

POOR LAWS IN SCOTLAND.

Abstract of Mr. Kennedy's bill to regulate the relief granted to the poor in Scotland.

The minister and elders are vested with the administration of all funds for the relief of the poor, arising from collections at the church doors, parochial dues, and all other sources, except assessments on heritors or occupiers of lands. The heritors who are not elders have no right to interfere with the application of the former funds.

The decision of the minister and elders granting or refusing relief out of these funds is final, and no appeal lies to the Sheriff Court or Court of Session.

The minister and heritors alone have the right to impose or not impose an assessment on the heritors and occupiers of land for the support of the poor; and the elders have no voice in any meeting held for this purpose, and no right to call upon the heritors to make such assessment.

All persons applying in future for parish relief are to receive it from the funds under the charge of the ministers and elders, and from no other.

But persons hitherto relieved from the produce of assessments must be relieved in this manner still, if the ministers and elders certify that the funds under their charge are insufficient after providing for the other demands recognised by the present act.

No person claiming relief can appeal from the decision of the heritors and minister to the Sheriff, Justice of Peace, or Court of Session.

But if the heritors fail to meet and give relief to those who have hitherto received it, the persons aggrieved may apply to the Quarter Sessions—who may call upon the heritors to meet for this purpose under a penalty—but have no power to review their proceedings after so long.

On the 11th June, Mr. Brougham was passing thro' the lobby towards the House of Commons, at a near the spot where Bellingham assassinated the amiable and lamented Mr. Perceval, he was attacked by the notorious Robert Gourlay, ex-Canadian Reformer, with a whip or small stick, which he the said Gourlay applied to the shoulders of the Hon. Member, but with what degree of force it does not appear. Gourlay was immediately taken into custody by the Serjeant at Arms, and stated as the cause of the assault that Mr. B. had neglected to present his petition to the House, and had, moreover, deserted his cause, and taken up that of a dead missionary. —(Smith.)

He was kept in custody at the House of Commons—with two messengers in the prison rooms. A friend appeared, in consequence of what was said in the House of Commons by Mr. Canning, and preferred to take some care, to make some arrangements with Mr. Gourlay: but Mr. Gourlay would not accept of them. He insisted on remaining in custody, and on being called to the bar. He has prepared several petitions, which have been forwarded to an Hon. Member, but which he complains were not presented. The prisoner is well provided by Mr. Bellamy, the Commons' Coffee-house-keeper. He has caused to be published in the morning papers several certificates as to his mental sanity, and also another letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, in which he says his plan was laid five months ago, in concert with a Dr. Hamilton, who formerly lived in Canada.

Mr. Gourlay was released from his confinement immediately after Parliament was prorogued, but was brought to Bow-street, where Sir George Frethill and Dr. Munroe, swore that he was a dangerous person, of unsound mind, and ought not to be suffered to go abroad. —He was then committed to the House of Correction, with directions to have every care taken of him.

An account of the proceedings under the insurrection act, during the last year, has been published by order of the House of Commons. It appears that no less than seventeen hundred and seven persons were brought to trial, after periods of imprisonment, amounting in many instances, to two and seven and three months, though not more than 271 were convicted, and sentence was actually carried into execution upon only 75.

The treaty has been published between Great-Britain and Prussia, stipulating "a reciprocal abrogation of all discriminating and countervailing duties which were demanded and levied upon the ships or productions of either nation in the ports of the other."

Official accounts have at length been received, confirming the melancholy intelligence of the death of Sir Charles M'Carthy, but the despatches containing the details of the operations with the Ashantees have not yet reached England.