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Meeting of Synod, May 1984

At the opening meeting of the 1984 Synod of the Church, the retiring Moderator, Rev. John MacDonald, North Tolsta, preached a sermon directed at the main functions of the gospel ministry, from the words in the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians third chapter and the seventh verse: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." The Moderator then opened the Synod with prayer for the Divine blessing and guidance and thereafter the Roll was called. The members present were:

Northern Presbytery — Revs. R. R. Sinclair, A. F. MacKay, D. B. MacLeod, John Ross, John Tallach and D. M. Boyd with Messrs. W. Taylor, D. S. Kelly, W. MacKenzie, R. MacKenzie, K. Robertson, D. Laing, E. Sutherland and W. MacQueen.

Southern Presbytery — Revs. J. A. MacDonald, Donald MacLean, L. MacLeod, A. McPherson, D. J. MacDonald and Angus Morrison, with Messrs. M. I. Matheson, M. Nicolson, J. A. MacLeod, John MacDonald, R. Middleton, M. Shaw, I. Matheson, J. Henderson, D. R. MacSween and W. D. Fraser.

Western Presbytery — Revs. A. Murray, A. MacDonald, J. W. Ross, N. M. Ross and D. A. Ross, with Messrs. James MacKenzie, Anthony McPherson, D. McCuish, E. Ross and J. van Woerden.

Skye Presbytery — Revs. F. MacDonald, D. Nicolson, H. I. MacKinnon, and James Tallach with Messrs. W. M. Byers, J. Campbell, R. Annand and D. McPherson.

Outer Isles Presbytery — Revs. Alex. Morrison, John MacDonald, Duncan MacLean and J. MacLeod, with Messrs. J. Buchanan, R. MacLeod, R. MacCuish, F. Thomson, A. J. Morrison and J. MacAskill.

Zimbabwe Presbytery — Rev. B. B. Dube and Mr James Mpofu.

Australia/New Zealand Presbytery — Rev. E. A. Rayner.

Letters of Apology for absence were read from — Revs. S. F. Tallach, D. M. Campbell, W. MacLean, A. MacKay, D. J. MacAskill and from Messrs. R. M. MacLeod, K. C. MacLeod and J. M. MacLeod.

Verbal apologies were made on behalf of: Messrs. R. MacLean, D. E. MacLellan and L. MacKinnon.

Mr Kenneth Gillies was appointed Officer of Court. The business of the Synod now began with Rev. D. J. MacDonald, Convener of the Training of Ministry Committee, intimating that Messrs. George MacAskill and Lloyd Roberts had completed their Divinity Course successfully and were ready to be taken on trials by their respective Presbyteries for licensing as ministers of the gospel.

The Moderator intimated that his term of office had now come to an end and called for the nomination of a new Moderator which nomination was made by Rev. A. Murray who said, "On behalf of the Church Interests' Committee I would like to propose to you the name of Rev. A. F. MacKay, minister of our Inverness congregation and in doing so it gives me much pleasure. No doubt the fact is, that the time has come again for Mr Mackay to occupy the chair of the Synod, and probably for the third time he will be Moderator. The very matter of his having continued so long is itself not without something to take into account. I am sure he himself would be the first to admit that it is of the grace of God that he has been permitted to do this over these years. He was ordained and inducted in December 1935, so that his ministry is now more than forty eight years in the church, and he has served the church at home and abroad: he has just recently retired as tutor and has been a long time in what is probably the largest congregation of the Church; he has been often to Canada; he has also been to the Mission in Zimbabwe and, just recently, he was able to visit our congregations in Australia and New Zealand, and has an over-all picture of the Church."

Rev. J. A. MacDonald agreed with Mr Murray as to the suitability of Mr MacKay for the office and Mr MacDonald added 'I have known Mr MacKay since he was at Glasgow University with me. He gave me the impression that he would be of use to the Church.'

Rev. A. F. MacKay accepted the office and said 'I would thank Mr Murray and Mr MacDonald for their remarks. When I was approached to take this office I at once agreed because I considered it my duty to do so. Reference was made by the retiring Moderator, in his sermon, to those gracious men who, in the early days of the Church, raised that

noble testimony and witness for sound doctrine. When I consider the men who have filled the office since their day to the present time, I accept office with a deep sense of humility. To be appointed Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church I consider a great honour, and I hope I will be able to justify the confidence my brethren have shown. I hope they will pray for me during the few days here and through the months of the term of my Office, that I will be given grace and strength to carry out the duties of Moderator.'

The Clerk of Synod mentioned the losses sustained by death since the Synod last met and committees were appointed to draw up tributes in respect of the deceased members — Rev. Donald Campbell, minister of our Edinburgh Congregation, Mr Alexander MacLennan elder of our Shildaig Congregation and Mr Finlay Smith elder of our Breasclete Congregation.

With this matter the business of the day ended.

On **Wednesday, 23rd May**, the first matter brought to the notice of the Synod was the suggestion to send to Lord MacKay a telex message of Congratulation upon his appointment as a Judge. The Synod therefore sent the following message — "Congratulations from the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, with prayerful good wishes that you may enjoy God's gracious presence and assistance in the new responsibilities which you take up today."

The LOYAL ADDRESS was then read.

May It Please Your Majesty

We, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, convened at Glasgow, this 23rd day of May, 1984, desire to express to Your Majesty the unfeigned loyalty and goodwill which we bear towards Your Majesty's Person and Throne.

We rejoice in the fact that, in the kindness of the Most High, Your Majesty continues to enjoy good health and we desire to render thanks to Him for His preservation of Your Majesty in the course of fulfilling the arduous and onerous duties of Head of State and of the Commonwealth at home and abroad.

In an age when the stability of homes and family relationships are being severely tested and the Word of God — "the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him" — disregarded to such a great extent, the Synod find it gratifying that Your Majesty, in this connection, continues to set an example worthy of emulation. We do, however, feel it

necessary to express our sorrow over the fact that members of the Royal Family do not pay due regard to the claims of the Fourth Commandment which require "a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days." We are especially concerned over unnecessary travelling on the Lord's Day and that it should be desecrated by participating in or attending upon sporting events. Such conduct, we firmly believe, is highly dishonouring to our Divine Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose triumphant resurrection from the dead is commemorated by that day.

As loyal subjects we would express our continuing concern over the deference paid to the See of Rome by members of the Royal Family in breach of the terms of the Coronation Oath and the Bill of Rights. Past history affords abundant evidence of the nefarious part played by the Roman Catholic Church in seeking to subvert our Protestant Constitution and Throne and should be sufficient to alert us to present-day dangers from the same source.

We shall continue dutifully to remember Your Majesty at the Throne of Grace ever seeking that God's rich blessing would rest upon Your Majesty, Your Majesty's Royal Consort together with every member of the Royal Family. We would anew commend to you the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which sets forth the all-sufficiency of His one atoning sacrifice and the salvation of sinners through faith in His blood and we pray that the Holy Spirit may savingly enlighten the mind of each member of the Royal Family in the knowledge of Christ. That the Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom "kings reign and princes decree justice," would strengthen, uphold and preserve our Sovereign at all times and in all circumstances is the prayer of your humble servants.

On behalf of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Moderator.

Rev. A. McPherson presented the **Report on the Welfare of Youth** and stated that he could now say that already there had been an increase in the number of persons doing the Scripture and Catechism Exercises (Senior Section) and he believed that this pattern would be seen in the other sections. He stressed the usefulness of the Exercises.

In giving his report on the YOUTH CONFERENCE Mr McPherson stated that it was not the kind of report he would like to give. He had sought no comments. He had heard that at a previous Conference held at Aberdeen, after the ministers had retired for the night, there had been the singing of choruses and hymns. Although the Committee had not

agreed to allow him to Chair the Conference in 1982 he was the Chairman of the 1983 Conference and it was to this Conference his present remarks were related. Although he had laid down at the opening, that the Conference was to be conducted on lines proper for the Church — that there would be no hymn-singing — no watching of Television — he found that there were young persons present who were not willing to be guided. This group showed dissatisfaction with the traditional methods of the Church in respect of personal witness and evangelisation. There were comparatively few fully in favour of the Church's view. The majority of members present took no active part. The ministers — Rev. Neil Ross and Rev. Angus Morrison, who had given excellent papers, and Mr MacPherson himself, tried to answer any questions raised. The whole Conference attended the prayer meeting at Dingwall and there Mr MacPherson referred to the power of Christ to make willing such as were given Him by the Father. Several of the young people said they did not want to hear about election. It was further observed, that the paper on Regeneration did not suit some who expressed unduly man's responsibility and minimised the need for conviction of sin. They appeared to desire to talk people into faith. When the Conference closed on Thursday about six of the members assembled. This was a strange contrast, said Mr MacPherson to the first Conference of the Church when the whole members of the Conference gathered together. Mr McPherson discovered that members of the Conference were engaging in holding an open prayer meeting to which members who shared their views were invited. Half the membership were and are opposed to much we hold and favour the things of which we disapprove. The majority section regard the Church to have failed by using only the ordinary means of grace. They were for singing of choruses and holding open prayer meetings where male and female prayed as they felt moved to do so. As for personal evangelism they were indifferent to important doctrine and preferred Modern versions of the Scripture. This majority, Mr McPherson had no hesitation in saying so, "have been dominating the Conference in public, and more so in private. This large section is hindering the Conference from achieving its original purpose." It was meant to help. It is now, Mr McPherson believed, used to undermine much the Church holds. Mr McPherson then made the following suggestions:—

1. There should be an elimination of subversive elements.
2. There should be strong chairmanship and careful supervision of activities.
3. There should be careful choice of venue and speakers and subjects.

4. "A committee of the same mind as myself is necessary. I would be willing to continue as Convener. If not, if you feel that I am scare-mongering, there must be another Convener. I am certain that unless steps are taken to bring it back it will greatly hurt the rising generation. I feel deadly serious about this."

This Report gave rise to comments and questions. Rev. R. R. Sinclair asked what was the source of this group. He was informed that the leadership of the group and a good number of the group were from our own congregations. There were a few not belonging to our church and there was one young woman who had professed receiving good at an earlier conference but she immediately came under the influence of this group.

Rev. A. Murray said that he was Chairman of the Conference held at Aberdeen. He was surprised to hear of some of the activities supposed to have taken place and was unaware that, as it had been said, after he had retired to his quarters there was disorderliness of the kind of singing of choruses and hymns. He had no knowledge of these events. He submitted that young people need a lot of handling and that he would not incline to the view that Mr McPherson had given and added that he would be very sad if we were to be like closed brethren with 'only some people — only some papers to be given.' — He thought that if Mr McPherson felt the task too great another should take it. It surprised him that the Chairman of the Committee decided that there should be no Conference this year. He would like to hear from the other ministers who were present at the Conference.

Rev. D. J. MacDonald stated that before the Aberdeen Conference he had chaired conferences. His experience in connection with these conferences led him to inform the Welfare of Youth Committee that he could not be chairman again, for the very reasons Mr McPherson outlined, namely, that there was a group of determined antagonists to the Church. Parents, he said, would not like their children to be indoctrinated with views antagonistic to the Church. "It is not fair to say," he continued, "that Mr McPherson is colouring the situation. I have heard from young people who attended, that anti-Free Presbyterians put their views across. It is not flimsy evidence. I was chairman twice and declined because I felt I could not handle the anti-Church people. They have very firm leadership and say our church is 'out of date.' It is high time that this Synod opened its eyes to what is going on, and one of the sad facts is that the opposition comes from members in full communion, mainly. Are we just going to let the young people be indoctrinated? Let us be

convinced of what we are doing. I am quite well aware of the natural tendency of young children to be rebellious.”

Rev. H. I. MacKinnon said “I have no personal knowledge of the Conference but one thing I am sorry for is, that personal evangelism has been criticised, I would not agree with the definition of ‘talking people into faith.’ I am a member of the Welfare of Youth Committee. I understand that the decision not to have a Conference this year, was the Convener’s. We have a remit from the Synod to hold the Conference. It distresses me that Mr McPherson has reasons but would not tell them to the Committee. Mr McPherson has asked for another Committee. I feel that the Synod Committee has been insulted.”

Here Mr McPherson stated — “Had this Report been delivered last Synod, possibly we would be on right lines by now and the Conference would have been arranged for this Spring. I decided there should be no Conference because, as I saw it, there was going to be no real improvement until my Report had been delivered to the Synod. Do not be side-tracked from the integral matters of the Report, confirmed by Mr MacDonald.”

Mr William MacKenzie said, “I have been responsible for the administrative arrangements. More than 60% of the people last year were from office-bearers families. More than one third of the people were members in full communion. I would suggest they can be dealt with through the normal procedure for discipline. I wrote Mr MacDonald on behalf of the Committee to take the Conference. He had taken two previous ones, and assured me all had gone well. I ‘phoned him up and he said ‘no.’ I asked, why? and was told ‘I am Clerk of the Southern Presbytery and am engaged in the Brentall/Radcliff case’.”

Mr W Taylor thought that since the Conference was proving such a difficult matter attention may be given to some other form of help for the youth such as a trip to Israel.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald said — “The idea of Conference had not gone very far off the ground when I said that there was danger ahead of us. I saw that young persons were passing by communion seasons to attend the Conference. We remember better days. We are only reaping what we have sown.”

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald agreed whole-heartedly with the expressions of Rev. J. A. MacDonald. Mr McPherson’s Report had only confirmed his own views of the matter. From the very beginning he had said

that there was no need for a Conference and that the young should be encouraged to attend communion seasons as was done in the past.

Rev. Donald MacLean said — "I am appalled and shocked at what I have listened to. What I say now is, that the Conference is more needed than ever before. What kind of young people are these? What kind of instruction are they getting where the conduct is such as we have heard? For young people to be wanting hymns and choruses, after being in the Free Presbyterian Church, is absolutely absurd and equally absurd is it that they should be in a position to take-over. There are young people in our Church who enjoy Conferences. I see many young people. I have in my manse a meeting for the young where we study the Westminster Confession of Faith. About thirty five to forty young attend. They learn from it. They can see through the kind of people who have been referred to. I was responsible for the Youth Conference coming into being. The young people have real difficulties. Nobody has difficulties with gospel choruses. I am alarmed that the Synod would turn its back on the Conference. The young people who have benefited, are those who have enjoyed Mr McPherson and Mr Ross and Mr Morrison. We should not allow a Conference of this kind to be swept away because of a few people who do not know how to behave themselves. There should be authority given to send such persons home. The idea of young people going to Israel is not in the same category as this. The young people do go to communions. We are parents and we are ministers and we ought to know their difficulties and give solutions. In preaching — yes, but the fact still remains that they do have difficulties of a special kind which can be met by their being able to approach a minister at Conference level. It means establishing a relationship between the young and their minister. I will not agree to its being set aside."

Mr W. MacKenzie said "My view is that the Young People need the Conference. All the errors that Mr McPherson spoke of, high-light the need to speak to people. Here is a place where the church can help. I whole-heartedly support Mr MacLean's views."

Rev. R. R. Sinclair said — "I would not like this Synod to have a decision to do away with this Conference. This whole question of 'youth' is uppermost. What are we doing for the youth?"

Mr McPherson replied — "I hope in presenting my Report I am not diverted by anything that has been said that would cause me to think I may have been mistaken. I hope the Synod may be of the mind to accept the Report. I am getting on in years. I find the task quite heavy. I would be quite happy to see a change of Convener if a change is necessary.

There must be a clean up. If I get a Committee of the same mind as myself I would be happy."

On the motion of Mr McPherson seconded by Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald the Report was adopted by the Synod.

Rev. Donald MacLean moved and Mr W. MacKenzie seconded the following motion — "That the Synod agree that the Youth Conference should be continued, it being understood that the Welfare of Youth Committee have full power to deal with any parties who show by their conduct that they are not in sympathy with the principles and position of the church."

This was agreed to.

From this the Synod turned its attention to the **Training of the Ministry** and Rev. D. J. MacDonald gave in his report adding — "Thanks are due to the tutors of the Church who carry out the very onerous task of preparing the students for the ministry. There are only two students left on our Roll and considering the number of vacant Congregations we should pray most earnestly that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into the harvest."

Rev. Donald MacLean supported this, urging that prayer be made for the Lord to raise up pastors after his own heart who would be able to feed the flock with knowledge and understanding. He was thinking not only of the home church, he said, but such places as Auckland and Sydney. He observed that the more one moved about the church the more one became aware of the need for the prayer mentioned above.

Rev. D. J. MacDonald then proceeded to explain why there had been no THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE arranged for last year. He apologised on behalf of the Training of the Ministry Committee. He suggested that the Synod discuss the matter as to the continuing of the Conference.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair answered — "Certainly. By all manner of means. Have it in Inverness or in Dingwall."

Rev. Donald MacLean. "I am in favour of that too. What I have felt is that it is a great pity when papers have been prepared, the attendance was so small. I gave a paper on the subject of "The Theology of Liberation" and there were not many there."

Rev. A. Murray said "A hard core of ministers are against the idea of a Conference and they absent themselves. The Committee should have the right to conscript these men to prepare papers."

Rev. F. MacDonald said — "One vital issue raised at the beginning

was that nobody would be compelled to attend. At that time, I was taken on with the suggestion and I thought it would help to bring us together and help to break through barriers and prejudices and bind us together in the love of Christ. I have been disappointed."

After this discussion the Synod showed itself in favour of continuing the Conference.

With Rev. A. F. MacKay presenting the Report of the Home of Rest, the business for this sederunt ended.

At 6.30 p.m. on **Wednesday, 23rd May**, the Synod met again. Rev. D. B. MacLeod Convener of Religion and Morals Committee introduced his Report, on Religion and Morals commenting on various items contained in the Report, all of which stressed the need that the Lord would arise and turn us from our sin unto God.

Rev. James Tallach observed that there was no mention in the Report of the practice of witchcraft in this country although there were a number of practising witches. He had been in contact with a psychiatrist who gave him an example of the awful result of witchcraft among the young.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald observed the mention of the Free Masons and referred to the book published by Sir John Knight on the subject. He had listened to a radio interview of Mr Knight and said that there was present at the interview a minister of the Church of Scotland who said that the matter was so serious, a commission should be set up by the Church of Scotland to enquire into it.

Mr W. MacKenzie took up the remarks of Rev. James Tallach and referred to an article in the English Churchman where reference was made to a group who claimed to be praying to Satan.

Rev. F. MacDonald pointed out that everything cannot be taken up. The Editors of the Magazines take up matters from time to time.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald said we ought to be very thankful to have the like of Rev. D. B. MacLeod to give a true picture of the day. "We have no idea," he added, "of the darkness of the day. Ecumenism is coming in and we are in great danger of being swallowed up and carried away by the flood. I notice how few say anything on a Monday of a communion about the stand of the Church. My day was different. The godly ministers of the past set before us the stand made by the fathers."

The Clerk of Synod read out the acknowledgements of the various resolutions of Synod 1983 and commented on the degree of interest taken in the Resolutions which was reflected in the detailed replies received from the different departments. This, he thought, should encourage the

Synod to continue sending Resolutions. He also informed the Synod that he had been in discussion about the matter of chaplains for the Forces.

Rev. D. B. MacLeod then introduced the various Resolutions of this Synod. The first one was a RESOLUTION ON NORTHERN IRELAND.

Resolution on Northern Ireland

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Glasgow on 23rd May, 1984, wishes anew to express its sympathy with the Protestant Community in Northern Ireland in view of the continued state of unrest there. We deplore the murderous attacks made by the I.R.A. on innocent civilians and on the forces of law and order, and the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to dissociate itself totally from the fomenters of unrest. While conceding to the Protestant community the right of self-defence against such attacks, we urge the Protestants in Northern Ireland to continue to show the restraint which has so largely governed their actions until now, and not to be provoked into retaliation in kind. The situation, we believe, calls for an uncommon measure of that grace so conspicuously exemplified in the Divine Redeemer, "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1 Peter 2: v23.

Our prayer for Northern Ireland is that the enemies of liberty and of truth and righteousness may be overthrown; that a just, equitable and honourable settlement may yet be arrived at which will leave the Protestants in possession of their dearly-bought civil and religious liberties, and Northern Ireland preserved as an integral part of the United Kingdom, and under our Protestant Throne, and that meanwhile the forces of law and order may be sustained in their arduous task until complete victory is ultimately obtained over the disturbers of the peace in Northern Ireland.

Finally, we would remind the Lord's people in that troubled land of His own promise to them in their time of need — "Fear not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Is. 41: v10.

In connection with this matter Rev. R. R. Sinclair said — "As a young soldier and officer of the first world war I was posted to Dublin and thus had an interest in the question of Home Rule for Ireland. Sir Edward Carson took up the cudgels for Ulster and stood firm to hold to the 'status

quo' — to their having a continued place in the nation of Great Britain. Sir Edward Carson was their great protagonist and great voice. He spoke in the House of Commons and said 'all I am standing for is on behalf of Ulster that it remain an integral part of Great Britain and under the British Protestant Throne.' The situation was very serious. Military officers would resign their office in the British army rather than fight against Ulster. Since these days there has been a campaign of people entering Northern Ireland and buying property on behalf of Roman Catholics in the South so that Ulster is being permeated with Roman Catholic influence. The day that some people get their way — I hope they never will — to withdraw the British army, that is the day of slaughter in Northern Ireland. Rev. Ian Paisley is criticised by the papers and we know that he has gone to the political side, but, if Rev. Ian Paisley was not there, I would not like to know what the state of Ulster would be today. We should be behind the man and praying for him. The pope never condemned the I.R.A. out and out."

The next Resolution was that against the screening of **Independent Television** of a series of programmes entitled "JESUS — THE EVIDENCE."

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow, this 23rd day of May, 1984, desire to protest against the screening by Independent Television of a series of programmes entitled, "Jesus — the Evidence," which, according to Press reports, purported to give the verdict of modern scholarship on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ but which, viewed in the light of the Word of God were a complete misrepresentation and blasphemous in the extreme.

The Synod strongly abhors and deplors the practice of producing programmes which represent the Divine Saviour as being anything other than "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners" and calls upon those responsible to bear in mind that the Third Commandment of the Divine Law forbids "all profaning or abusing of anything whereby God maketh Himself known" and that the reason annexed to it is, "That however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape His righteous judgement."

The Resolution re ABORTION was then presented to the Synod. The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow, this 23rd day of May, 1984, re-affirms its strong opposition to, and abhor-

rence of, the continuing and increasing practice of abortion and calls upon the Government to repeal the legislation which, in its present form, sanctions the widespread and almost indiscriminate slaughter of unborn children. We would, respectfully, remind the Government of the sanctity of human life as protected by the Divine Law.

Then followed a Statement by Mr W. Byers on "Video Nasties." He felt that the Synod should be made aware of the developments since last year. He said — "We are all familiar with tape recorders. Videos have vision as well as sound. The invention of Video we are not condemning but we are concerned about the terrible pornography and devilish stuff available in the market and great vigilance is required on our part. It reaches to all our parishes. There were video cassettes found to be obscene and currently under prosecution and these cassettes were available from merchants in the island of Skye. The titles were 'The Burning' and 'The Evil Dead.' We approached the merchants concerned and they withdrew them from sale. Every evil thing you can think of is in these Videos. Children could go out to a birthday party and find one of these Videos. It is a most dreadful social evil."

Very appropriately Rev. R. R. Sinclair brought forward the following motion re a DAY OF HUMILIATION AND PRAYER. He moved — That the Synod appoint a Day of Humiliation and Prayer throughout the Church on Wednesday, the 12th day of December, 1984. That the Lord's people confess their own sins, and the open and widespread ungodliness among all classes throughout the nation; and the growing indifference of the young to the Christian religion, the gospel of Christ and the house of God. That prayer be made — that God in mercy and for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ, would pour upon churches, the unbelieving world and the civil authorities, His Holy Spirit;

That believers would be revived and strengthened to witness for the truth of God's Word and against unscriptural and dangerous teaching from whatever source this emanates;

That many sinners would be awakened and converted and also among the young — and that civil authorities would have regard to the spiritual and moral well being of the Nation as well as the temporal prosperity thereof — that we, as a people, acknowledge our unworthiness of the least of God's mercies."

The Synod agreed to this.

Rev. Donald MacLean then presented the **Financial Report** and expressed the deep gratitude of the Synod to the people of the Church. He respectfully drew the attention of the people of the Church to the needs of the Organisation Fund. He concluded — 'It is a matter of great thankfulness that the Lord so operates in the hearts of our people to give and we would encourage them to persevere and pray that the means of grace thus supported would be means of blessing to those that enjoy them.'

Rev. A. Murray said — "The Forsyth Bequest is a great responsibility and money that came to us in a mysterious way. It is appropriate that the church as a whole should remember the Finance Committee and pray that the Finance Committee would be guided so that this money would be used in a right way for the glory of God and the advancement of the Church."

Mr W. Taylor then spoke on the Ministers' Pension Scheme observing that it had completed its first Ten Years. He felt that it was time to have a look at it and his opinion was that we should think are we using money aright. Although it had cost to date over £100,000 we had only obtained £13,000 out of it. When the Scheme began it cost £5,000 per annum now it is costing £22,000. He wondered if it were in the Church's interest to continue the Scheme and thought that a Committee should be set up to investigate.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald said that he fully agreed with Mr W. Taylor as to the expense of the Pension Scheme. In his opinion it was a 'fiasco' from the start with ministers paying in 22% per annum of their income (or the Church paying that sum for them) and in return receiving a very small return. He referred to the sum paid out under the scheme to the widows of ministers who were in the scheme. He noted that the pensions when paid out were increased yearly by 3% — and this figure was chosen when the rate of inflation was, as far as he could remember, in the region of 10%.

Mr W. D. Fraser said that the scheme was being looked at continually by the Company concerned who were this year making an Actuarial measurement of it and that the figures would be available soon. "It is true that the premium is 22%," he said, "but there was hope that that figure would be reduced. The Fund is valued at about £200,000. I would say, wait."

Mr R. Middleton said that he was professionally involved in Pensions and he thought that the fact that we had a Pension Scheme was a very far seeing thing. In comparing the Scheme with British Industry he con-

sidered it better. He admitted that he did not say the Scheme was excellent, and that the high rate of 22% did puzzle him (although that was explained by back service) yet he thought any idea to do away with it should be dropped.

Rev. Donald MacLean said that he did not believe that we should get out of the Scheme.

Now Mr W. D. Fraser, the General Treasurer of the Church, explained the various Accounts and noted the increase in congregational givings. He observed that while some congregations — and that the smaller ones — were showing some effort to repay their loans from the Forsyth Bequest, other congregations were ignoring this matter. Mr Fraser thanked the Congregational Treasurers who had taken to heart his yearly complaint about the slowness of their sending in money to the Central Fund so that now almost every congregation were giving in regularly. He suggested that monies collected for the various funds should be rounded off to the nearest pound. There was one particular Legacy to which he would make reference because of the extraordinary way in which it came to us. There was a person who used to attend the Church's meetings held at one time in Saltcoats. His name was Mr Conway and when he retired he had gone to live in Ireland. Although his connection with the Church was so peripheral he felt inclined to leave a Legacy of £3,500.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair asked about the pressure of work on the General Treasurer. Regarding Mr Fraser, Mr Sinclair said, "He is doing a meticulous work with respect to the handling of the finances of the Church and attends to business regularly as if he had a whole staff about him."

The Moderator thought that the whole Synod would join in the appreciation of Mr Fraser's work.

Rev. Donald MacLean then moved "That the Synod express its deep appreciation and thanks to the General Treasurer, the Publications Treasurer and the Church Auditor for their invaluable work during the year and re-appoint Angus MacKenzie, C.A., as auditor for the ensuing year." To this the Synod agreed.

Rev. Neil Ross submitted the **Sabbath Observance Report** and observed the accelerating rate of Sabbath desecration.

Rev. Donald MacLean thanked the Committee especially for their work done re the Shops Act in the written evidence they presented. He observed that it was the Trade Unions that took a strong stand in the matter of Sabbath opening shops.

Rev. Donald Boyd asked whether the Report made by the Committee on the Shops Act could be made available.

Rev. Neil Ross said that he would bring the matter before the Committee. With this matter the business for the day ended.

On **Thursday, 24th May**, the Synod met again.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair presented the **Magazine Committee's Report**. The Editor of the Magazine reminded the ministers of the Church of their duty as to providing material for the Magazine. Mr W. D. Fraser spoke of the 'disappointing response' hitherto to the plea of the Editor in this respect. It was suggested by Rev. D. A. Ross that Conference papers could go into the Magazine.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald praised the Magazine for its high spiritual tone and content and the readable nature of the Editor's work.

In regard to the **Young Peoples' Magazine Report** the Editor had the same complaint to make — the absence of contributions so that the result was that the Editor had to compile it himself. This was a difficult task as articles could not be taken from books without the necessary adaptation.

Resignation of Editor of Young Peoples' Magazine.

Mr MacPherson said — "The time has come that I am to tender my resignation. For the benefit of whoever will come after me I want to make the point, that notwithstanding the difficulties of keeping the Magazine going month after month, year after year, it is a satisfactory work as all who have done it have found. One has a feeling that one is reaching a much wider audience with one's writings than one can possibly do with one's words especially if one has been a pastor in small congregations as I have been. My teaching has gone out to a much wider public. That is one of the very satisfying aspects of doing a magazine and I hope it will be encouraging to whoever will follow me. The time has come for me to lay down this task because I just cannot now devote the time to it, and, as I say, there has been so little help from outside that a great deal of time has to be spent in preparing the Magazine month by month, and that is really the main reason. Another reason is quite frankly I think it is time for a fresh mind to be applied to this work. I thank those who have helped in the past and those who have encouraged me in various ways. I tender my resignation now to the Synod."

Rev. Donald MacLean, said, "Mr MacPherson had told me he was going to resign and I spent some time trying to persuade him not to do so. He has firmly made up his mind that he should resign. I had thought that the Synod, in view of all that he has said, should accept his resignation

and express our gratitude to him for being the Editor of the Magazine over the long period of sixteen years. It requires a considerable degree of application and work for reaching not only a wider audience but a specialised audience, as young people are. In my judgment Mr McPherson has done this very well and we are deeply indebted to him for his labours. We will now expect that if we accept his resignation he will be sending articles to the Young Peoples' Magazine and to the Free Presbyterian Magazine, and showing a good example in practice."

Rev. J. A. MacDonald said — "Mr McPherson has supplied excellent articles for both young and old and has to be admired for the way in which he has kept the position of our Church as distinct from every other denomination, before his readers. He has kept in memory those that stood in the day of battle. We hope that the next Editor will follow in his footsteps."

Mr McPherson thanked Mr MacLean and Mr MacDonald for their kind remarks and promised that he would be producing the July issue of the Magazine. The Moderator, on behalf of the Synod, wished Mr McPherson well.

Rev. A. McPherson then proceeded to present the **Publications Report**. He took the opportunity to bring before Synod the publication of "The Token of the Covenant," which was now nearly ready and expressed the hope that the reading of this book would go far to change the thinking of those opposed to infant baptism. He assured the Synod that the Committee would do its best to produce good material with the funds now entrusted to them.

Mr James Henderson proposed the printing of a Gaelic Concordance, also the English/Gaelic New Testament and some portions of the Old Testament in Gaelic.

Mr R. Middleton spoke of the reprinting of Volume I of the Free Presbyterian Magazine.

Rev. A. McPherson stated that the Committee had not been able to do anything. Rev. Angus Morrison said that although the matter had been discussed only briefly at the Committee, there had been a suggestion not to publish the whole Volume but only certain articles from it.

Mr Middleton answered that he desired the whole volume to be printed as it was in itself a valuable witness for the truth as the fathers of the Church had stood for it.

Mr R. MacKenzie said that there were still available one thousand

copies of the History of the Church where persons interested would find enough concerning the matter of the early days of the Church.

Rev. Donald MacLean said — "I do not agree. They cannot get the savour of Magazine Volume I. I think it should be reprinted and I have no doubt that it will be sold. It is of great spiritual value and is of a high literary standard. The then Editor, Rev. James S. Sinclair was a literary man of distinction and had a capacity for explaining matters which was quite exceptional. As the Church is approaching one hundred years of its existence I think that a good reason for reprinting Volume I of the Church's Magazine. I thoroughly recommend to the Publications Committee that they do so."

Rev. R. R. Sinclair answered — "I heartily support Mr MacLean. The printing of part would not give the character of Volume I."

Rev. D. B. MacLeod said — "I would like to support it and the Synod could give directions. As one hundred years of the Church's existence will soon be on us we should also reprint some of the Volumes already printed by the Church such as the Memoirs of the late Rev. D. MacDonald and the late Rev. D. MacFarlane."

Finally, in this business, the Rev. A. McPherson moved and the Rev. D. Ross seconded that the Synod instruct the Publications Committee to produce forthwith the Volume I of the Free Presbyterian Church Magazine.

This was agreed.

Rev. Donald MacLean presented the **Bookroom Report** and said — "Members of Synod should visit the Bookroom. I hope that no member of Synod has not done so. We commend this Bookroom to your interest and prayers."

He thanked the persons concerned in the running of the Bookroom and the Synod in a formal motion thanked Mr John Goldby who is in charge of the Bookroom.

Attention was now turned to the various Organisations which the Synod support. Rev. Donald MacLean read the correspondence from these organisations.

1. From the Ockenden venture, through which we support a group of people at Trieste. The Synod agreed to give £500 again to this needy cause.

2. A letter was read from the Trinitarian Bible Society conveying greetings and warm thanks and appreciation to the congregations and

individuals of the Church who helped throughout another year to promote the propagation of the Truth. A second letter was read which acknowledged the £500 special donation made by the Synod last year.

3. From Underground Evangelism (new name — Aid to the Persecuted) an acknowledgment was read together with request for prayer for particular persons in prison for the Truth. The Synod gave another £500 to this group.

4. Festival of Light (new name Care Trust). A letter was read from this group acknowledging last year's donation and in it it was stated that persons interested in receiving their bulletin would be required to contribute. The Synod agreed to donate £200.

5. From the L.D.O.S. (England) a letter was read acknowledging the donation given last year and stressing that the work of the Society was more necessary than ever. The Synod agreed to donate £300. Rev. F. MacDonald said that he had heard Mr Roberts of this Society, speak and was much impressed.

6. From the National Viewers and Listeners Association a letter was read acknowledging the Synod's donation and it was agreed to give them a donation this year of £200.

7. Copies of the Newsletter/Report Autumn 1983 of the Reformation Translation Fellowship were distributed to members of Synod. A letter also was read of acknowledgment of the Synod's donation and sending the Board's Greetings to the members of Synod. It stated that there had been an increase in the Work of the Fellowship and asked for the prayers of the Fathers and brethren. The Synod agreed to donate £500.

Rev. A. Murray asked at this juncture if the Blythswood Tract Society could have its donation restored which had been refused last year because of the activities of the Society in connection with its selling versions of the Bible other than the Authorised Version. Mr Murray pointed out that the Society had altered its ways.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald observed that the Society persisted in showing an attachment to versions other than the Authorised version and he suggested that no donation be given.

Rev. Donald MacLean thought it proper to wait and see and advised not to give a donation.

The Synod agreed not to give a donation to the Blythswood Tract Society.

Mr W. Byers suggested that the Synod give a donation of £200 to the Parliamentary Group, Video Inquiry and this was agreed to. It was

stressed that we should assure them of our prayerful interest in their work.

The **Theological Tutor's Report** was given in by Rev. John MacLeod who said — "I can look back on the winter and say that I benefited much studying together the Word of God in the reverent manner in which we ought to do it."

The Rev. Donald MacLean welcomed Mr MacLeod's performance after his first year and stressed that it is very profitable to be engaged in the work of tutorship.

The Tributes for deceased members of Synod were now read. These were:

Tribute to Rev. D. Campbell, M.A., Edinburgh

It is our wish and privilege to perpetuate the name of this worthy servant of Lord Jesus Christ, who, like his father before him, proved himself a faithful Free Presbyterian to the end. Mr Campbell was a native of Skye and was born there in the year 1908. While yet young he was brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Saviour. The truth which enabled him to make a public profession on the side of Christ for the first time is to be found in Psalm 118: v.17:

'I shall not die, but live, and shall the works of God discover.'

It pleased the Lord to call him to the ministry, which call he could not resist, no, no more than his effectual calling. The truth already quoted was a source of strength and encouragement to him in taking that solemn step. Notwithstanding, the tedious and long road, which he, no doubt could visualise before him to qualify for the Ministry, he took the decisive step and began his studies at the Portree High School, thus taking up the educational threads again. Here, Mr Campbell qualified for the Edinburgh University, where he later on took his Arts degree. During his student days, Mr Campbell proved himself an able expositor of God's Word, thus bringing out the bountiful treasures both old and new, matters for the consolation and nourishment of God's people. He could equally well warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

His first call was to Raasay where about three hundred signed it. Within the space of four years he received a call to the Stornoway congregation; a call which caused the Raasay congregation much distress, because they had received him with such gladness and joy, and to part with him now was not an easy matter.

In Stornoway his preaching reached great heights, thus captivating the

hearts and affections of the people of God in Lewis. The day of his induction was a memorable one, the church being packed to capacity with worshippers from all over Lewis and Harris. One Sabbath he preached with great liberty and faithfulness from a most unusual text:— “And Abraham journeyed, going on still toward the South.” Genesis 12: v.9. And so it proved.

It was made obvious to Mrs Morrison, Bayhead, a pious woman in the congregation, that Mr Campbell’s sweet and faithful ministry in Lewis would be of short duration and that he Abraham like would soon be travelling toward the south himself. And so it proved.

His next call was to Edinburgh which he accepted, and where he laboured to the end of his sojourn here. His scriptural warrant to do so is to be found in 1st Thessalonians 5: v.24, “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” Here Mr Campbell had a happy and fruitful ministry for over 32 years, during which time many were hospitably entertained in his manse. On Sabbath 20th November, 1983, which was the Sabbath of his own Communion, Mr Campbell took ill in the pulpit in which he sat so solemnly. He was taken to hospital where he died a few hours later. There was a call to him from Heaven that day: “Arise my love, my fair one and come away.” There could be no delay.

Space will not permit us to give a comprehensive account of his labours, activity and usefulness to the Cause of Christ. We would make particular mention of his labours abroad as Convener of the Dominion and Overseas Committee.

In Canada he was instrumental in bringing two congregations into the fold of the Free Presbyterian Church, which gave him much joy and encouragement. Nothing afforded Mr Campbell more delight than the spreading of the Gospel at home and abroad; thus ensuring for our own beloved church in her faithful witness, a global status.

Mr Campbell had his own share of the sorrows of this world, losing his first wife at a comparatively young age. This he endured with much patience, acquiescing in the will of Him who doeth all things well; as he believed it was well with her for ever more.

His second wife is a daughter of the late Rev. D. M. Macdonald, Portree, who proved herself to be a blessing to him as well as a real helpmeet. She, with her family is left to mourn their loss.

To his sorrowing widow, and every member of the family as if mentioned by name, we extend our sincere and heartfelt sympathy in their sore bereavement. We affectionately say to them; follow on in the footsteps of a Godly father, that it may be well with you forever; As

Moses reasoned with Hobab, "Come thou with us and we shall do thee good, for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel." Numbers 10: v.29.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald read this tribute and Mr M. Nicolson seconded its adoption.

Rev. F. MacDonald added, "I have been privileged to be a member of this Venerable Court for over thirty years and in the good providence of God I have never missed one Synod. I am glad to see young ministers raised up who are the hope of the future. None the less I must admit to a great sense of sadness and emptiness when the godly whom we knew and loved are taken away from time to eternity. Our late beloved friend had a rare blend of gifts, unction, and that holy authority which it is nauseating to simulate. He was one of the greatest preachers I have ever listened to. I remember the late Rev. M. MacSween (who was no novice in these matters) mentioning to me on one occasion that the best sermon he had ever heard was one by the late Rev. D. Campbell on a passage in the Song of Solomon. We greatly miss this man of God — and especially the older fraternity are painfully conscious of that."

Tribute to the late Mr Alexander MacIennan (Elder) Shildaig

The Synod hereby records its sense of loss at the death on 9th April, 1984, of this worthy Elder of the Shildaig Congregation who, over many years, was a member of the Court.

At the age of 23 years he was accepted as a member in full communion by the Gairloch Session and in 1951 he was ordained to the eldership in Shildaig so that for the considerable period of 44 and 32 years he has been in the capacity of member and Elder useful to the visible Church. During the Second World War Alex served, "King and Country" in the marine rescue service of the R.A.F., and for many years thereafter the Torridon-Diabeg district had in the person of Mr MacIennan a reliable mail-driver. Alex's father, "Ian Ban Diabeg" was a founding father of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, as one of that group, "that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chrs. 12: v.32) and upheld the hands of his worthy minister, the Rev. Donald MacDonald. His mother was a worthy woman, and it was in this robust tradition that Alex had learned to know how to act related to many matters coming before the Church Courts over the years.

A man of few words, his loyalty to Christ and His kingdom could not be doubted, and it was with Christian fortitude that he accepted cheerfully the final years of indifferent health.

To the sorrowing widow and family and other relatives, the Court extends its heartfelt sympathy — “Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.” (Ps. 45: 16).

Rev. A. Murray read this tribute and Mr D. MacCuish seconded its adoption.

Tribute to the late Finlay Smith, Breasclete

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow, this 24th day of May, 1984, would place on record its sincere sense of sorrow and loss over the death of Mr Finlay Smith, Breasclete.

Finlay Smith professed his faith in Christ in September, 1938, and kept his garments clean over the many years which were to ensue before he was to depart this life on 20th April, 1984.

He was ordained to the Eldership in 1949 and proved himself a worthy office-bearer, acting as Session Clerk in Breasclete for many years and rendering valuable assistance as an Assessor Elder in other Lewis congregations. For over twenty years he, faithfully and acceptably, on Sabbath and week-day, kept the services in Breasclete being relieved of the duty only on Sabbath evenings when supply was usually sent or on the comparatively rare occasions when a minister was present. In church courts he acted with wisdom and discretion and sought to do all in his power to advance the interests of Christ's cause and kingdom in Breasclete and elsewhere. The Synod has reason to mourn his loss as one who was always faithful to the Testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Rev. John MacLeod in producing this tribute added that it was not often that the late Mr Finlay Smith was a member of this Synod and the reason for that was that Mr Smith was an elder of Breasclete which is not a sanctioned charge and hence has no representative elder at the Synod. Any occasion therefore when Mr Smith appeared at the Synod it was as representing a congregation other than his own. He also mentioned that the late Mr Smith had served in the War in the Royal Navy.

Rev. John MacDonald seconded the adoption of this tribute by the Synod.

This ended the business of this meeting.

The Synod met again in the evening of this day **Thursday, 24th May**. The Moderator read the following letter received from Lord MacKay of Clashfern.

“My dear Mr MacKay,

I wish to thank you and all my brethren of the Synod of our Church

for the very kind message of prayerful good wishes which you sent to me on my taking up office as a Judge yesterday.

The Judicial Oath appointed by law to be taken by Judges on entering office recognises clearly the need for God's help in the discharge of the Judicial Office.

It is a great strength to me in undertaking this responsibility to feel that I have the prayerful support not only of my brethren in the Synod but of the people of our church generally. I much appreciate it and hope that it will continue.

With best wishes to the Synod that it may by its work promote the spiritual good of the Church and all her people,

Yours sincerely, James Mackay of Clashfern."

Rev. R. R. Sinclair presented the **Jewish and Foreign Mission Reoprt.** He intimated that this very day the Hospital in Mbumba which had been closed was due to be reopened and that our staff would be moving up in a more permanent way within one month. He suggested that it would be worthwhile reminding ourselves as to the origin of the Mission. Foundations, he said, are important. Mr Sinclair spoke of the origins as to how contact was first made when two Africans were sighted standing on a pavement in Edinburgh. One of these two was Mr J. B. Radasi who became the founder of the Mission. Later Rev. John Tallach went out and his first duty was to attend to the death of this Mr Radasi who had been killed by a train as he awaited the arrival of the Rev. John Tallach. Mr Sinclair informed the Synod that, at that time, he was in London and the words were exercising his mind, 'I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction.' He was conscious that the reference was to Africa. Next morning Mr Sinclair had a letter from the late Rev. Neil Cameron of Glasgow informing him of the death of Mr Radasi.

Mr Sinclair then referred to the late Rev. James Fraser. He concluded by saying — "These two men really did serve the Lord. 'Them that honour me I will honour saith the Lord.' These men had an honourable reputation in the Free Presbyterian Church — a branch of Christ's Church."

Rev. A. Murray introduced to the Synod Dutch Deputies in the persons of Mr Veldman and Mr van Vliet and said that these were two new members of Mbumba Zending. He referred to the significant support given by the Dutch and in particular that they had promised 600,000 guilders for setting up a clinic in Mashonaland. The Moderator on behalf of the Synod welcomed them.

Mr Veldman then addressed the Synod and said — “I hope you will forgive me if I do not speak English correctly. We thank the Lord that we are here — that in Zimbabwe the work of Jesus Christ and his work alone is going on among the black people who are leaving their blindness. The Sun of Righteousness who is Christ the Lord has shined in some parts. We in our congregation support the work not only by giving money but in our prayers when we have meetings we try to bring your Mission before the Throne of the Most Holy God. We have women who are working, making clothes to sell. We have some going to the houses to ask for money for Mbumba Zending. We have lost Mr Neuenhuis whom some of you knew very well. He has gone from the fight on earth, we believe, to the triumphant church in heaven. You know that he had at heart the Mission work of the Free Presbyterian Church. This year too we must tell you D. D. Waard of the Reformed Church died. We support your work and pray for you, so that the last of the elect ones will come to know the Lord and then we shall be one church — ‘one flock, one shepherd.’ The Lord bless you and your Synod in the work. I have seen that Scotland is dark. Scotland is dark. But God is alive. I should like to read for you some verses.” ‘I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.’ — Thank you.”

Rev. A. F. MacKay, the Moderator, thanked Mr Veldman for his address, and added, “The concluding words of the great apostle have been repeated down the ages and put encouragement and strength into the Lord’s people and are never so much needed as at the present time. The Cause of Christ is low and we are in need of a revival that the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing in His wings and visit our land, rolling back the clouds of darkness, delivering our land from the power of the Lord’s judgments and reviving His cause among us. I have no doubt

your words have brought encouragement and help to our people and I would like you to know we appreciate your being among us."

Rev. B. B. Dube presented the Reports on — the Ingwenya Mission, the Zenka Mission, the Mbumba Church, the Bulawayo Mission and the Zvishavani Mission.

In doing so he said, "I have been asked to speak on behalf of the Presbytery of the work in Zimbabwe. First of all I will speak of the Shabani Mission which is our newly born Mission and its name is New Canaan Mission. I was there at a Communion Season and the Church was full from the beginning. The Lord's work there is on the progress. We have also some preaching stations operated from New Canaan. The Word of God seems to be finding a place in the hearts of some sinners there. They seem to be drawn by the Holy Spirit, to the Saviour of Sinners, Jesus Christ. Coming to speak of Bulawayo and Ingwenya it is much the same. The church services are continued without any difficulty and there is every encouragement as far as success of the Lord's work is concerned. If this is in the hands of the Holy Spirit, it will continue, if not, it will disappear. At Zenka and at Mbumba things are not so. These places are affected by the activities of the dissidents. The peace gained was short lived. We do not enjoy freedom in going about. Nevertheless the Lord has given his servants power and protection so that they continue with the work in spite of the difficulties. In both places the attendance at services is increasing. At the last communion at Mbumba there were several who made profession of the faith. We hope that the time is coming when we shall have peace and security but meantime we hear of killings here and there. I take this opportunity of saying that we appreciate the help we get from Scotland by way of donations — and also the help given from Holland. I thank you on behalf of the Zimbabwe Presbytery for all your help as well as for your prayers for we need that the Church here and elsewhere to remember us in our situation — "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much."

Rev. A. Murray said that while we were pleased to see Rev. B. Dube he would add a special word for Mr James Mpofu who was also here. "The Synod," he said, "will remember his father Alexander Mpofu who was at the Synod in the early sixties and who made a very favourable impression upon the Synod and the Church."

Mr James Mpofu presented **The Hospital Report, the John Tallach Secondary School Report and the Building Report.**

He said "Mr Moderator, Fathers and brethren — I will try and speak

to you about the John Tallach Secondary School. At the end of the Fourth Form many get places in Further Education and this shows that the children are getting a good education. We have problems with children and we do find that at times it is not easy to control the children, yet, as Boarding Master, I can say that so far we have managed to succeed. The children come from different denominations and it is our work to try to bring them under the true gospel. Others among them belong to no church. We seek to keep the standard of our Mission. I attempt to look after them on the Sabbath day and guide them, encouraging them to read the Word of the Lord. I pass on to speak of the Building Report. The builders have to work very hard to keep up with the building programme. As for the Mbumba Mission Hospital the work done is appreciated by us all. The African nurses have done this work of maintaining the Hospital, with the European Staff going up once per fortnight. It has been our prayer that the Hospital would be opened fully and we have heard today that it has been opened so I do feel that the Lord has answered the prayers of His people. We hope that the Lord will keep our Staff and protect them and that the work will continue as it used to be, and flourish. People come into contact with the Word of the Lord in the Hospital — the souls of people are being thus treated with regard to the illness of sin.”

Rev. John MacLeod said — “I would like to say that it is a great pleasure to see Mr Mpofu here and it must be said that he occupies a very important position at Ingwenya as Boarding Master and he has to take care of these children over the Lord’s Day. He has over four hundred children to look after and it is no easy task to make them keep the fourth commandment. I was impressed with the Sabbath observance at Ingwenya.”

Rev. A. Murray then produced the Mission Accounts and made observations on them.

Mr R. MacKenzie paid tribute to the amount of work done by Mr W. Campbell.

Rev. James Tallach took note that one of the recent members accepted at Mbumba had come several years ago to the Hospital and at that time was deeply involved in spirit worship. He issued a caution to any optimism at the opening of the Hospital once again, observing that only so long as the Government had the finances to leave the Security Forces there, could this protection be looked for.

Rev. A. Murray completed the Mission business by reading extracts from a letter received by him from Mr W. Campbell indicating the

official word given for return of the European Staff to Mbumba with the assurance that a group of armed policemen would be stationed there permanently. Mr Murray also read a short letter from Miss Coote which stated — "We are hoping to return to Mbumba on 24th May. When the Mission will be being discussed in the Synod we should be getting settled in at Mbumba all being well."

Dominions and Overseas business was introduced by Rev. A. Murray the Vice Convener of the Committee because of the sad death of the former Convener, Rev. Donald Campbell. Referring to this Mr Murray said — "I would mention how our congregation in Toronto feel an especial indebtedness to Mr Campbell, securing for them a place in the Free Presbyterian Church. He did what seemed impossible."

After dealing with the **Convener's Report** Mr Murray read a report from Vancouver which arrived too late for insertion among the Synod Reports.

Rev. E. A. Rayner of Grafton being present presented the **Toronto and the Chesley Reports** and said that as in New Zealand and in Australia so the congregations in Canada had to face the matter of costs and the feeling of isolation and therefore deputies were much appreciated. Another similarity he drew to the attention of the Synod, was the influx of persons to these parts — persons who were non-Christians.

Rev. Alfred E. W. MacDonald presented his report as a Deputy and expressed the urgent need that the Auckland Congregation had for a minister.

At this juncture Rev. Donald MacLean gave an account of his private visit to Australia and New Zealand. He said — "My visit was a private one. Yet I would be failing if I did not say something. I was over in Grafton at the Communion and I missed some of the people who were there when Rev. William MacLean and myself were there in 1965 — such as D. Shaw; F. Shaw and I. Bailey (at whose home we stayed). The Kidds and the Shaws are the foundational families in that Congregation. I was impressed when I saw old Mrs Kidd sitting in the Congregation on the Sabbath morning of the communion and her two sons together with her two grandsons serving the Lord's Table. This indicates that the Lord continues to bless His Cause, and raises the sons and daughters instead of the fathers. "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." I also visited Sydney and was taken to see the site of the new church proposed, in the

midst of that city. I would hope, from the knowledge that I have of the people there, that the cause there would be built up. I would think, and it is my prayer, that the Lord may be pleased to send a minister to that vast city, and there are, among those that are there, such as have a great interest in the Cause of Christ and in the preaching of the gospel; and I believe it could be, and I hope it shall be, a very fruitful field of labour. Over in New Zealand, this was my third time of coming to them, and I was pleased to see them all again. I was down in Gisborne and saw Mr van Dorp and his family and Congregation and then I came up to Auckland where I met for the first time my grand-daughter. With regard to Auckland I was pleased to see again the widow of the late Rev. D. M. MacLeod and his family, and to see an increase in the congregation. It is a very promising congregation and the vast majority are young people. There are ten professing men. They are a very attentive congregation and I hope that the Lord in His loving kindness would send them a pastor after His own heart who would feed them with knowledge and understanding. The population of the city is as vast as that of Glasgow so that there is quite a field for a minister to labour in and to have extensive usefulness in that part of the vineyard. I would desire to say on behalf of all our congregations in these parts, to the people at home — pray for them that they might have a pastor. I also visited Wellington, a promising field, and I most heartily commend them to your prayers and your interest. In conclusion, I would like to say, we have been hearing reports from Zimbabwe, Canada (all these places which I have been privileged to visit) and with respect to them all it can be said I received the same welcome and I felt the same spiritual warmth that I would feel in the congregations in Scotland, and the same unity with regard to the glorious gospel of the Blessed God and our form of worship, testimony and stand as a Church. There is darkness but surely on an occasion such as this it is and ought to be a great encouragement to us all when we read these reports and hear about these scattered places, that we are all joined in the spirit of the gospel and in the spirit of brotherly love in our desire that the Cause of Christ would be advanced and that His Name for ever would endure and last like the sun! This is what I would desire all to pray for. It is a great privilege — a tremendous privilege to visit these places and to meet with the people there — young and old.”

Rev. E. A. Rayner now said — “I would like to take this occasion of conveying the heart felt thanks to the Church at home from our Presbytery in Australia and New Zealand for all that they have been doing for us. It means a tremendous lot to have the prayerful support

and the practical support being given by our people in the home Church. Mr MacLean has filled in in considerable detail, and I do not wish to weary the Synod.

It was a difficult decision for me to come to Grafton eight years ago — something I did not do lightly. I went out with fear and trepidation because the congregation was very small and a considerable number of elderly people who according to the course of nature, could not live long. Among them was the late Mr D. Shaw, an eminent man in prayer, who died at the ripe age of ninety-one. Just after the Second World War Rev. Angus MacKay visited Grafton and he was asked to take a service because Mr Shaw was sick. Mr MacKay was telling me, that, on that occasion there were sixteen people in the Church. Today we have forty. I am thankful to the Lord that he has maintained and upheld us as a congregation and as a people in Australia. We have four elders in the congregation. The Lord has encouraged us and our people have sought to maintain the witness for the truth in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church in that part of the world. Other denominations have sprung up. They do not have the experience and are inclined to be lacking in many things one would like to see. When we had Mr MacLean with us we had our communion at a difficult time of the year when the temperature is normally 30 degrees C. It was most remarkable that throughout the communion season, on this occasion, the temperature did not rise above 23 degrees C. Thank you for your help and prayers and may it continue!"

Rev. Angus Morrison presented his Report as a Deputy to **Italy**, commending the venture there to the prayers of the Synod and people at large. Mr James Henderson asked Mr Morrison about the refugee camp at Trieste supported by our Church to some degree and Mr Morrison answered that he was sure that the help was appreciated.

As will be seen from the composition of the Committees, several changes have taken place. It has already been noted too, that the Editor of the Young Peoples' Magazine has been changed. The new Editor is the Rev. N. M. Ross. At this stage members of Synod took the opportunity of recording special thanks for work done in various fields. Rev. John MacLeod referred to the labours of Rev. D. B. MacLeod who now relinquishes the post as Convener of Religion and Morals Committee, upon his taking over the Convenership of the Dominions and Overseas Committee. Rev. A. Murray acknowledged the help given formerly by Mr W. MacKenzie who up until now had been Clerk of the Welfare of

Youth Committee. Rev. R. R. Sinclair made reference to the work done by the Clerks of Synod and the Moderator offered thanks to them.

The Moderator then said — “I would like to offer the Synod’s thanks to the people of St Judes Congregation, Glasgow, for the hospitality they have shown to the members of Synod in receiving them and showing them every kindness and friendliness; also the ladies of the congregation who have provided tea between the meetings during these days. We assure them our thanks are sincere. We greatly appreciate all they have done. I would thank Mr MacLean for the use of the Church building.

And with the closing prayer and singing of the last few verses of psalm 72 the 1984 Meeting of Synod closed.

CHURCH COLLECTIONS

Jewish and Foreign Mission	March and August
Aged and Infirm Ministers’ Widows and Orphans ..	February
General Building	April
Home Mission	May and October
Organisation	June
Dominions and Overseas	September
Publications	November
College and Library	December

CHURCH COMMITTEES

Church Interests’ Committee — Moderator of Synod with clerks of Synod and clerks of the five home Presbyteries, with Rev. R. R. Sinclair.

Finance Committee — Revs. Donald MacLean, Convener, R. R. Sinclair, A. Murray, D. Nicolson, J. MacLeod, A. E. W. MacDonald; with Messres R. Middleton, W. Taylor, W. Byers and D. MacKenzie. Mr W. D. Fraser to act as clerk.

Religion and Morals Committee — Rev. D. Ross, Convener, Revs. D. Boyd, H. I. MacKinnon, A. F. MacKay (Vice Convener) with Messrs W. Byers, J. MacAskill and M. I. Matheson.

Dominions and Overseas Committee — Revs. D. B. MacLeod (Convener), A. Murray (Vice Convener), Duncan MacLean, L. MacLeod, S. F. Tallach with Messres J. Henderson, W. D. Fraser and D. MacCuish.

Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee — Revs. R. R. Sinclair (Convener), A. F. MacKay (Vice Convener), A. Murray (Clerk), A. McPherson, J. MacLeod and D. A. Ross with Messrs I. MacLeod, W. Taylor and J. van Woerden.

Training of the Ministry Committee — Revs. D. J. MacDonald (Convener), Donald MacLean, F. MacDonald, A. E. W. MacDonald, J. MacLeod and D. B. MacLeod, with Messrs A. McPherson and J. MacAskill.

Sabbath Observance Committee — Rev. Neil Ross (Convener), and Revs. D. A. Ross (Clerk) and Duncan MacLean with Messrs J. Henderson, D. MacRae and E. I. Fraser.

Church Magazines Committee — Revs. R. R. Sinclair (Convener), D. B. MacLeod, N. Ross, with clerks of five Home Presbyteries and clerks of Synod.

Publications Committee — Revs. A. McPherson (Convener), A. F. MacKay (Vice Convener), N. Ross, D. B. MacLeod, John Tallach, J. W. Ross, Angus Morrison and Mr W. Taylor.

Welfare of Youth Committee — Revs. A. McPherson (Convener), N. Ross (Clerk), D. Ross and D. Boyd with Messrs D. MacRae and J. MacAskill.

Home of Rest Committee — Revs. Duncan MacLean (Convener), A. Murray, Angus Morrison, D. B. MacLeod, John Ross and James Tallach with Messrs Dr R. MacCuish, Dr Neil Gillies, Hugh Gunn, William Taylor, Donald MacRae and John Campbell. To be associated with the Committee — Messrs A. MacKenzie, S. Grant and J Campbell.

Bookroom Committee — Revs. Donald MacLean, L. MacLeod with Messrs Dr R. McSween, A. Gillies and W. D. Fraser.

Rev. D. J. MacDonald was appointed to replace the late Rev. D. Campbell on the Board of Examiners.

Synod Sermon

by Rev. J. MacDonald, North Tolsta, Retiring Moderator.

“But what things were gain to me those I counted loss for Christ.”
(Philippians 3: v.7).

The Lord who sovereignly disposes all things to His own glory has not left Himself without witnesses among the sinful children of men. He raised up men of the calibre of Saul of Tarsus and fashioned them by His grace for His own service. This man, who had been opposed to the preaching of the gospel, was brought by Divine teaching to be “a chosen vessel” to bear that same gospel to the Gentiles, and kings and the children of Israel in his preaching and epistles to subsequent generations. This former persecutor came to profess, “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” He had been a persecutor of, and injurious to, the followers of the Lord Jesus but he came, by the grace of God, to be a preacher of “the faith which once he destroyed.” It was while he was engaged in his persecuting work on the way to Damascus that the Saviour made Himself known to him and he who left Jerusalem breathing out threatening and slaughter against the church entered Damascus a blind man having lost the faculty he had used in following his sinful course. His days as a persecutor had come to an end by the will of the One Who spoke to him from heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” He was directed to continue on the way to Damascus where he was to receive an answer to his question, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” The Lord directed Ananias a disciple of the Saviour, to go to restore his sight, not now to the persecutor Saul, but to the praying Saul. An enemy had become a friend. He who had been the leader of the persecutors of Christ and His disciples as “an enemy of the cross of Christ” was vanquished and, as a blind man, had to be led into Damascus.

I. A persecutor becomes a preacher.

II. The preaching of the gospel must leave the sinner in no doubt regarding his state.

III. Christ and His salvation must be held forth to sinners.

I. The grace of God worked mightily in Saul of Tarsus. This is very evident from the account of Scripture in the Acts of the Apostles and from his epistles to various churches. The bonds of men could not bind his affection for his Saviour, nor for His people. The shameful treatment which he had formerly received in Philippi did not cause him to bear them malice. He earnestly desired the church in Philippi to “stand fast in

one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.” Saul, or as he is more commonly known, Paul, who could truly testify of his Jewish genealogy had been an enemy of God by wicked works now came to be a contender for the faith which he had once endeavoured to destroy and suffered much from both Jew and Gentile for this. Old things had passed away for him when he came to embrace the Saviour whom he had formerly disowned as the promised Messiah of Israel and in consequence he witnessed fearlessly on His side as his Saviour, Lord and Master. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth.” He learned more in a moment of time on the road to Damascus than he ever learned at the feet of Gamaliel, although he was a man reputed for his great learning. As a self-righteous Pharisee he could never come to groan, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

In the service of his Saviour he left us a good example. He knew what it was to serve the Lord with many tears and temptations but necessity was laid upon him, “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” He preached the faith which he once destroyed. He, who had breathed out threatenings and slaughter in his opposition to the gospel, came to be a fellow-sufferer with those whom he had formerly persecuted. By Divine intervention, he came to glory in the cross of Christ. The error of his ways was brought home to him and from thenceforth he ceased to serve those who opposed the Son of God in our nature but he sought to do the will of the Lord of heaven and earth, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” He heard the charge against him being pronounced from heaven. Others may not have a similar experience respecting their guilt before the Lord, nor have such a clear indication respecting their duty, nevertheless, in the exercise of the Divine will in matters pertaining to life and godliness the Lord gives a clear direction to Saul of Tarsus and to all whom He calls to follow Him in his service. He not only calls men to the work of the ministry but by His grace and providence He opens the way for them to exercise the gifts which he bestows on them.

He gives other men to uphold their hands in Christ’s service known as elders and deacons of which we, as a church, have had many since the beginning of our witness, who where the ranks of the ministry were depleted, stood in the breaches which were made in the church and faithfully discharged the duties which consequently fell upon them. The church has reason to thank the Lord for those godly men whose labours

were owned by the Lord. The Lord raised up men and bestowed great gifts upon them and in the strength of faith they performed all the duties which devolved upon them through Christ which strengthened them. God who "at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" The Saviour was made known to John the Baptist by Divine revelation and he revealed Him to his fellow men as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The beloved Son of the Father took upon Him our nature for the suffering of death that He "might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." He brought in everlasting salvation through "the blood of His cross." The Saviour in speaking of an incident which took place during Israel's wilderness journey when many of them were fatally bitten by fiery serpents and Moses was instructed by the Lord to raise up a brazen serpent on a pole in the midst of the camp so that any Israelite who was bitten was saved from certain death by looking at God's provision and was healed. The brazen serpent had to be taken notice of otherwise death would be the outcome and the Saviour uses this as an example of Himself being raised up on the cross "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." Sinners convinced of sin and enlightened by the Holy Spirit come to know that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby, they can be saved but the name of the Son of God revealed from heaven in the word of God. Men because they hold distorted views of the gospel become a law unto themselves therefore we must seek to persuade them prayerfully of man's spiritual ignorance of Divine things. It is very evident that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" and also that "every way of a man is right in his own eyes but the end thereof are the ways of death." The Son of God is despised and rejected of men and they turn away from His teaching. "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, yet is not washed from their filthiness," they are satisfied with the outward appearance and forget that God looks at the heart. We are exhorted to search and try our ways and turn again unto the Lord but we refuse, and rebel against the doctrines of His holy word, although the Saviour exhorts us to "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. Men are satisfied with a few years in time and what this world has to offer." The natural man is satisfied with temporal things and with having the adulation of the men of this world on his sinful course in the service of Satan and is quite unconcerned that the gospel holds forth an inheritance incorruptible and

undefiled that fadeth not away which is reserved for the redeemed of the Lord.

II. The preaching of the gospel must leave the sinner in no doubt regarding his state.

The gospel of salvation goes out to the sons and daughters of Adam's fallen race. It is a revelation to them of God's mind in their lost and ruined state and those who go out with it do so according to their Lord's good pleasure. The apostle was sent and taught by the Lord to preach the word, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Christ," and in consequence he could also say, "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." He spoke of his Lord as the One Who "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" wherein the purpose and grace of God is revealed to sinners to their everlasting gain. The majority of those who hear the gospel in this present evil day have no real relish for it, "for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness" but to others it is the "wisdom and power of God." Ministers of the gospel are constantly reminded of the Saviour's words, "without me ye can do nothing." Paul may plant and Apollos water but the fruit must come from God. We do not know what will prosper this or that. Apart from His blessing we will have reason to bemoan the fact that we "are unprofitable servants."

The Lord raises up men and separates them for the work of the ministry to preach the gospel and where this is done in all its purity the sinner is not left to shelter in refuges of lies. We must not seek the applause of men for "woe unto you if all men speak well of you." We will experience grief and pain and, perhaps, shed many a silent tear in the presence of the great Head of the church but have we not reason to take encouragement from the word of God that they who go out grief-stricken with the "precious seed" shall return rejoicing with the fruit of their labour. This generation has turned away to a great extent from the teaching of the gospel in the pulpit and in the home. Pulpits are occupied, in many instances, by men who have not themselves undergone a saving change through the operation of the Holy Spirit and as a result cannot speak from inward personal experience of His work within the hearts and souls of their fellow-creatures. Men are not told of the nature of sin nor of the consequences which must follow in the day when men are called to render their accounts before the judgement seat of Christ. They are left in their slumbering slothfulness.

The Lord told Isaiah, "Cry aloud spare not, lift up thy voice like a

trumpet and shew my people their transgression and Israel their sin." All have sinned and come short of the glory of God therefore all must be told that retribution must follow disobedience. The stroke of God's judgement will be upon the lost and ruined sinner. "Because there is wrath beware lest he take thee away with his stroke then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." The trumpet of the gospel must be used, then, to awaken sinners out of their lethargic condition in no uncertain way, for, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle." We must labour with an eye to the glory of God and the salvation of sinners and we must be diligent in our private and public exercises. Our walk must be consistent with our preaching. John Calvin tells us that not all are fit for the solemn work of the ministry when he says, "All are not fit for the ministry of the word, which requires a special calling: nay it is the duty of those who consider themselves as possessing the best qualifications to take care lest they hurry into it without a call." We must carefully deliberate upon our call and not enter hastily into this privileged office. "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." Men and women take a stand upon their own righteousness consequently every effort must be made, with the word of God as our authority, to prove to them that we are all by nature guilty sinful creatures and unworthy of the mercy of God, destitute of all righteousness according to His word which tells us, "There are none righteous, no, not one." Let us who have the charge of preaching the gospel attend to this duty with diligence, preparation and prayer and "be ready always to give an answer to everyone that asketh for a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." In this day of spiritual declension when many scoff at the preaching of the gospel, Satan is exerting all his power against the faithful in the land, nevertheless, "ministers should go up to the pulpit, to preach the word of God in His name, with that strength of faith as to be assured that their doctrine can no more be overthrown than God himself." We are to take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine.

The Lord has highly honoured us in sending us forth with the glad tidings of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ to lost and ruined sinners. We can expect opposition to the gospel from our fellow-creatures even though we desire their salvation more than anything else in the world. At the present time the worship of the only living and true God is much maligned. It is an age of blasphemy, rebuke, atheism, secularism, pride and arrogancy. We are called antediluvian and straitlaced because we seek to adhere to the teaching of the word of God. The fathers of this

church did this and were not put to shame. Many false prophets pronounced swift judgement upon this church but we are still in existence and the Lord has given us abundant tokens of His favour in the faithful preaching of the gospel while our eyes have been towards the Giver of all good for His blessing. The eyes of the world are upon us and following the example of the Saviour we must not marvel if we have to suffer the opposition of the world. We are but few in number compared with the many enemies of the cross of Christ among whom we have our portion. However, like the church of old as she went from land to land without a sure abode, we can be assured of the protection of the One Who promised His people before He left this world, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." The Lord of hosts is constantly on the side of the church and like Israel of old he suffers no man to do her wrong, "yea he reproveth kings for their sakes." We serve the Lord Jesus therefore we can rest assured that we shall not lose our reward.

A goodly heritage has been left us by our ancestry and we, by His grace, who is the great Head of the church must protect the distinctive witness left to us by the founding fathers of this church, by the grace of God. They would not tolerate any departure from the clear teaching of scripture nor of its subordinate standard, the Westminster Confession of Faith. They knew that other men had laboured and they had now entered into that labour. The Lord honours those that honour Him, those who give Him the pre-eminence in all things, and the witness of our forefathers has been owned by the Lord in raising up a seed to serve Him. We do not shun to declare the whole counsel of God to our fellow sinners. Men have the disease of sin which brings death in its train for "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners" and again "... by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Carnal security leaves the sinner at ease. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Our work is great and calls for the utmost diligence especially at this time when gross darkness, as far as spiritual matters are concerned, covers the people. This once fair land where the great head of the church had His due place has been despoiled by the departure from the teaching of the scripture in the pulpit and home to a lamentable extent. The gospel must be preached, not with the enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The difference between the way which the wisdom of God lays it before us and which "blind leaders

of the blind " lay it before us is very evident if we take, as we must take, the word of God as our rule of faith and conduct. Blind unconverted men do not know of the path of the just which is as a shining light "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The light that was in those who crucified the Lord of glory was the light of human reasoning which could not penetrate beyond the human nature of the Saviour, notwithstanding the fact that the miracles which He performed testified of His Divine power. He truly bore witness of His co-equality with the Father — "I and my Father are one," but to them he was the carpenter's son and went about, according to them, deceiving the people. They were so incensed against Him that they sought occasion against Him so that they could lay their hands upon Him in order to cut Him off from the land of the living but those who went to arrest Him were to find out that "never spake man like this man," such was the effect of Christ's teaching upon them.

Men, when the Saviour is revealing His word and power to them, come to learn supernaturally of the compulsive power of His words and of their application to themselves through the Holy Spirit enabling them to understand His words. It is when He is opening our understandings that our "hearts burn within us" and we come to know from inward personal experience the One Who came to seek and to save that which was lost. His light in our understandings brings us to know a little with respect to our own sinful state in the sight of the One Who is the heart-searching God. "But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay." Ministers of the gospel travail at the throne of grace for the souls of their fellow-creatures and meet with many things that will discourage them in their labours. Although their hearts may be full of zeal in their Master's service for the souls of men, yet they find themselves to be but weak creatures, often emptied from "vessel to vessel" and burdened by sin and Satan. It is a day of days to them when they see sinners taking an interest in the things which pertain to salvation, when they come to see God's method of salvation through the sacrificial sufferings and death of His Son on the accursed tree. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." We see Him in our nature fulfilling "the law for righteousness unto everyone that believeth." He laid down his life "a ransom for many" and finished the work which the Father had given Him to do. It was after completing this work and before ascending to the right hand of His Father that He commissioned His disciples to go out into all the world to preach the gospel.

Into the hearts of those whom He sends out with the glad tidings of salvation He implants a yearning that sinners might come to believe the gospel. The apostle Paul tells of the thoughts he cherished towards them. "God is my record how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Christ." In going forth with the gospel we must bear testimony to the transcendent dignity of our Lord and Master whose we are and whom we serve. The Chiefest among ten thousand must be magnified in His Person and work. He must have the pre-eminence in our preaching and in our lives. We must always be prayerfully careful that our preaching will not be contradicted by our conduct in the world.

Often we have to echo the words of the Saviour with sore and burdened hearts, "They hated me without a cause." The Lord, however, forewarned His people while He was still on this earth, "Marvel not if the world hate you." The eyes of the church must be on her Saviour. We are not to go labouring seeking the praise of men but we ought always to desire to see fruit that may abound to their account. It is our great privilege to preach the gospel of free and sovereign grace to sinners and to feed the flock of God which He has purchased with His Own blood. To this end He took bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh for the suffering of death and made satisfaction to the demands of the law on behalf of a number that no man can number of the sinful race of Adam. "God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." The apostle Paul who was formerly, by his own confession, a self-righteous Pharisee, came to learn of the emptiness of formality and the great gain that there is in having a good hope through grace. He charged the church of the Thessalonians, "as a father doth his children" to "walk worthy of God who hath called you into his kingdom and glory." The former conduct of the Philippians towards him did not cause him to turn away from them although he had been, as he says, "shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi." He was bold in the service of his Saviour, as he also says, "We were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention." He had formerly gloried in his pedigree and accounted this a great gain but with every other enlightened sinner he came to see that misused privileges are a loss. God at sundry times and in diverse manners had spoken to Israel through the prophets and thus had pointed to the coming Messiah the Saviour while other nations had been passed by.

III. Christ and His salvation must be held forth to sinners.

Our knowledge may be of a very high standard as far as the things of the world are concerned and that knowledge may be of considerable gain

to us and we may attain to high honours in this world but when these hide from us the issues of life and death in which we are inextricably involved our gains are but losses. Men and women untaught by the Holy Spirit comfort themselves with the knowledge that they have been baptised, that they have God-fearing parents who pray for them and hold many other mistaken views of God's way of salvation. They, however, forget that they are walking according to the course of this world and are, consequently, numbered among the children of wrath who shall yet reap as they have sown. We have been highly honoured by the God of all grace and He forewarns us that to whom much has been given of such much shall be required.

Our work is to preach the gospel, "Preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all." The thoughts of men's hearts are worldly, "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Or wherewithal shall we be clothed?". Men, by nature, forget that worldly gain is only temporary, "for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall descend after him." The Lord Jesus Christ manifested His mercy and grace when He came into this world "to seek and to save that which was lost" and by His word and Spirit He teaches us of our own involvement with the issues which are brought before us in the gospel of His grace. He uses the preaching of the gospel to convince and convert sinners and to strengthen His people and "to build them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation." Carnal reasoning will bring us to conclusions which are not founded on the infallible word of God. We need Divine teaching to bring us to understand Divine revelation. We have attained to great gain indeed when we come to know Christ as the Saviour of the lost. It is by grace that we come as humble suppliants to his footstool.

Men may wrest scripture to their own satisfaction and as a consequence their fellow-creatures are misled by cunningly devised fables and the preaching of the cross becomes a great stumbling block to many. It is, however, the preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus that is owned by the Holy Spirit. It is very evident that the preaching of the gospel must be adhered to in its fulness without deviating from its teaching. Life and immortality is brought "to light through the gospel." We preach the gospel with the glory of the Lord of heaven and earth and the eternal welfare of immortal souls in view. We are going forth with precious seed. It is our responsibility to sow it but the fruitbearing must be of the Lord, for we do not know "what will prosper this or that." All the praise is due to the Lord the Provider, Preserver and bountiful Benefactor of His people, the church. We pray and preach the word looking to Him for the edify-

ing and the building up of His church. Loss or gain for eternity is inseparably connected with faith in Jesus Christ, who tells us, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The apostle professes his own faith in the Saviour in this epistle, "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." May the Lord bless His word.

The Providence of God

by Thomas Boston

Never let the fear of man stop you from duty, but let your souls learn to trust in God who guides and superintends all the events and administrations of providence, by whatever hands they are performed.

Do not slight means, seeing that God worketh by them and He that hath appointed the end orders the means necessary for gaining the end. Do not rely upon means, for they can do nothing without God Math. 4: v.4. Do not despond if there be no means for God can work without them as well as with them Hos. 1: v.7 "I will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword nor by battle, by horses nor by horsemen." If the means be unlikely, He can work above them Rom. 4: v.19. If the means be contrary He can work by contrary means as He saved Jonah by the whale that devoured him. The fish swallowed up the prophet, but by the direction of providence it vomited him out on dry land.

Beware of murmuring or fretting under any dispensation of providence, remembering that nothing falls out without a wise and holy purpose. In all cases even amongst the most afflicting incidents, learn submission to the will of God as Job did, when he said upon the back of a train of the heaviest calamities — "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away," blessed be the name of the Lord.

The Salvation of the Thief on the Cross

Concerning the thief on the cross, I offer these things to your thoughts.

- (1) He was saved to teach sinners not to despair, so another was damned to teach them not to presume.

A pardon is something given to one upon the gallows, but whoso trusts to that, the rope may be his hire.

- (2) It is an example without a promise. Here it is an example of late repentance, but where is there a promise of late repentance? Oh! let

not his late and sudden conversion be to you a temptation. Not examples but promises are foundations for faith to rest on. He that walks by an example of mercy without a precept to guide him, walks but by a dark lantern that will deceive him. Young man, remember that examples of mercy increase wrath when the heart is not bettered by them.

- (3) This was a rare miracle of mercy, with the glory whereof Christ did honour the ignominy of the cross.

The sermon on the cross was the first that this man ever heard Christ preach, and Christ's prayer on the cross was the first that he ever heard Christ make. He knew not Christ till he met Him on the cross, which proved to him a happy meeting.

But this is not His ordinary way of bringing souls to glory, and therefore O young man, let not the thief's late conversion, prove a temptation or an occasion of delaying your repentance, and trifling away your days in vanity and folly.

From: Thomas Brooks' Works.

A Wonderful Bargain

Rev John Flavel being in London in 1673, his old bookseller, Mr Boulter, gave him the following relation, viz. That some time before, there came into his shop a sparkish gentleman to enquire for some play-books. Mr Boulter told him he had none, but showed him Mr Flavel's little treatise of "keeping the heart," intreated him to read it, and assured him it would do him more good than play-books. The gentleman read the title and glancing on several pages here and there, broke out with the following and other expressions "What a fanatic was he who made this book!" Mr Boulter begged of him to buy and read it, and told him he had no cause to censure it so bitterly. At last he bought it, but said he would not read it. "What will you do with it then?" asked Mr Boulter. "I will tear and burn it" said he "and send it to the Devil." Mr Boulter told him he should not have it. Upon this, the gentleman promised to read it; and Mr Boulter told him that if he disliked it upon reading he would return him his money.

About a month later, the gentleman returned to the shop in a very modest habit, and with a serious countenance, and addressed Mr Boulter thus: "Sir, I most heartily thank you for putting this book into my hands, I bless God that moved you to do it, it hath saved my soul; blessed

be God that ever I came into your shop.' And then he bought a hundred more of those books, and told the bookseller, that he would give them to the poor, who could not buy them, and so left him praising and admiring the goodness of God. Thus it pleased God to bless the sermons, discourses and writings of Mr Flavel.

Mr Flavel was exceedingly affectionate to the people of Dartmouth, of which the following is a remarkable instance. When our fleet was first engaged with the French, he called his people together to a solemn fast, and like a man in an agony, wrestled with God in prayer for the church and nation, and particularly for the poor seamen of Dartmouth, that they might obtain mercy. The Lord heard and answered him, for not one of that town was killed in the fight, though many were in the engagement.

A Message to Old and Young

Bethink yourselves, you that are full of days and full of sin, whose time is almost done, and your great work not begun; who have but a few sands more in the upper part of the glass to sun down, and then your conversion will be impossible. Your sun is setting, your night is coming, the shadows of the evening are stretched out upon you. O think, if all sense and tenderness be not withered up, as well as natural verdure — think with yourselves how sad a case you are in. God may do wonders, but they are not seen every day, then they would cease to be wondered at. O strive, strive, while you have a little time, and a few helps and means. Strive to get that work accomplished now that was never done yet defer it no longer.

Let this be a caution to all young ones to begin with God and take heed of delays till the last, as many thousands have done to their eternal ruin. O set to the business of religion now when your hearts are tender and your affections flowing — your life is immediately uncertain.

From — Flavel's "Fountain of Life".

Notes and Comments

Industrial Strife

The miner's strike, which has continued for many weeks, has caused considerable disruption in many sections of the mining industry and has led to conflict among the miners themselves, some of whom do not sup-

port the strike. Perhaps the most serious aspect of the strike is the confrontation to which it has led with the forces of law and order. The police have had to face a difficult task in preserving law and order where pickets have massed together to try to prevent coal deliveries to the steel industry and also to try to intimidate, by their presence, miners who have continued working. The conflict is undoubtedly a political one, with the intention, if possible, of bringing down the Government, or at least of forcing the Government to radically alter its policy so far as the coal industry is concerned.

While the present high rate of unemployment is a justifiable cause of concern to men and women in many professions and industries today, yet the methods used by some of the miners in order to remedy the situation, seem only destined to exacerbate it. The miner's leaders tend to be on the far left of the political spectrum and it is well known that communist policy is to generate a situation that would provoke revolt and secure the overthrow of truly democratic institutions so that they could be replaced with the tyrannical despotism of the godless communistic system. We pray that all efforts towards this end may be frustrated and that the leaders of the nation may address themselves in a reasonable and dignified way — and with due regard to biblical principles — to the pressing question of the mass unemployment which the nation is now facing. It is a situation which must be faced and only the Scriptures of truth can give the light and teaching and guidance which the nation so sorely needs at this hour.

Swearing

Mr Stanley Bailey, Chief Constable of Northumbria, has stated that the use of obscenities is on the increase, especially among youngsters. He calls it a regrettable drop in standards, reflecting changing attitudes in society. He blames parents, teachers, television, radio, films, newspapers and other publications for this state of affairs. He pledged that his officers would continue to restrict the use of obscene language in public by every means open to them.

It is gratifying to hear a Chief Constable drawing attention in a public way to this plague which has come in to defile the land. There is little doubt that in many instances it begins in the home where the example of parents is readily followed by the young. Sad to say, many of the young when they go to school use profane language and do not even know that it is profane until it is pointed out to them by teachers. What is found in many homes in this way is reinforced by the disregard shown by the

media of what is in good taste, far less what is required by the divine law. We hope that the Chief Constable's warning may be heeded and obscene language abandoned by young and old, not only as that which is self-demeaning and obnoxious to many people, but also as that which the law of God forbids.

Euro-candidate

A Church of Scotland minister, Rev Jack MacArthur of Broadford, Skye was the Labour candidate in the Highlands and Islands for the European elections. In defending his right to stand for the European Parliament he said: "As a minister I would not claim my calling was worthy of the name if I did not identify with the problems of my congregation and the effect which Government policies have on their lives." He claimed that he was answerable to God as a minister, as a father and as a local councillor and when he was asked to contest the election he agreed to do it, even supposing all he could do was to raise the threshold of support to a respectable degree where the Labour Party could take off and a caring community can begin fighting for the future.

While it is true that on specific occasions and particularly in times of crisis, the leaders of the Church of Scotland were pressed into service in the political arena, yet this was more often in an advisory capacity and only rarely did it involve taking up the reins of Government. Even then it was temporary and ministers of the gospel who were truly such were glad to relinquish such duties and return to that work to which they were specifically called. The ministry of the Gospel is a high work and calls for the highest talents and devotion. The forsaking of it, in effect "to serve tables," cannot be expected to produce the high anticipations of those who follow such a course. "Give thyself wholly to them," was the Apostle's direction to Timothy and it was a divine direction — and that is what the Lord will honour. We need have little doubt that if ministers will be faithful in their calling that the Lord, through their ministry, will raise up men fitted for Christian service in the government of the nation.

The Pope and Papua New Guinea

The Pope visited Papua New Guinea early in May. While there he blessed the country's great rivers, high mountains and deep valleys and prayed that peace would descend on the region's feared volcanoes. He prayed also for world peace. Travelling the world, the Pope poses as a man of peace, while all the time he has assumed to himself the claims of the divine Redeemer and shows by this that he is an enemy of the true

Prince of life and glory. What the pope will yet learn is the truth of that solemn declaration of God's Word: "There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked," for he is that Wicked, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming."

Church Notes

Court of Session Case

On June 13th Lord Dunpark dismissed the Case against the Church. This result, in favour of the Church, is a cause for deep thankfulness to the Divine Head of the Church, and an answer to the prayers of the Lord's people amongst us.

Twenty one days are allowed for appeal, and once the matter of appeal has been settled, a full and comprehensive statement of this Case and its implications in the light of Lord Dunpark's judgment will be prepared, and printed in the Free Presbyterian Magazine (DV).

(Rev) Donald MacLean, Clerk of Synod.

Synod Reports

The Reports of Standing Committees of the Synod are now for sale at £1.20 each, and are available in congregations or from the Publications Treasurer.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Australia and New Zealand: At Wellington on Friday 24th August at 2.30 p.m.

Teacher for John Tallach Secondary School

As Miss Marion Graham and Mr Alasdair MacCormick are due to come on leave in August and Mr Murdo Lamont and family are due home in December, the Committee would like to hear shortly from an experienced teacher with qualifications possibly in English, Mathematics or Geography but who would have a prime interest in the religious side of the school and would teach Bible and in the Sabbath School. A retired teacher either male or female who would consider a 2-year term of duty might well be the answer. Enquiries to Rev. A. Murray, Applecross. (Tel. 052-04-207).

Staff for Zimbabwe Mission

Advertisements for staff over the past months have failed to produce any response. It has been possible to open the Hospital at Mbumba on a

full time basis from the 24th of May so that the need for a suitably qualified doctor to act as Medical Superintendent is now urgent. Ingwenya School still has a vacancy for a Teacher with Physics qualification. I will be happy, therefore, to hear from applicants wishing to take up this rewarding work in our mission in Zimbabwe. (Rev) Alex. Murray, Applecross, Strathcarron, Ross-shire, IV54 8LT. Telephone 052-04 207.

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until the present Satan has continued his campaign of harassment of the true Church of God in the world, and no doubt will continue it unabated until that time come which is fixed in the counsels of the Trinity from

Acknowledgments of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr. Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow, G12 OHE acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:

Foreign Mission Fund — Anon., Canada, \$100.00 (thrice) for hunger relief in Zimbabwe; Anon., for distressed people on the Mission, per Rev. A.F. Mackay, 1,573 dollars; A Friend for the New Canaan Mission 315 dollars; Raasay Friends per Rev. J.R. Tallach, £300., for famine relief.

Aged Ministers' etc Fund — Anon., Dundee per R. MacK., £4.90.

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Free Distribution Fund: Stirling Congr. £8; Anon in F.P. Church, Inverness £5; A Gairloch Friend £2.

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Dumbarton — Friend, Inverness £5 for Congr. Fds. per T. MacRae.

Fearn — M.B. in memory of loved ones £100.

Glendale — Anon £55 for door coll.; Anon £25 for Church repairs, both in plate.

Laide — Shildaig Friend £5 per Rev. D.A. Ross; Laide Friend £81.50; Stockinish Friend £5; Anon, Laide £100; Gairloch Friend at Comm. £20; Ardersier Friend at Comm. £10; Dutch Friend at Comm. £20; Two Friends £100; Anon, Stornoway £30; all for Laide Church Building Fund; Mrs M., Laide £5 for Sust. Fd, £5 for Home Miss. Fd. per Mrs Ross.

Stornoway — In memory of my dear wife from D.M., Stornoway £100, where most needed; Miss Morrison £40 for Stornoway Congr. Fds, both per Rev. J. MacLeod.