

which had now taken place, and he was of opinion that the time had now come when the House should go the length of appointing a committee to consider the whole of the subject referred to in the overture before the House. He thought there were various grounds for the appointment of such a committee. In the first place, although it was quite true that they had not before that Assembly any complaint of the introduction of any particular innovation in any one individual case, it was notorious that such innovations had been introduced, and were now practised to a very considerable extent, and he was afraid that there was throughout the country a growing and somewhat uneasy feeling, that the desire or the tendency on the part of particular congregations to introduce these innovations at their own hands, is in some degree inconsistent with that decent order, and tended to lessen the bond somewhat of that decent order which ought to prevail in an Established Church. If that were so, he thought that was a ground for appointing a committee, that the working of that committee and the investigations to which it might be directed might have a tendency to set at rest that uneasy feeling. But he was not prepared to go further than merely to appoint a committee. He thought the House itself ought to take care, in appointing a committee, not to commit itself to a declaration of general principles which might be doubtful, and which might seriously embarrass them afterwards. That was the point on which he differed from Dr. Pirie. The conclusion he came to was, that the committee ought to be appointed, and that its hands ought to be left open to consider the whole subject, without being fettered by any pledges on the part of that House as to particular principles; and he begged to submit the following resolution:—"That the General Assembly remit the overture to a committee with instructions to consider the same in connection with the whole subject and the laws and usages of the Church, and the present practice of their congregations in regard to the administration of public worship throughout the Church, and to report to next General Assembly the result of any inquiry the committee may institute regarding these matters, and at the same time report whether in the opinion of the committee any and what legislative measures on the part of the Church seem necessary or expedient in the circumstances; and the General Assembly earnestly recommend to ministers and congregations to refrain in the mean time from all innovations, and all such forms and ceremonies and doings of whatever kind in reference to public worship as seem likely to impair the peace and harmony of particular congregations."

Sheriff BARCLAY had much pleasure in seconding the Procurator's motion.

The Rev. MAXWELL NICHOLSON rose amid cries of "vote, vote," and said that the General Assembly was this day seeking to

cure evils that had risen up by the application of judicious remedies. If there was want of respect for their Church in some quarters—if some who were once adherents of their Church were passing into other Churches, they would not be stayed by a miserable playing at Episcopacy such as had been introduced into some congregations. (Cries of "Oh oh," hisses, and interruption.) There were ministers of the Church followed, as always was the case in such circumstances, by some of the weaker brethren—(renewed hissing and uproar)—who sought in this way to stay the tendency towards Episcopacy; but was that tendency to be stayed by the introduction of a prayer-book such as that they had a specimen of laid on the table of the Assembly in the year 1859? (Hisses.) The only prayer-book of which they had any knowledge in this Assembly was that one, which, it might be remembered by his fathers and brethren now present, was unanimously condemned by the General Assembly. (Cries of "No, no," and renewed disorder.)

Mr. BREWSTER, Kilmany—It was not the prayer-book, but its use, that was condemned. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. NICHOLSON said it was a prayer-book to be introduced into the worship of the Church that it was condemned. Was it by the introduction of such prayer-books that the tendency to Episcopacy was to be stayed, or were they to stay that tendency, as his respected father Dr. Bisset would recommend, by the introduction of stringed instruments? Dr. Bisset had not told them what stringed instrument he would prefer. (Laughter.) It appeared to him that this day they were making themselves a spectacle to their enemies. (Cries of "Oh, oh," and hisses.)

Professor PIRIE having briefly replied.

The Assembly then divided on the motion of Mr. Cook and Dr. Bisset, when the former was carried by a majority of 157 to 41.

Dr. PIRIE having withdrawn his motion, that of Mr. Cook was declared to be carried.

The Assembly then adjourned till evening.



Preaching and Preachers.

It seems to be a debateable subject, whether in point of public eloquence, the present days are equal to those which have gone by. If we are to believe the public essayists, the writers of leading articles in the leading journals, we now live in degenerate times. The pulpit is losing its influence and power over the educated classes, while the great masses are ignoring, or have ignored to a great extent, the profession of religion altogether. In order to fortify this position, they point with something like an air of triumph, to the