

more practical recognition of the membership of children belonging to the Church, in the rules relating to the duties of sessions, the Synod earnestly urge upon Sessions the importance of exercising a faithful superintendence over the members of the Church who have not yet been received into full communion, taking care that, when they leave the bounds, they be transferred to the superintendence of the session of the congregation into whose bounds they pass' (Chap. i. sec. 1, R. 19).

Thus the object of the overture is one on which the mind of the Synod has for many years been before the Church, and especially before its sessions, in no ambiguous or obscure form. But there has hitherto been wanting any organization for systematically carrying it out, and this it is the special design of the measure now submitted to obtain.

In order to this, the fundamental requisite is that every kirk-session should have as complete a roll of all the baptized members belonging to the congregation under its care, who have not been received into communion, as it has of all those who are in full communion. The roll of children baptized should be as regular as the roll of members received into stated fellowship; and all accessions to the former roll, and all disjunctions from it, arising from the influx or removal of families or from other causes, should be as carefully recorded as all accessions and removals pertaining to the latter roll. Such a rule as this would go far to make elders, parents, and communicants realize the solemn relations of the Church to baptized children, and therefore the claims of these little ones to their prayers, their interest, their regard, their instruction, their guidance, their guardianship, and their solicitous endeavours for their good; and it would at the same time go far to make baptized children realize their solemn relations to the Church, and, from the sense of the kindness shown to them, of the care taken of them of the concern felt for them, and of the efforts made for their welfare, to bind them with gratitude and love to its members and office-bearers, and to make them prize membership with it as their most precious and sacred earthly privilege. Its adoption would impart a stimulus and support to every needed family, by ministers in the pulpit, by elders in visitation, by teachers in the Sabbath school, and by better agencies than have hitherto been attempted for their daily religious instruction, 'to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'

To carry out this rule a regular certificate of disjunction should be required for each baptized child removing from a congregation, as for each member in full com-

munion. When the child is under the care of the parents, its co-relation to the Church and corresponding claims and privileges, are thereby conserved and attested along with the parent's. When the child is withdrawn from the parents to be placed under another's care, the more needful and important is it that the Church should watch over its spiritual interests, and see that its membership is preserved, and that the benefits thereof are obtained for the child.

The spiritual care of the young of the Church from the time that they enter school until they come of age, is probably the most important department of pastoral oversight which belongs to ministers and elders, as respects their opportunity and their influence as 'overseers of all the flock,' to save many from going astray in the paths of error, vice, and ruin, and to bring them while their hearts are tender unto the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.' Over no other class will their pious and kindly care be so much appreciated as over this, by parents, guardians and employers. By no other class will it be received with greater reverence, confidence, and predilection. On no other class can it be bestowed with greater facility or encouragement, or for so long a period, and that when it is most important and influential. In no other class may blessed and abundant fruits from it be so confidently expected. Begun early, and continued throughout the whole term of a youth's education and training for the duties of after life, this care of the spiritual overseers will have an influence on him next to that of a godly parent; will form between him and them the relation of Christian friends; and when that is followed by his admission into full communion, will strengthen the bonds and advance all the ends of Church fellowship.

To the accomplishment of this end, it is obvious that a uniform system of organization is necessary throughout the Church; and having considered the draft remitted to them, with the suggestions received from the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Committee submit the following scheme:

1. That the kirk-session of every congregation shall henceforth keep a full and accurate roll of the baptized children belonging to it who have not been received into full communion, as well as of the members in full communion.

2. That of all juvenile members above five years of age, the elder of the district should have personal knowledge, should make particular inquiry regarding their education or occupation, and should seek, in conjunction with the parents, to promote their spiritual welfare, by urging diligent attendance on the means of instruction and