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The Men whom God chooses

God says in His Word: "My thoughts are not your thoughts." He also declares: "As the heavens are higher than the earth . . . so are . . . my thoughts (higher) than your thoughts." When Samuel was sent to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be king over Israel, whenever he saw Eliab he said: "Surely the Lord's anointed is before him." But the Lord showed Samuel that it was otherwise. He said to Samuel: "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." It was David, a man after God's own heart, who was to reign over Israel after Saul.

When, in the providence of God, the Lord raised up men who would be instrumental in preserving a testimony on the side of truth in 1893, the men of God's choosing were not those whom men would have expected to be leaders in such an enterprise. They were virtually unknown, except to some of the godly, who valued their ministrations highly. They were born in North Uist, far from the madding crowds of the cities, in one of the islands of the Outer Hebrides. How honoured was that island to be the birth place of these men, who alone, out of the hundreds of ministers in Scotland at that time, stood on the side of truth. Like Luther, they could do no other because they saw clearly the issues that were at stake.

It was thought that Rev. MacAskill, Dingwall, a leader among the Constitutionalists at that time, would stand on the side of truth and separate from the Disruption Free Church when the Declaratory Act was passed. Indeed, he ventured to say to a godly mother in Israel, that if no one else would stand he would. The godly woman replied, that the Lord would not so honour him, but would raise up a poor Mordechai to maintain His Cause. And so it came about. It is not the vain boasters, it is not the proud or the carnally bold that the Lord chooses. "He knoweth the proud afar

off." "He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way."

What, then, were the characteristics of the men whom the Lord chose — Rev. Donald MacFarlane and Rev. Donald MacDonald — to raise a witness on the side of truth? Two of their outstanding features were humility and meekness. In this they were like the Master whom they served, who Himself said: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." They had been with Jesus and had learned of Him. They were men of prayer and knew in reality what fellowship and communion was with the Lord at a Throne of grace. Like Moses, when he came down from the Mount, they could not but reflect something of the glory of the One with whom they had been communing. It was such men that the Lord chose, not men filled with their own importance, but humble men of God, Spirit-taught men, true ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

The preservation of the Free Presbyterian Church, throughout its history, has been dependent on the Lord raising up such men, and so it will be in the future. When few such are being raised up then it is a matter of great concern to the true people of God. Prayer to the Lord for the raising up of men with the stamp of godliness would be the most effectual way of securing the prosperity and preservation of the Free Presbyterian Church. There are plenty of men in evangelical Church circles in our day who do not have the stamp of true godliness. Such can only be a hindrance and a burden to the Lord's Cause, whatever other gifts they might possess. The Disruption Free Church was full of men of gifts and their gifts only brought that Church to ruin.

Let us plead then for the raising up of men (and women) in our Church, faithful men, humble men, godly men to fill our pulpits and pews, and men and women of such a stamp of godliness that their very lives would speak to the people of this generation. This generation has not been favoured to see real vital godliness in the lives of professing christians, except in a few rare instances. Men once knew that these godly men and women had something which they did not possess. Christians in our day may go in and out among the world, and make no impact whatever, not because of the blindness of these people, but because Christian profession is at such a low ebb. These things ought not so to be.

How are we to obtain in this dark day faithful servants of Christ to proclaim the everlasting gospel to their fellow-sinners? Where are they to be found at such a time as this? The Saviour has made this plain. He has said: "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest." Divinely-sent, divinely-commissioned ambassadors of the

Cross would be a blessing to any people. The God of heaven who took a vicious persecutor of the Church of Christ, a Saul of Tarsus, and made him a bold, fearless preacher of the Cross, can do so again and again and again. What a change He effected in Saul of Tarsus when men could say, that "he which persecuted us in time past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed". When the Lord will arise, in answer to the pleadings and cries of His people, one thing is sure, He will not lack instruments to forward His glorious work, though He should take them out of the darkest corner of Satan's camp. It is true of His servants as well as of His people, that He took them from the dust and from the dunghill to set them among the princes of His people.

So, too, can the Lord raise up in His Church office-bearers, men answering to the description given in the Scriptures of those fitted for such offices. They will be men who will enter into the duties of their office with their whole heart, and they will uphold the hands of those who are sent forth to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. But, in addition to this, the Lord is able to raise up in His Church a praying people who will be earnest at a Throne of grace, pleading for the advancement of His Cause and kingdom in their midst, and throughout the whole world. We are encouraged to believe this from the fact that it was a people of this stamp who, when Rev. D. MacFarlane and Rev. D. MacDonald raised a testimony on the side of truth, joined with them in that testimony with their whole heart. They proved, in their day and generation, stalwarts for the truth, and were a staunch support to the Cause of Christ. Is it any wonder that a season of spiritual prosperity was experienced at that early period in our Church's history? May such a time come again, in the merciful kindness of the Lord, to revive His weary heritage.

Let us bemoan the low state to which we have fallen. Let us plead for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our Church, at home and abroad, as we approach our Centenary. May we say with the Psalmist:

"Do thou, O God, arise and plead
the Cause that is thine own:
Remember how thou art reproach'd
still by the foolish one."

Frequently those have most real honour done them, who least court the shadow of it.

Matthew Henry.

Sermon

by Rev D. N. Macleod, Ullapool

(Preached at Plockton, on Monday, 26th July, 1948)

"And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
Matth. 28: 18, 19 & 20.

Before the Lord Jesus suffered and died, He made an appointment with His disciples to meet Him on a certain mountain in Galilee after He was risen from the dead. He knew well that death could not hold Him, that as He was going to die, He was going to rise again, and live again, and live after the power of an endless life. He did not forget that appointment for he told the women to whom He revealed Himself after his resurrection to go to His disciples to remind them of it and to be there and He would meet them. The disciples obeyed the message and went to Galilee and the apostle Paul tells us that there were over 500 assembled on the mount. Matthew here tells that when they saw Him coming some of them doubted. They were not very sure who it was. Was it He or not, that is when He appeared at a distance, but when He came nearer, they all knew Him. It is one of the proofs of the veracity of God's word that Matthew recorded that they had doubt, for he was not afraid to record it. If he were writing about one that he was himself making a hero, he would very likely mention nothing like this that would happen to be true about him, but he was not in the least afraid. He was recording things just as they were and he was not afraid to tell the future generations that some of them had this doubt when they saw Him but that afterwards that doubt vanished. Christ met them on the mount, and met them to set them apart for their work.

We shall notice in the first place what He said to them about His power.

In the second place the commission and where they were to go; to all the ends of the world; and what they were to do with men and women — they were to baptise them.

In the third place what they were to teach.

In the fourth place, His own promise unto them and unto the church. He promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world. And Jesus came unto them saying "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

He is speaking of Himself as the God-man, the only mediator between God and man, the only Saviour and the Captain of salvation made perfect

through sufferings — all power in heaven and earth is given Him; that is owned by Him, for He received a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father; that He has omnipotent power; that everything is possible to Him as the Head of His church on earth. He has this power — all power in heaven and on earth. The disciples were to remember that, in sending them forth, He was behind them to defend them and to uphold them, to work with them. They were not sent forth in their own strength. They were sent forth in His strength, with all His power behind them. That is all power in heaven and on earth and that is the same now as it was the first time. He has not changed. All His sent ambassadors have that power behind them. They are to remember that. They must not forget it. They must not cease to trust Him. It is meant to be their strength to enable them to do His will, no matter how things may be, no matter what they may think, no matter how hard the work may be or what it may cost themselves, that He is behind them with that power and that in order to prosper their work and in order to make them victorious over all the power that may be against them and that even the power of the gates of hell of which He spoke on another occasion “upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against thee”.

Having spoken to them of that power He gave them this commission, saying to them, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. It was as the apostle Paul refers to, it was to the Jews and then to the Greeks. The middle wall of partition was entirely removed, not one stone was left upon another in it, and the Gospel of salvation, which is the power of God and the wisdom of God was to go forth into all nations, kindreds and tongues. They were to go and teach them, that is teach them the truth, teach them the doctrines of His own gospel, and they were also to baptise them — to make disciples of them. The church, that is, the reformed church always insisted on this in dispensing the sacrament of baptism that it would be connected with preaching or teaching the word of God. That was one of the things they had against private baptism. The disciples here were asked to teach and make disciples of such as would believe, by baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, for although baptism was observed before then and John Baptist baptised in Jordan and although His own disciples were sent forth to baptise in Judea, baptism, or the sacrament of baptism, was not instituted as a sacrament until this time when He gave them this commission. It is then that it was

instituted as a sacrament to continue in the church to the end of time and to be observed once in the case of every person, for baptism is only to be administered once. Baptism is in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, that is, in the name of the three persons of the Godhead. The three persons have their own work in man's salvation. The great work of redemption was devised by God the Father, the plan of redemption is His. It was worked out by His Son, Jesus Christ, and it is applied by the Holy Spirit. It is the work of the Three-in-one. A great work in truth. A work that none could do but the Triune God. What should make us think much of it, and make us willing to receive it apart from the effect and our need, is that it is the work that was done by the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It also means that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are under an obligation to see that the salvation of every believer is not only begun but is carried on and finished. They are all concerned in it. They undertook that in the case of all the redeemed. In the case of all baptised persons to whom the sacrament of baptism is made effectual unto salvation. They are not left with mere signs but are made partakers of the things signified by water and by the word in the sacrament for the salvation of that person will be assured, will not only be begun but carried on and finished for it is in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. This is a great privilege. This is truly a marvel. Very little is thought of it as a rule, so little that people speak of it as putting the water on, that is all that it means to them, that the water is to be put on and it is to be feared that many rest quite satisfied with that and if they are baptised they seek nothing more than just the fact that cold water was put upon their person. The cold water, although that is the element used in the sacrament, will never mean this, that the sinner is saved. He must be made a partaker of all that that water signifies and seals and that is what we have been trying to bring before you, as what the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost undertook to do in the case of those who are redeemed — baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

They were not to teach whatever they liked themselves or whatever pleased themselves. Some may think that they can preach anything, but they are confined to this, to what they were themselves taught, what Christ gave them, what they learned of Him, the doctrines He gave them, they were to teach and carefully observe that they would teach nothing else, nothing of their own, nothing belonging to man at all, only the doctrines that He gave — that is, the Gospel. We live in a day when Christ's authority

is quite overthrown. It is not only that the authority of the Bible is overthrown, both testaments, but Christ's authority is overthrown. It is not what He said at all that is true, it is not what He said that people are to believe, and believe as the truth and nothing but the truth. Christ is given a low place in our day. Men are to be feared above him. We are quite ready to do as we are exhorted to do and give honour unto whom honour is due, to give men the honour due unto them, but what we are saying just now is exceedingly sad, that the honour of men is given a higher place by far than the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sinners no longer come to Him as He lovingly invites them to come saying, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, take my yolk upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." They do not come to learn of Him at all. There are many nowadays that are not ashamed to say that they would teach Him — that they know far more than He knew. A few years ago we read in the press of a minister in Galashiels who said openly at a meeting of their Presbytery that they knew many things that Christ did not know and were able to teach Him things that He did not know, but that is only a man usurping Christ's place, taking His place from Him, taking away the authority from Him, and overthrowing Him as much as lies in their power but that does not interfere with Him in the least, that makes no change on Him. He still has all power in heaven and on earth. He is still the Truth and His word is true. His doctrines are still the same. Not one jot or tittle of what He taught has fallen to the ground, nothing has been changed of what He has revealed. It is still true what was taught by Him, as it was put by one of his servants, the Prophet Ezekiel, "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him and woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him." It is still true and still the same that he that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned, that unless sinners will repent they must perish, that there is none other name given among men or in heaven whereby we must be saved, that besides Him there is no Saviour. There is no other salvation for lost sinners but the salvation He has wrought out for them, and that salvation is free, absolutely free — that is, without money and without price. It is offered to whomsoever of the human race, that is willing to accept it. It is still true that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved. It is also unto all nations whatsoever I have commanded you. There is no saviour beside Him, no salvation apart from Him. There is no other gospel for poor perishing sinners and perishing sinners must be given nothing else, nothing but what He commanded — that is His inspired word — what we have in this book before us.

“Whatsoever I have commanded you,” and then he gave them this great promise, “Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world, Amen.” I am with you alway. You will not go anywhere but He will go with you. As you go forth to all nations of the earth I am with you in this work that I gave you. I am with you no matter where you be, I am with you no matter how you are finding things, whether things are prospering with you or not, whether you are finding things difficult or easy, whether you are received yourselves or whether you are rejected — I am with you alway and I am with you night and day. There will not be a single moment in which this will not be true of you, “Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end,” and true to the end of time, even unto the end of the world. What a gracious, precious promise this is, a promise that He cannot forget. He does not forget. A promise that He does fulfil. He abides by it. We are to receive this promise in our own day. No matter how things are or may be, no matter how we find things, no matter what condition we may be in, or where our lot may be cast, whether we are welcome or not, but that does not interfere with His promise at all. We are to receive this promise, rest in it, in the fulfilment of it as being as true now, as it was when He first spoke it, as true now of all His servants as it was then, of all who are His people now as it was then, for it is to be to the end of the world and that is that He is with us as we were singing, “God in the midst of her doth dwell, nothing shall her remove.” That is what is true of His church in the world, of His servants and of His people, that He is with them, and with them, they are to remember, with all His power. All power in heaven and on earth. With them as anointed with the oil of joy and gladness above His fellows, with the Holy Spirit above measure, for it was not by measure it was given to Him. With them to enlighten them, to instruct them, to quicken them by way of enlivening them, when any decay sets in, or any falling away, to liven them again and to give them fellowship with Himself and communion with Him. To give them, as the apostle John puts it, to strengthen them to equip them for their work, to work with them and to enable them to finish the work He gives them. He enables them to be faithful unto Him and faithful even unto death, enables them to bear with hardships for His sake, to endure sufferings for His sake, to persevere to follow on to know Himself, and to be victorious at last. He is with them always. Lo I am with you alway. The Lord’s people often feel afraid, even when they have such a precious promise as this. They feel afraid to apply it to themselves. They will agree, very readily agree, that it belongs to the Lord’s people. It is true of them but they cannot apply it to themselves. They are afraid to take it. We have

no reason to be afraid of that kind of fear if our faith is in Him, if our only hope is in Him and our whole trust is in Him, if we have made choice of Him, if He is the beloved of our hearts, if He is to us fairer than the sons of men, if there is none like unto Him, none that we can give His place to, if He has become all and in all to us. We are to take this promise with all other promises. It is meant for us. It is given to us.

If we do not take it we lose its whole benefit. If we go through this world in the way, professing him, professing to be His, and yet afraid to take such a promise as this, a promise of His own presence with us, of having Himself with us, what shall we be like? We shall be as weak as water, ready to tremble at the least sign of danger, we shall lack the comfort of it, we shall lack the strength of it. Let us remember this that Christ knew that His disciples needed this. He knows that His people need it still. He gave this promise to them because He knew that they needed it. That is why He gave it. He knows that His poor people need it. Let them beware of this, of allowing the unbelief of their hearts and the temptations of the evil one rob them of His precious promises and of all the grace and the strength and the comfort that is in them. It was never more necessary for everyone to have a firm hold of it than today. How can we expect to persevere unto the end, how can we expect to get through all that meets us and all that confronts us every day, inwardly and outwardly if not in this way, by Himself being with us, dwelling in us by His Holy Spirit. We cannot any longer have His bodily presence. He is no longer known after the flesh but we have Him abiding in us and with us by His Holy Spirit, and by His Word, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end." No words of mine can convince anyone of the absolute necessity of this, of having a firm hold of this precious promise unless the Holy Spirit Himself is pleased to confirm it, but it is one of the things that has been before my mind for a long time. Every year we are seeing some failing, some ceasing, some going back. We are also seeing this, we are seeing others weak and trembling, and some perhaps owing to the very little use they are to Christ and His Cause on earth because they have not got the strength. They are not leaning on Himself, depending wholly on Him. They are not going forth in His strength. They will not come to Him for counsel, for advice. They are not setting Him before them in their ways. They are professing His name, and that publicly, but nevertheless they are doing it without Christ being in it at all. That is what we are trying to get at today. We are seeing it so plainly before us and we are seeing the evils of it. Some may be tempted to think that it is godliness for them to give in wholly to this, that it could not, as it were, be true of them

at any rate, although it can be true of others, of them making the same profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, but they give in to them, but depend on it if you begin to give in, Satan will do his utmost to get the victory over you and it will not be difficult for him. Let us see to this that if we profess Him in the world, and if we profess to be His people in the world that we are not going to go through the world without Him; that we are not making a step without Him, that we are not engaging in any work without Him, because we cannot do it. "Without me ye can do nothing." We are not going to overcome by our own wisdom and strength, it is only by His grace being made perfect in our weakness that we can overcome. "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end."

We must believe this promise, even in our day, sad as it is, when we are seeing such things that pain and grieve us — that His word is not blessed, sinners are not quickened, the number of His people are getting fewer, we are not seeing some added to the church as it used to be. We are seeing that the word is preached, the same doctrines are delivered, and nothing is given but what has the authority of His own word, and a special effort is made to have it that nothing be given to perishing souls but His own word, and yet that is what we see. We are seeing that there are no conversions. That is as far as we can see. Along with that we see no signs of increase of grace and of the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and we see but little sign of growing in grace and bearing fruit, the fruits of the Spirit, yet notwithstanding all this we must believe that the promise still stands true. Christ still abides by it and owns it, as ready to fulfill it, and it is in His own wonderful way He is fulfilling it. "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end." It would be well for us coming up to the close of another communion season, when we part to have ourselves firmly rooted in the truth and it is a great promise — "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," believing that the Lord is still with His church, still with His people. He has not parted with them. He has not disowned them. He is still with them, and still with them the very same as He was from the beginning. It is Himself, the same Person that is with them still. Try and take that with you away home. That it is the Christ of God that gave the promise that abides with you, and abides by His promise. He is bound to fulfil it and is fulfilling it and that is the Person who is going home with you. It is the same Person that is to accompany you away from this Communion, as you put your faith and trust in Him, and as you devote yourself to Him and give your whole heart to Him. That is the Person who is to accompany you to your homes and abide with you until the day of your death, and will see to it that

you will abide with Him throughout the endless ages of eternity. We are not left with doubtful things at all. We make them doubtful to ourselves by our unbelief and carnality, and worldliness, by listening to the temptations of our evil hearts and the temptations of the world. We make things that are absolutely certain to be doubtful to ourselves, and depend upon it, my dear friends, that the Lord is as willing to fulfill His promise to us as to those to whom He first gave it, that is, His disciples. "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto you." Let us see that we will teach nothing to our fellow sinners but what we have in the word of God — To teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and think much more of your baptism, not to make salvation of the sacrament but what will be yours if it is made effectual unto you.

What you became an heir of the day you were received as a member of Christ's visible church, you are to receive as a member of His invisible church, that is the true church. What inheritance will be yours then — Improve your baptism, and do not rest satisfied that you were merely baptised.

Do not rest satisfied with being a member of the visible church. You are part of the visible church by baptism. Seek with all your might to enter into the invisible church, to be of the true church — bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh — Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. His people are expected to observe all things, to do them willingly and then there is His own promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen".

The Saints' Rest

by Rev. Richard Baxter

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Heb. 4: 9.

This rest will be absolutely perfect. We shall then have joy without sorrow, and rest without weariness. There is no mixture of corruption with our graces, nor of suffering with our comfort. There are none of those waves in that harbour, which now so toss us up and down. Today we are well, tomorrow sick; today in esteem, tomorrow in disgrace; today we have friends, tomorrow none; nay, we have wine and vinegar in the same cup. If "revelation" raise us "to the third heaven," "the messenger of Satan" must presently "buffet" us, and "the thorn in the flesh" fetch us down, 2 Cor. 12: 2, 7. But there is none of this inconstancy in heaven. If "perfect love casteth out fear," 1 John, 4: 18, then perfect joy must

needs cast out sorrow, and perfect happiness exclude all the relics of misery. We shall there rest from all the evil of sin and of suffering.

Heaven excludes nothing more directly than sin, whether of nature or of conversation. "There shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," Rev. 21: 27. What need Christ at all have died if heaven could have contained imperfect souls? "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," I John, 3: 8. His blood and Spirit have not done all this, to leave us after all defiled. "What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" 2 Cor. 6: 15. Christian, if thou be once in heaven, thou shalt sin no more. Is not this glad news to thee, who hast prayed and watched against it so long? I know if it were offered to thy choice, thou wouldst rather choose to be freed from sin, than have all the world. Thou shalt have thy desire. That hard heart, those vile thoughts, which accompanied thee to every duty, shall now be left behind for ever. Thy understanding shall never more be troubled with darkness. All dark Scriptures shall be made plain; all seeming contradictions reconciled. The poorest Christian is presently, there, a more perfect divine than any here. Oh that happy day, when error shall vanish for ever! when our understanding shall be filled with God himself, whose light will leave no darkness in us! His face shall be the Scripture, where we shall read the truth. Many a godly man hath here, in his mistaken zeal, been the means of deceiving and perverting his brethren, and, when he sees his own error, cannot again tell how to undeceive them. But there we shall conspire in one truth, as being one in Him who is the truth. We shall also rest from all the sin of our will, affection, and conversation. We shall no more retain this rebelling principle, which is still drawing us from God; no more be oppressed with the power of our corruptions, nor vexed with their presence: no pride, passion, slothfulness, or insensibility shall enter with us; no strangeness to God, and the things of God; no coldness of affection, nor imperfection in our love; no uneven walking, nor grieving of the Spirit; no scandalous action, nor unholy conversation; we shall rest from all these for ever. Then shall our will correspond to the Divine will, as face answers face in a glass; and from which, as our law and rule, we shall never swerve. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his," Heb. 4: 10.

Our sufferings were but the consequences of our sinning, and in heaven they both shall cease together. We shall rest from all our doubts of God's love. It shall no more be said, that "Doubts are like the thistle, a bad

weed, but growing in good ground." They shall now be weeded out, and trouble the gracious soul no more. We shall hear that kind of language no more, "What shall I do to know my state? How shall I know that God is my Father? — that my heart is upright? — that my conversion is true? that faith is sincere? I am afraid my sins are unpardoned; that all I do is hypocrisy; that God will reject me; that he does not hear my prayers." All this is there turned into praise. We shall rest from all sense of God's displeasure. Hell shall not be mixed with heaven. At times the gracious soul "remembered God, and was troubled; complained, and was overwhelmed, and refused to be comforted;" Divine "wrath lay hard upon him, and God afflicted him with all his waves," *Psa.* 77: 2, 3; 88: 7. But that blessed day shall convince us, that, though God "hid his face from us for a moment," yet, "with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on us," *Isa.* 54: 8. We shall rest from all "the temptations of Satan." What a grief it is to a Christian, though he yield not to the temptation, yet to be solicited to deny his Lord! What a torment to have such horrid motions made to his soul! such blasphemous ideas presented to his imagination! sometimes cruel thoughts of God, undervaluing thoughts of Christ, unbelieving thoughts of Scripture, or injurious thoughts of Providence! to be tempted sometimes to turn to present things, to play with the baits of sin, and venture on the delights of flesh, and sometimes to atheism itself! especially, when we know the treachery of our own hearts, ready, as tinder, to take fire, as soon as one of those sparks shall fall upon them! Satan hath power here to tempt us "in the wilderness," but he entereth not "the holy city;" he may "set us on a pinnacle of the temple" in the earthly "Jerusalem," but the New Jerusalem he may not approach; he may take us up "into an exceeding high mountain," but the "Mount Sion" he cannot ascend; and if he could, "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," *Matt.* 4: 1, 5, 8, would be a despised bait to a soul possessed of the kingdom of our Lord. No, it is in vain for Satan to offer a temptation more. All our temptations from the world and the flesh shall also cease. Oh the hourly dangers that we here walk in! Every sense and member is a snare; every creature, every mercy, and every duty is a snare to us. We can scarcely open our eyes, but we are in danger of envying those above us, or despising those below us; of coveting the honours and riches of some, or beholding the rags and beggary of others with pride and unmercifulness. If we see beauty, it is a bait to lust; if deformity, to loathing and disdain.

How soon do slanderous reports, vain jests, wanton speeches, creep into the heart! how constant and strong a watch does our appetite require!

Have we comeliness and beauty? What fuel for pride! Are we deformed? What an occasion of repining! Have we strength of reason, and gifts of learning? Oh how prone to be puffed up, to hunt after applause, and despise our brethren! Are we unlearned? How apt then to despise what we have not! Are we in places of authority? How strong is the temptation to abuse our trust, make our will our law, and cut out all the enjoyments of others, by the rules and model of our own interest and policy? Are we inferiors? How prone to grudge at others' pre-eminence, and bring their actions to the bar of our judgment? Are we rich, and not too much exalted? Are we poor, and not discontented? Are we not lazy in our duties, or make a Christ of them? Not that God hath made all these things our snares, but through our own corruption they become so to us. Ourselves are the greatest snare to ourselves. This is our comfort, our rest will free us from all these. As Satan hath no entrance there, so neither any thing to serve his malice; but all things there shall join with us in the high praises of our great Deliverer.

As we rest from the temptations, we shall likewise from the abuses and persecutions, of the world. The prayers of the souls under the altar will then be answered, and God will "avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth," Rev. 6: 9, 10. This is the time for crowning with thorns; that, for crowning with glory. Now, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," 2 Tim. 3: 12; then, they "that suffered with him, shall be glorified with him," Rom. 8: 17. Now, we must "be hated of all men for Christ's name's sake," Matt. 10: 22; then, Christ "will be admired in his saints" that were thus hated, 2 Thess. 1: 10. We are here "made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men; as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things," 1 Cor. 4: 9, 13. Men "separate us from their company, and reproach us, and cast out our names as evil," Luke 6: 22. But we shall then be as much gazed at for our glory; and they will be shut out of the church of the saints, and separated from us, whether they will or not. We can scarcely pray in our families, or sing praises to God, but our voice is a vexation to them, how must it torment them then, to see us praising and rejoicing, while they are howling and lamenting! You, brethren, who can now attempt no work of God, without losing the love of the world, consider, you shall have none in heaven but will further your work, and join heart and voice with you in your everlasting joy and praise. Till then, "possess ye your souls in patience," Luke 21: 19. Bind all reproaches as a crown to your heads. Esteem them greater riches than the world's treasures. "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are

troubled, rest with'' Christ, 2 Thess. 1: 6, 7.

We shall then rest from all our sad divisions and unchristian quarrels with one another. How lovingly do thousands live together in heaven, who lived at variance upon earth! There is no contention, because none of this pride, ignorance, or other corruption. There is no plotting to strengthen our party, nor deep designing against our brethren. If there be sorrow or shame in heaven, we shall then be both sorry and ashamed to remember all this carriage on earth; as Joseph's brethren were to behold him, when they remembered their former unkind usage. Is it not enough that all the world is against us, but we must also be against one another? O happy days of persecution, which drove us together love, whom the sunshine of liberty and prosperity crumbles into dust by our contentions! O happy day of the saints' rest in glory, when, as there is one God, one Christ, one Spirit, so we shall have one heart, one church, one employment for ever!

We shall then rest from our participation of our brethren's sufferings. The church on earth is a mere hospital; some groaning under a dark understanding, some under an insensible heart, some languishing under unfruitful weakness, and some bleeding for miscarriages and wilfulness; some crying out of their poverty, some groaning under pains and infirmities, and some bewailing a whole catalogue of calamities. But a far greater grief it is, to see our dearest and most intimate friends turned aside from the truth of Christ, continuing their neglect of Christ and their souls, and nothing will awaken them out of their security; to look on an ungodly father or mother, brother or sister, wife or husband, child or friend, and think how certainly they shall be in hell for ever, if they die in their present unregenerate state; to think of the gospel departing, the glory taken from our Israel, poor souls left willingly dark and destitute, and blowing out the light that should guide them to salvation. Our day of rest will free us from all this, "and the days of mourning shall be ended: then thy people, O Lord, shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of thy planting, the work of thy hands, that thou mayest be glorified," Isa. 60: 20, 21.

Then we shall rest from all our now personal sufferings. This may seem a small thing to those who live in ease and prosperity; but to the daily afflicted soul it makes the thoughts of heaven delightful. Oh the dying life we now live! as full of sufferings as of days and hours! Our Redeemer leaves this measure of misery upon us, to make us know for what we are beholden, to mind us of what we should else forget, to be serviceable to his wise and gracious designs, and advantageous to our full and final

recovery. Grief enters at every sense, and seizes every part and power of flesh and spirit. What noble part is there, that suffereth its pain or ruin alone? But sin and flesh, dust and pain, will all be left behind together. Oh blessed tranquility of that region, where there is nothing but sweet continued peace! O healthful place, where none are sick! O happy land, where all are kings! O holy assembly, where all are priests! How free a state, where none are servants, but to their supreme Monarch! The poor man shall no more be tired with his labours: "no more hunger or thirst," cold or nakedness; no pinching frosts, or scorching heats. Our faces shall no more be pale or sad, no more breaches in friendship, nor parting of friends asunder; no more trouble accompanying our relations, nor voice of lamentation heard in our dwellings: "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes," Rev: 7: 16, 17. O my soul, bear with the infirmities of thine earthly tabernacle, it will be thus but a little while; the sound of thy Redeemer's feet is even at the door.

We shall also rest from all the toil of duties. The conscientious magistrate, parent, and minister, cries out, "Oh the burden that lieth upon me!" Every relation, state, and age, hath variety of duties; so that every conscientious Christian cries out, "Oh thy burden! Oh, my weakness that makes it burdensome!" But our remaining rest will ease us of the burdens.

Once more, we shall rest from all these troublesome afflictions, which necessarily accompany our absence from God. The trouble that is mixed in our desires and hopes, our longings and waitings, shall then cease. We shall no more look into our cabinet, and miss our treasure; into our hearts, and miss our Christ; no more seek him from ordinance to ordinance; but all be concluded in a most blessed and full enjoyment.

Letter

by Rev. Neil Cameron

(To Donald MacMaster, Strontian)

S.S. Grenadier.
20th January 1894.

My beloved friend,

I am on my way to Tighnabruaich for the Sabbath.

I am getting anxious to hear how you are and how the Lord is pleased to deal with you in the hour of your bodily weakness. You are before my mind night and day but that is worth nothing. My doubts about my own state before the Judge of Eternity are every day increasing and still such is the stupid carnality of my mind that I seem so careless under these doubts.

What a fearful thing eternity without peace with God through Christ must be! Oh, that Christ were made to us what He was to those who believed on Him! "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious." "He will satisfy the desire of every thing that lives," and the desire after a saving union with and a saving knowledge of Christ shall surely be satisfied. I hope, my dear friend, in the midst of your sickness and weakness "that He (Christ) is the strength of your heart. His atoning death and the efficacy of His blood shed for the remission of the sins of many is the only foundation of the good hope through grace which shall not be put to shame. It may be very small even like the grain of mustard seed, still if this be its kind it will bring forth fruit after its kind."

The Lord grant that you may be raised from the gates of death and that you may go to the gates of the daughter of Zion to show forth the praises of the Lord.

The state of the poor church of Christ in Scotland is heart-rending. Her once pretended friends wounding her and she continuing to go further astray from her God and His commandments every day. The Lord grant the Spirit of grace and supplications be poured upon us.

Plead with the Lord for His poor Kirk in Scotland. She had glorious days and you saw them but the enemies have set up their ensigns for signs in the Lord's sanctuary. All this has come upon us because we have sinned so grievously against the Covenant God of our fathers. Pray for me.

Kind regards to all enquiring friends — as if mentioned by name and Fond love to Mary (Allan), Miss MacMaster and yourself.

I remain,

Your loving friend,

Neil Cameron.

A Faithful Minister of the Gospel

Rev. Neil MacIntyre, Edinburgh

Mr MacIntyre was born at Lochside, Fort William on 15th February 1867, and was the youngest son of James MacIntyre and Mary MacMaster. His mother was a sister of Donald MacMaster, Kilmallie, who was well-known and respected as a bright and shining Christian in his day, and one who, whole-heartedly, cast in his lot with the Free Presbyterian Church in 1893. Mr MacIntyre often spoke with tenderness of his uncle, and, from his references to him, one could easily gather that they were knit together in a union which is more lasting than an earthly relationship. In early manhood the subject of this sketch left his home to lead a sea-faring life,

but prior to this he must have been exemplary in his life, and of good report among those who were lovers of Zion, for he would often be asked to lead the singing in the Free Church, Kilmallie, in the absence of the regular precentor. The steamers on which he served were sailing to and from Glasgow, and, as his sister had a house there, he made his home with her. About this time he began attending Hope Street Free Gaelic Church when the memory of the Rev. Alexander Urquhart who died in 1886 was still green in the congregation, and when not a few were there of the seals of his ministry. It was there that he became a member in full communion. We are not in a position to state with certainty what were the means in the hand of the Holy Spirit in bringing about a saving change, but that that change took place was amply evident during a long and consistent life.

At the time of the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892 which changed the relationship of the once-glorious Free Church of Scotland to her Creed and Constitution, he was a student in Arts, studying with a view to the ministry, and took an active and intelligent interest in those matters which led to the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At the time when the Assembly of 1893 refused by an overwhelming majority to rescind that notorious Act he was acting as supply in the Free Church Congregation of Millhouse, now known as Kames, and, being present at the Assembly as a spectator, he was an eye-witness to Rev. Donald Macfarlane tabling his Protest against the action of the Assembly and thus separating himself in a public manner from a Church which had accepted the Declaratory Act. There are many yet living, who often heard Mr MacIntyre give a detailed account, both in the pulpit and in private conversation, of what took place at the Assembly, and what was Mr Macfarlane's own understanding of what took place, and what was his position now. When Mr Macfarlane walked out of the Assembly Mr MacIntyre followed him, and arranged with him to go to Millhouse for the weekend. What followed has often been told and is only referred to here in order to show the part Mr MacIntyre had in bringing out the first congregation which joined the Free Presbyterian movement. He, and those like-minded with him, were under no illusion as to the meaning of the Declaratory Act and the effect it had on the relationship of the Church to its Constitution as the following Bond, to which his name is appended, shows:— "A meeting of Divinity and Arts students opposed to the Declaratory Act was held in Glasgow on the evening of Wednesday, 2nd November. The finding of the meeting was as follows:— Seeing the Declaratory Act is now an integral part of the Constitution of the Free

Church of Scotland we, the undersigned, have ceased to prosecute our studies with a view to the ministry of that Church as now constituted.” Some of the men whose names are appended to this document proved afterwards to be modern examples of the sons of Ephraim, but to Mr MacIntyre and others it was given to be faithful to the end, and in an uncompromising manner to hold up the testimony then raised. After the Free Presbyterian Church was organised and theological tutors appointed, Mr MacIntyre studied Divinity at Gairloch under Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A. (afterwards Professor Mackay), and Rev. Donald Beaton, and was licensed by the Northern Presbytery at Portree on 9th August 1899.

On 11th October 1899, Mr MacIntyre was ordained at Glendale, Isle of Skye. The Call was signed by 1,100, and the parish which is a large one, was difficult to work, there being none, at that time, of the modern facilities for travelling to which we are now accustomed. He had other trials, which are incident to the life of a godly minister, but over which we must draw a veil here. He was, however, supported by the whole congregation, and encouraged by the presence in public and the prayers in secret at a Throne of Grace of a godly band of praying men and women, between whom and their minister there existed a bond of union which had its spring in a spiritual relish for the doctrines of grace and an unswerving faithfulness to a Scriptural Creed. Some time after being ordained at Glendale he was married to Miss Annie Mackay from Fearn, who survived him, and who proved a faithful and efficient help-meet to him during a long married life.

After labouring for nine years in Glendale, Mr MacIntyre saw it as his duty to accept a Call to Stornoway where he was inducted on 17th June 1908 and remained for fifteen years. On 31st May 1923 he was inducted to the Free Presbyterian Congregation of Edinburgh which charge he held until his retiral, owing to advancing years, in January 1950. In both Stornoway and Edinburgh, as well as in Glendale, he was loved and respected as a Christian minister, and he performed the duties of a pastor in a faithful and zealous manner, manifesting that he had the glory of God and the good of immortal souls in view, and there are not a few in the Church triumphant and some yet in the Church militant who have acknowledged that they heard the Gospel as the Gospel of their salvation, for the first time, from his lips.

The whole of Mr MacIntyre's ministerial life was characterised by usefulness to the Cause of Christ in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church, in one form or another. He was greatly in demand at Communion Services throughout the Church, not merely in the early days of the Church

when ministers were comparatively few, but throughout a long life until increasing infirmities caused him to curtail his activities. From 1905 till 1923 he acted as Clerk of the Western Presbytery and for a number of years afterwards as Clerk of the Southern Presbytery. In 1911, as the Church's Deputy, he visited Canada and the United States, of which he supplied an interesting account to the Synod. When Rev. N. Cameron passed away Mr MacIntyre was appointed as Convener of the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee. This office he ably filled until he found his strength not equal to the strain which it involved along with the oversight of his own congregation. He also took an active interest in the education of the young and at School Board elections, both in Duirinish, Skye, and in Stornoway, he "topped the poll" and for a considerable time in both places he acted as Chairman of the Board.

As a man, Mr MacIntyre was greatly beloved by those who had the privilege of knowing him. Dignity, consistency to his profession, and humility, blended beautifully in him, so that when in the company of people who had no sympathy with his religious views or ecclesiastical position, as on many an occasion he had to be, he was always the Christian minister, while in his intercourses with his own congregation in the various places where he laboured, he was the personification of friendliness and sympathy, encouraging where that was necessary, and administering reproof where he saw occasion for it. Thus he earned for himself, without ever soliciting it, the verdict given by not a few in our hearing — "A Christian and a gentleman."

As a preacher, he was doctrinal, experimental and practical. He had a logical mind and a keen insight into the truth, thus enabling him with accuracy to divide a text, present its doctrines, its relationship to the context, and its inferences; while, as he proceeded, he made application; and the whole, delivered with a clear well-modulated voice, never striving after effect, made even careless hearers listen. His sermons carried the conviction that he was, by no means, a stranger to the desperate wickedness of the heart or the temptations of Satan, but could say with the Apostle, "We are not ignorant of his devices;" yet, he knew the Refuge and the rich consolations of the everlasting Gospel. While all the doctrines revealed in the Scriptures got their due place in his preaching, yet one would notice a special emphasis laid on the Fall of man, the glory of the Person of Christ, His Priesthood, the work of the Holy Spirit, and Justification by Faith.

That he had a clear grasp of the doctrines of the Bible and of the reason why the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland took up a separate posi-

tion he himself has often proved by his statements and his conduct, and many incidents could be related to show how he could defend its position. One such incident must suffice just now. Mr MacIntyre, as a student was travelling to Inverness on board a steamer plying on the Caledonian Canal when he was accosted by a gentleman who had evidently swallowed the "assured results" of the Higher Critics. From casual remarks the conversation developed into a keen argument on the veracity of the Bible and on the merits or demerits of the Declaratory Act which caused Mr MacIntyre to be oblivious to the crowd of listeners which gathered round them on the deck, till his opponent, with all his show of learning, finding himself no match for the arguments presented by Mr MacIntyre with such logical precision, thought discretion the better part of valour, and removed himself to another part of the steamer. When the crowd was dispersing a tall good-looking gentleman stepped up to Mr MacIntyre and congratulated him on the able way in which he stood up for the Scriptures as the Word of God. The gentleman made himself known as Bishop Ryle of Liverpool, and on discovering that Mr MacIntyre was studying for the ministry, he, on parting with him, gave him a monetary token of his appreciation of his stand for the Word of God. In all the conflicts in which the Free Presbyterian Church was involved he stood firm as a rock, being swayed neither to the right hand nor to the left by the sophistries of men, whether they were within or without the Church, who endeavoured by pleasing visions of the benefits of an outward union, or by pretence of a keener insight into the position of the Church, to drag it from its moorings, and, perhaps, little realising the catastrophe which their conduct, if followed, would involve. Mr MacIntyre had many experiences of this nature, but whenever one met him, or whatever troubles the Church was harassed with, one could count on finding him, what he was from the early days of the Church — a genuine Free Presbyterian, faithful to the position of his Church, and faithful to his ordination vows.

He was equally at home in English and Gaelic, and he also had a gift for writing, though, to the great regret of his friends, it was not used as often as one would wish. His published pieces consist of a large number of obituaries in various issues of the Free Presbyterian Magazine, thirteen sermons published in the same periodical, and "Lectures on the Bible", originally given to his congregation in Glendale, and subsequently published in Volume IX of The Free Presbyterian Magazine. He also read a most interesting paper on "The Free Presbyterian Church" at the Commemoration Meetings of the Synod in 1943. This was afterwards published in a volume entitled "Commemoration Papers."

The writer visited him frequently during the last few years of his life and was much struck with his cheerful demeanour, together with his resignation to the will of the Lord, and the calmness with which he awaited the Lord's appointed time. On one occasion, when listening to his exercises, we had the impression that it would be the last time we would see him. In this we were mistaken as we had the privilege of calling on him once again, but one could discern that his affections were set on things above where Christ is, and that the soul was about ready to take its flight to the house of many mansions. Though in a frail condition for some years, the end came rather suddenly. A few days of utter physical helplessness, together with loss of speech, but apparently conscious of what took place around him, he continued till Friday night, 11th September 1953. While family worship was being conducted in his room, he quietly breathed his last, and entered, we fully believe, into the joy of his Lord, there to take part in the worship of the Upper Sanctuary.

It is worthy of note that there was a warm friendship of over sixty years between Mr MacIntyre and Rev. D. Beaton. The latter survived him by two months, and, from the point of view of usefulness and faithfulness to the Cause of Christ, it may be said of them that they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; and the faithful fail from among the children of men." — J.C.

(Rev Neil MacIntyre's obituary, written by Rev. Donald Campbell, his successor as minister of the Edinburgh Congregation, will be found in the Free Presbyterian Magazine Volume 59, pp 1-9).

Looking Back After a Hundred Years

Part 2

by Rev. K. D. MacLeod

The first part of this article sketched the course of declension in the Free Church of Scotland during the fifty years from the Disruption of 1843, and gave a brief examination of the Declaratory Act which was passed by the 1892 General Assembly of the Free Church on May 26.

At a meeting of the Constitutional Party that evening Rev William Balfour declared that the time for separation had now come. Rev Murdo Macaskill, possibly the man closest to being a leader of the party at that stage, then said, "I never thought or dreamt of a disruption." This remark sounded strange from someone who had up till then taken such an outspoken line against the Declaratory Act and against the general declension within the Free Church. But it appears that "he was not always con-

sistent with this public attitude in his conduct of things'', at least when he had been a minister in Greenock. The outcome of this meeting, and of others which followed, was a decision to fight on within the Free Church. For that particular year those who objected most to the Declaratory Act were protected by a dissent and protest which contained an appeal to the General Assembly of the following year. Protests were also engrossed in the records of various Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries.

When 1893 came round the moves against the Declaratory Act were rebuffed by the General Assembly, by a majority even more overwhelming than in 1892. Immediately afterwards Rev Donald Macfarlane, who had already ascertained that none of his ministerial brethren were prepared to separate, with the exception of Rev Donald Macdonald, read his Protest against the introduction of the Declaratory Act. By his Protest he separated from the Free Church, now so definitely committed to a line of defection from the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, and therefore from the Scriptures also. The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (originally called the Free Church Presbytery of Scotland) was formally established on July 28, 1893, when the two ministers and Alexander Macfarlane formed the first Presbytery of the Church and signed a deed of Separation from the Free Church.

Were they justified in their separation? The serious tendencies of the Declaratory Act, which were outlined in the first part of this article, might indeed seem sufficient justification. However, the fact that such a change in the constitution was *ultra vires* (going beyond the power of the Church) was used to justify their remaining in the Free Church by that part of the Constitutional Party which did not separate, especially as the Formula for ministers had not been altered. But the fact of the matter was that, in practice at least, the creed of the Church was now *the Westminster Confession of Faith as read in the light of the Declaratory Act*, and men were now entitled to sign the *Confession of Faith* "in view of the Declaratory Act".

Much play was made of the argument, made explicit in a resolution of the 1894 General Assembly, that the provisions of the Declaratory Act were not binding on any who did not wish to avail themselves of the doctrinal relaxation which it gave: "Whereas the Declaratory Act of 1892 was passed to remove difficulties and scruples felt by some in reference to the declaration of belief required from persons who receive licence, or are admitted to office in this Church, the Assembly hereby declare that the statements of doctrine contained in the said Act are not therefore imposed upon any of the Church's office-bearers as part of the standards of the

Church, but that those who are licensed or ordained to office in this Church, in answering the questions and subscribing the Formula, are entitled to do so in view of the said Declaratory Act”.

The Free Church minister of Halkirk, for instance, made a statement along these lines to his congregation, and it was reported in the local press. A reply appeared shortly afterwards which showed that his freedom, and the freedom of those who thought in the same way, was not as real as he imagined: “Mr Fraser states that this Act is not imposed on him and does not bind him. . . . If anyone applies for admission to communion in the Church Mr Fraser may endeavour to ascertain the knowledge of the applicant by asking him or her a few questions from the Shorter Catechism. If it happens that some of the questions asked assert the imputation of Adam’s guilt to his posterity, and the electing love of God, what can an examining minister say if the applicant asserts his belief, according to the Declaratory Act, that no one is foreordained to death irrespective of their own sin, and that God loves all men? If the minister is true to his own convictions he will refuse admission to the applicant. If the matter is brought before the Church Courts their finding must necessarily be, that, although the minister is at liberty to hold the strict view of these doctrines, yet he is not at liberty to refuse the privileges of the Church to those who hold views of these doctrines that are given in the Declaratory Act. Where is now the minister’s freedom from the binding obligations of the Act?”

The Formula, by which office-bearers formally affirmed their beliefs, certainly remained unaltered, at least for ministers. However, it is clear that the leaders of the Free Church did not consider such a change necessary as the Formula could now be signed “in view of the Declaratory Act”. The inconsistency between the Formula and the Declaratory Act must have been obvious to all. But there was a difficulty: to alter the Formula was to run the very definite risk of splitting the Free Church far more drastically than in the separation which took place in 1893. The motion accepted by the Confession of Faith Committee in 1892 clearly reflects this concern: “That the Committee, while recognising the value of the Declaratory Act, and the important purpose it is fitted to serve, find it difficult to introduce any reference to the Act into the Formula which would not imply the acceptance and approval of those who subscribe it of all the doctrinal statements now referred to, and may find in them a serious obstacle to their signing the Formula. The Committee consider that it is not the design of the Declaratory Act to add anything to the *Confession* or to lay on any party any new burden. The primary purpose of

the Act being to afford relief, not to impose any new restriction, the Committee are of opinion that the purpose is sufficiently served by the passing of the Act in question, and that any reference to it in the Formula is unnecessary, and would be fraught with serious risks." This policy, in pragmatic terms, was largely successful; the larger part of the Constitutional Party considered the Act "inoperative".

It is now, of course, perfectly clear that a policy of non-separation at any price has ended with incorporation in the present Church of Scotland, where it would seem that both in doctrine and practice anything goes except the refusal, either to ordain women to the eldership, or to baptise infants. Thus the only serious question to be answered is, Was it right to separate in 1893, rather than in 1900 when the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches united to become the United Free Church? The above discussion indicates that the time of crucial change in the structure of the Free Church took place with the passing of the Declaratory Act, and so the proper time for separation was when it was clear that that change was irreversible. But for a reasonably detached view we may turn to Principal Rainy's major biographer, P Carnegie Simpson. Referring to the secession of 1893, he says, "They expected a far larger ministerial following, and had a right to do so. One has more respect for the two ministers and their associates than for those who had used the most violent language and then, at the last moment, themselves drew back." And John Macpherson, by then a United Free Church minister, in commenting on the continuing Free Church, said that "most of those composing it ought in consistency to have gone out with that secession" (that of 1893).

Dr John Kennedy of Dingwall has been quoted in support of staying on in the Free Church in 1893, on the strength of his remarks in his *Unionism and the Union* when he had addressed the pro-union party in the first union controversy over twenty years earlier: "Of your ministers, elders, deacons and people, not a few are resolved not to forsake the . . . Free Church, and are resolved not to separate from you till you have parted from them by being actually incorporated with those whose fellowship you have preferred . . . and if there is to be a disruption, the act shall be yours." This was exactly the course pursued by those in the Free Church who did not join the union of 1900 — except that the circumstances were very significantly different. There was no question of change of doctrine or constitution between 1863 and 1873, apart from actual union with the United Presbyterian Church. In 1892, on the other hand, a fundamental change in the constitution had taken place. Certainly the Church had acted beyond its powers in making that change, and

the result was inconsistent, but the consequences in practice should have been obvious.

This was, however, something that Dr Kennedy had in fact foreseen. In private conversation, at least, he had referred to what he called the *advanced party* getting out from under the Confession of Faith, yet remaining in the Free Church. "No, they cannot," he went on, "nor can they alter it, but they can frame an Act modifying its doctrines, as has been done by the UP Church . . . I believe that the Lord has a remnant in our land who will not brook a creed framed to suit and to shelter men of Arminian and Rationalistic opinions, a remnant that will separate, and, as I think, the separating party will be found especially in the districts lying north and west of the Caledonian Canal. I am naming it prospectively the Caledonian Church. . . . Perhaps I shall have joined the Church of the first-born before the crises comes, but that it will come within a very few years appears to me inevitable."

Inevitable the separation indeed was if men were to hold to Scriptural principles. To remain in the Free Church was to endanger the Scottish testimony to the accurate statement of Scripture doctrine, not only for that time, but for all time to come. To separate was to preserve the testimony intact for that generation and to hand it down to the next, however few there might be who would hold on to it. The necessity remains in each generation to remain faithful to that testimony. It is our duty too; may we get grace to be thus faithful!

Notes and Comments

Euthanasia

The House of Lords recently came to a very far-reaching decision, when they ruled that doctors could stop feeding Tony Bland, a Hillsborough disaster victim, who had lain for three years in what is called a persistent vegetative state. He died ten days after the artificial feeding was stopped. Had the House of Lords not given its legal ruling the doctors in the hospital could have faced a charge of murder for depriving him of food. In view of the pressure which has gone on for many years for the legalisation of euthanasia, it is not difficult to envisage what the outcome will be. There will no doubt be increased pressure for the legalisation of euthanasia.

Euthanasia is spoken of today as 'dying with dignity', but it cannot be called a dignified death to have one's life snuffed out, either by one's own hand — which is suicide, or by the hand of another — which is murder. The public are being conditioned to look on euthanasia as a com-

passionate way of dealing with certain very ill patients. It is a strange compassion which is being promoted by those men — men who have lost sight of eternity, and the God of eternity to whom they must give in their account.

Recently the Dutch parliament voted by 91 to 45 votes to permit euthanasia under strict guidelines. The patient must be suffering unbearable and incurable pain, request death repeatedly, be in a clear state of mind and a second medical opinion must be obtained. The Tony Bland case would only meet one out of these four criteria.

In view of the Tony Bland case, a special House of Lords Committee is being set up to enquire into the ethical and legal issues surrounding what are called 'right to die' cases. It is thought that peers who are known to take a strong moral stance on the issue, will not be selected for the Committee. It is almost certain that Britain will follow Holland down a road of no return to the barbarism that existed before the light of the Gospel dawned on our nation. The reason for coming to this sad conclusion is that such decisions are no longer based on the Moral Law but on the prevailing opinion in society. May the Lord hasten the day when the light of the Gospel will once more dawn on this sin-darkened land of ours.

Drink laws need Reform

The leader in the *Daily Express* in the middle of February called for the reform of Scotland's licensing laws. It stated that when Scotland's licensing laws were liberalised, it was hailed as a breakthrough for modern thinking. Now, it says, not a few Scots are having second thoughts. It has been found that violence and late-night drinking go hand in hand, stretching police resources to the limit. The leader writer in the *Daily Express* favours adjustments to the present law, which would give residents the right of appeal against the granting of ultra-late licences, and he states that, unless the present excesses are curbed, then more draconian measures will have to be taken. It is good to think that people are, at last, waking up to the evil consequences of the relaxation of the drinking laws, and are calling for reform. Had a little wisdom prevailed earlier these evil consequences could have been foreseen and avoided. But it is better late than never.

Murder of James Bulger

The heart of the nation was moved at the tragic murder of two-year-old James Bulger. Two teenagers have been charged with the murder. Crime has been escalating in many parts of the country and murder has

almost become commonplace, yet all this hardly prepared the minds of people for the event that has taken place. It is true that juvenile crime has become endemic in some of our cities, yet it could hardly have been envisaged that a child of two years would have been murdered so tragically.

Questions are now being asked how it is that things have descended to this level. What has happened to our country, that such a crime would be perpetrated? The answer should not be far to seek, if the people of the land, and the authorities truly seek an answer.

The moral decline of the nation did not begin yesterday, but many years ago. A time came in the history of our nation when moral values were rejected by a generation which sought only the gratification of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. It needed no prophet to predict what the outcome would be, and the results of that libertine age are now upon us. There is no need to hold up our hands in horror. We willed it, in that, instead of upholding the moral values handed down to us, we did nothing to prevent the decline and legislated as a nation in favour of the new outlook. As a consequence the nation has suffered in nearly all aspects of its national life, and is likely to suffer even more still. But we must look behind the debased moral outlook of the nation. Why were the moral values of former generations abandoned? This can be traced to the rejection of spiritual values which occurred even earlier in our history as a nation. The Word of God was rejected by many in the nation as the rule to direct them. The gospel of God's grace was despised, and men became their own saviours, and their own will became their only guide. Moral deterioration inevitably follows spiritual apostacy from God, and so it came to pass.

In the light of these things the remedy for the nation is quite clear. God is saying in His own Word: "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." What the nation needs is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, if it is to be saved from destruction, and from perishing in its own corruption. No palliative measures will do at this stage. It is a radical remedy that is necessary, and this can only come from a rich outpouring of God's Spirit upon us as a people. Let us plead for it.

Cardinal Hume and the 'conversion' of England

It is thought that the Roman Catholic Church is close to agreeing to a formula which would allow Anglican clergy, opposed to the ordination of women, to join the R.C. Church, while retaining their priesthood and elements of Anglican identity, according to a *Times* report. Cardinal Hume's comment on this proposed reception of these Anglo-Catholics

was: "This could be the conversion of England for which we have prayed all these years." May the Cardinal's prayers never be fulfilled, as this would mean plunging England once again into the Dark Ages from which it was delivered at the Reformation. It is good to know that even in the Church of England the Lord still has a remnant who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. They need our prayers in these days of gross apostasy from the doctrines of the Bible which had filled England with the gospel light at the Reformation. May the boastfulness of the R.C. Cardinal make us only more earnest at a throne of grace for the overthrow of the Papal system, which God has promised in His Word.

Mission News

In the goodness of the Most High, there has been an excellent rainfall in a great part of Matabeleland. The rivers and dams are full, the people are busy in their fields and are hoping for a good harvest. It is also a pleasure for the people to see their cattle grazing once more in the fields.

In one district of Binga the Army Worm has worked havoc destroying the early crop. The Agritex officials came to spray the area, but the people say the worms had gone underground before the spraying began. They may reappear when the second crop begins to grow.

Mbumba Hospital is very short-staffed and a large number of patients with the dreaded AIDS have been admitted. Sister Coote has asked the Foreign Missions Committee to appeal for nurses.

Sister Anne Zekveld says, 'There is an encouraging side to the work. I went to the Mobile Clinic at Magazi at the end of last month and was so pleased to see our little Samuel again, a chubby, smiling, little 3.2kg, looking very bright, and his mother looking very happy. Samuel had been a tiny little premature baby who gave the staff a great deal of anxiety. He was so weak and just when they thought he was going to survive he would have a relapse, and almost fade away. However, the little fellow revived, no doubt in answer to prayer. Everyone was delighted when he was well enough to go home. His mother asked Sister Coote to give him a name and she chose 'Samuel'. We hope he will be a blessing.

There is no news at hand of Sengera, but we know there is a great deal of work going on there, and we look forward to hearing of the progress being made in preparing a clinic for immediate use and dividing up the hospital building into appropriate units. The Committee has agreed that a site be bought in Blantyre, Malawi, and a house be built for the use of the Mission European staff, deputies or other visitors.

Another matter of interest is that the F.M. Committee received a letter from the Rev Baruch's congregation in Israel. They said they hoped to publish the Mothers' Catechism in Hebrew at a cost of £800. It was agreed to donate £800 for this purpose.

It has been arranged in Zimbabwe that eleven of our friends there, including the Rev P Mzamo, the Rev A B Ndebele, and the Rev and Mrs Z. Mazvabo travel to Scotland for the Church Centenary and the Synod. The remaining friends are members of the Zimbabwean Presbytery. A few will stop off in Holland and attend the Mbumba Zending Meeting in Utrecht, where around seven thousand people gather and provide the generous donations for our Mission.

The Mbumba Zending Committee have also offered to give special donations for the Kenya mission for the first two years, to help establish the work there. This is a most generous gesture.

The Rev Dr J. R. Tallach, Clerk of the F.M.C., flies D.V. from London on March 2nd as the Church's Deputy to Kenya, where he will spend three weeks, then to Zimbabwe for three weeks and finally to Malawi for two weeks. We should be much in prayer for Dr Tallach's safety while travelling, and also that he be given wisdom for the many problems he will face.

— J. N.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Southern: At Glasgow on 13th April at 6 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 4th May at 11 a.m.

Demission of Charge

At a meeting of the Skye Presbytery on 9th February, 1993, it was noted that Rev A. M. Cattnach gave notice of his demission of the Pastoral Charge of the Staffin congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and his severance from the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

(Rev.) Fraser MacDonald
Clerk of Presbytery

Aberdeen Congregation — Resumption of Services

Free Presbyterian services have now resumed in the Aberdeen congregation. All are warmly invited to attend.

Sabbath Services — 11.30 a.m. & 6 p.m.

Room 7, New Kings Building, Kings College, University of Aberdeen, Regents Walk, Aberdeen.

We are grateful to the University authorities for allowing us to use their facilities. Those who left the Free Presbyterian Church in 1989 to form a new denomination are still occupying our property in Aberdeen and whilst pleading the cause of liberty have refused to allow continuing Free Presbyterians to worship in their own building. Are these actions consistent with Christian principles? Let A.P.C.'s read Leviticus 19: 13 and Mark 10: 19 and then examine their own consciences.

For further information

Please contact the Interim Moderator Rev J. Goldby, Tel: 08083 357. Local enquiries may be made to Mr R. Bruce, Tel: 0224 868196.

(Rev) J. Goldby

Ballifeary Home of Rest

The Ballifeary Home of Rest Committee wish to draw the attention of any elderly people in the Church who anticipate residing in the Home to the necessity of filling in and submitting the appropriate form (available from the Matron), so that their names may be put on the waiting list. They should be clear that this does not require them to take up the first vacancy offered to them.

(Rev) James R. Tallach

Ingwenya Mission Appeal

WANTED URGENTLY

Teachers for John Tallach Secondary School

Qualifications: University degree with teaching subjects suitable for school level, and/or Teacher Training Diploma.

Contract: 2 years.

Mission teachers from overseas **may** be asked to (1) take Bible and/or English as well as their own subjects. (2) Assist with extra-mural activities, e.g. Sabbath School, dispensary.

Reasonable accommodation with water and electricity is provided.

Applicants should apply as soon as possible. It takes 3-6 months to get a work permit.

Matron and Nursing Staff Appeal

A Matron and Nursing Staff are required for Sengera Hospital, Kenya. The Foreign Mission Committee would be pleased to hear from suitably qualified staff for the above posts. It is our hope that the Hospital will open, the Lord willing, in March 1993.

(Rev.) James R. Tallach

Appeal for Centenary Commemoration Fund

Due to the high cost of providing accommodation and a meal for those attending the Centenary meeting in Edinburgh on 25th May (D.V.), and to avoid an excessive drain on Church Funds, the Centenary Committee appeal to those who will receive these benefits to contribute something towards the cost. Donations can be put in the local Church plate in an envelope marked for the Fund or sent to the General Treasurer, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Rod A. Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE wishes to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Ballifeary Home of Rest: Miss E. Gunn's Executry, £3000.

Centenary (Publication): Mr D.K.C., £50.

Centenary (Commemoration): Mrs M.C., Glasgow £30; Mr D.K.C. £50.

Dominions and Overseas: Friends, Italy per Rev D.R. £86.69.

Eastern Europe: Anon., Glasgow £10.

Foreign Mission: Anon., Glasgow £1000; A Friend, Glasgow £10 for Mbuma; Mr D.K.C. £200 for Kenya.

The Treasurers of the following congregations wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Edinburgh: Anon., £100 for Kenya and Malawi Mission; Anon., £100 for Manse Expenses.

Glasgow (St. Jude's): Miss J.K. £10; Miss M. MacA. £8, both for Centenary Fund (Publication); Anon., £20; Anon., £100; Anon., £10; Miss J.C., £25; Miss MacC. £20; Miss J. MacD. £25; Mrs J.K. £10; Miss M. MacA. £12; Miss M. MacI. £10 all for Centenary Fund (Commemoration); Anon., £30; Anon., £10, both for Eastern Europe; Anon., £30 for Foreign Mission; Anon., £20 for Foreign Mission Famine Relief.

Greenock: Anon., £20 for Congr. Fds. per Rev L.M.

Larne: Anon., £10 for Lord's Work in Kenya; Anon., £10 for Lord's Work in Italy, per Rev. D. Ross; Anon., £10 for Free Presbyterian Witness in Malawi; Anon., £10 for Eastern Europe Fund; Anon., donation £40, where most needed.

North Harris: MacD., Kyles £50 for Sust. Fd., £25 for Home Mission Fd, £25 where most needed, by envelope in plate; C.M.L., Cluer £5, by envelope in plate; M.M., Cluer £10 per J.M.L., both for Bus. Fund; Anon., £10 for Hearing Aid Exp.; Friend, Tarbert, £50 for Centenary Commemoration Fund; MacL., Manse Road, £20 for Church Fds., last three by envelope in plate; P.M.L., Grosebay £5 for Bus. Fd. per J.M.L.

Portree: A.C. £1000; Friend £5, both per F.M., Friend £15; Friend £5, both per S.Y.M., all for Sust. Fd.; Friend £10; Friend £15, both per S.Y.M.; Anon., £7; Anon., £6; Anon., £13, last five for Door Coll.; A.N., £4 for Church Bus., last four by envelope in plate.

Raasay: J.M.M. £25, where most needed, per M.D. MacKay; Anon., Inverarish £25 for Car Fd.

South Harris: Friend, Northton £100; Friends, Kentutavig £200 per D. MacKenzie.

Stornoway: M.M., Nuneaton £100 for Famine Relief, £100 for Blind Pupils at Ingwenya; £300 for Stornoway Church Sust. Fd.; A Friend £50 for Sust. Fd.; Friend of the Cause, all per Rev J. MacLeod; C. £100 for Stornoway Congr.; Anon., £10; Anon., £4 both for Sust. Fd.; Anon., £10 for petrol, all per Church plate.