

to deceive; and that he doubted if his Voluntary friends would receive it as it stood there; and that as regarded the eighth resolution, they did not insert anything about the fourth commandment, and that he should be disposed to withdraw his opposition if they would put in that commandment. He knew that the United Presbyterian and the Relief had never as a Church formally declared the Voluntary principle; and that was founded upon in these resolutions. That was an important reason why they should reconsider their position, but that was not a reason why the Free Church should change what they believed and held firmly by. The union now pointed at was just asking the Free Church to take up the United Presbyterian position; and there was not a single concession made to the views of the Free Church at all.

Professor Gibson said he was not opposed to union if based on right principles; and that if these resolutions had been merely a simple proposal for the consideration of the important object of union among the two bodies, he would not have felt called upon to interfere in the matter, though he might have deemed it premature, and not likely to lead to practical issue. But as the resolutions consdescended upon special grounds which made these a basis for union, he felt called upon to notice them. Professor Gibson then said, that he would state some reasons why he was compelled to take the earliest opportunity of objecting to these resolutions. His objection was that he saw that already since this subject was introduced new names had been committed to it,—names of considerable weight and importance in point of standing in our Church and that was going on every day, and must go on, and would do a grievous injury to our Church and our cause if the ministers, when they had an opportunity, were to stand by and to give no expression of opinion.

He must say in regard to some names that he saw there that they had been, to his apprehension, engaged in too many schemes of compromise to make him trust them very much. (Hear, hear.) He must fairly and honestly say that if report spoke true, these resolutions emanated from a quarter that they should be very jealous of; and he therefore thought it would be wrong in the Presbyterian to allow this matter to go on without any expression of their mind. Another reason for the course he proposed was, that he felt it necessary to assure their people, and many of their best elders, that there was no danger of such an union taking place. (Applause.) He knew that there were men taking a view of this question which he would not like to state publicly, office bearers and members of their Church, and that too not in small numbers. If they allowed it to go on, they might find that it was too late to preserve some of their own office-bearers and members. He knew men who were considering very seriously whether they should longer give their large funds as they had been doing, to this Church, if this went on. He was not speaking without book; and

therefore it was high time that they assured their office bearers and members what was their real position. He had not introduced into the overture the point that the method of proceeding adopted by these resolutionists was unconstitutional as there might be a difference as to that matter. But he would say that they were sowing the seed of division within the Church of a most dangerous kind—(hear, hear, and applause)—and, moreover, that the result would be in regard to some what he did not mean to tell. He did not like to make a boast, but he knew in regard to many that the result would be very serious if they were to proceed to this union on the principles contained in these resolutions.

It was very well for men to talk of these resolutions as a private document, meaning thereby that it was not a document of the Church; but had any party a right to expect that he or any man was to remain quietly by and to allow names of influence, of high position and of wealth without the Church, to get the elders and influential men of the Church committed to these resolutions and to get them committed to such an extent to the proposed plan of union, and to such a leavening of opinion in their own direction as to secure its being carried out and then they would say they would bring it into the Church courts; In what position would they then be placed? He would feel it to be his duty to refuse submission to the judgment of the Church Courts if a union on the basis of these resolutions were proposed. He thought the plan would be attended with very cruel effects, although he did not say that their friends intended it to have these effects. He could see that the carrying out of these resolutions might have serious effects and he could see perhaps when a time would come that he might comply; but that that would be more cruel than the other; and what he said to a person who, before the Disruption, told him that thirty-five of them were attempting to set up a plan to avoid that event, after all negotiations had failed, and to save their wives and children that he would do them greater favour if he and his friends were endeavouring to save their consciences, he would repeat now.

Mr. McNAB, in seconding the transmission of the overture, expressed regret that the authors of the resolutions had not, before publishing them to the world, consulted with some of the clerical members of the Church in which case he thought they would have been enabled to take more comprehensive and more correct views of the great difficulties that beset the enterprise on which they had embarked. After referring to some of these difficulties, in connection with the sanctity of the Sabbath, the educational interests of the people of the land and the interests of religion in general, and to the Church's duty to co-operate with the State on all these matters by advice and by help otherwise, Mr. McNAB said that these resolutions did not inform them how these duties were to be performed, but gave them a thing

called forbearance, which he supposed, meant that all who held by the old principles of this Church should be at liberty to act in their individual capacity, or in their own congregations, provided the congregations were unanimous among themselves, but gave no explanation at all how the Church was to act in her collective capacity in seeking to do these things; and the effect of these resolutions would suppress these things in the Assembly altogether; and it would, he thought turn out that the Moderator would at once prevent any person alluding to these matters by a reference to the constitution of the Church. This view was, he thought, confirmed by the state of matters in the United Presbyterian Church. He therefore did not see that the suggestion was anything else than a formal dissolution of the Free Church, or to adopt in integrity the whole constitution of the United Presbyterian Church. (Applause.) If this was the case how were their principles as a Free Church to be transmitted to posterity. The Presbytery were then addressed by Mr Barnatyne, the Clerk (Mr Wilson), Dr Forbes, Mr Bremner, and Mr Wilson (Bridgeton), in support of the transmission of the overture.

After a few words from Mr Parker, Mr Menzies, and Mr Archibald Campbell (elder), a vote was taken, when 20 voted for the overture, and 7 for the amendment. The transmission of the overture was accordingly declared carried.

CHURCH AT HOME.

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The General Assembly of the National Church commenced its annual sittings on Thursday the 21st May. In accordance with ancient custom, on Wednesday evening Lord Belhaven and Stenton, her Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, received a civil deputation, headed by the Lord Provost, who presented to him the keys of the city, to whose custody his Grace again restored them in the usual complimentary manner.

THE LEVEE.

His Grace the Lord High Commissioner held his first levee on Thursday morning at eleven o'clock, in the ancient Picture Gallery of Holyrood Palace.

THE PROCESSION.

After the levee, his Grace went in procession to the High Church to hear a sermon, as usual before the opening of the General Assembly.

OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

At the conclusion of the services his Grace left the Church, and proceeded to the Assembly Hall, where a guard of honour from the 34th, with the colours of the Regiment, was stationed. He immediately took his place on the Throne, the members of the House rising as his Grace entered.

ELECTION OF MODERATOR.

The Rev Dr Crombie then said—This Assembly having now been constituted, the first duty incumbent on you is to choose a Modera-