

Shall not her children in all parts of the earth rise up and call her blessed ?

You no doubt rejoice with us, brethren, in contemplating the highly cheering aspect which religion at the present time manifests within the Church of Scotland. We refer to this mainly in as much as it affords us an opportunity of mentioning a fact that needs to be well pondered by many professing Christians in America. A simple, frequent, full and zealous announcement of the doctrines of the Cross has been the grand means which the Spirit of God has made efficacious in maintaining and promoting this state of things in the Church of Scotland. Indeed the ministers who have been the most successful there in awakening the minds of men do not seem ever to have thought of any thing that was for a moment to be put in comparison with the simple preaching of the Cross in converting sinners. This they have regarded as the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation.

Wherever there is a genuine revival of religion it will produce all its holy fruits in rich abundance. And it affords the greatest pleasure to be able to refer to some of those fruits which furnish to us abundant evidence that the Lord has by his own precious truth been accomplishing a great work for some years past throughout all the borders of the Scottish Church. Who can doubt this who thinks with enlightened candour of the efforts which that Church is now making to free herself from all unhallowed secular influence—her high and holy determination to know no master in spiritual things but Christ—her zealous efforts to purify herself from all heresy, and the noble stand she is taking against Popery and the insidious and bland infidelity of the day. Nor should the sacrifices she is now making to provide the means for the spiritual instruction of the destitute portion of her people be forgotten. Within the short space of three years nearly a million of dollars has been raised to build new churches : at the same time vast sums have been collected to aid weak congregations in many of the British Colonies : in sending the gospel to the heathen she is labouring with great zeal and perseverance, and many of her most accomplished preachers have gone forth to the work of the Lord in the dark places of the earth. These things are cheering to every christian heart :—and, brethren, are they not peculiarly so when they can be traced so directly to the vivifying influences of those doctrines that make a crucified Saviour all in all to perishing sinners ?

We were grieved, christian brethren, to learn from your letter that errors and irregularities had crept into your Church which at length assumed

such an alarming aspect that the Assembly had been under the necessity of dissolving certain Synods which had become most infected by heretical notions and antipresbyterial practices. Of all this we were well aware before we received your letter. At the same time we were well pleased to have your own statement of the case, and we beg to say that to that statement we gave entire credit. It is likely that our opinion on the course you have pursued may be to you of little moment. Yet as a sister Church we are constrained to say that we fully approve of the steps you have been compelled to take. We speak advisedly—with a full knowledge of the case, and free from all uncharitable feelings and prejudices when we declare that—if Presbyterian Church government was to be maintained among you—if the truths of the Gospel were to be proclaimed in their simplicity and purity—if the worship of the sanctuary was to be preserved from wild and unscriptural novelties—if the most fatal disorders and errors were to be driven from your communion—we cannot conceive what else you could have done than pass the disowning act. Yea, brethren, looking at that act in all its bearings we regard it as neither harsh nor unjust. Truly if you will permit us to speak plainly, we think your sin has not been hasty severity but culpable forbearance. While men slept, the enemy sowed tares. And here we cannot but remark, that to us it appears a very plain matter that when persons abandon the standards of a church, or repudiate the essential doctrines of its confession, the course which honesty points out is quietly to withdraw from that church. To remain in its communion,—to seek shelter behind the standards they treat with obloquy and the constitution they labour to subvert, is equally at variance with order and integrity.

We cannot, brethren, contemplate the decision that has recently been given against you in the civil courts without sorrow and astonishment. That the case should ever have been carried to a civil tribunal must be matter of surprise to all who hold that the church ought and does possess sufficient powers in her own judicatories for deciding all questions of doctrine, discipline, and government. But let the issue before civil courts be what it may, your triumph depends not on it. A victory has already been gained worth every sacrifice which you may be required to make. A church that holds fast the truth may lose her property and suffer much temporary embarrassment ; yet in His eyes who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks she is rich,—all glorious within, and eminently powerful for good. A church becomes poor, and weak, and despicable, only when she