

1955) observed the spirit of this law scrupulously, and no student could have claimed that he had been in any way indoctrinated. A breadth and a choice of viewpoint were always offered, and offered in the most objective way; at the same time, shrewd and sensible criteria were presented, so that the student was not left befogged by a vast and conflicting mass of undigested opinions. This technique had the effect of forcing one to think for oneself, to reach one's own conclusions, and to learn facility in applying criteria. At the same time, it gave one opportunity to adjust one's thinking to unpalatable facts or theories, without losing one's spiritual balance. The attempt to shock was never one of F.F.B.'s teaching methods; one was never bullied into making an immediate decision, pro or con. Hence one was schooled, almost unconsciously, to avoid snap judgments, to weigh up problems carefully and objectively, and above all to resist the temptation to oversimplify all questions into black-and-white terms ('sound' or 'unsound', 'evangelical' or 'liberal', etc.).

In his individual relationships with students, Professor Bruce was a true Barnabas. He was no taskmaster, but his pupils received every encouragement. Work done for him was assessed shrewdly—but kindly. Any burgeoning aptitudes or interests were noted and fostered. And any ideas or suggestions, however ill-conceived, one might proffer to him, consistently received courteous and sympathetic—though, wisely, not uncritical—attention.

F.F.B.'s literary output speaks for itself. The wonder is that he has never put research before students, and that he has always been prepared to give unstintingly of his valuable time to the needs and demands of his pupils.

Years have passed since I could speak from first-hand experience—hence the past tenses of the above paragraphs. But I do not doubt that the same—and more—could be said of the present Rylands Professor in the University of Manchester (to which Chair he succeeded in 1959).

F. F. BRUCE AS A FELLOW-ELDER

ARNOLD PICKERING*

IN April 1960 when we had the joy of welcoming the Bruce family into the fellowship of the church which meets in Crescent Road Hall, Stockport, F.F.B. appeared to have found a congenial spiritual home. He diligently entered into the activities of the church and evidently enjoyed the spontaneity of its worship and service. His particular ministry was immediately apparent and gratefully acknowledged. Here was a man with a unique insight into the Word of God and a facility in giving the sense and causing the reading to be understood.

By common consent his service in the church soon required formal recognition. Precisely two years from his first visit to the Hall to conduct a Broadcast Service he, and others, were presented to the church as additional elders. Very probably the manner in which this recognition was effected differed little from common practice, but for us there was one

*Mr. A. Pickering, a Certified Accountant, is an elder of Prof. Bruce's home church.

quite unusual feature. For the first time in its history the church was formally recognising a teaching elder. Not that F.F.B. exercises amongst us an exclusive ministry of the Word. He gladly shares our arranged ministry on alternate Sunday mornings with several of his brethren, encouraging them to stir up latent gift. He carries his learning lightly and never parades his knowledge.

This teaching ministry is far from representing the whole of his contribution to the well-being of the church. To watch him dedicate a babe (wisely allowing the child to repose in the security of mother's arms!): to hear him dedicate an offering and to listen to his counsel to young folk leaving the church and home to go up to University, is to be reminded that the true elder must be a man of many parts. His experience and heavenly wisdom are equally apparent in the necessarily wide variety of matters considered at the monthly meeting of elders. The efficiency and expedition with which business is despatched when he occupies the Chair cannot be wholly explained by the time of his homeward train! Notwithstanding that the world is his parish he maintains a great loyalty to our fellowship and among the other sterling qualities which have endeared him to us all are his dependability, unaffected humility and consistent thoughtfulness for others.

In his useful booklet entitled *Who are the Brethren?* F.F.B. wrote concerning the elders who administer local churches—'they try to guide by example rather than rule by decree'. Not easily could better words be found to describe the gracious and faithful manner of his services to our church in which the Holy Ghost has made him an overseer.

F. F. BRUCE AS A FRIEND

G. C. D. HOWLEY*

THERE are many excursions into the pleasures of a friendship. Each fresh experience deepens the friendship and reveals its potentialities for enrichment of mind and spirit. Some friendships develop gradually; others seem to blossom quickly. But there can be no true friendship without a mingling of affection and respect. Where such exists, it is something to be greatly prized.

I write merely as one of a wide circle of friends and well-wishers of F.F.B., but it is a privilege to be able to represent them by this tribute to what this friendship has meant to me. I know sufficient of his friendships with others to realise that exactly the same qualities that have marked our friendship mark his with other people. Ours began gradually: first contacts with him in his Cambridge days were few, yet they left their mark on my mind; and later meetings with him drove home to me the depths behind the quiet exterior. Correspondence between us was occasional, yet led to the ripening of the link. My wife and I were always struck with his essential simplicity of heart. This was shown in his interest in the most ordinary matters in the home. He was never one with a great element of small talk,

*Mr. G. C. D. Howley is editor of *The Witness* and a well known teacher among Brethren.