

mere formalities. It will disperse the gatherings at Sabbath schools, empty the family circles of the Sabbath eve, and, in short, change the whole aspect of Christian society amongst us, and hasten forward that course of iniquity which is the disgrace and ruin of any land.

The Committee trust, and are, indeed, fully assured, that the General Assembly being pleased to receive this Note from them, will accede to the desire which they respectfully and earnestly express to the Venerable Court, that the Assembly renew the solemn declaration of anxious concern on account of the prolonged endeavours that are made to weaken and destroy in the public mind a religious sense of the Sabbath obligation; that they announce their satisfaction at the success which, through the Divine blessing, has recently followed the means employed to prevent the sanctioning, by Parliament of flagrant desecrations of the Lord's Day; that they again call upon the office-bearers and members of the Church to take opportunities, by all competent methods, of promoting reverence for the Sabbath and the religious observance of it; and, further, that the Assembly now (should they in their wisdom see fit) send a petition to Parliament, deprecating all relaxing of the Sabbath law by Legislative interference, and praying for protection and countenance to the due keeping of the Lord's Day, as directly instrumental to the piety and welfare of individuals, and to the stability and general good of the nation.

In name and on behalf of the Committee,

(Signed,) WILLIAM MUIR, Convener.

Dr. HILL added that the Report which they had just heard laid them under a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Muir, whose services had been so great in this matter. He proposed, as the deliverance of the Assembly, the following motion:—That the Assembly approve of the diligence of the Committee, approve of the note, and agree to the recommendations it contains: in particular, the Assembly resolve to renew the solemn declaration of the anxious concern of the Church of Scotland on account of the endeavours made from time to time to weaken in the public mind a sense of the sanctity of the Sabbath; the Assembly have learned with high satisfaction the success which, through Divine Providence, has recently followed the means employed to prevent the sanctioning, by Parliament, of the flagrant violation of the Lord's Day, and, in the view of the determined efforts making of having Sunday amusements practised on a wider scale and in a more enlarged form, resolve to send a petition to Parliament, praying for its protection and sanction to the due keeping of the Lord's Day; and again call on office-bearers and members of the Church to take every opportunity, by all competent methods, of promoting reverence for the Sabbath, and the religious observance of it. The motion also proposed the re-appointment of the Committee, with thanks to Dr. Muir and the Committee for their unwearied attention to the subject.

Mr. W. COOK seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

DEPUTATION TO TURKEY.

Mr. WILSON, Paisley, brought this subject before the notice of the Assembly. He stated the reasons which rendered the collection of information from the East at present a matter of great importance to the Jewish Committee. The Rev. Messrs. McLeod and Macduff, of Glasgow, were eminently qualified to undertake the task, and they had offered in the handsomest manner not to put the Church to the smallest expense if they were sent as a deputation from the Assembly.

Dr. PIRIE was disposed to move that the matter be referred to the consideration of the Jewish Committee, with instructions to correspond with the Presbytery of Glasgow.

Mr. W. COOK thought the proposal of the two gentlemen named was so liberal and large-hearted, and the occasion so urgent, that the Assembly would accept it with gratitude.

Professor SWINTON thought it would be quite satisfactory to the parties referred to if power was given to the Jewish Committee to appoint them as a deputation. Their offer was such a liberal one, that he would look on it as a great misfortune if it was not accepted with the enthusiasm which it merited of the Assembly.

Dr. NAPIER, Glasgow, said that the summer months were those in which the gentlemen named could be best spared from their parishes.

Dr. PIRIE moved that the very liberal proposal by the two members of the Presbytery of Glasgow to go as a deputation to Turkey, and the general propriety and necessity of sending a deputation, shall be referred to the Jewish Committee, with authority to communicate thereanent with the Presbytery of Glasgow if they see cause.

Dr. HILL hoped that the two gentlemen named would, if requested by the Jewish Committee, consent to go to Turkey. They were unquestionably the very best men that could be appointed.

The motion of Dr. Pirie was then agreed to, and the Assembly adjourned till the evening.

EVENING SEDERUNT.

The Assembly resumed at eight o'clock—the Moderator presiding.

CONVENERSHIP OF POPERY COMMITTEE.

Dr. FOWLER intimated that the Popery Committee had met that afternoon, and had chosen as Convener in room of himself, he having accepted the Convenership of the Colonial Committee, the Rev. W. Robertson, of New Greyfriars, Edinburgh.

BONA-FIDE ACTING ELDERSHIP.

The Assembly then took up the Overture sent down by last Assembly to Presbyteries, proposing an alteration on the certificate of representative elders in the Assembly to the effect of omitting the words "bona fide acting" elder, and thus to admit persons who had been ordained elders, whether in the active discharge of their functions or not. A majority of 40 to 20 Presbyteries disapproved of the change, and a discussion arose on the question whether it should be re-transmitted.

Mr. STEVENSON, Forfar, moved that the Overture be not re-transmitted. He trusted it would never become a rule of the Church that a person might be allowed to sit here as a representative elder who did not also take part in the duties of his own Kirk-session.

Mr. STEWART, Liberton, seconded the motion, which was adopted on a division by a large majority.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Mr. CHEYNE gave in the Report of this Committee. It stated that the balance in hand at last April, of the general collection made in 1854-5, amounted to £782,—the contributions from parishes, £108; and the annual grant from Government, £1026; making a total of £1932. After the payments of salaries, and debts due by the Church at the date of last Report the liquidation of which had been sanctioned by the Assembly, there was left in hand the sum of £379 9s. 11d. Since the last meeting of Assembly contributions had been received from about 100 parishes.

Mr. SHAND moved the adoption of the Report and the re-appointment of the Committee, with an injunction to parishes to make a contribution towards the fund.

Dr. HILL alluded to a statement mentioned in the Report,—to the effect that, through the liberality of the Elders' Union, the Parochial Committee were able to discharge their duty,—as one that ought to have prominence given to it.

Mr. J. COOK thought the Assembly were under a deep debt of gratitude to the Committee, and he hoped that some means would be adopted to get more contributions.

ADMISSION OF DISSENTING MINISTERS.

Dr. RUNCIMAN gave in a Report from the Committee appointed at a previous diet to consider the application of Messrs Dickson, Strachan and Home for admission to the Church. All the parties named had been connected with the Free Church, and the Committee, after giving a brief narrative of the circumstances in each of the cases, recommended that Mr Dickson should be admitted to the position of a probationer, and the cases of Mr Strachan and Mr Home to the favourable consideration of the Assembly.

Dr. R. LEE thought the Assembly could not, on the information that had been afforded to the House by the Committee, agree to the admission of these parties to the Church. With reference to the case of Mr Dickson, he moved that that gentleman be examined by a Committee.

After some discussion,

Dr. ROBERTSON intimated concurrence in the motion of Dr Lee for the examination of Mr Dickson by a Committee.

Some members of the Assembly thought that, as Mr Dickson had complied with the regulations of the Assembly, the recommendation of the Committee should be complied with.

Principal LEE said the regulations in question were intended to apply to Dissenting ministers, and he thought Mr. Dickson was not included in this category, as he had, in the first instance, been licensed by the Established Church.

Mr. MUIR moved that, as Mr Dickson had obtempered the regulations of the Assembly, the recommendation of the Committee be agreed to.

Mr. P. BLEWSTER seconded the motion.

The vote was then taken, when 34 voted for the motion of Dr. Lee, and 58 for that of Mr Muir.

With reference to the application of Mr Strachan, a motion by Professor Swinton, that that gentleman be admitted as a probationer of the Church, was agreed to without discussion.

On the motion of Mr Irvine, Arbroath, Mr Home was also admitted as a probationer without a vote.

DEBTS ON CHAPELS.

Professor SWINTON reported that, during the past year, the Committee had been able to release six chapels from debt besides assisting others. Collections had been received from only some 30 parishes during last year. He regretted to say and he had most urgently to request that the Assembly should order a collection in aid of their funds during the current year. He stated that it was exceedingly desirable that Presbyteries should be relieved as soon as possible from the burden which these debts had laid on many of them, and hoped that collections would be received during the current year from every parish throughout the Church.

Dr. ROBERTSON moved the approval of the Report and impressed on the Assembly the desirableness of the debts referred to being discharged as soon as possible.

Rev. Mr. IRVINE, Arbroath, seconded the approval of the Report.

It was agreed to appoint a collection.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Principal LEE read a proposed declaratory Act on this subject, approving of the Overture that had been submitted, and enjoining all ministers of the Church to observe the recommendations contained in it respecting the reading of the Holy Scriptures at each diet of public worship, and calling their attention to the regulations of the Church on that subject, as set forth in the Directory for Public Worship.

The proposed Act was approved of.

ENDOWMENT SCHEME.

Dr. ROBERTSON stated that the revenue of this Scheme for the years was now £44,261, 18s. 11d. He had that day received several contributions, including £400 from the Earl of Selkirk, being