

[IMPORTANT DECISION AS TO MANSES IN SCOTLAND.]

A DECISION has been given in the Court of Session recently that will have some influence on the action of stingy proprietors hereafter. The manse of Insh, Aberdeenshire, had been repaired in 1860 at a cost of £270. In 1868, the Presbytery of Garioch found that the expense of further repairs and additions would be £700, and that the heritors should be assessed accordingly. The heritors took the matter to the Court, and the Lord Ordinary decreed a smaller sum. The minister took it then to the inner Court, and they have awarded the full amount. Lord Kinloch concluded the judgment in these words:—"It would have been with much regret had I found myself compelled to come to any other conclusion. *It is of great importance that the residence of the minister of the parish should be suitable to his position, and comfortable for his family, not merely as a tribute due to a most valuable and useful class of men, but with reference also to those moral influences which are very closely connected with suitable and comfortable dwellings. The manse of the minister should be the dwelling-house of a gentleman.* This is very properly attended to in the construction of new manses. But there are some old fabrics, like that in the present case, which, utterly unfit as they are for comfortable or even decent residence, have strongly built walls, and obstinately refuse to go into decay. These often resist—and resist successfully—the judicial hand. It is fortunate if, when unable to order a new manse, we can at least authorise those additions and alterations which will to some lesser extent enable the old building to discharge its proper function, and exhibit its true character."

THE LATE REV. DR. MONLAWS, OF PEEBLES.

ON the 27th of January last, one of the grand race of the Church of Scotland ministers of the olden time passed to his rest. He was little more than sixty years of age; but though his constitution was of the strongest, his untiring energy, and the great toil he always had to endure, broke him down. Dr. Monlaws was distinguished as a scholar, a preacher, a worker, and a man of the purest and loftiest character. As an original and striking preacher, he had not his equal in the Presbytery. The county paper says of him:—"He possessed in particular the gift so rarely to be met with of speaking to his fellow-men on Sunday just as he would have spoken to them on Monday; and this joined to a pervervid style of oratory, gave a freshness and a reality to his sermons which riveted the attention of his hearers. Disdaining the aid of manuscript and the trammels of clerical phraseology, he threw himself heart and soul into his subject, and proclaimed the blessed Gospel which he loved with a noble eloquence and fearlessness of speech that reminded one of the prophetic vehemence of Knox before Queen Mary and her assembled Lords. It is seldom that a voice so bold, so genuine and manly, is heard from the well-bred but somewhat timorous pulpit of modern days."

During his last illness he exclaimed—"I have never failed to hold up Christ." And on the question being put—"But you don't trust in that?" he replied, "Oh, no, I trust in Christ alone." Ere he passed away to his rest, he preached to an imaginary congregation of his people two earnest sermons, one of them on the shortness of time; and then, exhorting them all to come to Christ, affectionately bade them farewell.

It is distressing to know that before this good man was laid in his grave, an agitation was got up by a clique of busy bodies to have his assistant appointed to the vacant charge; and that in consequence, an indignation meeting was called by the body of the congregation to protest against any step being taken in the matter until it had been well considered, and a regular meeting called by the proper parties.