

SOUVENIR



75th ANNIVERSARY

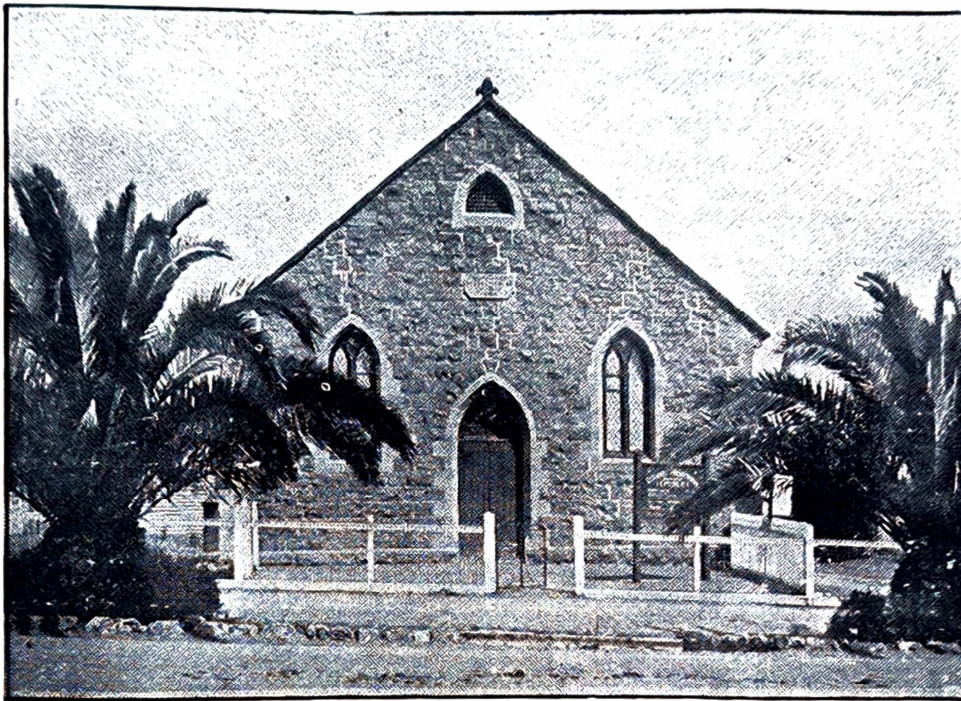
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN
(COVENANTER)
CHURCH



GEELONG, VICTORIA

1858—1933

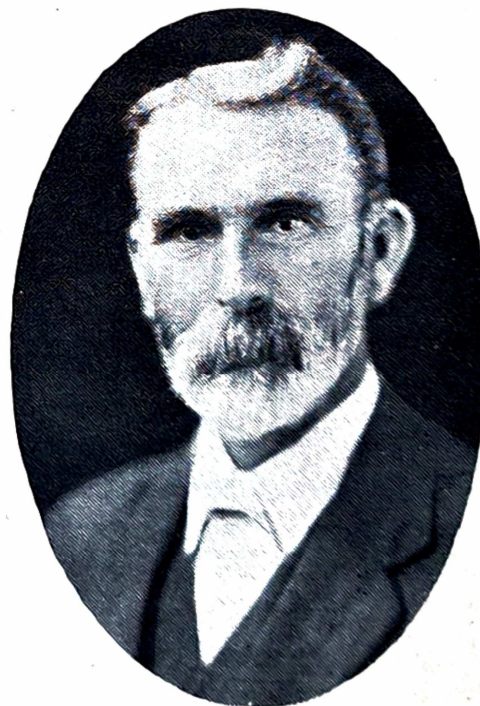
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R.P. CHURCH, GEELONG
VIC.



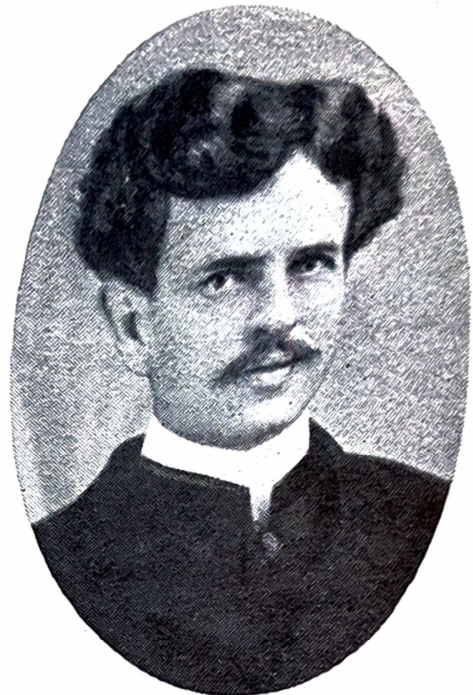
FIRST MINISTER
REV. A. M. MOORE, M.A.
1857-1897



PRESENT MINISTER
REV. H. K. MACK, B.A.
1909 —



REV. A. HOLMES
1897-1898
(SUPPLY)



REV. W. McCARROLL, B.A.
1899-1903



REV. A. M. THOMPSON, M.A.
1904-1909

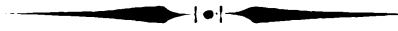


REV. W. R. McEWEN, B.A.
1929 —
(ASSOCIATE MINISTER)

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN (COVENANTER) CHURCH

GEELONG, VICTORIA

1858-1933



First Minister—REV. A. M. MOORE, M.A., 1858-1897.

Former Members of Session *

JAMES RAMAGE	1858-1910
HUGH BROWN	1861-1875
JOHN MILLER	1861-1872
GEORGE GRAHAM	1875-1884
FLEMING McDONALD	1899-1918

* Mr. Lawrence Kay, certified as an elder from R.P. Church, Greenock, was residing in Geelong on Mr. Moore's arrival, but was, it seems, prevented by illness from taking his place as a member of Session.

Present Session

Minister : REV. H. K. MACK, B.A.

ARCHIBALD RAMAGE (son of James Ramage)

ROBERT J. MOORE (son of Rev. A. M. Moore)

JAMES BROWN

REV. W. R. McEWEN, B.A.

Managers

Members of Session (ex-officio)	JAMES DUNLOP
D. G. MORETON	HUGH BOAL
R. KITSON	D. McCONAGHY
R. MACK	D. G. LONGWELL, Sec. & Treas.

Brief Historical Statement.

In the first half of the nineteenth century there was much missionary activity in the churches of the British Isles, and earnest efforts were made to follow emigrants to new countries with the ordinances of the Gospel. The Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Ireland and Scotland manifested commendable zeal in this matter, and were not behind other churches in seeking to follow their sons and daughters to Australia and New Zealand with suitable missionaries who might minister to them in spiritual things. In 1842, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland sent out the Rev. James Duncan to New Zealand, and he was followed in 1843 by Rev. John Inglis, D.D., who, with Rev. J. Copeland, afterwards carried on mission work under the auspices of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the New Hebrides. It was not until the early years of the second half of last century that the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland found a man to take up work in these southern lands, when Alexander McIlwaine Moore, M.A., offered himself and was accepted. Mr. Moore was a native of County Down, Ireland, and had prosecuted his studies in Glasgow University. His ordination to the work of the ministry took place in Belfast on August 18th, 1857, and Mr. Moore sailed from Liverpool on September 28th, and reached Melbourne on December 23rd, 1857. After a day spent in Melbourne in looking up families of Covenanters, Mr. Moore decided to proceed to Geelong, "where," as he writes in his first letter, "I knew there were men of the right stamp, with whom I could take counsel as to my future mode of procedure, and the scene of my labours." Proceeding, Mr. Moore says, "And here I have been received in the most cordial manner possible by the friends of our cause. I may mention that my arrival was somewhat unexpected by them; for, whilst they had heard at one time that a minister was to be sent out, a later communication from Scotland hinted that it was doubtful if he would visit Geelong. But notwithstanding the doubt thus cast on my coming, there awaited us a furnished house belonging to a gentleman who resides at present in the country (or bush, rather), and who had kept it open for a length of time, in the hope that a minister might come out to labour here."

In this his first letter, which was addressed to the Rev. Thomas Houston, D.D., Knockbracken, Mr. Moore expressed a feeling of thankfulness and hope: "I have thus good reason to thank God

and take courage. He has brought us over the trackless ocean in safety and in health, and raised up kind friends for us in this distant land, and the prospects of establishing our Church in this beautiful town and other parts of Victoria are most encouraging. Here let me hope I shall be honoured of God to lay the foundation of a cause which I believe will yet be as extensive as the world."

On the first Sabbath after his arrival, December 27th, 1857, Mr. Moore "met a few friends for prayer"; on the second Sabbath, January 4th, 1858, he preached "from the parable of the mustard seed, to a small congregation, assembling at the house of Mr. John Wright"; and on the third Sabbath after his arrival, January 11th, he preached in the Free Church, now St. Giles. For a time, Mr. Moore and his fellow-worshippers met in a school hall belonging to the Free Church, until another building could be secured. From that date until February 18th, 1897, a period of 39 years, Mr. Moore carried on an earnest and faithful ministry in Geelong, while he made occasional visits to isolated families in distant parts of Victoria.

In the report of Mr. Moore's ordination in "The Covenanter," September, 1857, the following statement occurs: "Mr. Moore is an able preacher, a superior scholar, a man of manly independent mind, and one who has given evidence of extensive acquaintance with, and cordial attachment to the principles of the Covenanted Reformation." This reputation he sustained throughout his long ministry. In an obituary notice in the "Southern Cross" (Melbourne) the following sentences appear: "Publicly and privately, with voice and pen, he preached the common truths of Christianity, and emphasised the distinctive doctrines of the Reformed Presbyterian or Covenanting Church. As in his opinion, so also in his friendships he was firm and unchanging. In conduct he had set before himself a very high ideal, and the erectness which characterised his bearing was but a symbol of the uprightness of his character all through. He leaves behind him the memory of a blameless life." The Rev. W. Dick, M.A., then editor of "The Covenanter," in referring to Mr Moore's death, said, "Our Church has been singularly blessed with ideal missionary pioneers, and Mr. Moore was one of the noblest of them all."

Soon after his settlement in Geelong, Mr. Moore and his co-workers began to consider the question of erecting a suitable Church building. In the course of a few years this project was carried through, and the present building was opened on August 10th, 1862. The opening services were conducted by the Rev. John G. Paton, who had been sent out a few years earlier by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland as a missionary to the New Hebrides,

At the time of Mr. Moore's appointment, an effort was made to secure another worker to co-operate with him, and the Rev. John Bates was sent out by the Scottish Synod, but as his health was already partially undermined, Mr. Bates was not able to enter upon the work, and died soon after reaching Sydney. The claims of the home field, and the distance of Australia from the home centre, no doubt militated against an increased supply of workers for Australia.

On the death of Mr. Moore in 1897, the congregation was supplied for twelve months by Rev. A. Holmes, whose short ministry was very acceptable and successful. But Mr. Holmes decided to return to his congregation in Ireland, and once more the Geelong members were left without an under-shepherd. After a faithful ministry, Mr. Holmes was called to his reward on September 27th, 1932.

Mr. Holmes was succeeded in Geelong by Rev. W. McCarroll, B.A., who remained for four years and then accepted a call to carry on mission work in Cyprus under the Foreign Mission Board of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. He (Dr. McCarroll) is now labouring in New York. The Rev. A. M. Thompson, M.A., ministered in Geelong for about five years, and he is now pastor of a congregation in Hemet, California.

The present minister, Rev. H. K. Mack, B.A., reached Geelong on October 8th, 1909, and so has been in charge of the work for just over twenty-three years. In order to allow Mr. Mack an opportunity of visiting the homeland, which he did last year, the Rev. W. R. McEwen, B.A., was appointed by the Synod in Ireland to come out and take charge of the work in Mr. Mack's absence.

For many years a monthly service has been held in Melbourne, and frequent visits made to families in outlying districts, and this work has been extended since a second worker has been on the field. Mr. McEwen is now engaged in special itinerary work, and has many opportunities of preaching in various centres in Victoria and other States, and emphasising the principles of the Second Reformation and their application to individual and national life.

With thankfulness to God for what has been accomplished, and with hope for the future, we celebrate the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the commencement of the work in Geelong.

SABBATH, JANUARY 8th, 1933
11 a.m.

Our Historic Testimony

REV. H. K. MACK, B.A.

Hebrews I., 1, 2, 3.—God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, who . . . when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

These words indicate briefly the place which Christ occupies in the life of His people, and trace out the main lines of our testimony. The Reformed Presbyterian Church emerges into view as a distinct denomination at the close of the complex Reformation movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ; but, doctrinally, it is, we believe, rooted in the Word of God. We disclaim the idea that our principles originated or were brought into notice for the first time at the Reformation. We hold that the doctrines which we preach are definitely Scriptural, and that God would have them proclaimed to all men. We do not say that we have uttered the last word in the interpretation of Scripture, and if we stand apart from others it is because, like other denominations, we feel we have our own particular contribution to make to the work of witnessing for Christ and calling men to accept a full Gospel. We mention only two or three points.

AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

The first idea that we ask you to consider is the supreme authority of the Word of God. We believe that God speaks to us in and through the Scriptures. The Bible is the revelation of God's will concerning man, and Christ occupies a unique place in the giving of that revelation. He is a prophet, and yet more than a prophet. He is "God manifest in the flesh." Of no other could the words of Nicodemus be used with the same fulness of meaning, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God." God has spoken to us by His Son. Christ is, in a peculiar sense, the Word of God ; divine revelation reaches its climax in Him."

One of the questions at issue in the Reformation was, whether the Word of God is to be regarded as supreme, absolute and all-sufficient for man's moral and religious life, or whether tradition and human reason may claim practical equality with Scripture ? The Covenanters stood for the exclusive authority of the Word of

God in doctrine, worship and life, and they asserted the right of every man to be taught by the Spirit through the Word. For any ecclesiastical head or civil ruler on earth arbitrarily to lay down principles of faith and practice they regarded as contrary to Scripture. The spiritual independence of the Church, and of every member of the Church under Christ the Head, was a vital principle with the Reformed Presbyterians. But if they rejected human authority, they fastened upon themselves all the more closely and firmly an absolute divine authority, and refused to allow themselves any belief or practice which was not definitely taught in Scripture or plainly deducible from Scripture. Thus they sought their doctrines, forms of worship, and regulative moral principles in the Word of God alone.

The general principle enunciated in the Confession of Faith is as follows: "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men." And the particular principle in reference to worship is: "The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestion of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture." On this principle the Reformed Presbyterians went back to the simple forms of the early Christian Church, and excluded human art and ornament from the service of the sanctuary.

The question is asked, Can the Christian not enjoy art, music, beauty in form and colour? Yes, but we think the true order is for the Christian to come into the sanctuary to worship God in the beauty of holiness, to have his soul touched and revived and cleansed by spiritual things alone, that he may go forth spiritually fitted to look upon and enjoy the beautiful works of God and the creations of human art. The danger is that when we bring these latter into the sanctuary the senses will be so taken up with them that the soul will not be fed with spiritual food and God will not be glorified. For the Christian life does not consist in a natural capacity developed to enjoy natural or artistic beauty, but in a gracious disposition wrought in us by the Spirit whereby we exercise filial faith and love towards our Father and Redeemer. And such a disposition is wrought in us and sustained by those influences that come to us along the line of God's gracious word. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever."

As the sun in the visible heavens is necessary to light and life and growth in the material world, so is the Word of God in the spiritual sphere. It is "a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path," and also exercises a quickening and invigorating influence. Whether it be our private thoughts, our family relationships, our acts of worship, our business enterprises, our political problems, the Word of God claims the right to teach and guide. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST.

Our second thought is of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice. We believe that the Bible teaches what is known as federal theology, on the question of sin and salvation. This theology is brought to a clear issue, and is concisely presented, in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, while its logical force is felt in many other places in the New Testament. In the chapter mentioned, the representative man, Adam, is pictured as involving all his posterity in sin and ruin by his one act of disobedience ; and the representative person, Christ, is presented as bringing righteousness and salvation to a guilty world by His obedience unto death. Two verses put these respective ideas very clearly—
 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation ; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

If Adam's disobedience meant more for us than setting us an evil example, if it meant the breach of a covenant in which we were interested, and the transmission to us of guilt and a sinful nature, then Christ's work means more for us than setting before us a good example ; it means satisfaction on our behalf to a broken law, and the quickening us to a new life of faith and holiness. A son who has received from his father an encumbered estate and a vicious disposition stands in need of a friend who will render him a two-fold service. The burden of debt must be removed, and the son must be imbued with the spirit of virtue and industry. Christ meets our indebtedness and quickens us by His Spirit. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom. viii. 1, 2.

There are three fundamental points in connection with Christ's redeeming work which require to be made clear and constantly emphasised.

As our representative in the Covenant of Grace, Christ's work was in the nature of ransom for those held under guilt and condemnation. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to be minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Christ offered Himself willingly and joyfully for this work in harmony with His Father's will. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." There was the most perfect understanding and sympathy between the Father and the Son in the work of man's redemption. Christ was not laid an unwilling victim on the altar; the Father was not a stern, relentless Judge, knowing only how to exact the utmost penalty. Man's redemption was a work which displayed the grace and greatness of divine love.

Christ's ransom is all-sufficient and final. It does not need to be repeated, nor does it need to be re-inforced by the merit of man. Christ's one sacrifice purges from all sin; had it not been so, it would have been necessary for Christ to suffer often. "Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the holy place with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. ix. 25, 26.

Well might the poet, Young, exclaim, in contemplating the sacrificial work of Christ,—

"Thou, my all!"

My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!
 My light in darkness! and my life in death!
 My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise!
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
 To man of men the meanest, even to me;
 My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!

CHRIST AS KING.

Our third main thought is that of Christ as King. There are two expressions here which suggest this idea. Christ has been "appointed heir of all things"; and, "when He had by Himself

purged our sins He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

When Christ effected man's redemption He did not retire into a private position, to be remembered as a hero of the past, and to have his death commemorated by a frequently-repeated feast. He was exalted to the highest pinnacle of honour and authority. There are many expressions in the New Testament emphasising this fact. Peter, addressing the multitude on the day of Pentecost, said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." And Paul in his epistles stresses the same glorious truth. Writing to the Ephesians he declares that God has set Christ "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church." And in his epistle to the Philippians he writes, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

If this be true, how calculated to fill us with fear or confidence—with fear if we fail to submit to His authority : with confidence if in our weakness we are sincerely striving to do His will !

The name of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is closely associated with the struggle to have Christ's royal prerogatives acknowledged and honoured. While the Reformation was a movement for the spiritual independence of the Church and for purity of doctrine and worship, it also recognised and urged Christ's claim to sovereignty over every department of human life. Christ said to His disciples, "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." It is just as dangerous for rulers as for private individuals to stand in the way of and oppose the interests of Christ's kingdom. As men should not lay aside their reason, so they should not divest themselves of their Christian convictions when dealing with public matters affecting the moral interests of their fellow-men. Dr. Welldon, Canon of Westminster Abbey, in his Essay on The Consecration of the State, quotes Bishop Thirlwall as saying, "It is an extravagant paradox that anything which exercises such a powerful influence on the habits, character, and condition of a nation, as religion, should be viewed with indifference by its rulers." And yet many seem to rely on secular public opinion, with its mercurial instability, rather than give heed to the sure and authoritative word of Him who is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever."

At the Revolution Settlement the Reformed Presbyterians were constrained to stand apart as an ecclesiastical body, because they could not accept that impaired spiritual independence offered to the Church in Scotland ; and they were forced to stand apart as citizens because they could not take part in a civil government that laid restrictive and hurtful bands upon the Church of Jesus Christ. If one, on passing down the street, were to see a strong man binding a boy hand and foot in order to have him completely in his power, one would be under obligation to protest against such a wrong. The Church in England was bound hand and foot by the civil power to her great hurt and loss. One of the most sensational debates in the British House of Commons in recent years was that on the Revised Prayer Book, a debate which suggested to one's mind how much more the Church of England might have done for evangelical truth if she had been left free from the dominating influence of the secular power.

The kingly claims of Christ still wait full recognition, for He must be acknowledged as supreme in every department of knowledge and of action. The Rev. Henry Wace, D.D., in *The Gospel and its Witnesses*, says, "No philosophy can reach a true result, no moral system can lead to sound conclusions, no system of education, whether private or national, whether at home or in schools or in universities, can be trusted, which is not based upon the recognition of our Lord as the centre of all God's purposes, and as the Judge of all mankind."

A great and noble discontent should fill our hearts until Christ is acclaimed King by the general consent of mankind. Professor Henri Clavier, of Montpellier Divinity College, France, is quoted as saying in an article on French Protestantism and Democracy, "My whole hope for French Protestantism is that the Huguenot people, forever dissatisfied, will never settle down in the half-way house of a human democracy without pursuing incessantly a city governed and inspired by God."

That is the sentiment which has lain at the heart of the Covenanter Church all down her history, and it is a sentiment which is, we believe, warranted by the words of Christ, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations."

"Hope thou not, then, earth's alliance,
 'Take thy stand behind the cross ;
 Fear, lest by unblest compliance,
 Thou transmute thy gold to dross.
 Steadfast in thy meek endurance,
 Prophecy in sackcloth on ;
 Hast thou not the pledged assurance,
 Kings one day shall kiss the Son."

7 p.m.

The Present Message of the Covenanter Church

REV. W. R. McEWEN, B.A.

Isaiah 30. 21—And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, "This is the way : walk ye in it."

On this 75th Anniversary, many of you, as you review your past association with this congregation, will no doubt hear many a word behind you still saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." You may recall many voices, some now silent, that have spoken to you the ever-living word from the pulpit and in the Sabbath School, and they still encourage you onward in the way that leads to everlasting life. Others may recall a similar word from the homeland. For a word is a living thing. Once spoken, it never dies. And a word from God does not return void. Though we leave it behind in the past, it still echoes with a message for the present. That truth comes out clearly in the very composition, as well as in the matter of the Bible. Isaiah, for instance, when he spoke to the people of his time, appealed to the word of the prophets of the past in confirmation of his message, which was really the same message. And he in turn wrote down his message to be for future generations and new situations. So the voice of the past ever speaks to the present, and points the way of progress for the future.

Now, while it might be both helpful and interesting to you if I could enlarge upon the word that has issued from this place during the past 75 years, I want rather to recall to you a word which echoed in the more distant past in Scotland, where the Covenanter Church had its birth as a distinctive branch of the Christian Church. I want you to hear that word which was sealed by the blood of martyrs. I want you to listen to the voices of those who carried aloft the Blue Banner "For Christ's Crown and Covenant," in dangerous and dark days, that you may be inspired with the same spirit. And after all, this word is similar to that proclaimed in this place for the past 75 years. In one of Mr. Moore's early letters home, he reports of "the standard being lifted up in Australia under which, in former days, our fathers fought and fell, but conquered when they fell." And for 75 years that standard has been kept flying. This word is still the message of the

Covenanter Church. When I take the subject, "The Present Message of the Covenanter Church," I do not suggest that the message of the Covenanter Church has changed with times and circumstances to catch the popular breeze. Her principles have remained the same since the time they were so clearly enunciated nearly three centuries ago. But they have a message for the present day which is as much needed as it was in the past. It is not enough for us to admire our Covenanted forefathers and the noble stand they took in their day. It was their principles they emphasised and cherished, and for which they suffered and died. And they handed them down to posterity that we might begin where they ended, as Donald Cargill phrased it in the Queensferry Paper. So I think it is fitting on this 75th anniversary that we should pause and catch that word which rang out so clear and strong in the past, but which is in danger of being deadened to-day by distance and the din of the world around us.

1. There is a **Message on Personal Piety**. I mention that first because they put it first. Since Scott and others have caricatured the Covenanters, many have got the impression that they were a cold, stiff, dour lot, more like the Scribes and Pharisees than the disciples of Jesus Christ. It is easy and cheap in these modern days of compromise to laugh at their strictness; but the stand they took was prompted by a burning love for Jesus Christ. We fail to understand them if we miss that. John Howie, the contemporaneous biographer of the Covenanters, says of the Duke of Argyle, the first Covenanting martyr: "He had piety for a Christian, sense for a counsellor, courage for a martyr, and a soul for a king." It is a fine tribute, and it could be applied to many more who followed him to martyrdom. "Piety for a Christian." That was the characteristic of them all. No doubt many of them could have died with the stoic fortitude of a Roman, but they preferred to die as Christians, trusting in the merit of the Saviour and finding His Spirit sustaining them. They did not pride themselves in their virtues. They did not hope for heaven because of the stand they took. They searched their souls with a careful self-scrutiny. They confessed their sins to one another, not with glib tongue, but with pained hearts. We find Hugh Mackail, as he waited his execution at the age of 26, when his leg was shattered after the cruel tortures of the boot, confessing to his father that "through coming short of the 5th Commandment, I have come short of the promise that my days shall be prolonged in the land of the living." But

though conscious of many shortcomings, they found Jesus Christ Whom God had sent to save from sin; they trusted Him for pardon and their hope was in Him. It is the only hope for you and me still, and their lives call us to trust Him for salvation.

And Christ was real to them. They walked with Him daily. (In spite of the daily dread in which they lived, and perhaps because of it, their love for their Lord grew into a deep devotion.) Most could have said with James Guthrie: "I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of, and wherever I have seen the print of His shoes in the earth, there I have coveted to set my foot too." Their expressions were not mere pious talk, but sprung from hearts nurtured by prayer and reading the Bible. When Bailie of Jerviswood was returning to prison after being condemned to be executed, he passed the house of Lord Wariston, the lawyer of the Covenant, who had already won the martyr's crown, and looking up to a well-known window he said to his sister-in-law, who was Lord Wariston's daughter: "Many a sweet day and night with God had your now glorified father in that chamber." And many a sweet day and night with God had many others who were not permitted the quietness of a chamber, but who had to seek shelter in the dens and caves of the earth. Do we not hear them calling us in these days of rush and bustle to spend more time in fellowship with God?

And theirs was not a superficial piety which just conformed to their personal ideas of holiness. It was based upon the Bible, which they accepted as the perfect standard of rectitude, and to which they sought to conform their lives. They believed with Samuel Rutherford that "Truth is an indivisible line which has no latitude and does not admit of splitting." Though sorely tempted and tried, though great pressure was brought to bear upon them to compromise, yet when they thought of the indivisible line of truth and duty they said, in effect, to the demands of men what James Guthrie said to the court which condemned him to be hanged: "My conscience I cannot submit." What a challenge to us in these days of liberty and laxity!

Again, these Covenanters were not content with nurturing personal piety in solitude or in the shelter of their own homes. When the ministers were driven from their congregation and refused permission to preach in their pulpits, the people went into the field to meet them there. Sometimes they would tramp across the moors all night to be present at the morning hour

on the Sabbath at some quiet spot where a minister had arranged to meet with them. In spite of the threat of death should they be caught by the troopers thus assembling, they came often in thousands and waited long as the spokesmen of Christ issued His warnings and His welcomes. And how the hills and valleys echoed as those vast assemblies sung those strains which had resounded on the hills of Judea, or within the walls of Jerusalem, or by the waters of Babylon. What a rebuke to us if we neglect these spiritual privileges! How they call us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but to unite by heart and voice in praising God!

Let us listen for a moment to their preachers. We do them wrong if we think their sermons were denunciations of popery and prelacy and all people who differed from them. True, there was the tone of controversy in many of their discourses, for they felt they must contend earnestly for the faith. But they were just as earnest in setting forth the glories of the Gospel and pleading with men to be reconciled to God. Hear John Blackadder preach in the open field from the text, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost," or Cameron as he preaches his last sermon from the text, "Be still, and know that I am God," or Cargill's last sermon from the text, "Come, My people, enter into your chambers." Patrick Walker, who heard the last, tells us "he insisted on what kind of chambers these were for protection and safety, and exhorted us all earnestly to dwell in the clefts of the rock, to hide ourselves in the wounds of Christ and to wrap ourselves in the believing application of the promises flowing therefrom, and to make our refuge under the shadow of His wings until these sad calamities pass over and the dove came back with the olive leaf in her mouth." There was no bitterness in such discourses. They were on the main things. They issued the royal invitation, "Come," and the preachers could testify of their own experience of the welcome that awaits the penitent.

Perhaps the best insight we can get into the preaching of that period is the personal report of a London merchant who visited Scotland at the time. One Sabbath he heard a Mr. Blair preach, and "that man," he said, "showed me the majesty of God." "Then," he added, "I afterwards heard a little fair man preach"—that was godly Samuel Rutherford—"and that man showed me the loveliness of Christ." "Then," he said, "I came and heard at Irvine a well-favoured, proper old man"—a Mr. Dickson—"and that man showed me all my heart." And it seems that Englishman, who was a stranger to true religion

before, became an excellent Christian. Those then were the themes of the Covenanter preachers in the past—the majesty of God, the loveliness of Christ and the sins and sorrows of the human heart, followed by the invitation to “adventure the whole weight of salvation upon Christ Jesus,” as Wm. Guthrie puts it. And I believe those have been the themes of this pulpit for the past 75 years, and I trust shall always be the themes of it. This then is the message of the Covenanter Church on Personal Piety.

2. There is a **Message on Public Righteousness**. This is the second message which we gather from the word of the past, and which is needed in the present. Donald Cargill once made an illuminating remark which throws a flood of light on the Covenanters’ position and motive. One of the ministers who had given up the Covenanter position and was enjoying peace and quietness in consequence, was speaking disparagingly of the noble contendings of those who were hunted and harried for their faithfulness. “What needs all this ado?” he asked in contempt, “we will get to heaven and they will get no more.” But when the remark was repeated to Cargill he replied, “Yes, we will get more; we will get God glorified on the earth, and that is more than heaven.” Yes, that was the true Covenanter position. They did not exclude others from heaven, but they wanted “more than heaven.” They wanted God glorified upon the earth, and surely that is the highest motive for noble living. They had a vision of Jesus Christ as the enthroned Mediator, and so sought the overthrow of everything that was opposed to His royal sway. They wanted to have the Kingdom of Heaven set up on earth, and to have everything brought under its sway. They not only desired a better country, even an heavenly, but they had a vision of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

So they had their Church bound in solemn covenant to God and His Son, and they would tolerate nothing that would deny the right or usurp the place of Jesus Christ as Head of His Church. They were willing to suffer to the death for the honour of Jesus Christ in the public courts of His house, and many were

“Murdered for holding Christ supreme,
Head of His Church and no more crime.”

And it was not over church property or mere material jurisdiction that they contended. “Where is the Church of God in

Scotland?" cried Peden once in a sermon. "I will tell you where the Church is. It is wherever a praying young man or a praying young woman is at any dykeside in Scotland. That's where the Church is." We still need the same spiritual vision of the Church. And we still need the spiritual body under the complete control of its Divine Head, if God is to be glorified on the earth.

But the Covenanters had a wider vision than the Church. They were jealous for the rights of man as well as for the rights of God, for they felt these human rights were bound up with the Divine. Dr. Alex. Smellie, in referring to William Guthrie, one of the Covenanting preachers, says of him: "He could not understand a piety which was divorced from good citizenship." And like him his brothers in Covenant bonds were as patriotic and public-spirited as they were religious. They felt they were not only Christians, they were citizens, and sought the highest interests of their country. So we find "seraphic" Rutherford, as he was called, that little fair man who showed the English visitor the loveliness of Christ, and who died with a vision of the Glory of Emmanuel's land in his eyes, writing a book entitled "Lex Rex," "The Law is King," in which he enunciates the principles of modern democracy. "The law is not the King's own, but is given him on trust," he says. "Power," he says again, "is a birthright of the people borrowed from them; they may let it out for their good and may resume it when a man is drunk with it." They recognised that the source of this power was God, the Absolute Sovereign of the Universe, and that it was mediated through His Son, to Whom He had given all authority, and so they had the nation linked in covenant to the throne of God and of the Lamb, from which the River of the Water of Life flows forth, that it might receive its truest and highest life.

They were not disloyal to rightful authority, but they did not believe in the "right divine of kings to govern wrong." They held rather to what John Knox told Queen Mary of Scots, "If princes exceed their bounds and do against that whereof they should be obeyed, it is no doubt they may be resisted even by power." And when the Stuart sovereigns were drunk with power and exceeded their bounds, then they publicly disowned and denounced the King in their famous declaration nailed by Richard Cameron to the market cross in Sanquar, and took the sword in defence of civil and religious liberty. And the Revolution which followed six years after justified their action by deposing that godless tyranny.

But while we enjoy the privileges which they purchased by their blood, we must not forget the vision that prompted them to those noble endeavours, a vision which has not been fully realised. The covenants are still repudiated; Jesus Christ is still rejected; even God is often forgotten in the affairs of state; the land is no longer married to the Lord; but instead lawlessness, selfishness and vice abound. So there comes to us to-night afresh the challenge from the past to hold aloft still the Blue Banner, "For Christ's Crown and Covenant," till all the world adores His name.

This message, if accepted and applied, would solve the vexed problems of political and industrial strife, rid the land of vices like the liquor traffic and gambling, and bring in an era of world peace for which the weary heart of humanity sighs. To realise that universal vision of the nations at the feet of Jesus Christ is the goal of the Covenanter Church; and we still need to proclaim the universal Kingship of the Mediator. May God make us true to our trust.

Sabbath School Rally

On Sabbath afternoon, some of the old scholars gathered with the present scholars to sing favourite psalms and to hear a special address. Owing to another engagement, the Rev. T. M. McClean, a visiting minister of the Free Presbyterian Church, who had been asked to speak to the children, was unable to be present, and his place was taken by Rev. W. R. McEwen, B.A., who spoke very feelingly on Psalm 23, "The Shepherd Psalm." Mr. McEwen referred to the care, protection and provision which Christ, the Good Shepherd, affords the sheep of His flock, and urged all to place themselves in Christ's keeping, that at last they may stand safe in the heavenly fold. An interesting exhibition was a facsimile copy of the National Covenant of Scotland, 1638, and a picture of the maid, Margaret Wilson, "the Wigtown Martyr," who was drowned in Solway Firth for her adherence to the cause of the Covenant. Mr. Mack pointed out that some of the Covenanters had signed the Covenant with blood drawn from their own veins, and he read a portion of the "Wigton Martyrs" poem giving a vivid description of the drowning of Margaret Wilson and her aged companion, Mrs. Margaret Lauchlan.

Social Re=union

A social re-union of the members and friends of the congregation was held in the Sons of Temperance Hall, on Monday, January 9th, at 8 p.m., and was largely attended. The minister of the Church (Rev. H. K. Mack, B.A.) presided, and, after the opening exercises of praise and prayer, Mr. McEwen announced apologies from R. I. Moore, member of Session, who has been in ill health for some time, also from a number of Geelong ministers. He also read a letter conveying fraternal greetings from our nearest ecclesiastical neighbour, St. George's Presbyterian Church. Interspersed with musical items, a number of addresses were given by visiting ministers and laymen. The Mayor of Geelong (Cr. E. A. McDonald) recalled his early association with the Sabbath School and the Church, in the days of the Rev. A. M. Moore and his immediate successors. Cr. A. E. Kane, Melbourne City Council, spoke of his experience as a boy in Larne, when he accompanied his grandmother to the Covenanter services in that home town, and stressed the importance of maintaining a strong protestant spirit. The good wishes of the Presbyterian Churches of Geelong were voiced by Rev. J. McMaster, B.A., St. George's, and Rev. T. Worsley Maguire, B.A., St. Giles', both of whom emphasised the fine testimony borne by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the great practical influence of the denomination on the moral and religious life of the public. The Rev. E. C. Burleigh, B.A., spoke on behalf of the Baptist Church, and wished for blessing and prosperity for the Reformed Presbyterian Church in years to come. The last speaker was the Rev. I. L. Graham, M.A., Hamilton, who rejoiced in the friendly spirit and close co-operation existing between the Free and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches. During an interval for general conversation, supper was served by a number of ladies of the congregation, assisted by several of the young men. All who contributed to the success of the meeting were accorded a vote of thanks at the instance of the Rev. W. R. M. McEwen, B.A., and a very happy evening was brought to a close by praise and the Benediction.