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Meeting of Synod 1985

The annual meeting of the Synod of the Church took place in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness, on Tuesday 21st May at 6.30 p.m., when the retiring Moderator of Synod, the Rev. A. F. MacKay, preached from the words — “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20: 24).

The following members of Synod were present:

From the Northern Presbytery — Revs. R. R. Sinclair, A. F. MacKay, D. B. MacLeod, John Ross, John Tallach, Fraser Tallach, Donald M. Boyd and Alexander Murray, with Messrs. William Taylor, Roderick MacDonald, Ian MacRae, Roderick W. M. MacKenzie, Hugh MacKenzie, Peter MacLeod, Ewen I. Fraser and Eleneth Sutherland.

From the Southern Presbytery — Revs. Donald MacLean, Lachlan MacLeod, Alexander McPherson, Donald M. Campbell, Donald John MacDonald and George I. MacAskill, with Messrs. Duncan MacNicol, Roderick A. Campbell, John MacDonald, Dr R. K. MacCuish, Alasdair MacPherson, John Morrison, Murdo Nicolson, James Henderson, Hector McPherson and Dr Duncan McSween.

From the Western Presbytery — Revs. Alfred E. W. MacDonald, John W. Ross, Donald A. Ross and Neil M. Ross, with Messrs. Roderick MacLean, Jan van Woerden, Donald MacCuish, William G. MacLeod, Edward Ross and Thomas Maton.

From the Skye Presbytery — Revs. Fraser MacDonald, Donald Nicolson, James Tallach and Hamish I. MacKinnon, with Messrs. William Byres, Ronald MacBeath, John Campbell, Roderick Annand, Murdo MacLeod and Duncan MacPherson.

From the Outer Isles Presbytery — Revs. Alexander Morrison, John

MacLeod and Duncan MacLean, with Messrs. John Buchanan, Roderick MacLeod, Roderick MacCuish, Finlay Thomson, Donald Murray, John Nicolson and J. MacAskill.

Letters of apology for absence were read from — Revs. D. J. MacAskill, W. MacLean, Angus MacKay, John MacDonald, John Angus MacDonald and M. MacInnes, and from Mr J. C. Fraser. There was also a letter from the Rev. John Tallach explaining his absence from the opening meeting of Synod.

Licensing of students.

The Rev. D. J. MacDonald, Convener of the Training of the Ministry Committee, notified the Synod that Messrs. Donald MacAskill, B.A. and Archibald MacPhail, M.A. had successfully finished their Divinity Course and were now ready to be taken on trials for licensing by their Presbyteries.

At this juncture the Moderator stated, "The time has come for me to demit this office and I would thank the members of Synod for their forbearance and patience and for their prayers that I should be upheld throughout the period of my office as Moderator. I ask then that another Moderator be appointed for the coming year."

Rev. Donald MacLean said, "Moderator, Fathers and Brethren, the Church Interests' Committee adopting the usual procedure came to the decision to propose the name of the Rev. John MacLeod, Stornoway, as Moderator for the ensuing year. I have much pleasure in moving that he be given this position. He is well known to us all and he has served the Church at home and abroad, and is acquainted with the various parts of the Church; he has also been Clerk of the Outer Isles Presbytery for a number of years. This experience fits him, I think, to be a very suitable Moderator over this our supreme Court. He will need the Holy Spirit of promise who is alone able to do in us and for us above what we can ask or think."

Rev. Donald John MacDonald seconded this motion, homologating all that Mr MacLean had said.

Rev. A. F. MacKay then vacated the Chair and wished the new Moderator the help of the Lord in carrying out his duties.

Rev. John MacLeod upon taking the Chair said — "I would like to thank the Court for the honour — and I regard it as no ordinary honour — to be found in this Chair. I regard this Chair to be the Chair that has been occupied by Alexander Henderson, by Thomas Chalmers, by Principal Cunningham, by Donald MacFarlane, by Neil Cameron, and other

servants of Christ who are now in glory; and it is with a deep sense of my own inadequacy I accept it. I therefore crave your prayers that I may be given grace and strength to carry out my duties in a way consistent with the honour you have conferred upon me.”

Tributes to Deceased Members of Synod.

It was agreed that tributes to the following deceased members of Synod would be prepared — Mr John Cumming, Glasgow; Mr James MacLeod, Strathy; Mr Anthony MacPherson, Gairloch, and Mr Farquhar Ferguson, Fort William.

Publication of Synod Sermon.

Rev. F. MacDonald in asking the Synod that the sermon of the retiring Moderator be inserted in the pages of the Church's Magazine, said, “We listened to Mr MacKay with a degree of interest because the sermon was apposite, evangelical, shot through with the Word of the living God that liveth and abideth forever.”

It was agreed that the next meeting of this Synod would be held on Wednesday 22nd May at 10.15 a.m. in private and at 3 p.m. and at 6.30 p.m. in public.

At this private meeting of Synod on **Wednesday 22nd May**, a Report from the Northern Presbytery was given in connection with the publication by Rev. S. F. Tallach of a booklet entitled, “The Ides of May.”

Part of this Report stated:—

The Presbytery (Northern) unanimously came to the following Decision:

“After hearing parties at the bar the Presbytery finds:

1. That Rev. S. F. Tallach confessed that he had erred in respect of the Synod's motion of 1978 in publishing the “Ides of May.”
2. That Rev. S. F. Tallach has given an undertaking that he will now desist from agitating the minds of the loyal people of the Church on the subject of Protest;
3. That Mr Tallach has undertaken relative to any raising of the subject of Protest, he will in future first bring the matter to the Church Courts;
4. That the Presbytery find that Mr Tallach be admonished.” This admonition was duly administered.

Rev. S. F. Tallach acquiesced in this decision.

At this same meeting of private Synod the activities of a group called “FRIENDS AT TEN” were discussed. This group had been meeting in

connection with the Aberdeen Congregation of the Church, over several weeks on Thursdays at 10 o'clock, a.m., when talks were given on such subjects as, crochet for beginners, patchwork, flower arranging. There followed a break for refreshments and this was in turn followed by a talk in some way connected with religion. The matter had been brought before the Northern Presbytery and came before the Synod by way of Dissent and Complaint.

After discussion the Synod unanimously came to the following decision — That the Synod find that the activities of such a group as The Friends at Ten are incompatible with the proper activities of a Christian Congregation and instruct that all connection between this organisation and the Aberdeen minister and his Kirk session cease forthwith.

In the afternoon of Wednesday 22nd May the Synod met again in public.

The Clerk of Synod read the acknowledgment of last year's Loyal Address and the LOYAL ADDRESS 1985 was read and passed by the Synod.

LOYAL ADDRESS

To The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty

The Loyal and Dutiful Address of the Synod of the
Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

May it please Your Majesty,

We, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, convened at Inverness, this 22nd day of May, 1985, desire to express anew to Your Majesty, the sincere loyalty and affection which we bear to Your Majesty's Person and Throne.

We are deeply thankful that in the kind providence of God, Your Majesty continues to be upheld in discharging the exacting and arduous duties of your exalted position as head of the British Nation and of the Commonwealth, and that Your Majesty has been preserved from evil in a revolutionary and increasingly violent age. We gratefully acknowledge the great goodness of God in wonderfully preserving Your Majesty's Government from the murderous attack made upon it at Brighton last October. Our prayerful desire is that Your Majesty may long be spared to continue your gracious reign over us.

It is with sorrow that we note the continuing decline of the religious and moral life of the nation, as that is evidenced by the accelerating rise in the incidence of crimes of violence, the increasing repudiating of

lawful authority, the growing breakdown of family life, the continued abandoning of the worship of God, and the spreading desecration of the Christian Sabbath.

We desire to humbly convey to Your Majesty the importance of a consistent example on the part of Your Majesty in observing the divine institution of the Sabbath, that great bulwark of the Christian Faith. We feel bound respectfully to state that we cannot but be grieved by reports of members of our beloved Royal family engaging in, or spectating at, sporting events on the Lord's Day.

With the utmost respect we wish to say also that the continuing deference paid to the Head of the Roman Catholic Church by members of the Royal family is also distressing to Your Majesty's most loyal subjects, and we particularly deplore that His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales and Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales have had an audience with the Pope during their visit to Italy, but we rejoice that in the Divine Providence they were prevented from attending a private mass. Considering that the Bill of Rights expressly forbids any person, who has communion with the See of Rome, to "inherit, possess or enjoy the crown and government of this realm," it causes us much concern that the heir to the throne should pay what is generally viewed as an official visit to the one who, although he is Head of the Vatican State, never ceases to be the Bishop of Rome and never lays aside his claim to be the Vicar of Christ on earth.

We assure Your Majesty that we fervently pray that the stability of Your Majesty's throne be maintained and, to that end, that there be a national returning to God, to His Word and to that righteousness which exalts a nation and establishes the throne.

We rejoice with you at the birth of Prince Henry and pray that he may be the recipient of the favour of God.

Our continuing prayer is that Your Majesty, Your Majesty's Royal Consort and all members of the Royal family may enjoy the rich blessing of God, especially that essential blessing of Salvation which is by faith in Christ Jesus.

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

The Rev. A. McPherson presented the **Welfare of Youth Committee Report** and gave the following report on the **Youth Conference** held this year at Edinburgh.

“The Conference was held at the Carlisle Halls of Residence, Edinburgh, and was attended by 40 young persons. The Conference, in my experience, was a very profitable occasion and a very pleasant one. I was happy to be there. There were many new faces, something like 25 and a wide area of the Church represented. Excellent papers from Rev. Neil Ross and Rev. D. Boyd were delivered and there was a great deal of interest shown in them. In the evening Miss Nicolson and Mr Taylor addressed us and Mr Taylor gave a very enthusiastic account of the work of the schools at the Ingwenya Mission.

We had an afternoon guided tour of some of the historical sites in Edinburgh when Rev. Sinclair Horne took us to several places of interest. The one that made the greatest impression on myself was the visit to a little chapel — Magdalene Chapel, which is under the ownership of the Scottish Reformation Society and is not open to the public. The chapel was built in 1529 by a pious R C couple. It was the venue of the first Assembly of the Church of Scotland and it became the workshop of the Reformation. During the time of the persecutions many of the martyrs who had been executed at the Grass Market had their bodies recovered and kept in this chapel until they were given a burial.”

The **Training of Ministry Report** was given in by the Convener, Rev. Donald John MacDonald who drew the attention of Synod to the need for prayer to the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into the harvest.

The **Theological Tutor's Report** was presented by the Rev. Donald B. MacLeod. In connection with this the Rev. Donald J. MacDonald expressed the debt owed by the Synod to the tutors.

The **Home of Rest Committee Report** was presented by Rev. Duncan MacLean who indicated the need for fairly large expenditures if the property was to be kept in good condition. He expressed the thanks of his committee to the Deacon's Court of the Dingwall and Beaully Congregation of the Church who had come to the help of the Committee in providing the necessary money wherewith to purchase a car for the Matron of the Home. In referring to the several deaths that had taken place in the Home he mentioned that this ought to lift our minds to the necessity to seek a place in the house of many mansions.

Dr R. K. MacCuish supported the Convener in his request for money for the Home. He could not accept that the debit balance came about by the employment of nursing staff. It was his opinion that persons needing terminal care should be admitted to the Inverness Home of Rest. He was aware that in order to have a home registered by the Board of Health for

this purpose, there would be additional expenditure to meet public requirements. Another point raised by Dr MacCuish was the salary of the Matron and this led to some lengthy discussion and the Clerk of Synod stated — “The Synod does not want anyone to be employed at anything less than the current rate.” The business was left to the Committee.

The Helmsdale Congregation. The position of the Helmsdale congregation was brought before the Synod in that it was regarded as a preaching station under the Lairg Kirk Session. The Northern Presbytery had a remit to the Synod asking for clarification of the position of the Congregation and also asking that Helmsdale be incorporated in the joint congregation of Dornoch, Rogart, Lairg and Bonar. The matter was discussed by the Synod and the recommendation of the Northern Presbytery was agreed to.

The Dundee Congregation. The Southern Presbytery had been asked by the Church Extension Kirk Session to alter the bounds of that Charge and that the Dundee Congregation be established as a Church Extension Charge in its own right while the Perth and Stirling parts of the charge should continue as at present. The Southern Presbytery had agreed to transmit the matter to the Synod.

Rev. Donald John MacDonald in speaking for the Remit stated that a few years ago the Church Extension Committee had been discontinued and the duties of Church Extension placed in the hands of the Presbytery and therefore what we have here is a Presbytery performing that very duty.

Rev. A. Murray said that he would support the Remit but that we had to be realistic and take note that the Home Mission Fund is in a depleted condition. He asked would the way forward not be to make the Perth and Stirling Charge a proper sanctioned Charge and thus the proposed Dundee Charge would have the full resources of the Home Mission Fund.

Rev. S. F. Tallach stated his agreement pointing out that the number of persons in Dundee was almost equivalent to the number in the whole Highland Area. He felt that if after several years a Charge could not raise money to the level of 40% of a minister's salary, that it was time to move on to some other place.

Rev. F. MacDonald raised the issue of representation at Synod. Such a charge, did it come into existence would immediately have representation in the Synod notwithstanding its very small numbers.

Mr Alasdair MacPherson said, “I have been in this Charge from its inception and basically we believe it to be a work of God. Because of the unmanageable nature of the Charge as it is at present, one man cannot

do the work. Dundee, being a big city, in a very short time could support a minister of its own. Since we opened a church in Dundee many people come in to hear the gospel. At the last communion on the Monday evening we had 31 persons of whom 19 were from the Dundee area. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." After some further discussion the Synod agreed to grant the remit and so establish the Dundee Congregation as a separate Church Extension Charge.

In the evening the Synod met again and Rev. D. A. Ross, the Convener of the Religion and Morals Committee presented the Committee's Report.

Mr W. Taylor thought that it was too long having more than doubled its size from what it was two years ago.

Rev. A. Murray commended the work of the Committee. He asked for a text proof for the statement on page 19 that corrective chastisement was enjoined in God's Word on teachers. He stated that as a member of the Religious Joint Committee on Education he noticed that there was a tendency to attempt the removal of the predominancy of Christianity from the Higher Grade Religious Studies.

Rev. Donald MacLean extended his congratulations to the Committee for the clarity and skill of the Report. He referred to the proposal for the sequestrations of the assets of persons found guilty of trading in illegal drugs and he thought that this should be a great preventative and he was pleased to know that the suggestion was on the Scottish Law Commission Agenda. In connection with the Warnock Report, Mr MacLean had been in communication with the Home and Health Department in London. That Department informed him of their intention to issue a publication in which the Report given in by the Committee would be included. On the subject of Education, Mr MacLean had been in correspondence with the Strathclyde Authorities in connection with proposals to avoid anything in Education which would be offensive to Hindus etc.

Rev. J. W. Ross asked re the reference to Freemasonry, if there were in the Free Church members who had association with this Society.

Rev. Alex. Morrison stated that he could give names of persons in office in the Free Church, in days gone by, who were members of the Masonic Lodge. Mr Roderick MacLean corroborated this.

Resolutions of Synod 1984. Acknowledgments of these Resolutions were read out to the Synod by the Clerk.

Resolutions of Synod 1985.

1. Re Church Privileges and Freemasonry.

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Inverness on Wednesday, 22nd May, 1985, considers it timely to draw attention to the exclusion of Freemasons from the privileges of Baptism or the Lord's Supper in any congregation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The Manual of the Practice of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (1969 edition) states, in Chapter I, Part II, Section 10, that the Kirk Session are entitled and called upon to insist upon the following qualification:—

“Such as are members of Societies requiring Secret oaths from their members, for example, Free Masons, are not entitled to privileges while they remain connected with such societies.”

Rev. D. M. Boyd presented this Resolution and observed that it was purely to re-affirm the position of the Church. He noted that at least two books have been printed on the subject of Free Masonry and its influence adversely on society. Reference was also made to the scandal in Italy re this Society. In connection with Free Masonry in our own land it had been postulated that the K.G.B. may be using Free Masonry as a back door to get into contact with the top people of our land.

The Synod adopted the Resolution.

2. Re Surrogate Pregnancy, Legitimacy, In Vitro Fertilisation and the Exploitation of the Human Embryo.

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Inverness on Wednesday, 22nd May, 1985, wishes to express its condemnation of the practice of surrogate pregnancy and, likewise, the exploitation and the experimentation unto destruction of the human embryo.

While we welcome the Government's measures in introducing legislation intended to outlaw commercial surrogacy, we would urge the Government to extend this to include all forms of surrogacy. We affirm that the proposal to legitimise the offspring of any fertilisation other than that between husband and wife is unscriptural.

We also wish to express our strong reservations regarding In Vitro Fertilisation (the test-tube baby technique) and our condemnation of the present IVF programme which includes the destruction of human embryos, which is apparently an essential part of the test-tube baby programme. We urge the Government to introduce legislation as soon as

possible to give full protection in law to the unborn child at all stages of its development from fertilisation.

Rev. D. M. Boyd in introducing this Resolution stated — “This is a subject we cannot begin to educate you in now. We look upon surrogate motherhood as a breach of the seventh commandment. One of the problems of surrogacy is re the laws of inheritance which must be reviewed. The concept of illegitimacy disappears and thus we get rid of the ‘idea.’ Of the exploitation of the Human Embryo you have read already in the Religion and Morals Report. The question of when the soul comes into the body does not come in here. I have my own views. The body is forming and there ought to be no undue interference. The Warnock Report suggests the creation of human embryos for the sole purpose of experimentation and then to be destroyed. We view that with utter abhorrence. It is in that light that we must look at the question of In Vitro Fertilisation and consider the policy of those working in the field. Millions of human embryos can be destroyed.

Can we have Test Tube babies without destroying them? We address ourselves to what is happening in the present programme. If it were not for Enoch Powell’s Bill this matter would not have been brought forward to the public. The medical profession tells us that experimentation is necessary to their programme — ‘an essential part of the programme’.”

The matter was then discussed by the Synod.

Rev. S. F. Tallach asked “Can we not distinguish between In Vitro Fertilisation and experimentation? Can a programme not be simply for meeting the situation of a woman otherwise infertile? Is there not a clear distinction?” To this Rev. D. M. Boyd replied that there are so many things bound up that we cannot disentangle.

Rev. S. F. Tallach added: “There are situations where this is being used not outside marriage faithfulness.”

Rev. D. M. Boyd explaining the procedure used answered, “You might start saying can you not do this or that — this is what is happening.”

Rev. James Tallach took up the phrase “we wish to express our condemnation,” He added — “You are not saying that there is anything inherently immoral in taking the eggs. I would agree with that. I think that we should keep that in mind. We must condemn the present programme not the thing itself. It is not immoral.”

To this Rev. D. M. Boyd replied that he did not say that there was nothing wrong with In Vitro Fertilisation in itself. He did have strong reservations. The Rev. R. R. Sinclair at this stage stated that we did not

want a long medical debate but that what we desired was to know what, as Christians, we are to repudiate.

Dr R. K. MacCuish then spoke and said — “Mr Tallach said that there is nothing inherently immoral. There is immorality involved. The whole procedure is to be condemned because the Most High has given us an orderly way of procreation. The whole thing is leading to what Germany did in the last war.”

Rev. F. MacDonald stated his view — “I deeply appreciate this Resolution. We are deeply indebted to Mr Boyd. I totally endorse the view.”

Rev. John Ross suggested that while not saying In Vitro Fertilisation is wrong in principle we could express our disapproval of the programme. He moved that the Resolution be altered to embrace the words ‘while not saying In Vitro Fertilisation is wrong in principle.’ Rev. James Tallach seconded this Motion.

In being put to the vote the Resolution thus amended obtained ten votes and the Resolution in its original form as found above obtained FORTY EIGHT votes and was thus adopted by the Synod.

3. Resolution of Rock Music

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Inverness on Wednesday, 22nd May, 1985, expresses its deep concern about the moral filth and blasphemy which are conveyed through Rock Music. In addition to the music being sensual, is the fact that many of the lyrics extol nihilism, sex, drugs, rebellion and blasphemy and the occult. Even the titles of many Rock songs are blatantly immoral or very suggestive.

With regard to the Rock musicians and singers, is the fact that many of them are regular drug users: some are unashamedly homosexuals and lesbians, and some go so far as subtly to advertise their links with evil: as in the case of the long established group KISS.

Another frightening aspect of the Rock scene, is the technique known as backmasking by which evil and blasphemous messages can be conveyed through the subconscious. Some of these messages are too awful to mention, but suffice to say they exalt sin and Satan, and blaspheme God and Christ.

Rock music has a corrupting effect on soul and body and debases those captivated by it. Having, as it does, millions of followers, these sad effects are more widespread than we can estimate. We solemnly warn against this monstrous evil. Behind it is Satan the evil one, and those also

of whom the Scripture say, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." II Tim. 3: 13. Listen to and be warned by the Word of God which states: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6: 7.

Rev. D. A. Ross presented this Resolution and said that the reason for it is obvious, although there are many parents not aware of what is going on in this sphere. There are many who follow it, he said, and thereby fall down at last into a lost eternity.

The Resolution was adopted by the Synod.

Letter to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

Rev. D. M. Boyd prepared and presented a letter to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales as follows:—

H.R.H. The Prince of Wales
Buckingham Palace
LONDON

Your Royal Highness,

It was with anguish and dismay that our Synod learned of Your Royal Highness' request and intention to attend a private mass with the Pope of Rome, together with the secrecy surrounding it. It was with a measure of relief that we heard of the cancellation of this event.

We would respectfully remind Your Royal Highness that the noble Protestant Reformers of the Church of England, of which Church Your Royal Highness is a member, described the mass as a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit (The Articles of Religion, No. 31), while the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 29, Section 2, says the mass "is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of His elect."

We number ourselves among Her Majesty the Queen's most loyal servants. We endeavour by our speech, lives and prayers to uphold Her Majesty the Queen and the Protestant Throne which she occupies. It shocks and disappoints us that the Heir-apparent to the Throne should consider so compromising Her Majesty the Queen, who by the Bill of Rights 1689 and the Act of Settlement 1701 is pledged not to be "reconciled to or . . . hold communion with the see or Church of Rome" without relinquishing that Protestant Throne.

It gives us no pleasure to write in such terms to Your Royal Highness, but as duty bound to the Lord Jesus Christ, to our own consciences, and to Your Royal Highness' spiritual and temporal well-being, we unders-

tand that as the Heir-apparent to the Protestant Throne of Britain, such reconciliation to the see of Rome could jeopardise Your Royal Highness' right to succession and would be inconsistent with the Oath, upon Your anticipated accession, to preserve the Protestant and Presbyterian Religion of the Church of Scotland, as an integral part of the Treaty of Union 1707.

In view of the serious and precarious position, brought about by ecumenical activities, to our Protestant Throne, we feel duty-bound to speak plainly to Your Royal Highness before a situation arises relative to the Protestant Constitution, which is irreversible. We feel that Your Royal Highness is being ill-advised in spiritual matters by some who have departed from the true teaching of the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God. The Lord says of those who reject His Word, "Lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord: and what wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah, Chapter 8, verse 9).

We pray God that Your Royal Highness will be brought to a full appreciation of the Protestant faith as a true exposition of "the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II Timothy, chapter 3, verse 15).

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

MODERATOR.

The Clerk of Synod expressed his appreciation of the work done by Mr Boyd and it was agreed that the letter be sent by the Moderator of the Synod.

Day of Humiliation and Prayer.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair in introducing his Motion re a Day of Prayer prefaced it by observing that the masses were not conversant with the Word of God yet it was only by the Word of God that the Spirit of God works and therefore to pray for the Holy Spirit apart from seeking to use the Word is unscriptural. We must pray that those that are without the visible church altogether, would be brought in.

The Resolution read —

"That the Synod appoint Wednesday, 18th December, 1985, as a Day of Prayer throughout the Church for our nation. Bearing in mind; that the people in general have no regard for God's Word — That they have forsaken the House of God and the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ — And that desecration of the Lord's Day is manifest — That transgression of the Law as to immorality and violence increases —

To pray that God would in wrath remember mercy toward our Nation — By pouring His Holy Spirit upon His believing people, and enable them to hold fast to the Word of God, His Law and the Gospel of Christ in heart and conduct; by influencing many living without God, by His government in providence, to attend the House of God and the faithful preaching of the Gospel; and by His Spirit's power bring many to Repentance toward God over their sins, and to faith in His Son unto their salvation; and to godly living — That God would for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ, so favour our Nation in His Sovereign mercy."

The Synod agreed to this.

The **Finance Committee Report** was presented by the Rev. Donald MacLean.

Regarding the Forsyth Bequest Fund, Mr D. MacPherson suggested that the money could possibly be earning more. At a later stage, when presenting the Church Accounts, the Church's General Treasurer pointed out that this was not the case.

Mr J. MacAskill thought that there was an inordinate delay in the manner in which applications for assistance from the Forsyth Bequest Fund were being handled by the Committee. The Convener of the Committee replied — "I fully appreciate what has been said. The Finance Committee cannot pay out money which it does not have. Every claim is considered on its own merits."

Several other members of Synod spoke on the matter of the procedure adopted in connection with seeking assistance from the Forsyth Bequest Fund.

The **Financial Accounts** were then presented by Mr W. D. Fraser, the Church's General Treasurer who, while glad to be able to state that most congregations were forwarding the money due to the General Funds at proper intervals, there were still a few who were unduly delaying payments.

Mr W. Taylor said that on behalf of the Synod he would express thanks to Mr W. D. Fraser for his very comprehensive Report which must have involved a lot of hard work.

The Synod expressed its thanks to the General Treasurer, The Publications Treasurer and to the Church's Auditor.

Sabbath Observance Report. This was presented by Rev. N. M. Ross.

Overture from The Southern Presbytery

That the Synod reaffirms the resolutions of Synod enjoining every minister to give an address once a year on the position of the Free

Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the relationship in which it stands to other churches in Scotland.

Dr. R. K. MacCuish in presenting the Overture stated —

“I am very happy to present this. It is, of course, an Overture of many years standing and it is mandatory already. It first came before the Synod in 1898 — then again it came up in 1906 — and I am grateful to Dr. MacSween for letting me have a copy of what appeared in the Magazine that year. I want to read what was written there — ‘Rev. D. MacFarlane moved that the Synod, as usual, instruct their ministers to address their congregations once a year on the principles of the Church. He said that this was not a new thing, but that it prevailed in the Free Church for a number of years after the Disruption of 1843. The practice, however latterly came to be neglected, with the result that people grew up in ignorance of the principles of the Church, and that the Calvinism of the original Free Church had largely given place to Arminianism. The motion was unanimously agreed to.’

It was again reaffirmed in 1924; in 1927 and in 1954. It is most appropriate today. We are not engaged in the religion of miscalling but we must make clear to our congregations and to our church at large, why we separated from the Free Church in 1893 and remain separated today. The Editor of the Free Church Magazine sees no difference but I think he should be taught. To come nearer home I want to make one or two points. We have heard one saying that he does not want to hear anything about 1893. That is a very serious matter. We have had also one question the refusal of our Church Interests’ Committee to send a delegate to the Free Church Assembly. Let us remember that the Church has expanded in recent years — not because we have engaged in ‘evangelistic campaigns’ — they have come because we have remained separate — because we have remained hitherto faithful to 1893, and this is the way forward. I am quite sure that there are better days coming. It may be said that there are good men in other churches. That may be and may not be. The question I ask is what are they doing there? In the Church of Scotland they are bound to ordain women ministers — to allow women engage in the worship of God without head covering (hats) — and they have to accept the custom of women wearing trousered suits. In the Free Church it is permissible for persons supplying pulpits to travel on the Lord’s Day by public transport. Doctrinal and practical errors in other churches must be pointed out and people warned against them for we are here dealing with the issues of the eternal welfare of immortal souls and we cannot afford to cover over and water down. Let us not think that by mixing

with ministers of other churches we are going to improve them but what happens is that there is the danger of getting used to what is wrong." Rev. A. Murray said — "In bringing forward such an overture with reference to Resolutions of past Synods, I think the previous ones should be included. Let us see exactly what we are reaffirming."

In answer to this Dr. MacCuish stated that the terms are exactly those of the 1924 Synod.

Mr Donald Murray said that he would disagree with Mr MacCuish on the issue of the numbers increasing. He was aware that we could not attract persons to church by such things as flower shows but that we can attract them by a sound gospel ministry, and in that way tell them that we believe in 1893.

Mr Thomas Maton agreed with Dr. MacCuish that he also had encountered a spirit of antipathy when on one occasion he was reading a sermon in which a small reference was made to 1893.

The Clerk of Synod then spoke —

"As one who has been doing this ever since I became a minister, and who profits greatly from doing so, and finds it a spiritual pleasure to set before our people once a year the doctrines of Divine Revelation maintained by us; together with the wonderful way in the providence of God we came into existence and are continuing, I would move in terms of the Overture."

The Synod thus adopted the Overture.

The next meeting of Synod was held in private on **Thursday morning, 23rd May**. At this meeting the state of the Congregation at Barnoldswick was discussed and the Synod agreed with a request from that congregation that it be raised to the status of a Church Extension Charge.

The Synod met again in the afternoon in public and the first item of business considered was the presentation of the **Church's Magazine Committee's Report** by the Rev. R. R. Sinclair. Mr Sinclair referred to his contact with a member of the firm responsible for the printing of the Church's Magazines who had expressed to Mr Sinclair his high satisfaction with the co-operation given to the firm by the Editors of the Magazines.

The Editor of the Free Presbyterian Magazine, Rev. D. B. MacLeod, M.A., now presented his Report.

In presenting the Report of the Young Peoples' Magazine, the Editor, Rev. N. M. Ross, B.A., stated that he had no idea of how much work was involved and that he was very appreciative of the help given and hoped that that help would continue.

The **Publication Committee's Report** was given in by Rev. A. McPherson who drew the attention of the Synod that the First Volume of the Free Presbyterian Magazine was now available at the very modest price of £3.95 and he expressed the hope that every family in the Church would purchase a copy. He informed the Synod that three books were in process of being printed; A new Edition of the Confession of Faith; Sermons by the late Rev. Donald MacFarlane on the Love of God and cognate themes — a book noted for its simplicity and depth; and the life of Dr. John Duncan.

A suggestion was made that the Life of the late Rev. Neil Cameron be republished with additions but the Rev. Fraser MacDonald thought that this would not be at all necessary considering the large numbers of this book still available.

The **Bookroom Committee's Report** was given in by Rev. Donald MacLean.

Arising out of this Report was the information that Bibles with metrical psalms were scarce. It was decided that Rev. D. B. MacLeod would take up the matter with the T.B.S.

The Clerk of the Synod now read out **Acknowledgments of Tributes and of Letters of Sympathy of Synod 1984.**

He then proceeded to read out the **Acknowledgments of Donations given by the Synod 1984** and the Synod agreed to the following donations being given this year —

To the Reformation Translation Fellowship	£600
To the Ockenden Venture	£500
To the AID to the Persecuted	£500
To Care Trust	£500
To National Viewers and Listeners' Association	£200
To L.D.O.S. England	£500
(Increased figure to cover extra costs in connection with the work done re the Shops Act.)	
To the Blythswood Tract Society — for Bibles (A.V.)	£500

The Clerk of Synod explained that the Trinitarian Bible Society do not receive a donation from the Synod as the several congregations of the church make annual collections for this Society. However, he pointed out that he had sent £200 last year to the Trinitarian Bible Society's Testimonial Fund for Mr Terence H. Brown who had retired as Secretary from the Society.

The Clerk of Synod read the letters of thanks and of greetings from the Trinitarian Bible Society.

The Moderator took up the matter of the work being done in restoring Magdalene Chapel, Edinburgh. It was agreed to leave it to the Finance Committee what contribution should be made to the Scottish Reformation Society re this.

Tributes to Deceased Members of Synod were now read as follows —

Tribute to Mr John Cumming, Glasgow.

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Inverness on Thursday, 23rd May, 1985, resolves to express its deep sense of loss in the removal by death of Mr John Cumming, an elder in the Glasgow Congregation, and on many occasions a member of this Court.

Mr Cumming became a communicant in the St. Jude's congregation on 23rd April, 1946, and was ordained an elder on 4th March, 1949. Although Mr Cumming did not take a very prominent part in public in the Synod, it was abundantly evident that he loved the Cause of Christ amongst us, and he was painfully wounded by references which in any way depreciated the stand for Truth made in 1893.

He was manifestly a man of prayer, who pled not only for the spiritual prosperity of the congregation with which he was associated for 77 years, but also for the Church world-wide, as well as for the generation in which he lived. For the last four years of his life he was prevented by the infirmities of old age from attending the public means of grace, although he was undoubtedly there in spirit. It is a matter of thankfulness to the Lord that he was kept by the power of God through faith, until, on Sabbath, 13th January, 1985, his soul entered the eternal Sabbath of the rest which remaineth to the people of God.

To his sorrowing widow and family the Synod extend their sincere sympathy, with the prayerful desire that they will be sustained by the comfort and strength of the "Father of mercies and the God of all comfort."

"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." "Psalm 112: 6.

**Synod Tribute to Mr James MacLeod
Elder and Lay Missionary, Strathy.**

James MacLeod was born on April 3rd 1915, the fourth in a family of three boys and two girls. His father was a tenant on the farm of Duartbeg, a few miles south of the Scourie village. Being the youngest of the boys, James stayed at home during the Second World War in order to

look after the farm. These years were to be eventful for the family. First his mother died, and then at Normandy, Alexander, his older brother, was killed. Perhaps these two deaths were blessed to James. Certain it is, in the estimation of those who knew him, that there was a distinct change in James's spiritual outlook about this time. He became a member at the Kinlochbervie Communion in 1954.

Not long after James went to Achness, Strathnaver, as a shepherd. In Church circles the latter part of his life will always be linked with the Strathy congregation. Till 1979 he was part-time missionary there, travelling every Sabbath into Strathy from Achness. After 1979, when he came to reside in Strathy Point, he was a full-time missionary.

James married after coming to Achness. With the object of his only daughter benefiting from the services of a doctor in Dornoch, James moved there with his family for some time before returning North.

In personality James was quiet, humble and very unassuming. When the time called for it, however, he could be very outspoken in defence of his convictions. His judgment of others fell on the side of charity.

It is in Strathy that James will be most warmly remembered. In prayer, preaching and speaking to the Question James MacLeod spoke from the heart and to the heart.

How spontaneous and genuine is the deep and loving appreciation of those who regularly sat under James' preaching. Of him we believe, "He doubtless, bringing back his sheaves, rejoicing shall return, Psalm 126: 6." The quiet resignation with which he bore his domestic trial over many years was most impressive. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Proverbs 4: 18." He was widely respected in the community.

His death was very sudden, and deeply felt by a wide circle of friends. He passed away in his sleep at the beginning of this year, after taking two services that Lord's Day. We can say in truth that both in a spiritual and natural sense his latter end was peace.

To his brother Peter, his two sisters, Mrs MacAskill and Mrs MacKenzie, the congregation in Strathy and most of all to his wife and daughter, the Synod extend their prayerful and heartfelt sympathy.

In connection with the late Mr James MacLeod, Strathy, Rev. R. R. Sinclair said that he had found in Mr James Macleod a very gracious humble Christian with whom he had intimate fellowship. His Christian

character was absolutely respected to the end. He was unassuming and did not project himself — he projected the grace of God in his heart. As missionary of the Strathy Congregation he followed in the line of great and godly persons such as Mr Donald MacKay, Mr Munro — and he did not fall below their high standard.

Tribute to the late Mr Anthony MacPherson, Elder, Gairloch.

The late Mr Anthony MacPherson was the representative elder for the Gairloch Congregation in the supreme Court of this Church. He had personal experience of the power of God's Word upon his own soul in leading him to the Saviour. According to the gifts bestowed upon him he sought to serve the Lord in a humble way, and when called to take office in the Church, he did so, conscious of his own weakness but relying upon the Lord alone. There was an absence of self-seeking in him which manifested itself to all, while any degree of ostentation was missing.

As he was born and brought up in the Free Presbyterian Church, and had early come to an appreciation of the stand made in 1893, it is not surprising that he was unswerving in his loyalty to it. To this Court he brought that gravity which characterised him in all things relating to the Cause of Christ. Without being in the least degree opinionated he was able to make his own judgment upon matters. To him it was an honour to be allowed to contribute any help he could to the Courts of the Church, and he acted therein with undeviating truthfulness. Although advanced in years (being 76 years of age upon his death), he showed no sign of decay. We have reason to believe that he is now among the number that serve God day and night in His temple in heaven. The Church mourns his loss and prays for the healing of such breaches.

To those that are related to him this Court would extend its sympathy.

The Late Farquhar Ferguson, Fort William

Farquhar was born in the city of Glasgow on the 19th day of May, 1926. His parents came from Plockton. His mother was an eminent Christian lady, who attended many Communion Seasons throughout the Church. Her thirst for the gospel, together with her zeal and love to our beloved Church, seemed to make a lasting impression on Farquhar's young mind.

Upon his leaving home, she always said farewell to him with this sweet quotation: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

It was, however, while serving in the Merchant Navy during the war

that he was brought out of darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel; when the Holy Spirit brought unspeakable peace, gladness and joy to his distressed soul in this precious truth: "And ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6: 19-20). Another scripture which he invariably quoted is "When the poor and needy seek water; and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them . . . (Isaiah 41: 17)."

Shortly after the change, Farquhar made a public profession, and thus became a good asset to Christ's Cause, especially in Fort William. The congregation there was then numerically weak. For years he was an elder in this congregation, and was much loved and respected by the congregation, and indeed throughout the parish, as the packed Church with those attending his funeral indicated. He was a member of Synod several times. In the absence of the minister Farquhar often took the services, which was very acceptable to the people, as he had a good delivery; that, together with his sweet musical voice, caused him to be often in demand to lead the Lord's praise in the Sanctuary both on Sabbath and weekday. One in the congregation, affectionately known as Johnny, an out and out Free Presbyterian who cast in his lot with us for many years, and one whose heart the finger of the Lord touched, we believe, often said to the writer after hearing Farquhar: "Minister, he himself should have been a preacher also."

Little did we think, when he so dignifiedly assisted at the serving of the Lord's Table at our Communion in September, that in a few weeks he would be in Heaven at the Supper of the Lamb. When he spoke to the Question on the Friday before, he gave several marks of God's filial fear being in the hearts of true and sincere professors. As he concluded, and as if he were bidding us farewell, he referred touchingly to the God-honouring stand made by the revered servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely Donald MacFarlane and Donald MacDonald, when in 1893, in defence of the Gospel, the evangelical and unadulterated doctrines thereof, they reserved such for the eternal good of the generations to come. Dr Rainy cared not for these things, when he and his like-minded party successfully piloted the infamous Declaratory Act through the Assembly of the Free Church, to the grief and dismay of thousands in Scotland. How sad!

Farquhar also had a good grasp and sound scriptural understanding of the position of our Church; as to the real significance and validity of a Protest in the Supreme Court he had no doubt and never, never varied on

the subject, for he was well aware of the obvious dangers of tampering with corner stones.

However, on the afternoon of 12th October, 1984, he did a somewhat unusual thing; he arrived home and had coffee with his dear wife. As he left, he stopped, closed the gate, and, as it were, gave a wave of farewell to her. Within a couple of hours, and while yet at the wheel of his vehicle, he, like Noah's dove, was taken into the ark above, to be forever with the Lord:

"Then are they glad, because at rest
and quiet now they be:
So to the haven He them brings,
Which they desired to see." (Psalm 107: 30)

To his widow, his son Kenneth and daughter Marion, we as a Synod convey our heartfelt sympathy in the time of their distress. Oh! may his mantle like that of Elijah fall on you. Oh for one to take his place in the Sanctuary which seems so empty at the moment.

Rev. A. Murray associated himself with this tribute.

On Thursday evening the Synod met again and the first item of business was the presentation of the **Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee's Report** by the Convener of that Committee, Rev. R. R. Sinclair.

Mr Sinclair prefaced his presentation of the Report by drawing the attention of the people of the Church to the fact that all the Reports are published in a separate booklet and that he would expect the people to buy them. The price is £1.40. He referred to the wonderful fact that we have the Mission in Zimbabwe where, as far as he was aware, the Church of Scotland had no Mission. It was, he said, a fulfilment of the prayer "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

It was his express desire that people would come to have a real appreciation of the kingdom of Christ in our Mission. In the Divine Providence, he thought, it was likely that we would soon have a Mission in Malawi where Rev. A. Ndebele had already made some contact. He hoped that when Mr van Woerden would visit Zimbabwe as Church Deputy that he would enter Malawi and seek audiences there and address them on the principles of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Rev. A. Murray now introduced to the Moderator of the Synod Mr J. Reijers and Mr H. van Vliet, and in doing so said — "This is an annual feature of the Synod Meeting that we have with us deputies from the Mbumba Zending Committee, Holland, and, of course, we have very

good reason why this should be as it is an annual thing. As you all know we depend greatly upon our friends in Holland to supply the wherewithal for the Mission. The contribution this year had risen to almost £200,000. We have with us this evening the Treasurer of the Committee, Mr Reijers."

Mr H. van Vliet then addressed the Synod.

Address of deputy of the Dutch "Mbuma-Zending"

Dear Moderator and Synod,

At first, I tender my best thanks to you for the opportunity, given to me, to speak some words in this meeting.

It is just now this year and this month 80 years ago, that the Lord widely opened up a way to start the mission work in Zimbabwe. For in a letter, dated 19th May 1905 to the late Mr Neil Cameron, your first missionary Rev. Radasi, informed him, that one of the chiefs, named Ngege, consented, that he should have a mission near his place.

A piece of ground at Bembesi, about 38 miles from Bulawayo was given to Mr Radasi, who could take it on a lease for £1 a year.

Many things have been changed since that time. But what has not been changed is, that in the over-ruling Providence of the Most High, the missionary work is going on. This in spite of several difficult political situations in Zimbabwe in former times and today.

As you know, we in Holland, are sustaining your missionary work since 1964, and up to now we continue with it. As a proof of it, I may point out to you the big attendance of about 7,300 people on our last missionary meeting in Utrecht.

We may say, with regard to your mission, that the threefold cord: Scotland-Zimbabwe-Holland, had not yet been broken.

Blessed be the Lord, for it is He, that inclines the hearts of men to the things of the mission. That may be seen not only in collecting money, but also for example in selling ballpoints, which is mostly done by children, in making many self-made knitted and sewn wear and other articles, mostly done by ladies' circles, and in collecting old newspapers and good, worn clothes. Concerning this last-named, in the course of a year, four tons of these clothes, after sorting, were despatched by container via Durban, to Bulawayo, where they safely arrived. And so many a man has a thing in hand for the mission work.

Moderator, for this time I shall not take more of your time.

The Lord may grant us, that you and we may continue, in His strength, with promoting the witness, committed to the Church.

He may bless all the work done for the mission, for except the Lord build the house (of the mission), we labour in vain that build it.

And as God is the first and highest cause of the mission, so He is the last and highest aim of the mission.

Finally, receive the kindest regards of the board and all the friends of the Mbuma-Mission in Holland. Our (Dutch) friends salute thee.

Thank you.

The Moderator of the Synod replied — “On behalf of the Synod I would like to thank you for your remarks. I was present at the last meeting of the Mbuma Zending in Holland on 30th April, 1985, in Utrecht. It was an amazing sight to see 7,300 people meet together and their aim was to support our Mission in Zimbabwe. I could not help feeling that this was truly of the Lord’s Divine Providence — and what an inscrutable and mysterious providence it is that he should move people in Holland to give of their substance to such an extent. By the Tuesday evening there was handed to the Treasurer of the Committee in Holland the sum of £53,000 pounds gathered on that one day. That is an indication of the level of support that our Mission receives from our friends in Holland. I speak for the Synod, and for the people of the Church in general when I express our heart-felt thanks for all your kindness and for all the support we receive from you — not only your material support but, we believe, there is a volume of prayer ascending from Holland on behalf of our Mission and we deeply appreciate that.”

Rev. Alex. McPherson presented the following Mission Reports — **Zenka Mission Report — Ingwenya Mission Report — Mbuma Mission and Hospital Report — Bulawayo Mission Report — and the Zvishavani Mission Report.**

Rev. James Tallach spoke re the opening envisaged in Malawi and expressed the expectation that when Mr van Woerden visited that place he would be accompanied by Rev. A. Ndebele and that after that the Rev. Ndebele would deepen the contacts made.

Rev. D. A. Ross presented the following Mission Reports —

The John Tallach Secondary School Report — The Mission Financial Report and The Building Report.

Mr. R. MacKenzie referred to the reference in the Report by Mr W. Campbell to the fact that the Sustentation Fund was disappointing and that it was more of a lack of will than of anything else.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald took up this point and said that he felt this was due to the fact that they had never been faced with the responsibilities of providing for themselves in the realm of the Church.

The Mission Accounts were presented by Mr Angus MacKenzie, C.A., and thus ended the business of the Foreign Mission.

The Synod then moved on to consider the state of the Church in the **Dominions and Overseas**.

Rev. D. B. MacLeod presented the Report of the Committee responsible for the Dominions and Overseas work of the Church. He indicated that he hoped to go out there soon himself and visit Australia and New Zealand, and therefore he was craving the prayers of the people of the Church on his behalf.

The Rev. D. A. Ross gave in his Report as Deputy to Australia and New Zealand. The **Toronto and Vancouver Reports** were submitted by Rev. A. Murray who stated — “In the past I had visited these places, and as far as I can work it out I visited Vancouver five times and Toronto an equal number of times.”

The Chesley Report was given in by the minister of Chesley, Rev. D. Campbell.

The Moderator welcomed back Mr Campbell and took note of his isolated condition in Chesley.

Mr Campbell thanked the Moderator.

Mr Campbell informed the Synod that since his coming to this country the recommendation of the Canadian Law Reform Association that the Federal Lord's Day Act be rescinded, had been made Law. “This decision,” added Mr Campbell, “is an assault on the Headship of Christ over the Nations.”

Another live issue in Canadian politics to which Mr Campbell referred, is the principle of giving financial aid to R. C. Schools. It was his view that in this matter the R. C. Church had received a set back.

Rev. Alex McPherson, who had visited the Congregation at Chesley, mentioned that he had found it most interesting to sit in at the Catechism Class in the Chesley congregation.

Deputy to Italy — Report.

Rev. John Tallach gave in this Report and supplemented it with matter relating to his most recent visit.

He explained that they were not many in number but it was his opinion that among the group at Fornaci Di Barga there was shown a deep spiritual interest in the Word of God particularly by one young person who by reason of her attachment to the things of God was living a pressurised existence. Mr Tallach referred to the results of the Vatican Council II and gave it as his opinion that there was a slipping away from the Pope — gradually, to the Bible as the Word of God. Mr Tallach was

not saying that the Roman Catholic Church is not as bad as we have been saying it is, neither was he saying that the R. C. system is changing, but he felt that there was undeniable evidence that there was some movement.

Mr W. Taylor asked re the persecution and Rev. John Tallach replied that there was no physical persecution but more in the way of being ostracized.

The Moderator asked if we had a church in these parts to which the reply was given that not as such but that there were persons who were interested.

Mr John MacDonald asked who were the *Communita Di Base*.

Rev. John Tallach replied that it meant groups related to the base of the Church but not to the hierarchy. They were not specifically spiritual.

Mr T. Maton asked re the services held by Franco Maggiotto. Rev. John Tallach stated that he had been at one service. He stated that it is not in the form of our worship — that they do have hymns.

This being all the business, the Moderator thanked the Inverness minister for the use of the Church and he thanked the Inverness people for their generosity.

Standing Committees

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

Church Interests' Committee — Moderator of Synod with Clerks of Synod and clerks of the five Home Presbyteries, and Rev. R. R. Sinclair.

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

Dominions and Overseas Committee — Revs. D. B. MacLeod, Convener; A. Murray, Vice Convener; Duncan MacLean, Lachlan MacLeod, S. F. Tallach with Messrs J. Henderson, W. D. Fraser and D. MacCuish.

Jewish and Foreign Missions Committee — Revs. R. R. Sinclair, Convener; A. Murray, Clerk; A. F. Mackay, Vice Convener; 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; F. MacDonald, Donald MacLean, D. B. MacLeod, John

MacLeod and A. MacDonald with Messrs A. McPherson and J. MacAskill and Dr. R. MacSween.

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

Church Magazines Committee — Revs. R. R. Sinclair, Convener; Clerks of Synod, D. B. MacLeod, N. M. Ross with the clerks of the five Home Presbyteries.

Publications Committee — Revs. A. McPherson, Convener; A. F. MacKay, Vice Convener; N. M. 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, D. M. Boyd and Messrs D. MacRae and J. MacAskill.

Home of Rest Committee — Revs. Duncan MacLean, Convener; D. B. MacLeod, Angus Morrison, John Ross, A. Murray and James Tallach with Drs. R. K. MacCuish and Neil Gillies and Messrs Hugh Gunn, Donald MacRae, John Campbell and W. Taylor.

Bookroom Committee — Revs. Donald MacLean, Convener; and L. MacLeod with Dr. D. MacSween and Messrs A. Gillies and W. D. Fraser.

Church Annual Collections

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund taken in March and August.

General Building Fund taken in April.

Home Mission Fund taken in May and in October.

Organisation Fund taken in June.

Dominions and Overseas Fund taken in September.

Publications Fund taken in November.

College and Library Fund taken in December.

Synod Sermon

by **Rev. A. F. MacKay M.A., Retiring Moderator**

“But none of these things move me neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I may finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus Christ to testify the Gospel of the grace of God” — Acts 20: 24.

In the days of his persecuting zeal while on the way to Damascus, Paul was arrested by the Lord Jesus Christ and called to engage in the service of the Gospel, that gospel, he says, which once I destroyed. The old life of the Pharisee with its legal righteousness as the ground of salvation and the pride the apostle felt in belonging to the strictest sect of the Pharisees, he at once renounced when the call of the gospel came to him. “When it pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” — Gal. 1: 15. He obeyed the call of Christ to enter his service. And in that service Christ committed to him the ministry of reconciliation and thereafter he laboured faithfully and earnestly to fulfil that ministry, so much so that he counted not his life dear unto himself. The ministry was dear to the apostle for he received it from the Lord Jesus Christ. He was careful to avoid giving any occasion of offence lest the ministry should be blamed. He made himself all things to all men that by all means he might save some. Nevertheless, he did not escape suffering and persecution. The ministry was always a cause of anxiety to the apostle and often attracted the persecution of an ungodly world. The ancient prophets spoke of the burden of the Lord when they went out with the Lord’s message. Jeremiah complained: “I have neither lent on usury nor men have lent to me on usury; yet everyone doth curse me” — Jer. 15: 10. And like his Master who suffered “the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God,” the apostle laboured in preaching the Word of God that he might do good to the souls of men. He was oppressed by weakness, sometimes by bodily ailments; the conflict between the flesh and spirit was always present within; he kept under his body lest while he preached to others he himself should become a castaway; and besides, the care of all the churches was laid upon him. He toiled in the vineyard to make the word of God known to perishing sinners. He was pressed in spirit to preach the gospel. Necessity was laid upon him. “Yea, woe is me,” he said, “if I preach not the gospel.” The ministry was, nevertheless, the source of great happiness and comfort to him. “Having this ministry as we have received mercy we faint not but have renounced the hidden works of dishonesty, not walking in craf-

teness, not handling the word of God deceitfully" — II Cor. 4: 1, 2. And like many of the Lord's true servants since the apostle's day, he went forth sowing the seed with tears but came again rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him.

In these words of the apostle we may with the Lord's help consider briefly the Gospel; the nature of the Gospel; and the service of the Gospel, "to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

1. The Gospel.

The Gospel preached by the apostle was that same gospel which Christ once for all committed to the church, the Gospel of Salvation.

Let us notice first that the apostle had tasted of this salvation for himself. A godly man of a by-gone age said: "I answered my call to grace before I answered my call to the ministry." The gospel the Lord will bless is the gospel which has brought forgiveness and peace to our own souls so that we may say that it is the gospel of our salvation. The godly Lachlan MacKenzie gave the advice: "Never commend to others a duty which you have not first reduced to practice yourself." The great apostle also gave this counsel: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." In preaching to others it is the preacher's main concern to explain how this work is to be undertaken. The apostle defended the authority of his ministry by declaring how the Lord called him to the work of the ministry. On different occasions the apostle gives in detail an account of his own conversion to hearers many of whom lived ungodly lives and some occupying high state office, and had no ear for the gospel. Nevertheless, the apostle proclaimed the message of the gospel to all who came within the hearing of his voice. The fire that burned within was shut up in his heart and he could not forbear but found relief only in making known to others what the Lord had in such a wonderful way done for his soul. The great experience of being translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son; of being delivered from the power of sin and satan so as to enjoy the liberty of the children of God; of being turned from the service of self and the world to the service of Christ; of exchanging the iron yoke of bondage for the light and pleasant yoke of Christ will provide his ministers with a wide field of discourse in presenting this glorious message of salvation to an ungodly world. And in handing in his account on the great day, many surprises await the Lord's servant. A godly minister confessed that in the future life many of his hearers would be in heaven whom he did not expect to see there and many absent whom he expected to be there, but

the greatest surprise of all that he himself should be in heaven. Samuel Rutherford declared that heaven would be two heavens to him if one sinner from Anwoth met him at God's right hand.

The apostle was also united to Christ in the bonds of the Gospel. "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his." The message that draws perishing and despairing sinners to Christ is the gospel of Christ and him crucified. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me; this he said, signifying what death he should die!" As the believer grows in grace and in knowledge, the bonds of the gospel will draw him closer to Christ. He will become one spirit with the Lord. The Church in the Song confessed: "My beloved is mine and I am his; he feedeth among the lillies." And the saintly Samuel Rutherford comments on these words: "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine; he brings a poor vile sinner into his house of wine." And Christ will continue to beautify the meek with salvation till they be ready to enter his own presence in the heavenly Sion. The story is often told of Archie Cook on meeting on one occasion a poor deformed woman on the street in Thurso, enquired where she was going and received the answer "I go to the place I desire to be at" and sensing a fellow traveller on the same path with himself, observed; "Is he not a wonderful lover when he would choose you?" When Christ's friends, however, take their place in the heavenly courts they will be clothed in the finest raiment of Christ's own righteousness and cleansed in his blood from all trace of sin and reflect the beauty of Christ who will be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe. "Beloved," John says "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." This is the meeting between Christ and his people that the apostle sought for his people and prayed to the Lord to preserve them till His return. "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

Further, the apostle was constrained to witness to the gospel from love to Christ. "The love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge that if he died for all then were all dead; and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto him which died for them and rose again." It is true, as the apostle says, that this is love that passeth knowledge. They who have experienced the kindness of Christ's love and have that love shed abroad in their hearts will declare to others: "Come, hear, I'll tell what the Lord has done for my

soul." They will not be slow to bear witness to the faith that is in them but will be ready to give to everyone that asketh them a reason for the hope that is in them with meekness and fear. This is the love that strengthened the apostle to be patient in the midst of the tribulations of life and to continue instant in prayer. Many waters cannot quench this love nor can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned. In this same 20th chapter of Acts from which we have taken our text, the apostle tells the elders who came down from Ephesus to meet him at Miletus: "I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." It is this constraining love of Christ that will make his servants faithful that they hold not back anything that may profit their people in doctrine or reproof. The meeting of the apostle with the Ephesian elders on the sea shore at Miletus proved to be a solemn occasion when he bade them farewell for they would not see his face again in the flesh. "Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men." The apostle's faithful ministry as he travelled throughout the countries of the east preaching the gospel left his hearers without any excuse to offer if they were found rejecting Christ at last. And Christ will look upon this love his people bear to him with favour. "Thou hast ravished my heart my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck (or with one fold of thy necklace) Song 4: 9. This is the glorious gospel of salvation which his servants proclaim and call upon the ends of the earth to look to Christ and be saved for "I am God and there is none else."

11. The Nature of the Gospel.

The gospel of salvation is the gospel of the grace of God and all the doctrines of the Bible are suffused with this grace of God. The Bible takes account of those to whom the gospel brings salvation, that sin has deprived us of the favour of God and left us helpless to deliver ourselves. The prophet Ezekiel in two passages of his book of prophecies describes this condition to which the first parents of the race by their sin and we by our own sin have brought ourselves. They are likened to a new born babe cast out in the open field, forsaken by its parents and none to do the services necessary, but the child is left lying polluted in its own blood. The Lord passed by and spoke in the ear the word of life and the exposed child lived. "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live" — Ezekiel 16: 6. "Now

when I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold thy time was a time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." Ezek. 16: 5, 6.

The prophet in another passage describes the same scene of death and desolation caused by sin. He saw the vision of a valley full of dry and parched bones, lying in heaps in the valley of vision, and adds "they were very dry." "Son of man, can these bones live?" and he answered, "Oh Lord God, thou knowest." But when the prophet at the Lord's bidding prophesied over the bones, there was a sound of shaking as they came together, bone to his bone, and sinews and flesh came upon them and skin covered them from above but there was no breath in them. Again he prophesied to the winds and there came breath from the four winds upon the slain and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army — Exek. 37: 1-10. We too must make the same confession that sin has ruined us and left us without hope. "Our bones are dried and our hope is lost and we are cut off for our parts." It was in view of this scene of death and desolation to which sin had brought us that the grace and mercy of God were exercised. The Lord provided a Saviour when in love to a sinful world he sent his only begotten Son that we might be saved. The prophet Zephaniah sang the joyful song of the days of the gospel: "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest his love; he will joy over thee with singing." And in the clearer days of the gospel we read: "Ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich" and "when we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly." The grace of God is seen in these days of the Gospel in the Lord's merciful dealings with the ungodly and the sinful. These are the days of the Holy Spirit of promise. "Other men have laboured and ye are entered into their labours" — John 4: 38. Of the events on the great day of Pentecost at Jerusalem Peter explained: "This Jesus hath God raised up whereof we are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" — Acts 2: 32, 33. This is the harvest day of the world in which Christ is reaping down the harvest field and gathering the wheat into the heavenly garner. "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" — Matt. 3: 12. He is effectually calling his people out of the world and separating

them to his service through the gospel. The apostle speaks to the Romans of the work that the gospel is doing in the church on earth:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us who can be against us?”

These are some of the great blessings of the covenant which Christ has obtained by his death for his people. They are made over to them who are in Christ. The prophecy of Isaiah is: “I will give thee for a covenant of the people.” And the church is rich in Christ. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And out of his fulness have all we received and grace for grace.” If any man desire to glory, the apostle counsels him to glory in the Lord. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” — I Cor. 1: 30, 31.

The Father’s promise to His dear Son ensures that he will bless this gospel of his grace. With the clear eye of prophecy the evangelical prophet recounts the sufferings and death of Christ the Saviour from which would follow the rich fruit which Christ would reap from his soul’s travail: He would see his seed; the Lord would prolong his days; the pleasure of the Lord would prosper in his hand; and by his righteousness he would justify many. It may be that the Lord’s Suffering Servant while enduring the terrible sufferings and death on the cross, found comfort in these consoling promises and from the 22nd Psalm as well. After the resurrection and before he returned to the Father, Christ provided that the work of the gospel would continue till the end of the world. He sent out ambassadors of the cross to all the world with instructions to preach this gospel of grace and these promises the Father made to his beloved Son are still in course of being fulfilled. “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead, by ye reconciled to God” — II Cor. 5: 20. He left this prayer in his church which will be offered by his servants in seeking the Lord’s help in their work: “The harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few;

pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." The cause of Christ is weak today and the need is great to pray to the Lord to raise up faithful servants to serve him in "a day of blasphemy and rebuke." The Church's enemies see in the present religious declension and disarray among the churches their chance to attack the doctrine of the Bible and when ministers of religion take up this work, they need have no fear that they are laying themselves open to be called to account for their conduct. Such is the delusion of the day that in the Church of England, Dr David Jenkins has made known his rejection of the doctrines of the Virgin Birth and the physical resurrection of Christ in defiance of the 39 Articles of his church and, his heretical views have made no difference to his appointment as Bishop to the see of Durham, and he can now join like-minded bishops on the Bench of Bishops. The Committee set up by the Home Secretary to enquire into the Sabbath in relation to the Shops Acts in 1983 has last year brought in their recommendations, and in short they advocate the wholesale "abolition in England and Wales and Scotland of all legal restrictions on the hours for which shops may be open to serve customers." We now prayerfully await and with dread the Bill to be presented to parliament which no doubt will include these recommendations.

The doctrinal standards of the church and the great institutions of the state, such as the Christian Sabbath, are today under threat and in danger of being destroyed. The psalmist prayed in his day: "Help Lord; for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men." On the great day of Pentecost in the early days in Jerusalem, the church was greatly strengthened by the increase of a godly seed and the gospel was carried to the uttermost parts of the earth and spread throughout the countries of the world. Such a time of revival of religion is sorely needed by the church of the present day.

The Saviour also gave this mission to his disciples, as in Mark's account, that they go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The believer will find in the gospel of the grace of God full salvation for his soul in believing in Christ, together with all covenant blessings in him. He is a debtor to the grace of God for the coming of the Saviour into the world whom the apostle describes as God's "unspeakable gift." And the Saviour promised that his presence would go with his sent messengers. "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world, Amen." And to encourage his servants, often cast down and dispirited in their own souls as well as by lack of success in their work, he says as he sends them out into the world: "All power is

given unto me in heaven and on earth.” The Saviour possess the fulness of the Holy Spirit, and as he himself in his earthly ministry relied on the presence and help of the Holy Spirit, he counsels them to wait till they be endued with power from on high. The Saviour, we read, undertook the Galilean ministry in the power of the Spirit. “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee and there went out a fame of him through all the regions round about” — Luke 4: 14. Their words will then be clothed with spiritual power, before which his enemies will bow themselves and his people will be made willing to submit to Christ.

“The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send thy rod of thy strength out of Sion;
rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauty of holiness, from the womb of the morning; thou hast the dew of thy youth” — Psalm 110: 1-3.

This Messianic Psalm the Saviour is able now to fulfil in the church on earth.

III. The Work of the Ministry.

The main service required of the Lord’s servants is to bear witness to the Gospel of God’s grace and this means the whole written word of God. They devote their time and strength to declaring the whole counsel of God, rightly dividing the word of truth, apportioning to hearers appropriate instruction, conducting their preaching within the bounds of the gospel of God’s grace. The Westminster Confession and the wide range of pulpit literature are available, but these are subordinate, the main work is bearing witness to the Word of God.

Sources of this Witness.

1. This witness will be drawn from the Scriptures themselves. The able minister of the Gospel is the servant who is mighty in the scriptures. The renowned Dr John Owen on being taken to task for going to listen to John Bunyan, replied that he would give all his learning to be able to preach like the Bedford tinker. To preach aright, the minister’s concern is to become attuned to the scriptures; the spiritual mind that can dwell with profit and delight upon the Word of God; the prayerful heart that can wait upon the light of God’s presence; the anointing of the Holy Spirit; full submission to the authority of God’s Word under an awful sense that the Word is inspired by the Holy Ghost in all its parts, that it is clothed

with the plenary inspiration of the Divine Spirit; that the scriptures are not the word of man but the word of the living God who abides forever. Down the centuries the Church of God has enjoyed the labours of servants of many and varied talents, consecrated to God's service who have bequeathed the fruits of their studies and learning and preaching to the ages following. The church is rich in these works. The Word of God, however, is as full and fresh as ever, for the scriptures are inexhaustible. The Puritans had a saying that fresh light may yet break out of the Scriptures. Rev. Murray McCheyne is said to have poured out to his congregation on the Sabbath the treasures he had gleaned from the Scriptures through the week. The appeal of the preacher must be to the authority of God's Word.

2. This witness is also drawn from the sound experience of the work of grace and the power of the Gospel in the hearts of the Lord's people. Christ in subduing his people to himself demands the assent of the mind and the devotion of the heart and the witness of the conscience. We should bear in mind that the attestation of the canonical books of the Bible was not given at first by the Great Councils of the Church — that came later — but by the discriminating judgment of the Lord's people who sifted out the inspired books of the Spirit from the devotional writings of mere men with which they were often mixed up, sometimes joined together in the same volume or roll, when they first made their appearance in the Church. The faith of the Gospel is a living faith which bears its own unmistakable fruit. And that fruit bears the impress of the Word of God. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The expectation of the Lord's people is to hear the voice of Christ either when they read or come under the preaching of the Gospel. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them"; "the voice of a stranger will they not hear."

3. This witness is also drawn from the constraint which was laid upon his people by the Lord through his Word, either when his servants were thrust out to labour in the field of the Gospel or when he drew them to himself. The invitation by Christ to come to him became the effectual call of the Gospel which cannot be denied when accompanied by the command, "Compel them to come in." The Lord's people often look back, recalling the way the Lord led the blind by a way that they did not know and recall that though it was the way of love, the Lord's power was also present, compelling their consent. They will bear witness to the faith of the Gospel that is in them, that it is "faith of the operation of God."

4. In the service of the ministry, testifying to the gospel of the grace of God, the witness of God's Word makes it necessary also that the doctrines of the faith must be defended. In the Apostle's day warnings were given against traditional Judaism, today forms of heresy are legion. We may mention these three.

1. Arminianism. The idea that some good has survived in man from the fall, the power of the will to accept the Gospel, has its origin in Holland as the word indicates, is found in evangelical circles, and is a subtle heresy. It pleases the unrenewed soul. It gives power and attraction to the appeals from the platform for decision for Christ in the great religious rallies and campaigns we have witnessed in this country such as those conducted by Dr Graham, Louis Palleau, etc. and was the poison inserted into the Declaratory Act of 1892 of the Free Church: "Standing in the forefront of the revelation of grace is the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit to sinners of mankind." God is represented as showing benevolent love to all. Arminianism is a danger to us all, and can only be overcome by having our hearts established by the grace of God.

2. Eucemenism. The ideal of a world-wide united church today has attracted world church leaders of every and any religious persuasion and sometimes none, the presidential chair being reserved for the Pope of Rome. This is far from bearing any resemblance to the Church unity Christ taught in his high priestly prayer in the Gospel according to John.

3. Romanism. The boast of Rome is *semper eadem* — always the same. The papal church has carried all the mediaeval superstitions with some modern heresies added, into the modern world. It is enough to say that the blasphemy of the mass still survives in that church. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

From these few remarks some conclusions remain to be drawn.

1. Our modern age needs the gospel of the grace of God. The Free Presbyterian church has a message of value to contribute, as long as pure doctrine in her pulpits; scriptural discipline in her courts; and godliness among our people are maintained.
2. No human remedy will do. Prayer must be offered continually to the throne of grace for an outpouring of the Spirit upon our ministers, office bearers and people, and upon the professing church generally.
3. The duty of the hour is that we be faithful to God's Word and to the Gospel. God is faithful. Let us seek grace to be faithful too.

Death of Rev. Wm. MacLean, Ness

It is with deep sorrow that we record the death of this eminent and godly servant of Christ. Truly it can be said that "there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel." He was a man greatly beloved and his passing is a great loss to the Church at home and abroad.

The charge given by the Apostle to Timothy, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine," was fully borne out in the Rev. Wm. MacLean's ministry. So also was the further charge of the Apostle, "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." In the Church at home, and in Australia and New Zealand where he laboured for thirteen years, he ministered faithfully and lovingly in the Gospel of God's grace, warning sinners and strengthening and encouraging believers. That he will have many trophies to his crown in the great day of judgment we have little doubt, for many profited savingly through his preaching by the divine blessing. He was a man eminent in prayer. He pleaded earnestly for the Cause of Christ throughout the world and particularly for the ingathering of the Jews in whom he had a special interest. His prayers, like David's — "Let the whole earth be filled with His glory" — shall yet be answered. His interest in the spiritual welfare of the young is well known and for their salvation he prayed and laboured.

We would record the debt owed by our Church Magazines to his unremitting interest and help in this department of the Church's work and witness. He was a most faithful contributor to the pages of the Free Presbyterian Magazine over many years. For a short period also he undertook the editorship of the Gaelic section of the Magazine. Of the many sects which are prevalent in our day, he was a ceaseless opponent. Having come through conviction to embrace the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church, he understood the reasons for the Church's separation and would stoutly defend that witness against any who would seek to besmirch it.

But now, this Mr Valiant for the Truth has laid aside his armour, the battle is over and his day is done. He could well say with the Apostle: "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." Like David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, he fell on sleep. He

has gone to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense and he can say in a much fuller sense now than when he was here, "Thy love is better than wine." The church at home and abroad mourns his passing while he has gone to receive his reward, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

To his sorrowing sisters, other relatives and congregation we extend the sincere sympathy of the whole Church in the great loss which they have sustained.

"Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Psalm 12: 1.

Extracts of Diary

by Rev. Jonathan Edwards

(continued from page 179)

Sabbath day, May 5, in the morning. This day made the 47th Resolution.

Sabbath day, May 12. I think I feel glad from the hope that my eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy joys, arising from the manifestation of God's love, and the exercise of holiness and a burning love to him.

Saturday night, May 18. I now plainly perceive what great obligations I am under to love and honour my parents. I have great reason to believe, that their counsel and education have been of great use to me; notwithstanding, at the time, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good reason to hope that their prayers for me have been in many things very powerful and prevalent; that God has in many things taken me under his care and guidance, provision and direction, in answer to their prayers. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

Wednesday, May 22, in the morning. *Memorandum*. To take special care of these following things: evil speaking, fretting, eating, drinking, and sleeping, speaking simple verity, joining in prayer, slightness in secret prayer, listlessness and negligence, and thoughts that cherish sin.

Saturday, May 25, in the morning. As I was this morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I was now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my state, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more pains to see, and narrowly search into this matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future most nicely and diligently to look into our old divines concerning conversion. Made the 48th Resolution.

Friday, June 1, afternoon. I have abundant cause, O merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bless and praise thee, that thou hast

heard me in my earnest request, and has so answered my prayer for mercy to keep from decay and sinking. O, graciously, of thy mere goodness, continue to pity my misery by reason of my sinfulness. O, my dear Redeemer, I commit myself, together with my prayer and thanksgiving, into thine hand.

Monday, July 1. Again confirmed by experience of the happy effects of strict temperance, with respect both to body and mind. Resolved for the future to observe rather more of meekness, moderation, and temper disputes.

Thursday, July 18, near sunset. Resolved to endeavour to make sure of that sign the Apostle James gives of a perfect man, James III. 2, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

Monday, July 22. I see there is danger of my being drawn into transgression by a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending friends. Watch against it.

Tuesday, July 23. When I find those groanings which cannot be uttered, that the apostle speaks of; and those soul breakings for the longing it hath, which the psalmist speaks of, Ps 119: 20, let me humour and promote them to the utmost of my power, and be not weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my desires. I desire to count it all joy when I have occasion of great self-denial, because then I have a glorious opportunity of giving deadly wounds to the body of sin, and greatly confirming and establishing the new nature; to seek to mortify sin, and increase in holiness; these are the best opportunities (according to January 14) to improve afflictions of all kinds, as blessed opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my Christian course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, to damp the vigour of my mind, and to make me lifeless; also as opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, habitually, according to the 57th Resolution; and of rending my heart off from the world, and setting it upon heaven alone; to repent of, and bewail my sin, and abhor myself; and as a blessed opportunity to exercise patience, to trust in God, and divert my mind from the affliction, by fixing myself in religious exercises. Also, let me comfort myself, that it is the very nature of afflictions to make the heart better; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present?

Friday, July 26. To be particularly careful to keep up an inviolable trust and reliance, ease and entire rest, in God, in all conditions, according to the 57th Resolution; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous.

Monday, July 29. When I am concerned how I shall perform anything to public acceptance, to be very careful that I do what is duty and prudence in the matter.

Wednesday, July 31. Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical relations of others' faults. Never to give credit to anything said against others except there is very plain reason for it; nor to behave in any respect otherwise for it.

Wednesday, August 7. To esteem it an advantage that the duties of religion are difficult, and that many difficulties are sometimes to be gone through in the way of duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by labour is abundantly more precious; as a woman loves her child the better for having brought it forth with travail. And even as to Christ Jesus himself in his mediatorial glory, (including his victory and triumph, and the kingdom which he hath obtained,) how much more glorious, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by such agonies!

Friday, August 9. One thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in time of vacation or leisure is, that when I light on a profitable thought, I can fix my mind in order to follow it, as far as possible to advantage.

Sabbath day, after meeting, August 11. Resolved always to do that which I shall wish I had done, when I see others do it. As for instance, sometimes I argue with myself, that such an act of good-nature, kindness, forbearance or forgiveness, &c., is not my duty, because it will have such and such consequences; yet, when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it; and I see that none of these feared inconveniences do follow.

Tuesday, August 13. I find it would be very much to my advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal books, or books of controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more confidence; can see upon what foundation I stand.

Thursday, August 29. The objection my corruptions make against doing whatever my hand finds to do with my might is, that it is a constant mortification. Let this objection by no means ever prevail.

Monday, Sept. 2. There is much folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, in entering into a vehement or long debate upon it.

Monday, Sept. 23. I observe that old men seldom have any advantage of new discoveries; because these are beside a way of thinking they have

been so long used to. Resolved, if ever I live to years, that I will be impartial to hear the reasons of all pretended discoveries, and receive them, if rational, how long soever I have been used to another way of thinking.

Thursday, Oct. 18. To follow the example of Mr. B_____, who, though he meets with great difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling countenance, as though he thought them but little; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Thursday, Nov. 26. It is a most evil and pernicious practice in meditating on our afflictions, to ruminate on the aggravations of the affliction, and reckon up the evil circumstances thereof, dwelling long on the dark side; it doubles and trebles the affliction. And so, when speaking of them to others as bad as we can, and use our eloquence to set forth our own troubles, we thus are all the while making new trouble, and feeding the old; whereas the contrary practice would starve our afflictions. If we dwelt on the light side of things in our thoughts, and extenuated them all that possibly we could when speaking of them, we should then think little of them ourselves; and the affliction would really, in a great measure, vanish away.

Thursday night, Dec. 12. If at any time I am forced to tell persons of that wherein I think they are sometimes to blame; for avoiding the important evil that would otherwise ensue, resolved not to tell it them in such a manner, that there shall be a probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry emotions of mind.

Dec. 31, at night. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry emotions of mind more or less, except the honour of God calls for it, in zeal for him, or to preserve myself from being trampled on.

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1724. Not to spend too much time in thinking even of important and necessary worldly business. To allow everything its proportion of thought according to its urgency and importance.

Friday, Jan 10. (After short-hand notes) Remember to act accordingly to Prov. 12: 23, *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*

Monday, Feb. 3. Let everything have the value now, that it will have on a sick-bed; and frequently in my pursuits of whatever kind, let this come into my mind: "How much shall I value this on my death-bed?"

Wednesday, Feb. 5. Have not in time past, in my prayers, insisted enough upon glorifying God in the world, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the good of men. Determined that this objection is without weight, viz., "That it is not likely that God will make great alterations in the whole world, and over-

turnings in kingdoms and nations, only for the prayers of one obscure person, seeing such things used to be done in answer to the united earnest prayers of the whole church; and if my prayers should have some influence, it would be but imperceptible and small."

Thursday, Feb. 6. More convinced than ever of the usefulness of religious conversation. I find by conversing on natural philosophy, I gain knowledge abundantly faster, and see the reasons of things much clearer, than in private study. Wherefore, resolved earnestly to seek at all times for religious conversation; and for those persons that I can with profit, delight, and freedom so converse with.

Sabbath day, Feb. 23. If I act according to my resolution, I shall desire riches no otherwise than as they are helpful to religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many parts of Scripture, that to fallen man they have a greater tendency to hurt religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not; but I have remarked it hitherto, that at those times when I have read the Scriptures most, I have evermore been most lively, and in the best frame.

Saturday night, June 6. This has been a remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and distraction of thought; being the week I came hither (to New Haven) in order to entrance upon the office of tutor of the college. I have now abundant reason to be convinced of the troublesomeness and perpetual vexation of the world.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the relation of a thing, let me abstain from altering, either in the matter or manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one afterward should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 22. By a sparing diet, and eating what is light and easy of digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think more clearly; and shall gain time, 1st, By lengthening my life; 2ndly, Shall need less time for digestion after meals; 3rdly, Shall be able to study closer without wrong to my health; 4thly, Shall need less time to sleep; 5thly, Shall more seldom be troubled with the headache.

Sabbath day, Nov. 22. Considering that bystanders always espy some faults which we do not see, or at least are not so fully sensible of ourselves; for there are many secret workings of corruption which escape our sight, and others only are sensible of; resolved, therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient means, learn what faults others find in me, or what things they see in me that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or unbecoming.

Book Reviews

The Wrath of God by Eryl Davis. Evangelical Press of Wales. £1.40.

This small paperback by a Welsh minister on the Wrath of God deals with the biblical doctrines of wrath, final judgment and hell, and contains the substance of addresses delivered at the annual Ministers' Conference of the Evangelical Movement of Wales. The addresses are on the whole Scriptural and timely and sound a warning against the neglect of the teaching of these doctrines in evangelical pulpits.

In dealing with the wrath of God the writer points out that abhorrence of sin on God's part is the reaction of His glorious and perfect nature to sin and he goes on to show that this reaction is a reaction that is worthy of God. Manifestations of God's wrath in Biblical history are mentioned and the stress laid on the day of wrath in Scripture is referred to. The section on final judgment sets aside the views of dispensationalists and premillennialists and shows the judgment to be at the end of the world. God's justice, the writer states, is inseparably related to this final day of judgment. The majesty of the Judge is one of the solemn aspects of that day. In dealing with the judgment the writer suggests that believers will be judged and their sins be manifest as forgiven sins. This hardly accords with the Scripture: "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." Jer. 50: 20. It is true, nevertheless, that on that day believers shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, as our Catechism teaches. The section on hell shows that separation from the favourable presence of God is an essential feature of hell and the writer goes on to aver the everlasting nature of that punishment as over against the heretical teaching of such sects as the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah Witnesses and of those who believe in conditional immortality.

The concluding section of the booklet attempts to show the place that this teaching should have in evangelistic preaching. The Biblical quotations are mainly from the Authorised Version though two or three from the New International Version slip in. The booklet is a useful brief survey of the doctrine with which it deals.

D. B. M.

Some Noted Ministers of the Northern Highlands by Rev. D. Beaton. Free Presbyterian Publications. £3.

This volume from the pen of Rev. D. Beaton, the second Editor of the Free Presbyterian Magazine is a reprint of an edition published in 1929.

On this occasion it is issued in paperback. The articles contained in it first appeared in the Free Presbyterian Magazine and give brief accounts of some of the noted ministers in the North of Scotland from the 17th to the 19th Centuries. In all the lives of 33 ministers are recounted. Such a book cannot but be of interest to those who wish to know something of the religious history of Highlands.

We commend this volume especially to the rising generation who have seen little of the spiritual vitality that characterised the Church in the Highlands in other days. It will surely stir up a desire in such that similar days of Gospel power may be granted in their own day.

We regret that through a misunderstanding the cover of the book is less attractive than it was intended to be and the picture on it, which has Dr Kennedy's Church in the very centre and Ben Wyvis in the background, so diminished in size as to lose its effect. Apart from this the book is well done and the price of £3 for 285 pages of excellent material cannot be regarded as excessive.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

The Pope's Peregrinations

Pope John Paul is surely the most travelled Pope in history. His travels have taken him to all the corners of the earth and still he is not done. No doubt these much-orchestrated visits serve for propaganda purposes as the Pope poses as a prince of peace.

His recent visit to the Low Countries highlighted the division within the R.C. Church between the liberal faction, which is particularly strong in Holland, and the traditionalists. Other elements of a blatantly immoral kind also tried to obtain publicity for themselves through the Pope's visit. These elements would wish all restraints withdrawn. For the R.C. Church all is not well in Holland as in other parts as well and the Pope hopes to call the faithful back to more orthodox lines. His task is not an easy one but he prosecutes it with a will. It is not, however, this conflict in the R.C. Church which is to destroy that anti-Christian system but the glorious Gospel of the blessed God taking hold of the minds of the people. Liberal theology will never achieve the overthrow of Romanism but may itself be ultimately swallowed up by it. May the overthrow of that evil system of Anti-Christ of which the Pope is Head come quickly as surely as it shall come suddenly in the day when that Scripture is fulfilled: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils."

Meanwhile to try to shore up his falling kingdom, the Pope is to call an extraordinary Synod of bishops in Rome in November, and continues his peregrinations by visits to some of the countries in Africa.

The B.B.C. and Rome

According to a Press Report the B.B.C. Chairman, Mr Stuart Young has apologised for the failure of the B.B.C. to give live coverage to the Pope's Easter message. It is now stated that in future the Pope's message will be broadcast in full. It is certainly something new for the B.B.C. to fail to give adequate coverage to Roman Catholic intimations or events. It is less publicity and not more that the Romanist system needs.

I.R.A. Murders

In May, among other incidents was one in which four young Northern Ireland police officers were murdered by an I.R.A. bomb. One of them was a police woman. This atrocity was carried out only a short time after Sinn Fein, the political wing of the I.R.A. had won successes in the local elections. The Unionists have called for a ban on Sinn Fein until the provisional I.R.A. terrorists abandon their campaign of violence and murder.

The people of Northern Ireland have had to endure much during the last number of years from such attacks, especially the forces of law and order who have borne the brunt of the I.R.A. assault. That they have stood firm in the face of such unprovoked violence is a tribute to their resolution to maintain the Protestant Cause in Northern Ireland. Our prayer is that they may continue to stand firm and that the Lord will maintain their Cause against the murderous elements that seek their destruction.

Football Tragedy and Violence

The Bradford City football stadium disaster which claimed over 50 lives — and which was seen live on television — has shocked the sporting world. So also has the disaster in Belgium which followed so closely on its heels in which 38 Italian fans died when a fence gave way through crowd violence. These events are solemn judgments in which God is speaking loudly to the sporting world, as well as to the nation of large. How solemn it is for souls to be ushered into the eternal world in the very midst of their enjoyment of these vain amusements.

The tragedy in Belgium has another dimension. It brings to the fore, as perhaps nothing else could, the deterioration in the life of the nation.

The mindless violence now current at football matches shows that the nation has been given over in a very large measure to its own devices. We are reaping as a nation as we have sowed. We are proving by bitter experience the truth of God's Word: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." As there is no sign of any change of heart in the nation we fear that these things are but the beginning of sorrows for us as a nation and people.

Church Notes

Church Deputy to Australia and New Zealand

Rev. P. Lloyd Roberts along with his wife and son, were due to leave for Auckland at the end of June for a period of service by him as Deputy to Australia and New Zealand, as agreed at the recent meeting of Synod. We trust that they may be preserved during their journeys and that the Lord will grant a blessing in connection with Mr Roberts labours in that part of His vineyard.

Change of Date of TAIN Communion

The Kirk Session of the Tain and Fearn Joint Congregation have decided that the Tain Communion for 1985 and future years will (D.V.) be held on the second Sabbath of November instead of the second Sabbath of July as previously.

Post of Doctor at Mbumba Mission Hospital

The Committee feel concerned that no applications have been received for this important work on the Mission field, and with nursing staff at the hospital since May the work is being considerably curtailed in the absence of a doctor. The whole of the Nkai District with a population of 100,000 is presently without the services of any medical practitioner. In Mbumba itself there are some 22,000 persons so deprived.

Free Presbyterian Magazine Volume I

Persons who ordered the Free Presbyterian Magazine Volume I by subscription from Barnoldswick some time ago are advised that they must re-order if they still wish to obtain any copies. Please direct the order to the Church Bookroom in Glasgow or other Christian Bookshop.

Post of Teacher of Bible Knowledge at John Tallach Secondary School

A need continues for a teacher qualified at least to university level in some other subject to take up these important duties at Ingwenya.

Notice to Congregational Treasurers

It is hoped to place an order for Collection Envelopes with the printers later this year (D.V.). Will any congregation requiring a supply please advise Mr Kenneth Gillies of their requirements not later than 30th September 1985. Orders should be in "sets" — one set per contributor per year. Each set consist of 12 Sustentation and 10 Special Collection envelopes and it would be reasonable to cover requirements for a 4/5 year period. The address is 137 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE.

Acknowledgments of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow, G12 0HE, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks.

Sydney Church Building Fund: Anon., North Tolsta, £15.

Chesley Congregation: Anon., Wick, £50; Anon., Lairg postmark, £40.

Grafton: Rev. E. A. Rayner acknowledges with sincere thanks £500 from Interested for Sydney Church Building Fund.

The Publications Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Welfare of Youth Fund: Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congregation, £30; M. M. MacIver, £20.

Free Distribution Fund: Anon., £10; J. S., 20p; D. M., 20p; I. M., 40p; J. C., 20p; R. C., £2.20; R. F., 20p.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Fort William: A. McG., £10 per Rev. J. A. MacDonald.

Glasgow: Mrs MacK., £14; Anon., £3, both for Congr. Fund; Matthew 6: 3 (two donations) £20; A. M., £5.

Kames: Friends, Glasgow, £10, for Communion Expenses.

Laide: Friend, Shieldaig, £1; Friend, Alness, £5, both per Rev. D. A. Ross; Friend, Sandwick, £30; Ardersier Friend, £10; Friend at Communion, in memory of loved ones, £10; In collection plate, £5, all for Laide Church Building Fund; Fort William Friend, £80 for Sust. Fund, £10 for Home Mission Fund and £10 for Foreign Mission Fund.

North Harris: Friend, Tarbet, £60, where most needed; Friend, Meavag, £20 (£10 door collection and £10 Communion Expenses); Envelope in plate, £40; J. M., Tarbet, £3; M. M. L., Harris House, £10, per Rev. D. MacLean, both for door collection; M. M., Tarbet, £10 for Communion Expenses; W. B., Tarbet, £40; D. M., Urgha, £50, both where most needed and both per Rev. A. MacKay; Friend, Stockinish, £10; Friend, Collam, £10, both for door collection; Friend, Leacklee, £100; Friend, Leacklee, £20, both for Church and Manse repairs, last four per R. MacCuish; Envelope in plate, £5 where most needed; Envelope in plate, £5 for Sabbath School Expenses.

Raasay: Mr and Mrs J. M., Belfast, £50; Mrs G., £20; Envelope in plate, £10; Friend, Portree, £10, per J. M. MacLeod, all for Sust. Fund.

South Harris: Friend, Northton, £10; Friend, Leverburgh, £10; Friend, North Harris, £10, all for Seilebost Mission House, per J. MacKay.

Stornoway: Anon., £30 for petrol, per Rev. J. MacLeod.