

speaking importance to the present comfort and everlasting welfare of the people of this country, and members of this church, that the Scriptures should be circulated not only in pure and accurate editions, but under such safeguards as will command confidence in their accuracy, and consequently, keep up the reverential feeling with which the Sacred Volume is generally and justly regarded—the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr humbly overture the Venerable the General Assembly of the church of Scotland to take this subject into their immediate and earnest consideration, and to adopt such prudent and energetic measures as to their wisdom shall seem meet and expedient, in order to secure and perpetuate to the inhabitants of this land the free and unlimited circulation of the Word of God, in all the purity, correctness, and authenticity, which can, under the Divine blessing, be attained by the employment of human means.”

The Rev. Principal moved that the Assembly present a loyal and dutiful address to the Queen and petition both Houses of Parliament on the subject, praying that measures may be adopted to secure the accurate printing of the Bible after the expiration of the Queen's Priater's patent, and appoint a committee to adopt such measures as may appear to be necessary for insuring that Scotland may be provided with accurate copies of the Scriptures.

After a few words from Mr. COLLINS and Dr. LEE, the committee was appointed.

OVERTURE ANENT PRESBYTERIAN CHAPLAINS OF REGIMENTS.

Dr. SMYTH moved an overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow to the Assembly, to petition the Legislature that Presbyterian chaplains and schoolmasters be appointed to Presbyterian regiments.

Dr. BRYCE seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

Dr. MUIR said, that he held in his hand a letter subscribed by the Moderator of the General Synod of Ulster, containing a copy of a memorial on the subject sent to the Secretary of War. In the concluding sentence, he says, “there can be little doubt that the Church of Scotland will move in the matter with the determination that becomes her, and if so, a happy issue will not be long delayed.”

Dr. LEE suggested that the motion should include a clause to the effect, that the religious instructors to be appointed to the Presbyterian soldiers of the British army, should be confined to the licentiates of their own church, and those of the Synod of Ulster, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at eleven o'clock, till eleven on Monday forenoon.

Monday, May 27.

Letters were read from Lord John Russell, thanking the Assembly, in name of her Majesty, for a Report relative to the Poor-laws in Scotland; and intimating that copies of the Report would be sent to each Presbytery in Scotland; as well as to the Assembly; and that a number would be sent for sale at a low rate to Messrs. A. & C. Black. The Moderator returned thanks to the Commissioner for the gift of the copies of the Report.

Dr. CHALMERS then said—I rise to propose that the following gentlemen should be appointed a committee for the purpose of considering in what way the privileges of the National Establishment, and the harmony between Church and State, may remain unimpaired, with instructions to confer with the Government of the country if they shall see cause:—The Rev. the Moderator, Dr. Muir, Mr. Candlish, Dr. Gordon, Alex. E. Mortreith, Esq. J. Maitland Hog, Esq. Dr. Mackellar, J. J. Hope Johnstone, Esq. Sir C. Fergusson, Bart. James Smith, Esq. Jordanhill, Dr. Smyth, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Principal Macfarlan, Robert Bruce, Esq. of Kennet, Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas, Claud Alexander, Esq. Dr. Cook, Principal Dewar, Mr. Robert

son of Ellon, J. C. Brodie, Esq.; G. Buchan, Esq. Alexander Dunlop, Esq.

The committee was then appointed, with the addition of Dr. Chalmers, the Procurator, and J. Stewart, Esq. and with power to add to their numbers. Dr. Chalmers Convener.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Several overtures having been read on the subject of Sabbath observance, it was agreed to forward an address to her Majesty, a memorial to the Treasury, and petitions to both Houses of Parliament on the subject—the petitions to be presented by Lord Haddington and J. H. Johnstone, Esq.

EMPLOYMENT OF PROBATIONERS.

Dr. CLASON gave in the report of a committee, the object of which was to inquire as to how far the probationers could be made available for extending the influence and usefulness of the church. It appeared, by returns given in the Presbyteries (several had not made any), that there were 592 probationers residing within their bounds; and making allowance for those not returned, and for those out of Scotland, the committee calculated that the whole number of licentiates could not be fewer than 760. Of the 592 returned, 276 were employed as assistants or missionaries, 148 as teachers, 131 were unemployed, and 37 were engaged in secular employments, and 65 of the whole number could preach in Gaelic. The committee submitted, that they should be re-appointed, and authorised to issue schedules to Presbyteries, with queries as to the number, names, qualifications, and occupations of all licentiates within their bounds, requesting answers to be forwarded to the committee before the meeting of next Assembly—that they should also be instructed to forward returns of all the destitute portions of their parishes, and of the number of probationers who were willing to labour in those localities. By these means, the committee would be able to devise some means in order to counteract the increase and prevalence of spiritual ignorance in our land.

The Assembly approved of the report, and voted thanks to the committee, which was re-appointed in the terms proposed.

STRACHUR CASE.

Mr. MACFARLANE read the report of the committee to which the case of Strachur had been referred. The committee recommended that an assistant should be continued during Mr. Ferguson's incumbency—to be filled up in future out of a list of three licentiates proposed by Principal Macfarlan, Dr. Muir, and Mr. Paton, it being understood that Mr. Tulloch shall not be put on any such list, and that Mr. Ferguson be relieved from any existing inconvenience from putting the arrangement into effect; and that the case be remitted to the Commission, by whom the arrangement shall ultimately be carried into execution, should any of the parties object.

PRESBYTERIAN SOLDIERS.

Mr. DUNLOP read the draft of the petition to Parliament, ordered by the Assembly on Saturday to be prepared on the subject of Presbyterian soldiers. The petition was approved of.

REGULATIONS ON CALLS.

Mr. SHAW STEWART rose to present the Report on Regulations on Calls. He said that the Regulations on Calls had not been approved of by a majority of Presbyteries; and, looking to the position of the church, the committee thought that the becoming course for the church was to allow matters to remain in their present state. The Regulations had hitherto existed altogether as an interim act; and the committee were of opinion that the Regulations should be again transmitted to Presbyteries, and passed as an interim Act, so that matters should be maintained in their present state. Returns had been received from thirty two Presbyteries; eight of them disapproved; nine approved absolutely; while fourteen suggested various alterations; and one made no report. Many

Presbyteries which formerly approved had not done so now from some misapprehension.

THE PROCURATOR begged to move that the General Assembly re-transmit the Regulations, and re-enact them as an interim act; but having by a resolution declared that it is deeply impressed with the unhappy consequences which must arise from any collision between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and holding it their duty to use every means, not involving any dereliction of the principles and fundamental laws of this constitution to prevent such unfortunate results, appoint a committee, &c. and feeling that it is inexpedient to do anything which may tend to embarrass the committee then appointed, do direct Presbyteries to report all disputed cases to next General Assembly.

Mr. DUNLOP supported the Procurator's motion, and maintained that the four chief Courts of the country, the Criminal, Civil, Fiscal, and Ecclesiastical, were independent of each other.

THE ELDERSHIP.

The overture on representative elders having been approved of by a majority of Presbyteries.

Mr. DUNLOP moved that the overture be now adopted as a standing law of the church.

Dr. COOK approved of the overture in many respects; but objected to its vagueness. He did not mean, however, to offer any opposition. The motion was then adopted.

ASSEMBLY HALL.

Mr. DUNLOP read a report from a committee recommending the Assembly to disapprove of the site for the Assembly Hall, and, as some new circumstances had transpired, to re-appoint the committee.

The report was approved of.

A long discussion ensued with regard to the funds of the church; but ultimately, at the suggestion of Mr. Robertson of Ellon, a committee was appointed to consider the most prudent means of raising funds for defraying the expenses incurred in the actions at the instance of the Earl of Kinnoull.

The committee on Theological Teaching recommended that an application should be made to her Majesty for the institution of chairs of Biblical Criticism in the Universities. The report, which contained some other suggestions of a subordinate kind, was agreed to.

The PROCURATOR made a verbal report with regard to the position of the Lethendy case.

Mr. CANDLISH moved that the Assembly do record their approbation of the conduct of the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and their sympathy with their brethren of that Presbytery in the painful circumstances in which they are placed.

It was also remitted to the Commission to advise with the Presbytery as to the course to be adopted by them.

Dr. SMITH seconded the motion, which was adopted.

The minutes of the sederunt having been read over, all causes not decided by the commission of 1838, and all that had not been decided in this Assembly, were remitted to the commission which is appointed to meet on Tuesday.

The MODERATOR then addressed the Assembly as follows:

RIGHT REVEREND AND RIGHT HONORABLE. It has been the becoming and useful practice of my predecessors in this chair, to close the proceedings of the General Assembly with an address, intended to carry home to the hearts of those over whom they presided, the practical lessons which these proceedings were calculated to teach, that they might bear along with them a salutary impression when about to return to the superintendance of the flocks among which, as ministers and elders, the great Head of the church had appointed them to labour. I could have wished, in following this worthy example to have had an opportunity of addressing you at a time when your attention was less pre-occupied, and your spirits were less exhausted by weighty and long-protracted duties; and I do feel that, at this late hour, neither your patience nor my own strength will permit me to trespass long on