

ing, and can award them the exact amount of credit which is their due. We bid them God speed in their good work, and as Presbyterians, pure in doctrine and evangelical in spirit, we hold out to them the right hand of fellowship; but, we will beg leave to differ from them in this one important point—to differ from them in a christian and affectionate spirit, earnestly hoping, that, while differing, we may never disagree.

But, it may be asked, of what avail is it to you this profession of the Establishment principle, while in this country your practice is voluntary and must ever remain so? We answer this question, Scotch-wise, by asking another. Of what avail is it to profess the truth? or, what is the distinction between right and wrong? We believe the principle of State support for religion to be the true principle, and Voluntaryism we discard as a gross and dangerous error. This is the utmost we can do for the good cause in our present circumstances, but this is equivalent to a great sum; for the belief and maintenance of the truth, even in profession, must ever amount to all the struggle and half the victory. Our fathers could do no more than we now do in the days of Popish and Prelatic ascendancy, when the dungeon yawned for them and the horrors of the stake and gibbet were daily suspended over their heads. And we, like our fathers, will adhere to the truth through good report and through evil report. Should the day be far distant—nay, should it never arrive, when our principle may assert its own practice, we will nevertheless stand fast by it, cling to it with the utmost tenacity as our only safeguard against the dangers of wreck and storm. But we are not without hope. So long as we possess the sympathy and support of the Parent Church, with all her might of Presbyterian purity, of internal vigor, of manifold resources and missionary zeal,—so long, and only so long, as we cherish and invite that sympathy and support, may we and dare we hope. We have already abundantly experienced the benefit of her Colonial Scheme, may we not also, at some not very distant day, have practical acquaintance with her Endowment Scheme. That Scheme has already wrought wonders. Scores of churches, both in crowded cities and in thinly peopled rural districts of the old country, have been permanently endowed and created into parishes, while in desolate localities, remote from the Kirk of the civil parish, churches have been built and equipped with full parochial powers and privileges—and all this by the Endowment Scheme of the Church of Scotland. As soon, therefore as she has provided her own population with sufficient church accommodation on Endowment principles, may we not reasonably expect that she will then transplant her Scheme among her Colonial offspring. This is a consummation which we devoutly wish for and which we also confidently anticipate. Our country is still in the infancy of her available capacity and resources, but rapidly

advancing towards their complete development; and we trust that, at whatever time the advice and assistance of the Parent Establishment may be tendered to us with the view of effecting the endowment of our Churches, and so ridding us for ever of the perpetual worry, the incoherent and spasmodic effort and demoralizing tendency of the Voluntary system, we may be found equal to our share of the task and willing to perform it. Strenuous and sustained exertions will then be necessary if ever—both individually, congregationally and collectively, we will be called upon to lend a vigorous helping hand to the good work, and we will do it cheerfully and effectually, knowing that thereby we shall secure to ourselves all the blessings and benefits of State endowments, with none of their inconveniences, and so place our Church, at once and for all time coming, upon a permanent and rock-fast basis.

But let us revert from the pleasing contemplation of our future prospects to the stern realities of our present position. Having adopted the Voluntary system as an evil necessary in existing circumstances, let us make it serve as efficiently as possible our immediate and pressing need. It is, at best, like a complicated machine, whose parts will not cohere and whose entire organization suffers from chronic disorder—like a locomotive engine afflicted with rheumatics, grievously affected with the asthma, and mightily ruptured in the abdomen. The pilot, who would presume to guide such a melancholy piece of mechanism, must not only be skilful in his own peculiar vocation, but must also be thoroughly versed in the arts of the artificer in brass and iron, and thoroughly furnished, first, with a stock of said artificer's tools, in order that, when a break-down threatens, when a piston goes crazy, or a crank gives way, or an increased leakage presages speedy dissolution, he may be ready, with the aid of all these appliances, and with all his strength and craft, to patch up and tinker at the crazy concern. But we have adopted this system with all its defects, and therefore we must earn our bread by it. We must work, one and all, work zealously, indefatigably, perseveringly. Let us but direct half the zeal and half the industry which we daily lavish upon secular affairs towards our spiritual interests and the cause of our Zion, and our success will surprise the most sanguine. Difficulties, we will encounter, numerous and perplexing obstacles will arise in our path, vast and threatening, but let us never for one moment stay in our onward course, for in the eyes of the truly wise and brave, difficulties are made but to be overcome, obstacles, but to be surmounted. We are tired, however, of repeating the eternal cry of—Work, work! Give, give! We urge the absolute necessity, in a scriptural and religious point of view, both of working and giving. We are told that a judgment throne will be erected at the last day, before which we shall all be summoned to give an account

of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be bad, and we are further told that it will be then and there demanded of us, if we have ever, or if we have never, given a cup of cold water to one of Christ's suffering little ones. Viewed in the light of that judgment day and the awful tribunal, the task which has devolved upon us, and upon every member of our Redeemer's Church, becomes a most imperative, a most solemn and sacred duty. If we neglect it we do so at our peril, for, let us be well assured, is no work of supererogation—not a work which may be done or left undone just as expediency may suggest or selfish ease and interest may seem to demand. We are all morally, religiously and by every other claim and necessity bound and pledged to this duty, and our very existence must depend, now and ever upon the manner in which we redeem this our pledge and fulfil these the terms of our bond.

Here we would leave the appeal, conscious that it must go home to the heart of every christian man and woman who will seriously ponder over it, but that, in connection with it, we would direct the special attention of our people to the 'Lay Association,' which has been so lately organized among us. This is a Scheme devised by laymen and committed into the hands of the laity. It proposes to raise money by an easy and popular method, to enlist the sympathies, and to elicit the energies, of the poorest as well as of the richest, to afford scope for the vigor of the strong, to infuse vital heat into the veins of the lukewarm, to rouse up the sluggard, to lay upon every man's shoulders his due proportion of the work, to allot to every man his share of the burden and heat of the day. Such a Scheme—so genial in its tendency and so universal in its operation—must succeed. At all events it must not fail. So terrible a disaster must not even be contemplated—must not be within the range of possibility. Apart from every other consideration what would they think of us at home, whence we expect so much, were this to be chronicled among our backslidings, or how would they not exult in Gath and rejoice in the streets of Askelon. But we cannot now speculate on what we ought to do in reference to this Scheme; if we speculate at all it must be concerning what we must do. We are already responsible for it—the Association is actually among us—it has sprung into existence, and, should it not succeed up to our most sanguine expectations, we know exactly who must wear the blemish and who must bear the blame.

Reverting to the Voluntary system and its pernicious effects on the body ecclesiastical, we would briefly indicate one or two out of a numerous brood for the purpose of preserving our people, as much as possible, from their deleterious influence. An error which must be combated now or never, has crept in among us, has been in existence among us for an indefinite period, and is