

their covenant God. The end of all this, I shewed them, was that all the nations of the earth should notice the manifestations of God's power and love to a people who serve Him, and thereby be led to abandon their idols, and to return to the only living and true God.

I then proceeded to shew them, from the whole history of Israel and Judah, that they have broken the Lord's holy covenant, transgressed His laws, and thereby provoked His wrath to punish them severely, and thus make them an example of His justice to all those nations to whom they ought to have been an example of His mercy. Hence, and particularly from the duration of their punishment and alienation from God, I proved to them the necessity of a divine Redeemer to deliver them from the guilt, punishment, and power of sin. I then went on to show them that the Lord Jesus is the Redeemer, and that by His meritorious death, He has once for all made full atonement not only for their sins, but also for the sins of the whole world, and that by faith in Him we become partakers of the blessings which He has promised and prefigured in the Old Dispensation, and fulfilled in the Gospel.

ENDOWMENT SCHEME.

ABSTRACT OF ANNUAL REPORT TO GEN.

ASSEMBLY BY THE COMMITTEE, May 1859.—

The special object of an Established Church is to make provision, that the Gospel shall have free course and be glorified, within the limits assigned to the Establishment. This object is not to be interpreted, however, as if it were the business of the Church to follow a course of proselytizing. In a country, the inhabitants of which have vindicated for themselves the rights of conscience, the privilege belongs to every man, provided he interferes not with the just liberties of his fellow-citizens, of worshipping God in the way that most approves itself to his own mind. Where the Church holds that those who have withdrawn themselves from her communion, have apostatised more or less from the purity of the faith once delivered to the saints, it is her duty, no doubt, to endeavor to reclaim them in the spirit of meekness. But where the faith is held in its purity, dissent having respect only to government and matters of form, the course required of her, as a general rule at least, is that of non-interference. To those who hold the like precious faith with herself, but worship in separate assemblies, her office-bearers and members will best discharge their duty by studying to maintain with them the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. A Church of Christ, while it may lament what it deems unnecessary divisions, yet cannot but rejoice in the success of her labors which tend to promote the glory of God and the good of souls. But it belongs peculiarly to an Established Church to take the oversight of the ignorant and the careless; and will such a Church discharge with fidelity

the duty imposed upon it, if it leave the careless without warning, or the ignorant without instruction. Then only will its functions be adequately fulfilled, when to every family, and indeed to every individual, within the limits assigned to its labors, it has testified the Gospel of the grace of God.

There can be no doubt whatever, that the sacred trust mentioned has been committed to the Church of Scotland. "The power of her Presbyteries," as has been provided for by the Act 1592, ch. 116, "is to give diligent labors in the bounds committed to their charge, that the kirks be kept in good order; to inquire diligently of naughty and ungodly persons; and to travail to bring them in the way again by admonition, or threatening of God's judgments, or by correction. It appertains to the Eldership, to take heed that the Word of God be purely preached within their bounds, the sacraments rightly administered, and the discipline entertained."

Exclusive of Royal Bounty churches in Argyleshire and the Isles, the number of unendowed churches in Scotland, in connexion with the Established Church, amounts at present to about 200. There is reason to believe that a portion of these churches, probably a fourth of the whole number, might be retained with advantage a little longer, as Home Mission preaching stations.

The definite object, therefore, assigned to the Endowment Committee, is the conversion of about 120 of our unendowed churches into parish churches by Sir James Graham's Act. In undertaking this work, the Committee at first proceeded on the assumption, that, if they could collect a central fund of such an amount as should enable them to stimulate local exertion, by offering a grant of £1000, or thereby, for the endowment of each church that should otherwise be provided with the requisite balance of endowment, they might entertain a reasonable hope of accomplishing their object. They succeeded in raising a central fund of upwards of £59,000; and so far the hope was not disappointed. More than 50 new parishes have now been erected by them, almost all of which were erected through the aid of grants of the aforesaid amount from the central fund. But as was mentioned in former Reports, it was soon discovered by your Committee, that the number of parishes to be erected on this plan was limited. The plan required a local subscription in each case of upwards of £2000, a sum which, in the circumstances of the inhabitants of a large majority of chapel districts, it was found impossible to raise. At the same time, if the object of your Endowment Committee was to be carried out, the necessity of erecting most of those districts into new parishes was not to be denied. Your Committee were thus led to devise what has been called the Provincial Branch of the Scheme, the character of which was explained in several of their later Reports. Suffice it to say here, that it was the design of this branch to raise by subscription in each of