

villages. Nor are those who thus despise ordinances merely the ignorant and brutish. Many of them are thinking steady men, fluent talkers, anxious to propagate their opinions, ready and eager for debate, and fertile in resource.

Is this state of matters to continue? Are the masses to be left to such teachers? It is, alas! true, that in too many cases there is a great gulf between them and us. How little comparatively speaking, do we know of their feelings and of their wants? How rarely do they speak frankly and open their hearts to us? How often do they suspect and misconstrue our motives? But this should not be so. The minister of religion should be the first instrument of civilization. As such, then, we can not be indifferent to the social and moral condition of the people. We should seek to become thoroughly acquainted with their views and feelings, if we would win their affections and find our way to their hearts, if we wish to become the instruments in regenerating the nation and regaining those thousands who are now outcasts. We must shew them that we sympathize with them, and that we are ready to do all we can to ameliorate their condition. Infidelity is at present claiming to be the champion of social reform, and foremost in such movements are many who make no pretensions to holiness, but who, though they fear not God are eager in shewing their love to men. Should this field be abandoned by us, or should not their zeal rouse in us that higher principle to benevolence which should actuate Christians? We should never forget that, as ministers of the National Church, we have responsibilities not merely in respect to those who attend our ministry, but also in regard to the careless and sceptical who despise it. We should remember that now, when the standard of the Gospel is applied to everything, and when Christianity is claiming its right as the ultimate arbiter of all questions, the absorbing social and educational topics of the day should engage our attention, and the Church should let her voice be heard both in promoting what is right and opposing what is wrong—for if we confine ourselves to obstruction merely, our motives will be misconstrued, and we shall lose our legitimate influence.

And, further, as the Christian ministry has been instituted for the instruction of men in every age and country, it should adapt its teaching to its position, so as to be able to repel the assaults of impiety and error under whatever forms they appear. We may sneer at the spirit of the age, but unless we accommodate ourselves to it, as far as our Lord's command permits, we come short of the apostolic injunction, and thus fail to accomplish the good we might. Even if the spirit of the age were thoroughly evil,—which it is not,—we should understand it so as to be able to encounter it, for we may learn from history current, as well as history past. Instead, then, of setting ourselves to rail at it, we should grasp it with a vigorous hand, and make it subservient to our work, assured that, though a bad master, it may be made a useful servant. Let us, in short, to use the words of an able writer, "adapt ourselves to the circumstances in which we are placed, not by withdrawing from the pulpit the great themes of the mediatory system, and substituting for them a rationalized Gospel, but by such a general line of conduct, with reference to the circumstances of a growingly enlightened age, and such a strain of preaching as shall lay hold of the public mind, and bring it under that doctrine which, and which alone, is the power of God unto salva-

tion. Let there be a just estimate formed of the mental powers of the common people,—a judicious and hearty sympathy with their real wants and wishes.—a studious consideration of the means by which they may be brought back to the sanctuaries of religion, which they have deserted. For these purposes, let us seek correct information as to the state of their intellect, their prevailing habits, their peculiar temptations, their literary tendencies and aspirations, and the books they read,—let there be all this, but let it be only as so much power put forth to bring these masses under the power of the Gospel. Oh! it were a noble triumph of the modern pulpit, to see men of strong principle and self-controlling wisdom gathering round them the most boisterous elements of our social atmosphere, conducting the lightnings with which its darkest thunder clouds are charged, and shewing to the nations they have saved that the preaching of the cross still is the power of God.—*Gordon's Synod Sermon*

#### The Church of Scotland Endowment Scheme.—Great Public Meeting.

A meeting of the members and friends of the Church of Scotland was held in the Parish Church, Elgin, on Thursday, 18th September, for the purpose of hearing a deputation from the Endowment Committee, and to organise an extensive and efficient agency for carrying out the scheme in the North—His Grace the Duke of Richmond in the chair—and on the platform surrounding the noble Duke were—Charles Lennox Cumming Bruce, Esq. of Dunphail, M. P.; Sir Andrew Leith Hay of Rannes; Admiral Duff of Drummuir and Hopeman; Sir Macdowall Grant, Esq. of Arndilly; Sir A. P. G. Cumming of Altyre and Gordonstown Bart.; the Hon. T. C. Bruce, Commissioner to the Earl of Seafield; Lord Alfred Paget; John Paul, Esq., M. D., Elgin; the Rev. Dr. Robertson of Edinburgh; Rev. J. Robertson of Mains and Strathmartin; Rev. Dr. Brander of Duffus; Robert Simpson, Esq. of Cobairdy; Rev. John Walker of St Andrews-Lhanbreyd; Rev. James Sellar of Aberlour, Moderator of the Synod of Moray; and the Rev. F. Wylie of Elgin.

Among the clergymen and other gentlemen present we observed;—Rev. Dr. Duguid, of Glass, Dr. Bisset of Bourtie, Sutherland of Dingwall; General Sir Geo. Brown, K.C.B.; W. H. Leith, Esq. of Palmcross; Major Massie, Grant Lodge; R. Grant, Esq. of Kinorth; Wm. Yeats, Esq. of Aquharanie; Peter Brown, Esq. Linkwood; James Stephen, Esq. M. D. of Bruceland; Robert Walker, Esq. Leuchars; Dr. Geddes, of Laurel Bank; Dr. Taylor, Elgin.

The proceedings having been opened by praise and prayer, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Sellar,

The noble chairman rose and said—He felt, as he was not a member of the Church of Scotland, that some apology was required of him for occupying the proud position of Chairman of the very large and influential meeting now assembled. When he was asked by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, the zealous and talented Convener of the Church of

Scotland's Endowment Scheme, to preside he looked upon it as a command, and when he considered how deeply he was interested, both hereditarily and personally, in the welfare of the northern counties, he felt that, in acceding to the request, he was only proving his gratitude to the great talents, perseverance and zeal manifested by the Rev. Dr. in prosecuting a scheme which, in his (the Chairman's) humble opinion, will be most conducive to the highest and best interests of Scotland, our fatherland. While there were gentlemen of well-known talent and eloquence prepared to address the meeting, it would become him to detain them with any remarks of his. In the hope that his apology for occupying the honourable position he now did was received by the meeting, he would ask the Rev. Mr. Wylie to read letters of apology from several gentlemen who could not be present, and would then introduce the Rev. Dr. Robertson of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Mr. Robertson of Mains and Strathmartin to address the meeting.

The Rev. Mr. Wylie then read letters from the following noblemen and gentlemen:—The Rev. Norman M'Leod of Glasgow, detained by severe illness.

Lord Saltoun, subscribing £100.  
Lord Cawdor, subscribing £100.  
Sir George S. Abercromby of Birkenby Bart., subscribing upwards of £200.

Wm. Murray, Esq. of Geanies, subscribing £50; and £50 by his brother, Mr. Murray, banker, Dingwall.

Mr. Wylie said he had several other letters of apology, but he would not further detain the meeting in reading them.

The Chairman then called on the deputation to address the meeting, when

The Rev. Dr. Robertson rose, and addressed the meeting as follows;—My Lord Duke, In addressing this meeting I trust I may be allowed to say that it affords me the highest satisfaction to see the chair filled by your Grace. I think I may congratulate the meeting as well as myself, on the circumstance that we have a chairman who has ever been keenly alive to the best interests of his country, and who has proved himself the worthy successor as well in his attachment to our national church as in every other respect, of a nobleman whose memory will long be revered in the North of Scotland, whose name indeed, will be a household word in the mouths of our children and children's children. It must be matter of very deep thankfulness to us all that the successor of the ever-to-be-lamented Duke of Gordon is of kindred spirit to him, as well as possessed of his broad domain. I feel assured my Lord Duke, that he would have cordially sympathised with your Grace in promoting the object in support of which we are now met. This object is to make such provision for the religious destitution of the country as shall render the Gospel of Christ its own witness to the conscience of every man who claims to be our fellow citizen. But, is there just cause, it may be asked, why we should undertake a movement of this char-