsistent with those of the former kind, is as great an absurdity as to confound it with them. It may be lawfully employed in defending and maintaining, externally, the kingdom of Christ; in securing the rights and privileges of particular churches; in removing external hindrances or molestations, and in providing those things which are necessary to the use of the spiritual means. There is no more reason for saying that the apostle condemns any of these things, than for saying that he forbids the use of civil power for defending the church from violence, because he has said, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal."

The Establishment at the Reformation and at the Second Reformation in Scotland

The late Rev. James Kerr, D.D., Glasgow, in his lectures on Church and State (printed in May 1893) writes: "The Establishment reared by the Scottish Reformers in the best times of the Reformation stands in history as a refutation of the opinion that Church and State cannot be nearly allied without the surrender of freedom. The Reformers without exception, maintained the principle of Establishments and urged upon the nation the duty of acknowledging and rendering support to the Church of Christ. . . . With such clear views about Church and State, Melville and Knox and the Reformers in the Second Reformation, reared their Establishment. The late Dr. Andrew Symington refers thus to the general principle of Establishments, and to the Establishment then happily constituted: "A civil establishment of religion, according to the sound and scriptural theory of such a national institution, implies no barter of the Church's privileges for the countenance and pay of the State, but a civil confirmation of privileges already possessed by

the Church by solemn donation from her exalted Head. . . . it is for the mutual advantage of both Church and State, to be united on sound scriptural principles. . . . We conceive that in the Second Reformation, these two provisions were admirably fulfilled. Church and State acknowledged the common obligation of submission to the Redeemer's Headship. . . . To the Christian, the lover of His Saviour and His Church, this period is pregnant with instruction and with promise, the brightest day of Scotland's Church, a day in which millennial glory seemed to dawn. A Church, holding directly her Head in heaven, with doctrines and institutions and polity based immediately on the Holy Scriptures: with standards so excellent: with ministers so pious and faithful: with a people so enlightened and devoted: allied to a Christian reformed State, without any encroachment upon its independence or compromise of her own; with schools for scriptural education and seats of learning consecrated by sound religion, and banded together in holy covenant, and standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made her free, and resolutely prosecuting her proper purposes, presents an object commanding admiration."

"For fidelity to these happy attainments—this complete Established uniformity," continues Dr. Kerr, "the servants of Christ were driven from their benefices, intercommuned, outlawed, shot down on the moors, drowned in the waters, carried to heaven in chariots of fire. Their sufferings were on behalf of the Establishment in principle and in fact. The late Dr. C. J. Brown, referring to the Act of 1649 said: "How finely does the existence of this very statute demonstrate the practicability of an alliance between Church and State on terms honourable to both; and further demonstrates how nobly and successfully the Church had struggled during the previous years to maintain her spiritual independence. . . . Voluntary churchmen, out of an Establishment, talk of the independence of the Church: our forefathers within one, bled and died for it."

VOLUNTARYISM

“Voluntaryism,” in the words of Principal Cunningham, “amounts in substance to this—that the only relation that ought to subsist between State and the Church—between civil government and religion—is that of entire separation, or in other words, its advocates maintain that nations, as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, not only are not bound, but are not at liberty to interfere in any religious matters, or to seek to promote the welfare of the Church of Christ as such. This theory, if true, supersedes the necessity of all further enquiry into the principles that ought to regulate the relation between Church and State; for it really implies that no connection should subsist, or can lawfully subsist between them. (Historical Theology Vol. 1, ch. 13).

“Under the general head of the Civil magistrate, or the civil magistracy—that is, in the exposition of what is taught in Scripture concerning the functions and duties of the supreme civil authorities of a nation, whatever be its form of government—the Reformers were *unanimous and decided* in asserting, what has been called in modern times, the principle of national establishments of religion—namely, that it is competent to, and incumbent upon, nations, as such, and civil rulers in their official capacity, or in the exercise of their legitimate control over civil matters, to aim at the promotion of the honour of God, the welfare of true religion, and the prosperity of the Church of Christ. This principle, which comprehends or implies the whole of what we are concerned to maintain upon the subject of national establishments of religion, we believe to be fully sanctioned by Scripture; and we can appeal, in support of it, to the decided and unanimous testimony of the Reformers—while the Anabaptists of that period seem to have been the first, if we except the Donatists of the fifth century, who stumbled upon something like the opposite doctrine, or what is now- a-days

commonly called the Voluntary principle." (Historical Theology Vol. 2, Ch. 27).

"Voluntary Principle"—A Misnomer

"The 'Voluntary principle' is, indeed," continues Principal Cunningham, "a most inaccurate and unsuitable designation of the doctrine to which it is now commonly applied, and is fitted to insinuate a radically erroneous view of the *status quaestionis* in the controversy. The Voluntary principle properly means the principle that an obligation lies upon men to labour, in the willing application of their talents, influence and worldly substance, for the advancement of the cause of God and the kingdom of Christ. Of course no defender of the principle of national establishments of religion ever questioned the truth of the Voluntary principle in this its only proper sense. The true ground of difference is just this,—that we who hold the principle of national establishments of religion extend this general obligation to nations and their rulers, while those who are opposed to us limit it to individuals; so that the Voluntary principle, in the only sense in which we reject and oppose it,—and in the only sense, consequently, in which it forms a subject of fair and honorable controversy,—is a mere limitation of the sphere of this obligation to promote the cause of God and the kingdom of Christ—a *mere* negation, that the obligation in this respect which attaches to individuals, extends also to nations and their rulers. We have no intention, however, at present of discussing this question. We have merely to advert to the unanimous and decided testimony of the Reformers in support of the general doctrine, as a portion of scriptural truth,—that the civil magistrate is bound, in the exercise of his legitimate authority, of his rightful jurisdiction over national affairs, to seek to promote, as far as he can, the welfare of true religion, and the prosperity of the church of Christ."

Voluntaryism Postulates a Secular State

“Voluntaryism,” wrote Professor G. Smeaton, D.D., in “The Scottish Theory of Ecclesiastical Establishment,” “proposes to substitute a non-religious state—that is, a state purely secular without a religion and without a creed. . . . Never till the dawn of the French Revolution did this theory gain much attention or influence. For though we find it among the Anabaptists, the Quakers, and the untaught fanatical sects of the Commonwealth time—men who regarded the State as belonging to the empire of an evil power—it never menaced the institution of the Christian State till the fury and impiety of the French Revolution insinuated themselves into other nations. The heathen philosophers, Plato and Cicero, speak with a deeper view of the religious character of States, than Voluntary divines evince. We are naturally led to enquire, what description of person must be the ideal ruler of the Voluntary theory, if that could ever be reduced to practice in any country? The answer can only be, that in order to be a MODEL RULER he must be a BAD MAN, a man denuded of the fear of God, to whom all religions are alike, and none worthy of encouragement.”

Voluntaryism Essentially Atheistic

“The Voluntary principle,” said the Rev. John Duncan, LL.D., professor of Hebrew and of Oriental languages in the Free Church College, Edinburgh, (usually known as “Rabbi” Duncan), “is not only anti-Christian, but atheistical.” “Apply the Voluntary principle to the British Constitution and Administration and the Imperial policy,” wrote Dr. James Kerr, “and at one fell blow, all references to Christianity in them must be instantly demolished. The Protestant Succession to the Throne must be abolished, the Bible must be expelled from the National Schools, prayers in Parliament and the Court of Assize must end, and all laws in favour of the Lord’s Day must

be repealed. In short, in obedience to the demands of Voluntaryism, the whole laws and policy of the British Empire must be so fashioned and conducted, that they would not show whether the God of the Mahommedan, or the God of the Christian was Governor and King of Nations. Voluntaryism bolts the door of all public institutions against the entrance of the universal Lord. It is thus more Erastian than the Erastianism against which it is continually protesting. Thus imperiously Voluntaryism will thrust God out of the rulership of part of His own dominions and require the nation as such to conduct its affairs without any recognition of Him."

Voluntaryism "the Offspring of Unbelief"

In a speech which the late eminent Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall, made in 1881 before leaving for Mentone for his health, he said, "The decay which generated the fungus of disestablishment (Voluntaryism) accounts for the growth of sensationalism in worship. The taste indulged in the drawing-room and in the concert room, craves for gratification in the house of God. This is the reason why hymns and organs are demanded. Of course some plausible excuse must be devised for urging such a change, but it is weariness of Scriptural worship that causes the fashionable desire for innovations. The coincidence of the development with that of disestablishment is sufficient to indicate the character of both. And the current change has passed on to unfaithfulness as to the custody of God's Word. A revolt against the regulations of Scripture can only result from defective views of its Divine perfection and authority. To one, who traced to growing unfaithfulness, the two former changes of feeling, there can be nothing unaccountable in the extent to which the Word of God is degraded within our pale. In a Church such as ours, Voluntaryism, Arminianism, and Sensationalism, must be the pioneers of Rationalism for they are all the offspring of unbelief."

Alterations in the Confession of Faith in Deference to Voluntaryism

The present Church of Scotland is the result of the union of the Established Church and the United Free Church in 1929. As far back as 1889 the General Assembly of the Established Church passed an Act entitled: "Act on Subscription of Office-bearers of the Church," which loosened the Church's relation to the Confession of Faith. In 1921 it passed the notorious Declaratory Articles which were approved by an Act of Parliament. The passing of the Declaratory Articles was in prospect of the union with the United Free Church, a Church strongly Voluntary, Arminian and riddled with Higher Criticism. The fact of such a union taking place was proof of how far the Established Church had drifted on the sea of apostacy from her historic moorings. In connection with the 1929 union it was agreed that the Establishment Principle could no longer be recognised as an article of religious belief and obligation in the Church of Scotland.

The Presbyterian Church of America in 1788, changed the chapters and sections of the Confession of Faith dealing with the Civil Magistrate. In "The Contender" for April 1957, edited by the Rev. Malcolm R. Mackay, Nova Scotia, Mr. Mackay states that they did so "in order to make them conform to the new (and false) doctrines of separation of Church and State, and the equality of all religions before the law, which the Anabaptists (wrongly called "Baptists") and Jeffersonians (followers of Thomas Jefferson, the deistic rationalist) had succeeded in putting across in the new land, and were about to write into the First Amendment in the United States Constitution. We showed from the history of the period, as given in the Encyclopedia Britannica, that the Presbyterians in America were in perfect agreement with the Anabaptists and Jeffersonians in this matter and had co-operated with them in their efforts to write these new doctrines into the Government's Constitution."

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church of America has not only revised the sections dealing with the Civil Magistrate, but has also left Section 6 of chapter 25 of the Westminster Confession of Faith an open question as far as the church's terms of subscription are concerned. "Despite the professed loyalty of the Westminster Theological Seminary, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church and "The Presbyterian Guardian," to the Westminster Confession of Faith," writes the late Rev. D. Beaton, "we are sure it will amaze our readers, to learn that in the doctrinal Constitution of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, clause or paragraph 6 of chapter 25 of the Westminster Confession of Faith is left an open question, as far as that church's terms of subscription are concerned. We refer to that part of the Confession which declares concerning the Pope that he is "that anti-christ, that man of sin, and son of perdition that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God." A Church making such a grave omission scarcely merits the name Protestant, according to the original connotation of that term. Personally, the present writer believes sincerely that the attitude of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to this part of the Westminster Confession of Faith is the fruit of lack of spiritual discernment, due to spiritual or intellectual pride, in imagining themselves superior in their power of Biblical interpretation relative to this particular point, to the pious, profoundly spiritual and scholarly theologians who framed the Westminster Confession of Faith, and that the Most High has consequently punished the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and its evangelical periodical, by giving them over, in this respect to spiritual blindness. If this view is correct, as we firmly believe it is, then the Church and that periodical will not be honoured, failing conviction of their error and repentance in witnessing against the most formidable obstacle to the spread of the Gospel in the world—Romanism, "the masterpiece of Satan." As it is generally acknowledged that, with the possible exception of the

Reformers at the Reformation period, and the body of godly and scholarly men who produced that unrivalled translation, the 1611 Authorised Version of the Scripture, there has not been known since the time of Pentecost, a body of theologians more endowed with spiritual power, depth and discernment, from on high, than the pious, spiritual, and scholarly framers of the Westminster Confession of Faith, does it not appear like gross presumption on the part of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church thus, by implication, to correct the, to them, debatable convictions of these divinely highly-favoured theologians? The most deeply spiritual Christians of the present day might, with propriety, be called light-hearted compared with these theologians.

To excuse oneself by saying that the confessional view on this particular point is merely an interpretation, is inconsistent, as it is an integral part of the Westminster Confession of Faith, binding upon all who subscribe to it as the confession of the individual subscriber. To subscribe only those parts of the Westminster Confession of Faith which suit our own notions of propriety, while still claiming unqualified, unequivocal heirship of, and admiration for, confessional doctrines, savours far too much of the unscrupulously-unseemly tactics of the Modernists relative to the Bible—they must needs pose as Christians, while discarding those parts of the inspired, infallible Word of God, which they, in their lamentable spiritual blindness, think should not be there. The seeming subterfuge that the Westminster Confession of Faith, being, after all, a humanly framed document, though based on the Bible, one could not be expected to endorse every detail of it, as one knows of no book composed by man to which one could not yield such endorsement, may seem not only plausible but an incontrovertible argument to some, but in this particular case it does not carry conviction. If the Papal System, culminating in the blasphemous doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, when he

speaks ex-cathedra on matters of faith and morals—an attribute and prerogative peculiar to the Godhead—is not, after all, the Scriptural Anti-Christ, we fail absolutely to conceive how any other system that can ever arise and develop, will coincide so exactly in minute detail, with the inspired Biblical description. We can only conclude that “blindness in part is happened” to those who believe otherwise.” (The Free Presbyterian Magazine, March 1941).

The above criticism holds good in connection with “The Reformed Church of New Zealand,” which also accepts the Voluntary alterations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the sections of the Confession of Faith dealing with the “Civil Magistrate.”

The Christian Reformed Church in America has changed Article 36 of the Belgic Confession on “The Civil Magistrate” or “The Magistracy” as it is called.

This church’s earliest membership was composed of immigrants from the Netherlands. It has, according to the 1962 statistics, “more than 550 congregations and a quarter million members located in 27 states, plus the District of Columbia and in six provinces of Canada.” The theological seminaries of the Christian Reformed Church are Calvin College and Calvin Seminary. The doctrinal standards of the Church consist of “The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort.”

The original text of the Belgic Confession on the Magistracy reads as follows: “Their office is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also that they protect the sacred ministry, and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship, that the kingdom of the Anti-Christ may be thus destroyed and the kingdom of Christ promoted.” The following footnote in connection with Article 36 appears on page 19 of “Doctrinal Standards of the Christian Reformed Church,” published in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1962, states: “The Synod of 1910, recognising the unbiblical teaching, contained in this sentence concerning

freedom of religion and concerning the duty of the state to suppress false religion, saw fit to add an explanatory footnote. The Synod of 1958, agreeing with the Synod of 1910 as to the unbiblical character of the teaching referred to, but recognising a conflict between the objectionable clauses in the Article and its footnote decided to eliminate the footnote and to make the change in text of the Article, corresponding to the change adopted in 1905 by the Synod of the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland." We cannot accept that the teaching of the Reformers on "The Magistracy" is "unbiblical."

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America has not changed the original text of the Confession, but has made a special declaration on the subject. The Reformed Presbyterian Declaration and Testimony says: "No ecclesiastical authority is lodged in the hands of private Christians or civil Magistrates; Church judicatories are subordinate only to Christ Jesus etc." This declaration is inconsistent with the plain teaching of the Confession and of the Word of God.

Voluntaryism Essentially Sectarian

"At an early period of the Reformation on the continent," writes Dr. McCrie, "certain sects of separatists from the body of Protestants appeared, who began to propagate peculiar opinions about the nature and exercise of the office of civil magistrates among Christians, the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and Christian liberty, especially in reference to religion, as to which every person and sect were to be left to their own humour or liking, without respect to public authority. Among these, the Anabaptists, Socinians, and those denominated Libertines were distinguished; by whom commotions were excited in various places, both in civil and ecclesiastical society. . . . In England, during the sitting of the Westminster Assembly, after some progress had been made for

settling religion by authority¹⁷, according to the Solemn League, a number of sectaries appeared, who, in order to hinder a new national establishment, vented these tenets in their discourses and writings, and insisted for a general toleration and liberty; and rested not, until those who favoured their scheme wrested the sword out of the hands of the Presbyterians, and seized on every part of the government, which they employed for their own purposes, involving all the three kingdoms again in troubles and bloody wars, and restricting considerably the due freedom of the ministry and ecclesiastical courts; though under the republic and usurpation of Cromwell, for *political reasons*, the laws that had been made for settling religion were never repealed, but only restricted and new-modelled. . . .

“Sectarian principles are opposed to unity and uniformity in religion, and to the proper means for promoting these, whether by civil or ecclesiastical society. In the present controversy they are considered chiefly with reference to civil authority, and are so called, not only because they have been commonly held by sects that had separated from the great body in Protestant churches, but also on account of their tendency to produce and foster endless sects, by patronising, instead of checking all sorts of religious opinions and different forms of worship. Though they are sometimes denominated a new scheme, or new principles; and sometimes new light, because they are recommended in our times, as the effect of further light and improvements than our fathers were blessed

17 It must be observed that the religious body once known by the name of Puritans, became Presbyterian both in principle and practice, partly before and thoroughly during the time of the Westminster Assembly—And of the whole two thousand who were ejected by the Act of Uniformity **above nine-tenths were Presbyterians**. (History of the Westminster Assembly by W. H. Illetherington, D.D. L.L.D., p. 325.)

with, yet it will be evident to any acquainted with modern church-history and literature, that, from whatever source they may have been immediately drawn, whether from the religious sectaries above mentioned, the sentiments of latitudinarian and socinianising divines, or the schools of more modern philosophers, they are far from being new. Every proposition and favourite phrase, the very modes of expression used in argument, explication, or declamation, are but a repetition of what may be found almost *verbatim*, in a variety of productions left by their worthy predecessors."

Dr. McCrie shows that Voluntaryism is essentially sectarian and that churches and bodies which have renounced the Establishment Principle have fallen from the Reformed and Scriptural position taken by the Churches at the Reformation. That sacred unity with which they upheld the Supremacy of Christ as King of Nations, with the consequent duty of nations as such and civil rulers in their official capacity to honour and serve Him by recognising His Truth and promoting His Cause, Voluntaryism has shamefully violated. It has cast to the ground that royal diadem of glory and beauty, and under the banner of a spurious sanctity it has confounded "the state" with "the world," and has allured its devotees into the jungle of sectarianism. However divergent the sects may be in doctrine and practice, from the ultra-orthodox to the false and the fantastic, they all with one accord pay homage to the great Diana of Voluntaryism. "It is questionable," to quote again Dr. Begg's condemnation of Voluntaryism, "whether Popery itself more directly robs Christ of His glory—the glory of having all power in heaven and on earth." "Voluntaryism is not only anti-christian," said 'Rabbi' Duncan, "but atheistical." It is sad, indeed, to see churches and organisations professing to uphold the Calvinistic doctrines of the Reformation succumbing to the deadly spell of Voluntaryism. To all such the exhortation applies, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto

thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." This Achan in the camp, this accursed thing in the eyes of the Most High must be destroyed. Let us turn a deaf ear to the siren voices of Voluntaries however Calvinistic they may claim to be, and not be drawn by them into the wilderness of the sects. Let us keep to the King's highway trod by martyrs and Reformers, and in the name of our God display our banners that Christ is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and that the nation and the kingdom that will not serve Him and His Cause shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. "The Establishment Principle," said the eminent Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall, "is not only worth living for, but a Principle worth dying for." "Voluntary churchmen, out of an Establishment, talk of the independence of the church: OUR FOREFATHERS WITHIN ONE, BLED AND DIED FOR IT." (Dr. C. J. Brown)

His testimony and his law
 in Isr'el he did place,
 And charg'd our fathers it to show
 to their succeeding race;
 That so the race which was to come
 might well them learn and know;
 And sons unborn who should arise,
 might to their sons them show:
 That they might set their hope in God,
 and suffer not to fall
 His mighty works out of their mind,
 but keep his precepts all.

—Psa 78:5-7

W. MacLean

THE CHRISTIAN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

This paper, which was delivered by Mr Alexander Gillies, Glasgow, at the FP Theological Conference in Edinburgh, on 10th September, 1969, has been adapted for publication.

It appeared in the Free Presbyterian Magazine, February, 1970. Being a most able and timely article it is being reprinted for the wider circulation it deserves and our times demand. It gives a deep insight into the pattern of present-day thinking and behaviour and an understanding of the so-called 'God is dead'—Belief.

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The title of this paper—The Christian in Contemporary Society—embraces much. The subject has so many facets that a study of it entails extensive research and observation. I feel, therefore, that it is incumbent upon me at the outset to acknowledge my indebtedness to the following books, which have been so useful to me, and on which I have drawn freely in the composition of my paper:

Escape From Reason by Francis A. Schaeffer.

The God Who Is There by Francis A. Schaeffer.

The New Morality by Arnold Lunn and Garth Lean.

Set Forth Your Case by Clark H. Pinnock.

The Abolition of Religion by Leon Morris.

The Cult of Softness by Arnold Lunn and Garth Lean.

The Christian in Industrial Society by H. F. R. Catherwood.

Runaway World by Michael Green.

Perilous Times by Paul B. Smith.

The Christian and the World by H. M. Carson.

As has been indicated, the title is of such a comprehensive nature that volumes could be written on it; it is, therefore, essential that both the form of the paper and the limits prescribed should be clearly outlined. I propose to divide the subject into four sections as follows:

1. First of all, it is my purpose to anticipate and refute objections that might be raised against relating the position and conduct of the Christian to any particular society during any given period of history.
2. The second section will consist of an exposition of the ethos, that is, the prevailing spirit, of contemporary society and of the thinking which is so insidiously permeating this society.
3. The third section will consist of a description of the symptoms of the disease as these manifest themselves in contemporary society.
4. The fourth section will take the form of a prescription for the Christian whose lot is cast in contemporary society. This will deal with questions such as: how should the Christian be exercised, and what should his response be with regard to the society in which he lives and works?

1. A study of the position of the Christian in a specific society could, quite conceivably, be misinterpreted by some as countenancing the modernist trend of adapting the Christian faith in order to make it, as the catch-phrase goes, “relevant to the age in which we live”. This modernist trend could be summed up as follows: “The Christians of the apostolic era belonged to a primitive age; so the Christian in contemporary society must conform to the theological, philosophical, scientific, psychological and social outlook of his day.” This is a concept utterly at odds with the teaching of the word of God, and, I trust, with the spirit and content of this paper.

It may be argued that the world is the world, whether the date be 1969 or 1569 or 69 A.D., that sin is sin now as then, that the gospel is the gospel now as then. This is undeniable; but the spirit of the world manifests itself in a variety of ways, and certain sins are more prevalent in some ages than in others. Society changes in manifold ways.

We are not living in the society in which the Saviour lived. It is not necessary to expatiate here on His ecclesiastical, political and social environment, but it was manifestly different from ours. Careful perusal of the Gospels makes it abundantly clear that He dealt with religious hypocrisy, spiritual ignorance, formal traditionalism, inordinate worldliness, heretical doctrines, etc., as these manifested themselves in the society which was contemporary to Him. Moreover, He dealt with different classes of people in different ways; in other words He adapted His methods to His audience.

In the apostolic era we find the truth applied to people in forms suitable to their religious, political and cultural background. Examples are numerous: Peter on the day of Pentecost and in the house of Cornelius; Paul addressing the Jews at Antioch and the Greeks in Athens; Paul “disputing daily at the school of one Tyrannus”; Paul’s epistles to the various churches; Paul’s advice to Titus in connection with the Cretians.

Precept and example in the Bible are clear! Therefore the Christian's duty is clear: he must take cognizance of the society in which he lives if he is to be a faithful witness on the side of his Master.

2. In every society since the Fall human nature has exercised itself in various ways, that is, certain human characteristics are more obvious in some periods of history than in others. In order to attain to an intelligent understanding of the present, one must explore the past; for it is certain that the cancer of permissiveness has been working insidiously for many years. One could, of course, in one's research reach far into the past, but, for practical purposes, I shall confine myself to the 19th and 20th centuries.

If one looks back to the 19th century, and, indeed, to as recent a period as the one preceding the First World War, one finds that in Western society Christians and non-Christians had this in common: they accepted certain presuppositions, the fundamental presupposition being that there were such things as absolutes—absolute truth, absolute knowledge, absolute goodness, etc. People did disagree as to what these absolutes were, but the existence of absolutes was not denied. Both Christians and non-Christians reasoned in this way: if something is true, its opposite is false; if something is right, its opposite is wrong. Even a generation ago, if you said, "This is right" or "This is wrong", everyone would understand what you meant. This way of thinking has been called the methodology of antithesis. It was a way of thinking which permeated man's entire mental outlook.

In contemporary society there is a new methodology. The concept of truth and moral rightness has changed. There is no longer in general currency an antithesis like TRUTH v. ERROR or an antithesis like RIGHTNESS v. WRONGNESS. Absolutes have been cast overboard. The new methodology which underlies the

prevailing spirit, or ethos, of contemporary society has three basic characteristics:

- (i) **Subjectivism:** religion and morality are not fixed; they depend on individual attitudes.
- (ii) **Relativism:** knowledge can never be absolute; it is limited by man's perceptive faculties.
- (iii) **Agnosticism:** no one knows the right answer.

This is the situation that confronts us. The ethos, the prevailing spirit, of our age is dictated by a way of thinking completely foreign to previous generations, and to real Christians in our own time. It is not surprising that so many are baffled by contemporary trends, particularly among the young. Young people think that by throwing off the shackles of "outmoded" religious and moral concepts they will enjoy real freedom. This is an awful delusion. What has happened, and is happening, is that they are the victims of a policy of brainwashing, pursued in the interests of the new methodology. The absolute standards of the Moral Law are ridiculed; men create their own standards as they go along.

Obviously this change did not occur overnight. As I have stated, it is an insidious disease. One can trace its spread westwards from Germany to Britain, and then to America. Its social progress can be traced from the "highbrow" intellectuals to the more educationally privileged strata of society, to the working class, and then to the upper middle class. However, for our purposes it will be more profitable to follow the progress of the disease, the new methodology, through the disciplines—from philosophy to art, then to music, then to general culture, then to theology.

Before embarking on this exposition it is necessary to make a general statement with regard to all non-Christian thought. There was, and is, in all non-Christian thought a unifying factor rationalism,

or humanism in its wider sense. Humanism, in this sense, is the system whereby man, beginning absolutely with himself, tries with the use of his reason to find a meaning and purpose in life. In one sense, of course, rationalism is the same in every age—man trying to build out from himself. In another sense, humanism is constantly shifting, and so the Christian must be careful to study the form rationalism is **currently** taking.

If we follow the trend in the disciplines already mentioned we discover that men failed in their rationalistic efforts to find a unified meaning to life on the basis of the methodology of antithesis. So, rather than abandon the rationalism which had failed them, they changed the whole concept of truth. If we are to understand the ethos of contemporary society we must follow the conception and birth of modern man through the disciplines—from philosophy to theology.

In the realm of philosophy it was Hegel, the German, who discarded the methodology of antithesis and propounded the methodology of synthesis in the hope of finding a unified meaning to life. However, it is Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher and theologian, who holds the doubtful distinction of being the father of modern secular thinking and the new theological thinking. The really significant feature of his philosophy and theology is that he gave up the task of finding a unified meaning to life by the exercise of reason. He stipulated that in order to deal with the purpose and significance of life one must abandon rational thinking about them and make a gigantic “leap of faith”. Existentialist philosophers, then, have abandoned the hope of a **rational** answer to questions like “What is man? Why is he here? What is his destiny?” Their answer is that, if one concerned oneself with the rational and the logical, that is, historical and scientific truth, life is meaningless and purposeless. Therefore, one must by a “leap of faith”, or mystical experience, fly into the realm of the non-rational and

the non-logical, the realm of intuition and imagination and of what cannot be verified or proved in any way. According to this school of thought, here lies the only hope of finding a meaning to life.

This “leap of faith”, which is quite irrational, has been called a “first order experience”, and it is surely not without significance that Aldous Huxley advocated drug-taking in order to attain to a first-order experience. In fact, the sensitive person today does not usually take drugs in order to escape reality. He fondly hopes that by taking them he will attain to a first-order experience which will give some meaning to life.

Just as philosophers tried to find a humanistic answer to life, so did artists. The Dutchman, Van Gogh, and the Frenchman, Gauguin, collaborated to found a new religion based on humanistic principles, but they quarrelled (How very human!), and Van Gogh, two years later, in a fit of disillusionment, committed suicide. Gauguin created a painting with the pathetic caption “What? Whence? Whither?” and then failed in his subsequent suicide attempt. Dada, a modern art movement originating in Zurich, proclaims in paintings and poems that everything is chance—life is meaningless.

From the world of music one example will suffice. The *Musique Concrete*, developed by Pierre Schaeffer in Paris, proclaims the same message: all is relative; there is no truth; nothing is fixed.

In the realm of literature Henry Miller is an anti-law writer, a wrecker of conventions. Since life is believed to be meaningless, laws and time-honoured conventions are there to be smashed. It is, however, in the “theatre of the absurd” that the abject despair of the philosophy of meaninglessness is given its fullest expression. The avowed aim of this group of dramatists, including Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Harold Pinter and Jean Genet, is to depict the absolute emptiness of life. Francis Bacon, one of Britain’s leading

painters, goes even further: the main theme of his work is the sheer horror of existence. What is considered his best work Bacon is said to have done in a drunken state.

In John Osborne's play "Martin Luther" an old man, the head of Luther's old monastery, visits Luther and asks, "Martin, do you **know** you are right?" In the teeth of historical fact, but consistently with the contemporary way of thinking, Osborne puts this reply into Luther's mouth: "Let's hope so." Notice the thread running through contemporary culture: life is meaningless, and there are no such things as absolute truth and absolute morality.

In the modern cinema the same message is conveyed. "The Silence", produced by the Swede, Bergman, is a series of snapshots with immoral and pornographic themes. There is no commentary, for this is supposed to represent life—devoid of meaning and devoid of morals. "Blow-up", a film produced by Antonioni of Italy, was advertised by posters announcing "Murder Without Guilt" and "Love Without Meaning".

This concept of life has permeated society with alarming rapidity through television, radio, magazines, newspapers, novels, "pop" music, the theatre and the cinema.

The same ethos is evident in modern theology. Modern existentialist theology is the child of Kierkegaard. The whole system pivots on the "leap of faith" which I have already mentioned. One of the most remarkable features of modern theology is the close affinity between its development and the development of modern existentialist philosophy. It has already been noted that philosophers had to abandon the humanistic, rationalistic method and embraced Kierkegaard's leap of faith. Theology has been through the same process.

The rationalistic liberal theologians of Germany rejected everything miraculous and supernatural. They discarded the miraculous and the supernatural in the life of the Saviour and

attempted in a rational, objective way to find the “historical Jesus”, as they put it. They found it impossible, however, to separate the supernatural aspects of the life of Jesus from what they condescendingly called “the true history”. If they removed the supernatural, no historical Jesus remained. Two courses were then open to them: they could have renounced their rationalism and returned to Biblical theology, or they could have taken their rationalistic discoveries to their logical conclusion—nihilism (a belief that all existence is basically senseless and useless)—the religion of despair. They chose neither course. Like the philosophers they chose Kierkegaard’s way—the two-storey division of knowledge and truth. The “leap of faith” is their magic wand. In essence, this is the theology of Barth, Niebuhr, Tillich, Robinson, Richardson, and all the new theologians. They have separated religious truth, which to them is non-rational and non-logical, from scientific and historical truth, which is both rational and logical. The gap is bridged by the “leap of faith”. In fact, the faith of modern theology is faith in faith; and the more irrational the leap, the greater the faith.

The new theology is extremely influential in the majority of the churches of our day. It takes the old Christian doctrines and turns them into symbols by emptying them of all definable content. To take a few examples of this:

- (i) **The Person of Christ:** In the lower storey of historical criticism He is a human prophet; by a “leap of faith” He can be raised to divine significance.
- (ii) **The Bible:** In the lower storey of scientific criticism it is a human document, full of errors; but you can elevate it into being a medium of revelation. Then it is inspired like the Koran and Shakespeare.

- (iii) **Miracles:** According to the new theology, miracles are not facts of history. They are really interpretations which believing people gave to events which touched them deeply.
- (iv) **The Resurrection:** There is no way of knowing whether it happened or not, according to the pundits of the new theology, but one can believe that it happened by a “leap of faith”.
- (v) **The Cross:** This is a very popular theme, but is treated as a symbol. The blood is ignored or ridiculed. They say that you can still be a Christian even if you do not understand the Cross. “It is the contemporary Christ who saves,” they say.
- (vi) **The Trinity:** This, as expounded by the new theology, is merely a metaphorical description of God by men who saw the scheme of redemption in that way. If we attempt to take it as literally true, it is a mathematical absurdity.

All these doctrines are part and parcel of the new theology. That makes it more dangerous than 19th century liberalism. It looks so like the gospel, it sounds so like the gospel—when not investigated. The truth is that in the new theology these doctrines are really symbols which cannot be proved right or wrong and whose content is not fixed. The person who has “faith” merely loads these symbols with the meaning he chooses according to the consensus of the age in which he lives.

What emerges from this study of the ethos of contemporary society is that absolutes have been abandoned, and the old methodology of TRUTH v. ERROR and RIGHT v. WRONG, which is the methodology of the Bible, has been rejected. People are being

conditioned to a new way of thinking; there are no such things as absolutes, and all convictions are relative. Since this is what is believed, all discriminatory legislation and prohibitions must be removed. “Thou shall” and “Thou shalt not” are the imperatives of a morality which modern man rejects. The naiveté of the champions of the cause of permissiveness is such that they fail to understand that in that way lies anarchy—the greatest of all human tyrannies. The key words of contemporary society are “revolution” and “freedom”. All revealed law must be destroyed and be replaced by a fluid set of humanly appointed rules. Whatever is, is right.

Across the realms of theology, philosophy, science, psychology, sociology, the arts, literature, the mass-media, government, education, communal and family life, and personal morality, the words of Jeremiah are writ large:

“Lo they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?” (Jeremiah 8:9).

3. The religion of contemporary society both inside most of the professing churches and outside their influence is humanism. Biblical Christianity is being pushed from every section of life. Man is the ultimate standard by which all must be measured. It is man who sits in judgment on all questions of religion and morals. If you believe in absolute standards and cherish strong convictions you are condemned as a bigot. According to the standards of contemporary society all the creeds are equally grand, but none is absolutely true. Ecclesiastical leaders speak of our Protestant-Catholic-Jewish heritage.

Ecumenicism, which is as dangerous an “ism” as ever reared its head in this world, is the natural offspring of the ethos of contemporary society. Once the antithesis of TRUTH v. ERROR is abandoned, dialogue, accommodation, and compromise are quite logical.

When we enter the realm of so-called “religious experience”, the influence of the mentality of the “leap of faith” theology is widespread. Zen Buddhism and the cult of transcendental meditation are becoming popular, because in the lower storey of the rational and logical people can see nothing but meaningless and purposelessness. Rationalism has failed to find a meaning and purpose in life, and so there must be a flight from reason into the upper-storey of mystical experience. This partly explains the popularity of LSD and its family of hallucogenic drugs. It is a characteristic of these drugs that they create a heightened self-awareness and a mystical sensation. The aim is to detach oneself from reality and commune with the beyond. One professor has claimed that by going on a “trip” under the influence of a drug one could enjoy a conversion like the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. At Boston University divinity students “tuned in” to deeper meditation on “Good Friday” with the aid of the “sacrament”—LSD. This flight from rational control is a feature of contemporary society.

The ethos of contemporary society makes itself evident in the realm of politics. The Executive and the Legislature do not concern themselves with the law of God. Why should they, if there are no such things as absolutes? It is the politics of consensus now. It is not “What saith the Lord?” but “What does man desire?” The aims of contemporary politics could be expressed thus: let us appeal to man’s covetous and self-indulgent spirit and let us create opportunities for shameless and God-dishonouring self-indulgence with legislation like the Sunday Entertainments Bill, Divorce Law, Abortion Law, Sexual Offences Law and the abolition of capital punishment. There is now a movement afoot to amend or repeal the Obscene Publications Act; the result would be licence to publish and sell pornography. Two statements made on radio by Mr Bryan Forbes, film producer and director, are revealing. He was discussing with others, one of whom was Mr Malcolm Muggeridge, the subject

of censorship. If censorship were removed, Mr Forbes maintained, “human nature being what it is, we should get nothing but boring and unadulterated filth.” This sounds rather obvious to us, but his other comment was alarming, especially when it came from such an authentic source: “There is a conspiracy to exploit the basest instincts of human nature.” Satan does not lack human agents in the prosecution of one of his stock activities.

In the **Cult of Softness** by Lunn & Lean, the authors maintain “that there is today a brilliant, concerted and partially successful attempt to take over the mind and culture of the country for secularism.” Within the ambit of this conspiracy are universities and schools. A Christian student or a student with a Christian background can be prepared on coming to a University for an all-out attempt to wipe his mind clean of inherited ideas and implant within it the idea that there are no absolutes. In textbooks, in educational radio and TV programmes evolution is presented “as it happened”. Charts and illustrations of life’s progress over millions of years are shown. This, despite the fact that it is a travesty of the scientific method, besides being morally indefensible, to delude students into believing that evolution is a demonstrated fact or even a secure hypothesis.

The form and content of religious education in schools is a matter of grave concern to all who have the moral and spiritual welfare of the young at heart. Pupils learn that “values” are important for life, but also that no way exists of knowing which values. The absolute values of God’s Word are largely ignored.

In the field of literature and the arts, to quote Mr Quintin Hogg, “our country is being destroyed before our eyes by intellectuals without faith.” John Calder, the publisher, is inspired by an avowed urge “to break through the British public’s backward puritanical attitude to sex.” Alexander Trocchi, author of **Cain’s Book**, a Calder publication on drug-taking, said in Edinburgh in 1963, “In

the days of Charles II there was right, wrong and God. Now that we are not sure what's right and what's wrong, it's dangerous to limit forms of expression. We must allow all manner of opinions to go into the atmosphere for children." In 1962 the Writers' Conference in Edinburgh was preoccupied with homosexuality and drug-taking. At the Edinburgh Drama Conference of 1963 the monarchy, patriotism, moral values, law and order and religion were attacked. Also in Edinburgh, in 1964, Miss Joan Littlewood, Artistic Director of the Theatre Workshop, told the Press, "We believe we are breaking through the Puritanism of the world, leaving pre-history. The theatre can be a marvellous world, since God is dead, and religion is dead." Lord Harewood, onetime Director of the Edinburgh Festival, stated in the "Daily Record" of 28th August, 1963: "My greatest enemy is still that old Presbyterian, John Knox."

Contemporary society also has its sacred cow—science, and the cultural myth of our age is "evolution". This is not believed and taught as a fact because there is evidence for it, but because the humanistic religion of our society needs it. If there is a transcendent God Who is Creator and Lawgiver, the whole fabric of humanism collapses. Such a God must be excluded so that man can be autonomous and free. One need only read extracts from the papers and discussions in the official record—**Man and his Future**—of the conference sponsored by the C.I.B.A. Foundation in London, to be alarmed by the trend of scientific thought:

Sir Julian Huxley: "Genetic improvement should be brought about by multiple artificial insemination by preferred donors of high genetic quality."

Dr G. Pincus: "This could be done by the Government's putting a chemical in our food or water which made everybody sterile, and then providing a second chemical capable of reversing the effect of the first for those whom it licensed to bear children."

Professor Bronowski: “My values come from as objective and definitive a source as any god, namely the nature of the human being.”

Notice how unmistakably clear the spirit of the permissive society is among these intellectual giants of the scientific world—the abolition of an objective or absolute morality and the setting up of a variable morality where the reference point is some supposed good to human society.

A prominent feature of contemporary society is what has been called the cult of softness, one of the forms of permissiveness. In their introduction to the book of this title the authors write: “The great periods in a nation’s history, the age of Elizabeth and the Victorian age in our own, are always distinguished by the uncritical acceptance, at least by the ruling class, of an exacting code, the validity of which is unquestioned even by those who fail to practise what they might be ready to preach.” They go on to state: “In our country, the cult of softness has certainly been responsible for a weakening of the moral fibre not only in sex but also in the erosion of Christian dogma, in education, art and letters, in the increasing tendency to side with the criminal against the police, and in the repudiation of personal responsibility.” Many of the men dedicated to the secularizing of our society and to the elimination of all effective Christian influence are entrenched in influential positions in publishing, broadcasting and centres of learning.

Dr Leach dismisses the value of the family; Dr James Henning and his like advocate promiscuity. Dr Alex. Comfort in a television broadcast stated, “A chivalrous boy is one who takes contraceptives with him when he goes to meet his girl friend.” In his book, *Sex in Society*, he states, “It is highly probable that adultery today maintains more marriages than it destroys.”

The cult of softness is most evident in the current attitude to crime. The Bishop of Southwark could tell the House of Lords that

“most of those in prison were there because society or their families had failed them,” and the ex-Bishop of Woolwich described suicide as “a sin of society against the individual rather than the sin of the individual against society.” Yet within 20 years of the end of the Second World War burglaries had increased by over 250%, crimes against women by over 400% and crimes of violence by over 500%.

The breakdown of discipline defaces our society and is one of the symptoms of permissiveness. Mr Donald Hughes, the Headmaster of Rydal School, summed up the state of affairs prevailing in the educational sphere as follows: “It is not our job to tell the young what to do, but to give them their heads, to leave them free from directions and stand by to pick up the pieces.” After the pitched battle between Mods and Rockers at Clacton, in March, 1964, Mr Donald MacLachlan asked, “Are we certain that our schools have the right basic theory of education and discipline? For forty years now the reaction has been going on against hard learning, strictness in class, deterrent punishments, and the role of fear and habit in character formation. Perhaps the strongest grievance that teenagers will have against us may be a feeling that we did not give them the secret of the self-control we expect of them, and that we did not give them firm purposes in life.”

It is among the young in particular that we see the fruits of the philosophy of meaninglessness and the denial of absolutes. The mess the world is in, the mess society is in, the apparent purposelessness of the life of the individual drive many to take refuge in a fantasy world. They are assured by persuaders on every hand, “Sex satisfies; sex is the way to fulfilment.” Another form of escapism is drug-taking, which is assuming alarming proportions. “Pop” music provides yet another avenue by which the young can escape into the world of the erotic and fantastic. Further, if there are no absolutes, conventions and deference to properly constituted authority must go. Extremism,

whether it be in behaviour or in dress, is symptomatic of the cancer of permissiveness.

Deterioration of standards such as I have mentioned has had a powerful impetus from the broadcasting media—television and radio; and the spirit of this decadent age is not only interpreted but sedulously promoted by them. Blasphemy, sex and violence characterise many of their productions, and in their discussion programmes exponents of the new morality frequently have pride of place. One newspaper comment on the dramatic productions which followed the inauguration of BBC 2 will suffice: “The final casualty list in Ken Taylor’s trilogy on man and belief for BBC 2, **The Seekers**, was one bayoneting, one crushing under a jackboot, one beard set on fire, one suicide by intravenous injection, one rape, one flogging, and six brandings with a cruciform iron.”

The secularising, humanistic campaign, however, is not confined to the world outside the Church. It is believed by many that the power-house of the new morality in the Church of England has been for some time in the diocese of Southwark. Here worked the notorious ex-Bishop of Woolwich and Canon Rhymes. Lord Shawcross summed up the campaign as follows; “You may be as puzzled as I am about these exhibitionist intellectuals, these psychiatrists in a small way of business, these publicity-minded clerics who talk about the new morality. There is no such thing: this so-called new morality is too often the old immorality condoned. The great principles of good or evil, kindness or cruelty, generosity or selfishness, love or lust, do not change because some confused bishop writes a book about it.”

Private and public morality, the Lord’s Day, marriage, family life—all are victims of the denial of absolutes. The fruit in human misery is bitter: venereal disease is out-stripping all the modern drugs mobilized against it; sexual offences and crimes of violence are commonplace; mental illness is endemic in our society. Three

quarters of a million young people in England at any one time are the children of broken homes; and from their number something like eighty per cent of criminal offences come. We have the highest crime rate in our history; among the under twenties it doubled in nine years; prisons are grossly overcrowded. The following figures are six years old, but they are relevant: 55,000 babies a year born to unmarried mothers in Britain; one third of all first babies were conceived out of wedlock.

Statistics could be multiplied, and they would all bear testimony to the degenerate state of the society in which we live. To our shame our society is mirrored in the Epistle to the Romans, Chapter 1, and in the 2nd Epistle to Timothy, Chapter 3.

4. Having surveyed the contemporary scene, the Christian is not just to raise his hands in pious horror and retire from the battle-field into the cosy security of his own or his church's private citadel. This brings us to the final section of the paper, in which the question is posed: how should the Christian be exercised and what should his response be with regard to the society in which he lives and works? As this is the practical aspect which should concern and engage this conference, I shall confine myself to the enunciation of a number of guiding principles.

Every Christian should feel the solemn responsibilities placed upon him by the Saviour in the words, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16), and in the words, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32 and 33). The injunctions in the Epistle to the Romans, Chapter 12, verse 2: "And be not conformed to the world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may

prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”; and in 1st Peter, Chapter 3, verse 5: “And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”, are no less solemn as obligations on the Christian in the world. There is, in fact, a wealth of precept and example in the Bible relevant to the attitude of the Christian to the society in which he has his lot. The great pattern is, of course, the walk, life and conversation of the Master Himself. The prescription which follows is intended to be a practical application of the light which the Bible casts on the duties of the Christian in contemporary society.

Three considerations present themselves here:

- (i) What the Christian must avoid.
 - (ii) The ways in which the Christian must be equipped in order that he may be an effective witness on the side of Christ.
 - (iii) Positive duties incumbent upon the Christian.
- (i) Although the Christian is not to be conformed to the world he has no warrant to justify his being deliberately odd or eccentric. It was to the Roman Catholic saint that spirituality supposedly came by deliberate withdrawal to holy ground in the monastery or in the church. The Saviour was unworldly, but He moved amongst men, so much so that He was accused by His enemies of being “a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber.” Christians must not engage in moral or spiritual affectation.

Further, the criterion of the world is self-interest, and the Christian must beware of conforming to this brand of worldliness, that is, being concerned exclusively with his own immediate ecclesiastical circle and ignoring the perishing millions outside.

There must, however, be no compromising with modernistic

evangelism which seeks “to make the gospel relevant to the age in which we live.” The gimmickry, the mania for tabulated results, the false charity of ecumenicism must be shunned like the plague. The Christian must also shun the “social gospel”, which applies to the generality of sinners the words of Christ to His disciples, as if there were no need for personal repentance and forgiveness.

Nevertheless, in seeking to adhere to the old paths, the Christian must avoid the pitfalls of superstitious and idolatrous traditionalism.

Finally (in his relations with, and attitude to, his fellow-sinners) he must never lose sight of the claims of God’s glory.

(ii) In seeking to be equipped to be a living witness, the Christian must live a life of much prayer and personal holiness. He must live the faith he professes. Fighting the good fight of faith requires the whole armour of God. The Saviour’s words, “Without me ye can do nothing,” must be one of the watchwords of the Christian’s life.

He must, moreover, attain to that knowledge which is needed to communicate the gospel. A clear and intelligent grasp of “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” is indispensable. A heavy weight rests on the shoulders of the educated Christian, and the importance of a teaching ministry cannot be too strongly emphasised.

There is also a lack of Christians who understand the broad sweep of the contemporary intellectual climate. The Christian is duty bound to seek to attain to a clear and thorough understanding of contemporary society—its thinking and its trends.

(iii) However circumscribed his opportunities, the Christian must in word and life be a witness for Christ. The defence of the faith is essential. Sects, cults, heresies and specific declensions must be understood and exposed. Young people, in particular, must be instructed and prepared for facing the monolithic culture

of contemporary society by being taught the source and nature of attacks on the faith in our generation.

The Holy Spirit is sovereign, but the Bible does not separate His work from knowledge; nor does the prerogative of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners relieve us of our responsibilities as parents, pastors, missionaries or teachers, or, indeed, as citizens in our own communities. The human side to evangelism in the spoken word and in the dissemination of the Scriptures and Christian literature is absolutely vital.

Moreover, if we wish to communicate the gospel, we have a duty to learn our hearers' or readers' use of language, so that they understand what we mean to convey. Further, we must treat them as rational beings, for true faith is not a vague thing which replaces understanding. The Christian's part is to present the claims of God in law and gospel as intelligently and intelligibly as possible and wait for the blessing.

There is one pitfall in particular that the Christian must beware of in the communication of the gospel, and that is an exclusive appeal to experience. An inward personal experience there must be, but when religious consciousness becomes the central part of our teaching doctrines recede into the background. Furthermore, this plays into the hands of the new theology which lays so much stress on faith as a kind of magic wand and on comfortable feelings dependent on some kind of experience. In any case, an experience can be physiological, psychological, theological, or even demonic. Religious experiences not subject to testing can, and are, used, as one put it, "to prove anything from Zen Buddhism to Mormonism". Two of the pillars of the Christian faith are the veracity of God's actions in history and the reliability of God's Word in the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. These must not be relegated to a position of relative unimportance. We all know that experience is essential in personal verification, but it cannot stand alone.

With regard to the responsibility of the Christian in the society in which he lives and works two quotations from **The Christian in Industrial Society** will suffice to indicate principles of conduct:

- (a) "The voice of Christians should be heard in political matters, and they should influence legislation."
- (b) "The Christian must be concerned that, as far as he is able to accomplish it, righteousness shall prevail in those spheres in which he is involved, whether it is a school, faculty, local community, a business, a hospital, or what you will. To leave our fellows to secularism or humanism would be a complete abdication of our responsibility as Christian citizens."

The absolute necessity for importunity in prayer, and our absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit, have, I trust, been implicit and explicit in what has been said in this paper. I have, however, reserved to the end the words of Rev. Thomas Boston, who, in the closing passage of a sermon, so eloquently sums up the duty of Christians with regard to these great indispensables:

"Yet despair not of the reformation of the land or of particular persons, but pray, pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. O wrestle with God and lift up a cry for it. That is a sovereign remedy that would cure all our diseases at once. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.' The work of reformation hath long been like corn in a great drought, yellow at the root; a shower of the Spirit would make all green again, and grow fast. As much as we are divided this would unite us. As bold-faced as wickedness and profanity are, this would stop their mouths. As little good as the gospel does, this would make convincing, converting, and confirming work more frequent, and give ministers of the

gospel as much to do with broken hearts, as they have now with hard and impenitent ones. As great lifelessness and untenderness as are among ministers and people, this would purify the sons of Levi, and make the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem pleasant to the Lord as in former years. It would restore our judges as at the first, and our counsellors as at the beginning; and make nobles and gentry cease from building of Babel, and pulling down of the church and of religion; put holiness to the Lord on the bells of their horses, and willingly set their shoulder to the work of the Lord, O! pray, pray for this. And let not your hopelessness and uncharitableness, as to any ranks of people in the Land, whether because of their profanity, apostacy, formality, deadness, enmity to religion and hurtfulness to the church, shuffle them out of your prayers for good. But cry mightily for the outpouring of the Spirit that the whole land may mourn.”

THE SAVING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“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 first-born.”

—Zechariah 12:10.

The Spirit of grace and of supplications is in Himself incomprehensible, and the only way in which we can arrive at a knowledge of His character, is by studying the works which He accomplishes. We accordingly set before you in our last discourse, some illustrations of His work as the Spirit of grace: and showed, first, that the outward call of the gospel, and, secondly, that the inward and effectual call, are given by Him in this capacity. I endeavoured to show that in this work, as indeed in His whole work, He proceeds upon the redemption of Christ, which constitutes the foundation of all the favourable intercourse which God now holds with sinners of this world. “Grace reigns *through righteousness* unto eternal life by Jesus Christ.”

I stated that the Spirit of grace actually visits and enters the dead and polluted soul, for the purpose of bringing about the design for which He is sent of the Son from the Father. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

We now go on, leaning on the arm of omnipotent grace, to inquire into the work which in this visit to the soul He executes. And certainly, the *first* thing which claims our notice, because essential to all the rest, is the communication of a new nature. We sometimes speak of it as the implantation of a new principle, and this unquestionably is true. But when it is recollected that this principle extends to all the faculties and affections of the soul, and takes the chief, and in due time the entire control of the whole, it must be plain that the nature of the man is not only improved, but is essentially different from what it was. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

We do not dwell on the peculiar character of this new nature; suffice it to say, it is the gift of the love of God. "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." It is the fruit of the death of Christ. "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." It is the immediate production of the Holy Ghost; "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." It is not the effect of a change of sentiment, but the cause of any change that is radical: it is not the consequence of human efforts, but is the production of divine power: it is not the result of a gradual improvement brought about by the use of means, but the instantaneous work of the Spirit of grace; and instead of other steps in religion being necessary to it, it is indispensably necessary to every other: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." But beware, I entreat you, of saying that therefore you must keep your *eye* steadily fixed upon your own hearts, till you see the dawns of light, and then

look to the Saviour and seek salvation, and serve God and glorify Him. That were as foolish as if the Israelites had said they would look to the wounds of the fiery serpents till they saw them beginning to heal, and then look at the serpent of brass which had been erected by Moses for their cure. The command is given, and observe, it is given to all, and given to all as blind, and guilty, and helpless, to look to Christ that they might be saved; and the first decisive and satisfactory evidence of a change of heart is to get a sight of Christ as the Saviour. We may, even before this, have good hope concerning you, that the Spirit of grace has begun to deal with you: but we dare not, as we value the souls of men, and tender the glory of God, we dare not say, that any man is born of the Spirit, in other words, truly converted, till he sees Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:" or reverse it, If any man be a new creature he is in Christ Jesus. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

2. The *second* step in the work of the Spirit of grace on the soul, is the conviction of sin. And here we see the necessity of a new and spiritual nature; for the old carnal nature is not susceptible of genuine spiritual impressions, any more than a stone is fit to receive the impress of a seal. A man indeed may have very strong convictions, and dreadful fears, and deep anxieties, and yet perish: but that is because they are all the result of men's natural feelings. And thus Felix trembled, as Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," but said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

In explaining the nature of spiritual convictions, I observe—

1st. That the Spirit of grace gives to the soul a discovery of the true God, in the person of the Father. My friends, this lies at the foundation of every solid conviction, and if we are without it, we cannot have any other of its elements. The children of men are by nature practical atheists, and this is far worse than by speculation

to be so: for, in the latter case there is the opinion, in the former there is the wish, that there were no God. I know this is a very harsh doctrine to the ears of many; and rather than submit to it, they will rush against the thick bosses of God's buckler, and will with Heaven-daring insolence, call Him a liar. But the charge stands recorded in this Book against every child of Adam, and all the arguments and rage of sinners cannot expunge it. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." I daresay you will reply that you have always believed that there is a God; and not only so, you have also worshipped Him as well as you could. And I am ready to admit this; but who is the God you have worshipped? Not the Father the only true God; but an idol of your own imagination, He is called by the same name, but oh, how different! The god you worship is blind; he does not see your hearts, else you would be miserable: he is dumb and does not rebuke you for your iniquities, else you would be confounded and ashamed: he is deaf, and does not hear your vain talk, your worthless prayers, else you would tremble: he is altogether like yourselves, and you like him just as much as you like yourselves. "They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

And do what you will, heap up notions like the sand on the seashore, and labour in your minds till you are wearied, never will you form the idea of anything but an idol till you are converted: for your understandings are full of darkness, there is no light in you; your hearts are full of uncleanness, there is no purity in you; your souls are full of wickedness, there is no righteousness in you. And what can you make out of such materials but an object that is dark, and filthy, and abominable? But when by the Spirit of grace you get a new heart, and have from Him divine light poured into it, then

you will discover the true God; and the first feeling you will have is, I never saw Him before: I have been truly without God in the world: I have never known Him, never feared Him, nor served Him: Woe is me, for I am undone!

Now try, you that profess to be awakened, try if your convictions will bear this test. People may have some sense of sin, and fear of wrath, and desire of safety, and yet be “sensual, not having the Spirit.” And it matters not what they have, nor how they feel, if they are not awakened to a discovery of God, as heretofore an unknown, a lost God. Nor is it a simple discovery of His Being that will do. His glory is inseparable from Himself; indeed it is just Himself: and men may as well talk about seeing the sun without seeing his light, as seeing God without seeing His glory. We must not enter into detail, and therefore merely remark, that the soul, in saving convictions, has an apprehension of God as infinitely holy and just: that is, in His nature, essentially opposed to sin, and necessarily and immutably set upon its punishment. He that dreams of God’s winking at sin, or not visiting it, either in the sinner himself or a surety, with condign punishment, hath not seen God, neither known Him. I do not ask, Is your view of divine glory clear? It may be very dim. I do not ask, Is it abiding? It may come and go; and yet even when it goes, it will leave some trace behind it, if not in the way of giving light, at least in the way of aggravating the sense of darkness. I ask, brethren, Do you know by experience anything of what I have said? If not, you are fast asleep in the deep dungeons of atheism: and in the threatened storm of divine wrath, I would come to you, as the sailors went down to Jonah, and cry, “What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon you, that you perish not.”

The effect of this discovery is to convince the man that it is against God he has sinned, that it is His glory he hath assailed, His justice he has offended. In their natural state, men do admit they

have sinned against God: but compare that with the admission that they have stolen, or lied, or murdered: in the latter case they are ashamed and downcast; in the former they are as much at their ease as if they were paying a compliment. Oh the brutal stupidity, the whole-hearted levity of sinners! This comes of their living and walking in the dark, far from His soul-piercing and heart-searching light. But let them be brought into it, and then levity is at an end: they stand before One clothed in awful majesty, and they feel it is no time to trifle now. My friends, we speak of convictions, and fears, and cries: were the God of glory now to show himself to sinners, and cause sinners to see themselves in His light, this place might be called Bochim, a house of weeping; and we should have to say with Jacob at Bethel, "How dreadful is this place!"—"Surely the Lord is in this place,—this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." We have people amongst us that can offend against their brethren, and yet think it is with their brethren only they have to do: who get into trouble and are impatient under it, and imagine it is them or others they have to blame: who hear sermons, and think it is with the preacher, his matter and manner, they have to do. These are some of the forms of practical atheism. But let God appear and maintain His cause, sitting on His throne of righteousness, and you forget creatures, and cry with the psalmist, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

2nd. In convincing of sin, the Spirit of grace opens up and applies the law of God to the conscience. In their natural state, men are ignorant of the law of God, and are indifferent to its requirements, and reckless of its denunciations. And yet, with an effrontery which is only matched by their blindness, they will tell you that they keep it as far as in them lies, at the very time they are unable to say what it commands. What would you that are parents or masters think of the child or servant who should say, I go your messages, while he did

not know what your messages were? Now, that is the sort of service which God gets the hand of all unconverted men, that are not open and avowed profligates, and in their case the only difference is that they betray, the others conceal, what they are and what they do. In proof that natural men are ignorant of the law, they will own they have broken some of the commandments, but have kept others. And they are ignorant of the sin of their hearts, in which they have violated every precept of the law; and they are ignorant of the principle, that he who offends in one point is guilty of all. But the Spirit of grace breaks in upon this darkness, and lets men see the law, and their sin by the law: "For by the law is knowledge of sin."

(1st.) He show's them the purity of the law. And how can it be other than pure, since it is an expression of His will, "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?" It strictly prohibits every, the least departure from conformity to the image of God, opposition to the will of God, or neglect of the honour of God ; and frowns upon every vain imagination, every wandering desire, every foolish word, every unholy action. I know carnal hearts will rise against this doctrine; and you will say it is impossible for any man to be so pure as this. And what of that? Is the purity of the law to be given up because you are corrupt? How would you like it were one of your debtors to say, It is hard to demand payment of your debt because I am so poor? But say as you will against the law, it maintains its hold of you, and its purity you will feel if ever the Spirit of grace visit you; and if not, the fire of judgment will declare it: "The law is holy and just."

(2nd.) He shows them the spirituality of the law. Men are very ready to think well of themselves if they maintain outward sobriety and decency: they know not, nor consider, that they may be but whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly. The apostle Paul, while a Pharisee, was most exemplary in his outward conduct: "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless."

But when the commandment came, sin revived in him, and he died; and he who, like other Pharisees, thanked God he was not like other men, now knew no publican so bad, and therefore he called himself “the chief of sinners.” The Spirit of grace so shows the spirituality of the law, as extending to the constitution of our nature, the inward frame of our souls, the dispositions, desires, and motions of our hearts, that the man discovers there is not one of the commandments but he has broken; he sees he is an atheist, an idolater, a blasphemer, a Sabbath-breaker, unfaithful to relative duties, guilty of murder, adultery, theft, false witness, covetousness; and that he has never rendered to the law one act of true obedience: “I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”

(3rd.) The Spirit of grace shows them the perfection of the law. We may press the law closely upon men; they get off by saying they will do what they can, and what more can be done? But know, O sinners, that the law is perfect, and cannot be altered to suit your humour. If, therefore, you have not a perfectly sinless nature, a perfectly pure heart, a perfectly spotless life; if there has been but one vain thought, one loose desire, one sinful word, one unrighteous deed, you are offenders; and, observe, offenders against the whole law. If you have been angry without a cause, then the guilt of atheism, idolatry, &c., lies upon you: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” And the reason is, that one act of transgression shows a contempt for the law, and in that lies the essence of sin, for “sin is the transgression of the law.”

By this means, a mirror is held up to the conscience, in which a man sees himself. And oh, what a hideous sight! My friends, it is well for us that the Lord mixes mercy with judgment in this, and in every other matter in the present state, else we could not live. People have cried out at the sight of their sin, and why should you

wonder? If you saw a viper on your arm, if you felt it in your bosom, if its poison were diffused through your veins, would you not fear and tremble? But what are all the serpents that creep on the face of the earth, to sin? I know many of you are quite at your ease though you live in sin, though it breathes in every breath, speaks in every word, moves in every step, and works in every action. But your eyes are bolden that you do not see it. I am accused of over-severity, of needless earnestness, of rank enthusiasm, because I preach in such strains; but oh! dear brethren, I am very blind myself to the evil of sin, else I would show you more of its deformity. I am very little affected with its monstrous nature, else I would warn and beseech you with many tears; I can comprehend but little of its sad consequences, else would I be yet more earnest and importunate. But I trust I know enough to know that if you do not see your sin and flee from it, you will inevitably perish; and perish all the more miserably because of these warnings you have received. And if you once see your sin by the Spirit of grace, in the light of the divine law, you will say, The half was not told me, for sin is exceeding sinful.

But there is more than this which the Spirit of grace shows. The law which He opens up sheds a light upon the path of life, and clearly shows that it has been one unbroken chain of forgetfulness of God, and rebellion against Him ; but it also pours its searching light into the deep den of iniquity that lurks in the heart, and leads to the conviction that sinful as is the man's life, and aggravated as his sin is, by the fact that it has all proceeded from the heart, yet it is as nothing compared with what is in the heart itself. We hear of people that have good hearts, kind affections, and amiable dispositions: let the most amiable person, man, woman, or child, in this assembly, be brought out into the midst of us, and what saith the God of truth of his or her heart? "It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And wherein lies its deceitfulness?

It will practically deny and disown God, and withhold from Him all which He requires, and yet will puff up the soul with the idea that it fails only in a few insignificant particulars. And wherein lies its wickedness? It is bitterly, and determinedly, and irreconcilably set against God, in His being, and government, and law, and grace; and no power in heaven or earth can reconcile that heart to God: it must be consigned to destruction, and a new heart communicated, “for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man.”

The Spirit of grace further leads a man to the conviction of his apostasy from God, in the person of his first parent Adam. In some cases, He begins the work of conviction at this point, in others, He leads to it through the corrupt stream that flows from it; but in all, it forms an essential part of His saving work. I am aware that here too I enter ground which proud and rebellious sinners cannot endure. The tongue cannot tell what iniquity has been committed by men, in opposing this part of the divine economy; for it is hardly possible for a man to submit to the first covenant in real earnest, who has not some subduing view of the glory of the sovereignty of God, in doing what pleases Him in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. For into that it must be resolved, that we were in covenant represented by Adam, and that consequently we sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression. Now it is not enough that men obey the law, and keep their hearts clean; they must, before they can be justified, undo what Adam did, or get themselves severed from their connection with him; but, by their efforts, either of these is impossible; and therefore, so long as they are under the first covenant, they must be held as sinners, and dealt with accordingly, “for by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.”

3rd. In convincing of sin, the Spirit of grace applies with power

the claims of the gospel of Christ. The remark I now make, applies especially to those who from their earliest years, have been under a gospel ministry, and, it may be, have professedly united themselves to the visible church of Christ; for the Spirit of grace deals with men according to the situation in which He finds them, and the sin of which they have been guilty. Now when He visits unconverted men with His grace, He finds them unbelievers, that is, persons who have refused to obey the command of God to believe on His Son, and who are therefore held guilty of the heinous iniquity involved in this offence. I know that to natural men it is a very light matter to be an unbeliever, even when we can get them to confess it. But this is very difficult, for they will insist on it that they never belonged to that base class of character. I have just to tell you, my friends, that if you never were unbelievers, you are not believers; if you never rejected Christ, you have never received Him; if you never made God a liar, you make Him that to this hour. Do you ask my proof of all this? It is at hand and very abundant. "Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." "He will reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me." "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

But oh, how light you make of this charge! Were an officer of justice to come into this church, and lay his hand upon any of you and say, I arrest you as guilty of high treason, you would turn pale and tremble; but you are charged with treason against the King of kings, and you are not in the least moved. Were he to arrest you for an act of daring robbery, you would blush and be ashamed; but you are charged with robbing God of His glory, and you do not tremble. Were he to arrest you as a murderer, you would not know where to look; but you are charged with the murder of the Son of God, and yet you are not abashed. And why is this? Is it because you are innocent? No: but because you are blind to your sin, and insensible of your

state. But let the Spirit of grace visit you, and, like not a few that are around you, you too will be convinced that you are unbelievers; and that the boldest infidel is not so guilty as you are; for, like the Jews, you have been the betrayers and the murderers of the Prince of Peace.

APPLICATION

1. Let me address you, dear brethren, who know and feel the truth of what has now been said; but who also know by experience the sufficiency of the remedy that is provided in the gospel of Christ. You do not require to go back to your first turning to the Lord, for evidence that all I have said of your natural character and state is true. For is not your daily experience just a repetition of the lesson you were then taught—and a repetition often attended with greater difficulties, and productive of deeper bitterness, than what you then experienced? The apostle Peter doubtless felt that he was undone when Christ called him; but how much more lively was his sense of this fact when he fell so foully, and when he went out and wept bitterly? Let it not surprise you, then, that you are made to possess the sins of your youth; that the ungodliness of your heart sometimes prevails to a fearful extent; and that what between corruptions from within and temptations from without, you are ready to say, “There is only a step between me and death.” The design of all this trouble is, to bring out to view more clearly and more fully, the glory of Christ as the Saviour; and to try of what nature is the faith which you profess to have in Him. The honour of His name requires, and your safety is bound up in the same bundle, that you doubt not of His sufficiency to bring you through all the troubles that may assail. It was dishonouring to Christ that the disciples cried out, “Master, save us, we perish but the cause of it was, that their eye was fixed on the waves, and turned away from Christ. And just so you look to the

dark tempest that rages within, and say in despondency, We sink. But oh! Look to Christ, look to Him from forth the thickest clouds, and keep your minds at the question, Is He not more in might by far than the noise of great waters? And dwelling on His sufficiency, you may find it as an anchor to your soul, both sure and steadfast.

2. We are anticipating the views which must come before us next Sabbath, if the Lord permit; yet we dare not send you away with the notes of alarm that have been sounded in your ears, without proclaiming the joyful sound of Christ's gloriously full and free salvation. And we do this at present, especially for your sakes who have been awakened from your sleep in sin. But I must clear away an objection which some may prefer: Our convictions are not deep enough, and therefore it is not for us to receive Christ. My friends, that is to say your wounds are not deadly enough, and therefore you will not apply to the Physician. Is not sin in its very nature mortal, and why then delay till more of its deadly poison has got into your system? To cut the matter short, however, though your convictions were as deep as the sea, you have precisely the same warrant to come to Christ with those that have no convictions at all. It is not having convictions that warrants, nor the want of them that does not warrant. It is the offer of Christ in the gospel to sinners, that is the warrant. We are glad you are convinced; because we can come to our work at once of proposing, and commending, and pressing Christ; and do not need to stand proving that you need Him, and what is still worse, that you do not have Him. It is your concern that you have Him not; it is your felt sin that you do not believe in Him; it is your fear that you may never get Him. But why this fear? You will tell me of something you have done, or something you are, or something you feel. Now, I do not wonder that you get fears from that quarter. It would be a bad symptom if you got anything else. And I trust that so long as you look in that direction your fears will increase, and your distress get worse and worse: just as Lot if he looked to Sodom

saw nothing but cause of anguish and dismay. But look to Christ, and see if you can find in Him any ground for despondency or fear. Be it that you are deeply in debt, and have nothing to pay:—He has unsearchable riches and righteousness. Be it that you are absolutely lawless:—He is the end of the law for righteousness. Be it that you have crucified Him by your sin:—His blood cleanseth from all sin. And then He says to you, “Come unto me.” But you will say, Oh! there is the point, this heart is so hard it will not move. And do you cry to God to move it; yea, to take it away and give you an heart of flesh. Let that be your employment while hearing of Christ; and you may find the truth of His Word, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

Rev. J. R. Anderson

This sermon is the third in a series of seven discourses preached by Mr. Anderson during a season of remarkable revival in his congregation. It is on record that under their delivery, there was a copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit: many were brought under a work of conviction, which issued in their saving conversion to God and His Christ.

It is deeply lamented that revival work, such as was granted at that time to several parts of Scotland, has been, for many years, withheld to a large extent from this land; and that errors and delusions manifold abound, giving cause of sighing and crying to God’s faithful people scattered abroad.

But it will not always be so. God will remember Zion in her low and desolate condition; and there is a day approaching, when His truth shall be mighty and prevail. In the faith of the fulfilment in due time of the Lord’s gracious promises for the coming of that day, these sermons are now given to the public, with the prayer that the Lord will revive His work in the midst of the years, and in wrath remember mercy. (Extract from introduction to the first edition.)

The Rev. Jonathan Ranken Anderson has been described as a theologian of much eminence, who firmly held the doctrines and principles of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland. Mr. Anderson passed away to be for ever with the Lord, on the 10th day of January 1859 at the age of fifty-six years.

“And let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen”—Psalm 72:19.

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

1. An Ecumenical Bible

Do you know?

1. That the New English Bible is an ecumenical Bible produced by denominations which are in the World Council of Churches.
2. That Professor C. H. Dodd, the Director of the New English Bible, is an infidel. Professor Dodd says:—“Moses has left us no writings and we know little of him with certainty. Tradition calls him Moses, and so may we”. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “Moses wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5, 47).
3. That the translators were modernists, none of them accepting the Bible as God’s Word, inspired, infallible and inerrant.
4. That it is praised by the Church of Rome. Father Thomas Corbishley, S.J., a noted Jesuit in London, said, “It could be a most useful instrument in the business of promoting unity between Christians.”

5. That it includes the Apocrypha. The Westminster Confession of Faith states: "The Books commonly called the Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of Scripture; and are therefore of no authority in the Church of God" etc. The Church of Rome holds the Apocrypha to be canonical Scripture. The books of the Apocrypha were never accepted by the Jewish Church, and "to them were committed the oracles of God." (Rom. 3:2).
6. That Matthew 16:18 is translated "You are Peter, the Rock, and on this rock I will build my Church". This translation upholds the Romish view that Peter is the rock upon which the church was built.

2. An Heretical Bible

Do you know?

1. That it denies the *Eternal Sonship of Christ*. The Greek *Monogenes* (only begotten) is now reduced to "only". (John 1:14; 3:16; etc.). The case for this important alteration, writes the Rev. Terence Brown, is unscriptural, illogical, fallacious and untenable, and the diluted rendering calls into question the fundamental doctrine of the eternal generation and sonship of our Lord.
2. That it casts grave doubts on the *Virgin Birth of Christ*. Jeremiah 31:22 is translated:—"How long will you twist and turn, my wayward child? For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth; a woman turned into a man." Isaiah 7:14 is translated: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; A young *woman* (instead of virgin)

is with child and she shall bear a son and will call him Immanuel.”

3. That the seventy Hebrew scholars, who were all Hebrews by birth, translated the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek (the Septuagint). Everyone of them agreed that the correct translation of Isaiah 7:14 is “Behold a *virgin* shall conceive and bare a son ...”
4. Justin Martyr was born in 114 A.D. and his writings show how Christians then understood the verse. In his first Apology and in the Dialogues with Trypho a Jew, he expressly rejects the “young woman” rendering. Irenaeus was born about A.D. 120 and devoted much of his time to exposing heresy. On Isaiah 7:14 he wrote, “For what great thing or what sign should have been in this, that a young woman conceiving by a man should bring forth—a thing which happens to all women who produce offspring? But since an unlooked for salvation was to be provided through the help of God, so also was the unlooked for birth from a virgin accomplished.”
5. The late Professor Dick Wilson of Princeton, a distinguished scholar of international repute, says that the word for virgin, which is “almah” in the Hebrew is found fourteen times in the Old Testament and every time it means a virgin. Modernists of course deny the Virgin Birth of the Saviour.
6. That it contains a mockery of *Christ’s death*. “They pierced my hands and feet” Ps. 22:16 is translated “They have hacked off my hands and my feet”. This is a contradiction of the Scripture, “A bone of him shall not be broken”.

3. A Bible Based on an Unreliable Greek Text

Do you know?

1. That the New English Bible and other modern versions, the Revised Version (1881), the American Standard Version (1901) etc., are from an unreliable Greek Text, in the main based on the Sinai and Vatican Manuscripts, usually known as Codex A and Codex B. These Manuscripts which became available to scholars about 1860, have no valid title to be regarded as the text of the Holy Scriptures. Westcott and Hort based the new Greek Text which they constructed on these Manuscripts. Hort believed that B contained a singularly pure text to which he gave the name 'Neutral' (uncontaminated). This theory of the unique excellence of Codex B was enthusiastically upheld for many years by the followers of Westcott and Hort, especially in Britain and America. "Their treatise on the subject" writes the Rev. Terence Brown the Secretary of the Trinitarian Bible Society, "and their edition of the Greek New Testament exercised a powerful and far-reaching influence, not only on the next generation of students and scholars, but also indirectly upon the minds of millions who have had neither the ability, nor the time, nor the inclination, to submit the theory to a searching examination."
2. That the Sinai and Vatican manuscripts, produced when Arianism prevailed in the church, represent a small family of documents containing various readings which the Church as a whole rejected before the end of the fourth century. Dean Burgon—"That grand scholar" (the tribute paid him by Dr Scriviner) considered these

manuscripts to be the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings and intentional perversions of the text in favour of Arianism¹⁸ which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God.

3. That Westcott and Hort were professors in the latter part of the last century in Trinity College, Cambridge, that in doctrine they favoured the Romanising movement in their church, the 'Larger Hope' (of F. D. Maurice and Dean Farrar), the Darwinian hypothesis and the Old Testament Higher Criticism. These are the Goliaths who produced the Greek Text on which the modern versions or perversions are based.
4. That the unpublished Greek Text of Westcott and Hort upon which they had been working for twenty years was portion by portion secretly committed into the hands of the Revision Committee which produced the Revised Version of 1881.
5. That Dr G. Vance Smith, a Unitarian was a member of the Revision Committee.
6. That Westcott and Hort changed the Textus Receptus, the Greek Text on which the King James or the Authorised Version and all the Versions of the Reformation are based, in 5337 places. Dean Burgon in his classic—the Revision Revised, deals with several hundred omissions and alterations Westcott and Hort made in the Greek Text. In connection with the Revised Version he exclaims, "Shame—yes, shame on the learning, the learning which comes abroad only to

18 The Arian heresy is refuted in the Athanasian Creed.

perplex the weak and to unsettle the doubting, and to mislead the blind! Shame—yes, shame on the two-thirds of well-intentioned, but most incompetent men, who—finding themselves (in an evil hour) appointed to correct ‘plain and obvious errors’ in the Authorised Version—occupied themselves with falsifying the inspired Greek Text in countless places and branding with suspicion some of the most precious utterances of the Spirit. Shame—yes, shame upon them.” For further study see “The King James Version Defended—A Christian View of the New Testament Manuscripts” by Dr E. F. Hills¹⁹ or “The Providential Preservation of the Greek Text of the New Testament.” (See page 1 of this volume.)

4. The Authorised or King James Version

Do you know?

1. 1. That the Old Testament is based on the genuine Hebrew text providentially preserved in the Jewish Church, and the New Testament on the Greek Text providentially preserved in the Greek Church. This Greek Text is called the “Textus Receptus”, the Latin for the “Received Text”. Critics have called it the Byzantine Text, thereby acknowledging that it was

¹⁹ Dr Hills brilliantly defends the Received Text of the New Testament against the Westcott and Hort revision in his latest book, “Believing Bible Study” (220 pages). “The last four chapters deal with the manuscripts, the versions, Dean Burgon’s contention for the Textus Receptus and the superiority of the Authorised Version to the Revisions from 1881 to the present day.” (Bible League Quarterly, Dec. 1970).

the text in use in the Greek Church during the greater part of the Byzantine period (312-1453). It is much better, however, to call this text the ***Traditional Text*** as this is the text which has been handed down by the God-guided tradition of the Church from the time of the apostles unto the present day. It was the text which was made use of by the Protestants everywhere for three hundred years.

2. That the providential preservation of the Scriptures is a necessary consequence of their divine inspiration. The God who inspired the Scriptures and gave them to His people to be an authoritative guide and consolation cannot allow this perfect and fixed revelation of His will to perish. Because God has inspired the Scriptures, He has also preserved them by His providence.
3. That if God had been careless in the preservation of the New Testament, it is hard to see why He should have been so scrupulously careful in the original writing of the New Testament. If God has preserved the New Testament in such a way that it is impossible to obtain assurance concerning the purity of this text, then there is no infallible New Testament today, and if there is no infallible New Testament today, it may very well be that there never was an infallible New Testament. If God has allowed the New Testament to lose its infallibility, why should we suppose that He created it infallible in the first place? Thus the rejection of the King James Version for one of its modern rivals, leads first to the rejection of the doctrine of the providential preservation of Scripture, then to the rejection of the infallibility of Scripture, and finally to the adoption of a modernistic religion which

rests not on the authority of Scripture, but on human reason. Not all those who have thus rejected the King James Version have followed out the logic of their action to its final conclusion but they are always in danger of doing so. (The three above paragraphs in this section are extracts from “The King James Version Defended—A Christian View of the New Testament Manuscripts” by Dr E. F. Hills.).

4. That the integrity of the Greek Text underlying the Authorised Version has been ably vindicated in a recent article by Professor Z. C. Hodges of Dallas Theological Seminary in *Bibliotheca Sacra* for October 1968, who states: “The text upon which the King James Version is based has in reality the strongest claim to be regarded as an authentic representation of the original text. This claim is quite independent of any shifting consensus of scholarly judgment about its readings and is based on the objective reality of its dominance in the transmissional history of the New Testament Text. This dominance has not been and—we venture to suggest—cannot be otherwise explained.”

5. Divine Truth

Do you know?

1. That “the whole of the Bible is the Word of God . . . We have not to search from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22 in the hope that if we are sufficiently fortunate we may find somewhere or other, some scattered seeds of hidden truth; but we have Divine truth from the beginning to the end, and we may apply to the whole the words of our Blessed Lord, “Thy Word is Truth.”

2. There will be found ultimately to be no intermediate path between receiving the whole as the Word of God, or sweeping away the whole and launching forth on a sea of scepticism, without a Bible, without a Saviour, and as the last step, without a God. The more I have studied the subject, the more firmly am I brought to the deliberate and fixed conviction that the whole book, including words as well as thoughts, is to be received by the believer as the Word of God.” (Great Principles of Divine Truth by Canon E. A. Hoare, M.A.).
3. That “every motive that could move man to alter the Word of God has been fully delineated in various portions of the Bible. It shows that God was aware from the first of the reception that would be given to His truth, and it is as instructive to the humble believer as it is humiliating to the modern lover of penknife criticism.
4. “The tendency to alter the Word of God is HUMAN. It is manifested in the first religious conversation on record. The Divine voice had asserted “Thou shalt not eat of it”; the human voice added, “neither shall ye touch it.” The addition was the precursor of the fall.
5. “The craving to alter the Word of God is ACCURSED. Revelation 22: vs. 18, 19 should be read with fear and trembling. Thus all down the ages God has warned men against this crime. He is a jealous God, and has determined to visit with the direst punishment all who dare to alter His completed and full revelation.” (C. H. Spurgeon in “The Sword and the Trowel” Sept. 1888).

6. Nota Bene

Do you know?

1. That the New English Bible is sponsored by:
The British and Foreign Bible Society and
The National Bible Society of Scotland.
2. That the version Good News for Modern Man leaves out Virgin in Luke 1:27. “Begotten” is omitted as in the N.E.B. The “blood” is omitted from 15 texts in the New Testament. The “Good News for Modern Man” version is “another gospel”, and therefore false and accursed.
3. That the promotional literature for the N.E.B. distributed in U.S.A. quotes briefly the favourable comments of Dr Sandmel of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati; Dr J. A. Sanders of Union Theological Seminary, New York; the Jesuit scholar P. J. King of St. John’s Seminary, and Professor F. F. Bruce of Manchester University.
4. That churches and ministers who have adopted the N.E.B., the R.S.V. or other modern versions for use in public worship, or who recommend it, are guilty of unfaithfulness to the God of Truth and of putting astray for eternity the youth of this generation.
5. That the TRINITARIAN BIBLE SOCIETY, William Tyndale House, 29 Deer Park Rd, London SW193NN, UK www.tbsbibles.org (founded in London in 1831) prints and circulates no other version but the Authorised Version, Bibles, New Testaments and Scripture portions are supplied in many languages. Its service is world-wide.

6. That the Trinitarian Bible Society has recently printed—
 - (i) THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE LAST TWELVE VERSES OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK, demonstrated by the evidence of the ancient manuscripts.
 - (ii) NOTES ON VINDICATION OF 1 JOHN 5:7. (Summarised from Dabney's Discussions, published by Banner of Trust Trust).
7. The Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek being immediately inspired of God and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic. (Westminster Confession of Faith. Ch. 1, Sect. 8.).
8. The providence of God hath manifested itself as no less concerned in the preservation of the writings than of the doctrine contained in them, the writing itself being the product of His eternal counsel for the preservation of the doctrine, after a sufficient discovery of the insufficiency of all the means for that end and purpose. And hence the malice of satan hath regard no less against the Book than against the truth contained in it. (Divine Original of the Scripture, p.300 by Dr John Owen).

“Thy Word is Very Pure”

Those who are burdened with a sense of the world's great spiritual need, and have a reverent regard for the divine inspiration, authority and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, are invited to join with the Trinitarian Bible Society in its endeavour to feed the souls of the hungry with the pure food of God's Holy Word, which He has promised to bless and prosper. (Extract from the Quarterly Record

of the Trinitarian Bible Society—copies and information available from Westminster Standard).

“Because thou has kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Revelation 3:10.

W. MacLean

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