

sity of greater exertion. The most of the people who formed the Secession were the godly of the lower ranks of society, and were incompetent judges of the amount necessary for the support of their ministers in the station in which they were obliged to move. To plain people living by their daily labour, £100 a year appeared to be a large income. I recollect of a pious tradesman who had a salary of £50, to support his family, who conscientiously objected to raise his minister's stipend from £150 to £200, because, judging from his own expenses, he was satisfied that the minister had enough, or more than enough already. I recollect of another case, where a very worthy man, in one of the larger cities, devoted to his minister, objected to raise his stipend to £300 per annum, which was not more than adequate, because he thought it would be injurious to his pastoral fidelity to make him a companion for princes. It was from ignorance and inexperience on the part of the people, and not from parsimony, that the stipends were often inadequate.

It was quite different in the late Free Church movement. By that time dissent was common, and even in a worldly view was not disreputable; and the ministers of the Secession congregations, and of other denominations, especially in the larger cities, had incomes which could bear comparison with those of the Establishment. Society was much advanced, and the minds of the people in general more enlarged. Besides, the Disruption brought away from the Establishment multitudes of the more wealthy and influential classes, and even some of the nobility; and the matter of ministerial support was at once made an essential element in the movement. This was all right. But at that early period, when the Secession arose, it was unattainable; for the first Seceders did not come out, but were thrust out, of the National Church. They were, however, in part to blame, as being too delicate with the people about the means of support. I am not sure if Mr. Wilson of Perth lived to receive anything in the way of stipend from his people. His death took place during the second year after the ministers of the Associate Presbytery were finally deposed; and a document in possession of the writer, who is a descendant of that venerable minister, seems to intimate that his legal support was made up to his family by the Town Council of Perth after his decease. Mr. Moncrieff, his neighbour and friend, being an independent landed proprietor, refused to take stipend from his people, which, though well meant, was calculated to have, and actually was afterwards found to have, an injurious influence on his congregation, in regard to the support of his successors. It is said that Mr. Erskine, of Dunfermline, with one of the largest congregations, actually died in debt, from the inconsiderateness of his people, to whom it had not occurred that it was their duty to provide for his ample support, and who could have done it without an effort.

These remarks will serve to show how it happened that the Secession, in some quarters, were behind in the support of their ministers. It was this that led to the present discussion in the General Associate Synod, and to the recommendation which was issued. Of this the following is the tenor:

"As it hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe; as a Gospel ministry is a standing ordinance in the Church, appointed by our God and Redeemer; and as our Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel—it becomes the duty of every Church, and has been the practice of every pure one, to take care that this ordinance of Christ be observed, and his laws respecting it obeyed: And whereas it is apprehended, that there are various congregations under the inspection of this Synod, which are greatly defective in supporting the Gospel among them, according to their numbers, abilities, and engagements in the call which they subscribed to their ministers:

"It is therefore humbly overtured to the rev. Synod, that they would take this matter into their consideration, and that an Act be made by them to the following purpose, or with such alterations and amendments as shall be thought