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Meeting of Synod 1986

The annual Meeting of Synod was held in St. Jude's Church, Glasgow on Tuesday the 20th day of May. The retiring Moderator, Rev. John MacLeod, Stornoway, conducted public worship at six-thirty p.m. and preached from 1 Corinthians 1 verse 23 "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."

After public worship was ended, the Moderator constituted the Synod with prayer. The Roll was then called. There were present: From the Northern Presbytery — Revs. R. R. Sinclair, A. F. MacKay, A. Murray, D. B. MacLeod, S. F. Tallach, John Tallach, John Ross and D. Boyd, with Messrs W. Taylor, R. W. M. MacKenzie, E. Morrison, R. Ross, K. Robertson, I. M. MacLeod, E. M. Sutherland, W. MacQueen and David Laing, ruling elders. From the Southern Presbytery — Revs. J. A. MacDonald, Donald MacLean, L. MacLeod, D. J. MacDonald, A. McPherson, Angus Morrison, G. I. MacAskill and D. C. MacAskill; with Messrs D. MacNicol, T. Jackson, A. Gillies, R. K. MacCuish, M. Gunn, A. M. MacPherson, A. MacKenzie, H. McPherson, R. Middleton, M. I. Matheson, J. Henderson and D. R. MacSween, ruling elders. From the Western Presbytery — Revs. A. E. W. MacDonald, J. W. Ross, D. A. Ross, N. M. Ross, A. MacPhail and Angus MacKay, with Messrs. H. MacLeod, I. Matheson, R. MacLean, J van Woerden, D. MacCuish, K. C. MacLeod and E. Ross, ruling elders. From the Skye Presbytery — Revs. F. MacDonald, D. Nicolson, James Tallach, and H. I. MacKinnon, with Messrs. J. Campbell, M. MacKay and R. Annand, ruling elders. From the Outer Isles Presbytery, Revs. Alex Morrison, J. MacDonald and J. MacLeod, with Messrs. J. Buchanan, D. Murray, F. Thomson, J. MacAskill, D. MacDonald and D. MacKinnon, ruling elders. From the Australian and New Zealand Presbytery — Mr J.

McPherson, ruling elder. From the Zimbabwe Presbytery — Rev. Z. Mazvabo and Mr E. C. Sobantu, ruling elder. From the Canadian Presbytery — Rev. MacInnes and Mr N. McPherson, ruling elder.

Letters of apology for absence were read from — Rev. D. J. MacAskill, L. MacLeod and from Messrs W. Byers and M. MacLeod. Verbal apologies were given in respect of Messrs R. MacLeod and D. McPherson.

At this stage, the Moderator intimated that his term of office had now expired. He thanked the Synod for the kindness and forbearance that had been shown him during the year of his moderatorship, and said that it now lay with the Court to appoint his successor. In vacating the Chair he said, "It has been no small honour to sit in the Chair. It has been an eventful year and it would be good if, at the end of my moderatorial year I were able to report that many souls were converted North, South, East and West throughout the borders of our beloved Church. We cannot do that. We know that only through the power of the Holy Spirit can this be. And we pray that as my successor assumes the Chair which I vacate, there may begin a year in which that will take place; that our borders would be extended and many would be born again within our pale."

Rev. Fraser MacDonald moved as follows —

"As a member of the Church Interests' Committee, the duty of proposing the name of the new Moderator of Synod falls to me. As you will appreciate the handling of the increasingly difficult and complex work of the Synod depends largely upon the efficiency of the Clerks of your Venerable Court. At the same time the role of an alert fair-minded and able Moderator greatly facilitates and expedites the execution of this task.

I therefore have much pleasure in proposing Rev. Donald Beaton MacLeod, Dingwall, as the new Moderator of Synod. Mr MacLeod is no novice in the proper procedure of Church Courts and Committees, and has already shown a diligent readiness to shoulder every burden imposed upon him, with no small degree of dignity and acceptance. In addition, Mr MacLeod brings to the Moderatorial Chair a wide experience of service at home and abroad, as well as the expertise required for the post of Hebrew Tutor in the Church. Further, we have every confidence in Mr MacLeod's loyalty to, and appreciation of, the distinctive testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. May I add, Fathers and Brethren, that he comes to the Chair at a time when infidel Biblical Criticism is rife — the abandonment of Calvinism rampant — the corruption of the worship of God tragic; while the popularity of ecumenism

which leads to the obliteration of every denominational distinction at the price of truth, is the order and virtue of the day.” Rev. Donald MacLean seconded the motion and said, “I have great pleasure in seconding this motion, that the Rev. D. B. MacLeod should be appointed Moderator for the ensuing year, and I agree very much indeed with all that the Rev. Fraser MacDonald has said in connection with Mr MacLeod. While he, and each one of us, know that we are in continual need of fresh supplies of the Spirit of Christ Jesus in order that we may carry out our functions in the Church Courts as well as in our pulpits; and in our walk and conversation in the world, I am sure Mr MacLeod will rejoice in the promise of the One, and now glorified Head of the Church saying to His servants, “My grace is sufficient for thee.”

Rev. Donald B. MacLeod took the Chair and said:

“In accepting the office of Moderator of Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, I wish to thank the Fathers and Brethren for this honour which they have conferred on me for the second time. It is a privilege and honour which I highly esteem — to be called to preside over the meetings of Synod and I pray that I may receive grace and strength from on High to fulfil these duties in a way that would be glorifying to the Most High and which would not disappoint the expectations of the Fathers and Brethren in giving this work into my hands.

“It is particularly gratifying to me to be called to preside over this gathering in view of the fact that it is the Supreme Court of a Church that claims, and has solid ground for claiming, that it is the true representative and heir of the Church of the Reformation. Despised we may be, and despised we are, because we do not possess the large numbers of some of the other denominations. However, that may be, we have a testimony that is second to none in Scotland, and indeed throughout the world, for steadfast adherence to the truth of God’s Word — a testimony which owns the Scriptures as the inspired, infallible and inerrant Word of God — a testimony which is reformed in doctrine, worship and practice. To that testimony, raised in 1893 by the godly Fathers of our Church, Rev. Donald MacFarlane and Rev. Donald MacDonald and those likeminded with them, we, as a Church, seek grace faithfully, fully, heartily and unequivocally to adhere to.

“On the last occasion when I had the honour to preside over this Synod the meeting of Synod proved to be a particularly turbulent one — as Synods sometimes are — but I hope and pray that this Synod, so suitably opened by the Retiring Moderator with the appropriate and faithful discourse just delivered, will prove a Synod in which peace and harmony will

prevail, if only it be the peace and harmony of unity in the truth which only the Spirit of Truth can bring about. Our desire is that in all things Christ may be honoured and glorified and His Kingdom advanced in our midst. I crave the prayers of the Fathers and Brethren in undertaking these onerous duties and also their forbearance throughout the meetings of Synod."

After the Synod appointed various Committees to examine the Records before the Court and to prepare Tributes in respect of the deceased members of Court, the Synod adjourned to meet again, the Lord willing, next day.

The Synod resumed its sitting on Wednesday 21st May at 3 p.m. in public.

At a private meeting of Synod which took place on Tuesday evening it was agreed that Rev. Angus MacKay, formerly minister of Tarbert congregation and now Minister Emeritus, be granted a seat in the Western Presbytery and thus became a member of this Synod.

The Moderator of Synod expressed the pleasure of the Synod in the fact that Mr MacKay's health had been sufficiently restored to enable him to take part in the Courts of the Church.

THE LOYAL ADDRESS for 1985 had been duly acknowledged and the Clerk of Synod read these acknowledgements. Then Rev. A. Murray read the:

LOYAL ADDRESS
(for 1986 as follows)

"May it please 'Your Majesty';

"We, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, convened at Glasgow this 21st day of May 1986, renew to 'Your Majesty' our expression of unswerving loyalty to 'Your Majesty's' person and throne.

"In the year of the attainment of 'Your Majesty's' 60th Birthday, the Synod would express its gratitude to the Most High God, that 'Your Majesty' has been preserved from all danger to reign over this Nation and Commonwealth for these years, and it is our prayer that 'Your Majesty's' genial reign may be continued for many years in the days to come. The vitality of the service still being rendered to our peoples by Her Majesty, the Queen Mother, is an inspiration to all. The forthcoming marriage of HRH the Prince Andrew to Miss Sarah Ferguson will provide an opportunity for the nation to rejoice with 'Your Ma-

jesty', and the Synod takes this opportunity to wish for them the Divine Blessing for a long life together in the honourable state of marriage.

"Love unfeigned to 'Your Majesty' and to the prosperity of 'Your Majesty's' Realm requires the Synod to underline once more the need that God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — be honoured in the affairs of this land. The failure of 'Your Majesty's' Government to secure legislation in terms of the Shops' Bill for England and Wales, we, 'Your Majesty's' dutiful subjects in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, take as a 'token for good' from the Lord. We would respectfully represent to 'Your Majesty' that the powerful example which it is within 'Your Majesty's' province to give to your people, be directed to a more careful approach to conserve the Lord's Day for its purpose of divine worship throughout the day; and that, more particularly, 'Your Majesty' may see fit to refrain from accepting public engagements of a secular nature on that Day, alike in this land and in distant parts of the Commonwealth.

"The Synod earnestly desires for 'Your Majesty' and for each member of the Royal Family a true saving interest in Christ Jesus as Lord and Redeemer, and to that end we assure 'Your Majesty' of our prayers for 'Your Majesty' in all Congregations of our Church."

On behalf of the Synod, signed Moderator.

This address was adopted by the Synod.

The Rev. A. McPherson then presented the **Report of the Welfare of Youth Committee**, and in doing so he drew attention to the amount of work being done in connection with the Exercises for the Young.

Rev. Donald MacLean presented the **Theological Tutor's Report** and it had the special significance of being the last Report Mr MacLean would give as Theological Tutor. In referring to his teaching in the realm of Systematic Theology he emphasised the need for this teaching to all who seek to become ministers of the gospel. "It is" said he, "the gospel in which the glory of God shines, and truth is revealed in the Person and work of the Son and in the doctrines of revelation. It is essential for all ministers to have a good and sound grasp of the subject. The course seeks to lay a foundation for them to build upon during the rest of their ministry. They obtain spiritual benefit from the course, and their congregations obtain spiritual benefit from their labours by the blessing of God." In the realm of "Apologetics" Mr MacLean was glad to observe a move towards "Classical Apologetics".

After presenting his report, Mr MacLean informed the Synod that as a

result of medical advice he was now tendering his resignation from the work as Theological Tutor. He observed that it would be three years probably, before any student would require this class and he thought that his successor would take at least three years to prepare. The Synod with regret accepted his resignation.

Rev. A. F. MacKay said: "It is with regret that we have just heard that Mr MacLean has offered his resignation to the Court after twenty-seven years of service in training the ministers of our Church, and the reasons given make it necessary for us to accept this resignation, but it is done with regret. It is a sad day we have to see in one of our faithful ministers giving up work which he carried on over the years.

"One of the first matters attended to by the founders of our Church, away back in 1893, at their first Presbytery Meeting in Portree, was to make provision for the future training of our students. The first ministers of our church were trained in Belfast under Professor Watt. They received training from an experienced Professor of world-wide reputation, and that training Mr Beaton showed in his teaching of the students of the Church. Mr MacLean has carried on this work faithfully."

Rev. Alex Morrison then spoke and said: "I associate myself with what Mr MacKay has said. In the Providence of the Lord I was one of four students in the first class which Mr MacLean took. It was a class we enjoyed. I am sure that we never lost the respect we had for Mr MacLean. We wish Mr MacLean God's rich blessing and hope that he will be spared for many a year to preach the theology and gospel — and there is no gospel without theology — he has taught over a long period of years."

Rev. R. R. Sinclair expressed his appreciation of the work done by Mr MacLean as Theological Tutor.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald recalled that he too was one of the members of the first class taken by Mr MacLean and that he considered it a privilege to have had that instruction.

Rev. J. A. MacDonald stated how thankful the Church should be to the Lord for the honourable way in which Mr MacLean had carried out his duties as Theological Tutor.

The Moderator joined in these expressions of appreciation, noting that he too was a member of Mr MacLean's first class.

Reference was made to the only other member of that first class, the late Rev. John Martin, Staffin.

In reply to these appreciations Rev. Donald MacLean said:-

“I thank the various members of Synod for speaking as they have done. I am quite sure that I am very unworthy of all these remarks. Nevertheless I would like to say it has been a real pleasure to me to have the students of the Church down through the years in my class. I have enjoyed it very much indeed. It is not because I am weary of it in that sense of the term that I am laying it down, but rather for the reasons I have already explained.”

At a later meeting of Synod Rev. Alfred E. W. MacDonald, Gairloch was appointed Theological Tutor to succeed Mr MacLean.

The Training of the Ministry Report was now presented by Rev. D. J. MacDonald and he expressed great appreciation on the behalf of the Committee for the work done by Mr MacLean saying that Mr MacLean brought “a relish for the subject, which communicated itself to the students.”

It was observed that the Training of the Ministry Committee are also responsible for the Church Library. Notice was given that the Bookroom is prepared to receive books, either by way of free donation or in terms of sale, in order to resell them to the public in the second-hand section of the Bookroom.

Rev. S. F. Tallach pointed out the need for a good postal service and the Synod agreed to attend to this need.

The question as to what was to be done with “duplicate books” was discussed and it was agreed that a list of such books would be made available. Rev. J. W. Ross suggested the joining up with some other library such as the Evangelical Library. Rev. D. J. MacDonald said: “It is not the view of the Committee to sell them and get rid of them (i.e. duplicates). We have no authority to follow any suggestion such as Mr Ross has made and the Committee would, at its discretion, and with the advice of the Librarian, keep more than one copy of a book. We have no authority to dispose of any book in the Library.”

Rev. D. J. MacDonald moved and Rev. A. McPherson seconded and it was agreed by the Synod “That the Synod give approval to the Training of the Ministry Committee for the judicious disposal of the duplicate copies of books in the Library.”

In this connection the Synod also agreed to appoint a part-time assistant to enable the Library to function as a lending library and that attention be given to the issue raised by Rev. S. F. Tallach re a Postal service.

The Home of Rest Report was presented by Rev. A. Murray. Rev. F. MacDonald said: “It is gratifying to read this Report which keeps us up

to date with the situation in the Home. The late Rev. W. Grant was very concerned that there should be such a place and although at that time it seemed beyond the Church's finances it was not beyond Mr Grant's prayers. We wish and pray that God may bless the inhabitants of that Home with an appreciation of what Mr Murray has called its 'congenial surroundings'."

The Church Magazine Editors gave in their Reports on **The Free Presbyterian Magazine** and **The Young People's Magazine** and stressed the need for help in the way of original articles.

In connection with the **Publications Report** it was observed that there was a very large stock of books unsold. In particular attention was drawn to the fact that only 395 copies of Volume I of **The Free Presbyterian Magazine** had been sold.

With this item concluded the Synod closed this meeting and agreed to meet again in the evening.

When the Synod met again the Clerk of Synod read out acknowledgements of last year's Synod's Resolutions and observed that there seemed to be a greater attention given to the Synod's Resolutions than formerly was the case.

The Rev. D. A. Ross presented the **Religion and Morals Report**. Commenting upon the Report, Rev. Donald Nicolson said: "Our land is in a fearful state. As we have heard mention already there is a flood of iniquity. The flood of iniquity is over the whole land. And it is only God who can send His Spirit forth. There will be no change until then." Mr Nicolson then turned his attention to the state of affairs within the Church and noted that there was need for holding fast to the old customs which were in danger of being lost. The practice of "fencing" the Lord's table must continue as in the past. Such persons as are scripturally debarred from that ordinance must be described. He observed that there is much clamour in our time for change! change! change! But there is no need for any change. Mr Nicolson emphasised also the need for safeguarding the rights of the people to call the minister of their own desire.

The Assistant Clerk observed that there was no mention in the Report of the very significant matter of the British/Irish Agreement and said that he was surprised that no Resolution re this had been presented to the Synod.

The Religion and Morals Committee, through its Convener, promised

to consider the matter and at a later meeting of Synod a Resolution re the British/Irish Agreement was introduced.

The **Resolution re the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement** was presented by Rev. D. M. Boyd who explained why such a Resolution was necessary notwithstanding the Resolution anent Pentecostalism on Synod 1974. Two major developments, he said, were causing havoc in Churches in England and were likely to spread Northwards. The first is that there is a movement afoot to join the Reformed Camp and the Charismatic Camp, and to do this by means of books circulating in the Reformed Camp.

Dr. Boyd argued that it could be shown from publications that the teaching of the late Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones includes this element which is encouraging people within the Reformed Camp to give some heed to the concept of a second blessing — distinct from regeneration. The second development is that of House-group meetings. In his opinion these house churches have taken on the nature of a Cult having a cultish influence over their members. The ultimate aim is to withdraw people out of the Reformed Churches because it is said these Reformed churches do not have the baptism of the Spirit. Rev. F. MacDonald stated that he had not come across, in the writings of the late Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones, that which encouraged Pentecostalism. Dr. Boyd replied that it was in a goodly proportion of his books and in particular that the view of the Doctor was that the sealing of the Spirit came after regeneration.

Rev. S. F. Tallach thought that the fact that the late Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones believed that the sealing of the Spirit was different to regeneration did not mean that he was a Pentecostalist.

Rev. John Tallach said he heartily agreed with Rev. F. MacDonald and that different persons interpreted Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones differently. Rev. John Tallach suggested to include the substance of the Resolution without mentioning Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones.

Mr R. Middleton upheld the view set forth in the Resolution and stated by Dr. D. Boyd in presenting the Resolution. According to Mr Middleton, Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones held the view that the charismatic gifts had not ceased. Mr Middleton did not think that a view was being foisted on Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones. Rather he thought that it was the duty of the Church to witness against the books penetrating the Reformed Church. As far as he was concerned, the basic thing is that Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones did give a leading in the direction of Pentecostal-Charismatic views.

Rev. D. M. Boyd moved the Resolution and this was seconded by Mr

R. Middleton. However, an amendment was brought in by Rev. John Tallach and seconded by Rev. A. Murray to the effect that no mention should be made of the books of Dr. M. Lloyd-Jones.

The outcome of the debate was that the Resolution was passed by the Synod in its original form.

Resolution re. The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow on Wednesday 21st May 1986 reaffirms the 1974 Synod Resolution anent "Pentecostalism" (Synod Proceedings, p. 54)

However, due to the continued and alarming spread of Pentecostal Theology, particularly among non-pentecostal denominations and even among those who claim to be exponents of the Reformed Faith, the Synod would further warn our people against this movement and the drift into false doctrine taking place in consequence of its growth.

In particular the Synod makes the following statements and sounds the accompanying warnings:-

1. The Reformed Faith has come to its definitive credal expression in the Westminster Confession of Faith and in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms and is diametrically opposed to the distinctive doctrines of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement. The Synod would therefore state that it is quite impossible for adherents to the theology of the Westminster Standards to embrace the distinctive doctrines of Pentecostal theology.
2. The varying theories of a "Second work of grace" distinct from and subsequent to Effectual Calling are contrary to the word of God and involve a two stage concept of the Christian life.
The Synod would therefore warn against the "Second Blessing" teaching which is gaining prominence in Reformed circles and which is contained in many though not all of the books of Dr D. M. Lloyd-Jones, among others, due to the fact that these books circulate widely among adherents of the Reformed Faith.
3. The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement now forms a central thrust of the Ecumenical Movement and is possibly the single greatest impetus to closer links with Romanism at the popular level. Oneness in Charismatic experience has become more important than the theology that previously divided Protestant and Romanist.
4. House group meetings, which in some churches are claiming to be outside the inspection of church courts, are being used as a major vehicle for spreading both defective theology in general and Pentecostal-Charismatic teaching in particular.

A DAY OF PRAYER — WEDNESDAY 10th DEC., 1986

Rev. R. R. Sinclair moved in connection with the Day of Prayer as follows:

“The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Glasgow on Wednesday the 21st day of May 1986, appoint a day of prayer throughout the Church at Home and Abroad.

“That the Lord’s people confess their own sins and wherein they have come short in devotion to Christ, the Head of the Church.

“That God be implored, in the name of His Son, to exercise His power, spiritually and in providence, to the turning back of multitudes, of young and old, from heinous iniquity, transgression and sin throughout the nation.

“Britain, being a backsliding Nation, prayer is called for, that the Most High, in mercy, turn from evidences of His anger, to heal our backslidings, and to love us freely, by means of the Gospel in power.

“Let prayer be made for Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family; and for our Prime Minister and members of the Government; that they be guided to support the Christian witness of God’s people.

“This Resolution is for guidance, for the people of the Church.”

The Finance Report was presented by Rev. Donald MacLean, Convener of the Finance Committee who drew special attention to the **Organisation Fund** the deficit of which Fund was causing some concern. He appealed to the people of the Church to pay special attention to this. Mr MacLean said: “My attention has been drawn to some people who say that the Church is very well off and so are ready to direct their funds to other good causes. The Forsyth Legacy is within very confined limits and does not apply to any of the Funds for which there are special Collections. It cannot be used indiscriminately but must be administered according to the Will of Mr Forsyth.”

Mr MacLean now gave in his resignation of Convenership of this Committee saying “Due to medical advice I have to shed some of the burdens outside my Congregation. I am doing so purely with respect to the medical advice and not because I am in any way out of harmony with the Committee which I have served so long. It is the Lord who is the Provider of all that is needed for the furtherance and upholding of His Cause.”

The Synod accepted regretfully this resignation and at a later meeting appointed Mr W. D. Fraser the Church’s General Treasurer to succeed

Mr MacLean as Convener of this Committee.

Attention of the Synod was drawn to the very low returns from the Congregations that had received Loans from the Forsyth Bequest. It was hoped that the situation would improve.

The **Accounts for the Year** were presented by the General Treasurer Mr W. D. Fraser.

Mr Fraser pointed out that some few Congregations were continuing in default in not handing in money month by month at regular intervals to enable him to have a cash flow. He stressed the fact that the Auditor had some concern at the slow rate at which Loans were being repaid.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald observed the purchase of a word-processor and gave it as his opinion that such a purchase was unnecessary. Rev. D. M. Boyd did not agree and stated that he had found it necessary to purchase (at his own expense) office equipment.

Mr James Henderson spoke re the use of Deeds of Covenant and thought that if use was made of these, the deficit now existing could be wiped out. Rev. F. MacDonald noted that, in connection with all the monies given to the Church, it became us to be thankful to the Lord, saying, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

With this item of business completed, the Synod meeting closed.

The Synod met again on Thursday 22nd May at 3 p.m.

Rev. Neil Ross presented the **Sabbath Observance Committee Report**. Mr Ross told the members of Synod that although a victory had been obtained in connection with the Shops' Bill there was no room for complacency as a Member of Parliament had introduced a Private Members' Bill to reform the Shops Act 1950 and this could well affect the trading on the Lord's Day therefore we must continue waiting upon the Lord.

Mr W. Taylor expressed gratitude for the work done by the Committee and suggested that something be done for Scotland re the Trading on Sabbath. Rev. F. MacDonald said that it is obvious that it is not sufficient to pray but that we must pray and act. The victory referred to was the doing of the Lord. One of our basic principles as a Church, he said, was the Sabbath — Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. In connection with fencing the table of the Lord the observance of the Lord's Day should be insisted on.

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald observed that the majority in Parliament in the Debate re the Shops Bill was 14 — the very number of Northern Ireland Loyalist MPs. Rev. A. Murray took up the theme introduced by

Mr Taylor that there should be legislation sought for Scotland. There was need, he said, to be awake to the local scene.

Overture

To the Venerable Court, the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. At Glasgow and within the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland there, on Tuesday the 25th February, 1986, which day the Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland being met and duly constituted by the moderator, Rev. D. MacLean.

Inter alia:-

The Presbytery agreed to transmit the following overture to the ensuing synod:-

IT IS HEREBY overtured by the Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland to the ensuing Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

THAT WHEREAS the year 1993 will mark the centenary of the Rev. Donald Macfarlane tabling his protest in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland and the subsequent formation of the Free Prsbyterian Church of Scotland.

AND WHEREAS the stand taken for the whole counsel of God by the Free Presbyterian fathers was a unique and "Reformed" response to the world wide departure from Calvinism that came to expression in the Declaratory Act Movement.

AND WHEREAS due to the passing of many of the older generation, each succeeding year carries into forgetfulness the knowledge of important historical information with regard to the origins of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

AND WHEREAS it appears that the production of a commemorative historical volume is a most suitable way to mark the centenary of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, to honour the memory and witness of our Fathers and to preserve a detailed record for the rising generation.

AND WHEREAS the production of such a volume would require very extensive research into contemporary material in order to produce both a full and detailed account and to convey the atmosphere of spiritual refreshing surrounding the testimony of 1893.

IT IS THEREFORE OVERTURED that your venerable court take this whole subject in their serious consideration and DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:-

That the Synod set up a small committee that will be responsible for directing the necessary preparations for the centenary of the Church, which committee will report to the Synod annually.

OR DO OTHERWISE for this object as to their wisdom may seem best.

Extracted by me from the records of the Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland this 25th day of February 1986.

Certified as a correct copy of Extract Minute.

Signed D. J. MacDonald, Clerk of Presbytery

Overture from the Southern Presbytery. The Southern Presbytery of Church had given consideration to the fact that the Centenary of the Church would take place in 1993, the Lord willing. They had thought it proper to do something by way of preparation for such an outstanding event and overturned the Synod of the Church accordingly.

The Synod took the Overture into consideration.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair gave his opinion that the Church already had a well compiled history and therefore he would like to know what was envisaged in the proposed "Centenary Historical Volume".

Mr R. Middleton said in reply, that it appeared to the Southern Presbytery essential to produce such a Volume. It was his view that we were in danger of losing much material belonging to the past, as, for example, the witness of such persons as the late Rev. J. R. Anderson. The Rev. R. R. Sinclair did not share the view stated with respect to the late Rev. J. R. Anderson whose son, Mr Sinclair claimed, had not acted honourably in regard to the church building of Rev. J. R. Anderson which had been handed over to the Free Presbyterian Church and later taken from them. Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald thought that the works of the late Rev. J. R. Anderson were of worth. Rev. F. MacDonald said, "I am in sympathy with this Overture and take it as only one of the many events expected to take place to commemorate the event of 1893. At the same time we would do well to take heed to the counsel of Rev. R. R. Sinclair." Rev. S. F. Tallach added, "It is not a 're-hash' of Church History that is required but a statement of the Church movement in thought, and how the Church has been affected by events that have taken place." Rev. Donald MacLean said, "What the Presbytery is concerned about is the fact that the Centenary of the Church will attract a great deal of Media attention, and we must be well prepared when the time will come. Careful research is necessary. It is the Centenary of a Church that came into existence with two ministers."

The outcome was that the Synod accepted the Overture as set forth but held over the formation of a Committee until later.

Resolution About the Anglo Irish Accord

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow Thursday 22 May 1986 expresses its deep concern about the Anglo-Irish Accord which involves the Government of the Republic of Ireland in the governing of Northern Ireland. This agreement is, in our view, a betrayal of the interests of the people of Northern Ireland and has caused great distress to, and much unrest among that people. The Synod thoroughly disagrees with the Accord for the following reasons:

1. We believe that it will lead ultimately to the subjection of Protestant Ireland to Romanist Ireland.
2. It is an unwarranted interference by a foreign power in the affairs of Northern Ireland, and it greatly aggravates the already volatile situation.
3. It gives a say in the affairs of Northern Ireland to those who are not in the least sympathetic to the Protestant heritage of Northern Ireland, who have consistently given refuge to the murderous and dastardly IRA; who have never shown themselves to be friends of the United Kingdom; and who have as their head the Pope of Rome the enemy of all truth and who, if he could, would subject not only Northern Ireland, to Rome, but also, the whole of the United Kingdom.
4. It is a rejection and betrayal of the Protestant people in Northern Ireland who have shown themselves second to none in their wholehearted and loyal attachment to the United Kingdom and the Protestant Throne thereof and have constantly expressed their sincere and fervent wish to remain as they are.

Our prayer for Northern Ireland is that this Accord, which is destructive to the bond between Ulster and the rest of the United Kingdom, will be annulled. We also pray that the Lord may graciously preserve the people of that land from all their enemies, and that He may prosper them spiritually and temporally.

THE ANGLO/IRISH ACCORD

Rev. D. Ross presented the Resolution re Anglo/Irish Accord and expressed regret that the matter had not been incorporated in the Religion and Morals Report.

The Clerk of Synod read letters of acknowledgements for donations

given by last year's Synod to the undermentioned groups and the Synod agreed to repeat the donations.

Ockenden Venture; Reformation Translation Fellowship; Aid to the Persecuted; C.A.R.E. Campaign; National Viewers and Listeners Association; L.D.O.S. (England); Blythwood Tract Society.

Dr. Boyd thought that the ministers of the Church should be receiving magazines of all these groups to which the Church was thus donating money.

The next item of business was the reading of the **Tributes to the Deceased Members of Synod.**

Tribute to the late John MacKenzie, Kishorn

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow on 22nd May 1986 place on record its sense of loss through the death of John MacKenzie, Kishorn, elder and missionary, who died in January, 1986.

John MacKenzie was born in 1893 and had the blessing of a Godly upbringing. He like many of his contemporaries gave some of his early years in wartime service. He often expressed thankfulness to God for his preservation during these years.

While still a young man he came to a saving understanding of the truth under the preaching of the Rev. Neil Cameron. He became a communicant and elder when comparatively young.

His trade of fisherman meant that at times he would be away from home on the Lord's Day. He would on such occasions spend the day under the preaching of Rev. Malcolm Gillies, Stornoway.

When he became a home missionary he was called upon to supply many of the congregations throughout the West Highlands. His burden was particularly heavy during times of vacancies in Shildaig and Lochcarron.

He accompanied Rev. Wm MacLean to Australia and New Zealand as deputy on behalf of the Church.

He was no stranger to sorrow having suffered bereavement on account of the death of his first wife and some time later of his daughter. He however made fresh discoveries of the sufficiency of God's grace. Later provision was made for him when he married for a second time.

Mrs Elizabeth MacKenzie his wife provided such care for him that for a long time he was able to take occasional services and attend communion seasons away from home. Latterly as he became progressively disabled she encouraged and cared for him most carefully.

The most frequently expressed desire in his prayers was that there

would be an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. He believed that this desire would yet be granted.

To his widow and granddaughter the Synod extends its prayers and sympathy.

Tribute to the Late James Mackenzie, Laide

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland records its sense of great loss at the death of Mr James Mackenzie, Elder of the Laide Congregation.

James Mackenzie professed faith in Christ late in life, but gave evidence of a saving interest in the Redeemer many years before making a profession. He was faithful in his profession to the last; and was noted for his diligence and cheerfulness in the work of the Church.

James was ordained to the Eldership in December 1969 and showed a gracious willingness for every duty in connection with his office. He was a Synod Elder on numerous occasions and Assessor Elder of the Gairloch and Ullapool Congregations. His regular attendance at the communions of these congregations was much appreciated.

When Laide Congregation was raised to the status of a sanctioned charge James was exceedingly happy, and continued to labour incessantly for the good of the congregation. He often had to conduct the services, but he always refused to speak, preferring rather to read a sermon. He was a most acceptable reader who read with great feeling and in a manner that was easy to listen to. He was always ready to rise to the defence of the principles of the Word of God which Rev. D. MacFarlane stood for in 1893, and ever spoke of him in admiring terms. James served the Congregation as Treasurer for many years prior to professing faith and continued diligently in this work till his death.

On his death bed, he was noticeably calm and unafraid of death. At the last family worship held in his presence, James, although very weak, showed his usual pleasure in this exercise. Shortly afterwards he passed, we believe, to his eternal rest.

He is much missed in the Laide Congregation and throughout the Church. Indeed he was very highly respected in the community and is missed there also. May the Lord graciously raise up others in the place of the godly whom He has taken to be with Himself. "Help, Lord, for the godly man does daily fade away; and from among the sons of men the faithful do decay." Psl. 12: 1.

To his sorrowing widow and every member of the family we extend our sincere sympathy in their great loss. May the "God of all comfort,"

who can do for them exceeding abundantly above all that they ask of think comfort and sustain them.

Tribute to the Late Rev. William MacLean M.A., Ness

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow this 22nd day of May, 1986, desires to place on permanent record its sincere sense of sorrow and loss occasioned by the death of the Rev. William MacLean, Ness.

William MacLean was born in Lochcarron in 1907 and after serving his own generation well, he died in the house of his nephew in Stornoway, on the first day of June, 1985. While yet in his teens he became deeply attached to the Rev. Neil Cameron having heard him preach in the Lochcarron Church and when the time came for him to leave Dingwall Academy to attend a University he chose Glasgow mainly because of his desire to be under Mr Cameron's preaching. It was, however, a sermon preached by the Rev. Donald Beaton on a communion Sabbath evening in April, 1932, that was blessed by the Holy Spirit to his spiritual conversion. By that time he was a schoolteacher in Lionel School, Ness. In that congregation he became a member in full communion. This was in 1935 and in 1941, after the death of Mr Andrew Finlayson, he gave up his career in teaching and became a full-time missionary at Ness. In April, 1946, he was received as a Student studying for the ministry and on 18th August, 1948, he was ordained and inducted to the charge of the Ness congregation. In 1962 he was translated to Gisborne, where he was to labour for ten years before being translated to Grafton from which place he accepted another call from the Ness congregation and was re-inducted in February, 1976. In Ness he continued to labour in the Gospel until his lamented death.

William MacLean was a brother beloved. An able minister of the New Testament, he faithfully, skilfully, rightly divided the Word of Truth as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Not shunning to declare all the counsel of God in the pulpit his walk and conversation out of it was consistent with what he taught. Of a loving, charitable disposition, his kindness, hospitality and generosity were traits of his character which were widely known. His pen was, throughout his ministry, active in defending the Truth against error and in regard to our Church's separate position and the stand made for the Truth in 1893 he was fully convinced that it was of the Lord. He often quoted the spiritual experiences of some of the godly living at the time and who had the mind of the Lord on the matter. He wrote and compiled pamphlets and tracts which continue to

be widely distributed, some of them translated into foreign languages. Throughout his ministry he was a diligent pastor of souls willing to spend and be spent in his Master's service. He has now, we believe, received his commendation and reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The Synod is painfully conscious of the breach made and desires to look to the Great Head of the Church to fill it. The Court desires to express its sincere sympathy with his surviving sisters and other relatives.

Nearest relative: Mrs Nairn, "Corona", Lochcarron, Ross-shire.

Tribute to Mr William Sim, Elder, Dingwall

The Synod would place on record its deep sense of loss in the passing away, earlier this year of Mr William Sim an Elder in the Church for many years and also a member of this Court.

Mr Sim was well known as a man who feared God above many and whose life, walk and conversation bore testimony to Whose he was and Whom he served. It would appear that he had come to a saving knowledge of the truth in early manhood, if not earlier, and from that time lived a consistent and holy life. Men recognised in him "an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile". At times his mental condition exposed him to the assaults of Satan and brought him low, yet from these the Lord was pleased to lift him up again. He ever bore the affairs of the church of God on his heart at a Throne of Grace. He rejoiced when Zion rejoiced and mourned when Zion mourned. He was a rebuker of evil out of zeal for the glory of God, which did not win him the applause of the world. So far as the testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church is concerned, he was a firm and loyal supporter of that testimony within and without the Courts of the Church. He fought a good fight and has finished his course and has, we believe, received his crown. We have to say with the Psalmist, "Help, Lord for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

Tribute to the Late Mr Norman MacKay, Elder, South Harris

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Glasgow, this 22nd day of May, 1986, desires to place on record its sincere sense of sorrow and loss over the death of Mr Norman MacKay, South Harris.

Mr MacKay was born in Geocrab, South Harris, and passed away to his everlasting rest on 2nd October, 1985. Accepted as a member in full communion in 1956, he was elected to the Eldership the following year.

He was very highly respected in the South Harris congregation and in the community at large.

Well read and having a thorough intellectual grasp of the foundation doctrines of the Faith, he was well equipped to take services when in the Lord's providence that duty devolved on him. In the circumstances in which he was placed this was frequently. The duties of his office he carried out with becoming gravity and dignity and the observance of order in matters relating to Christ's cause was a prime consideration with him. Ever loyal to the stand and testimony of the Free Presbyterian Church he finished his course with his garments clean and we believe that he has now entered into the joy of his Lord. May the great Head of the Church raise up men of like calibre to fill up the vacant places in our pulpits and pews.

The Synod would express its sincere sympathy with his son and daughters who mourn his passing. May his God be their God also forever and ever.

Nearest relative: Mrs D. J. MacLeod, 6 Barony Square, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met in Glasgow this 22nd day of May 1986 records its sense of great loss and sadness at the passing of Mr Donald Mackay who was for many years an elder in Broadford, Skye, and an assessor elder to several congregations of the West Coast.

Mr Mackay was born on the island of Rona in September 1902 and was the oldest in a family of nine. For the first nineteen years of his life he was under the preaching of Mr Alexander MacLennan, missionary, of whom he retained a great store of anecdotes.

For most of his days Donald Mackay was a seafaring man, serving during the Second World War with the Merchant Navy, sometimes in distant parts.

While he did not talk much about his own conversion it is known that he came to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus at the time that he was residing in the village of Eynort in Skye. In the month of July 1960 Donald was received by the Kirk Session of the Bracadale Congregation as a member in full communion, and took his place at the Lord's Table for the first time.

Donald Mackay will be most widely remembered for his association with the parish of Strath. His move from Eynort to Broadford was significant in the history of the congregation. He was ordained to the

eldership there on 1st May 1964 and the Lord's goodness to the parish was confirmed later that same month by the Synod's recognition of "Elgol, Broadford and the surrounding districts" as a sanctioned charge.

Donald was a man of deep experience and character, friendly towards all, and especially encouraging toward his brethren in Christ Jesus. His likeminded wife, who passed away in June 1979, kept an open house for the Lord's people. Among the many experiences of grace which can be related concerning our late friend is the following:

On one occasion when he was living in Broadford he was preparing to go to the Communion at Bracadale. One of his cattle, a young heifer, failed to come home with the rest of the herd. Satan tempted him, saying that it would be better for him to go and look for the lost heifer than to go to the Communion. He went to his room to seek guidance from the Lord, and while he was praying the truth in Psalm 36 came strongly to his mind:

"Lord thou preservest man and beast
How precious is thy grace
Therefore in shadow of thy wings
Men's sons their trust shall place."

In the strength of these words Donald went to the Communion and the thought of the missing animal never troubled him once. After he came back home, the heifer appeared with the other cattle, safe and well.

Our friend went to the funeral of Rev. Wm MacLean in Ness, and it was after his return from there that his health began to decline. Throughout his life he had been of strong and robust health and it was a sorrow to him to be so weak that he could not attend the services at his own Communion in October 1985.

When leaving him after a visit on the 5th November his brother wished him goodbye. He replied "It is good to have the hope to be going to the place where we will never hear anyone say 'Goodbye'."

He passed away peacefully at his home on the evening of Wednesday 6th November 1985.

His loss to the church on earth is felt sorely not only in the parish of Strath but in the many congregations and homes to which he had endeared himself by his cordial manner and his warm preaching of the gospel.

May the God of all grace be with his family at home and away. We extend to them our sincere sympathy.

1. Rev. J. W. Ross read the Tribute to the late Mr John MacKenzie, Kishorn.

2. Rev. D. Ross read the Tribute to the late Mr John MacKenzie, Laide.

3. Rev. Donald MacLean read the Tribute to the late Rev. W. MacLean, Ness, and after reading added, "I happened to be present at St Jude's when the late Mr Donald Beaton preached the sermon that was blessed to Mr W. MacLean. It is an evidence of the distinguishing grace of God that that sermon which was so blessed to him made no impression on me. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth.' Later, I did come to be joined to Mr MacLean in the bonds of union to the Saviour."

Rev. A. F. MacKay referred to the time spent with the late Mr W. MacLean during his last communion season. Rev. F. MacDonald added the remark, "The Synod is much the poorer for the passing away of Rev. W. MacLean. May the Lord hasten the day when others will be raised up. If ever a man was filled with the Spirit and had a low estimate of himself it was Rev. W. MacLean."

4. Mr Ian MacLeod read the Tribute to the late Mr W. Sim. Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald spoke of the outstanding graciousness of Mr Sim and his manifest grace in enduring the severe trials which he passed through when for the last few months of his pilgrimage he was confined to hospital in surroundings far from congenial to one who feared the Lord but Mr Sim proved the promise to be true "My grace is sufficient for thee."

5. Rev. John MacLeod read the Tribute to Mr Norman MacKay, Harris.

6. Rev. H. I. MacKinnon read the Tribute to the late Mr Donald MacKay, Broadford. Rev. S. F. Tallach recalled the help that the late Mr Donald MacKay had given to him when Mr Tallach was minister of Broadford and Mr MacKay was his elder.

This meeting was thus brought to a close.

The Synod met again at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday 22 May, 1986.

The first business attended to was that of the **Foreign Mission** and in this connection Rev. R. R. Sinclair presented the **Foreign Mission Committee Report**. Mr Sinclair referred to the fact that the Church had a Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund and yet we had no Jewish Mission operating in regard to our Church. He himself took an interest in the work of a group called "The Christian Witness to Israel", and had organised meetings in connection with that group. He therefore asked

the Synod to donate to the said group and the Synod agreed to give £200.

The Convener of the Foreign Missions Committee expressed his gratitude to the Synod for this donation and looked forward to his meeting with the group concerned.

The Clerk of the Foreign Mission Committee now introduced to the Synod two Dutch Deputies, Mr Veldman and Mr Reijers.

The Moderator welcomed them thus "We welcome you to our Synod as those who have shown such a practical and, we believe, also a prayerful interest in our Mission in Zimbabwe. We welcome you also as representatives of a nation to which our country has had a close attachment from Reformation times. You were succourers also of the persecuted ministers of Scotland in times of great adversity in our beloved land during Covenanting Times, and also our Protestant succession to the Throne was secured by Holland. We remember these things. We welcome you as those who serve the same blessed Master — 'We serve the Lord Christ'. And one thing is certain, and I know that you will agree with me in this, that we cannot serve a better Master, and He is worthy of our devoted service. I welcome you to our Synod."

The Dutch Deputy Mr Veldman then addressed the Synod referring to Acts 4: 12. He wished well to the Synod and expressed the hope that God would in mercy return to Scotland.

Rev. Z. Mazvabo now presented **The Ingwenya Mission Report: the Zenka Mission Report: the Zvishavani Mission Report.**

In doing this he said — "We are very pleased to be here among you — referring to himself and his African elder Mr E. C. Sobantu — and we convey the greetings from the Presbytery of Zimbabwe and our heart-felt thanks to you all for the support and interest given. The Reports from the different missions are before you. When you look at them you will notice one thing in common, namely that in the providence of God there is an increase in the number of people attending the services of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Zimbabwe. It would appear that in our country, after their gaining independence, many churches drifted and introduced such things as drum-beating, guitars, etc to their worship. If the Lord preserves us we intend to keep to the truth, preaching the Lord Jesus Christ and the truth only. We think that it is because people get tired of drum-beating and all such things, they come from other denominations to us. I would like you to bear in mind that there is still need for missionaries in Zimbabwe. I thank you for the hospitality shown to myself and to Mr Sobantu during our stay among you."

Mr E. C. Sobantu addressed the Synod, with Rev. Z. Mazvabo interpreting. He said, "I am pleased to speak in my own tongue — Sindebele. God is in truth the living God. He has made a oneness among those who speak different languages. We are here, in this country Scotland, because of the mercy of God who gave His only begotten Son to save sinners. The Spirit of God has enlightened us and revealed to us that we are sinners and that our only refuge is to hide in Christ. I thank the people of Scotland for their kindness and that God gave them His word to carry it to our country. May your prayers for Zimbabwe continue."

The Financial Report and the Mission Accounts were presented by Mr W. Campbell who has returned from serving on the Mission.

Mr J. van Woerden then gave his report on his visit to the Mission as Church Deputy. He referred to the many changes since he had been there before and would acknowledge that the Lord had done much for the Mission, "Not unto us Lord not to us but do Thou glory take". Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald observed that a paragraph in the Report (Draft copy) was contrary to Church principles. The paragraph read:

"We had been invited as guest speakers at all meetings and were therefore not responsible for the manner in which the meetings were conducted." Mr van Woerden said in reply that the Chair was occupied by another person and that that person was responsible for the conduct of the meetings in which there were hymns. Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald reiterated that this was something new in the Free Presbyterian Church and could not be accepted as a general principle. Rev. John Tallach appreciated that Mr MacDonald had said but felt that he was being carried away with zeal. Rev. A. McPherson agreed with Rev. John Tallach adding that the meetings were taking place in a strange country and an altogether new field was being taken.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair remarked — "I would not personally concede to hymns. I would say NO. I have done that in school and the persons concerned know that when I come to take a service it is agreed that there are NO hymns and NO piano. Maybe the deputies were overcome with the situation but I could preach in Malawi without hymns."

Rev. A. E. W. MacDonald, replying to all that had been said emphasised that the basic principles of the Free Presbyterian Church were to be adhered to, whether in this land or in any other land, and that there was no room for the principle enunciated in this paragraph of the report. The Synod agreed that this paragraph be eliminated from the report. With that elimination the Report was approved.

The **Mbumba Mission Hospital and the Bulawayo Mission Report** together with the **Mission Building Report** were presented by Rev. John MacLeod. The need for a doctor was stressed and Rev. A. Murray said that there was a lady doctor preparing to go out to the Mission. She was from Holland. Mr Murray also informed the Synod that Mr Donald MacDonald, son of Rev. D. J. MacDonald, who held a degree in Accountancy, was going out to the Mission to take over the work of Treasurer of the Mission. Rev. A. Murray then presented a **Report on Malawi**.

REPORT on Malawi

History. At its meeting on 27.3.84 the Committee had before it a letter from Mr Neil Macdougall (Elder in the Stornoway Congregation, but now living in Malawi), with a request that work be undertaken in that country. It was agreed to have Rev. A. B. Ndebele visit these parts, and at its meeting of 2.10.84 the Committee had his report to the effect that prospects for missionary work there were good. Rev. Ndebele was asked to make a second visit which came about in company with Mr J van Woerden whose report of it is before the Synod.

Rev. Justin B. Gonakumoto, as a result of Mr Van Woerden's visit, wrote to him asking that the Free Presbyterian Church become established in Malawi. This letter was considered by Committee in conjunction with Mr van Woerden's report on 1.10.85. It was agreed that, subject to recommendation from Mr Macdougall, and Rev. Ndebele, Rev Gonakumoto be invited to visit the Mission in Zimbabwe. This visit took place for two weeks during the Bulawayo Communion last December. Following upon a favourable report of this visit having been received from Rev. Ndebele, the Committee agreed that Rev. Gonakumoto come to the U.K. and attend the theological class in Glasgow. He so arrived on 20th March. On 6th May the Committee after considering a report from Rev. D. Maclean, interviewed Rev. Gonakumoto at length both as to his theological etc. position and with regard to the situation that presently obtains in Malawi. It was ascertained that there are six ministers, including Rev. Gonakumoto, in the Blantyre district of Malawi and with a combined Church membership of 2,200 who have separated from the main Presbyterian Church. This Church is the offspring of missionary work from Scotland related to David Livingstone from last century. It is the wish of these ministers with whom Rev. Gonakumoto is associated that they be received into the Free Presbyterian Church in due course.

Next Step. Accordingly, the Committee have asked two of its number, Revs. D. A. Ross and A. Murray to visit Malawi for some weeks, and report to the Committee as to what may be done.

The Synod are asked to adopt this report.

N.B. Rev. J. B. Gonakumoto will be present to answer questions from Synod Members if desired.

Alex Murray, Clerk to the Jewish and Foreign Missions' Committee.

Mr Murray also brought before the Synod notice of a contact with Kenya. This contact was made through the Church Bookroom. It had been agreed by the Foreign Mission Committee that a deputation from Zimbabwe would go to Kenya. Mr Ndebele and Mr Dube have now returned from that trip and have given in a promising report on the situation there. Mr Murray sought the Synod's permission to register as a religious body in that country if that was deemed advantageous. At a later meeting of Synod Rev. James Tallach warned that there should be caution in respect of this last suggestion as it might entail expense. Mr Murray informed the Synod that the Deputies proceeding shortly to Malawi would also visit Kenya.

Rev. John MacLeod brought forward the suggestion that the Moderator of Synod should, during his Moderatorial year, visit the Church's Overseas Stations in Africa.

Rev. R. R. Sinclair replied saying that the Moderator had a congregation to look after and this was his first duty. Mr Sinclair thought it "not proper for ministers who had their own charges at home to look after, to be away abnormally from these their own congregations."

Rev. John MacLeod withdrew the suggestion.

The Foreign Mission business being now completed the attention of the Synod was drawn to the situation among the Dominions and Overseas Congregations.

Rev. Donald B. MacLeod presented the **Dominions and Overseas Committee's Report**: Mr MacLeod expressed the hope that Rev. Neil Ross would visit the Congregations in North America and in Australasia later in the year.

Rev. Angus Morrison gave in his report as the **Deputy** to Australia and New Zealand, expressing his gratitude to all who made it possible for him to undertake this duty.

Rev. Alex. McPherson, another Deputy, gave in his Report and explained that he had felt it his duty to remain most of his time at

Auckland. The Report of the Deputy, Rev. L. Roberts, was presented by Rev. D. B. MacLeod.

Mr James McPherson presented the **New Zealand** and the **Australian Reports**, and made reference to the hard task that the late Rev. W. MacLean had when he found himself alone in that area of the Church.

The Rev. M. MacInnes presented a **Canadian Report**, which Report, he explained was not a Presbytery Report. He conveyed to the Synod the greetings of the Canadian Presbytery.

Rev. Angus Morrison gave in a report of his visit to **Italy** as Church Deputy and he hoped that people would be encouraged to pray for the friends in Italy. He answered a query from Rev. A. F. MacKay as to where these people went in the long time that they had no minister visiting them, stating that they had nowhere to go. Rev. John Tallach thought it a remarkable sign of the Lord's help that Rev. Angus Morrison was able to defend the Faith against the attacks of the Jehovah Witnesses encountered in Italy — Mr Morrison speaking in Italian. Mr W. Taylor asked if these visits all over the world were justified when the Church at home was so needy and so many vacant congregations left for long without a minister's visit.

Rev. S. F. Tallach had a motion re Church Extension Charges in the Home Country and Rev. J. W. Ross had a motion re a Church Extension Committee but the Clerk of Synod requested that they would combine these issues and prepare a motion for the next Synod. This was agreed upon.

As the business of this year's Synod was now completed the Moderator thanked the Glasgow congregation for their continued kindness to Synod members during the Synod period. He also expressed thanks to the Glasgow minister and Deacon's Court for the use of the Church. He then added — "Fathers and Brethren, this Synod is now drawing to a close and you are about to return to your homes and congregations, whether here in Scotland, or in England, Canada, New Zealand or Zimbabwe.

"In taking our leave of this Synod in which much was done which, we trust, will be for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom in our midst at home and abroad, it would be well for us to remember the great responsibility which rests upon every one of us to maintain and defend the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the witness for truth committed to us as a Church. We are called on to do all in our power to extend the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in those parts in which our lot is cast, looking to the Lord for the grace and strength needed for such a task. The day is dark and evidently becoming darker. What lies before

us we do not know. But this we do know, that the Lord is the same, yesterday, today and forever. He will never leave nor forsake His people. We may take comfort in this also, that often the darkest hour is before the dawn. Who knows but that better days may not be so far away as we may be ready to think. But, however that may be, we can take comfort from the promises of Scripture concerning those glorious days, and the ingathering of the Jews as a people into the fold of the Christian Church, when they shall look to their glorious but so much despised Messiah and Saviour.

“In what spirit then are you to return to your congregations? Let it be in the spirit of humility and thankfulness that the Lord has not left us as a Church and has manifested Himself graciously to us during our days of meeting in Synod. Let my Fathers and Brethren in the ministry — and myself along with them — return to our congregations determining anew ‘to know nothing among them save Christ and Him crucified.’

“Faced with so many discouragements and so much opposition in our day, let each one of us be minded to say with the apostle, ‘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.’

“Let the elders present in our Synod return home fully determined in the strength of divine grace to carry out the duties which belong to their office with renewed vigour and faithfulness, declaring by their life and walk whose they are and whom they serve.

“We would bid farewell to our friends from the Mission and from Overseas as they return to their own countries where some of them labour in much isolation from their brethren and others in the face of increasing difficulties. We hope that they may yet be spared to return on another occasion. If not, and should we never meet any more on earth, may we meet at last in that place where there shall be no parting.

“May we all so live, so run and so fight that when we come to the end of the day we shall be able to say — ‘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’.”

“I would conclude this Synod with the same Scriptural exhortation with which I closed the last Synod over which I presided. The Apostle in 1st Corinthians chapter 15, after proving the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of believers as flowing from it, said, ‘Thanks be to God,

which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord'."

Church Standing Collections

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund	March and August
General Building Fund	April
Home Mission Fund	May and October
Organisation Fund	June
Dominions and Overseas Fund	September
Publications Fund	November
College and Library Fund	December

Note from Private Meeting of Synod

Rev. D. A. MacLennan has demitted his charge of the Staffin Congregation (on 28th February 1986) and is no longer a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance: Mr W. D. Fraser, Convener; Revs. R. R. Sinclair, D. Nicolson, J. MacLeod, and A. MacDonald; with Messrs W. G. MacLeod, R. Middleton, W. Taylor, W. Byers and D. MacKenzie.

Church Interests: Moderator of Synod with Clerks of Synod and five Clerks of Home Presbyteries and Rev. R. R. Sinclair.

Religion and Morals: Revs. D. Ross, Convener; D. M. Boyd, H. I. MacKinnon, A. F. MacKay, and Messrs W. Byers, J. MacAskill and D. R. McSween.

Dominions and Overseas: Revs. D. B. MacLeod, Convener; A. Murray, J. MacLeod, Angus MacKay, L. MacLeod, S. F. Tallach with Messrs W. D. Fraser and D. McCuish.

Jewish and Foreign Missions: Revs. R. R. Sinclair, Convener; A. F. MacKay, A. Murray, Clerk; A. McPherson, J. MacLeod and D. A. Ross with Messrs I. MacLeod, W. Taylor and J. van Woerden.

Training of the Ministry: Revs. D. J. MacDonald, Convener; F. MacDonald, A. MacDonald, J. MacLeod, D. B. MacLeod; with Messrs A. McPherson, J. MacAskill, D. R. McSween, and A. Gillies.

Sabbath Observance: Revs. Neil Ross, Convener; D. Ross, Clerk; G. I. MacAskill; with Messrs A. Gillies, D. MacRae and E. I. Fraser.

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

Publications: Revs. A. McPherson, Convener; A. F. MacKay, N. Ross, D. B. MacLeod, J. W. Ross and Angus Morrison and Donald MacAskill with Mr. W. Taylor.

Welfare of Youth: Revs. A. McPherson, Convener; D. Ross, N. Ross, Clerk; D. M. Boyd and Messrs D. McRae and J. MacAskill.

Home of Rest Committee: Revs. A. Murray, Convener; James Tallach, Clerk; D. B. MacLeod, D. M. Boyd, Angus Morrison, John Ross with Messrs R. K. MacCuish, D. MacRae, W. Taylor and E. Sutherland.

Bookroom: Revs. D. J. MacDonald, Convener; and L. MacLeod with Messrs. D. R. McSween, A. Gillies and W. D. Fraser.

Special Committees

Committee for preparing for Church Centenary. Revs. D. B. MacLeod, Convener; F. MacDonald, and Angus Morrison with Messrs. A. Gillies, R. Middleton and D. R. McSween.

Committee for enquiring into structure of Church Finance. Clerk of Synod, Convener of Finance Committee, Church Auditor, Church Treasurers.

A Note from Calvin

"The Spirit of God shews to us hidden things, the knowledge of which cannot reach our senses. Promised to us is eternal life, but it is promised to the dead; we are assured of a happy resurrection, but we are as yet involved in corruption; we are pronounced just, as yet sin dwells in us; we hear that we are happy, but we are yet in the midst of many miseries; an abundance of all good things is promised to us, but still we often hunger and thirst; God proclaims that He will come quickly, but He seems deaf when we cry to Him. What would become of us were we not supported by hope, and did not our minds emerge out of the midst of darkness above the world through the light of God's Word and of His Spirit?"

How Donald Cargill Preached and Prayed

"Ever since I bowed a knee in good earnest to pray," said Donald Cargill, "I never durst pray and preach with my gifts; and where my heart is not affected, and comes not up with my mouth, I always thought it time for me to quit it. What comes not from my heart, I have little hope that it will go to the heart of others." Patrick Walker's *Life and Death of Mr Daniel Cargill*.

Synod Sermon

Substance of sermon preached by the Retiring Moderator, the Rev. John MacLeod, Stornoway.

"We preach Christ crucified." 1 Cor. 1: 23

The account given in Scripture of the founding of the church in Corinth is well known. Paul remembers the occasion well. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." Paul apparently would have very soon shaken the very dust of that city from his feet had not the Lord appeared to him in a vision by night saying, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." **This** city, which of all the cities of the ancient world was the most notorious for licentiousness. The sins prevalent in Corinth are catalogued in chapter six. Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the effeminate, the abusers of themselves with mankind were numerous within its walls. We might expect that the same judgement would overtake it as overtook the cities of the plain and that fire and brimstone would come from the Lord out of heaven to consume it. But no! It was to be an outpouring of the Spirit of God so that we have saints in Corinth and a famous Church of God established there. Satanic opposition was to be expected. The policy adopted was that of "divide and conquer." Contentions had arisen and at the root of these contentions was pride. "Only by pride," we read "cometh contention."

The sin of pride is what brought about the condemnation of the devil and it is deeply rooted in the human heart. Among other things, it was Paul's aim to restore unity. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; But that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgement." Their allegiance was to be supremely to Christ; that Christ Whom Paul, Apollos and Cephas had preached to them and to Whose fellowship they had been called. As to nationality and kindred the Church in Corinth was composed of Jews and Greeks and they were required to live in brotherly harmony presenting a united front to the powers of the kingdom of darkness around them in the world. Around them were Jews still requiring a sign and Greeks still seeking after wisdom. When brought into contact with the

Gospel the Jews demanded "external supernatural evidence" as the ground of faith and the Greeks "rational evidence," nothing was to be received as true which they could not understand and see the rational grounds of. But Paul, Apollos and Cephas came preaching Christ not as a "sign shower" or as a "philosopher" but condemned and crucified. "We preach Christ crucified," summed up the very substance of their Gospel and they were not deflected from holding fast that profession because it was a **stumbling-block** to the Jews still labouring under the delusion that Christ was to come as a conquering Messiah to establish a world empire and **foolishness** to the Greeks who poured scorn on the doctrine that such preaching was to convert the world. The same Gospel has been committed to us and having been entrusted with it we are, in the same hostile world, to show the same determination as we endeavour to hold aloft that banner given to us and to be displayed because of the Truth. If we are in the true Apostolic Succession, called to the Christian ministry and found with love to Christ and to souls in our hearts then this will be our aim and profession. "**We preach Christ crucified.**" It is this statement that we desire to draw attention to and examine more closely.

I. **First**, we shall identify those embraced by the personal pronoun here, "**We**". We find Paul, Apollos and Cephas mentioned in the context and we may take them to be representative of all in the Christian ministry.

II. **Secondly**, we shall consider their function: we **preach**, that is, we make public proclamation as men called to do so; heralds in the service of the King of Zion; servants, who preach not themselves but Christ Jesus their Lord.

III. **Thirdly**, we shall consider their proclamation: we preach **Christ crucified**. This is the central doctrine of the Gospel. Everything else converges to or radiates from it. Here is the provision made for the salvation of Jew and Greek: it was the preaching of it that attracted them in Corinth and nothing else will attract sinners now. To them that are called, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

I. The Gospel heralds identified in the first instance and from the context are Paul, Apollos and Cephas. They are all Jews but with differing backgrounds. **Paul**, born at Tarsus, a Roman citizen, a polished scholar, the product of Rabbinical schools having sat at the feet of

Gamaliel: **Cephas** or Peter, a humble Galilean fisherman, unlearned and ignorant, uninitiated, that is, in the learning of the Jewish schools: **Apollos**, born at Alexandria which was a renowned seat of learning, eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures. We find them brought together here as Gospel ministers, servants of the one Master and of one mind in regard to what they proclaimed, "We preach Christ crucified." They were of differing backgrounds but this and most importantly they had in common — they were **converted** men. **Paul** was converted on the Damascus road and a most remarkable conversion it was. God revealed His Son in him. In his own words: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen . . ." God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had shined in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Christ being thus revealed in him, he was qualified to reveal Him to others. **Cephas** was brought to Jesus by his own brother Andrew. He was to be later commended at Caesarea Philippi after his confession of Jesus being "the Christ, the Son of the living God," "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Peter was thus qualified. The circumstances or time of the conversion of **Apollos** we have no record of, but it is recorded that he was instructed in the "way of the Lord," that is, the Gospel, and that he was "fervent in spirit" and with a heart boiling over taught diligently the things of the Lord. That he was taught and instructed of the Holy Spirit and thus qualified to speak to others is beyond question. Paul, Cephas and Apollos had this then in common; Christ was revealed in them and they were qualified to reveal Him to others. How could they sincerely preach Christ to others if they themselves were strangers to Him? How can such as are ignorant of their own lost perishing condition persuade others with any real urgency to flee from the wrath to come and how can such as have not learned by blessed experience what it means to find mercy speak to others with any measure of sincerity of the riches and fullness of that mercy and direct them to where it is obtainable? Unconverted men posing as ministers of Christ have done irreparable harm to the Cause of Christ down through the ages and have a fearful account to render at the Judgement Seat. They were there in Paul's day and they are by no means extinct. "False apostles," he called them, "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his

ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." The Vatican, the seat of Antichrist, the son of perdition, "even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders," is full of them. The World Council of Churches is made up of them and they are, we believe, in pulpits up and down the land. What have Runcie and Jenkins and their kind with their vestments, crooks and mitres in common with Paul, Cephas and Apollos. Their conduct and utterances proclaim them to be no ministers of Christ, no heralds of the Gospel but men still in the kingdom of darkness and led captive by the devil at his will. "There will be streets in hell paved with the heads of graceless ministers," the Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie, Lochcarron, once said in his own inimitable way and when a brother minister remonstrated with him for using such language his reply was, "Take you good care that your own big head will not be there." Paul, Cephas and Apollos were not of such but true-hearted ambassadors and heralds who, having believed, could therefore speak. He whom Christ commissions says Witherow, comes with the truth in his heart as well as on his lips. Like Isaiah, but in different circumstances, their eyes had seen the King and when the call came for heralds, "Whom shall I send and who shall go for us?", they could answer, "Here am I, send me," however conscious they were of having unclean hearts by nature and unclean lips.

II. The function of such is to preach or make public proclamation, set apart and sent forth on the King's business, to preach, as Jonah, the preaching which He bids them — no more, no less.

A divine commisison is an absolute necessity. "How can they preach except they be sent?" No man takes this honour to himself, this awesome responsibility upon himself except as called and authorised to speak in His name. "Horrible is the guilt of that man," says the great Dr Love, "who presses into God's vineyard without his leave, — who is not called into it by the great Master. Especially horrible is the guilt of him — who, being given over of God to his own reprobate mind, leaves or lulls asleep the souls of men in that deadly sleep in which he himself lies, or who deceives with damnable heresies unstable souls, and leads them to perdition. The blood of souls cries from the bottom of hell for vengeance upon such a man. And the cry will be heard. God's hand will find out his enemies. 'Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger.' Divine mercy is unlimited. 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.' But surely no more extraordinary objects of Divine mercy can be conceived of, than those — who now, at the

threshold of eternity, break into God's fold for purposes base and grovelling, to the scattering of the true sheep, and the eternal destruction of immortal creatures through millions of ages."

The Apostles and all who have succeeded them in the Christian ministry have had their commission from heaven. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," or as we have it in Matthew, "go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway (**all the days**) even unto the end of the world." One such day dawned in Corinth when within its walls were the messengers of the Churches, heralds of Christ commissioned to speak and to teach in His name. **Paul** is there and necessity is laid upon him. We hear him saying, "woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel," and, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." **Cephas** is known as a "fisher of men" one who could say elsewhere of Jesus of Nazareth, Whom the Jews had slain and hanged on a tree but Whom God had raised up. "He **commanded** us to preach unto the people." We have again no record of **Apollos's** call to the ministry. Paul however accepts him as his fellow-labourer and we know that he was eloquent, fervent and zealous. The seal of heaven was granted on his ministry when we find souls converted as a result of his labours. These are the ministers we need and urgently. Ministers given by Christ from His exalted glory for such gifts He has to give "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Paul was given in answer to prayer. The Master had taught His disciples, "the harvest truly is great and the labourers are few: pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest." They would not have been remiss in the performance of this duty as they lifted their eyes and saw the greatness of the harvest and the extent of the field — "all the world." They gave themselves to the word of God and **prayer**. The answer given was the conversion and call of Saul of Tarsus the persecutor. He who verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth was to be revealed as His chosen vessel to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. Apollos also we could regard as given in answer to prayer. Let the Lord's people among us pray that young men in our congregations would be raised up and sent forth by the Lord of the harvest to be zealous and faithful labourers in His service.

And as men are not to go forth as heralds of the Gospel without a divine call, so they are not, once called and set apart, to introduce into or remove from the proclamation anything whatever. Their commission is clear; they are to teach all things whatsoever He has commanded them. "Preach the **word**," Paul exhorted Timothy. That **word** was that with which he had been familiar from infancy and by means of which he had come to be wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus — the word of God inspired, infallible, inerrant "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Thus would Timothy be well equipped for his work. The word of reconciliation is committed to or placed in the hands of Christ's ambassadors. What they proclaim is to be found there. In this they have the example of the Master. When He would teach and open the understanding He began at "Moses and all the prophets" expounding unto them in "all the Scriptures" the things concerning Himself. **Paul** in bidding farewell to the Elders of the Ephesian Church could draw attention to the fact that while among them he had not shunned to declare unto them "all the counsel of God." He delivered to the Corinthians first of all that which he also received, "how that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**. And that He was buried, and that He rose again on the third day **according to the Scriptures**." To the Galatians he could say, "But I certify you brethren that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Perverters of the Gospel are denounced in no uncertain manner. "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." "Having obtained help of God," he could declare before Agrippa, "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer . . ." With regard to **Cephas** or Peter it will be sufficient to recall what was true of his preaching on the day of Pentecost. His sermon was in substance an exposition of **Scripture** passages, attention being especially drawn to the fact that they were being fulfilled. **Apollos** mightily convinced the Jews and that publicly showing by the **Scriptures** that Jesus was Christ. It would have been accounted high, inexcusable presumption for any herald to have gone out to make public proclamation of what the king had not clearly commanded. "The nature of the preacher's work," Robert L. Dabney points out, "is determined by the word employed to describe it by the Holy Ghost. The preacher is a

herald; his work is heralding the King's message. Once, the apostles call themselves Christ's ambassadors; but of old, ambassadors were no other than heralds. Now the herald does not invent his message; he merely transmits and explains it. It is not his to **criticise its wisdom or fitness**; this belongs to his sovereign alone. On the one hand, he does not carry it as a mere implement of sound, a trumpet or a drum; he is an intelligent medium of communication with the king's enemies; he has brains as well as a tongue; and he is expected so to deliver and explain his master's mind, that the other party shall receive not only the mechanical sounds, but the true meaning of the message. On the other hand, it wholly transcends his office to presume to correct the tenor of the propositions he conveys, by either additions or change. These are the words of God's commission to an ancient preacher: 'Arise; go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee'."

That there have been men ready to criticise the wisdom and fitness of the message and change the doctrines and propositions to make them more acceptable to the carnal mind is evident from the Church's history. Arianism, Pelagianism, and Arminianism are heresies which may be traced back to men pronouncing themselves wise and setting aside the wisdom of God revealed; sitting in judgement on the word of God; calling in question its integrity, veracity and Divine origin as a supernatural revelation committed to writing. It led to the introduction of the Higher Critical views into the Free Church and the movement to remove "difficulties and scruples" which were felt by some "in reference to the declaration of belief required. This, as is well known, led up to the passing of the Declaratory Act of 1892 and the subsequent separation of the Rev. Donald MacFarlane taking with him the creed and constitution of the Disruption Free Church of Scotland and that was, of course, that of the Reformation Church of Scotland. The Bible remains our supreme standard; the Westminster Confession of Faith our subordinate standard. "The Confession of Faith," wrote the late Rev. J. S. Sinclair, "is a document of almost unparalleled merit for lucidity and fulness of doctrinal statement, and there is not the slightest doubt that the difficulties and scruples referred to have arisen, not from any ambiguity or obscurity in the Confession, but from the natural opposition of the human heart to the Gospel truths contained therein." Our founding fathers were men who were fully persuaded and assured of the infallible truth and divine authority of the Word of God from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in their hearts. True heralds and faithful that they were, they left all that the Truth might be proclaimed.

Great is our responsibility. We have to jealously guard that which they committed to us and if we with love in our hearts to Christ and men proclaim the same Gospel then we may cherish the hope that we are worthy of a place among those who profess, "we preach Christ crucified."

III. The doctrine of **Christ crucified** is, of course, the centre and substance of all true preaching. It provides the foundation upon which a poor perishing sinner facing death and eternity may rest. "All else," wrote J. W. Alexander, "converges towards Him or radiates from Him. It tends to lead us to Him, or flows from our union with Him. All unfoldings of God in His perfections and glories; all exhibitions of character, condition, and duties of man, all inculcations of doctrine and practice, if true and scriptural, leads the soul directly to the Lord Jesus Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." The Christ that was preached in Corinth was divine, none other than the eternal Son of God, manifest in the flesh. The doctrine of Christ's person is summed up for us admirably in the Shorter Catechism: "The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, being the Eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever." That is the Christ that **Paul** preached in the synagogues of Damascus: "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that He is the Son of God." Such was **Cephas's** recognition of the Son of Man at Caesarea Philippi, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." **Apollos** in Achaia eloquently and mightily "convinced the Jews and that publicly that Jesus was Christ." This knowledge and recognition of Him is eternal life. But it is not just Christ in His person, anointed with the Spirit above measure that was preached but a crucified Christ or Messiah. This was the great theme of prophecy. The Messiah was to be cut off, but not for Himself: He was to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in an everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. (Daniel chapter 9). He was and came to be in reality the surety substitute of sinners and this is what gives meaning to Calvary. We have satisfaction rendered to the claims of divine justice and a righteousness fully adequate to meet the sinner's need provided. He who knew no sin, is made sin for His people that they might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This is what makes the Cross of Christ glorious to the eye of faith and makes the doctrine of Christ crucified so precious. Would that the Holy Spirit would come and that this doctrine would be preached after Paul's example among the Churches of Galatia — Jesus Christ vividly, evidently, set forth as crucified among us. This is

what Scotland needs, and England, Wales and Ireland and Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the nations of the world. Some may say that they have not many souls to preach to in their congregations. It is recorded of John Brown of Haddington that to a former pupil who was complaining of his congregation, he said, "Young man, when you appear at Christ's bar, it will be the least of your anxieties that you have so few souls to give account of." The same good man said, "Now, after 40 years preaching of Christ and His great and sweet salvation, I think I would rather beg my bread all the labouring days of the week, for an opportunity of publishing the Gospel on the Sabbath, to an assembly of sinful men, than, without such a privilege, enjoy the richest possessions on earth. By the Gospel do men live, and in it is the life of my soul." And in conclusion I quote from a sermon preached by that eminent and faithful herald of the Gospel and minister of Christ, the Rev. Donald MacFarlane: "Many in this degenerate age despise the ministry of the Gospel. But if I were to come back to the world after I am away, I would prefer to serve Christ as a minister to being crowned king over the whole world. But, I shall not come back. O for grace to redeem the time — to be up and doing for Christ while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work in this world. The night cometh but the morning of the day of glory shall shine on those that are in Christ, never, never to be succeeded by night. Amen, so let it be."

When Christ was born, all the idols that were set up in the world, as historians write, fell down. When Jesus Christ comes to be lifted up in a nation, in a city, in a town, in a family, yea, in any heart, then all idols without and within will fall before the power, presence, and glory of Jesus. Since Luther began to lift up Christ in the Gospel, what a deal of ground has antichrist lost! and he does and will lose more and more, as Christ comes to be more and more manifested and lifted up in the chariot of His word. Many in these days that speak much against antichrist, have much of antichrist within them. And certainly there is no such way to cast him out of men's hearts, and out of the world, as the preaching and making known of Christ, as the exalting or lifting up of Christ in the Gospel of grace. — *Brooks*.

Book Reviews

Aaron's Rod Blossoming by George Gillespie. 276pp. £11.95.

This book by the noted Scottish divine, George Gillespie, one of the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly has recently been reprinted by Sprinkle Publications, U.S.A. The volume deals with the proper nature and relationship of civil and ecclesiastical power. It sought to expose the erroneous views and practices on this subject which were then current, but especially erastianism. The first part of the book is taken up with Jewish Church Government, also showing it to be distinct from the Jewish state. The second part of the book deals with Christian Church Government showing the agreement and the differences between the nature of the civil and ecclesiastical powers. The third part of the book defends the Church's right to excommunicate offenders and to suspend them from the Lord's Table.

W. M. Hetherington in his Memoir of Gillespie in the Presbyterian's Armoury refers to this work which vindicates the divine ordinance of Church Government. He states: "In this remarkably able and elaborate production, Gillespie took up the Erastian controversy as stated and defended by its ablest advocates, fairly encountering their strongest arguments, and assailing their most formidable positions, in the frank and fearless manner of a man thoroughly sincere, and thoroughly convinced of the truth and goodness of his cause." He goes on to show that though in "Aaron's Rod" Gillespie answers the arguments of Selden, Coleman, Hussey and Prynne, and the writings of these men have sunk into oblivion, yet this does not make it an ephemeral production. Erastianism, he reminds us, never had abler advocates than the above-named men. "If, therefore," he states, "Gillespie's Aaron's Rod completely defeated the acute and able men of that day, we may well recommend it to the perusal of those whose duty it may be to engage in a similar controversy in the present age."

On that note we can safely end this review and recommend the volume to all who desire to be fully informed on this particular controversy.

D. B. M.

Westminster Confession of Faith Booklet. Free Presbyterian Publications. 24pp.

This booklet, containing the text of the Westminster Confession of Faith has been once more reprinted by the Free Presbyterian Publications Committee. It makes the Confession available in an easily acces-

sible form and would be especially useful to those who do not possess the large volume Confession which includes Scripture proofs, etc.

D. B. M.

The History of the Gospel Standard Magazine 1835-1985. Edited by B. A. Ramsbottom. Gospel Standard Trust. 228pp. £4.50.

This well-bound volume consists of two parts, the earlier part giving the history of the Gospel Standard Magazine and the later part giving the lives of the Editors down to 1970. The book is edited by the present editor of the Magazine. The first part contains an interesting and varied account of the Magazine's history, while the second part contains edifying accounts of the lives of the Editors. These include such men as Joseph Charles Philpot, James Kidwell Popham, John Hervey Gosden and Sydney Frank Paul, the last three of which were well known to Free Presbyterians who visited the South of England. Philpot, of course, is well known through his sermons and other writings.

While the history of the Gospel Standard Magazine will be of especial interest to Gospel Standard Strict Baptists, yet the lives of the editors will be of interest to others as well. Although there are those matters on which we differ with our friends in the Strict Baptists, yet there is a common bond in their emphasis on experimental acquaintance with the truth.

D. B. M.

Commentary on Hosea by John Calvin. Banner of Truth Trust. 530pp. £6.95.

Commentary on Joel, Amos and Obadiah by John Calvin. Banner of Truth Trust. 513pp. £6.95

These books are Volumes I and II of Calvin's Commentaries on the Minor Prophets. Spurgeon's recommendation of Calvin's Commentaries echoes what has been repeated over and over again by eminent men in many different parts. He says: "Everything that Calvin wrote by way of exposition is priceless. His expositions are more equal in excellence than those of other men; other men rise and fall, but he is almost uniformly good." The very fact that Calvin's Commentaries are still being published in the late 20th Century is a tribute itself to the excellence of these productions. This is the first Banner of Truth reprint of these works.

Commentary on Daniel by John Calvin. Banner of Truth Trust. 409pp. £9.95.

This is a second reprint by the Banner of Truth Trust of this volume, having been reprinted by the Trust 20 years ago. The remarks above on Calvin's Commentaries equally apply to this volume.

William Tyndale — His Life and Times by S. M. Houghton. Focus Christian Ministries Trust, 6 Orchard Road, Lewes, E. Sussex BN7 2HB. 55p (or 70p by post).

This interesting 16-page booklet on William Tyndale is divided into two parts, the first dealing with his life and times and the second part with his life and work. In the first section Mr Houghton shows the low state to which religion had sunk before the Reformation and in the second section deals with the part which Tyndale played in helping to bring about the Reformation through the translation of the Scriptures into English before he suffered a martyr's death at the stake on 6th October, 1536. Mr Houghton states: "Concerning the merits of Tyndale's work as a mere translation, I scarcely need to say anything beyond the fact that the present Authorised Version of the New Testament . . . is in substance the unchanged language of Tyndale's translation." It is interesting to note that through the efforts of the Trinitarian Bible Society a monument was erected in 1913 in Belgium near the scene of his martyrdom.

D. B. M.

Friends and Acquaintances of Henry Cooke by Terry Jackson. Mourne Missionary Trust. 63pp. £2.00.

This booklet, which is very thoroughly researched, has a foreword by Rev. Ian Paisley. In it he speaks of Henry Cooke as Irish Presbyterianism's greatest son. Cooke's particular work was to zealously oppose the Arianism that had crept into the Church and recall the Church back to the faith of the founding fathers of Ulster Presbyterianism. Brief accounts are given in the booklet of Cooke's friends in the Irish Presbyterian Ministry in last century such as Rev. James Morgan D.D., Fisherwick, known for his Commentary on 1st John, Rev. James Seaton Reid D.D., the great historian of 19th Century Irish Presbyterianism, and Rev. T. Witherow D.D. LL.D., author of *The Form of the Christian Temple and the Apostolic Church*. To this a few short accounts are appended of lay friends in the Ulster Protestant Churches. A section on Free Church Friends in Scottish Presbyterianism includes accounts of Chalmers and McCheyne, while a section on friends in England and overseas includes Spurgeon and D'Aubigne. The con-

cluding part outlines the lessons for Protestants in Ulster today to be learned from the battles for Bible Protestantism in the 19th Century.

D. B. M.

Expository Thoughts on Matthew by J. C. Ryle. Banner of Truth Trust. 414pp. £2.95.

This paperback, recently issued by the Banner of Truth Trust, can be highly recommended. The more one reads the writings of Bishop Ryle the more one admires not only the plainness of his writing but the clarity and richness of his exposition of the Word of God. On the whole, he is sound as an expositor so that those who wish a greater acquaintance with the teaching of the Word of God would find in him a safe guide. If Ryle's Expositions of the Gospels were used by the many house Bible Study groups which have been springing up in evangelical circles in recent times, the fruit of such study would soon become evident in a greater attachment to orthodox Calvinistic belief. The book also contains much practical instruction. On the Second Coming of Christ there are occasional references that appear to be pre-millennial in outlook. "Sunday" is here and there used for the Sabbath. Otherwise the volume is full of good instruction and wise counsel. For daily readings it is ideal.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

Nuclear Danger

The Chernobyl nuclear plant disaster was a loud warning to the nations of the world, and especially to nations possessing nuclear reactors, of the great danger to life when a disaster of this kind occurs. It also highlighted the awfulness of nuclear war should that ever occur. It is good for the nations of the world to realise the danger to which they are exposed. In this way they may be alerted to the need of taking every possible protection against similar outbreaks in the future. It may also make nations rely less on nuclear weapons and rely more on conventional weapons of defence.

There is little doubt that in the recent nuclear disaster, God was speaking loudly to the leaders of atheistic Russia showing them their impotence so far as protecting themselves from nuclear fall-out was concerned. May it be a salutary lesson to them and bring them to see what frail and poor creatures they are. Let them lay to heart that this is only a whisper

of God's power in judgment. May our own nation and other nations as well also hear the voice of God in it — God warning men in a small way of what the ultimate consequences of sin shall be.

Amazing Appeal Court Decision

Three Appeal Court judges reduced a life sentence to that of five years on a father who had killed his new-born son. The father had pleaded provocation by the child's crying and this plea was allowed by the Appeal Court. The decision has aroused widespread condemnation lest it allow those who batter babies to escape the just sentence they deserve. It appears that in a number of cases before the Courts in recent times the element of provocation has been given a place beyond what seems warranted. It is to be hoped that this particular case is an isolated one and that steps will be taken to prevent a similar verdict in the future. We can hardly believe that Parliament, as the law making body, ever intended that a case of this nature should end in this way.

Jehovah Witnesses

Jehovah Witnesses with their blasphemous doctrines have spread their tentacles over many parts of the Highlands and in some places get followers for their God-dishonouring cult. Recently a large number of them descended on Forres in order to erect what they call a "Kingdom Hall" there for their followers. Starting at 7 a.m. on Saturday they worked through the next night to complete it by 1.30 p.m. the next day. The rest of the Sabbath does not matter to those who are advancing the kingdom of darkness. Setting this aside, the diligence they showed in serving **their** master ought to make true Christians more diligent in serving the Master whom they are privileged to serve.

Dismissal of Welsh Presbyterian Minister

In a recent "Note and Comment" in the Magazine we referred to a House of Lords decision in the case of a Welsh Presbyterian Minister. It has since been brought to our attention that it was the minister's opposition to Freemasonry which occasioned his dismissal from his charge. It is reported that Rev. Colin Davies is now the pastor of an independent church, consisting largely of elements of his former congregation, and that this new congregation has since grown under a biblical ministry. It should be stressed that the House of Lord's decision did not take to do with the reasons for his dismissal but only the competency of an Industrial Tribunal to deal with his case.

The Reformation Translation Fellowship

Report from Dr. Chao

First of all I wish to give thanks to God for his marvellous grace to help us carry on the work through the past year. I appreciate the help of all those who donate to the work either as congregations or as individuals. I also want to thank the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, through its Foreign Missions Board, for supporting us to work overseas and to represent the Church in the foreign field.

Our deep appreciation goes to the British RTF Board for its financial help toward the printing of the Chinese magazine, *The Reformed Faith and Life*, and other titles. We also wish to express our indebtedness to the Boards in Japan and in New Zealand for their donations.

We have published a number of titles during 1985. Other titles are in process. The Chinese translation of Dr. E. J. Young's *In the Beginning* will soon be off the press. We have been very busy with the proof reading of the Chinese translation of Dr. Loraine Boettner's *The Millenium*. This edition will have 350 pages and should be published in the Spring of 1986. It will be the only publication available in the Chinese language on this subject. It is our sincere prayer that the forthcoming volume will be of great help to the Chinese reading public, for it offers Christians materials to make a deeper research into "the things that are to come".

We have been continuing to issue our theological journal *Reformed Faith and Life* quarterly. Many letters have been received from churches and individual believers in Taiwan to indicate their appreciation of the magazine. One pastor from Burma wrote recently to thank us for what we publish in the magazine. Letters also come from various Chinese seminaries to ask for back issues of the *Reformed Faith and Life*.

Quite a number of our titles are going out of stock. Among titles needing to be reprinted are *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* by J. I. Packer, *The Way of Life* by Charles Hodge, *Christianity Rightly So Called* by Samuel G. Craig and *The Atonement* by Loraine Boettner.

Logos Book House in Hong Kong has been the agent handling our publications. We praise God for their efforts in promoting, distributing and marketing RTF literature. With our agreement they have published an overseas edition of Isaac C. Jen's *Systematic Theology*.

Thirty seven years have elapsed since the initiation of the work of RTF. The organization is small and the working force is feeble yet God has used it to accomplish the impossible. It is encouraging to remember

that RTF was a faith venture from the beginning. It started with a cheque of \$50.00 given by Mr Philip Robb, brother of Mrs Grace Boyle, to the Boyle family in 1948. The work has continued by God's help. It is our deep conviction that God will provide a suitable person to carry on this important work in the Far East.

Charles Chao

Dr Luke Pei Yuan Lu

The need of a suitable assistant translator, and possible successor to Dr. Chao, has been a matter of prayer for some years now. We are pleased to be able to say that a promising candidate has come forward. He is Dr. Luke Lu. After hearing a talk by Dr. Chao he became interested in RTF publications and convinced of the Reformed doctrines. In the meantime he trained as a dentist and was in a practice for three years before deciding to go in for a theological course. After a year at China Evangelical Seminary he went to Westminster Theological Seminary in the U.S.A. where he hopes to complete a degree.

The American Board of the RTF interviewed Dr. Luke Lu at their meeting in the Summer of 1985. Persuaded of his suitability for the work the Board encouraged him to begin translation work and put him on a part-time salary while he completed his studies. His first project is the translation of *The Defence of the Faith* by Cornelius van Til. Let us pray that God will guide the steps of this young man and that the work of RTF will be able to go on unhindered.

(The Synod gives support to the work of the Reformation Translation Fellowship which is engaged primarily in the translation of Reformed literature into the Chinese language. Dr. Cameron Tallach, Hong Kong is associated with this Fellowship and receives support from it, as well as from our own China Mission Fund).

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 1st July at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 2nd September at 11 a.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 2nd September at 12 noon.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo on 14th October at 2 p.m.

Appeal for Nkulumane Church

The Deacon's Court of the Bulawayo Congregation at Lobengula is planning (D.V.) to build a Church at Nkulumane township at a site that has been offered by the city council after application. The cost of the

Church is estimated at Z\$20,000. The average attendance at the site is 50 people weekly. The worship is conducted in one of the classrooms at Mavene Government Primary School. There are two services weekly, one of which is usually taken by either the local pastor, Rev. A. Mpofu, or one of his elders at one o'clock and three o'clock respectively.

Our main need is for friends who would be willing to donate funds to build this Church. We are therefore sincerely asking for donors either individually or in groups who would be willing to help us financially to erect this Church as soon as possible. We request that donations for this be sent to the Congregational Treasurer, c/o Rev. A. Mpofu, or to the Mission Treasurer or to the General Treasurer in Glasgow.

We again further hope that those who choose to become involved in this project will also pray for us and also for the work here in general.

(Rev.) A. Mpofu, Moderator, E. B. Zikhah, Clerk pro. tem.

This appeal has the approval of the Zimbabwe Presbytery.

Greenock Communion

The Kirk Session decided that for this year the Autumn Greenock Communion would be held on the 4th Sabbath of October (D.V.).

Synod Reports 1986

Reports of Standing Committees of the Church submitted to the Synod in May 1986 are now available in booklet form from either the FP Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE, or Mr R. W. M. MacKenzie, Publications Treasurer, Geanies House, Fearn, Tain, Ross-shire IV20 1TW. Price per copy £1.20 or post paid £1.40.

Binding of Magazines

Persons wishing to have Church Magazines bound should send complete volumes only. The price per volume is £3.50 until August 1986 when it will be increased to £4.00 per volume. Send to Mr Neil MacLean, c/o Church Bookroom.

Demission of Charge

Rev. D. A. MacLennan has demitted his charge of the Staffin Congregation on 28th February, 1986 and is no longer a minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The Publications Treasurer, Mr R. W. MacKenzie C.A., Geanies House, Fearn, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Publications Fund: Fort William Congr., £2.

Welfare of Youth Fund: Lochinver, Stoer and Drumbeg Congr., £30.

Free Distribution Fund: J.A.F., Larne, £17; Mark 12: 30 and 31, £5.

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

Daviot: Friend, £20 (in plate) for Tomatin Church.

Dunoon: Anon., Inverness Postmark, £20 for Dunoon Congr. Funds.

Flashadder: Friend of the Cause, £30 for Church Funds per D. MacKay; Envelope in plate, £25 for Sust. Fund.

Fort William: Anon., £15 per D.M.

Glasgow: Anon., £10; Mrs MacK. (2 donations), £8, both for Congr. Fund; A. Macr., £5; Matth 6: 3, £20; Passenger, £20; South Harris Friend, £10; Anon., Harris, £20, all for Bus Fund; Anon., Harris, £50 for T.B.S., Anon., Harris, £10 for T.B.S.; Friend, Sussex, £5 for Tape fund; Anon., £10 for Sust. Fund; Anon., Skye, £10 for Sponsor a Child per Gen. Treasurer; Anon., Ness, £10 for Communion Coll. per Rev. Donald MacLean.

Inverness: Friend of Zimbabwe Mission, £100; Inverness Friends, £15, both per Rev. A. F. M.; Inverness Ladies Mission Mtg collection, £616 all for sponsoring blind children at Ingwenya Mission.

Kames: Anon. Friend, Glasgow, £50 for Church Funds.

Laide: Anon., £10; Friend, £5; Anon., £5; Friend, Melvaig, £10; Friends at Communion, £10; Friends, Edinburgh, £20; Friend, Stornoway, £10, per Rev. D. Ross.

Oban: A. MacD., Blanehead, £30 per Rev. A. M.; A Friend, St Jude's, £10 per A. M. P., both for Congr. Fund.

Perth and Stirling: Mr and Mrs T., £10 for Minister's petrol per Rev. D. J. MacDonald.

Portree: In memory of a loving husband, £20 (envelope in plate); Anon., £20 (envelope in plate); Anon., £20, all for Home Mission Fund; Anon., £20; Anon., £20, both for Foreign Mission Fund; D. G., Fraser Cres., £65 for Church Recording System per W. M. B.; In memory of a dear brother, £100 (envelope in plate).

Raasay: Two Friends, Inverarish, £10 for Sust. Fund; Raasay Friends, £300 for Zimbabwe Mission; R. & S., Inverarish, £14 for Comm. Exp.

Staffin: Anon., £10 (envelope in plate).

Stornoway: Anon., £20 for Congr. Funds per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Strath: Bequest from Estate of the late D. J. Cameron, Broadford, £200 for Strath Church purposes per M. MacLeod.