

ought to occupy high places here, if only we would open our doors a little to admit them—I know there are men whose hearts are moved in this question—who are willing to help the Church in it, and whose long experience of statesmanship might aid us in devising some means by which this popular feeling as to the right of our people in the election of their ministers should be secured, and secured if possible without the subversion of patronage. I confess I should be sorry to see patronage abolished; I should be sorry at least to allow the old connection between the territorial interests of the country and the nomination of the parochial clergy to be destroyed. It is not perhaps—I shall take the liberty of saying it in no spirit of contempt, but really expressing what I feel—it is not so much because I value those territorial interests in some respects themselves. That a man may possess land does not make that man estimable in my opinion. Nor do I think, with all deference, that many who represent the territorial interests of our country have been consulting their own interests of late in much they have been doing with reference to the Church of Scotland. (Applause.) I could say much upon this subject, but I forbear. I think they will perhaps find some day that it is to their own fearful peril and hurt they have entered on the course on which they have entered of alienating themselves from the religious feelings of the great commonalty of the country. (Applause.) But I prize the territorial interests for two reasons. I prize them, first of all, because it appears to me that, after all that has taken place, they are still identified, upon the whole, with the higher interests of culture, though the day may come when it will not be so. I would be sorry if the Church were to be alienated from these higher interests. Secondly, it appears to me that a Church professing to be national cannot subsist without some connection with the territorial interests of the country. It seems to me all but impossible to work out a national Church, from which a great proportion of the country is alienated. I therefore deprecate the abolition of patronage—if patronage can be maintained, and yet it is only as a last extremity—we may have to come to the extremity, but it is only in the very last extremity—that we should take up this idea, that it is impossible any longer to preserve patronage, and certainly I cannot, after the expressions of opinion which have taken place in this House this day, think that we have nearly come as yet to this position. I cannot think that we have nearly come,

even among ourselves, to the recognition of this fact, that we can no longer, consistently with the well-being and prosperity of the Church, maintain a system which has existed for at least 150 years. It is on such views as these that the motion which I will take the opportunity of submitting to the house is founded. Before I sit down I will only say a word or two in reference to the character of this movement. My earnest hope is that good may come out of this movement. (Hear, hear.) But it is difficult to foretell the issue of any such business. I see evils which may come from it. I cannot applaud, I cannot much approve some of the influences which have been at work behindhand in this matter. I know that it is the desire and expectation of not a few that if the question of patronage in our Church were only settled according to their views, that many who have left the Church, and for long most bitterly reviled it, may return. Such a return, I should say, looking at it by itself, would be a consummation I should greatly hail. (Applause.) And it might come about. I am not one of those who have been touching these secret springs, and I cannot tell on what those expectations may be founded. May I utter a warning to these very clever gentlemen who are playing in the dark—with that strange love for darkness which has so often distinguished ecclesiastics—upon the divisions and disappointments of other parties—to take care what they are doing. It is a pleasant excitement to move secret springs, but they may find it a very dangerous excitement. They may spring a mine upon themselves. Union is a blessed thing. God knows how good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. But union will prove no blessing which merely comes from ungenerous policy, from baffled ambition, and from political sources. Movements for Union which at the same time are movements for separation are hazardous experiments—movements for union which, while they look with one eye, an eye of friendship, towards those whom they wish to embrace, look with another and evil eye towards those whom they wish to crush. No blessing will come from such movements, but the curse and wrath of the Lord upon all evil. (Applause.) Christian union which is worth the name must be the union of Christian enlightenment, Christian honour, and Christian character, and not a mere accidental coincidence of selfish party interests. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

(To be continued.)

Miscellaneous.

CHURCH PATRONAGE.

(From the Glasgow Herald)

The Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland are again busy with the ever-recurring question of Church Patronage; and overtures to the General Assembly against the system are being adopted by many of them. In theory Church Patronage is as much opposed to this modern spirit as anything can well be. It assumes that a patron who may not be a member of the Church of Scotland at all—but who may

be an Episcopalian, a Roman Catholic, a Voluntary, a Quaker, or even an Infidel—is better fitted to appoint a spiritual instructor to a parish than the people to be instructed, and who are thus doomed to sit it may be for a lifetime under the ministrations of the intruded pastor. The presentee may be quite unsuited to the congregation, or the congregation may be unsuited to him, but the patronage theory takes no circumstance of this kind into account, but simply says—"You, the parishioners, are incapable of