

good reasons they composed. As I have said, the Confession of Faith is, with all its merits, still a human composition; it is the composition of fallible men, of men of like passions with ourselves; and we are not to forget that with respect to a great number of articles contained in the Confession of Faith, the very men who made it were divided, and greatly divided. Some of its articles were unanimously adopted by the Westminster divines. Some of them were carried by majorities, and some of them were carried apparently by the pressure of the Scottish army. Such is the testimony of the man who has given us the clearest and most intelligible account of the proceedings of the Assembly—namely, Robert Baillie, the well known author of certain letters. As to the compact between us and the State, it is perfectly true that the Confession of Faith has the sanction of the State and the law of this country. We need not, therefore, make protestation that we adhere to it. But, sir, while I say—and of course everybody knows—that the Confession of Faith is an Act of Parliament, I am not quite sure we are altogether correct in all our ideas on this subject. I am not quite certain that the State was imposed on the Church—in fact, it did not impose, it consented, at the request of the people of Scotland, to sanction it—but I rather think that a court of law would hold that it only sanctions the general doctrine, and does not commit itself to every particular expression or passage in the Confession. Some gentlemen, whether judiciously or not I will not enquire, have thought that the Confession of Faith is longer than is necessary. Well, Sir, is there any profanity in that? Are not some Confessions of Faith much smaller? Was not our own old Scottish Confession a great deal smaller? Is there any suspicion to the Church, or any suspicion of infidelity conveyed in a man being, for instance, desirous that the old Scottish Confession, upon which the Church was founded, were substituted for the Westminster Confession, as the Westminster Confession was adopted by the mere authority of the General Assembly, instead of the old Scottish one? I can conceive no profanity in that, or any disrespect either to the Assembly or to the Church. I do not know them, and perhaps if such exist I am as likely to know them as other people. (Laughter.) But if such men exist, they are not within the circle of my acquaintance. (Hear, and laughter.) The men who lie under suspicion—perhaps I ought to include myself—(laughter)—though I have never said anything or written anything in this sense that I am aware of, and I am conscious in my own heart that I am a most loyal and zealous friend and son of the Kirk of Scotland, (Applause and “Hear, hear.”) Let us trust each other a little. Let us not suspect that every man is a secret enemy to the Church. Let us exercise this generous con-

fidence in each other, and I believe we shall never regret that forbearance—I believe it will never make us ashamed. (Applause.)

After some remarks from Dr. Muir and others,

Mr. MACDONALD said—I have said that I would press my judgment; but I have been requested by many of my friends not to take up the time of the House unnecessarily by going to vote. (Loud applause.) I would beg leave, however, to make one or two remarks. (Cries of “No, no.”) Well I withdraw my motion. (Applause, and cries of “Agreed.”)

Mr. PHIN, having made a few remarks, the motion submitted by him was adopted as the finding of the House.

THURSDAY.

The Assembly met at 11 o'clock—Dr. Cook, Moderator.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Dr. MUIR gave in the report of the committee on Sabbath Observance.

The Hon. Major BAILLIE moved the adoption of the report.

Dr. MACPHERSON seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

THE DECLARATORY ACT OF 1865 ANENT CHANGES IN THE FORMS OF WORSHIP.

The Assembly next took up a number of overtures on the Declaratory Act of 1865 anent changes in the forms of worship. It was stated by Dr. Pirie that ten of these overtures were against the Act, eight in favor, and five either absolutely in favor, or in favour with the slightest possible modification. The overtures from the Presbytery of Deer, the Presbytery of Dumbarton, and the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, were read, as indicating the tenor of the other overtures.

Dr. PIRIE, in a lengthened speech, moved a motion, which in its last form was as follows:—

“Whereas, it appears from certain overtures from Presbyteries and otherwise, that the Declaratory Act, cap. vii. of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1865 anent Changes in the Form of Worship and other ecclesiastical arrangements, has been misunderstood in various quarters, and a more full and explicit declaration of the law is called for and necessary, the General Assembly, while adhering to its principle, recall the said Act, and in order to carry out more effectually the purposes truly contemplated in the same, enact and declare that the right and duty of maintaining and enforcing the observance of the existing laws and usages of the Church in the particular congregations or kirks within their bounds, in matters connected with the performance of public worship, and the administration of ordinances, belong to and are incumbent upon the Pres-