

THE Free Presbyterian Magazine

AND

MONTHLY RECORD

(Issued by a Committee of the Free Presbyterian Synod.)

*"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may
be displayed because of the truth."—Ps. lx. 4.*

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THE

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VOL. XXXIII.

July 1928.

No. 3.

Report of Synod Meeting.*

THE Synod met this year in Glasgow, on Tuesday, 22nd May. There were large attendances of the general public. The retiring Moderator, Rev. R. Mackenzie, M.A., preached from Phil. i. 27—"That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

The following members of Synod were present:—SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY—Revs. Neil Cameron, Neil Macintyre, D. A. Macfarlane, ministers, with Messrs James Mackay, Edinburgh, and John Macdonald, Glasgow, ruling elders. NORTHERN PRESBYTERY—Revs. D. Beaton (Clerk), E. Macqueen, W. Grant, Finlay Macleod, D. J. Matheson, ministers, with Messrs Inspector Sinclair, Sinclair Polson, Halkirk; Malcolm Fraser, Dornoch; Alexander Mackenzie, Dingwall; James Campbell, Inverness, ruling elders. WESTERN PRESBYTERY—Revs. D. N. Macleod, D. M. Macdonald, James Macleod, Malcolm Gillies, John MacLachlan, R. Mackenzie, (Moderator), D. R. Macdonald, Donald Macleod, ministers, with Messrs John Macdonald, Gairloch; John Macleod, Harris, ruling elders.

The minutes of previous meeting were read and approved.

The Moderator, having intimated that his term of office had now come to an end, said it remained with the Synod to appoint his successor. He thanked the Synod for their forbearance during his year of office. The Clerk intimated that he had carried out last Synod's instructions re appointment of Moderator. The Rev. Neil

*The Report of the Synod proceedings given in the Magazine is not the official minutes of the Synod, as these have not yet been approved by the Court.—Editor.

Cameron then rose and said:—"In view of certain difficult questions that were likely to engage the attention of the Synod, I think it advisable that one of the older ministers should be appointed this year. And in accordance with this, I beg to move that the Rev. Ewen Macqueen, Inverness, be appointed Moderator for the ensuing year." This was seconded by the Rev. John MacLachlan, and unanimously agreed to. Mr Macqueen then took the chair, and thanked the Synod for the honour conferred on him.

After examiners of the Presbyteries' Records had been appointed, it was decided that all the members of Synod would meet as a Committee on Bills and Overtures next day, at 11 a.m., in the Hall of St Jude's Free Presbyterian Church. The Synod decided to adjourn until next day and appointed next sederunt to be held (D.V.) in the Hall of St Jude's Free Presbyterian Church at 5 p.m.

Second Sederunt.

The Synod met on Wednesday, 23rd May, at five p.m. in terms of adjournment. The members present were the same as at previous sederunt. After devotional exercises, conducted by the Moderator, the Synod was constituted. The minutes of previous meeting were read and approved. Letters of apology for absence were intimated by the Clerk from Revs. Duncan Mackenzie, M. Morrison, and Mr Kenneth Munro, Ullapool.

The Clerk then intimated the order of business as agreed upon by the Committee on Bills and Overtures. The Synod then proceeded to deal with the items in order.

1. Proposed History of the Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. N. Cameron, Convener of the Committee, appointed to prepare a history of the Free Presbyterian Church, said he regretted that he could not report much progress. He had read a good deal in connection with the matter, and he made a beginning with writing down the first part of the work. He expressed the hope that the members of the Committee would do what they could to render help in the undertaking. The Rev. D. N. Macleod moved, and Rev. W. Grant seconded, the adoption of the report, and that the Synod reappoint the Committee. This was unanimously agreed to.

2. Financial Statement.

In the unavoidable absence of the General Treasurer, Mr John Grant, through illness, the Financial State-

ment was read by the Rev. W. Grant. All the funds, with one or two exceptions, showed encouraging increases. Mr Grant pointed out that the Foreign Mission Fund showed a balance of over £30 to the good between the income and expenditure for the past year, and it would thus be seen that if this were so, with its present commitments, that a very considerable increase would be required to meet the new demands on the Fund for the following year, when two additional missionaries would draw on the funds. The balance at the end of the financial year to the credit of the Sustentation Fund was £6811 5s 11d, as compared with £7276 17s 2d for last year. This was only, however, an apparent decrease due to the new method of payment within the financial year. If reckoned on the same basis as last year the balance would have showed a considerable increase on last year's. The congregational contributions showed a very encouraging increase. Legacies, however, were only £170 3s as compared with £1583 17s 3d last year—a decrease of £1413 14s 3d.

The Rev. N. Cameron, in moving the adoption of the report, said that they were sorry Mr Grant, the General Treasurer, was presently laid aside. The report prepared by him was encouraging and ought to fill us with a measure of thankfulness. It proved the truth of the words:—"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." He remembered their late respected friend, Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall, remark on one occasion that since the Free Presbyterian Church was formed he found that a shilling went as far as a pound when he was in the Free Church. The Free Presbyterians began without a penny of funds, and we have to bear witness to-day that after 35 years we have lacked nothing. It ought to be a cause of thankfulness to us how remarkably the Lord opened the hearts of our people to provide money for the support of the means of grace in our midst. It is nothing short of amazing the amount of money also which has been collected for church building, manses, and mission houses since 1893. Mr Cameron said he had great pleasure in moving the adoption of the report, and in thanking the General Treasurer and the Auditors for their services (which were given free). He also moved that the Auditors be reappointed. Inspector Sinclair seconded, and the motion was unanimously adopted.

The Rev D. Beaton moved that all annual payments, should, in future, be made quarterly within the

financial year where the funds would allow it, and where this was impracticable that the General Treasurer report to the Synod. This was seconded by Rev. R. Mackenzie and unanimously agreed to.

3. Jewish and Foreign Missions Report.

This report, which is given on another page, was given in by the Rev. N. Cameron, convener. Prior to giving in his own report, Mr Cameron read Rev. John Tallach's, which appears on another page. The adoption of the report was moved by Rev. W. Grant, seconded by Mr Alexander Mackenzie, and unanimously agreed to. In connection with the matter of the Questions and Formula for native elders in Rhodesia, the Rev. N. Cameron moved, and Rev. R. Mackenzie seconded, that the matter be left to the Foreign Mission Committee, who would report progress to next meeting of Synod. This was unanimously agreed to.

It was also agreed to, on the motion of Rev. R. Mackenzie, seconded by Mr Sinclair Polson, that the Synod approve of the grant of £45 made by the Foreign Mission Committee to Dr R. Macdonald for fees in connection with his classes in Tropical Medicine, and that a further grant of £40 from the College Fund be given to him as a student preparing for the mission field in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church. This was unanimously agreed to. It was also decided that the Church meet the outlay for Dr Macdonald's medical equipment and his travelling expenses to Rhodesia, and that an appeal be made for the same through the Magazine. The Rev. F. Macleod, seconded by Mr James Mackay, moved that £150 per annum be given to Dr Macdonald as the Church's share of his salary, payment to begin from date of his ordination.

The Rev. Neil Cameron said he had suggested, as books of study in theology to Dr Macdonald, Hodge's Outlines of Theology, Cunningham's Historical Theology, Calvin's Institutes, and the Gospel according to John in Greek. He understood Mr Beaton had a report to submit on the way in which Dr Macdonald had acquitted himself in the examination set him in theology. Mr Beaton reported that he was agreeably surprised at the way in which Dr Macdonald answered the questions, in view of the fact that he had not had a long theological training, and that his time had been so much absorbed with medical duties and study in the classes connected

with Tropical Medicine since he went to London. He had pleasure in moving that Dr Macdonald's examination in theology be accepted by the Synod, and that the Southern Presbytery be authorised to license and ordain Dr Macdonald at a convenient date before going out to Rhodesia.

Mr Cameron intimated that Mr Angus Fraser had expressed a wish to accompany the Rev. Donald Urquhart to Palestine should the Synod decide on that country as the field of Mr Urquhart's future work. Mr Fraser was willing to pay his own expenses. The Rev. D. Beaton moved that the Foreign Missions Committee arrange for the Rev. Donald Urquhart being sent to Palestine as a missionary to the Jews, and that Mr Fraser's offer to accompany him be accepted by the Synod. This was seconded by the Rev. James Macleod and unanimously agreed to.

Mr Cameron had indicated in his report that the Committee had approached two or three of our ministers with a view to going to Australia, but that he had been unsuccessful. He was glad to report, however, that the Rev. R. Mackenzie had at the last meeting of the Committee on Bills and Overture consented to go should the Synod ask him. It was accordingly moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to that Mr Mackenzie be asked to go to Australia for one year. The Rev. M. Gillies moved, and Mr John Macleod seconded, that Mr Mackenzie's travelling expenses, beyond the amount on hand, be paid out of the Foreign Mission Fund as a loan.

4. Report on Religion and Morals.

This report, which appeared in the June Magazine, was given in by the Rev. D. M. Macdonald. The Rev. James Macleod said, in moving the adoption of the report, that he had listened to it with interest. In one sense it made sad reading, and he was reminded of what Julian the Apostate said when facing death after spending his strength for the overthrow of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ:—"Thou hast conquered, O Galilean." And he believed that powerful though the forces of evil were that they would be all conquered by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The motion was seconded by the Rev. D. R. Macdonad, and unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. D. M. Macdonald moved that the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church, in view of the danger to true religion and Scottish civilisation, urge upon the

Government to prevent the unrestricted immigration of Irish into Scotland, and that the Clerk be instructed to send a copy of this motion to the Secretary for Scotland. The motion was seconded by Mr John Macdonald, Gairloch, and unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. D. M. Macdonald also moved that the Synod call upon the Government to amend Section 18 of the Education (Scotland) Act favouring Roman Catholics, and that the Clerk be instructed to send a copy of this motion to the Secretary for Scotland. This was seconded by the Rev. N. Macintyre and agreed to.

5. Canadian Mission Report.

This report, which is held over meantime, was read by the Rev. N. Macintyre, convener. The Rev. James Macleod, in moving the adoption of the report, said we ought to remember our Canadian people at the throne of grace, and pray that the Lord of the Harvest would send out in His own time a pastor, or pastors, who would break the bread of life to them. He had much pleasure in moving the adoption of the report. The Rev. D. A. Macfarlane seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

Mr Macintyre asked in regard to the request from Vancouver whether in the event of the Vancouver congregation not being able to meet the expenses of a deputy, would the Church come to their rescue? It was moved by the Rev. D. J. Matheson, seconded by the Rev. James Macleod, that in the event of the Vancouver congregation failing to meet the expenses, after doing all they could, that the Church would come to their rescue.

6. Communications from Canada.

The Clerk read communications from Rev. William Matheson, Chesley, the Ontario elders (Messrs Hugh Scott, Alexander Macfarlane, and Murdoch Matheson), and the Winnipeg Kirk-Session. The Rev. Neil Macintyre read a letter from Rev. James Tallach, which had been received by the Southern Presbytery, and had been remitted by them to the Synod.

After these had been read, the Clerk said that, in view of certain statements made in these communications, he felt it his duty to review them at some length, as they bore more or less on the procedure adopted by the Synod in passing certain declarations and motions having reference to church privileges. In doing this he said: "I shall have occasion to quote from the minutes of the Committee on Bills and Overtures, the Synod records,

and also from the letters of Rev. W. Matheson read to the members of Committee on Bills and Overtures in 1927. It might be necessary also, for the benefit of the younger members of the Synod, to begin with a brief history of the Synod's declarations and motions on the subject that is now before the Synod. Other controvertible statements contained in the documents read will probably be dealt with by others.

The finding which called forth the communications is as follows:—"The Synod express strong disapproval of the conduct of the Rev. William Matheson, Chesley, Ontario, inasmuch as he admitted to the Lord's Table and Baptism at Winnipeg parties debarred by findings of this Synod anent Sabbath observance, and also, of the lax and modern views revealed in correspondence with him about this matter; and, while the Synod refrain from taking further steps as to his conduct in the matter referred to, they warn him and all concerned that the findings of the Synod must be honoured." Owing to what Mr Matheson terms "the registered complaint of our esteemed and respected missionary at Vancouver, Mr D. Matheson,* against our procedure at Winnipeg with respect to what may be called the question of the use for church-going of Sabbath street cars," Mr Macintyre asked for an explanation. Mr Matheson, in his reply, dated 28th August 1926, says:—"I am constrained to draw your attention to the facts that, on being asked by the elders of the Winnipeg session at our first meeting there regarding the dispensing of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, I acquainted them with the fact that I stood upon the ground taken in the resolution of the Synod of May 1921, as published in the report of the Synod in the Free Presbyterian Magazine and Monthly Record, Vol. XXVI., No. 3, July 1921, page 85, which reads—" . . . that it be an understood matter that such as receive the privileges of the Church from the Free Presbyterian Church should not make use of trains or street cars run for secular purposes on the Lord's Day, and that we acted accordingly." This reply was submitted to the Canadian Mission Committee, and the Convener, in communicating with Mr Matheson after the matter had been discussed by them, wrote:—"The Committee did not understand what you actually meant when you say, 'I acquainted the Session of

* The Rev. N. Macintyre explained to the Synod that his informant was Mr Donald J. Matheson.—Editor.

Winnipeg that I stood upon the ground taken in the resolution of the Synod of May 1921.' The Committee were not clear as to whether you acted even according to the above resolution. I must, however, point out that the resolution of 1921 is not the fixed law of the Church but the authoritative law on the subject is set down in the Church Documents (page 85), of which you no doubt have a copy." In his next letter, dated 3rd November 1926, Mr Matheson makes the following statements:—"I am firmly convinced from Scripture that it is not wrong to take any public conveyance to church on Sabbath, however run by others in defiance of God's law, any more than it was wrong for a believer to eat meat and to drink wine at an idolater's table, however the 'meat and drink' was prepared and partaken of by the idolater in defiance of God's law. Does not the resolution of the 'Church Documents,' by necessary implication, really recognise the rightfulness of what it penalises, viz., the church-going use of a conveyance on the Sabbath Day? In other words, is not the ground of condemnation of the use of a public conveyance based upon the action and motive of the Sabbath-breaking conductor of such conveyance? This is fundamentally unjust according to the doctrine of Scripture in the case of the eating of meat and the drinking of wine idolatrously offered to strange gods. Again, as for Pharisaism, was not an undue rigidity with respect to the Sabbath one of the characteristics for which they came most under the severe reproofs of our Lord? Do you ask me to debar a soul from the Lord's Table for using a street car in order to come to church when the fact is that in that very church the comfort of lighting by gas or electricity is being enjoyed, and I go home from enjoying the ordinance myself to enjoy, perchance, a meal cooked on a gas or electric range? What difference in principle, may I ask, is there between paying for accommodation and shelter for the public worship of God by means of a special collection on the Sabbath Day, and paying for transportation to that place of accommodation and shelter for the public worship of God on the Sabbath Day? In the former case we are the enjoyers of the fruit of Sabbath labour, perhaps more unreasonably than the one whom we debar, and in the latter we have actually been enjoying what we would now condemn that soul for doing.

"Now I do not say that I cannot have acted in a way which gave opportunity for criticism, if my action can be

construed properly as disrespectful to the authority of the Synod. But I do not see that as I deliberately owned the resolution of Synod to which I have referred, having studied its terms very carefully when it reached me, and having decided that, owing to its terms, I was not under necessity to send any word of dissent on the question, on the very ground of the Scripture treatment of the 'meat and wine' question, and because I did not wish to appear to weaken, in any way, the testimony of our Church to the sanctity of the Sabbath. On the question of granting the privileges of the Church of Christ to persons who make use of public conveyances on the Sabbath Day for church-going purposes I cannot acknowledge error. I am sorry to have to challenge your assumption with respect to 'a law in agreement to the Word of God, and passed by the highest Court of the Church.' I hold that the 'law' in question has not only no true basis in, but is in definite conflict with, the Word of God. And I am content that, before I can be censured in any way for my action, the law of the Church requires that I be shown to have acted in 'contrariety to the Word of God,' as well as to 'the laws of the Church.' I am sorry that you seem to fear what may develop out of this for me. But I must face it in faith."

When the correspondence which passed between Mr Macintyre and Mr Matheson was read at the Committee on Bills and Overtures in 1927 Mr Cameron gave notice that he intended to move at the next sederunt of Synod a motion in terms of that already quoted. This motion was duly moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to by the Synod.

As there are certain declarations and findings referred to in these communications, it may be as well at this stage to state as clearly as possible what these are to avoid confusion. But before doing so it may be as well at the outset to indicate the real issue between the Synod position, as I understand it, and the position taken up by the writers of these communications sent us. The real issue may be brought out thus:—Has the Synod, in refusing church privileges to those who make use of trains and street cars run on the Sabbath Day in coming to church, erred, or has it acted within its rights and in accordance with Scripture? Those who oppose the Synod's position say that it has erred, and Mr Matheson has no hesitation in passing this sentence upon it:—"I hold that the 'law' in question has not only no true basis in, but is in definite conflict with, the Word of God."

And he further says:—"I am firmly convinced from Scripture that it is not wrong to take any public conveyance to church on Sabbath however run by others in defiance of God's Day." That statement, as it stands, appears to me would sanction the use of our members at Beaulieu taking the Sabbath excursion trains to attend services at Dingwall, or from Balloch, to attend services at St Jude's. To say the least of it, surely the statement, "any public conveyance . . . however run by others in defiance of God's Day," requires a sweeping qualification. We ask our people, and especially those who hold such views as are expressed in these communications, to seriously consider where such statements will lead them. It was statements such as these that the Synod described as "lax and modern views," and surely no one will blame them for so doing. The way is now cleared for a short history of the various resolutions of findings and declarations of the Synod bearing on the subject. At a meeting of the Synod held in May 1920 a remit came up from the Northern Presbytery, in which it was stated that one of the ministers of the Presbytery felt bound to refuse baptism to an adherent because he was regularly employed on the railway on the Lord's Day. The Synod agreed that the minister was fully justified in the refusal. It was also agreed to delete a former minute of this Presbytery which did not sufficiently safeguard discipline on this point. Following this there is the following entry in the Synod minutes:—"The Rev. Neil Cameron moved the adoption of the following resolution, which was agreed to:—"The Synod declare, in accordance with previous resolutions on Sabbath observance, that the Sacrament of Baptism is not to be given to any who engage in unnecessary work on the Sabbath Day, or who travel on the sacred day by trains or cars which are run in systematic disregard of the claims of the Fourth Commandment, but the Synod leave special cases of baptism, where the husband, but not the wife, refuses to adhere to above standard of Sabbath observance, or has ceased to acknowledge the Christian religion, to the serious consideration of kirk-sessions to decide as to the matter of giving the ordinance to the wife if she be found faithful to the Fourth Commandment and otherwise exemplary.'" This resolution does not appear in the Magazine report of the Synod, but is recorded as above in the Synod Minutes (III., 90). This resolution, though probably suggested by the case referred to above, was meant

to have general application throughout the Church, and was never intended to be limited to such cases as that which came up from the Northern Presbytery. At the following Synod (1921) a declaration on the subject of Church privileges was made by the Synod substantially the same though differently worded. It is as follows:—"The Synod declares, in accordance with former resolutions, that Church privileges, such as baptism, are not to be given to any who engage in Sabbath work (other than works of necessity or mercy), or who travel by trains or cars run in systematic disregard of the sacred day. The serious and careful consideration of kirk-sessions to be given to special cases, such as that of a husband who has ceased to acknowledge the Christian religion, or who refuses to adhere to the above standard of Sabbath observance, but whose wife (desiring baptism) fulfils the demands of this declaration." It was this declaration which was read to the Winnipeg Kirk-Session in 1922 by the Church's deputy for that year as recorded in the minutes of the Kirk-Session dated 7th October 1922:—"The Session decided, after the Moderator's statement as to the resolution passed by the Synod in regard to church privileges denying these to such as work on the Sabbath or make use of street cars or trains on the Lord's Day, that intimation to this effect should be made on first Lord's Day. The Session decided that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should not be held on this occasion." The Kirk-Session of Winnipeg were thus fully aware of such a declaration as were also the communicants. It was the duty of the elders to inform Mr Matheson of its terms which had been brought to their notice, and publicly read before the Winnipeg congregation when Mr Matheson acquainted them that he stood upon the ground taken in the resolution of the Synod of May 1921, as published in the report of Synod in the Free Presbyterian Magazine and Monthly Record, vol. XXVI., No. 3, July 1921, page 85. The elders failed alike in their duty to the Church, of which they were office-bearers, and to Mr Matheson when they did not point out to him the declaration which was specially brought before them in the Session and read before the congregation of Winnipeg in 1922. But why did Mr Matheson take his stand on the resolution given at page 85 of the Magazine (vol. XXVI.), and make it necessary for the Rev. N. Macintyre to point out to him that the authoritative rule of the Church on

the subject under discussion was the declaration in the Church Documents? Mr Matheson's answer is that he was not aware of it until his attention had been called to it in 1926. It certainly seems strange that he did not take notice of it when the Magazine appeared in 1921, as it is given quite a prominent position only a few pages before the motion on which he took his stand at Winnipeg. But what is stranger still is the fact that this declaration was read in the draft minute submitted to the Synod for its approval in 1922. Mr Matheson was present at the meeting at which the minute containing this declaration was read, but as Clerk of Synod I am not aware of receiving from him or anyone else any communication indicating that he or they were out of sympathy with the rule of the Church as set forth in this declaration.

We come now to the resolution on which Mr Matheson took his stand at Winnipeg. It reads as follows:—"That it be an understood matter that such as receive Church privileges from the Free Presbyterian Church should not make use of trains or street cars run for secular purposes on the Lord's Day." Mr Matheson interprets the words "should not" as "hortatory" and not "prohibitory." Why he should do so is not quite clear, for there can be no doubt that the words are often used in injunctions in a strongly prohibitory sense, e.g., "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? (Gen. iii. 2.)" The words of the Synod's resolution are as prohibitory as those of Nehemiah when he gave the order that the gates should be closed against the Sabbath traffickers, and that they "should not be opened until after the Sabbath (Nehem. xiii. 19.)" Mr Matheson evidently thinks that the prohibitory "must not" should have been used instead of "should not." The Synod's meaning, however, is as clear as Nehemiah's, and that was clear enough.

It is in connection with this resolution, as interpreted by him, that Mr Matheson makes the statement:—"I know of no finding of the Synod anent Sabbath observance contravened by the Session under me at Winnipeg in 1926, and I am conscious of having honoured the authority of the Synod in its findings deliberately to the utmost of my power during my deputyship in 1926. I stood on the ground of the Synod's 'motion against members travelling on street cars on Sabbath of 1921.'" But the elders who composed the Session with Mr Matheson candidly admit their wrong-

doing in their communication to the Synod in the following words:—"Considering the fact that the Session had actually dishonoured the finding of the Synod with regard to the matters referred to in the reprimand, it was therefore agreed that the Session accept the reprimand." We leave Mr Matheson to settle with the Winnipeg elders as to whether it is a fact or not that the Session over which he presided had "actually dishonoured the finding of the Synod." The elders say it did, and most people will feel that the elders are right, and that they did right in making a confession of wrong-doing.

We come now to the declaration of 1923 as given in the Church Documents. In this the declaration of 1921 and the motion of the same year above referred to are combined. The subject was discussed at some length at the business meeting, and on unanimity being reached it was decided that it be included in the Church Documents and submitted with them for the Synod's approval. This was accordingly done, and the declaration, with the other findings of Synod in the Church Documents, was passed as an authoritative rule of the Synod.

It is this declaration that is now recognised as the rule of the Church on the subject, and it is worthy of attention to notice the terms of appointment of the Committee on Church Documents, the care with which they carried out their work, and the unanimity with which all the documents were passed by the Synod in 1923. In 1918 "the subject of publishing a booklet containing obligatory Church Documents and resolutions was discussed at the Synod, and it was resolved to appoint a Committee, consisting of Revs. Neil Cameron, Alexander Macrae, and James S. Sinclair, to deal with this and report (Synod Minutes III., 44.*)" At next meeting of Synod this Committee was reappointed, Mr Beaton being added in place of Mr Macrae, with instructions "that they prepare a publication which will embody those documents of an obligatory kind (Synod Minutes III., 83.*)" It was reported at next meeting of Synod that the Committee had done nothing, and it was reappointed. A similar report was given in in 1921. At the Synod meeting of 1922 Mr Cameron, as Convener, gave in the following report of the Committee:—"The Committee looked over all the resolutions passed by the Synod, and copied out those which they considered binding on the Church, but owing to unavoidable pressure of other urgent work they have not been able to have the

matter so far advanced as they would like before presenting it to the Synod . . . In the opinion of the Committee it is suggested that a Committee should be appointed to give a final revision to the two branches of the work referred to above. And they would further suggest that typed copies of the resolutions referred to above, and also a list of suggested omissions and changes in Sir Henry Moncrieff's Practice be sent to each member of Synod, so that they may be in a position to deal finally with the matter at next meeting of Synod." The Committee was reappointed, and payment for the typing of the documents was authorised to be made out of the Organisation Fund (Synod Minutes III., 130-131). In 1923, at the meeting of the Synod's Committee on Bills and Overtures, the minutes state "the greater part of the time of this sederunt was taken up with the Church Documents and the Gaelic translation of the Questions and Formula put to and signed by elders at their ordination (Synod's Business Committee's Minutes, p. 8.)" It was at this meeting the Declaration of 1921 and the motion of the same year were combined. After unanimity was reached as to what documents should be included in the Church Documents as binding on the Church, and their terms adjusted, it was reported by the Convener to the Synod:—"Copies of resolutions and findings of Synod considered binding on the Church had been collected and typed, copies being sent to all members of Synod. These had been carefully considered by the Business Committee (Magazine, XXVIII, 68). It was then moved at the Synod, and unanimously agreed to, that the Synod adopt the report of the Committee on the Church Documents, and order the same to be printed as soon as possible. It will be generally admitted that the Synod did not rush the matter, neither did it carry through the work unawares to the Church, nor did it neglect to give the fullest opportunity to the members of Synod to consider carefully these Synod findings that were to be regarded as binding on the Church. Not since the Free Presbyterian Church came into existence has there been such prolonged consideration and careful attention given to legislation passed by the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church. [The part of this speech dealing with the Barrier Act is held over until next issue].

The wording of the Declaration of 1923 has been criticised, and while it is admitted that the substitution of "or" for "and" would make the Declaration clearer,

it is necessary to point out that the meaning of the Synod was clearly understood by the generality of readers, and did we consider this matter sufficiently important it could be easily shown that the meaning Mr Matheson takes out of the Declaration cannot, by a careful interpretation, yield the meaning he reads into it.

Another point that requires clearing up is Mr Matheson's statement made in 1926 in reference to the 1923 Declaration, and what he says in 1928 about the same Declaration. Writing to Mr Macintyre (3rd Nov. 1926), Mr Matheson says: Had I known of any such distinction I would not, I believe, have allowed any time to pass in making known the impossibility of my recognising the binding force of this latter resolution." That seems to mean, unless we are misunderstanding his words, that Mr Matheson would have deemed it necessary to object to the 1923 Declaration had he realised that it had the authoritative place Mr Macintyre said it had, for he would not, he believes, "have allowed any time to pass in making known the impossibility of my recognising the binding force of this resolution." But about two years after, in his communication to the Synod (6th March 1928) he maintains that the explicit terms of these resolutions [that is those of 1921, the one on which he took his stand at Winnipeg, and the 1923 Declaration] debar no one from church privileges on the single ground of the Sabbath church-going use of street cars" (see Sec. VI. of communication to the Synod). If this is so what need had Mr Matheson to object to the 1923 Declaration, however authoritative it might be, seeing it did not debar from church privileges, those who took the street car or used trains in coming to church on the Lord's Day, provided they did not work on the Sabbath. To plain thinking people his 1928 statement looks very like an effort to find a sanction for the deed after it was done, for in the interval between 1926 and 1928 Mr Matheson, after scrutiny of the 1923 Declaration, has discovered something in the wording of the Declaration that was evidently not noticed before he went to Winnipeg or when he wrote to Mr Macintyre.

In referring to the 1921 and 1923 Declarations Mr Matheson described the latter as "the authentic or official version." But why this distinction? Both are authentic, and both are official. When the Synod Clerk

reminds the readers of the Magazine that the report of the Synod appearing in its pages is not official he is guarding against the view which some might be ready to entertain that such a report was the official minutes of the Synod. No minute is official until approved by the Synod, but every motion duly passed by the Synod is official and operative whenever passed.

The elders of Winnipeg, in their communication to the Synod, wrote—"We freely admit that street cars run on the Sabbath is a violation of the sanctity of that Holy Day. But we are faced with the facts, and the fact is that they are run. Accepting the fact, is it not a Scriptural method of procedure to take the devil's weapons out of his hands and use them against himself? It would not be the first time that Haman was hanged on his own gallows." Yet if the Synod will not alter the existing law the elders say—"We are left with no other alternative but to resign from the eldership," and that, be it noted, after their acknowledgment that "street cars run on the Sabbath are a violation of the sanctity of that Holy Day." The other statement as to using Satan's weapons is a very dangerous one, and without a qualification will lead our friends into paths which we are sure they would willingly shun. We are heartily in agreement with them in their effort to enact at Winnipeg what was so effectively done at Shushan, and if they are as successful in bringing to an end the bad career of Satan as the Persian officials were in ridding the Persian Court of that arch-schemer, Haman, they will have done a work which will not be soon forgotten.

I must apologise to my brethren for the time I have taken, but it is to be hoped that the Synod will make it plain to all concerned that they do not regard the Declaration of 1923 as contrary to God's Word, and that they mean to stand by it.

The Rev. N. Cameron then rose and moved the following motion:—"The Synod re-affirms its adherence to its resolution on Church Privileges printed in 'Church Documents' of 1923, viz.:—"The Synod declare, in accordance with former resolutions, that the Church's privileges, such as admission to the Lords' Table and Bantism, are not to be given to any who engage in Sabbath work (other than works of necessity and mercy) or* who travel by trains or cars run in systematic disregard of the Lord's Day.'" Mr Cameron, in speaking to the motion, said:-

We have heard a great deal about this case to-night, as set forth in the letters read from

* "Or" is substituted for "and" to avoid misunderstanding.

Mr Matheson, the elders of Winnipeg, the elders of Ontario, and Mr James Tallach, also the answer that Mr Beaton gave to their criticism of the Synod's procedure in framing the Declaration under review. It is evident enough that the whole thing is levelled against the Synod's finding, and that an attempt is made to allow Free Presbyterian members, and such as receive baptism, full permission to travel on cars or trains on the Lord's Day. When we consider the history of the day in which we live, as to how Churches and nations observe the Lord's Day, we see there is a flood of Sabbath desecration. This is true of the aristocracy in this and other countries, and those who are responsible for the legislation of the land are the advance guard in this, and they transgress openly and defyingly God's law. If you follow on you will find in the industrial world that the flood is carried over the whole country. I am not speaking of individuals, for there are still Lots in Sodom. All the Churches have opened their doors to what these men want; they admit to Church privileges such as travel by cars and trains on Sabbath; their office-bearers and ministers do it, and the Churches are just full of this flood of Sabbath desecration. The little body to which we belong is the only one (as far as is known to us) which stems this flood, and these men are attempting to remove this bar in order to let the flood in. This is nothing but Satan's work, for he wants to destroy this barrier, so that there will be no place clean at all. We are not saying that we are perfectly clean, but we are clean in this matter—the keeping of the Sabbath Day.

How could these men write such documents and not say one word about the Fourth Commandment? There was a deliberate effort made to keep away from the very point at issue, which was not the Barrier Act—that was only a mere Church Act. The terms of the Sabbath are quite clear and unambiguous—"Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work. . . ."

When trains began to be run in this country on the Sabbath Day, a most faithful letter, which should never be lost sight of, was written by the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne, to the legal agent of the Directors of the Railway Company, in which he made it clear that it was necessary for all to observe the Lord's Day, and that the action of the Company horrified him. The same thing was true when they began to run trains to the North—Perth, Inverness, and all over; people were horrified when they saw anyone, to say nothing of

communicants, they knew travelling on them. The case of the user of the street car on the Lord's Day for the purpose of attending the means of grace it has been argued is *analogous to the case of Lot in Sodom*. We should remember, however, that it is written to the commendation of Lot, that he was vexed day after day at the conversation of the wicked, but I am afraid it is not true of us, for we are getting so used to it now; but it was true of him that he was as much grieved the last day he was in Sodom as he was on the first; and if that were true in Scotland no man would put his foot on a train or street car on Sabbath, for men know very well that it is a transgression of the Law of God, which is sin, and the wages of sin is death.

This is not a trivial matter at all. It is because we believe the breach of this law if persisted in means eternal death that we have had a hand in this resolution, for if we slackened our hands, we were conniving at the everlasting ruin of those souls for eternity; but we are more concerned for their souls than to remain silent, and we are concerned also that the blood of no poor sinner should be sought for in our skirts at the Great Day.

Much of the reasoning in the papers sent to the Synod is sheer quibbling. The most of the argument in Mr Matheson's long document is based on the case of the Christian in Corinth that was supposed to be invited to supper by a man who was an idolater. Mr Matheson took good care, however, that he did not give the whole quotation. There is nothing I loathe more than men taking and trying to carve God's Word. The Apostle says of this man in Corinth that he was to go and to eat what was put before him, for "the earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains." An idol was nothing to him, but Mr Matheson carefully overlooked this, that if the man who offered him the meat would say, "This was offered to idols," he was not to taste it, for if he would take it after he was distinctly told that it was offered to idols, then it would mean that the Christian did not see so much wrong with idolatry after all. Again, he was not to eat it in order that he might not hurt the conscience of the weak brother for whom Christ died. A man that goes into a street car does not need any one to tell him that it is run for making money for the idol Mammon, and certainly if he is to apply the Scripture Mr Matheson uses, he is not to put his foot on that car, and I must say I am very much afraid Mr Matheson is not giving justice to his conscience in this matter.

There was one thing in the arguments of the Winnipeg paper that made me smile, viz., the suggestion made by the

elders as to how they were going to hang Satan, or, as they say, Haman, on his own gallows, but I am very much afraid they have given themselves a work that I should not take in hand, viz., hanging Satan.

I am not going to enlarge further, but the Lord said—"If ye love me, keep my commandments," and we never yet met a man or woman, young or old (and we are looking around us on the religious world for fifty years) who had grace, that had any desire to travel on trains or cars on the Lord's Day. We are told distinctly that God writes His Law on the heart of every converted man and woman, and as He did not forget to write the Fourth Commandment on the tables of stone on Mount Sinai, He does not forget to write it on the heart of the sinner whom He saves.

This was seconded by the Rev. D. Beaton and unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. James Macleod then moved:—"The Synod require of all who receive Church privileges in this Church to honour this re-affirmed Declaration and such as may infringe on the Synod's ruling, shall be dealt with by the Courts of the Church, and that the attention of all adherents of the Church is seriously drawn to this matter." This was seconded by the Rev. D. A. Macfarlane and unanimously agreed to. The Moderator then said, to avoid all future misunderstanding, would those who agreed to these findings hold up their hands. All the members of the Synod present did so.

The Synod then made the appointment of Church collections, which are on the same dates as last year. There was no change made in the Church's Standing Committees.

The Magazine report, which will appear in next issue, was submitted by the Editor.

Third Sederunt.

The Synod met again in terms of adjournment on Thursday night at 5 p.m. After devotional exercises, conducted by the Moderator (Rev. E. Macqueen), the Synod was constituted.

The sederunt was the same as last, with the exception that Revs. D. N. Macleod, D. R. Macdonald, ministers; and Messrs Malcolm Fraser, John Macdonald, and John Macleod, ruling elders, were absent.

After the Roll was called a letter of apology for absence was read from Rev. W. Matheson, Chesley. The minutes of previous meeting were held over. A statement dealing with the question of the use of public convey-

ances on the Lord's Day, which was drawn up by the Rev. R. Mackenzie and discussed at considerable length by a special Committee, consisting of the whole Synod, and unanimously agreed to, was submitted to the Synod. The approval of the statement, which is printed on another page of this issue, was moved by the Rev. N. Cameron, and seconded by Inspector Sinclair, and unanimously agreed to.

The report on Fishing Stations was given in by Rev. M. Gillies, and will appear in next issue.

Business from Presbyteries.

WESTERN PRESBYTERY.—Among some of the items of business coming up from this Presbytery, the following of general interest may be noted:—1. The resignation of Mr Donald Mackenzie, Laide, was accepted, and a decision come to in regard to his salary. 2. Mr John Maclellan, Diabeg, and Mr Kenneth Macleod were appointed joint-missionaries of Shieldaig and Lochcarron congregation at a salary of £20 each. 3. A request from Applecross to be sanctioned as a charge, with right to call a minister, was granted. 4. A petition from Finsbay was remitted to the Presbytery. 5. A motion was passed that missionaries should not interfere with ministerial supply for Communion.

NORTHERN PRESBYTERY.—A letter was read from Mr Kenneth Matheson, Dingwall, requesting to be acknowledged as an unpaid missionary. The Synod recommended that the Northern Presbytery grant the request.

Competent Business.

1. **MEMORIAL STONE TO THE LATE REV. D. MACFARLANE, DINGWALL.**—It was decided that an appeal be sent to the Magazine for funds to erect a memorial stone to the late Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall. The following Committee was appointed to carry through arrangements:—Rev. N. Cameron (convener); James Campbell, Inverness; and Samuel Fraser. An appeal for funds will be inserted in the Magazine when the Committee have ascertained the probable cost.

2. **FREEMASONS AND SECRET SOCIETIES.**—The Rev. D. A. Macfarlane moved that such as are members of societies requiring secret oaths from their members, such as the Freemasons, etc., are debarred from Church privileges in this Church while they remain connected with such societies. This was seconded by the Rev. D. M. Macdonald, and unanimously agreed to.

3. LEGACY COMMITTEE APPOINTED.—It was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to that the Finance Committee in future also act as a Legacy Committee.

4. LAW AGENTS AND LEGAL ADVISERS APPOINTED.—It was unanimously agreed to that Messrs Morris and Macdonald, Inverness, be appointed law agents and legal advisers to the Church.

5. GRANTS TO MINISTERS' WIDOWS.—The question was raised as to whether an increase would be granted to the amounts allocated last year. It was finally decided that the amounts remain the same for this year.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF DONATIONS, ETC., IN THE MAGAZINE.—It was decided that in future only anonymous contributions (with certain exceptions) be acknowledged in the Magazine. For a fuller statement see notice under Church Notes.

7. DAY OF HUMILIATION AND PRAYER.—The Synod decided to appoint a day of humiliation and prayer on account of the religious state of the country, on Wednesday or Thursday, 25th or 26th July.

The Synod decided to meet again, D.V., in the Free Presbyterian Church at Inverness, on Tuesday after third Sabbath of May 1929. The meeting was closed with praise and prayer.

Synod's Statement in Reference to Church-going by Public Conveyances on the Sabbath.

In view of the nature of certain communications received with regard to their attitude towards the question of churchgoing by public conveyances on Sabbath, the Synod have considered it desirable to issue the following statement on the subject:—

I. In passing the several motions which bear upon Sabbath observance at intervals within the past number of years, the Synod have been actuated by a regard for the sanctity of the Lord's Day as exhibited in the Word of God; by a sense of the duty and responsibility devolving upon the Christian Church in this connection; and by an apprehension of the growing menace to the religious and social well-being of the community at large arising out of the evils of unlawful Sabbath labour, business, and recreation.

II. While not in any way condemning or disallowing the use of mechanically-driven or other conveyances on the Lord's Day when the purpose and manner of their employment are in keeping with the spirit of the Sabbath, and in accord with the precepts and precedents of Scripture, the Synod do, notwithstanding, most emphatically denounce as sinful and subject to the censure, not only of men, but of God, the practice of running such conveyances on Sabbath for reasons dictated by considerations of worldly or carnal expediency and on terms which are essentially mercenary. Under this description the Synod include the Sabbath services of trains, tramway-cars, and motor-cars run for ordinary hire. It must surely appear to all who hold by the scriptural interpretation of the Sabbath law, as set forth, for example, in the Shorter Catechism, that such services, being maintained in utter disregard of the claims, and at the expense, of sanctity, constitute a flagrant breach of the Fourth Commandment.

III. This being their view, the Synod further hold that, ordinarily, that is, allowing for the extreme exigencies of necessity and mercy, no one can lawfully make use of such services, whether for the purpose of attending church or for any less worthy purpose. Any use made of them on the part of an individual entails the giving by that individual of a certain proportionate moral and material contribution towards the support of the evil, thereby making him a party to it and involving him in the guilt of it. In consideration of this, and by way of raising a testimony against Sabbath desecration, the Synod have passed a motion which in effect excludes from Church privileges those who thus use public conveyances on the Lord's Day.

IV. Some responsible individuals in the Church have taken exception to this action of the Synod, maintaining that, while the practice should not be encouraged, yet in itself it is not necessarily sinful, and does not properly constitute a bar to Church membership.

V. One of the principal arguments put forward in support of this contention is, in substance, that a right motive on the part of the person travelling legitimises the use of public conveyances and the payment of fares on the Sabbath. The well-known judgment of the Apostle Paul in the matter of the eating of meats offered to idols is quoted for authority. With regard to this argument, and in refutation of it, the Synod would point out that

(1) There is a very fundamental difference in principle between the case with which the Apostle Paul dealt and that with which the motion of the Synod deals. In the former case, the question at issue concerned the eating of meats that had been offered to idols—in other words, the use of that which, in another connection, had been abused. The Apostle, one would almost say naturally, saw nothing wrong in eating such meats, provided no offence were given thereby to the consciences of others. The judgment, surely, would have been materially different had the Apostle been called upon to deal with Christians who had themselves been involved in the idolatry, who had contributed to the provision of meat for the offering, had countenanced the service, and had lent a hand with the performance. It is a case analogous to this, on the other hand, that the Synod's motion contemplates. That motion, be it noted, does not in the least disparage the lawful employment on week days of conveyances which have been unlawfully employed on the Sabbath. Inasmuch as it does not, it involves no deviation from the principle of Christian liberty stated by the Apostle in connection with the "meats" controversy, a principle, by the way, which, because of its very preciousness, requires the most scrupulous handling. It does, however, in effect, declare it sinful and a bar to Church membership to be a party to the unlawful employment of them on the Sabbath in the spirit of that passage of the Apostle, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils." (1 Cor. x., 20, 21.)

(2) It is incorrect and dangerous to affirm that a right motive legitimises an action and then leave the matter there (which just amounts to saying that the end justifies the means.) Some actions are notably in their content, direction or mode wrong, and persist so in spite of right motives. Take, for example, the payment of money in gambling. It is wrong. Nor can it be justified to the extent of a farthing under any circumstances, not even by instancing, if it were possible, the case of a man who gambles with no baser motive than to devote his whole returns for the payment involved, should these amount to thousands of pounds, to the cause of religion or charity. The same applies to the payment of fares in

connection with Sabbath travelling by public conveyances. It, again, is wrong—wrong, because, in itself it is, and claims to be nothing more or less than a piece of worldly, “week-day” business, conducted on worldly, “week-day” lines, and transacted on God’s holy day in which “He challengeth a special propriety for Himself”—wrong on the part of the payee, because, without deference, implied or expressed, to what the Fourth Commandment prohibits, on the one hand, or allows, on the other, he, as a contracting party, carries forward into the business of the Lord’s Day the same mercenary aims, the same working conditions, and the same contract terms which he lawfully and necessarily employs on the six days during which, God says, “thou shalt do all thy work”; and wrong on the part of the payer, because, as the other contracting party, by availing himself of the service, and by paying the stipulated fare, he voluntarily, and, for the most part, cheerfully, accomodates himself to these aims and conditions, and accepts these terms. Nor can any amount or species of motive serve to make it right.

But even if it is granted for the sake of argument that the cases are parallel, and that the ruling of the Apostle in the “meats” controversy applies equally to the question at issue here, the case for the Synod’s declaration loses nothing, as a careful examination of all the facts of the matter will show. The liberty of the Corinthian Christian to accept an invitation from an idolater and to eat the meat set before him was a conditional liberty only. In deference to the fact that others had consciences as well as he, although all had not knowledge, he was to ask no question of his host about the meat because “the earth is the Lord’s and all the fulness thereof,” and it mattered nothing to him whether it had been offered to idols or not, for to him an idol was nothing. If, however, his host told him, and it was now a matter of common knowledge that the meat had been offered to idols, then he was no longer at liberty to eat it, nay, he was bound to abstain, because (1) of the conscience of the idolater who, if he ate it, would naturally conclude that his Christian guest saw nothing wrong in idolatry; and (2) of the conscience of his weak brother for whom Christ died. In consideration of the latter, the Apostle characterises the mere act of sitting at meat in an idol’s temple as being something calculated to cause a brother to offend, and as being, on this account, a sin against the brethren and a sin against Christ. Now, in the cause

of public conveyances run on the Sabbath, one knows without being told of it that they are run in sacrifice to Mammon. According to the rule laid down by the Apostle, therefore, one is not merely at liberty, but is bound not to use them out of respect to his own conscience and the conscience both of those who run for monetary purposes and of those to whom such use may be a stumbling-block.

It has been noted above that the Apostle Paul is mentioned as an authority in connection with the view under discussion. Let it here be observed with what vehemence he disclaims any such connection in Romans iii. 8, ("as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), let us do evil that good may come? whose damnation is just."

VI. Some have urged that travelling to church on Sabbath by trains, trams, etc., when no other means is available and where distance precludes walking, comes within the category of works of necessity and mercy, and is therefore not essentially unlawful. The Synod cannot accept this view for the following reasons:—

(1) It has been well said:—"In no case can the plea of necessity be advanced for Sabbath churchgoing, while the alternative of staying at home is recognised." The Synod do recognise this alternative in cases, and in those only, where an alternative is properly admissible. They recognise it in such circumstances, for example, as when the state of one's health renders a person going to church physically impossible, and again when one's duty to a fellow-man, or even to an animal, renders his staying at home morally imperative. In the case in point, when the circumstances, both physical and moral, combine to prevent one's attendance at church, circumstances which in the one direction are related to the inscrutable providence of God, and in the other have a direct bearing upon His glory—when one is placed at a distance which he cannot walk, and can only get to church by employing a public conveyance on the condition, virtually, that he drop a coin into the world's cash-box and, with Naaman, bow in the house of Rimmon (or, to be more exact, in the house of Mammon), before he reaches, if ever he does reach, the house of God—in such a case, the Synod hold that a man, not only may, but must stay at home or be answerable to God.

(2) On the score of mercy, the Synod are of opinion that much need not be said to show that this plea is in

favour, not of countenancing and of continuing, but of abolishing for ever the practice of Sabbath travelling by public conveyances and the amount of Sabbath work it involves. It is, indeed, a mercy to be able to get to church lawfully (but not otherwise). It is a mercy also to enable a fellow-sinner to go, even should it necessitate one's staying at home, and substituting private for public worship. The one is a mercy received, the other a mercy bestowed. Which of these two is the more relevant to the matter in hand, we need scarcely discuss. Suffice it to say, and surely all loyal Free Presbyterians, at least, will say with us, that it would be a great mercy indeed if the travelling public, including church-goers, of Britain, of America, of the world would consent to do all their travelling by public conveyances on week days, and by abstaining on the Sabbath, would thus set free from the trammels of unlawful labour and from the snare of filthy lucre hundreds, thousands, perhaps millions, all told, of their unfortunate brethren to possess the privileges and enjoy the rest of that one day in seven which, for all alike, the law of nature demands and the law of God provides, and to this extent, at least, deter them from ruining their souls for eternity.

VII. Having thus far put the case for the motion in question, wholly upon its own merits, before all concerned, and especially before those of our own people who have called it in question, the Synod would fain hope they have made it tolerably clear that, in taking the step they did, they merely did their duty. They entertain the confidence, therefore, that all who have placed themselves under their ecclesiastical jurisdiction will recognise it as their duty in turn to accept the principle and submit to the rule which the motion represents, by their avoiding all abuse of public conveyances on Sabbath in future. This may appear in the case of some to constitute a hardship in so far as it precludes them from worshipping under conditions to which they had formerly accustomed themselves. The Synod believe, however, that in the end this will be found to be a hardship in appearance only; that the difficulty of it will be seen to have yielded to the forces of faith and faithfulness; and that the compensations of obedience to the truth and of preserving a conscience void of offence toward God and man are more than sufficient to counterbalance any amount of specious comfort foregone and of inconvenience suffered. "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments."

Foreign Mission Report.

BY THE REV. NEIL CAMERON.

The report that has been submitted to the Synod by the Rev. John Tallach, and that has been now read, shows that considerable progress has been made since last year. It reveals that Mr Tallach and the elders have had to contend with trials, both from within and without, as regards the work there. These trials were connected with the religious and educational sphere. At the same time we can see that the Mission continues to prosper in both. From the religious point of view you will have observed that a considerable number of members were added to the Communion Roll after a faithful examination of each one, both as to intellectual and experimental knowledge. Educationally the Inspector's report was very satisfactory, and does credit to Mr Tallach and his teaching staff. We would acknowledge the Lord's hand in the case of our school at Morven. It is in the power of farmers in Rhodesia to close schools on their land, and to remove the natives if they will. The Government mapped out large reserves for the natives, so they are only on toleration while they are left on the land possessed by these farmers. What we would like to see is, that while these farmers allow them to remain on their land, they should have no power to deprive them of the means of education or religious instruction, provided by Missions or otherwise. Some of these farmers are against educating the natives because they are under the erroneous impression that they are more adapted to their purpose as heathen. This is not true of all the farmers, for another farmer in the Morven district has given full permission to carry on the school and Mission on his farm. We would convey the Synod's gratitude to him.

Concerning Dr R. Macdonald, M.B., Ch.B., he expressed his desire to attend a course of studies in tropical diseases prior to his being sent to Rhodesia. He is studying just now in the University of London. We expect these studies will be finished about the middle of August. Thereafter steps will have to be taken for his being licensed and ordained in order that he may be sent to Rhodesia without undue delay. The Medical Office of the Government of Rhodesia have agreed that Dr Macdonald can make Ingwenya his headquarters.

For this we feel thankful, because he and Rev. John Tallach will be of much assistance and encouragement to one another in all departments of the work of the Missions. The Government offers to pay Dr Macdonald up to £200 as their half of his salary—the Synod will be advised to fix the salary to be paid by us. We hope Dr Macdonald may be able to depart either by the latter end of September or the beginning of October. We expect the Synod will be asked to supply him, before he leaves, with necessary appliances, &c., for his medical and surgical duties on his arrival at his post, and that his travelling expenses will be paid.

As regards our friends in Australia, we were expecting to hear from them shortly after our report at last Synod would come to their hands, but they seem to have misunderstood it. The Convener received a letter in January expressing surprise that a minister was not sent out to them in accordance with the Synod's decision. He replied by directing their attention to the statement made by him in last year's report, and to the Synod Clerk's report of the Synod's decision on the case. The Convener wrote at once to the Rev. James Macleod, Glendale, in order to ascertain whether he could proceed to Australia now seeing he promised to do so at last meeting of Synod. Mr Macleod's reply was in the negative owing to circumstances over which he had no control. The Committee since have approached three of our ministers on the subject; two of these gave satisfactory reasons why they could not go, the third* has still the matter under his serious consideration. His decision, we trust, will be in the affirmative when the Committee will receive it. The Convener received in all £85 to meet outgoing expenses. If more will be required we trust the Synod will agree with the finding of the Finance Committee last February that a sufficient sum of money be given as a loan to the Foreign Missions Committee to make up any deficiency required. We submit this case, as an urgent one indeed, to the serious consideration of the Synod. The isolated position of our friends, both on the Clarence and Richmond Rivers, are often in our thoughts. May the Lord move one of our ministers to volunteer his services, so that our people there may be helped and encouraged.

* This refers to the Rev. R. Mackenzie who, since the above was written, as will be seen from the Synod report, is to go out as the Synod's deputy to Australia for a year.—Editor.

The Synod are aware that Mr Donald Urquhart has been licensed, and is now awaiting the decision of the Synod as to where he is to labour among the Jews. We hope that after serious consideration the Lord may guide the Synod in their decision, and that, whatever that decision may be, Mr Urquhart will acquiesce heartily.

In conclusion, the Committee desire to draw the attention of our people to the expenses that will be incurred when three missionaries will have to be maintained out of the Foreign Missions Fund instead of one as at present, and that they will help, as the Lord will enable them, in sending the Gospel to the poor heathen, and also to the Jews. The Lord loves a cheerful giver. This caused Him to commend the widow's contribution of two mites, because she gave all her living. Do you think that she was the loser? Certainly not.

South African Mission Report.*

BY THE REV. JOHN TALLACH, INGWENYA, RHODESIA.

It seems fitting that I should begin this report with expression of thankfulness to the Most High for the way He has brought us through what has proved a particularly trying year.

In spiritual matters we had the bitter disappointment of seeing some of our members fall away. So far as the purely human side of this question goes, we must at all times expect a measure of disappointment on this account. The subject is a melancholy one, but before passing from it I would like to remark on the conduct of office-bearers and members under these trials. Not only did these come to sympathise and encourage, but they met on more occasions than one and discussed plans on the best ways to reduce temptation. In this they revealed a grief for sin, a concern for the glory of God, and a deep sympathy with us which, perhaps, we would never have known were it not for these trials. If we were downcast on account of darkness from an unexpected quarter, we were upheld on account of an unexpected light from another.

In temporal things, too, this year was full of difficulties. Rain was very scarce, crops were poor, the grass

* This Report was sent to Rev. N. Cameron, Convener of the Foreign and Jewish Missions Committee, and read by him to the Synod.

began to fail as early as May, and by July the cattle began to die off. It was in these circumstances that we had to keep 22 girls boarding in the school. I told you last year that our plan was to take in as many girls as would come (at any age) provided that the parents provided food for them. The mealie crop being a failure, only half of the parents were able to fulfil their promise to send food. By June we were faced with the question of sending some of the girls back to their homes, but gifts of money from two friends at home enabled us to keep all the girls until the closing of the school in November. It was in these circumstances that the work reported in the following was done:—

CHURCH MATTERS.—Throughout the year the services held at the different out-stations were all well attended. The congregations of Enduba, Shangani, Ingwenya, and Lebeni have all increased, the attendance at this last station being now over 82. Here, too, during the year two of the young men have begun to help the elder by taking the service occasionally. All the communion services were well attended, and as we have now four Tables to serve we have begun to hold the services for baptism on the Thursday, thus saving time on the Sabbath when these used to be performed. Two members died during the year, one a woman of Lebeni and the other a man of Ingwenya. I was able to see the latter before he passed away. He was an intelligent young man, and careful in his life, and we hoped that one day he would become an office-bearer. The Lord saw it otherwise, however, and we were, in a way, slow to mourn his loss. His departure was one of such happiness that no one would wish him to remain. On the night upon which he died I went to see him; he took my hand and told me that he was leaving everything and was going to be with the Lord. On being asked what was his ground for believing this, he gave me the following striking reply:—"I see a road straight from this hut to Heaven. Christ is the way, and I also see Him standing at the end of the way waiting to receive me. Christ is the way and Christ is the end." As you know, heathen people are so much afraid of death that they have been known to rise from their death-bed and run outside. "Are you afraid?" I next asked him. "Jehovah is my only God, why then should I be afraid?" was his reply. He then went on at some length to tell how he was en-

joying great peace through the blood of Christ, and said that he had no desire other than to depart and to be with his Lord. His mother-in-law is a very old woman, so disabled that she cannot walk well and cannot sit except with difficulty. She was a bad drunkard before she joined the church three years ago. She is now very regular in her attendance on the means of grace, although it must cost her much pain to get there. Passing a house one day I heard a woman member telling about this man's death-bed to a man who is still a heathen. It refreshes one's spirit to meet with a witness in an unexpected quarter. I think that I told you that all the heathen living near come to the funerals of our people, and taking advantage of this, we hold a full service, preaching a fairly long sermon; many thus hear the Gospel who otherwise would never hear it.

As the children have to watch the cattle while their parents are in church, we always had a difficulty in going in the morning, followed by the children's service. Since the Sabbath School this is now overcome. Our activities on the Lord's Day now run into a prayer meeting in the morning, followed by the children's service. There are then the two preaching diets, followed by a Bible Class, and in the evening I go over the "Pilgrim's Progress" in Xosa with the girls. Last year weekly prayer meetings were begun at all out-stations, and these are well attended. As well as these regular out-stations we have preachers at Mekie's Kraal, Queen's Mine, and at Martha Farm, a place about 50 miles north-east of Ingwenya; services are held in these places each Sabbath, and if there are any people who desired to be examined for membership they come to Ingwenya for this. I hope in the future to visit these places at stated times, taking an office-bearer with me, and perhaps through time we will hold regular communion services with them. Shangani, the last time I visited it, was as a little sanctuary of the Lord among the heathen, and I am at present comforted in hearing that there are two men waiting examination when next I go there. This has been our special prayer in connection with Shangani—that the Lord would turn some of the men there to Himself. The missionary there needs their help.

Last year was a starvation year, and the collection only amounted to £28 12s 6d. The number of persons added to the membership is 17, a mere drop out of the ocean of heathenism around. Drunkenness and adultery are the two hands by which the Devil holds this people,

and as one stands before the Mystery of Iniquity hidden in these two evils one feels a weakness enter into one's spirit. "You may cut off my head, but do not take drink from me," is often said to me. I have seen men actually perspire at the mere thought of giving up drink. Yet we continue to warn and entreat them, and when discouraged because of their indifference, we look at those who have already been brought to the fold and take courage. Small though their number is, we know that the same Lord who has wrought in them can work in others also, and with that hope and expectation we labour on.

SCHOOLS.—You will understand that native education is now under a department of its own, and that this department is worked through a Director of Native Education and three Inspectors. The Inspectors visit all Third Class Schools twice a year. The grants are more liberal than before, but the standard expected is higher, and consequently the superintendence of the schools is more intensive, and will take up more of our time. The total number in our schools at closing time 1927 was 401, which is higher than the number of children last year. The total amount of grants earned for the year was £167 15s. The Inspector visited Ingwenya School on 31st May, 1927, and a copy of his report has been forwarded to you. It was gratifying to us that the work here was reported on as "very satisfactory" and "very valuable." There were 43 girls taught Sewing, Basketwork, Washing, and Ironing, and, having added a stove and utensils this year, we are to teach Domestic Work and Cooking. My wife has taken these two last subjects in hand. All our teachers are paid the Rhodesian rate of pay, and hope, through the extra grants for Domestic Work, to have a fully qualified teacher for the girls next year. As we dye some of the grass we have introduced the making of fancy baskets, which are not only useful but attractive. The teaching to make these has a moral value as well as an industrial one. In Africa, as well as other parts of the world, idleness often leads to worse evils. When the girls get a desire to make these baskets they can fill in their spare time in a way that is useful and pleasant, and yet cheap. For the same reason we wish to begin crochet work, and thanks to the kindness of friends at home we are able to begin this kind of work this year. In addition to the stove, &c., we have added six forms, a map of Africa, a black-board, and arithmetic books for all classes. The large schoolroom has been walled off,

and sleeping quarters for the girls made of one part of it. I have not yet got a kitchen made for them to cook their own food in, but hope to get this done this year.

I do not need to remind you that in all our scholastic activities we have the one end in view, the bringing of the children to a knowledge of God's claims and their duty in the world. Last year about 30 repeated two Psalms, the 145th and the 25th, and about another 30 repeated the 145th only. We had a written examination in Scripture for all classes from Standard I. upwards. The subject was the Parables, and on the whole the answers were very good. I am sorry that the Shorter Catechism in Xosa is now out of print, but I have a copy, and I will type out the questions and answers, and give these to the children as they learn them.

Farmers have the right to close schools on their ground, if they please, and the farmer upon whose ground our school is at Morven sent word to me that he wished the school there closed, and after a fruitless effort to keep the school open I asked and obtained permission from a farmer close by to build a school on his ground. A school has not yet been built, but this will soon be done, and in the meantime the children meet at a kraal on this farm. I got permission to open a school at Martha Farm, and I am waiting to get a teacher to send there. I hope to go there in April on my way to Shangani, when I will spend a few days at both these places.

I would thank Mrs Miller, Wick, and the many friends who have sent parcels through her. The parcels arrive regularly in a good condition, and in every case the contents are most useful; and would also thank Miss Mackenzie, Ullapool, for the goodly sums she collected for the medical branch of our work. It is a great relief to us that this difficulty is now solved, and that we can turn to sewing, knitting, or crochet work without any anxiety as to where material is to come from. I desire to thank the children of the Raasay School for the money forwarded by them for prizes, and I may mention that if there are any other Sabbath Schools which desire to help in the same way I will only be too pleased to send them a letter of interesting African news.

LEASE.—Up until last year the amount of ground granted to the Mission was only 20 acres, and as this was useless for cultivation owing to its rocky nature, I approached the Government for a further grant. The outcome is that our ground is increased to 60 acres. This includes a fair amount of bush which, when cleared,

will be good for cultivation. Should we at a future date begin to teach the boys agriculture the Government has promised to consider a further grant. I think it should be known that this ground is for purely Mission purposes, that is to teach boys agriculture and provide food for the girls attending school.

MEDICAL WORK.—This side of our work goes on as usual. I did not keep an account of those receiving treatment in their homes, but there were over 2000 callers, 200 of these being cases for teeth extraction. As we get opportunity we lay before all the claims of God upon them. The Government gives a grant of £30 in aid of partially trained missionaries in medicine, but as my training extended to 3 months only I do not qualify under this provision. We are overjoyed to know that Dr Macdonald is to come here, and thank the people at home for sending him. May he come in the fulness of the Holy Spirit.

A friend in London, and another unknown friend in Edinburgh, both sent me parcels of medicines, and I wish to thank them both warmly. We are always encouraged by the deep interest manifested by our people in us, and again cast ourselves and our work on their prayers. We look to our people to sit down at a time and think on us and our difficulties, for however unworthy we are in our persons, our work is worthy of their daily interest and prayers. This year is likely to prove one of great trial, as we have had no rain since January. The crops are all burnt, already the grass is failing, and a number of our office-bearers and members are now preparing to go to the towns in search of work.

I have one thing more to ask of you, and I do not think that it will be very difficult for you to help me in it. Good books in simple English is what I want, such as "The Pilgrim's Progress," "The Holy War," "Little Henry and His Bearer," "Mary Jones and Her Bible," or the lives of Missionaries and Reformers and other books of that kind. The postage of books by book post is only 4d per pound, and there is no duty to pay. If it is thought better to send all books to Mrs Miller, Wick, I am sure that she will only be too pleased to forward them. If I may be excused a personal plea, I would request of my brother ministers that they be not unmindful of one whose library is necessarily a small one, and who is denied their privilege of picking up useful books.

Going to Lovedale for the first time one of our boys forgot to take his Bible with him, and wrote to me to send it on at once, for he said, "My life is not still well without my Bible." We cannot do without the Bible wherever we are, and we cannot do without books relating to it if our life is to "still well." Mr Beaton has been very mindful in this way, and I wish to thank him. The office-bearers, members, and children all send thanks for every interest shown. Mrs Radasi is well and wishes to thank all friends too.

May the Lord, by His almighty power, keep our faces as a Church at home and abroad to the wind until His Kingdom comes in power.

Literary Notice.

LECTURES, SERMONS, AND WRITINGS OF THE LATE REV. LACHLAN MACKENZIE, LOCHCARRON. Edited by James Campbell, Inverness: "Courier" Office, Inverness.

Mr James Campbell, 6 Ardross Place, Inverness, has really done good work by publishing these most valuable remains of the late Rev. Lachlan Mackenzie. These lectures, etc., are, like every other composition of Mr Lachlan's, clear as to statement of Scripture doctrine, as sound as gold as to exposition, and as to practical theology they are the very thing required in our day. He makes, throughout, a very clear distinction between true godliness and its counterfeits, and establishes his conclusion in each case by examples drawn from the fountain of all truth—the Bible. This book is so valuable that, in our opinion, none should lose the opportunity of having a copy of it. We value it as being equal to the writings of that famous servant of God, the Rev. Thomas Boston. The price is as low as the expense of printing and publishing allowed. There is no profit accruing to Mr Campbell from it. Its price is 3s; by post 6d extra.—N. C.

Church Notes.

Communion. — July — First Sabbath — Raasay, Lairg, Thurso, and Beaulie; second, Tain, Staffin, and Tomatin; third, Daviot, Halkirk, Flashadder, and Rogart; fourth, Plockton and Bracadale; fifth, North

Uist. August—First Sabbath—Dingwall; second, Stratherrick and Portree; third, Laide, Broadford, and Bonar-Bridge; fourth, Finsbay and Stornoway. September—First Sabbath—Ullapool and Vatten; second, Strathy; third, Stoer and Tarbert (Harris). October—Second Sabbath—Gairloch; third, Scourie; fourth, Lochinver and Wick. South African Mission.—The following are dates of the Communion:—Last Sabbath of March, June, September, and December. Note.—Notice of any additions to, or alterations of, the above dates of Communion should be sent to the Editor.

Day of Humiliation and Prayer.—As will be seen from the report of the Synod proceedings it was decided that Wednesday or Thursday, the 25th or 26th July, be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer for the religious state of the country.

Acknowledgments in the Magazine.—The Synod decided that in future only anonymous subscriptions be acknowledged in the Magazine, with certain exceptions (the nature of which have been indicated to the Treasurer), and in these cases only the initials and names of place are to be given. This does not apply to Magazine subscriptions.

Memorial Stone to the Late Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall.—The Synod decided to erect a suitable stone at the grave of the late Rev. D. Macfarlane, Dingwall, and appointed a Committee to see this done. Mr Macfarlane deserved that the Church should show her appreciation of him, both for eminence as a preacher of the Gospel and for his faithfulness to God's Word and to the souls of men in his day. The Synod decided also that contributions should be sent to Mr John Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, for this commendable purpose, and that he should acknowledge the same in the Free Presbyterian Magazine.—N. C.

Kaffir Bibles.—The Synod desire to convey sincere thanks to all the friends who have so liberally contributed to the fund for distributing the Kaffir Bible among all the children who learned to read it in our schools in Matabeleland. Seeing that £330 are now to the credit of this fund, the Synod advise that no more should meanwhile be given to it; but as the drain on the Foreign Missions Fund is to be trebled the Synod will feel grateful to our people for enlarging their contributions to it.—N. C.

Dr Macdonald's Travelling Expenses and Medical Equipment.—The travelling expenses and medical equipment of Dr R. Macdonald, M.B., Ch.B., will have to be paid, and the Synod resolved to place before our people its desire that they would help by their contributions to meet the sum that may be required. Contributions should be sent to Mr John Grant, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness.—N. C.

The Prayer Book Measure Before Parliament.—The Prayer Book Measure was again presented to Parliament. The controversy connected with the attempt to get the recognition of Parliament for the new and revised Prayer Book was keener than when it was rejected by the Commons. It is with the greatest pleasure we learned the news that the Measure was rejected by the House of Commons by a majority of 46. Much sympathy has been expressed with the aged Archbishop of Canterbury. We regret we cannot join in it; our admiration goes out rather to the aged Bishop Ridley, who at the age of 80, as the House was pertinently reminded by the Home Secretary, stood at the stake for Reformation doctrine.

Notes and Comments.

General Assemblies.—The General Assemblies of the Established, United Free, and Free Churches met at Edinburgh on 22nd May, and we hope to make reference to some of their proceedings, as has been our wont in past years, in next issue of the Magazine. Meantime it may be noted that the prospective Union between the two larger Churches was brought a stage nearer consummation. The opposition in the United Free Church has considerably lessened—the vote against Union this year being only 53. Both Assemblies adjourned, to meet again on 21st November, when an Overture will be sent down by the Assemblies under the Barrier Act to the Presbyteries of the respective Churches, with a view of having the Union consummated next year.

Taking the Name of the Lord in Vain.—During the recent frenzy of betting that annually seizes multitudes in these islands and in the Empire at the Derby event, we were somewhat taken aback to read in one of the dailies that the person who drew the favourite horse in one of the sweepstakes makes this acknowledgment :—"We both [i.e., he and his wife] thank our Lord for our good fortune." We cannot say how long the gratitude continued, but it is likely to have ended the following day when it was made

known that the favourite was not the winner. Our main reason for drawing attention to this mixing of the Lord's name with betting is that we have noticed of late a decided tendency on the part of otherwise estimable people to introduce and make use of the Lord's name in connection with some pet scheme or project of their own, which as far as can be seen has neither His sanction nor approval. It used to be said that some people were too ready to father on the devil what they should have acknowledged as their own shortcomings, but this is not nearly so serious as when we attribute to the Lord what is of a questionable nature simply because it pleases and suits us. To attribute to the Lord imaginary success in betting may suit a certain type of mind, but we should think neither the avowedly worldly or the avowedly religious will regard this otherwise than taking the Lord's name in vain. The false idea that betting is quite justifiable on Derby Day is immoral, and a master policy of the devil to popularise betting.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

John Grant, Palmerston Villa, Millburn Road, Inverness, General Treasurer, acknowledges, with thanks, the following donations:—

SUSTENTATION FUND.—H. C., Kingussie, 10s; a Friend, o/a Oban congregation, £2; D. R., Golspie, 16s; L. G., Culkein, Drumbeg, 3s; J. McL., Crianlarich, 5s; Mrs B., Hamilton, 6s; R. K., Auchamore, Pirmill, 3s; A. McP., Strontian, £1; W. R., Kingussie, 10s

AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' FUND.—Mrs William McA., Saskatoon, Sask., 5s 1d; R. M., Lochyside, Banavie, 5s.

HOME MISSION FUND.—Mrs W. B., Huntly, 7s.

JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.—J. and B. Tenby, Manitoba, £1 0s 5d; D. M., Lochyside, Banavie, 6s; a Friend, Inverness, 15s; A. S., Spean-Bridge, 16s 6d; Mrs W. B., Huntly, 6s; A. L., Fernabeg (children's saved pennies for Clothing Fund), 6s 6d; C. McL. Arnisdale, Gleneig (do.), 5s; do. do., for Kaffir Bibles, 5s. Rev. N. Cameron, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following donations:—"Ab-rach," £2; Friend, Glasgow, £1; J. M., Glasgow, £1; Anon., Laide P.O., £2 10s; a Friend, Harris, towards Dr R. Macdonald's expenses to South Africa, £10.

The following lists have been sent in for publication:—

ACHMORE MISSION HOME FUND.—Mr John Macarthur, 15 Achmore, acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following:—Per Capt. K. K. Macleod:—A. M., Inverarney, £1; Kames, £1; Friend, Edinburgh, 10s; Miss McK., do., 10s; M. M., Manchester, 10s; Farr Post-Office, 10s; Mack, Clydebank, 10s.

BONAR CHURCH BUILDING FUND.—Rev. D. J. Matheson, Lairg, acknowledges, with grateful thanks, the following donations:—M. M., Stornoway, £1; "A seed shall service do to Him" (two contributors), £2; Mrs M., Saval, £1; Mrs G. M., Golspie, £2.

DUNOON CHURCH DEBT.—Rev. N. Cameron acknowledges, with sincere thanks:—A Friend, 10s.

HELMSDALE CHURCH BUILDING FUND.—Rev. William Grant, Halkirk, acknowledges, with sincere thanks, the following donations:—"Thank Offering" (St Jude's Member), £1; "Be of good courage," Thurso, 5s; Friend, Wick, per Miss G. S., 10s; D. M., Portgower, £1 2s 6d; C. and A., Stornoway, 12s 6d; Portree, p. Rev. D. M. M., £4; Miss D., Thurso, £1; Miss B., do., 10s; Bath Street, Glasgow, £1; Gairloch Well-wisher, 10s. Per J. Adamson—J. G., Canada, £5; Mrs D. S. Fearn, £1; Miss D. R., Golspie, £1; H. M., Strathy, 10s.

THURSO CONGREGATION FUNDS.—Rev. Wm. Grant, Halkirk, gratefully acknowledges receipt of £50 from London—"Brother and Sister, in loving memory of their Father, a worshipper in Thurso in former years" (to be used for purpose stated).

The Magazine.

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