

tracts from the Journal of the inspector in reference to these facts. Speaking of the school at Culnacnoe, he observes—"I was highly pleased with the appearance which the children made in this school, both with the correctness with which they read and spelt, and also with the amount of Scriptural knowledge which they have acquired since your teacher came among them. You will be happy to hear that your teacher (as this has been his first station) has given, not only satisfaction to me, but also to the people among whom he labours. Some of his scholars have been awakened to know and understand that they have immortal souls. About 300 adults attended to see and hear the children examined. When addressing them, there were some, bathed in tears, rejoicing; others crying out, being distressed in mind, having not as yet attained to that liberty that is in Christ Jesus, so that a person would be reminded of the noise of the shout of joy, and the noise of the shout of weeping which was among the children of Israel when the temple was rebuilt."

[To be continued.]

FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

SPEECH OF THE REV. DR. BURNS—CONCLUDED.

For twenty years after the revolution every thing went on pleasantly and edifyingly. By the Act of Union of 1707 that settlement was consolidated and confirmed. Scotchmen have been accused of being more careful of their religious than of their civil liberties; and so jealously careful were our ancestors of that day of their Church, that before a Committee for treating for an act of Union was appointed, before a single step was taken even for meeting to discuss its terms, they insisted on the English Parliament passing an Act by which its rights and privileges as settled at the Revolution, were guaranteed for all time, and it was enacted that no condition of Union should ever affect it. This was called the Act of Security, and it was ratified by the Parliament of Scotland in 1706, and by that of England in 1707. This incident in their history was of the greatest importance to the understanding the merits of this struggle. The provisions for the liberties of the Church were engrossed in the Act of Union, by which they received a third sanction, and, finally, the Queen was required to take an oath to preserve inviolable the whole. That was their Magna Charta, and the Church of Scotland pleased herself with the hope that her troubles were over, and her liberties forever secured. But human hopes are evanescent, and within four years of the passing of the Act of Union, a conspiracy was formed against her in the Parliament of Great Britain in the introduction of an Act of Patronage, by which no matter what were the condition or position of the patrons, with only the single qualification of the possession of certain lands, and without any condition or reservation, they were restored to what they were deprived of at the Revolution, and, by being restored, the people of Scotland were deprived of the high privilege of electing their own pastors, guaranteed to them by the Act of Union. This had always been felt as a most severe blow at the religious liberties of the country. The Assembly of Scotland was never at all consulted in the matter, and when its representatives in London were about leaving the place towards the close of the session, they only incidentally heard of its passing. They were too late to be heard in the House of Commons, but they were heard before a committee of the Lords, and the celebrated Dalrymple, one of the originators of the Act of Union, appeared as counsel for them, and denounced its infringement. On the division which took place, five of the English Bishops voted for the Church of Scotland, but they were outvoted, and it is a remarkable coincidence that the majority against them was precisely the same as that in the same house in the division on the Free Church question last year—72. In consequence of that, the patronage was again inflicted on the Church, and a chain hung round her neck. The Church made every effort at a time when sending resolutions to London was very difficult and expensive, but never could

prevail on the Government to repeal the obnoxious act. But, that though unsuccessful, she never gave up the struggle, and renewed it year after year, until finally, opposition was put to rest by the ascendancy in the General Assembly of the "moderate interest." Though yielded practically, it was not until after half a century's agitation, and even then a zealous minority, led by Witherspoon & Erskine, recorded their dissent from the conclusion. And though the patronage law had passed, none imagined that it was not the right and duty of the Assembly to defend the people's rights, and protect them in the refusal of an objectionable presentee; far less did it enter any man's mind that the Church by exercising her unquestioned jurisdiction would expose herself to fines and imprisonment, and to rebuke from the civil courts. All that was expected by the highest legal authorities was that a particular minister might expose himself to deprivation of his temporalities. If a presentee was opposed by his parish, the assembly drew the conclusion that it was not for the edification of those whom he was to instruct to proceed with his appointment. The law then provided that the emoluments of the living should accrue to the patron, and that the expense of maintaining a minister appointed as acceptable to the people should fall upon them. Three such cases had actually occurred, and in all the Courts of Law said they would not interfere in the matter of ordination, as that was one peculiarly ecclesiastical. Such was the doctrine held until the late decision of 1839. He had shown that until that time, though patronage was introduced, the Church was still considered the possessor of a large share of power, and the people looked up to it for protection. But now that it had no power to exert, now that it was utterly helpless, they felt it their duty to secede; as, had it still possessed power, and exerted it as formerly, they would have felt it their duty to remain and struggle on. When an absolute majority of two to one is obtained, and put forth in defence of the people's rights, the Courts of Law declare that the assembly has no power to protect these rights, and that that of the patron is absolute. Therefore it was that they seceded. Two things had always characterized the position of the Church of Scotland. The first, that it had always claimed to be the judge exclusively of all matters appertaining to the ordination to the ministry. The second, that the constitution of the Church was essentially republican, and that the people at large had a share of power, and were entitled to be consulted in the choice of a pastor. The first was a power which every Bishop of the Church of England claimed, and though that Church was called an Erastian one, he believed it to be much less Erastian than the Church of Scotland was now. In this respect the Bishop had ample power—no power on earth could compel him to ordain a minister against his conscience. In the case of the Bishop of London the other day, it was decided that he could not be compelled to ordain or to assign any reason for ordaining, and that the appeal from his decision lay not to any temporal court, but to the convocation, which is a court purely spiritual. That right of ordination, the Church of Scotland said, was a spiritual right, of which the Church was as purely the judge as of the fitness of any individual to be admitted to the Lord's Table. They had always admitted the right of the temporal powers to dispose of the temporalities, but they denied their right to fine them, and prosecute them for defamation in the exercise of their spiritual jurisdiction. There was a clear distinction between the right to dispose of the temporalities if they did not ordain, and that of interfering with the ordination, and compelling it under penalties. The voluntary alliance between the Church and the state did not impose any dependence between the one and the other. In that respect the Church of Scotland always took up a position midway between the claims of Papacy and Erastianism—distinct from the other. The papacy went to the extreme of ruling the law on the temporalities; Erastianism made the church subject to the State in spiritualities. The Free Church held the medium position. It asked for no control in civil matters, but it claimed exemption in matters purely spiritual. And was anything more purely spiritual than the ordination of a minister?—The Reverend speaker here enlarged eloquently on the spiritual responsibilities it involved. Could there be a

more sacred and spiritual duty than that of laying on their hands and dedicating a minister to the service of Christ?—Ordination was not always connected with a benefice, nor did the church say that the temporalities could not be taken away by the same power that gave them. But they said to the State, if our views do not coalesce, and we cannot serve you without sacrificing our souls, we leave you your benefices—we cannot lay our hands on any man to ordain him to office for which we think him unfit to be ordained. It was impossible for them to do so in common sense, or in conscience, or in knowledge of scriptural duty. Their resistance did not come until the Court of Session had reviewed the acts of their Presbyteries, removed their suspensions, destroyed the independence of their spiritual jurisdictions, and bound the chain of Erastianism about their neck. Erastus was a German physician, who being tired or incapable of his own profession, took to writing bad theology. His doctrine was that, while a Church was not established, it might do as it pleased, but the moment it was established, it had no jurisdiction at all, but must bend in all cases to the law of the magistrate. That they maintained, the Courts and the Legislature had involved them in, and in this the Residuary Church, as it was called, and he thought it a most appropriate name, had acquiesced, and laid her neck under the feet of Cæsar. The Bible was their guide as a Church; and that the Acts of Parliament should interpret the Bible, was at the very least, Unitarianism, for it made human reason the guide to the interpretation of the bible. Obedience to the law, as thus laid down, involved also a breach of the vow to go and deliberate according to the word of God, and to be responsible to the brethren for their decision. For this involved a mental reservation, another vow on the part of a Minister, to do nothing in his official character as judge, but what the Court of session found to be his duty to do. What reciprocity was there between the two sets of vows?—How could the former vow be taken sincerely, with a reservation that whatever be their mind in Christ, if the Court of Session say differently, they should give up the mind of Christ and cling to the mind of the Court of Session? The civil courts did not pretend to be guided by the word of God at all, but merely by the statutes of the realm. They relied on expediency, not on regard for the glory of the Head of the Church; not on his will, but on human expediency. The church was cramped and re-trained in its whole course, and told to evade the duty of God's church, and the rights of Christ, as the head of all. The evils of Erastianism were manifest in every church, and the same contest waged as fiercely in the days of the covenanters, when their fathers, because they would not acknowledge James or Charles as head of the church of Christ, were compelled, not merely to abandon their temporalities, but to lay down their lives as witnesses of the truth. It has been said, might not the church have saved the peace of the country by not passing the Veto Act, or by giving it up when they found it illegal? That act was one recommended by the highest authorities in the land. Shortly after the first accession of a liberal government to power, a committee of the assembly was appointed, and the great crown officers were advised with as to the most fitting mode to secure their rights. Lord Moncreiff drew the bill. Lord Brougham, then Chancellor, said it was one of the noblest things ever devised, was the safest course to pursue, and fraught with all blessings. It was carried by large majorities, nor did a single Presbytery or patron record dissent. For six years not a word was heard to disturb the harmony which succeeded it. Then a patron, the Earl of Kinnoul (we believe) lent his name, not that he contributed one penny to the expense—lent his name to a suit raised to disturb it. They would remember that the Court of Session was not unanimous, that the majority against it was not a large one, and that the minority included almost all the respectability and learning it possessed, numbering the names of Lords Glenelg, Jeffery, Cockburn, Fullarton, and Moncreiff. And, but that a doubt was raised on a question purely of form, the decision would have been on the other side. It was the opinion of Lord Macdonald that if the question had been raised in the form of a call and not of the veto, he must have voted with them. But if it had been so