

It is unnecessary for me to pronounce panegyric on Dr. Robertson. Men who knew him well have preached his funeral sermons. He was one of the strong men of our day: a giant in working, catholic in spirit, a man of the most thorough personal piety. He has gone, and how prematurely we may understand from the fact that his father is still hale and active. Heaven's will is best. The Church on earth, while sorrowing over its bereavement, can still give thanks that the Spirit who animated him will strengthen others to do his work. As he himself said, with almost his latest breath, while some were mourning the blow that would be given to the Endowment Scheme by his departure, "Sirs, the work will be done not by Conventions or Committees, but by the Spirit of the living God." Such is the faith that is the "substance of things hoped for." And now faith is exchanged for sight: he sees even as he is seen. He is gone; but his works do follow him. In the high places of the field he walked and worked; therefore is it well with him now. He has joined a wider "communion of saints" than there is on earth; he ranges with the great Intelligences of heaven.

Before this letter has reached Nova Scotia the Tercentenary of the Reformation will have been celebrated in Scotland by all the Protestant Churches on the day appointed. It will be almost a universal holiday; a day not of congratulation only, I trust, but of faithful enquiry into the errors and shortcomings of Protestantism. I will endeavor to have in the *Record* for February an account of the great meeting that is to be held in the City Hall of Glasgow, at which the leading ministers of the Free, U. P., and Congregational Churches will be seen uniting in the large spirit of Christian liberty and love with the Church of Scotland in its proposed celebration. In every parish in the land there will be special services during the day, and in the evening a union meeting of the ministers and members of the various Protestant Churches that may be in each parish. I augur much from such keeping of such a day. Especially is it fitting that the national, the historical Church of Scotland should do all in its power worthily to commemorate an event which really made us a nation and gave us a history. A good opportunity such a day will give of taking a calm retrospect of the past, and thence deducing wise rules of action for the future. From that day let us each and all set out on a new path, which will also be the old; filled with the spirit of love and wisdom, let us eschew the old gangrenes of Protestantism, schism and uncharitableness; striving to heal not to multiply divisions, to keep the unity of spirit and the unity of working in the bond of peace.

There are two cases of "disputed settlement" to be brought before the next General Assembly, that of the island of Tyree in the

parish of Mull, and another in Perthshire. A third case of a similar kind was threatened, that of Carriden, in the Presbytery of Linlithgow, but the presentee, who throughout has been considerably ill used, has withdrawn. Neither of the others is a matter of much magnitude. A good deal different is a new phase of the old Scoonie case. The majority were victorious at last Assembly, and got the minority's man, Mr. Logie, rejected. Their favorite is now the presentee, but the minority are in no mood to submit. They never liked Mr. Blackwood, and they like still less to have him forced upon them after this defeat. The Presbytery have sustained their objections, and at next Assembly the Scoonie case, *redivivus*, will be as fresh and interesting as ever. The evils of such disputes are of course very great, but perhaps inseparable from Lord Aberdeen's Act, no matter under what regulations it is worked; and the greatest and most inevitable evil of all is the cumbersome and expensive character of the litigation before the Church Courts. However, it is very foolish in our Free Church friends to point to these difficulties as proofs of the delusive and worthless provisions of the Act; for it is not in one case out of twenty that any difficulty occurs; and all such difficulties have their parallels, sometimes intensified too, in Dissenting Churches; and whenever the Church is convinced that the evils demand a remedy, and is agreed as to the nature of the remedy that should be applied, the door is open to seek for constitutional redress. In the meantime there is no immediate necessity for action: it does not do to be frequently tinkering at a constitution: better first to sift the subject thoroughly; and these cases of disputed settlement are the best possible means of ventilating the whole question, and of bringing the united intellect of the Church to bear upon its just and satisfactory solution.

The Free Church bugbear, the Cardross case, has advanced another step, and that step, like all the others, is unfavorable to its pretensions. Lord Jerviswoode has dismissed their pleas that the Civil Court has no competency in decisions which they choose to call spiritual; and he asserts that in their constitution as produced to him he can find no sentence which debars a member of their Church from appealing for address if they violate their own laws. They have appealed to the Inner House against this decision, but the only effect of this is to delay the matter for another eighteen months. One would think that enough time had been spent already on the outworks of the question, and that they would be anxious to come to the proof of the real questions at issue—have you or have you not broken your own laws? and if you have, has Mr. Macmillan by your constitution no redress? But no; they are many and wealthy: the complainant is single, and poor, and old. It is of no consequence to them how long