



Session, Managers and Officials,
United Free Church,
Buchlyvie.

October, 1902.

BUCHLYVIE UNITED FREE CHURCH.

1902

Session.

Rev. GEORGE WM. S. COWIE, *Moderator.*

Mr. JAMES M'PHIE, ordained 1860	Mr. JOHN HARVIE, ordained 1892
Mr. ALEX. MORRISON, ,, 1873	Mr. JAMES DICK, ,, 1895
Mr. JOHN MORE, ,, 1878	Mr. JAMES RISK, ,, 1895
Mr. GEORGE MORRISON, ,, 1892	Mr. D. M'KERRACHER, inducted 1892
Mr. WILLIAM BAUCHOP, inducted 1902	

Managers.

* Mr. ROBERT MORE, *Preses.*

Mr. JOHN BAUCHOP.	Mr. DAVID MUIRHEAD.
Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL.	Mr. ALEXANDER STEWART.
Mr. JOHN DRYSDALE.	Mr. JAMES STEWART.
Mr. JAMES B. GIBB.	Mr. JAMES TAYLOR.
Mr. THOS. M'EWEN, <i>Treas.</i>	Mr. JOHN MILNE, <i>Clerk.</i>

<i>Leader of Psalmody,</i>	- - - -	Mr. GEORGE DALGLIESH.
<i>Harmoniumist,</i>	- - - -	Miss KATE BUCHANAN.
<i>Church Officer,</i>	- - - -	Mr. DANIEL M'LELLAN.

* Mr. More, who for twenty-one years was Clerk to the Managers, was elected Preses in January last, and was present at several meetings when arrangements were made for the Ter-Jubilee Celebrations. He died on 2nd April, 1902.

THE HUNDRED-AND-FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the Church was celebrated on Sabbath, the 3rd August. At noon the Rev. Robert Campbell, Calton U. F. Church, Glasgow, conducted the service, and preached an appropriate sermon from the closing words of the twenty-third Psalm:—"I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." In the evening the minister of the congregation gave some account of the church history during the last fifty years.

On Monday evening a successful Social Meeting was held in the Public Hall, when, interspersed with Anthems, Solos and Recitations, addresses were delivered by Revs. M. M'Lean, Gartmore, who represented the Presbytery of Stirling and Dunblane, Adam Shaw, M.A., Glasgow, and Robert Campbell.

Apologies were intimated from Revs. Dr. Frew, St. Ninians; George Rose, Aberdeen; Peter MacDonald, B.D., Edinburgh; Andrew R. Cowie, Glasgow; H. W. Hunter, M.A., Kippen; Andrew Wilson, M.A., Drymen; and John A. M'Donald, Buchlyvie. An apology was also received from Mr. David Ure, who was ordained to the eldership here in May, 1844, but who resigned when he left the district a few years ago.

This Ter-Jubilee Record, containing the "Centenary Sketch," written by Mr. Russell, and the address on "These Last Fifty Years" by the present minister, is published at the unanimous request of the Session and Managers of Buchlyvie United Free Church.

G. W. S. C.

August, 1902.

THESE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

It is exactly fifty years ago to-day since the Centenary of this church was commemorated, and a few months over a hundred and fifty years since the first congregation assembled within these four walls, and under this same old roof, and engaged in the services of Public Worship. When one considers, but for a moment, the many great changes which must have transpired since this building was erected, together with the fact that the same Gospel is preached here to-day as was proclaimed by our fore-fathers in this church in the yesterday that is past, he must feel that such an occasion as this could not be passed over without some remark, and without our expressing our deep gratitude to God for the inestimable blessings of the Gospel ministries granted to the people of this district during all those years.

This church has had an interesting history, and was extremely fortunate as regards the historian of its first century; and all who have read Mr. Russell's sketch will admit that the Session and Managers of the Congregation were well advised when they moved so unanimously to have it re-printed.

Although at the time of its publication in 1853, Mr. Russell's booklet had a very wide circulation, copies of it now are exceedingly scarce. Indeed, we know of only two in the district to-day, and these have been handed round from house to house, with the inevitable result that the pages are brown, the type vanishing, and the copies, as a whole, in a pretty tattered condition, despite the great care and even reverence with which they have generally been handled. We would express the hope that the reprint, together with the notes that are given here to bring the history up to date, will stimulate all to take a deeper and more active interest in the welfare of our church, and in those great schemes which all our churches exist for the very purpose of promulgating.

So admirably and exhaustively has the history of the first hundred years been dealt with that there will be little need for our referring to that period at all, and our main purpose will be to

take up the narrative where Mr. Russell left off, and endeavour to bring together such facts in the subsequent period as may appear to be interesting in themselves, or necessary to furnish a fairly adequate account of the history of the church during the last fifty years.

On the 18th July, 1837, the United Associate Presbytery of Stirling and Falkirk met at Buchlyvie, and after a sermon by the Rev. A. C. Rutherford, the Rev. Mr. Patterson ordained Mr. John Russell to the work of the holy ministry, and inducted him to the pastoral charge of this Congregation.

Six years later the Disruption took place, which issued in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland; and ten years after Mr. Russell's settlement, the Relief and Secession churches united, and became the United Presbyterian Church.

These were stirring times, but they do not seem to have disturbed or in any way affected the peace and harmony of Mr. Russell's ministry. In his sphere here he wrought away with a quiet, patient perseverance, ever seeking the highest temporal and spiritual welfare of his people, and of the whole community around. During his life-time he enjoyed the friendship and the closest confidences of the late Rev. Prof. John Eadie, LL.D., who frequently preached here, and whose services at summer communions, held in the open air, in that field to the west of the Church, are remembered by some who are with us to-day. At the Centenary, Mr. Russell was in perfect health, and seemed likely to have a long and increasingly useful and popular ministry before him; but five years later, while preaching in his own pulpit on a Sabbath afternoon, in February, 1857, he was taken suddenly ill with a serious affection of the brain. From this attack he was partially restored, but he never fully recovered.

For eighteen months he was laid aside from his ordinary duties, and though at times able to go about and talk with his people in his frank and homely manner, he only preached twice, and on one of these occasions—a communion—he broke down completely, and the minister who was assisting him had to carry through the remaining parts of the day's services.

Still Mr. Russell hoped that he would yet recover, but the trouble ran its regular course, and on the 5th September, 1858,

“the angel with the pale face” entered the manse, and soon it was reported in the homes of his people that their beloved minister, Mr. Russell, was dead. The funeral sermon was preached in this Church more than forty years ago, by the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Robert Frew, minister of St. Ninian's United Presbyterian Church, who, we rejoice, is still with us—the respected father of the United Free Church—and still deeply interested in this Church and Congregation.

One who knew Mr. Russell intimately, wrote thus:—* “Mr. Russell was not one of those men who contrive to make a noise in the world, for his chosen path was the ‘cool sequestered vale of life.’ He aspired not to be a Son of Thunder: he was made to be a Son of Consolation. He was not cast in the mould of Boanerges, but of Barnabas ‘the good man.’ His talents, indeed, were excellent and they were carefully cultivated. His views of divine truth were clear and decided. His expositions of Scripture were broad and simple, and he spared no pains to impress the truth on the minds and consciences of his people. . . . His sermons had about them the stamp of healthy manliness, a mind that thought serenely, and a heart that felt profoundly, with a delivery which won attention rather than commanded it, as the preacher grew in fervour and strove in tones of felt and visible anxiety to gain the souls of his people.

His pastoral intercourse had the same sedate and cheerful character. He was still himself everywhere, no manner put on, no conventional phrase employed, and no official decorum assumed. . . . He was known to be ‘gracious, full of compassion, and righteous,’ and therefore he was consulted in many a domestic crisis, for he was ready, not only to comfort the dying believer with the hopes of the Gospel, but as was often the case, to allay fears and anxieties by enabling him to set his house in order. His advice and effort were always at the people's disposal, for he was theirs to live and die with them. His tried sagacity and his upright and honourable character gained him their admiration, and his gentle and unpretending nature opened for him a place in their hearts. . . . And so for more than twenty years he pursued the noiseless tenor of his way—preaching Christ—teaching publicly

* “United Presbyterian Magazine,” November, 1858.

and from house to house—warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom—labouring to the utmost of his power and with the aid of Divine Grace to make full proof of his ministry.”

His dust, dear to God, and to all who knew him, is with us in our church-yard; and not a dozen yards directly behind this pulpit are the four graves of four ministers of this Church: the resting places of Messrs. Cleland, Spiers, France, and Russell. They sleep beside the people whom they loved, and whom they did their best to prepare for that coming day, when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man.

The Rev. Wm. Watt, minister of Buchlyvie Chapel of Ease, which was built in 1835, left the Establishment at the Disruption, and, with his followers, went to the barn of Spittal Farm, close by, where, for some time, services were regularly conducted. Mr. Watt, however, soon left in response to the call addressed him by the Free Church Congregation of Thornhill, Stirling, where he laboured till his death, on 14th January, 1897. His farewell sermon was preached in the Spittal garden, in a deluge of rain, a faithful member holding an umbrella over Mr. Watt as he preached.

It is interesting to know that their first Communion was held in this Church, and that the water of Baptism* was applied to several children of Free Church parents, by the Rev. John Russell.

On Mr. Watt's departure to Thornhill, the Rev. Alexander Black of Gartmore, who also had come out at the Disruption, and had originated the Free Church Congregation in Gartmore, rode over regularly on the Sabbath afternoons, and conducted the Services in the Spittal. This, of course, could not always go on; so, after the Congregation had had a long run of supply, they

* Besides the Pulpit Bible, to which reference has been made in Mr. Russell's sketch, on page 20, the Congregation has still in use: (1) Communion Plate, dated 1820. (2) Communion Tokens, marked thus:—

On one side,	AS.C BUC	On the other	M J.C 1752
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Which mean respectively, “Associate Congregation, Buchlyvie,” and either “Minister, John Cleland, 1752,” or “Memorial of Jesus Christ, 1752;”

(3) Baptismal bowl, with the following inscription, exactly reproduced:—

“TO THE ASSOCIATE CONGREGATION BUCHLYVIE 1752.”

presented a call to the Rev. Alexander W. Morris, who became the first regular minister of Buchlyvie Free Church Congregation, which now worshipped in the workshop of Alex. Stewart, wright. This building is still standing. An upturned cart, we learn on good authority, formed the platform, and the front of a kitchen dresser, the pulpit rail. Here then, and until 1876 or 1878, the Congregation met under Mr. Morris' genial ministry. The Congregation, though small, was strongly attached to its minister, and its members to one another. For thirty-one years Mr. Morris was minister, but for several years before his death he had the services of the following able assistants:—Messrs. Dewar, Sharp, Gordon, Reid, Fleming, Niven, and Rose. These gentlemen succeeded one another, in the order given, in assisting Mr. Morris and serving the Congregation.

In 1876, Mr. Morris' petition to Presbytery and Assembly for a colleague was granted, and towards the close of that same year, on 23rd November, the Rev. Geo. Rose was ordained in the church at the burnside. Shortly after Mr. Rose's settlement, the Congregation removed to that neat and comfortable iron church which stood directly opposite the head of the Station Road, and which only a few months ago was removed from the district. This church was opened by Rev. Dr. Beith of the North Free Church, Stirling, whose son, Mr. Gilbert Beith, Ex-M.P., for some time proprietor and tenant of Ballochneck, was for many years a good and generous friend to the Free Church Congregation.

Mr. Morris' last public function was in connection with the opening of Buchlyvie Water Supply, in January, 1870. It is commonly believed that on that occasion, while conducting the religious service in the open air, with uncovered head, he contracted a severe chill that brought on a serious illness, which, after eight years, issued in his death. On the 21st November, 1878, he died in the manse which his devoted people had built for him. Mr. Morris' remains were interred in Stirling Cemetery. For twenty-five years Mr. Rose discharged the ministerial duties in a faithful and kindly manner, and when the Free Church and United Presbyterian Congregations were united here in 1899, he went to reside in Aberdeen. In a letter received from him yesterday, he expresses regret at being unable to be present with us on this occasion, and wishes us God-speed in our Master's work.

After this necessary and somewhat lengthy digression, we go back again to the year of Mr. Russell's death, 1858, when, after a vacancy of nearly two years, the Rev. James Berry was ordained on May 2nd, 1860. That day he entered on what has hitherto been the longest pastorate in this Church.

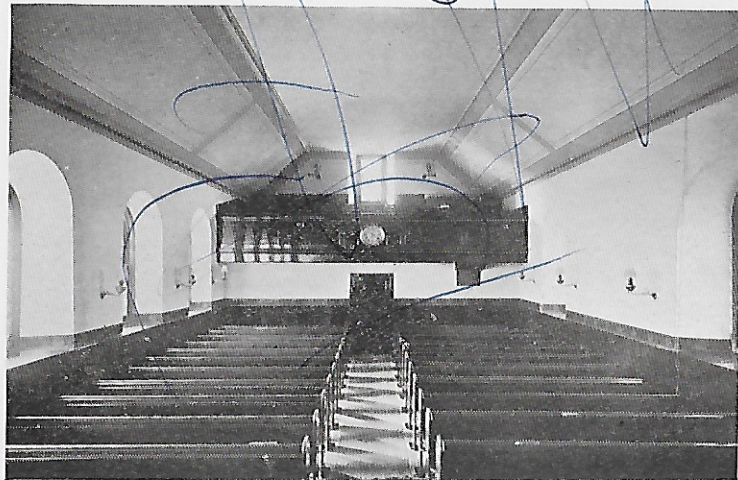
Mr. Berry, a native of Edinburgh, was born in 1825. In his youth he removed to Glasgow, and after some experience of business life, we find him labouring as missionary in connection with Gillespie United Presbyterian Church, then ministered over by Rev. Mr. Borland, and now by Rev. Mr. Shaw, who is expected to be with us to-morrow at our social gathering. Mr. Berry's spiritual experiences led him to seek the office of the Christian ministry, and in due course, after his University and Theological Hall training, he was licensed, and shortly afterwards called to his life-work here. He was a man of quite a different stamp from his predecessor, and was much more retiring than he. He did not seem to make himself so soon and so readily at home with those with whom he came into contact; and yet, though he seemed distant, when one came close up to him he was found to be frank, hospitable, and generous to a degree.

He was deeply and truly religious, and no one could be long in his company before discovering that his outward profession was but the most natural expression of one who breathed the atmosphere of sincere and prayerful communion with the Most High.

Mr. Berry was gifted in prayer, and though he had done nothing more for his people than lead them, Sabbath after Sabbath, so directly into the presence of God, his memory well deserves to be cherished as it is, for "he prayeth best who loveth best," and "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." But Mr. Berry had many other admirable qualifications for his work here: he was a faithful preacher of "the Gospel of the Grace of God," and an indefatigable worker in all matters that aimed at benefiting his fellows. His zealous advocacy of the temperance cause all through the thirty-nine years of his ministry shewed him to be brave and manly, and the courage with which he stated and defended his opinions on political and other debatable subjects, left one in no doubt that he had the strength of his convictions, and could stand by them.



Interior of Church, looking towards Pulpit.



Interior of Church, looking towards Gallery.

On the 17th August, 1885, Mr. Berry celebrated his Semi-Jubilee as minister of the Congregation, when the members and friends gave very tangible proof of the respect they had for him as a man, and their high appreciation of his services as their minister in Christ.

It was largely due to his exertions that the manse received considerable additions and improvements, and that the interior of the Church was remodelled and renovated in 1890. So admirably were the alterations on the Church carried out, that those who had known it in its older state, with its box pews and deep galleries running round three sides, and its pulpit standing in the middle of that south wall, could hardly believe it possible that such a change could be effected without interfering materially with the four walls and the old roof. Re-opening Services were conducted on 3rd November, 1890, by the Rev. James Robertson of Viewforth United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, and formerly of Balfron.

In March, 1894, the question of introducing instrumental music was first considered, and on the 9th September of that same year the present instrument was first used in the Church Service. One half of the cost of this instrument was borne by two lady-friends of the Congregation, the Misses Harvie, who for many years have taken the deepest interest in the Church and neighbourhood, and who have ever been ready to come forward with generous help whenever a need arose.

In 1880 the Congregation had bequeathed to it by the Trust disposition and settlement of Messrs. Joseph and John Morrison, the sum of £1000; in 1884, by the Mutual Trust disposition settlement of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Harvie, the sum of £750; and in 1896, from Mrs. Maule's Estate, the sum of £100. All these sums were left for various specified purposes.

Encouraged by such manifestations of kindness, undismayed by the continuous depopulation of the district owing to the rush for the centres of industry, Mr. Berry fought bravely on and never for a single hour lost sight of the chief end and purpose of his work. From this pulpit, and in the homes of the people, he did his utmost to win men and women for the Master, whose he was and whom he served. Many to-day must remember the appeals

he made, the vistas of Divine truth he opened up, and the example of the truly Christian life which he ever set before this whole neighbourhood. These are not lost. "Though dead, he speaketh." And what Mr. Berry said and did will yet, we trust and believe, be productive of much good.

During his closing years he had frequent recurrences of severe illness, which led him early in 1899 to place his resignation in the hands of his Presbytery. Before he left the district, the Congregation once again expressed their esteem for him and their heartiest sympathy with him in his enforced retiral.

Up to the last he was interested in all that was done with the view to filling the vacancy caused by his retiral. He was greatly relieved when he learned that his successor was appointed, and, as was natural, longed to grasp him by the hand and wish him God-speed. It was accordingly arranged that the two should meet at Dunoon on the 8th February, 1900. On the evening of the previous day, however, Mr. Berry died somewhat unexpectedly, and so his successor's visit on the following morning was one of condolence. The burial took place in the new cemetery at Kippen, and on Sabbath, 18th February, the Rev. James Lindsay, M.A., Balfron, preaching the funeral sermon, paid a fitting tribute to Mr. Berry's memory.

On the 8th March, 1900, the Presbytery of Stirling met in this Church, and after the sermon by Rev. John Young, M.A., Home Mission Secretary, the Rev. Robert Mackenzie, M.A., Alloa, ordained and inducted the eighth minister of this Church. He was licensed by the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Glasgow, in June, 1898, and shortly afterwards, was appointed assistant to Rev. Dr. John Steel, Greenhead U.P. Church, where the call of this Congregation found him. The union of the Free and United Presbyterian congregations here, anticipating the larger union of the Churches into the United Free Church of Scotland, in October, 1900, had already been effected, and the minister found a loyal and hearty people waiting to gather around him and help and encourage him in his work. None of these promises has been forgotten, and to-day we are a united people. Rejoicing in our great privileges, we could not be indifferent to our serious

responsibilities. To us much has been given; of us much shall be required. Let this, then, be a great occasion in the spiritual experience of every one of us. Let this be a day of thanksgiving, of self-examination, and of rededication and reconsecration to God. Let us seek no longer to live to ourselves, but for Him who loved us and died for us and rose again. And may we begin and continue from this day forward "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To whom be glory both now and for ever." "The Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers: let Him not leave us nor forsake us." Amen.

