

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and Monthly Record

Vol. 92

SEPTEMBER 1987

No. 9

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The Church of Scotland

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Staff Vacancies at Ballifeary Home of Rest

Applications are invited for the post of Matron and Senior Care Assistant at the Ballifeary Home of Rest, Inverness. These posts will fall vacant in August. Immediate enquiries would be welcome and should be directed to: The Clerk of the Home of Rest Committee, Rev. Dr. James R. Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, Raasay, Kyle, IV40 8PB.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, Room 7, Seafield House, Seafield Road, Inverness IV1 1SJ, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:-

Foreign Mission Fund: Friend, Lutterworth, £156; Mrs Barbara Beatty, Dawson Creek, B.C., "In memory of beloved mother, Elizabeth F. Fleming", £300; Beaully Congregation, £361 for African Relief Collection.

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

Applecross: Mr W. B., Lonbain £2000 for Cuaig Mission Hall Loan Repayment; From the Estate of the late Mrs Gillanders, Arrina £1000 for Congregational Purposes; A Harris Friend at Communion £10 for Communion Expenses, last two per Murdo Gillanders.

Barnoldswick: Mr M. McC. £20; Anon., South Humberside £5; Ps. 61: 5 £10; Anon., Haworth £20; Anon., £50 for Church Manse Fund.

Bracadale: Friend £15 for Communion Expenses per Rev. D. N.; Anon., £10 for Communion Expenses (envelope in plate).

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Dingwall: S. C. Invergordon £10; J. G., Dalmore £10, both for Church Funds; Harris Friend £10 where most needed.

Dumbarton: Anon., Glasgow £20; Anon., Glasgow £10; Anon., Glasgow £10, all for Congregational Fund.

Dundee: Inverness Friend £50 per Rev. D. C. M.

Fort William: Envelope in plate, £12 for Church Floor Repairs; Anon., £25, in loving memory of a beloved husband and father; Friend, Caol, £10; A. N. £10; Mrs B., £10; Friend, Caol, £10; Mrs R., £10; Mrs S., £10, all per Rev. J. A. MacDonald, last five for Sust. Fund.

Glendale: Friend of the Cause £20; Anon., £10, both "where most needed" and both per Rev. D. Nicolson.

Greenock: For T. B. S. £61.50; Anon., £40 for T. B. S.; Two Friends, Dumbarton £10, where most needed; Anon., £40 for T. B. S.

London: A Friend £50 for London Congregation per Rev. D. MacLean.

North Uist: M. MacD., Middlequarter £30; M. MacD., Hosta £100; Wellwisher £40; Anon., £50; Mrs D. C., Claddach £20; R. K. M. £50, all Church Repairs; A Friend £50; D. E. MacL. £40, £10 and £15; Miss C. MacD. £15; all "where most needed"; Mrs P. MacD., Trianaid £5 for Door Coll.; D. A. MacD., Cross Roads £80; Anon £230; Mrs H. S., Avonbridge £20, all for Church Repairs; Anon £2; Anon £10 for petrol; Estate of Late Miss Christina MacDonald, Dusary £108.20; Miss MacD., Clarkston £100 for Church Repairs; Anon., £20 for Fabric Fund, last five per Rev. A. M.; M. M. D. £50 for Church Repairs; Envelope in plate £10 for Door Coll., Anon £10 for Pulpit Supply.

Stornoway: Anon., £40 for Barnoldswick Church and Manse Fund; Envelope in plate £10 for Sust. Fund; Miss K. A. MacLeod, The Cottage, Callanish £40 for Petrol per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Strath, Skye: Mr M. MacL. £10 for Comm. Expenses per Rev. H. I. MacKinnon.

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and he claimed that secrecy is divisive of the body of Christ. He maintained that though the Lodge had prayers yet Christ's Name was deliberately omitted. Masonry, he said, taught a form of godliness at variance with several fundamental Christian doctrines. A number of members of Assembly admitted their membership of the Lodge yet claimed that they found nothing incompatible with Christianity in Freemasonry. It would appear that several former Moderators of Assembly were Freemasons. An attempt by Rev. Donald MacDonald to dismiss the issue was defeated by 601 votes to 314.

The appointment of a woman minister as a corresponding member and Church of Scotland delegate to the Church of England was challenged on the ground that it would be inappropriate to appoint a woman to act in this capacity at a time when the Church of England is seriously divided on the question of the ordination of women to the ministry. The appointment was approved on the assurance of the Church of England delegate that she would be warmly welcomed.

The Assembly agreed to investigate the provision of specifically Christian teaching in schools. A report from the Board of Education suggested that the support of the Roman Catholic Church was required in the fight against secularism in schools. It was said that the low priority given to religion in many schools was a matter for alarm. The need to press for continued Church representation on education authorities was also stressed in view of the fact that the Widdicombe Report had advocated no Church representation. The Assembly instructed the Board of Education to investigate the provision of specifically Christian teaching in schools and to consult fully with the Catholic Education Commission. When the history of religious education in schools is looked into, it is clear that the Church of Scotland must bear a great deal of responsibility for the present state of affairs and particularly in the Highlands where they secured the removal of the Shorter Catechism from the schools.

The Board of Social Responsibility warned of the danger from the terrifying AIDS problem. By 1990 it is thought that one million people in the UK are likely to be affected by it. The Board had provided special residential centres for victims of the disease. The Assembly refused to support a motion which questioned the Government's AIDS campaign and which reaffirmed traditional Christian values of chastity, faithfulness and non-homosexual practices. It is astonishing that a professed Christian Church could refuse in this way to condemn what is positively evil and uphold what is right.

The Assembly asked the Presbyterian Church of Ireland to reconsider

its opposition to the British-Irish Accord but the Moderator of the Irish Church's General Assembly said that the Accord had caused dismay among the Protestant community. The Presbyterian Church favoured devolved government within Northern Ireland. The Assembly also called on the Government to abandon nuclear weapons and rejected a plea that nuclear policy is necessary to preserve peace. The Assembly also asked the Government to abandon its opposition to sanctions against South Africa.

The Assembly accepted a motion to instruct the Church and Nation Committee to consider how the gap between the well-off and the poor could be bridged. Dr Reid maintained that the one and a half million people in Scotland living in poverty were alienated from the Church. An investigation into prison reform was also agreed to. An application by Rev. Alan Cameron, formerly known as Rev. Alan Hassan, for re-admission into the Church was turned down. The Assembly approved almost unanimously Dr Johnston's motion which viewed with disfavour the Government's failure to honour its undertaking on the abolition of domestic rates. A promise had been given to continue existing rate relief to Churches.

Free Church of Scotland

In the Free Church Assembly Rev. Fergus MacDonald was appointed Moderator. He succeeded Rev. Angus Smith, Ness. Mr MacDonald is General Secretary of the National Bible Society of Scotland. In his opening address he indicated that society was in the process of being secularised and condemned the materialistic assumptions so prevalent today. We must face the challenge of secularisation fairly and squarely, he maintained. He referred to the by-products of the permissive society including the AIDS epidemic. Church members, he said, ought to be ready to stand up for biblical values and be counted for Christ. Yet he also urged on the Assembly that ministers had a duty to relate the Word of God to the issues of the day reflected on television. "I believe," he said, "that we preachers ought to make much more reference in our Sermons to the television programmes which most of our congregations are viewing between 20 and 30 hours a week." It is surely a sad day when a Free Church Moderator would advise ministers to act in this way.

An Overture came before the Assembly calling on the Assembly to instruct Presbyteries to be vigilant in requiring due conformity by their members — ministers and elders — to their vows, and conformity in practice by all congregations within their bounds to the worship, govern-

ment and discipline of the Free Church. However, the Overture was rejected by 43 votes to 35. From the terms of the overture and also from letters in the Press since the Assembly it is clear that there are some within the Free Church who are very grieved and alarmed at certain trends within the Church, hence the need of the Overture to recall office-bearers to their obligations. One writer says: "The fact that the General Assembly dismissed these petitions does not auger well for the future. There are now two contradictory voices within the Church. One is the voice of the traditional conservatives . . . the other voice in the Free Church today is that of the progressives The question is, which is the real Free Church voice?" The writer mentions the Free Church in London where women's prayer meetings, modern versions of the Scriptures, Communion Services with no preparation or thanksgiving services have been introduced, also an attempt made to include paraphrases and playing the organ before and after certain services. Is this the Church that is to give a lead in the setting up of a Presbyterian Church in England?

The General Assembly re-affirmed its support for the restoration of the death penalty. The Committee on Public Questions stated in its report that the Bible made it clear that the death penalty was part of a divinely ordered covenant. Rev. Kenneth MacDonald, Rosskeen, opposed this but was the only Commissioner to do so. He told the Assembly that he could not accept that murder is the unforgiveable sin and must be punished straight away by death.

The Forgiveness of the Cross

by Rev. R. H. Ireland

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." — Luke 23: 34.

Calvary is reached. The soldiers begin the cruel work. They nail the blessed Jesus to a cross between two thieves — "on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." The *blood* drops from His pierced hands and feet, and the *word* drops from His lips, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

The soldiers hear it. The thieves on the cross hear it. The people that "stand beholding" hear it. The Father in heaven hears it — "Father, forgive them."

I think first of the love of Jesus, the perfect love of the holy Jesus, living on even unto death. Love reigns still, as ever, in that great heart — "Father, forgive them." I think next of the quick utterance of the plea

for pardon the moment that atoning blood is shed, as if to say, The way is open now, every barrier removed, the deep channel dug for the outflow of Heaven's pardoning love — "Father, forgive them."

I cannot but turn to the immediate crucifiers of Jesus, to the four soldiers whose hands did the work; and as perhaps they were but instruments in other hands, which had the greater sin, there may have been the loving thought and pleasing prayer for them, "*They* know not what they do." But the prayer extends beyond these, far beyond, not only to all the others who had any part, direct or indirect, in the crucifixion, but to all in every age, to sinners everywhere whose sins nailed the son of God to Calvary's cross, whose sins He "bare in His own body on the tree." Thank God, that down the stream of time the blessing of forgiveness comes, which was asked of the Father the first moment that the blood of atonement was shed; for the voice of Jesus asked articulately what the blood itself asked, and asks still while days of mercy last — "Father, forgive them."

I. — I point to *sin* — sin as needing forgiveness.

I take the deep tone of meaning to be — "they know not *what* they do." They have no idea of the tremendous sin they are committing, they have no idea of the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom; for "had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2: 8). I think that, viewing these soldiers who crucified our Lord as but the type of sinners everywhere, and the prayer of Jesus as offered for all for whom He died, the word tells of the magnitude of the sin, a sin the magnitude of which men only come to know when pardoning love reaches their hearts, a sin which many of the very people who crucified Jesus came to know when, under the preaching of the gospel, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," the light shone in, and the truth flashed on their souls — "We have crucified the Lord of glory:" and the cry came up from the depths of their stricken hearts, "What shall we do?" We now know what we have done, what shall we do, not to undo it, for that cannot be, but what shall we do to be saved?

Strange scene at Calvary! None know in all its import what is done, save the Man upon the cross Himself, and the Father in heaven to whom He prays!

Strange scene now! A world of gospel-despisers, and none knowing the depth of guilt but the Saviour, the God whom men reject; but looking from His cross on the miserable condition of men as sinners, and drawing as reason from it, urging it as a plea for mercy and pity and pardon, Jesus says — "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

II. — I point to *forgiveness* — God's forgiveness. If this word of the dying Saviour tells of *sin*, if it speaks of sin as God knows it, and as man knows it not, at least until he is either saved on earth or lost in hell, it only tells of it that it may tell of *forgiveness*, forgiveness for sinners now, forgiveness through the blood of Jesus, forgiveness prayed for by the dying High Priest, as His first word on His very cross.

What is forgiveness? It is the discharge from the guilt of sin, it is the cancelling of the obligation to punishment. But sin cannot be forgiven without satisfaction rendered to the justice of God, and so, there is blood shed for the remission of sins, and the blood of God's own Son, our Surety, is the meritorious cause of God's forgiveness. "God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4: 32). "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the richness of His grace" (Eph. 1: 6, 7). This is now the word of the gospel, that "through this man is preached unto us forgiveness of sins." (Acts 13: 38), for "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5: 31).

Forgiveness of sins! We know not its value until sin is felt, until we come, through grace, in some degree to realise what it is to have the guilt of sin lying on our head, and pressing on our conscience, what it is to feel bound over by the righteous law of God to everlasting punishment, what it is to feel the justice of the sentence, and the keenness of anticipated suffering, because it is sin against One so loving while so holy. It is then that the name of forgiveness is so blessed; it is then that the cry for pardon is so long and loud: it is then that the blessing is experienced by the weeping sinner at the feet of Jesus.

Fellow-sinner, are you forgiven? In your case is the bond cancelled, is the obligation discharged, are you free? O happy soul, if you are! And if you are, you have known something of the Holy Spirit's work, who first teaches a man to feel his sin, and then leads him to the Saviour; who first takes of the things of Jesus and His Cross, and shows a man his guilt, and then takes of these same things, yea, of the very blood of Jesus, and speaks to that sin-burdened soul pardon and peace.

So was it when this prayer of Jesus first was answered. I know not what sense of sin the Centurion may have had, when he "saw what was done, and glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man." I know not how these soldiers felt, if they felt their sin at all, of whom we read, "Now, when the Centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared

greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." I know not what was in the hearts of those who came together, hardened enough, to that sight, but "beholding the things which were done, smote upon their breasts and returned." But I know something of the feelings of that dying thief who rebuked his fellow with the word, "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds," and who cried to the Saviour at his side, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom." I know something of the feelings of these three thousand on the day of Pentecost, who listened to Peter's preaching of sin first, and forgiveness next. I know that these men were made to know what they had done. It was the first lesson Peter gave them, and the first lesson the Holy Spirit taught them: "Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2: 36, 37). Ah! now they know what they have done, and the question is, what are they to do next? And then it is that forgiveness is preached through the Man Christ Jesus, and in the way in which alone a sinner can know its value — "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins."

This is forgiveness, as man needs it and as God gives it. It is the same for us as for those to whom Peter preached, for he adds, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

III. I listen now to the *Great Intercessor's Prayer*.

"He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors," (Isa. 53: 12), and lo! here is His word for the transgressors, as He is nailed to the cross to hear their sins, "Father, forgive them." What love! what amazing love! what a heart must Jesus have, aye, and what a heart must the Father have, whom He knows so well as to ask from Him forgiveness at such an hour and for such sinners! Can *our* hearts conceive it! Can the tongue of man tell it? We can only listen and wonder, and pray that it may melt our hearts, and the hearts of thousands more, to hear that prayer.

Blessed connection between forgiveness and atonement! We see the blood, and we hear the cry, "Forgive," — it is blood shed for the remission of sins — aye, and in that blood there is complete satisfaction rendered to all the demands of the holy law, to all the claims of justice, so that it is not only mercy's voice we hear, but the voice of eternal

justice too, crying "Forgive, forgive." Oh! how blessed it is to see that divine grace and mercy rest on such a foundation as this, how blessed to know that when I, a poor sinner, seek forgiveness now, I seek it not, as in vain it would be sought, at the sacrifice of justice, but in the very exercise of justice. Mercy long held back the hand of justice, crying, "Spare, spare the sinner, until the victim shall die on Calvary's cross:" and when he died, then the voice of the blood, and the voice of the Saviour, the voice of justice, and the voice of mercy, all cried to heaven, "Forgive, forgive."

Have we not, too, the connection here between the two great parts of our High Priest's work, atonement and intercession? The atoning blood is shed, and the interceding voice is heard; the very moment that that blood is shed the voice is raised, as if Heaven's work were begun already, the first note of the prayer for sinners, as in the seventeenth of John, you have the first note of the prayer for saints.

If we view the first word from the cross in its *primary reference* to the immediate murderers of Jesus, what encouragement it affords to us, and all who feel themselves sinners, even the chief! It is as if our loving Saviour stooped to the lowest depths, as if on very purpose He singled out those who had even literally imbrued their hands in His blood, just to show us His heart, just to show us that His salvation is for the very chief of sinners. Akin to this is the word of our Lord, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24: 46, 47).

Two hundred years ago an old divine preached from the text "Beginning at Jerusalem," one of the most touching and powerful sermons, I believe, ever penned. The Saviour is introduced as giving the apostles direction how to proceed in carrying out their great commission. Among other things He is represented as saying, "Go unto all nations, and offer this salvation as you go: but, lest the poor house of Israel should think themselves abandoned to despair, the seed of Abraham, mine ancient friend, as cruel and unkind as they have been, go make *them* the first offer of grace: let them that struck the rock drink first of its refreshing stream, and they that drew My blood be welcome to its healing virtue. Tell them that, as I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so if they will be gathered, I will be their shepherd still. Though they despised My tears which I shed over them, and imprecated My blood to be upon them, tell them 'twas for their sakes I have shed both. Tell them you have seen the prints of the nails upon My hands and feet, and the wound of the

spear in My side, and that those marks of their cruelty are so far from giving Me vindictive thoughts, that if they will but repent, every wound they have given Me speaks in their behalf, pleads with the Father for the remission of their sins, and enables me to bestow it. Nay, if you meet that poor wretch that thrust the spear into My side, tell him there is another way, a better way, of coming at My heart; if he will repent, and look upon Him whom he has pierced, and mourn, I will cherish him in that very bosom he has wounded; he shall find the blood he shed an ample atonement for the sin of shedding it; and tell him from Me, he will put me to more pain by refusing this offer of My blood than when first he drew it forth."

O blessed Jesus, is this Thy heart of love? Lift up Thy prayer anew over the writer and readers of these pages, "Father, forgive them."

Oh, my fellow-sinners, lift up a prayer for yourselves, for, as Augustine has it, "Mercy prayed that misery might pray; the Physician prayed that the sick might pray; the Judge, willing to be merciful, prayed that the guilty might plead to be spared."

"Our Father, which art in heaven, . . . forgive us our trespasses."

— From the *Christian Treasury*.

Mbuma Mission Society Meeting

Rev. Donald A. Ross

The 30th of April is a public holiday in Holland; the occasion is the Queen's Birthday: this day is also chosen by the Mbuma Mission society for their yearly Mission Meeting. The Society kept its 24th Mission Day in Utrecht, where seven thousand people gathered for six hours to hear several short sermons from a number of ministers and to contribute over £54,000 to the cause of Mission work by the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Zimbabwe. It was the hope of the Mbuma Mission Committee that Rev. Alfred Mpofu and Elder Enoch Zitha would be present at the meeting to represent the Free Presbyterian church from Zimbabwe. The Lord had another purpose, and showed that while man proposes, He disposes. The Rev Alfred Mpofu was called home to glory on Tuesday, 17th March; happy day for him but a day of sadness and loss for us. When the labourers are few and when yet another of the Lord's servants is removed from time to eternity, may the Lord in His mercy raise up others to be faithful to Him and to the congregations over which He is pleased to place them.

The various addresses given at the meeting dealt with a variety of sub-

jects and were listened to with rapt attention. We heard about the great faith of the centurion and his sense of unworthiness (Luke chapter 7). Then about true conversion (Heidelberg Catechism Questions 88 to 90); the King of kings triumphant (Psalm 89: 25 - 27); the treasure in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4); and finally about all nations coming to worship before God (Psalm 86: 9). The young people were told a story about two Hebrew Christians who were persecuted for their faith.

Rev. F. Mallan, the vice-President of the Mbumba Mission Society, was in charge of the business of the day and ably executed his many tasks. It was rather touching to see Rev. Smit, (well known to some of our older ministers), with snow white hair and bowed down with old age, assisted to the platform by two men to give a few minutes of earnest appeal to the people about the need for true conversion. A few days later it was a great pleasure to sit in his company and to talk about spiritual matters. He wished me to convey his good wishes to Rev. R. R. Sinclair and Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow, with whom he worked closely when they were respectively Convener and Clerk of the Foreign Mission Committee.

One of the greatest causes for thankfulness and wonder we have as a church is the consistent and generous support which our christian friends in Holland have given for many years for the work of the Gospel in Africa. It is surely of the Lord's goodness for us as a Church, that He sees fit to entrust us with such large sums of money to further His work in Zimbabwe. May we by His grace prove to be good stewards in the affairs of His Kingdom. During my few days stay in Holland I was shown great kindness by Mrs Barth, s'Gravendeel and many other friends. I wish to acknowledge the Lord's kind providence in once more permitting me to attend the Mbumba Mission Meeting and to meet so many gracious friends.

Mbumba Zending Meeting Address

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you on this occasion. It is not the first time that it has been my privilege to be among you, and it is a great pleasure to be with you yet again. Over the years you have shown unfailing support for mission work in Africa. Our people in Scotland, Africa and throughout our Church ever appreciate your practical and kind interest in supporting the spread of the Word of God. It is now about eight years since I left the Mission and I recall how dependent we

were on funds received from Holland. This is still the case. Without your help our work in Africa would be greatly curtailed.

No doubt you are familiar with the early days in our Mission in Africa when the Lord directed the Rev. J. B. Radasi to labour in Matabeleland the southern part of what was then known as Rhodesia, but since Independence in 1980 has been renamed Zimbabwe. We believe that from our beginnings in Africa that it was by the Lord's leading that we came to work there. It is the Lord who sets the bounds of our habitation, distributing the Word where so ever He will and prospering it to the saving of never dying souls. It is obvious from the Word of God that the church is directed by God as to her particular sphere of labour. It seems that the Apostle Paul along with his brethren had a mind to preach the Word in Asia; they were however, forbidden by the Holy Ghost to do that. They then attempted to go to Bithynia but the Holy Spirit again showed that His mind was that they should not go there. Following these experiences Paul had a vision in the night in which he received a call from heaven to preach in Macedonia. "There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Acts 16:9. Obedient to this heavenly calling, Paul with his brethren departed to Philippi the chief city of Macedonia. On the sabbath day they went to the river side; a place where prayer meetings were regularly kept. In that small gathering Paul spoke the Word which was evidently accompanied by the secret power of the Holy Ghost, and which had a convincing and saving effect on a woman named Lydia, "... whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul," Acts 16: 14. From this experience of Paul, (which serves as an example to the church) it is obvious that the Church is directed by the Most High as to its sphere of labour. While no doubt there is the general call of God to the church to go out to the whole world to preach the gospel, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark 16: 15; yet, at the same time the church must be directed to a particular place of labour. As well as the example in Paul's case, the Scriptures abound with such incidents.

The reason for the church being so directed is:

(1) The government of nations and the church is upon the shoulder of Almighty God, and we may expect therefore that God will direct His church to a particular sphere of labour.

(2) God is sovereign, distributing the Word according to His good pleasure. It pleases Him in His providence to send His Word to certain nations and communities and in other cases to withhold it. Accordingly, He

will open and close doors to the church in her seeking to comply with the command to go forth with the gospel.

(3) He has purposed to save a definite number of sinners, the elect, from among the nations of the earth, and will in His own time employ the church to bring His word to them, that they may hear the outward call of the gospel, and by the effectual call of the Holy Spirit obey the outward call.

(4) Christ who died a sacrificial death for such, intercedes for them before the Father, and we may expect therefore that the church be led in His providence to bring the gospel to them just as the apostles were led in their day.

I believe that the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is used in some measure in Zimbabwe to this end, and has its part to play in the glorious purposes of the Most High to save a number which no man can number.

By supplying the material means of money, God is pleased to facilitate the distribution of the Word and the sending forth of preachers. This is the part, that you, our friends in Holland, have in God's providence been engaged in for many years, and so by God's leading, contribute to His great and ever merciful purpose to gather in His elect from the four corners of the earth. I am aware that among yourselves there are those who labour in word and doctrine; and are so used by God to fulfil His purpose of saving from among yourselves a seed that will do Him service. It is wonderful however, that your thoughts go beyond your own bounderies so as to contribute of your money for the spread of the gospel in Zimbabwe. We, as a branch of the visible church, are greatly honoured when you see fit to entrust such vast amounts of money to us for this purpose. We feel we owe a deep measure of gratitude to you, our friends; but especially to the Most High for honouring us by calling us to spread His word in Zimbabwe, and for making such an abundant provision through you for that purpose.

Finally, may I remind you of the rich blessing promised by the Most High to all such as give of their substance for the furtherance of His cause. In Malachi 3: 10, we read: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." In our so giving to His glorious cause the blessing will be undoubtedly ours. One such blessing will be our seeing the gospel of God's grace having free course and being glorified to the saving of sinners. May the Most High also add the blessing of sending labourers into

His harvest, and especially at this time of our sad loss in Bulawayo by the death of Rev. A. Mpofu; our loss indeed, but his gain. May the blessing of the Lord be on you for time and eternity. I thank your committee for giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

“He Lingered” (Gen. 19: 16)

by J. C. Ryle

Who is this man that lingered? — Lot, the nephew of faithful Abraham. And when did he linger? — The very morning Sodom was to be destroyed. And where did he linger? — Within the walls of Sodom itself. And before whom did he linger? — Under the eyes of the two angels, who were sent to bring him out of the city.

Readers, the words are solemn, and full of food for thought. I trust they will make you think. Who knows but they are the very words your soul requires? The voice of the Lord Jesus commands you to “remember Lot’s wife.” (Luke 17:32). The voice of one of His ministers invites you this day to remember Lot.

Let me try to show you —

- (1) *What Lot was himself:*
- (2) *What the text already quoted tells you of him:*
- (3) *What reasons may account for his lingering:*
- (4) *What kind of fruit his lingering brought forth.*
- (1) *What was Lot?*

This is a most important point. If I leave it unnoticed, I shall perhaps miss that class of professing Christians I want especially to benefit. You would perhaps say, after reading this paper, “Ah, Lot was a poor, dark creature — an unconverted man — a child of this world! — no wonder he lingered.”

But mark now what I say. Lot was nothing of the kind. Lot was a true believer — a real child of God — a justified soul — a righteous man.

Has any one of you grace in his heart? — So also had Lot.

Has any one of you a hope of salvation? — So also had Lot.

Is any one of you a “new creature”? — So also was Lot.

Is any one of you a traveller in the narrow way which leads unto life? — So also was Lot.

Do not think this is only my private opinion — a mere arbitrary fancy of my own — a notion unsupported by Scripture. Do not suppose I want

you to believe it, merely because I say it. The Holy Ghost has placed the matter beyond controversy, by calling him "just" and "righteous" (2 Peter 2: 7, 8), and has given us evidence of the grace that was in him.

One evidence is, that he lived in a wicked place, "seeing and hearing" evil all around him (2 Peter 2: 8), and yet was not wicked himself. Now to be a Daniel of Babylon — an Obadiah in Ahab's house — an Abijah in Jeroboam's family — a saint in Nero's court, and a righteous man in Sodom, a man must have the grace of God.

Another evidence is, that he "vexed his soul with the unlawful deeds" he beheld around him. (2 Peter 2: 8). He was wounded, grieved, pained and hurt at the sight of sin. This was feeling like holy David, who says, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved, because they kept not Thy word." "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law." (Psalm 119: 136, 158). Nothing will account for this but the grace of God.

Another evidence is, that he "vexed his soul from day to day" with the unlawful deeds he saw (2 Peter 2: 8). He did not at length become cool and lukewarm about sin, as many do. Familiarity and habit did not take off the fine edge of his feelings, as too often is the case. Many a man is shocked and startled at the first sight of wickedness, and yet becomes at last so accustomed to see it, that he views it with comparative unconcern. This is especially the case with those who live in towns and cities. But it was not so with Lot. And this is a great mark of the reality of his grace.

Such a one was Lot — a just and righteous man, a man sealed and stamped as an heir of heaven by the Holy Ghost Himself.

Reader, before you pass on, remember that a true Christian may have many a blemish, many a defect, many an infirmity, and yet be a true Christian nevertheless. You do not despise gold because it is mixed with much dross. You must not undervalue grace because it is accompanied by much corruption. Read on, and you will find that Lot paid dearly for his "lingering". But do not forget, as you read, that Lot was a child of God.

(2) Let us pass on to the second thing I spoke of. *What does the text, already quoted, tell us about Lot's behaviour?*

The words are wonderful and astounding: "He lingered;" and the more you consider the time and circumstances, the more wonderful you will think them.

Lot knew the awful condition of the city in which he stood; "the cry" of its abomination "had waxen great before the Lord" (Gen. 19: 13): and yet "he lingered."

Lot knew the fearful judgment coming down on all within its walls; the angels had said plainly, "The Lord hath sent us to destroy it" (Gen. 19: 13); and yet "he lingered."

Lot knew that God was a God who always kept His word, and if He said a thing would surely do it. He could hardly be Abraham's nephew, and live long with him, and not be aware of this. Yet "he lingered".

Lot believed there was danger — for he went up to his sons-in-law, and warned them to flee: "Up!" he said, "Get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city." (Gen. 19: 14). And yet "he lingered."

Lot saw the angels of God standing by, waiting for him and his family to go forth. And yet "he lingered."

Lot heard the voice of those ministers of wrath ringing in his ears to hasten him. "Arise! lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city." (Gen. 19: 15). And yet "he lingered."

He was slow when he should have been quick — backward when he should have been forward — trifling when he should have been hastening — loitering when he should have been hurrying — cold when he should have been hot. It is passing strange! It seems almost incredible! It appears too wonderful to be true! But the Spirit writes it down for our learning. And so it was.

And yet, reader, there are many of the Lord Jesus Christ's people very like Lot.

Mark well what I say. I repeat it that there may be no mistake about my meaning. I have shown you that Lot "lingered" — I say that there are many Christian men and Christian women in this day very like Lot.

There are many real children of God who appear to know far more than they live up to, and see far more than they practise, and yet continue in this state for many years. Wonderful that they go as far as they do, and yet go no further!

They hold the Head, even Christ, and love the truth. They like the sound preaching, and assent to every article of Gospel doctrine, when they hear it. But still there is an indescribable something which is not satisfactory about them. They are constantly doing things which disappoint the expectations of their ministers, and of more advanced Christian friends. Marvellous that they should think as they do, and yet stand still!

They believe in heaven, and yet seem faintly to long for it; — and in hell, and yet seem little to fear it. They love the Lord Jesus; but the work they do for Him is small. They hate the devil; but they often appear to tempt him to come to them. They know the time is short; but they live as if it were long. They know they have a battle to fight; yet a man might think

they were at peace. They know they have a race to run; yet they often look like people sitting still. They know the Judge is at the door, and there is wrath to come; and yet they appear half asleep. Astonishing they should be what they are, and yet be nothing more!

And what shall we say of these people? They often puzzle godly friends and relations. They often cause great anxiety. They often give rise to great doubts and searchings of heart. But they may be classed under one sweeping description: they are all brethren and sisters of Lot. *They linger.*

These are they who get the notion into their minds, that it is impossible for all believers to be very holy and very spiritual. They allow that eminent holiness is a beautiful thing. They like to read about it in books, and even to see it occasionally in others. But they do not think that all are meant to aim at so high a standard. At any rate, they seem to make up their minds it is beyond their reach.

These are they who get into their heads false ideas of *charity*, as they call it. They would fain please everybody, and suit everybody, and be agreeable to everybody. But they forget they ought first to be sure that they please God.

These are they who dread sacrifices, and shrink from self-denial. They never appear able to apply our Lord's command, to "cut off the right hand and pluck out the right eye." (Matt. 29, 30). They spend their lives in trying to make the gate more wide, and the cross more light. But they never succeed.

These are they who are always trying to keep in with the world. They are ingenious in discovering reasons for not separating decidedly, and in framing plausible excuses for attending questionable amusements, and keeping up questionable friendships. One day you are told of their attending a Bible reading: the next day perhaps you hear of their going to a ball. They are constantly labouring to persuade themselves that to mix *a little* with worldly people on their own ground does good. Yet in their case it is very clear they do no good, and only get harm.

These are they who cannot find it in their heart to quarrel with their besetting sin, whether it be sloth, indolence, ill-temper, pride, selfishness, impatience, or what it may. They allow it to remain a tolerably quiet and undisturbed tenant of their hearts. They say it is their health, or their constitutions, or their temperaments, or their trials, or their way. Their father, or mother, or grandmother, was so before themselves, and they are sure they cannot help it. And when you meet after the absence of a year or so, you hear the same thing.

But all, all, all may be summed up in one single sentence. They are the brethren and sisters of Lot. *They linger.*

Ah, reader, if you are a lingering soul, you are not happy! You know you are not. It would be strange indeed if you were so. Lingering is the sure destruction of a happy Christianity. A lingerer's conscience forbids him to enjoy inward peace.

Perhaps at one time you did run well. But you have left your first love — you have never felt the same comfort since, and you never will till you return to your first works. Like Peter, when the Lord Jesus was taken prisoner, you are following the Lord afar off; and, like him, you will find the way not pleasant, but hard.

Come and look at Lot. Come and mark Lot's history. Come and consider Lot's lingering, and be wise.

The Death-Bed of Rutherford

Tread lightly through the darkened room, for a sick man lieth there;
And 'mid the darkness only stirs the whisper'd breath of prayer,
As anxious souls take watch by turns beside the lonely bed
Where sleep the awful stillness wears that soon must wrap the dead.
A smile hath brighten'd on his lips, a light around his brow;
O! surely "words unspeakable" that dreamer listeth now;
And glories of the upper world his raptured senses steep,
Blent with the whispers of his love who gives his lov'd ones sleep —
But hark! a sound, a tramp of horse, a loud, harsh, wrangling din!
O! rudely on that dream of heaven this world hath broken in.
In vain affection's warmest plea; the intruders onward press;
And, with a struggling spasm of pain, he wakes to consciousness.
Strange lights are gleaming thro' the room; strange forms are round
his bed;
Slowly his dazzled sense takes in each form and sound of dread:
"False to thy country's honour'd laws, and to thy sovereign Lord,
I summon thee to meet thy doom, thou traitor, Rutherford!"
Feebly the sick man rais'd his head, his hand so thin and pale,
And something in his hollow eye made that rude speaker quail:
"Man, thou hast sped thy errand well, yet it is wasted breath,
Except the great ones of the earth can break my tryst with death:
A few brief days, or briefer hours, and I am going home
Unto mine own prepared place, where but few great ones come;
Unto the judgment seat of Him who sealed me with His seal,

'Gainst evil tongues and evil men to make my last appeal.
A traitor was his name on earth — a felon's doom his fate;
Thrice welcome were my Master's cup, but it hath come too late;
The summons of that mightiest King, to whom all kings must bow,
Is on me for an earlier day — is on me even now.
I hear, I hear the chariot wheels that bring my Saviour nigh!
For me he bears a golden crown — a harp of melody;
For me he opens wide his arms, he shows his wounded side;
Lord, 'tis my passport into life! I live, for thou hast died."
They gave his writings to the flames; they brand his grave with shame;
A hissing in the mouth of fools becomes his honour'd name;
And darkness wraps awhile the land for which he pray'd and strove;
But blessed in the Lord his death, and blest his rest above.

Hislop

The Book of Psalms

The Only Manual of Praise in the Worship of God for All Times

By Rev. D. Macfarlane.

The following article is the outcome of a correspondence in the local press on the subject of uninspired hymns in public worship. In almost all the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland the inspired Psalms are either superseded or largely supplemented by uninspired hymns in the worship of God, which indicates a sad departure from Reformation principles, doctrine, and mode of worship. Now, while I admit that scriptural hymns composed by men taught of God, though not inspired, are useful in their own proper place, that is, for private edification, I hold that the Book of Psalms is the only divinely-authorised manual of praise in God's worship for all times, and I shall endeavour to prove my statement, both from Scripture and Church history.

I. From Scripture — It is God, the only object of worship, whose prerogative it is to appoint the matter and manner of His own worship. This He has done in His Word, which is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him. His will, revealed in the Scriptures, is the law whereby we are to be regulated in all our duties to Him. To sing praise to His name is part of the worship He requires of us, and in order that we might celebrate His praise in an acceptable manner, He has supplied us with a book of songs indited by His Spirit. That book is the Book of Psalms. As "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," so is the Book

of Psalms. The Lord appointed David, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," and others whom He had inspired by the Holy Spirit, to compose this Book, to be the only authorised manual of praise in His worship to the end of time. That the Book of Psalms was designed for both dispensations — the old and the new — as the only divinely-appointed manual of praise, may legitimately be inferred from these facts:-

(1) That none of the apostles, or any other inspired men, were employed by Christ to compose another book of songs for the New Testament Church. Now, if Christ, the Head of the Church, had proposed to provide such a book, surely He would have authorised inspired men to perform such an important work, and would not have left it to be done by men who could not justly lay any claim to inspiration. Inspiration ceased with the apostles. I observe that a correspondent on the question under discussion confounds *inspiration* with *illumination*. That writer does not seem to me to have studied theology, or if he has, his knowledge of the subject is inaccurate. All Christians taught of God are subjects of spiritual illumination, but no Christian since the time of the apostles, however high his attainment in grace, has been inspired. "Spiritual illumination is an essential element in the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, common to all true Christians; inspiration is a special influence of the Holy Spirit, peculiar to the prophets and apostles, and attending them only in the exercise of their functions as accredited teachers." — *Hodge on Systematic Theology*. It is of the utmost importance to keep in view the distinction between inspiration and illumination. Unless this is done the question will be left in the utmost confusion.

(2) That the Book of Psalms contains sufficient matter for praise to the end of time, which makes it unnecessary that any addition should be made thereto, even although it would be lawful to do so, which it is not. Add to this that praise is expressed in the Psalms in such a manner as is incapable of improvement by any attempt of uninspired men — the words being indited by the Holy Spirit. Then as to the matter and manner of expression, this book is a perfect manual of praise for the New Testament Church to the end of time, when all the redeemed shall sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb in heaven for ever. What theme do we wish to take up to celebrate the praises of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that is not to be found in the Book of Psalms? Do we praise Him as the Creator, Preserver, and Righteous Law-giver and Governor of the world, and not find abundant matter and suitable words put in our mouths by the Holy Spirit in that book of sacred song? What aspect of the divine attributes, as "infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His

being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth," do we desire to celebrate in song that is not to be found in that book in most suitable terms, ready for our use in that dutiful exercise? Do we praise Him for the gracious scheme of redemption — originating in His own eternal purpose — for the salvation of "a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," and not find sufficient matter for our song in the Book of Psalms? Do we praise Him for providing a Substitute and Surety for us in the Person of His only-begotten Son, and sending Him to the world in our nature, to "suffer, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," and need we seek for matter of song outside the Book of Psalms? But not only that the Father, who gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, is extolled in songs of sweet melody in the Book of Psalms; but the praises of the Son, who came and humbled Himself unto the death which is the wages of sin, are not less set forth in that book in songs of adoration and thanksgiving.

I am aware that the advocates of uninspired hymns say that, although the Book of Psalms was a suitable manual of praise for the Church before Christ came to the world, it is not now — after He has come and finished the work of redemption — sufficient to celebrate His praise without the addition of songs of mere human composition and authority! To show that there is no scriptural or reasonable foundation for such an idea, I may refer the reader (1) to the 22nd Psalm, where "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow," are set forth by the Holy Spirit in sacred poetry, with such strict exactness and solemn and affecting grandeur as need not the words of vain man to improve upon it. Though David was the penman of that Psalm, Christ is the speaker, and we know that He uttered the first words of the Psalm — "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" — when finishing the work of redemption on the Cross (Matt. 27: 46); and although He did not repeat in words the following verses, which describe His awful sufferings, He gave expression to them in a more solemn manner — an expression in which there was a loud voice, which was heard by His father, whose pleasure it was to bruise Him, and which should be heard by us, telling us of the fearful punishment we deserve on account of our sins, and of the unspeakable love of the Saviour, who endured that punishment for all that the Father gave Him in the everlasting covenant of grace before the foundation of the world. Was that Psalm suitable for the Old Testament Church? And is it not suitable for us? If believers under the old economy sang it in anticipation of Christ's sufferings, much more

ought we, under the new, to sing it, seeing that His predicted sufferings are now an accomplished fact! (2) Notice the 68th Psalm and the 18th verse. Here the victory of Christ over sin and all enemies, and His triumphant ascension to heaven, are celebrated in such grand music as delights the heart of the Father, and that of the once "Man of Sorrows," the heart of holy angels, and the heart of every true Christian on earth. Let us listen to the song: "Thou has ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive: thou has received gifts for men; for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." Where, I ask, is the need of songs of human composition to celebrate the exaltation of the ever-blessed Saviour, which is so well done in this Psalm? They are as chaff to the wheat. (3) Observe the 50th Psalm, 1 - 6 verses. In these verses the second advent of Christ, to judge the quick and the dead at the last day, is celebrated in song in such majestic style, and at the same time in such intelligible expression, as leaves no room for an uninspired hymn on this most solemn subject.

Passing over several other things which might be referred to in support of my contention regarding the sufficiency of the Book of Psalms as a manual of praise, I shall close the argument from Scripture with a brief survey of the apostolic age. The hymn-singers think they have a divine warrant for their innovation in the example of Christ and His disciples having sung a hymn at the close of the Passover services, and in Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians and Colossians to sing "hymns and spiritual songs." But it can be shown that there is no foundation for their allegation in these instances. The testimony of the Jews, who were familiar with the service of the Passover, goes to show that it was their custom during that solemnity to sing the six Psalms of David — the 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th. Christ observed the Passover in the customary way, and He and His disciples sang one of these Psalms — probably the 118th — at the close of the services. And as to Paul's exhortation to sing "hymns and spiritual songs", it is observed that he did not command those addressed to *compose* these songs. They were already composed, and used in the worship of God. They were in the Book of Psalms. The reader may, by consulting that book, see that some of the Psalms are designated *songs*. "Psalm or Song" is the title of several of them, *e.g.* 30, 45, 46, 48, 66, 67, 68, etc.

2. From Church history — comprising four periods, the *Primitive*, *Medieval*, the *Reformed*, and *from the Reformation to the present day*.

(1) In the Primitive period the Book of Psalms was the authorised manual of praise in the Church. Other hymns were considered an innova-

tion, and looked upon by the godly with suspicion. Clement of Alexandria, who lived in the second century, was perhaps the earliest hymn-writer. He composed one hymn, but there is no evidence that it was ever used in public worship. In the same century, Bardesanes, who was of a Gnostic sect that denied the divinity of Christ, wrote 150 hymns, which he, for self-glorification, called *psalms*. By these heretical songs, the Syrian Church was in danger of being overflowed with a heresy that aimed at the overthrow of the very foundation of the Christian religion — the denial of the Godhead of Christ! But there is ample evidence that the Psalms of Scripture were exclusively used in public worship by the orthodox in the early Church, down to the fifth century. Augustine, who lived in the fourth century, says, "The Donatists, too, reproached the orthodox because they sang with sobriety the divine songs of the prophets, while they (the Donatists) inflamed their minds with the poetic effusions of human genius." It is stated in the *Apostolic Constitutions* "that women, and children, and the humblest mechanics, could repeat all the Psalms of David; they chanted them at home and abroad; they made them the exercises of their piety and the refreshment of their mind. Thus they had answers ready to oppose temptation, and were always prepared to pray to God, and to praise Him, in any circumstance, *in a form of His own inditing*." This was also in the fourth century. Cassian, who lived in the fifth century, says, "The Elders have not changed the ancient custom of singing *Psalms*. The devotions are performed in the same order as formerly." Evidence to the same effect might be multiplied, but enough has been adduced to show that in the Primitive Church the Book of Psalms was the only recognised manual of praise in the worship of God. During this period, the orthodox followed apostolic usage. Had the apostles left other songs for the Church than the Psalms, surely there would be some mention made of them after their death. The fact that hymnologists had to begin to compose songs for the church proves that they left none behind them but the Scripture Psalms they themselves used during their lifetime.

(2) The Mediaeval or "Dark" Ages. In this gloomy period, when "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people," we look in vain for sound doctrine or purity of worship in what was called "the Church". The light of the Bible was hid under the thick darkness. It was, however, a time of hymn-making, as is the case in every age of spiritual declension. Many hymns were composed by monks. But the hymns were characteristic of their authors, and of the darkness that prevailed. In these idolatrous songs the praise was divided between God and angels

and saints. Let us listen to *The Voice of the Christian Life*, describing the state of matters:- "Of Mone's Collection of the Latin Hymns of the Middle Ages, in three volumes, one is filled with hymns to God and angels; one with hymns to the blessed Virgin Mary; and one with hymns to the saints." But in the midst of the general apostasy there was a remnant according to the election of grace in Southern France, and among the Alps, who, in the midst of persecution, adhered faithfully to the faith once delivered to the saints, and these used the Psalms of the Bible in their service of God's praise. Dr. Macmaster, speaking of this period, says, "In the middle ages, the ages, too, of moral gloom and terrible superstition, the purest section of the Church of God was found in the valley of Piedmont. Among the Waldenses were found the simplicity of apostolic order, and the purity of evangelical worship. They sang, 'mid Alpine cliffs, the Psalms of Scripture. And long before the Reformation dawned on Europe, they sang them in metre."

(3) The Reformed Period. The Reformation in Germany was not so pure as in some other countries of Europe, and the Church there used hymns along with psalms in public worship, "although it repudiated, *en masse*, Mediaeval hymns." It retained, however, some serious errors of the corrupt system of the dark ages. The false doctrine of consubstantiation, held by Luther, was one of these. But it was different in the Churches in France, Holland, and Britain. These adhered to the Psalms of Scripture in worship. Let us again incline our ear to hear the *Voice of the Christian Life* speaking on the subject in this period — "The Reformed Churches of France and French Switzerland seem to have had no literature corresponding to the hymns of Protestant Germany. Did the peculiar form which the Reformation took in France, then, tend to quench the spirit of sacred poetry, or what other causes brought about this result? When we remember that the same absence of an evangelical national hymn literature, springing up spontaneously as a national growth of the Reformation, which characterises the Reformed Churches of France and French Switzerland, exists also in the sister Church of Scotland, it is impossible not to connect this fact with the similar form which the Reformation took in all these lands. *None of the strictly Calvinistic communities have a hymn-book dating back to the Reformation.* It cannot surely be their doctrine which caused this; many of the best known and most deeply treasured of the more modern hymns of Germany and England have been written by those who receive the doctrines known as Calvinistic. Nor can it proceed from any peculiarity of race, or deficiency in popular love of music and song. French and Scotch

national character are too dissimilar to explain the resemblance; whilst France has many national melodies and songs, and Scotland is peculiarly rich in both. Is not the cause then simply the common ideal of external ecclesiastical forms which pervaded all the Churches reformed on the Genevan type? . . . Next to the first chapter in the Acts of the Apostles, was to stand, as the second chapter, the history of the Reformed Churches. Words were to resume their original Bible meaning, *nothing was to be received that could not be traced back to the divine hand*. Ecclesiastical order was to be such as St Paul had established, or had found established; clearly to be traced, it was believed, in the Acts and Apostolical Epistles. Thus, the Book of Psalms became the hymn-book of the Reformed Churches, adapted to grave and solemn music, in metrical translation whose one aim and glory was to render into measure which could be sung, the very words of the old Hebrew Psalms."

(4) From the Reformation down to the present day. The leaders of the first Reformation — that from Popery — did noble work, for which they are worthy of being held in honourable remembrance, though some of them retained some of the dregs of the middle ages. But it was after the second Reformation — that from Prelacy — the Confession of Faith, the Act of Uniformity, and the Directory for Public Worship, were compiled. In these subordinate standards, founded on Scripture and agreeable thereto, the doctrine and worship of the Church are fixed. In the Directory for Public Worship, the Psalms of Scripture are alone ordained to be used in worship, to the consequent exclusion of all uninspired hymns. As already mentioned, the Calvinistic Churches strictly complied with this rule in their practice. They did so down to the 18th century. "As early as 1542, Calvin introduced the Psalms in Marot's translation into the worship of the Genevan Church. The Psalter remained the exclusive hymn-book of the Reformed Church down to the 18th century." — *Delitzsch*. The Wesleys were the first to give a hymn-book to England, in the 18th century. Up to that time the Book of Psalms was the only manual of praise in the Church there, with the exception of a few hymns that were introduced, and used by some.

As for Scotland, the Reformed Church there had no uninspired hymns till the 18th century, when at a time of spiritual declension the Scripture Paraphrases now appended to the Bible were introduced. But they were not used in public worship by those who had regard for sound doctrine and purity of worship, and who sought to feed their flock with "the sincere milk of the Word." They came into partial use in 1807 — a century ago. In 1843 — the year of the Disruption — the Book of Psalms

was the manual of praise in the Church of Scotland, though some made an occasional use of the Paraphrases referred to. It was Dr. Candlish who led the introduction of uninspired hymns in the Free Church. He was opposed by Dr Begg, Dr Kennedy and other faithful men, but he insisted on his project, and said he only wanted a few hymns. He would be satisfied with 25. Dr Kennedy, who was a member of Assembly that year, said that if the Assembly would agree to Dr Candlish's motion for hymns, ten years hence there would be an overture on the table of the Assembly for the introduction of the *organ* into God's worship. He was scouted for such a preposterous idea. The Free Church, would never, they said, condescend to do such an unseemly thing. The motion for hymns was carried by a large majority at that Assembly, and, exactly as Dr Kennedy predicted, ten years thereafter there were two overtures sent up to the Assembly craving the venerable Court to permit the introduction of the *organ* into the service of praise in public worship! And what was the result? The Assembly swallowed its ten year old scouting of Dr. Kennedy's forecast, and so greedy was it for innovations in worship that, with a wide-open mouth, it swallowed the "kist of whistles," too. And yet its craze for such unwholesome food was not satisfied. The motion for the introduction of the *organ* was carried by an overwhelming majority, with the late Principal Rainy at their head, who, since the Free Church began to decline, always managed to carry with him a large majority on the wrong side. Since that time, a hymnary containing several hundred songs has been prepared by the innovators, to be used in public worship, and musical instruments have been multiplied, to be employed as substitutes to offer praise to God on behalf of spiritually dead congregations, who are *self-worshippers* rather than worshippers of God, who will not give His glory to any other, nor His praise to graven images.

In conclusion, I wish to point out (1) that while the one Scripture Psalmody is a *bond of union* among Christians, uninspired hymns are a cause of *division* in the Church. We need not go far back in history to prove this. The Free Church of 1843 is a case in point. There was unity among the ministers and members of the Church until uninspired hymns were introduced into it. The introduction of hymns into the Free Church was the putting in of the thin edge of the wedge which in process of time split that Church into three different sections. *Hymns* were introduced first, the *Organ* followed as a matter of course, and then a *change of Creed*. The men who forced these changes on the Church without any scriptural warrant are responsible for the deplorable divisions that now exist in the Highlands and in other parts of Scotland, and for all the bit-

terness displayed in connection with these divisions. This is so evident that it will be readily admitted by all except such as are under judicial blindness, or are indifferent about religion. (2) That uninspired hymns are a channel of doctrinal errors. They were so in the primitive, mediaeval, and subsequent periods of the Christian era, and they are so in our own day. A critical examination of the hymns used in Protestant Churches in Scotland would probably show that some of them contain dangerous errors. The Gnostics of ancient times disseminated their heretical doctrines by means of sacred poetry. The Romanisers in the Protestant Church of England have now begun to employ the same method, in addition to their former intrigues, in order to proselytise. (3) That in every time of genuine reformation in the Church there is a return to the Word of God as the rule of faith and practice; and so the church in all its branches shall, during the glorious days of the millennium, be one corporate body, holding the same scriptural doctrines and the same mode of worship. All uninspired hymns shall be set aside, and the Book of Psalms shall form the one manual of praise for the universal Church of Christ throughout the world. Let us then, in our own day, adhere faithfully to sound doctrine and purity of worship, and testify against those who depart from the same, as we shall have to render an account of our stewardship at the great day of judgment.

Zimbabwe Mission News

After another year of drought in Zimbabwe the lack of water is a problem, even at Ingwenya, where for many years there was a plentiful supply of water. Of course, the large increase in the number of pupil-boarders, of whom there are now around 400, makes the water situation more acute. Needless to say, there is very little grass on the Reserve around the Mission. On the Mission itself, where a small herd of cattle used to graze, supplying the boarding-school with some of the milk required, there remain only one Fresian cow, its calf and a bull.

Mrs Kay Hicklin says in a letter, that the main project, when she wrote, was a recycling water system. The men were taking the waste water and washing water from the school dormitories, and putting it through filters, and then into tanks to be used for flushing the toilets, and watering the gardens. Mr Neil Hicklin also tried putting an electric current through the water, and found it very successful in causing the soap to rise to the surface, and leaving clear water below.

Another practical problem the men have is securing spare parts for the many Mission vehicles. Only a limited supply come into the country and are dispersed among the many large garages. Naturally the garages which receive them are reluctant to part with them. Messrs William Campbell, Neil Hicklin and David Ndlovu drove to Johannesburg, a distance of 600 miles, where they secured a plentiful supply of spare parts, at a price.

Mr and Mrs Neil Murray had a very pleasant holiday in South Africa. They travelled by bus being the cheapest way to travel, and stopped off in Jo'burg and Peitermaritz with Lewis friends, on route for Durban, where they very much enjoyed the sea breezes, after the heat and drought of Zimbabwe.

At Mbuma there was a sad outbreak of rabies. A straying dog had gone into one of the school classrooms, and several of the little girls tried to drive it out with sticks. The dog bit a few of them. One little girl was so badly bitten that she was sent to Mpilo Hospital, Bulawayo, a distance of a hundred miles. Sad to say the little girl died the following week, of rabies. Eight children who had been bitten by the same dog came to the hospital the following Friday. They were given an anti-rabies course of treatment, immediately. Apparently the disease develops in four to eight weeks, but may lie dormant for a couple of years.

Miss Jantein van Saane returned to work at Mbuma in May. She says that the young Dutch lady doctor will probably be ready to go out to Zimbabwe in September. According to new Government regulations she may be required to work at Mpilo General Hospital, Bulawayo, for the first year, and after that at Nkai Government Clinic, 40 miles from Mbuma, for a period.

Thembisio, the orphanage, begun and run very successfully by Mr and Mrs van Woerden, with Dutch and African helpers for a number of years, and later supervised by a Dutch Committee, has now been put under the religious surveillance of the Rev. A. Ndebele. Bulawayo has now been declared a Vacant Charge. We trust the large congregation of young people will be provided with a faithful pastor. The Rev. A. Mpofu is greatly missed.

Miss Jessie Coote hopes to arrive shortly in the U.K. on furlough. We wish her a safe journey. (Miss Coote arrived home at the end of July).

J. N.

Notes and Comments

The Church of England and Freemasonry

The report on Freemasonry referred to in the last issue of the Magazine, in which some masonic rituals were criticised as blasphemous or heretical, has been accepted by the General Synod of the Church of England by 394 votes to 52. The Archbishop of York who spoke in the debate described Freemasonry as a fairly harmless eccentricity and said he was more disturbed by prying Christians who want to make everything conform to their own standards of truth. From this comment by the Archbishop it would appear that the higher men rise in the ecclesiastical hierarchy the less they are concerned to maintain the doctrines and practices of the Word of God. It is good that the Synod have endorsed the report, though this is unlikely to mean that any action will be taken against practising Freemasons in the Church of England to require them to relinquish their connection with the Masons.

Prison Overcrowding

The Government is faced today with too few prisons to contain the number of law breakers given custodial sentences. The Home Secretary has recently announced new measures to meet the situation. Remission of some sentences is to be increased from a third to a half as an emergency measure. This is surely a novel way in dealing with the situation. It means that the sentences of judges and magistrates are being severely interfered with which hardly makes for proper justice. It is regrettable that Governments have been slow to recognise the close connection between true religion and morality. If there is to be an improvement in matters it is not by shortening sentences which judges have considered appropriate but by giving encouragement and support to true religion while discouraging and applying sanctions to whatever tends to break down law and order in the nation.

Roman Catholic Teacher and her Bishop

A Perth teacher whose appointment was confirmed by the education authority, has had her appointment annulled by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dunkeld on the ground that she sent her two sons to a non-denominational school. In so far as the Roman Catholic Church is permitted, it is not slow to show its opposition to freedom of choice for its people in the matter of education. In this case the teacher was dissatisfied with the Roman Catholic school and withdrew her children from it. How

sad it is to think that in a Protestant land such power is given to Roman Catholic bishops to override the decisions of legally constituted Education Authorities. Similar powers would never be granted to Protestant leaders in Roman Catholic lands, or in this country if Roman Catholicism again came to power.

Church Notes

Church Opening: Sydney, Australia

The Sydney Church, situated in the western suburbs at Riverstone was opened on the 6th June, 1987. It was appropriate that the Rev. Van Dorp was able to preside at the service as he was helpful in arranging loans from some of our congregations in New Zealand at the time of purchase.

A very suitable portion was taken from Isaiah 11: 10. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." The prophecy speaks of a Messiah who was pre-eminently qualified to carry out his work of redemption.

The first heading of the sermon dealt with Christ being identified as the root. The root or family of David was then at a low ebb, outwardly weak and insignificant. Jesse lived in obscurity. Reference was made to Christ's humiliation and to his lowly birth. Though he was the Son of God who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation and finally endured the cursed death of the cross.

The second heading was about the work Christ had to do, i.e. to stand for an ensign of the people. The text points out a time — in that day. This was the time of his coming, or the fulness of time. The ensign was raised and made visible. It was as a signal of war. In triumph He finally bruised Satan's head. The ensign now became a declaration of peace so that glad tidings of reconciliation are proclaimed. The same ensign is also a rallying point for God's people, for unto Shiloh shall the gathering of the people be. The church is now a place for the gathering of people to hear the voice of Christ who is present in a special way. Here he communicates spiritual blessings. Again the ensign proclaims liberty. Here is the great blessing of the Saviour freeing his people from sin.

Finally in the third place we note the success, "His rest shall be glorious." Christ delights to dwell in Sion. He rests not in buildings, but where the truth is and where he is proclaimed and adhered to. His rest also abides in the hearts of God's people.

There were 49 people present including a few visitors. After some had spoken to express their thanks to the Lord for His goodness and after other well wishers had contributed to the proceedings, all were invited to Mr and Mrs J Van Praag's hospitable home for tea, where a very fine buffet meal concluded a most happy occasion. Next day on the sabbath morning, three deacons were also inducted.

The congregation has a very suitable modern and architecturally designed building, originally used by Baptists. The plan is exceptionally practical and has a room for a library and another for mothers who need to take their children out of the service.

Though the small congregation has a considerable debt, it is hoped that a block of land they own will be eventually sold which will go a long way to help repayments. The congregation appreciates the prayerful concern of the church abroad, which is often expressed by way of generous donations.

We trust the Lord will make this church to be a Bethel and that Christ's cause amongst us will be advanced in the vast city of Sydney.

(Rev.) E. A. Rayner.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 1st September at 12 noon.

Canadian: At Toronto on 10th September at 10 a.m.

Skye: At Portree on 15th September at 11 a.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 24th November at 2 p.m.

Stirling Communion

The October Communion in Stirling will be held on the 4th Sabbath (October 25th) D.V. The usual preparatory services will be held on Thursday and Friday at 7.30 p.m. and Saturday at 3 p.m. The Sabbath services are at 11.15 a.m. and 6 p.m. The service on Monday is at 7.30 p.m. All services will be held in the Cambusbarron Community Centre.

(Rev.) D. J. MacDonald.

Binding or Re-binding of Church Magazines

Anyone wishing to have Magazines bound should send them to Mr Neil MacLean, c/o F. P. Church Bookroom, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6LE. Special note should be taken that only **COMPLETE** volumes should be sent. In the past many incomplete volumes have been received. The cost per volume of the Free Presbyterian or Young People's Magazine will be £4.50.

Committee Meetings (D.V.)

The following Committees will meet at Inverness Church:

Tuesday, 6th October

10.00 a.m. — 11.00 a.m.	Training of Ministry
11.00 a.m. — 12 noon	Church Magazines
12 noon — 1.00 p.m.	Publications
2.00 p.m. — 3.00 p.m.	Welfare of Youth
2.00 p.m. — 4.30 p.m.	Finance
3.00 p.m. — 4.00 p.m.	Sabbath Observance
4.30 p.m. — 5.30 p.m.	Dominions and Overseas Religions and Morals
7.00 p.m. — 9.00 p.m.	Jewish and Foreign Missions
7.00 p.m. — 8.00 p.m.	Church Centenary Commemoration Committee

Staff Vacancies at Ballifeary Home of Rest

Applications are invited for the posts of Matron, Senior Care Assistant and Care Assistant at the Ballifeary Home of Rest, Inverness. These posts fell vacant in August. Immediate enquiries would be welcome and should be directed to: The Clerk of the Home of Rest Committee, Rev. Dr. James R. Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, Raasay, Kyle, IV40 8PB.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, Room 7, Seafield House, Seafield Road, Inverness, IV1 1SJ, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

Sustentation Fund: J. D., Urgha, £10; Anon., £50; Anon. A., £120.

Home Mission Fund: J. D., Urgha, £10; Anon., £40; Anon. A., £50.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: Anon. A., £50; C. F., Lochcarron, £20 for Blind Mission School Children.

African Relief Appeal: Anon., £100; A. Forgie, £10; Dingwall Congregation, £310; Mrs Sutherland & daughter, Wick, £100; Anon., per Greenock Treasurer, £40; Anon., £50; D. MacKinnon, Struan, £20; Anon., Canada, \$100; R. & E. Kershaw, Haworth, £20.

Organisation Fund: Anon., £10; Anon. A., £50.

General Building Fund: Anon., £10; Anon. A., £50.

Dominions and Overseas Fund: Anon. A., £50; Collection at service in Calgary on 10/6/87, \$134.

Publications Fund: Anon. A., £30.

Special Donation: Anon., Wick, £100 "in appreciation of your stand as a Church in keeping strictly to the Authorised version of the Bible".

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia: The Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donation:

Friend in Scotland, £100 for Church Building Fund.

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

Applecross: Friends, Lochcarron, £5 per Rev. P. L. Roberts; Friends, Dumbarton £70, both for Congregational Funds; Friends, Inverness £50 for Manse Repairs and £50 for Congregational Funds, last three per R. MacLean.

Daviot, Stratherrick and Tomatin: Anon., £100 for Daviot Manse; Anon., £100 for Tomatin Church.

Dunoon: Anon., Glasgow, £100 for Congregational Funds.

Edinburgh: Anon., Edinburgh Friend £500 for Sust. Fund.

Fort William: Mrs S., £10; Three sisters, in memory of a beloved mother, £10; Mr and Mrs W., Lincs., £10; Friend, Caol £10, last two for Sust. Fund, last three per Rev. J. A. MacDonald.

Glendale: Anon., £20 for Comm. Expenses per Rev. D. Nicolson.

Inverness: A Friend, £10 for Ingwenya Mission Blind Children per Rev. A. F. M.

Laide: Anon., £10; Anon., £100; Friend, £30, all three for Church Building Fund; Friend, £500 for Congregational Fund.

North Harris: Envelope in plate £5; M. M., Tarbet £10; Envelope in plate £10; North Harris Friend £10, all for Comm. Expenses; Friend, Stockinish £10 for Sust. Fund, last two per Rev. J. MacLeod; Anon., Tarbet Church Plate £20 where most needed and £10 for Comm. Expenses; Friend, Stockinish £10; Miss S. M., Harris House £20, both where most needed; Miss K. MacK., Tarbet £10 for door coll.; R. F., Cluer, £10; J. A. M. D., Stockinish £5; M.K. M.K., Collam, £5; M.J.M., Urgha, £10; C. M. L., Cluer, £5; last five for Sabbath School outing expenses.

Oban: A Glasgow Friend, £20; A. MacD., Blane field, £20, both for Congr. Fund.

Portree: Anon., £3, for Braes Bus; Anon., £6 for tapes, both envelope in plate; D. M., Lewis, £40 for Sust. Fund and £10 for Home Mission Fund, per S. Y. M.; M. M., £100 for Minister's Car Fund; Anon., £20, where most needed, both envelope in plate.

Staffin: Anon., £50 for Congregational Purposes — Isaiah 2: 22.

Stirling: Friend, North Tolsta £10 for Church Funds, per Mrs J. M.

Stornoway: Miss M., Uig £40 for Congregational Funds, per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Strath, Skye: Dutch Friends £20 for Congregational Fund, per Rev. H. I. MacKinnon.

Uig, Lewis: Anon., £10 (7 times) for Communion Expenses; A Friend, £10; D. W., £20; J. M., £5, both for Comm. Expenses; J. M., £2 for Door Coll.; Anon., £10; Mrs M. M., £10, both for Manse Expenses; Mrs MacLeod, Toronto, £10 for Church Funds; Anon., £10 for Church and Manse Fund; Wellwisher, £20 for Church Property (all by envelope in plate).