

charge, he may speedily overcome the opposition he has hitherto encountered, and gain the goodwill and affection of his parishioners.

In the meantime it will be admitted that this case has rendered it more apparent than ever that there exists an absolute necessity for a change being made on the Regulations which are contained in the Act of Assembly for the Induction of Ministers, so as to render that Act more consistent with the Act of Parliament, and so as to diminish greatly the time and expense consumed in cases of disputed settlements.

Right Reverend and Right Honourable,—

We are now about to separate and to return to our respective homes, to resume in our different parishes the discharge of our important duties.

Let me address myself, therefore, first to the ministers who are before me:—Need I say to you that a certain portion of our time ought to be devoted to our own improvement. An unlearned clergy can never long retain a hold upon the public mind. Every department of Science and Literature is open to us, and ought to be made tributary to Religion. But our favoured walk ought beyond all doubt to be Sacred Literature. If a man is not learned in his own profession, it matters little what may be his other acquirements. He needs never expect to inspire others with confidence, or to induce them to show deference to his views and opinions.

True it is we have not the same facilities for digging deep into the wells, either of sacred or profane literature, which are possessed by members of the sister Establishment by means of their stalls and fellowships. It may be that they have more men of mark among them on this account than we can pretend to; but with all the disadvantages connected with the smallness of our incomes, and the poverty of our institutions, we have men among us who, in regard to the extent as well as the variety of their attainments, would do honour to any Church with which they might be connected. The young ministers who hear me would do well to look to those bright and shining lights, so that they might have communicated to them some of their ardour, and be induced to follow them in their brilliant career.

The laborious clerical student, however, ought to beware of spending in his study or among his books the time that ought to be devoted to the sick-room or to pastoral visitation. His love of learning may become a snare to him. For the same reason he ought to beware of allowing employment of any kind to take the place of preparation for the pulpit; all that he does ought to converge to the same centre. He ought not to be occupied with his own but with his Father's business. He ought to cultivate the spirit which led the Apostle of the Gentiles to exclaim, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

The elders who are before me will forgive me if I now address a few words to them before I have done. In consequence of the nature of your office—it being a labour of love—and, likewise, on account of the elevated position of many of you in society, your influence is often far more powerful in your respective parishes than that of your ministers. What we do we are supposed by some to do professionally. What you do, on the other hand, in your Christian character you are believed to do under the direction of Christian principle. This adds greatly to the weight of your Christian exertions, and gives an attraction to them; while the effect of your example is in proportion to the measure of respect with which you are regarded by those around you.

The Church of Scotland has recently passed

through a period of severe trial. Some of us can never forget the warm sympathy, the powerful countenance, the zealous co-operation, we received at that time from our lay brethren. These gentlemen stood by us manfully, sharing the obloquy which was freely heaped upon their ministers, because they had consciences and obeyed them. They favoured us with their counsel; they aided us with their substance; they procured strength from on High for us by their prayers. Not a few of that noble band of Christian brothers have ceased to take any part in earthly struggles; but some of them still live, while mourning our losses, to share our triumphs, and are ready still, by means of their pecuniary contributions and personal labours, to uphold and extend the Church of their fathers.

Of those to whom I have been referring I have seen some in this Assembly. I say therefore to them, and to their brethren in the eldership, who are like-minded: Rest assured, your ministers feel—the congregations to which you belong feel—your countrymen feel—they owe a deep debt of gratitude to you for your unpaid services in the cause of humanity and the cause of Religion.

Right Reverend and Right Honourable,—

I shall not at this late hour say more; but, as we met and were constituted in the name and by the authority of the Great Head of the Church, in the same name and by the same authority I dissolve this Assembly. And, as, by the good laws of this kingdom, a General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is allowed to be held annually, I hereby appoint that the next meeting of the Assembly shall meet in Edinburgh on Thursday, the 19th day of May, 1859.

I presume it is now the pleasure of the Assembly that I convey to his Grace the Lord High Commissioner their respectful thanks for his good and kind offices.

May it Please your Grace,—

We are all aware that we owe much to our beloved Sovereign for the appointment of your Grace to be her Majesty's Lord High Commissioner in this Assembly. No nobleman could have been honoured by this appointment who would have been more acceptable to the Church at large, not only on account of your Grace's distinguished rank, but on account of your eminent Christian character, and the high estimation in which your Grace is held in every part of the kingdom.

The members of the Assembly feel much indebted to your Grace for the great interest you have taken in the business of the House, for your ready compliance with all our requests, and for your courtesy and kindness on every occasion. I am directed, therefore, by the Assembly to convey to your Grace their respectful thanks, and to declare that it is their sincere hope and prayer that your Grace may be long spared to be an ornament of your order and a blessing to your country.

While doing this, permit me to assure you I shall ever retain a grateful remembrance of my own obligations to your Grace for all those acts of personal kindness with which your Grace has honoured me.

Allow me to add that I trust your Grace will feel warranted to give to her Majesty a favourable report of the proceedings of the Assembly.

His Grace the Lord High Commissioner then dissolved the Assembly in her Majesty's name, and appointed its next meeting for Thursday, 19th May, 1859.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY.

The Commission of Assembly met yesterday, Dr Robertson, moderator.

CASE OF MR STEWART OF KILLAROO.

A reference was read from the Presbytery of Islay and Jura, from which it appeared that Mr Stewart, minister of the parish of Killaroo, had been proceeded against by that Presbytery for drunkenness, profane swearing and other charges, but, as he was afterwards found to be insane and confined in Gartnavel Asylum, Glasgow, the Presbytery withdrew the libel. An application was about to be made to the Sheriff for his liberation from the Asylum, and, as the Presbytery had been asked to sanction that proceeding and grant Mr Stewart leave to travel for six months, they had judged it advisable to ask the advice of the General Assembly as to whether it would be justifiable to grant such long leave of absence, and what arrangement should be made for the ministration of the Gospel to his parish in the meantime. After some conversation it was agreed to recommend the Presbytery, in the event of Mr Stewart's liberation, to make arrangements for having the spiritual wants of the parish properly provided for, and to appoint a committee to consult with the Presbytery in the matter.

PROPOSED CELEBRATION OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION.

A memorial was read from the Students' Protestant Society of the four universities of Scotland, suggesting that it would be for the interest of the Church of Christ if a Trecentenary were held in Edinburgh, 1860, in commemoration of the Reformation of the Church of Scotland.

The proposed celebration was to consist of a series of meetings, to which Protestants from all lands should be invited, and papers read illustrative of the religious history of the country before and subsequent to the Reformation—these papers to be afterwards published. The memorialists expressed the hope that the General Assembly would favourably entertain the proposal, and appoint a committee to co-operate with them in carrying the proposed object into effect.

Dr. Muir thought the matter should have been brought before the General Assembly itself instead of the Commission. Without entering into the particular suggestions of the memorialists he thought they ought to be encouraged, and that the most advisable plan for effecting that object was to appoint a committee to confer with them, and he begged to move accordingly.

Dr. Hill thought that a committee should be appointed to encourage the young men, and gather information as to the manner in which the thing might be done without entering into details. He hoped their Dissenting friends would join with them on such occasion. He seconded the motion.

The Moderator thought they ought not to commit themselves in the matter. He proposed that the Commission should heartily approve of the object of the memorial, and appoint a committee to consider the matter, and put themselves in communication with the memorialists, and all other parties favourable to the object, and report to next General Assembly all suggestions for carrying it into effect in a manner befitting the solemn and deeply interesting event proposed to be commemorated.

Dr. Muir having signified his acquiescence in the Moderator's motion, it was unanimously adopted.

The Commission then adjourned.

AUSTRALIA.—Out of the gross population of 400,000 there are 165,000 members of the Church of England; 80,000 Roman Catholics, 70,000 Presbyterians and English Dissenters, including Methodists; 41,000 Congregationalists and Baptists; and 40,000 of other sects.