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A Sin-pardoning God

It has pleased God to give to man a revelation of His glory as the infinitely holy Jehovah. The Scriptures of truth make clear to every unbiased and unprejudiced mind the consummate purity and holiness of the being, nature and character of the God of eternity. The revelation given of Him in His holy law brings out the immaculate holiness of His character: the revelation given of Him in the Gospel confirms it. We are faced then with this tremendous and yet glorious truth concerning God — the unstainableness of His holiness. That God ever was, is, and ever shall be, the infinitely glorious, infinitely holy Jehovah, is a truth that we may impugn only to our own ultimate ruin and confusion of face.

From such a revelation of the glory of God we learn the revulsion that is in God to all sin and evil. He is the sin-hating and sin-avenging God. Sin cannot dwell with Him. The prophet Habakkuk had to declare of Him: "Thou are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." He is a consuming fire against sin. Impenitent sinners will find this out to their cost in a lost eternity — "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." The thought of the holiness of the God of eternity ought to strike terror into the hearts of Christ's enemies, and ought to put an awe upon the spirits of God's people. It is with such a God that we have to do. The Lord by His Spirit alone can make the revelation of the glory of His holiness and of the infinite magnitude of sin — as against an infinitely holy God — real to us. May we be led to see sin in its true light as that which God hates and as that which is against God. We must be brought to know this if we are ever to be taken up with the further revelation of God's glory as a sin-pardoning God.

That we find a revelation given in Scripture of God as a sin-pardoning God ought to be a matter of wonder to us. It will be a matter of wonder to the saints in glory throughout eternal ages that God ever found out a

way to pardon sin, iniquity and transgression. They will praise God throughout eternity for finding out that way and providing such a way so that pardon, peace and reconciliation might flow out to poor needy sinners. What will fill their hearts with most joy in heaven is that God's glory remained unsullied while pardoning and blotting out sin. No attribute of God is marred in extending mercy to the guilty.

But what is the way of pardon? God is a sin-pardoning God in Christ. It was at infinite cost that the way was opened for mercy to flow out to the guilty. It was to flow forth to the unworthy and to the hell-deserving through the rent veil of Christ's flesh. His body must be broken, His blood must be shed before pardon and peace could reach the sinner. He must render obedience to the divine law, He must pay the penalty due to sin if His people were to go free. This Christ did in His humiliation in this world. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And now the message can go forth to poor, lost, needy sinners that God is a reconciled God in Christ. He is now willing, for Christ's sake, to pardon sin, iniquity and transgression. Let us then come in our sin-laden, guilty and polluted condition to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness and discover there that God is a sin-pardoning God in Christ and that "the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Synod Sermon

by Rev. Fraser MacDonald, M.A.

(Continued from page 293)

Time will only permit us to speak of one other aspect which the profession of Moses involved. We refer to the triumphant and glorious overthrow of the flower of Egypt at the Red Sea. Grace deals with the resurgence of old enemies from within and without, and we need to learn, that the Spirit of God convinces, not only of sin and of righteousness, but of judgment too, for now is the prince of this world cast out. Whatever the unbelieving fears of Israel were, as they saw their deadly oppressors more determined than ever to devour their prey, Israel's former victories were not to be nullified by this terrifying sight. God opened up a way of escape for them by His miraculous power, "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned" (Hebrews 11:29). There was no contrition in Pharaoh's repentance, nor had he profited by past experience of divine power. The wise are thus taken in their own craftiness, and the Lord has

his enemies in derision. Lured by the passage of the chosen of God through the Red Sea, they pursue, without warrant into that very path, only to be swallowed up in the jaws of death. Now, if we read carefully the holy song that celebrated that victory, we can surely trace the significance of that fact, that the song of the redeemed in glory is designated as "The song of Moses the servant of God and of the Lamb" (Revelation 15:3). This triumphant song exalts God, while it describes graphically and poetically what took place. "Thy right hand, O Lord hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thy excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath which consumed them as stubble" (Exodus 15:6,7).

Read the triumphal ode and see if you can find in it, the least trace of sorrow for the slain, the most meagre compliment to those who fell. No such note can you detect, as in battles between man and man, for this is a song of redemption, in which we read, "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." (Exodus 15:18). Their joy was not tinged with sadness, nor will that holy rapturous song of the redeemed in glory be affected in any such way by the final and eternal destruction of Satan and the impenitent. Carnally minded dignitaries of the church tell us that the very idea of hell is incompatible with that of heaven. Ah, how little they know! How ill disposed are they to hear, let alone consider, the words of John in Revelation chapter 19 verses 1 to 3: "And after those things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying, Alleluia; salvation and glory and honour and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." Swallowed up in the will and enjoyment of God, and sweetly supported by a sense of acquiescence in the **justice** of God, the sighs of the lost will increase, rather than diminish the joy of the ransomed of the Lord.

Fathers and Brethren, by this same grace, we are gathered here tonight, for "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). The magnitude, the marvel, and the mystery of that grace may be gauged (if I may use that term), by considering that the very contemplation of its exhibition and execution afforded ineffable, mutual and boundless joy between the persons of the everlasting Trinity from eternity. This truth we think is

indicated in that sublime passage in the Book of Proverbs, chapter 8, verse 23, where Christ speaks under the figure of wisdom. There we read: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was. When he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was with him, as one brought up with him and I was daily his delight rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." So much then for the confession of Moses — Oh, may it be yours in truth, and may it be mine.

Let us turn now to consider the **nature** of that separation, by which it is best manifested that the church **has** found grace in the sight of God. It evidently lies in the fact of the continued presence of God among them. If He does not go with them, if He does not abide with them, then neither they, nor Moses shall be separated from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. Was it not Moses' very understanding of this, that made him exclaim so fervently, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Exodus 33:15). The measure of this spiritual separation is proportionate to that of the gracious presence of Jehovah among them. Well Moses knew that it could not be accomplished in any other way. Now, without His presence the boundaries between Israel and the world of other nations would soon be broken down, and they would no longer dwell in safety alone. The world is ever seeking to entice the church of God to join with her or, at least, to narrow the gap which ought to exist between them. Spurred on by success in many quarters, she speaks persistently to prevail upon the people of God to compromise.

Prompted by Satan, the god of this world, she endeavours to persuade the church that she is **not** the enemy of God. Little by little, the church too often succumbs to the temptation, and begins to tolerate what God hates. The spirit of the world invades the church, until it becomes a place where worldly men can enjoy her services, and use their association with her for their own carnal ends. The church's witness is thus blurred, and her strength for good withdrawn, in the measure with which worldliness gains a footing. The church may thus fondly think that she is successfully attracting and **overcoming** the world, but vast accessions from the ranks of the unregenerate exert no influence for good, nor can they compensate for the loss of the Divine presence. The highest service therefore, that the true people of God can render to this world, is that of

separation. That may sound paradoxical, but it is true, for carnal 'unsaved believers' make no spiritual or saving impact on the world. Indeed, all too frequently they only help to confirm the ungodly in their conviction, that the gulf between themselves and the truly penitent is not so great after all; that it is merely a matter of degree, and not of nature, and that they and the church have so much in common, that they should unite and agree, rather than be suspicious of one another. Brethren, as the iron and the clay do **not** mix, neither does even the 'respectable' world, and the true church of God. Having stated categorically that a policy of **separation** is not only the best service, but the best witness, to the reality and power of grace received, we must in all fairness offer a word of explanation as to the nature of that separation — which is the work of grace.

I. It is not Pharisaical separation which grace produces. There is such a thing, a 'holier than thou' attitude, and the race of Pharisees is not extinct! We read of them in Isaiah's time. After speaking of their rebellious and unholy activities, over against the outstretched hands of Jehovah, the prophet refers to their language — "Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." "These," says God, "are as smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day" (Isaiah 65:5). This fearful attitude is born of pride and ignorance, a very evil, but very common combination. Pride, spiritual pride, is its ailment and element. It is an abomination and a curse in the sight of God, and leads to the grievous sin of despising others. Beware, my friends, of self conceit, of a self-styled, self-originated authority to judge others. This blind proud posture of hypocritical and hypercritical separation from **all** others, is epitomised in the words of the poor Pharisee, who worshipped God in the temple. Instead of spending more time in extolling himself, under pretext of giving thanks to God, he cuts short his prayer by saying, summarily, "I am not even as this publican" (Luke 18:11). The Saviour declared most clearly the design of the parable, where this Pharisee and his sin are portrayed, by saying, "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others:" (Luke 18:9). Cursed separation it is, that magnifies, and sees with **lynx eye** the sins of others, while blind to their own corrupt and more deadly sins of the spirit, such as envy, pride, malice, guile, evil-speaking and self sufficiency. It is surely a most unenviable attitude which breeds contempt for our fellow men. Are we guilty brethren? Let your own consciences answer.

This much we know, that such is the hypocrisy of our hearts, that we can make ourselves **believe** that we have the prayer of the publican, and even take comfort from it, while we manifest most clearly the conduct and spirit of the Pharisee. A separation of this nature should **never** be attributed to grace, which is calculated above all else to beget within us a deep and deepening sense of our own utter sinfulness and corruption, and a growing **distrust** of ourselves in the sight of an infinitely holy God. The language of grace is 'O what a sinner I **am** — I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies; O, my need of the precious cleansing efficacy of the Blood of Jesus. The sight of the outcast makes me cry, 'There, but for the grace of God go I'.

II. Further, separation from the world on the part of the believer does **not** mean lack of concern for the spiritual, moral, social, physical needs of the world. We may not, like the Pharisee, despise the publican, but we may feel **no** guilt at all on account of our lack of genuine concern for the salvation of our fellow men. If we have received grace from God, it has altered radically our relationship to God, to the godly, and to the ungodly. Possession of grace effects a new and special care for the ungodly. The benevolent love begotten in the soul by the Spirit of God is not inoperative. By its exercise, the ungodly have a place hitherto unknown in heart and prayer, and there is a desire to do what we can to reach such, with the claims of Law and Gospel. A selfish, indifferent, careless attitude is replaced by a deep concern for their salvation. The appeal of monasticism is seen to be but an escape from reality, and the Christian seeks rather to discharge all his duties towards the careless and ungodly in a spirit of tenderness, loyalty and forbearance, praying that his presence and witness in the world may be blessed to them. The ungodly may think it strange that we do not run with them to the same excess of riot, but let them not be able to point to neglect of duty on our part. A conscientious involvement with the affairs of this life, a steady and cheerful discharge of the various tasks and duties common to all, is quite consistent with the separation we speak of. If a man is too holy to labour honestly among his fellow-citizens, his claim to holiness is suspect. If believers allow the agnostic, the humanist, the sceptic, to take over **all** positions of influence in the varied realms of life, his prided separation may be nothing more than a disguised form of indifference and selfishness, or an indication that he is ashamed to own his Lord in the presence of the ungodly. Perhaps the most **telling** condemnation

of sin comes from those who, though working among the ungodly, are seen to be so different from them. Their gracious convictions regarding the sanctity of the ordinances of work and marriage, their unselfish and conscientious fulfilment of duty, their refusal to stoop to anything sordid, fraudulent or questionable, their readiness to suffer loss, rather than gain money by desecrating the Lord's day, and above all, their holy contentment with a life that appears as dull as it is simple, to this pleasure mad generation: **these** are the things that indicate a true and gracious separation from the world that lieth in the wicked one.

III. More positively then, the true separation of the Israel of God cuts much deeper than any mere external separation or witness. By the grace of God, the redeemed of the Lord are under peculiar obligations to their merciful and holy Deliverer, and feel separated in heart, life, spirit and interest. Like Israel of old, they are under the law of One to whom they are incalculably indebted, and by loving, sincere, and universal obedience to His law, they are separated from others. The Christian is a new creature in Christ Jesus; his nature as well as his state is changed; his citizenship is in heaven, he is but a pilgrim here. The secret of true spiritual separation lies in the hidden man of the heart. Faith is the root, as can be seen from Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare that they seek a country." Having been translated from the kingdom of darkness to that of God's dear Son, they are still **in** the world, but **not** of it. They therefore should seek to have **no** complicity with evil, and **no** desire for **intimate** association with unregenerate men. Now in God's family, they love the brethren, they are joined together in Christ, and should be known by their new associates, interests, desires and pursuits.

IV. In the idea of separation there is also that of **devotion**. The godly are not just separate from sin and sinners, but separated **unto God**. Like the vessels of the sanctuary they are consecrated to Him, they belong to Him, they are His in a special way. Therefore, their lives, energies, talents, and all that they have and are ought to be spent in His service. Such service properly estimated, is regarded as an honour. In general terms, this same principle of separation, as the fruit of grace, is declared in Paul's Epistle to Titus, where we read in chapter 2, verses 12,

13, 14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

V. Ecclesiastical separation — Finally, we come to this vexed subject. In our view, it should be obvious to all who are true believers in the Lord Jesus, that they should sever their connection from openly erroneous, profane, frivolous, lax idolatrous teaching **within** the church, as surely as from the spirit of iniquity outwith its bounds. If a child of God finds himself in a denomination where the Word of God is not believed, loved, and honoured in its **totality**, we believe that God's call to such is "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, Touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty." (2nd Cor. 6:17, 18).

With regard to the formation of our beloved church, we may state that that call was heard, and acted upon, by the late Rev. Donald MacFarlane. By the passing of the Declaratory Act in the Free Church Assembly of 1892, he saw and **appreciated** what was at stake. Those who set themselves against the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, set themselves against no solitary article of the faith. It is the Gospel in its integrity and **totality** that is in danger. It is all that is God-honouring, saving, comforting, and edifying that is imperilled. Good and valid were our reasons then for our separation from the old Free Church. A mutilated Bible, and a mutilated Confession of Faith were substituted for the whole Word of God, and the entire unreserved acceptance of the doctrines of the Confession of Faith.

Fathers, and Brethren, we owe it to the generation now inheriting the promises, and to posterity, to conserve and propagate the precious deposit, which, by the grace of God was given to us. Woe then to us, if we **despise** our God given heritage, and woe to any one of us if we **shelter** in our privileges, rather than in Christ, who is the only and glorious Head of His body, the Church, 'for in all things He must have the pre-eminence'.

Christ is All

by Dean Henry Law

22. THE KINSMAN

"If thy brother he waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold." Lev. xxv. 25.

Reader, your heart is hidden from man's view. But surely you are one of human race, and therefore you partake of human need. Sin is your birth-place, and your cradle, and your native air. It is the stream, on which you naturally glide; and its course tends to ruin's depths, except some helper intervene.

But help is ready in the Saviour Christ. There is more power to Him to rescue, than in sin to slay. Say, are these tidings music to your ears? If so, each image will be dear, which shows some feature of delivering grace. This is the value of the Bible-page. It is an ever-varying picture of one precious scene. Faith cannot look, but some new beauty of the beloved Lord appears.

An instance meets us in the Kinsman's rights. The tale is simple. One of Israel's sons is destitute. His goods — his lands — are torn away. The creditor demands. The claim is just. All must be yielded. But is there some Kinsman, whose heart feels pity, and whose means abound? Then he has right to pay the price, and to buy back the forfeited estate. He may not be denied. He speaks, and restitution must be made. Redeeming privilege is his.

Such is the statute of the Jewish realm. But it is more than tender mercy to distress. It shows far more than civil remedy for helpless debt. It is bright transcript of the work of Christ.

Mark the clear parallel. He saw our misery. He felt that no one but a Kinsman could redeem. He tarries not. He puts on our flesh. He visits earth, as man; and so is qualified to rescue our estate. Thus He stands forth the end and substance of the Kinsman's type.

Let us draw nearer. None value this restoring grace, but they, who realise their penury. Many exclaim, Are we thus poor? Nature is blind to nature's meanness. It flaunts in rags, and calls them royal robes. It counts its tinsel to be gold. It proudly stalks, as the possessor of all treasure. Alas! the misery of such conceit! What is the soul as seen by

God? What is its spiritual estate? All innocence is forfeited and sold. The glorious inheritance of righteousness is gone. The title-deeds of heaven are torn away. One property alone remains — an amassed pile of sin. No beggar is so spiritually poor as man.

This is the wreck, which Jesus saw with pitying eyes. His mercy moved Him, and He could not rest. His love constrained Him, and He must relieve. His heart could not forbear. He must redeem.

But mighty hindrances opposed Him. Let them be viewed. Gigantic is the mass of obstacle. The needy ones are offspring of poor earth. Dust is their origin: the worm their brother: the clod their home. But to redeem requires a kindred birth. How can this intervening gulf be spanned? Jesus is God. Infinite distance parts the natures. One sits enthroned on glory's highest seat. The other grovels in earth's lowest mire. One is as great, as God can be. The other is the meanest of the mean.

Jesus may love. But how can He relieve? As God alone, He cannot claim the Kinsman's right. Are then the destitute beyond relief? My soul, are you then hopelessly undone? It must have been so, if Jesu's grace and wisdom had known bounds. But they are vast as Deity. Thus they are able to devise and execute a scheme. Since the Redeemer must be man, Jesus connects Himself with human ties.

My soul, draw nearer to the wondrous fact. What! will He lay aside His glorious robe, and leave His glorious throne? What? will He tread on earth in human nature, and in human form? He, whom no heavens can hold, will He be prisoned in a case of clay? He, whose eternal age has seen no birth, will He be born an infant child of dust? Will He, who made all worlds, be made a man? Will He, who spans infinity, contract to be a humble sojourner in our abode? Will He, whose brightness far outshines the sun, wear our dull rags? Yes. One of the family alone can help:—therefore one of the family He will become.

And verily it is so. There is no fact more true. The Holy Spirit lends His aid. A human frame is marvellously framed. A Virgin mother bears the heavenly child. The mighty God, Jehovah's compeer, breathes as the brother of our lowly tribes.

O my soul, what costly love is here? We count that to be real, which in its efforts sacrifices self. It is not difficult to help in word. But sincere truth is tried, when it must strip itself, and bear hard burdens, and submit to pain. Such is this love. It willingly comes down to shame and scorn.

You often think, that worlds would be mean price to buy assurance of a Saviour's love. You may read this at Bethlehem. The lowly manger has a voice mighty in sweetness — sweet in its might. It tells, that He has done so much, that no more could be done. God becomes man. Here then is love — high above height — broad beyond breadth — deep below depth — immeasurable — unspeakable — inconceivable. It is the Godman's godlike love. Be satisfied — give thanks — adore.

Reader, scorn not this statement — as the element of truth — the earliest lesson, which our childhood learns. Nay — nay. God joined to man — man joined to God, is heaven's highest wisdom — deepest thought — and most transcendant glory. It is so vast, that all the Spirit's might alone can bring us to receive it. It is the mystery, which Abel sealed with blood — and Abraham gladly saw — and David and the prophets sang — which Jesus verified — and the Apostles boldly preached. He only is the blessed man, who sees a Godman living as a Kinsman to redeem.

But mark, the Kinsman must be armed with more than ties of family. He must avail to pay down the required price. Keep this in view, and then survey the vast inheritance, which is here forfeited. It is a mass of souls. Each is infinity. Each is eternity. Build a high pyramid of worlds — these riches will have bounds. Deal out earth's jewels to an endless age — the value reaches not one spirit's price. But the lost property is a company of souls more numerous, than tongue can tell. They multiply, beyond the stars, which glitter on the brow of night. What then can Jesus bring to equipoise such worth?

Reader, oft weigh the price laid down by Christ. Salvation surely would be prized, if its full cost were once discerned. Our Kinsman gives Himself — His life — His blood — and they are all divine. He rescues not with money — that were vain. He brings no finite store — that would fall short. He makes His soul an offering for sin. His Deity imparts sufficiency. Much is required: more is bestowed. The price is boundless: the payment far exceeds. The power and right both meet in Christ. He comes in flesh. He pays a Godman's blood.

Reader, such is the Saviour of the Gospel-page. Such is His love — His tenderness — His willingness — His might. Study His heart — His character — His plenitude — His power — His work. The every view invites — attracts — allures. Can you refrain from flying to His arms? Surely the rocky heart must melt beneath the sunshine of such grace.

Surely no fears can keep you from such a Kinsman's side. Would He be man, unless He longed to save? And, being man, can He be silent to a brother's cry? Approach. Draw near. Oh! rest not, till you know, that you are His — and He is yours. Plead His near kindred-ties. Tell Him, that He is one of your own family — your nearest friend — flesh of your flesh — bone of your bone. Remind Him, that He alone has the redeeming right and might. Kneel with petitions for your ruined soul. Urge this, and you fail not. Ask all the saved. One voice responds, our elder brother never drives a coming sinner from His cross. Ask all the hell-bound. They miserably sigh, we never sought Him — therefore we are here.

Believer, awake, and see your happy state. Your soul is rescued. Your heavenly home is sure. The chains are broken. Your loving Kinsman buys you from each adverse claim. Tremble no more at Satan's rage. No longer fear the Law's stern curse. Once and for ever all is paid. You are redeemed. Live a redeemed life. Often repeat, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Ephesians 1:7.

Awake, awake, and see your access to delights. The earthly path is often rough. Grievs press with heavy hand. Afflictions flow, as wave on wave. Tears stream, because of relatives no longer seen. Pain racks the limbs. Sickness brings langour and distress. The world points piercing sneers. False friends inflict a festering wound. You need much solace. You have it in your Kinsman's love. The Man of Sorrows tasted each bitter cup. Now from His throne He calls us to relate our every woe to Him. Each aching head may rest upon His breast, and find a pillow of relief. Trouble takes wing, when once His smile is seen. Fears are not heard, when His sweet promises speak peace. Cares are no cares, when laid on Him. Burdens are gone, when cast down at His feet. Who can be sad, who have a Godman Kinsman near?

But let your life proclaim, that being bought, you are no more your own. The Kinsman claims your heart — your love — your all. Shame, shame, to those, who would defraud Him of His purchased due! Believer, let Christ's great glory be your one pursuit. Seek it in all your time — with all your strength — with all your means. It is the Kinsman's joy to see His people bearing grateful fruits. Oh! multiply this joy. It is His glory, when you bring rich praises to His name. Let then each breath be praise.

Ye ministers of Christ, would you win souls? Then preach the Kinsman. Apart from Him, all topics are a chilling blight. The terror of the Law may scare. But it gives no relief. It may wound sorely. But it lacks the healing balm. The charms of virtue fascinate. But they paint summits, which unredeemed feet can never reach. External rites and forms have specious show. They seem a haven of repose. They promise steps, which mount to heaven. Experience proves, that without Christ, they only cheat. They cannot ease a tortured mind. They cannot blot out past offence. The path seems flowery. But it beguiles to aggravated woe. The Kinsman is the only help. Then publish the story of the incarnate God. This cannot be in vain. Christ never was upraised, but sinners fled into the fortress, and were safe. Proclaim the Kinsman, and souls will hang delighted on your lips, and bless you now, and bless you for evermore.

Preach Him with tender zeal. He is your model. He yearned for souls. Their misery led Him willing to the cross. Can you tell this with icy lips? Can you be listless shepherds of a listless flock? You know His earnestness. With eager flight He sought this earth. He scorned no agony — no shame — no pain. Here is again your model. Burst all the bands of self-indulgent ease. Up and be doing. Strive, as if striving rescued men from hell. Toil, as if toil conveyed them swift to heaven.

The Kinsman shortly will appear again. May His approving smile then be your heaven of heavens! May His glad welcome own you as brethren of His heart — the fellow-helpers of His work.

Fragments

from the late Rev. Malcolm Gillies, Stornoway

by Rev. J. A. MacDonald, Fort William

Most of these precious fragments from the lips of the late eminent servant of the Lord, Rev. Malcolm Gillies, Stornoway, have appeared in our *Young People's Magazine* several years ago. Both at home and in Canada we met those who derived much comfort from these utterances of Mr Gillies. This constrained me to publish more of his sayings. Seldom do I enter the pulpit without recalling to my memory some of his original sayings.

At Inductions and Ordinations he laid special emphasis on the need that ministers have of confining themselves exclusively to the work to which they professed to be called, especially to the preaching of the

everlasting gospel, and also the defence of it in its purity in the face of all opposition, if and when it is assailed by its adversaries. It is dangerous for ministers to entangle themselves too much with the affairs of this world, he maintained, as this is bound to bring leanness of soul to themselves, as well as to their hearers.

His fertile mind, together with his whole heart and affections, was ever focused upon the things that matter. He had an excellent grasp of the distinctive position of our beloved Church, and of the reasons why the Fathers of the Church made their God-honouring stand in 1893, thus separating from the Declaratory Act Free Church, with full purpose of heart never to return until every fragment of that God-dishonouring Act had been swept away. I am fully persuaded that the Rev. Malcolm Gillies would never agree for one moment that the godly Rev. Donald MacFarlane could easily have continued in the Declaratory Act Free Church one moment after he tabled his historic Protest, as some appear ready to maintain in our day. He used that Protest as a legal instrument for complete separation from a corrupt body. To be suggesting, on the basis of a mere supposition, that he meant this or that other thing, other than what he actually did; or that he blundered in any way, is both dishonouring to God, and to Mr MacFarlane.

When with Mr Gillies at a Communion in London on one occasion, he preached on the Thursday evening to a large congregation from the book of Jonah. His text was: "And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land" (Jonah 1:9). Jonah, he said, was commanded by God to proceed to Nineveh, and preach to a people who were then actually on the brink of a lost eternity. However, God had a purpose of mercy in His heart towards them, although Jonah feared otherwise. Like Moses of old, he felt himself insufficient for such a task, while at the same time the dictates of conscience suggested that he should obey the divine command. The fear of man caused him to disobey. He, in his plight, proceeded to Joppa, and found a vessel ready to sail for Tarshish. This pleased him very well. I can visualise him, continued Mr Gillies, enquiring for the Purser's office, and probably asking for a single ticket to Tarshish. It also seems to me as if the Purser answered: 'Sorry, Sir, but we only supply returns at the moment; moreover, I cannot promise you a very smooth passage.' Still, poor Jonah paid the fare, vainly hoping all would be well. Mr Gillies then pointed out the danger of disobeying God when He says, "This is the

way, walk ye in it." God in His infinite love prepared a good strong vessel for Jonah, made and navigated by God Himself, which was to land him safely on the dry land.

Mr Gillies then told the story of two godly men who were comparing some of their spiritual experiences. One of them said, 'I often compare myself to poor Jonah while in the belly of the whale, with the waves and billows going over his head.' 'Yes,' answered the other, 'and I am sorry for yourself and godly Jonah, but often I feel as if the whale were in the belly of my own poor heart and soul.'

Twice I heard Mr Gillies preach from the words in Psalm 84:6 — "Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools." Digging wells, he said, is an important duty which is laid upon us by God. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Isaiah 55:6). Oh, be out as often as is possible with your little spade of prayer, digging wells in this vale of tears. Keep this in mind, however, that it is a valley full of very sharp thorns and scorching thistles; yet, notwithstanding, David got his wells full to overflowing on many occasions, as when he said: "My cup runneth over" (Psalm 23:5). At another time David declared:

*"But now, depart from me all ye
that work iniquity:*

*For why? the Lord hath heard my voice,
when I did mourn and cry."* (Psalm 6:8).

Daniel would continue three times a day digging wells in the face of such a severe restraint as this — "that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee O King, he shall be cast into the den of lions" (Daniel 6:7). Come what may, I will worship none but the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land, was Daniel's determination. Yes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was Daniel's God. It was not on the royal decree that the eye of Daniel was focused.

Obituary

William MacKenzie, Deacon, Inverness

The Lord has pronounced that the offspring of the wicked will never be renowned but that the seed of the righteous shall be blessed and their offspring with them. William MacKenzie was born into a God-fearing family in the home at Inverness in 1907 from which, however, he was

deprived at the age of 8 years of his saintly father who was for many years a deacon in the Inverness congregation. To his mother was left the responsibility of caring for a family of four young children. She herself had professed to know the Lord from the early age of 20 years and had spent her youth amidst the scenes of the labours of Rev. George MacLeod, the eminent minister of Ullapool. She trained up her family carefully to walk in wisdom's ways and had the joy of seeing some of her family join her in the profession of Christ. William, however, while always a dutiful son and careful in his life, gave no indication of any spiritual interest in the Gospel more than might be expected of a member of such a household. The Lord's people were always welcomed into the home at Kenneth Street, Inverness where for many years the godly men and women of the early church gathered on communion occasions. William's interest was stirred and he was drawn by the company and conversation of these pious people which contributed greatly, he recalled in later years, to forming those serious religious impressions on his mind which never left him. Communion seasons in the congregation always made him uneasy. He felt a strong attachment to the Lord's people whom he respected and loved and longed to be able to say that he belonged to their number. Between himself and his mother there grew up a strong bond of affection and she longed and prayed for the day when her son would become a follower of Christ.

He married in 1938 the daughter of William MacAngus, a godly elder of the early congregation of our church at Fearn, and in her he found one who could sympathise with him and aid him in his spiritual pilgrimage. Others too were interested in him. He was greatly encouraged to learn that to the godly wife of one of our late Dingwall elders, Mrs Samuel Fraser, the words of Psalm 105, verse 19, occurred as she thought of William: "Until the time that His word came, the word of the Lord tried him." Several more years passed and he came before the Inverness Session who were glad to receive him into the full membership of the Church on the Saturday of the winter communion of 1967. Many rejoiced at this step. When he emerged from the Session meeting, he was met by an old friend, the late Dr Peter Aulay MacLeod, Stornoway, who had waited for him in the lane outside the Church and greeted him with kindly words of affection, indicating the place that he had in the worthy doctor's prayers. His earthly course thereafter was short. He contracted diabetes, no doubt induced by the severe strain and overwork of his

many business responsibilities. He was for many years the sole Director for the North of Scotland of the large business firm he worked for, besides being connected with important public bodies in the town. When the nature of his illness was disclosed in 1958, his wife suggested that he take up Hezekiah's prayer that 15 years be added to his life. Later, it appeared that he had done so and it is significant of the answer he received to his prayers that as 1974 approached he felt that the end was drawing near, although this was unknown to his closest friends. On the day of his death, when unable to speak, he was reminded of the words of Psalm 33, verse 4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me", and a smile lit up his face to intimate that he understood.

This worthy man was active most of his life in the affairs of the Church. He became treasurer of the congregation in 1940 and gave the last years of retirement to improving the financial position of the congregation which he left in sound condition. He succeeded the late Mr John MacQueen as leader of the praises of the sanctuary. He was an able helper of the Church courts and acted as general auditor of the Church. He accompanied the late Finlay Beaton, elder, a life long friend, on the trip which they took in 1971 to the Holy Land. Aberdeen and Fearn were two young congregations of the Church in which he took a deep practical interest. He was a firm friend of the Free Presbyterian Church from whose Testimony he never swerved; he impressed upon his family and friends the duty of maintaining steadfastly their adherence to the Church's position. In his later years the young occupied a special place in his public prayers. Before the end came, it consoled him to know that his four sons were professed believers in Christ. Many beyond his family, his widow and sons and his three sisters who survive him, or his minister and congregation, will mourn the passing of this likeable and most useful servant of Christ. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (Psalm 112:6).

A.F.M.

To keep gospel truth in the Church is of even greater importance than to keep peace — J. C. Ryle

Eadar-Mhineachadh air Salm CXXX

Le Iain Omhain, D.D., Eadar-Theangaichte, Le Alastair Macdhughail

Gu feud anama gràsmhor a bhi air an tilgeadh ann an doimhneachdaibh do bhrìgh peacaidh — Ciod iad na doimhneachdan sin.

Mu'n téid sinn idir ni's fhaide air ar n-aghaidh ann a bhi 'fosgladh nam briathran, air dhoibh uile coimh-cheangal a bhi aca ris a' cheud cheann a chuireadh sìos, ni sinn an fhìrinn féin a tha fo'n cheann sin a mhìneachadh agus a dhaingneachadh; chum mar sin gu'n tuigear ciod a tha sinn ag ràdh, agus ciod mu'm bheil sinn a' toirt cinnte, anns an iomlan de'r teagasg a leanas.

Is fìrinn mhuladach a th' againn r'a thoirt fainear. Buinidh dha-san a tha 'ga h-éisdeachd criothnachadh ann féin, chum gu'm bitheadh fois aige ann an là an àmhghair. Tha comhairle an abstoil r' a fhòghlum ann, Rom. xi. 20. "Na bi àrd-inntinneach, ach fo eagal;" agus a rìs, 1 Cor. x. 12, "An ti a shaoileas a bhi 'na sheasamh, thugadh e aire nach tuit e." 'Nuair a dh' fhòghluim Peadar an fhìrinn so o 'fhiosrachadh mhuladach féin, an déigh gach braiseid mhisneachail a thaisbean e, tha e'toirt na comhairle so do na naoimh uile, "Caithibh aimsir bhur cuairt 'an so le h-eagal," 1 Phead. i. 17; air dha fios a bhi aige cia cho fagus as a dh' fheudas aimhleas agus cunnart a bhi d'ar dorus, 'nuair a's mò ar sìth agus ar suaimhneas.

Feudar beagan eisempleir 'ainmeachadh a dh' fhàgadh air chuimhne, anns am bheil an fhìrinn so air a taisbeanadh: Gen. vi. 9, "Bha Noah 'na dhuine cothromach, agus iomlan 'na linn; agus ghluais Noah maille ri Dia." Rinn e sin ré ùine fhada, 'am measg gach uile ghnè bhuaireidhean, 'nuair a "thruaill gach uile fheadhail a slighe air an talamh," rann 12. Dh' fhàg so ùmhlachd Noah ni bu chomharaichte, agus gun teagamh rinn e an comh-chomunn a bha aige ri Dia, ni's ro mhìlse dha féin. B'e anam gràsmhor a bh' ann, agus sin air teistias Dhé féin. Ach tha fios againn ciod anns an do thuit an duine naomh so. Bithidh e furasda do neach sam bith a leughas eachdraidh a thuiteam, Gen. ix. 20-27, a cheadachadh gu'n do thilgeadh ann an àmhghar do-fhuasglaidh e do bhrìgh peacaidh. Rinn a mhisg féin, maille ris na thàinig 'na lorg, rann 21, ana-miann mi-nádurra a mhic a bhrosnachadh, rann 22; ionnus gu'n d' thugadh e 'na dhéigh sin gu bhi 'toirt thairis a' mhic sin maille r'a shliochd chum sgrios, rann 24, 25: air chor as nach 'eil teagamh nach d' rinn na nithe so uile, maille ris a mhothachadh a bh'aige de dhiom Dhé, a rinn a

theasairgin air dhòigh cho miorbhuileach o bhreitheanas nan uisgeachan, a lionadh le bròn anama agus imcheist spioraid.

Tha so ni's ro shoilleire ann an cùis Dhaibhidh. Fo'n t-Seann-tiomnadh cha robh neach sam bith a's mò a bha 'gràdhachadh Dhé na esan; cha mhò a bha neach sam bith a's mò a bh'air a ghràdhachadh leis. Tha slighean sin a chreidimh agus a ghràidh anns an robh e 'g imeachd cosmhuil ri slighe na h-iolaire anns an adhar an coimeas ris a' chuid mhòr 'nar measg-ne. Gidheadh tha glaothaich an duine so a bha a réir cridhe Dhé féin ri seirm 'nar clusaibh gus an là'n diugh. Air uairibh tha e 'gearain air cnàmhaibh briste, air uairibh air doimhneachdaibh bàthaidh; ann an so tha stuaidhean agus tonnan 'ga chlaoidheadh, ann an sud tha creuchdan agus leòntan 'ga chràdh; an diugh air a luasgadh 'an ànradh feirge, am maireach 'am piantaibh ifrinn; anns gach àit is iad a pheacaidhean a ghearain, an uallach agus an trioblaid a ghlaodh. Is aithne dhuinn uile aobhair nan doimhneachdan, agus nan àmhghar anns an do thilgeadh e. Mar nach d' fhuair duine idir tuilleadh gràis na fhuair esan, cha mhò a tha eisempleir ni's soilleire againn air cumhachd a' pheacaidh, agus air toraidhibh a chiont air a' choguis. Ach tha na nithe so soilleir do na h-uile, ionnus nach 'eil aobhar dhuinn a bhi 'leudachadh orra.

Book Reviews

The Works of Robert Traill. Banner of Truth Trust. Two volumes. £3.50 each.

The short account of Traill's life and character found at the beginning of the first volume states, among other things, that "as Mr Traill's writings have been so long before the public, and have met with the universal approbation of the judicious and serious, it will be unnecessary to say much in their recommendation". That was in 1810. It will be sufficient for us to say that in 1977 they still "breathe that spirit of piety for which the author was so distinguished".

If the ability to express the profound in simple language is a mark of genius then Traill must surely be regarded as worthy of that distinction. Beautiful thoughts clothed in appropriate words are frequently met with. We give one example. Speaking of 'safe dying' and of 'death' being the believer's as well as 'life', he says, "But what have we to do with death, or death with us? It is a black boat, that we must sail out of time to heaven

in: and Christ steers the boat, and lands all believers on heaven's shore. This is all we have to do with death. And when all the passengers are brought over, Christ will burn this ugly boat . . .".

George Whitefield, in his day, spoke of "that sweet singer Traill" and James Hervey and J. C. Ryle, among others, paid their own tribute to him. The Banner of Truth are to be commended for bringing his writings again within reach.

J.McL.

Ireland Forever. Single copy 20p; by post 25p.

This little booklet of thirty pages analyses the situation in Northern Ireland and does so, in our view, in a most poignant, interesting and illuminating way. Those who value their Protestant heritage should read it and help to distribute copies far and wide. Obtainable from: The Secretary, 188 Upper Newtonards Road, Belfast BT4 3ES.

J.McL.

Notes and Comments

Her Majesty the Queen's Visit to Northern Ireland

The courage and devotion to duty of Her Majesty the Queen were clearly evident in Her Majesty's visit to the strife-torn province of Ulster. In the Lord's good providence the Queen was preserved from the many dangers to which she was exposed by her visit to that part of our land. It was certainly an arduous task to lay upon the Queen in her Silver Jubilee year, and it is with thankfulness to the Lord that we record her safe return from her two-day visit.

W.C.C. and Black Nationalists

The World Council of Churches is to continue its policy of giving aid to black nationalist movements. This year five national groups in Southern Africa are to receive \$265,000 from a special fund to combat racism. The W.C.C., while acknowledging that some of the recipients of aid do use military action to try to liberate their countries, yet claimed that the money was given for humanitarian projects and that it had never been proved that it had been used for any other purpose. However that may be, one would expect a Church organisation to steer very clear of terrorist organisations in handing out aid. Surely there are other groups, not given to murder and rapine, who would be more worthy of help.

"Gay News" Conviction

The prosecution and conviction of the magazine "Gay News" for the publication of a blasphemous poem on Christ has been strongly criticised by Rev. Dr Edmund Jones, minister of Queen's Cross Church, Aberdeen. Dr Jones has become notorious for his attacks on the fundamental truths of the Christian Faith, so in the light of this his attitude to the conviction for blasphemy of the magazine "Gay News" may not be altogether surprising. It is sad beyond words, however, that a professed minister of the Gospel should take up such an attitude. So, too, is the response of a spokesman for the Church of Scotland in connection with Dr Jones' utterances. It was stated that Dr Jones, like any other parish minister, could preach on any subject of his choice, and that the Church, while not approving of the practice of homosexuality, did look for a fairly liberal approach to the individuals themselves and did not approve of the harassment of any minority group. If this is the attitude of the leaders of the Church of Scotland to sodomy and to the vile blasphemy of this poem, what can be said of them but that they are "blind, leaders of the blind."

Church Notes

Death of Rev. John Nicolson, Tain

It is with deep regret that we record as we go to press, the passing away of the Rev. John Nicolson, Tain, on the 24th August 1977, after a serious illness. During the last few weeks of his life, though suffering much pain, he was wonderfully upheld in his mind and this continued to the end. The closing scene of his life was one which those who were present will long remember. We believe that he has now entered to the joy of his Lord.

The funeral to Tain cemetery took place on Friday, 26th August and was attended by fifteen ministers of the Church, as well as by ministers of other Churches in the area. At the worship in the Church the first four verses of the 40th Psalm were sung in accordance with the previously expressed wishes of Mr Nicolson.

Our sympathy goes out to Mrs Nicolson, Mr Nicolson's sisters and other relatives in their sore bereavement; also the Tain and Fearn congregation now bereft of a Pastor. May they be sustained by the God of all comfort.

Dominions and Overseas Fund Collection

By Synod appointment, the Collection for this Fund is due to be taken in the month of September, D.V.

The Committee is most grateful to our loyal people for their past generosity and it is hoped that this appeal will evoke a similar response.

This would encourage all involved in the work of sending the gospel to people overseas.

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts"
(Haggai 2:18). Donald Campbell, *Convener*

Committee Meetings (D.V.)

The following Committee Meetings will be held at Inverness Church on Tuesday, 4th October and Wednesday, 5th October:

Tuesday, 4th October

10 a.m. - 11.30 a.m. — Publications.

11.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. — Religion and Morals.

2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. — Finance.

7 p.m. - 9 p.m. — Jewish and Foreign Missions.

7 p.m. - 9 p.m. — Welfare of Youth.

9 p.m. - 10 p.m. — Home of Rest.

Wednesday, 5th October

10 a.m. - 11 a.m. — Church Extension.

11 a.m. - 12 noon — Church Magazines.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

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

Western: At Laide on 4th October at 12 noon.

Evacuation of Mbuma Hospital

At its meeting on 26th July the Jewish and Foreign Missions' Committee had before it a full report of the circumstances at Mbuma, Rhodesia which required the Staff there to withdraw to Ingwenya on Friday, 24th June. The staff concerned are the Misses C. A. Turner, J. Cox, N. van Saane and Mr N. Murray.

It is evident that the "law and order" situation in Rhodesia continues to deteriorate as Terrorist Gangs are present in many areas of the country. In particular, these gangs have become established in the area around Mbuma and the Hospital received a threat by letter and was

visited at night by an armed "freedom fighter". This resulted in a withdrawal from post of most of the African nurses and advice from the District Commissioner that the safety of the Europeans could not be guaranteed. In early July a European forrester was, in fact, shot, and his body mutilated, only six miles from Mbumba.

With regret, therefore, the Foreign Missions Committees have confirmed that Mbumba Hospital be closed and several decisions were taken to endeavour to ease the lot of our Mission Staff at Ingwenya and Bulawayo. One feature of the situation is that it is considered that our African Staff is less subject to molestation by the Terrorists in the absence of Europeans in their midst, and it is a matter for much thankfulness at this time that churches and schools remain open throughout the Mission, manned by Africans. Rev. P. Mzamo remains at Mbumba and the school there is open. I am sure that our praying people will desire to remember our staff, African and European at this time in the work of the Rhodesian Mission. May all be preserved in safety, and may it be the Lord's will that more peaceful times will soon return to these parts of the earth!

Alex. Murray,

Clerk to the Jewish and Foreign Missions' Committee

Outer Isles Protest against Cardinal Gray's Visit to Assembly

The Outer Isles Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland convened this day, Tuesday, 5th July 1977, herewith solemnly protest against the invitation and reception given for the first time in history to the Roman Catholic Cardinal G. J. Gray to address the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The Presbytery holds to the faithful testimony against Popery in the National Covenant of 1638 and 1639, and notified by the Act of Parliament in 1640, and which was subscribed by the barons, nobles, burgesses, ministers and canons.

The National Covenant inter alia states: "We detest and refuse the usurped authority of the Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the kirk, the civil magistrates, and consciences of men . . . his erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written Word . . . the nature, number, and use of the holy sacraments; his five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies and false doctrines added to the ministration of the true sacraments without the Word of God . . . his devilish mass; his blasphemous priesthood; his profane sacrifice for the sins of the dead and the living; his canonization of men; calling upon

angels and saints departed; his purgatory, prayers for the dead, etc. . . ." The Mass is the greatest **blasphemy** against the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work that Satan ever invented. The sacrifice of Christ being of infinite value and efficacy does not need to and cannot be repeated. The Word of God declares that "after He had offered **one sacrifice** for sins **for ever** he sat down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12), and again, "Christ being raised from the dead **dieth no more**" (Romans 6:9).

The early fathers of the Church did not believe in the Mass. Augustine about the year 400 A.D. in his commentary says: "Jesus told his disciples, 'Understand in a spiritual sense that which I say unto you. You do not eat my flesh which you see, nor drink my blood that will be shed by those who crucify me. This commemoration, though observed visibly, is to be understood spiritually'" (Enarrations in Psalmos 98.9).

In the light of what the Word of God says concerning the Harlot of Rome, that she is "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus", the fact that Cardinal Gray received a "tumultuous welcome" by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is proof of the appalling apostacy which prevails in our land.

Our prayer and desire is that our beloved fellow countrymen, and all others who are under the "strong delusion" of Popery, and under the blasphemy of Modernism so rampant in the pulpits of our day, would be turned to Christ, the one Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 11:5).

Conscientious Objection to Sabbath Employment

Last year Rev. R. R. Sinclair as Clerk of Synod wrote to the Department of Employment asking what the position was, from the Labour Ministry point of view, of persons who had conscientious objections to working on the Sabbath day. The following reply was received:

"Dear Reverend Sinclair,

The answer to your question is that everything depends on the contract of employment agreed between the employer and employee. The terms of a contract of employment are legally binding, whether the contract is written down or is simply a verbal agreement. Therefore an employee who accepted a contract of employment which stipulated that he must work on 'Sundays' would be in breach of contract for refusing to do so, and could face dismissal and, possibly, a court action for breach of contract.

On the other hand an employee whose contract did not require him to work on 'Sundays' could make a complaint of unfair dismissal to an industrial tribunal if he was dismissed for refusing to do so. If the tribunal found that dismissal was unfair they could order the employer to re-employ the dismissed employee or they could order the employer to pay financial compensation.

It is, of course, always open to a person who has religious or other objections to 'Sunday' work to refuse any offer of employment which entails working on that day.

If you know of a particular case where this problem has arisen or a person whom you wish to advise, you may like to know that a booklet on the unfair dismissal provisions called "Dismissal — Employees' Rights", and a guide to the Contracts of Employment Act can be obtained from your local employment office or unemployment benefit office.

Yours sincerely,

D. A. J. Lord."

Welfare of Youth Committee — Announcements

The attention of all concerned is drawn to the fact that the new Convener of this Committee is the Rev. Duncan MacLean. Any correspondence intended for the Convener should therefore now be sent to Mr MacLean at the F.P. Manse, North Tolsta, Isle of Lewis.

Another matter to which we would refer concerns the books issued as awards for the 1976 Scripture and Catechism Exercises. When these books were distributed, the Committee made it clear that, if a book were unsuitable for any reason, we would willingly replace it. In accordance with this arrangement, one or two books were returned and were replaced. However we gathered, from remarks which were not made to us until a public meeting of Synod, that exception was taken by some to 'Great Adventures of the Bible'. We therefore intimate again that, if this award is thought to be unsuitable, it can be returned to the F.P. Manse, Kinlochbervie, where arrangements for a replacement will be made.

As indicated in our Report to the Synod, we are as a Committee concerned to make our work with the youth of our church as effective as possible. We would therefore invite comment from any responsible source about the work we do, or suggestions as to any possible extensions to our activities. Any letters written in response to this appeal should be sent to Rev. D. MacLean in time for the meeting of the Committee at the beginning of October.

J.T.