

general views which she entertained of them in the short summary which was published at the time as her confession of faith. In the following century, a special benefit was enjoyed in the labours of that Assembly of Divines that met at Westminster, in 1643. The men who were specially called to that Assembly, and who took part in its proceedings, brought to the task which was assigned to them great talents, matured wisdom, deep piety, and extensive learning; and having applied themselves with diligence to their work, after lengthened deliberations, sent forth, as the result of their investigations, the documents which are well known as the Formularies of the Westminster Assembly, supporting at the same time the views which they thus promulgated, by references to those passages of scripture on which they were founded. These documents having been carefully examined by the Church of Scotland, and found to be in entire accordance with her own principles, and distinctly founded on the word of God, she expressed her approval of them, and adopted them as her own standards, not, as some have ignorantly alleged, thereby superseding the authority of the word of God, but as in subordination to that word, and as expressing for herself the views which she entertains of the truths set forth in that word: and the moral and religious improvement wrought upon the country, speedily bore testimony both to the value of those principles which she had been inculcating, and to the success with which her operations had been brought to bear upon the population.

The Church of Scotland had early manifested a deep sense of the importance of education, and with such means as she possessed, earnestly prosecuted the enlarged views of John Knox with regard to the "godly bringing up of the young." It is true, she was but ill seconded by the civil authorities of the land in her efforts for this object, but she persevered in them notwithstanding; and in the exercise of her own influence succeeded in erecting parochial schools to a considerable extent over the country, long before they acquired that standing which they at length obtained, when, in the Reign of William and Mary, they were endowed by the authority of the State. These, however, being at length established, were wrought under her superintendence with great effect. Scotland soon exhibited what, in the right sense of the word, was an educated population. Her comparatively scanty resources were diligently improved; within her own locality, the means of comfort were greatly increased; and her sons, passing into other lands, by the acuteness of their well cultivated minds, by the intelligence which they manifested, the general steadiness of their conduct, and the strength of those moral and religious principles in which they had been trained, became easily distinguished; and illustrated in their own experience, and in the advantages which through them accrued to others, the scripture declaration that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

It is true, notwithstanding the intelligence and religious character for which she may still be distinguished, Scotland presents now, and for more than a generation back, an aspect in this respect considerably changed; but that is just because her educational interests, and these as founded upon moral and religious training, have been greatly neglected. Her population had been rapidly increasing, while no adequate provision was