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THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH : ITS GREATNESS, AND SOME DEFECTS IN THE LIGHT OF TO-DAY

Opening Lecture of the Scottish Church and Theology Society¹ at a Conference in Crieff, April 1944.

If we, as a Church of the Reformation, are to accept the new responsibilities being laid upon us in the present hour, and make our true contribution to the future, it will depend on how far we are prepared to return to our distinctive witness in the past, and draw strength from our historical heritage. "There are times," says Dr. John A. Mackay, "in the history of persons and peoples, particularly times of crisis, when a rediscovery of yesterday opens a new pathway to to-morrow; when the awakening of a sense of heritage becomes a potent determinant of destiny." "But," he adds wisely, "all depends upon the yesterday to which men go back, whether the new beginning leads them eventually to a better or a worse state."

What is our yesterday? If our Scots Confession and Westminster Confession are to be taken as signposts, our true yesterday, which they indicate, is the Genevan spring of the Reformed Faith.

I purpose to look at our Westminster Confession of Faith, with some regretful glances at that earlier Confession of John Knox, which our fathers, partly by political considerations, allowed to be displaced. For as a Confession of *Faith* it comes far before the *Westminster Confession*.

Someone has said that a Church can only confess its faith when it is compelled to, and when it can do no other. It was in such an hour of utter need, and within a few days, that the *Confessio Scotica* of 1560 was produced, bearing the impress of the faith and genius of Knox. Whereas, the Westminster Con-

¹ Some groups of Ministers in the Church of Scotland, believing that the main issues confronting the Church are at bottom theological, have united under the name of "The Scottish Church and Theology Society" to pursue a course of study and action. They do not stress any particular theology beyond a special interest in their Scottish heritage, as a Church of the Reformed Faith. But they believe that the Church needs theology to interpret to it its meaning, while theology needs the Church to save it from barren logomachy.

fession owed its origin rather to the necessity of a political situation than to a spiritual compulsion to confess the faith, with the result that it lacks the original, spontaneous, and hopeful note, and also the confessional note, of the Scots Confession. It lacks, too, its humility, which asked believers to correct, if necessary, the affirmations made, "from the mouth of God".

But the Westminster Confession is not without its humility. It claims to be no more than a statement of the truth contained in Scripture. It puts itself, in its opening paragraph, under Holy Scripture, as being "most necessary". Its authors, distinguished theologians and Churchmen as they were—for the Westminster Assembly was one of the most learned conventions of Christian history—kept themselves severely in the background. We know there were differences of opinion, but the result was the remarkable unanimity arrived at in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of peace, by Christian men of patience and good temper.

If we are to take to heart the counsel that the road to to-morrow leads through yesterday, we must give ourselves to a patient, appreciative study of the Westminster Confession. First, of its *Greatness*, and second, of its manifest *defects* in the light of to-day. I have hesitated whether to begin with the first or the second. I shall start with its greatness, though inevitably they will get a bit mixed up as we proceed.

I

Let me first indicate some of the marks of its *doctrinal greatness*.

(a) We begin with its *witness to the Bible as the word of God*.

It is one of the most Biblical of the Confessions. In its opening chapter on "Holy Scripture", which we are told was the subject of long deliberation, it does not argue or seek to prove, any more than the Bible does, the fact of God's existence, but accepts it as axiomatic. It starts from the fact of divine revelation. *God has spoken*, and in the Holy Scriptures we have His Word. That is its first proposition, and all that follows is simply the unfolding of this Word of God.

In this, the Confession is the child of the Reformation. As might be expected, it keeps the Roman Catholic errors steadily

in view, especially in its teaching on the Sacraments, and on the State after Death. It repudiates transubstantiation, but retains the torments of hell for the wicked, with no intermediate condition.

Over against a hierarchy which had displaced Jesus Christ it sought to make as clear as a sunbeam that neither the Church, nor its Creeds, nor traditions, must come between God's Word and man. All Creeds, traditions, and interpretations, however hallowed by time, must come under the judgment of Holy Scripture. This love for, and veneration of, the Bible, on the part of the Reformers, and those who came after them, sprang from their zeal for the Gospel. They were Biblicists because they were Gospellers.

The Westminster divines adhered to Calvin's teaching that Scripture is only Word of God when its meaning is illumined by the Holy Spirit "bearing witness by and with the Word", and deprecated the laying of too much emphasis on "the heavenliness of the matter", or "the majesty of the style". But they did not always keep before them this insight, and usually identified the Word of God with the written text in a way which for many to-day invalidates many of their Scripture proofs.

As men of their time, they treated the Bible also as a collection of divinely guaranteed propositions, rather than as a witness to the activity of God, revealing Himself in Divine Acts in history, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. This prevented them from being as truly Biblical as they believed themselves to be. They did not possess a full understanding of history as a quality of revelation, and of the meaning and purpose of the "historical" in revelation. It has been the perception of a later day, that while history is not revelation, revelation is history, *Heilsgeschichte*, to use a word for which we have no exact equivalent. "Redemption history" it might be rendered.

Further, we cannot ignore the fact, that, in putting the Holy Scripture in the foreground, the Westminster divines were consciously and designedly placing their confidence and security in an infallible Book, over against the Roman Catholic confidence and security in an infallible Church. They were setting the one absolute against the other and they betray a marked fondness for the word "infallible".

It is questionable if a modern Confession should open

with an article "Of the Holy Scripture". Would it not be wiser to go back to such an opening as the Scots Confession, with its lapidary sentence?—"WE CONFESS AND ACKNOWLEDGE ONE ONLY GOD, TO WHOM ALONE WE MUST CLEAVE, WHOM ONLY WE MUST SERVE, WHOM ONLY WE MUST WORSHIP, AND IN WHOM ONLY WE MUST TRUST"—an echo of which I think we can detect in the Barmen Confession of 1934 which reaffirmed the centrality of Jesus Christ for the Christian faith as the "one Word of God which we have to hear, and which we have to trust and obey in life and death".

(b) The second mark of the greatness of the Westminster Confession is its witness to the unity of God as "the one only living and true God"—a spiritual and ethical Being Who is pure and just, loving and gracious, "most holy, most free"—the Sovereign Creator and Lord of all. In the present strange return to Nature-worship and to gods many, this truth that God is One calls for reassertion.

The Confession is less helpful in its definition of God after the mediaeval manner, in terms of His substance, attributes, and perfections, derived from Scripture, rather than as He has given Himself to be known in Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the Trinity also is introduced later in a detached sort of way, as if it were but another attribute, and not as it is, the central truth of Godhead apart from which, as Calvin says, "the word 'God' flutters through our brain, naked and void of meaning".

(c) The third mark of greatness of the Westminster Confession is its witness throughout to "the work of God" which He did, "once for all", in His Son, Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the Mediator between God and man, and which He continues to do through His Spirit in the Church, the Body of Christ in the world.

"It pleased God in His eternal purpose to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only-begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Saviour of His Church; the Heir of all things; and Judge of the world: unto whom He did from all eternity give a people to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified."

That is very fine. It takes us right back to the Old Testament witness to a "people of God" which is so central to its thought. It emphasises the central witness of the apostolic

Church. And, without mentioning them, it lines up with the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and all the great historical Creeds of Christendom, in one continuous testimony, the testimony of the undivided Church with which the Re-formation made no break.

(d) The fourth mark of the greatness of the Westminster Confession is its witness against man as a sinner, who is in utter need of redemption, which is the underlying presupposition of this "work of God", in Jesus Christ.

From our modern standpoint, the Confession may appear to treat man too exclusively as a sinful soul, as I shall later show, and not take full account of man in his totality, of body, soul, and spirit. But in these days when we are seeing the end of the Renaissance man, for long believed to be so adequate and self-sufficient, and now exposed in all his nakedness of evil, we should count it greatness in the Westminster Confession that for three hundred years it has been witnessing against this man, and against the whole humanist paean of "Glory to Man in the highest". Man is here uncovered as a sinner whose sin stains not only his vices but his virtues, even his pieties and idealisms.

Objection has often been taken to the statement in the Confession that "we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil", and admittedly it has sometimes been pressed to a point where it ceases to be true. But Dr. Denney was prepared to defend it as it stood, pointing out that what it means is, "not that every individual is as bad as bad can be, but that the depravity which sin has produced extends to the whole man. There is no part of man's nature which is unaffected by it".

One could have wished, however, that the rich realism of the Bible doctrine of man had found fuller expression. While maintaining that at the religious level of judgment all men are sinners, the Bible takes account of degrees of reality, of less and more, of relative goodness in that strange mixture of good and evil, angel and devil, we call man. Our Lord recognised degrees of faith and loyalty. He valued incipient faith. To Him the world of spiritual realities contained not only black and white, whereas the Confession tends to be too rigid in its distinctions. It lays out its truth in too static a fashion, without the flowing, dynamic quality of Bible Truth.

(e) The fifth mark of the greatness of the Westminster Confession is its exalted doctrine of the Church and of the Sacraments.

The Church—the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church—is the new Israel, the people of God, continuous with the “ congregation of Israel ”. It is the dwelling-place of God, the household of faith, the source of the lighted conscience, the Body of Christ in the world. Out of the Church, says the Confession, “ there is no ordinary possibility of salvation ”. Rightly understood, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* is a thoroughly Protestant tenet. It is the assertion that salvation is tied to the Church. Christianity knows only such a salvation as can be found in an *ecclesia*—in the Community of the Saints, a believing, witnessing, worshipping and working Community, chosen of God from the foundation of the world.

The Sacraments are not “ bare signs ” but “ holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace ”, “ for substance the same ” as the sacraments of the Old Testament, in which there is “ a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified ”. The only powers at work in the sacraments are grace and faith.

These are high doctrines. It may be, however, that the definition of “ the invisible Church ”, as “ consisting of the whole number of the elect ” in contradistinction to the “ visible Church ”, will require restating. It appears too rigid and static. The invisible Church is not something which “ consists ”, but which “ becomes ”. As the invisible Word became flesh, so the invisible Church becomes visible in the Churches through the decision of faith.

Our modern idea of the Church, visible as a Kingdom of faith, pushing out in bold aggression on every side, aiming at nothing less than the subjugation of the world, was but faintly realised by the Westminster divines. They could only think of the world’s conversion in terms of one nation after another becoming a covenanted people of God through having Christ offered to them. In Scotland, Boston and the Marrow Men alone had a more Christian conception of the spread of the Gospel.

But for nothing should we honour the Westminster divines more than that, meeting at a time when war was in the land, and the State was actually directing the Church, adjourning or

reassembling the Assembly at its will, they proclaimed so boldly as they did "The Lord Jesus Christ as the *Head* of the Church".

Among other great features of the Confession I might mention, for example, its witness to the high calling of the Christian life for every believer, and its rejection of the Roman doctrine of two kinds of life, one for "the religious", and one for the common world. But I have said enough, I think, to show the doctrinal greatness of the Westminster Confession. Its lofty impersonal character, in contrast with the warm, human, sympathetic Scots Confession, has on some a chilling effect, but the more I read it, the more its grandeur looms up before me.

II

But the Confession bears inevitably some of the defects of its time. They do not affect its greatness, but they detract from its value as a Confession for to-day. I shall select five defects.

(a) The first is its defect as a confession of *faith*. A hundred years had gone since the Scots Confession had appeared. The confessional urge had passed, and other considerations, particularly the apologetic, had become prominent. The Faith had to be defended not only against Rome, but against rationalism.

As a result, we find the Westminster Confession more concerned with correct belief than with faith itself, and it must bear some blame for the emphasis so long laid on "soundness" of doctrine, as the mark of the true believer. With its emphasis also on law, its view of the Sabbath, its legalistic trend, its doctrine of good works, it has to be admitted that it gave more place to the law than to the prophets. Unlike the other principal confessions, it committed itself to the Federal theology of Cocceius and its covenant of works, based on a somewhat fanciful exegesis, which has not stood the test of time.

No doubt the Westminster divines were in line with the Reformers in laying stress on the necessity of "Law-Work" to bring men within the dimension of the Gospel, which is the dimension of holiness and grace. But the Confession bears traces also of that Puritan Age out of which it came, and particularly of an English Puritan influence which was not all to the good of Scotland. It tended to eliminate the emotional and

aesthetic side of religion from our faith and worship, and showed small concern for the beauty of holiness in our temples of praise.

(b) But, coming to doctrinal defects, I would submit that the Confession of Faith does not do justice to the teaching of our Lord, and of the New Testament as a whole, on the *sovereign Fatherhood* of God. It is the sovereignty, and especially the sovereign power and omnipotence of God that is the primary concept. God is Father, as the first Person of the Trinity, and as Creator; but not as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father. Having predestinated and foreordained to life a number "so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished" God is pleased "for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures to pass by and ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin to the praise of His glorious justice". That emphasis on "sovereign power" is surely not the true evangelical note, the "Good News" of the New Testament.

The Confession is assuredly right in giving an important place to God's Decree—His plan of Salvation—which is the fundamental doctrine of grace, and the basis of all that follows—effectual calling, justification, etc. But it took an unfortunate step in being led away, in its doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, from the earlier insight of the Scots Confession that predestination has to be interpreted through Christology. It is not apart from, or before Christ, but *in Christ* that men's destinies are determined. "For that same eternal God and Father elected us in Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world, and appointed Him to be our Head and Brother, our Pastor and great Bishop of our souls" (*Scots Confession*, Art. viii).

In separating between the Decree of God and the existence of Jesus Christ, and in conceiving of election as taking place in some sort of eternity before and without Christ, with a complete mathematical precision, the Westminster Confession steps off the Christian ground of election. Instead of interpreting the sovereignty of God as sovereign Fatherhood, and sovereign grace, by which all men are elected in Christ, it relates it with the idea of omnipotence, and leaves its doctrine of predestination as a dark patch within the sphere of Christian doctrine. Actually it makes God the prisoner of His own predestination.

The doctrine of election is both a practical and preachable

doctrine. It is not some dark mystery lying behind the Gospel, and threatening its nature as Gospel. It is the sum of the Gospel itself. It is not something finished and concluded at the beginning, a mere decree fixing in advance all that should follow after, which would make it a dead thing. Election is God's free and continuous work upon men in all the determinations of their lives. For God also, as the living God, has a history, interpenetrating the history of man. Predestination is *Heilsgeschichte*—redemption history—and as such is the secret of all history.

We need such a doctrine of election for our comfort and assurance as believers. It is the one sound foundation for a strong and living faith by putting something objective under our feet, without which we are delivered over to a pure subjectivity. But in any new Confession which the twentieth century may produce this great fundamental doctrine must be related more closely to Jesus Christ, if it is again to find acceptance in our Church, and in our pulpits.

(c) A third defect of the Westminster Confession of Faith is its too individualistic conception of man's salvation, characteristic of the age out of which it came. It was the age that gave us *Grace Abounding* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. To-day we have come to realise that God has willed the life of humanity to be a family, a community. Every individual needs to be saved into community if he is to be truly a person. As Martin Buber puts it, "all real living is meeting". Was it some inkling of this that led Bunyan to dream again of how Christiana and her sons "packt up" and also went after Christian?

The Confession identifies the Church with the Kingdom of God, as we now know quite wrongly, and has no place for the wealth of Christian thought in our Lord's Parables of the Kingdom as a reign of right relations between man and man, as well as between God and man. To-day we are become more aware of social responsibility as an essential part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The interdependence of the members of the human family, and the duties and obligations we owe one to another as brothers, are seen to be of fundamental significance. We are neither elected nor are we saved one by one. We can only be saved in a saved race.

I cannot help the feeling that this blindness to social responsibility of that age was due in some measure to the strict individualistic doctrine of election. I can remember a Cal-

vinistic minister in the north in my younger days who expressed the view that in his parish men were either elect, or they were non-elect. If non-elect, he could do little or nothing about them.

A true doctrine of election would have made such a thought impossible. For God's election of grace for man makes all men responsible to His Will. Since all men stand, whether they know it or not, within the sphere of the divine election, they stand therefore under the imperative of the divine law. Election leads, or should lead, to ethics. It is the one right road. For the decision of God in grace calls for a corresponding decision on man's part to obedience in all the concrete situations of life.

While the Westminster Confession gives due place to the moral law, it is rather as something external and imposed *on* man, than as emerging *in* man as the claim of God Who has elected him. In consequence, it cannot be said to contain an adequate Christian ethic—corporate and social, as well as individual. Its world is, as it was to the Pilgrim, a "wilderness" through which men walk to confront the Last Judgment, and "to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil". That when God *calls* a man, He *claims* him for the immediate social and ethical tasks of the present was not then so keenly felt as to-day.

(d) I come now to what I consider as more than a defect, as a real demerit of the Westminster Confession of Faith, its persistent tendency to subject faith to logical explanation, and to rationalise the Gospel.

Appearing as it did, in an age when rationalism was in the ascendant, it set itself to counter it by producing a rational explanation of the Reformed Faith. It applied the rational to what in Scripture, and in faith, is always of a paradoxical nature, and attempted to define the undefinable.

Its juridical theory of the Atonement, for example, is a rationalisation of the mystery, by an attempt to interpret it according to a scheme of relationships existing in the natural world between man and man. It is an attempt to adapt celestial truth to the level of the thinking man, whereas it is impossible to conceive the mystery of redemption rationally any more than any other mystery of the Divine life. The dogmas of the Trinity, of the dual nature of the God-Man, of the Cross, have always been, from the days of St. Paul, folly, so far as rational thought is concerned, and always will be. Each is a revelation of another

world, a truth which is from above, and not from below. There is nothing in these dogmas which is rational, or capable of being grasped by the intelligence of a Brains Trust.

Our Lord, let us recall, could not express His truth without paradox. Neither can the theologian. "Take away the paradox," said Kierkegaard, "and you have the professor." Fortunately, not all professors have been blind to the paradoxical, contradictory nature of New Testament revelation. In our day it has been reaffirmed by theologians like Denney, Forsyth, Barth, and others. Denney speaks of "that meeting of contradictories, that union of logical and moral opposites" which are "the guarantee of truth". He believed that it is the one way in which the divine can speak as the human, the infinite can speak as the finite, that God can become and be man. "To say that it is irrational and unethical," he says in another place, "is to speak as a human in terms of relationships between man and man, and between God and sinner." Barth puts the same truth in other words when he says: "God reveals Himself in hiddenness, and hides Himself in His revelation." We meet it also in Luther's teaching on "the hiddenness of God".

(e) I can refer only in a word or two to a fifth defect, to what is the least defensible part of the Westminster Confession—that dealing with the Civil Magistrate whose duty, it is stated, is to see that blasphemies and heresies are suppressed, and corruptions and abuses in worship are prevented or reformed by political force. This Article, which differs little from the Roman Catholic idea, glaringly dates the Confession. Religious tolerance, as we understand it, was not then known, or considered a practical possibility. Scottish elders, faithful, as they believed, in the discharge of their duties to the Westminster Confession of Faith, have recently been described as the "Gestapo" of that day. Even John Milton, whose *Areopagitica* appeared during the sitting of the Westminster Assembly, would have counted our tolerance as licence. We have, since that day, entered more deeply into the meaning of religious tolerance and true freedom in thought and in worship.

At the same time, we must always keep in mind that, in regard to the whole body of Christian truth, the Westminster Confession has no place for "the right of private judgment", or "liberty of conscience". If at any point we propose to depart from the Confession it must be for some reason grounded in

Scripture. The believer is not a free thinker. He is bound by a certain constraint, as a member of the Body of Christ, to obey the Word of God, and is in no sense free in his own right as an individual.

This is the teaching, not only of the Westminster Confession, but of the whole Reformed Church, which set its face from the beginning against everything of the nature of inner light, or mystical vision, or light of nature as being able to produce a *saving* knowledge of God.

III

The conclusion to which I would lead up is, that the Church must set itself with the same seriousness as the Westminster divines, to write its Confession, face to face with the errors of our time. We cannot express the Christian thought of to-day in terms of the thought of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Any attempt to revise the Confession would be hopeless. With all its greatness and glory it belongs to a past day.

But the first thing necessary, before we even begin to write a Confession of Faith, is that we become again a confessing Church, by which I mean a Church which submits itself to the living Word of God in humble faith and obedience. For it is only out of a true Christian witness that a true theology can arise. We need a theology resting upon a better understanding of the Word of God, and of God's way of revealing Himself in divine acts in time, to which the Bible testifies, and of how this revelation reaches us and touches us through the Church, the Body of Christ to-day.

It will be a tremendous task. Word of God and Scripture will have to be more clearly defined. It will no more be possible to compel faith, or make use of the motive of fear, for it is not easily possible to frighten moderns with anything. It will no more be possible to draw in black and white on the old rigid lines. For the present-day Church is confronted with souls who have experienced every type of danger and have gone to the lowest depths of darkness. A new Confession will have to be more sensitive to the perplexities, and psychological and even neurotic conditions of men, and address itself not only to the conscious, but to the unconscious modern mind with a word

that has healing power. It will no longer be possible to think only in terms of the Reformed Churches. Our Faith must take a wider sweep.

There are many difficulties, but signs are not wanting of a desire for a return to Christianity, and to the Church, to fill the vacuum created by the collapse of our man-made faiths. In that lies the hope and opportunity of the Church to-day.

But how are we to lay hold of this opportunity? How far can the Westminster Confession help us? To what extent can we find the road to to-morrow through this great yesterday?

Some things at least are clear.

(a) We have to state the Faith to-day in a world of relativities in which any idea of a universal moral law is repudiated. How shall we bring home that there is a Law as well as a Gospel which is of God, and which is applicable to the whole human situation; a Law whose voice we hear in the Cosmos, the Law of a Creator, which is regulative, imperative, corrective, and preservative? The American Delaware Conference put this as the first of its thirteen points. "We believe that moral law, no less than physical law, undergirds our world."

(b) We have to state the Faith to-day in a world which is ruled by Science, and in which there is a very widespread idea that science has discredited religion—a problem which hardly confronted the Westminster divines, but which meets us on every side. How shall we state the doctrines of grace *vis-à-vis* this modern scientific outlook and conviction? Shall it be after the manner of C.E. Raven, let us say, who, looking through his two stereoscopic lenses, science and religion, sees them as one; or shall we stand with the Westminster divines for a Word of God which is a Word *to* Science, and not *of* Science?

(c) We have to state the Faith in a world that is ruled by dogmas, not only scientific but economic dogmas, such as materialistic Marxism. Is not Christian dogma an urgent need of our day? "Dogma," says E. T. Whitaker, "is the core of every system of faith and worship, without which religion would dissolve into mere sentiment, and in a few centuries perish altogether." Must not the Church take its courage in both hands and state its faith, not merely historically and experimentally, but dogmatically, testing its own faith as to its own understanding of it, and announcing it to the world? And

must it not do this in such a way as to escape the logical, rational method of formulation of the Westminster Confession, and preserve the paradoxical qualities of the Gospel?

(d) We have to state the Faith to-day, not merely as the Reformed Faith, though we must be true to that, but as the Faith of the World Church which has come to the birth in our time. How shall we restate the doctrine of the Church so as to give full value to the *Una Sancta*—the Church invisible—and at the same time do justice to the Church, as a visible, oecumenical, Divine Society, witnessing in a secular world, cutting across national barriers, and disseminating its Way of Life throughout the world by its Missions.

(e) We have to state the Faith in a world which proclaims, by word and symbol, the doctrine of Marxist man, and of Fascist man, so as to make clear the difference between these humanistic conceptions and the Christian doctrine of man. How shall we define the anthropology of grace in terms that recognise man as a sinner, but also as a person, responsible for his freedom and self-determining activity under the universal moral law? In face of the present, strong appeal of Communism, which may grow stronger, the Church has perhaps no more urgent task than to match the Communist doctrine of man with an equally dogmatic statement of the Christian doctrine of man.

The late Dr. William Adams Brown tells of how he once found the great American, Bishop Brent, spending his mornings in studying a little book which bore the title: *The A B C of Communism*—a textbook for use in the schools and colleges of Russia. Brent was enormously impressed by what he read. “Unless we can match this faith,” he declared to Adams Brown, “with a faith as consistent and uncompromising, we shall fail, and we shall deserve to fail.”

That, then, is the task which our time lays upon us: to set forth the Christian Faith *in* our time, and *for* our time, and in the idiom *of* our time, so as to lay hold of the youth of our time.

JOHN McCONNACHIE.

Dundee.