

preached in it when the temperature inside the building, except in the immediate vicinity of the crazy stove, must have been as low as zero, or several degrees below it. It is now repaired, or I might say renewed, and is quite comfortable even in the coldest weather. As I fail to see the consistency of crying out for "Union," and at the same time locking our churches, I have, with the consent of the Trustees, offered the use of it to the other Presbyterian body should they require it for public worship.

I am glad to report an increasing interest among our people in the *Record*. Thirty-one copies are taken here where three years ago only three or four were taken, and there are no bad debts.

On the 7th inst., when the weather for the first time this winter appeared to promise a continuance of sleighing, I started for Lake Uist, in order to be able to give information to the Presbytery concerning that quarter. On the 8th I reached Frantoise, expecting to preach there next day. An easterly storm, which continued all day and blocked up the roads, prevented this, to my great regret. I was compelled to leave on the 10th in order to be sure of reaching Lake Uist in good time. All that dreary day I pushed on over a road—trackless most of it, and indescribably wretched throughout—until at nightfall I reached the hospitable abode of D. McDougall, Esq. Next evening I preached in the school house. On the following day I visited some old people who could not come out. On Sabbath I preached three times to good audiences. On Monday I held a business meeting, at which the people gave bonds for the finishing of their church.

They take ten copies of the *Record* at this place. All I saw expressed their desire to secure the services of Mr. D. Campbell during the coming summer, and I promised to report accordingly. They will, I think, be able to pay a little more for Mr. Campbell's services should he go there, than they did last year.

Respectfully submitted by

JAMES W. FRASER.

DUNCAN McLAREN'S "LITTLE BILLS" AGAINST THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The radical member for Edinburgh is again seeking to distinguish himself at this Session of the Imperial Parliament by nibbling at the Church, but we are glad to see that he has already received one or two severe rebuffs even in the most Anti-Establishment House of Commons that has ever been elected. He first brought in a bill to abolish the assessment that is imposed on owners of land to erect and keep in repair the Churches and manse, and with which burden the land has been charged since the Reformation, and with which it is always bought and sold, but on the second reading he was signally defeated by a majority of 117, viz., 225 to 108. He next wished to disturb the settlement of the Edinburgh Clergy annuity tax made in 1860 (and by which the Church gave up much of her rights on the honorable understanding that further agitation was to cease), but the feeling of the House was so strong against him that he had to withdraw his bill on the Lord Advocate promising to bring in one instead. The Lord Advocate has redeemed his promise, and his bill, which has every chance of passing, seems, on the whole, a good one. Its chief features are to give the Edinburgh Ecclesiastical Commissioners a lump sum of £60,000 *stg.* instead of the annuity of £4,200 from the Town Council; to give them also half the produce of the Church-door collections, the other half, instead of the whole, as at present, being reserved for charitable purposes; and best of all, to take away the patronage of the Churches from the Magistrates and Town Council, and vest it in the Kirk-sessions. If this bill passes, the long-vexed question will be finally settled; for there will be no loophole left at which the most insignificant agitator can crawl in.