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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

(Concluded from *The Guardian Extra*, July 17.)

Friday, May 24.

Dr. CHALMERS read the report of the Assembly's Committee on Church Extension.

The following is a statement of the leading facts of Church Extension during the last five years:—

In 1835 there were reported	62 churches,	and	£65,626	1	11½
— 1836 —	26 ditto		32,359	12	5½
— 1837 —	67 ditto		59,311	6	0
— 1838 —	32 ditto		46,683	1	4¾
— 1839 we announce	14 ditto		25,413	5	4¾

Making in all 231 churches, and £231,398 7 3

Dr. LAIRD moved that the report be approved of, and that the committee be reappointed with its former powers, and that the cordial thanks of the Assembly be given to the Convener, Dr. Chalmers.

Captain TROTTER seconded the motion.

The MODERATOR—Although I well know that the approbation of your own mind and conscience, in extending the interests, along with the accommodation of this Church, is your dearest and your noblest reward, yet I cannot but believe that you are not insensible also to the approbation of this church; and it is most gratifying to me to be the organ of this Court in communicating to you their renewed and most hearty acknowledgements, for your most zealous and most efficient services in this great cause. To see the servant of Christ devoting the talents, the opportunities, the influence with which the great Head of the church has endowed him—to see him devoting those talents, those opportunities, and that influence to the great cause of Christianity, and of the salvation of souls—must, under all circumstances, and on every occasion, be a source of pious satisfaction; but when we see the servant of Christ so employing those talents, those opportunities, and that influence, as to become an instrument of great and extensive good to the church—when we see his Christian labours conducted with wisdom and crowned with success—it is the duty and the privilege which we owe to ourselves and to the church—while we give the glory to the great Head of the church as only due to him—it is our duty and our privilege to render to that individual, as an humble instrument in the hand of Providence, the tribute of our gratitude. Continue, Sir, to pursue the important course which you have so successfully begun—continue to “spend and be spent” in the cause of our great Head. And may God spare your valuable life—may he preserve you in your mental and in your bodily vigour, till there shall not be one spot in our beloved Zion unblest with the Christian labours of a pious pastor, and the active and efficient parochial agency which you contemplate along with it! The sympathies, and the hopes, and prayers of this church go along with you in this great cause. May the blessing from on high rest on your head—may the unction of the Holy One, as you have so beautifully expressed it in your report, rest upon you, and all who are engaged in this great and good work! and may you continue to be an ornament to the society in which you dwell—a pillar of the church of Christ, of which you are a member! And when God is pleased to call you from this earthly field, may you have the happiness of meeting with thousands and tens of thousands of those who under your influence, and by your instrumentality, have been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus!

Dr. SMYTH hoped he would be indulged in offering a single suggestion. He was sure there was not an individual in the Assembly

who had not listened with pleasure to the address they had just heard from the chair. A cause of such magnitude, to the present and everlasting interests of their fellow men and fellow Christians, demanded the special gratitude of the Assembly to Him who had so long spared that distinguished individual, whose report they had just heard, to carry forward his important labours. It was seventeen years, this very week, since he (Dr. S.) had the privilege of accompanying that distinguished individual to Glasgow; and he well recollected with what intensity of feeling he was then devoting his mind to that great cause; and it was especially due to him that they should offer up their earnest prayers to God, who had continued him as an instrument for so much usefulness, and spared his valuable life for still more abundant labours for the glory of God in that cause. He begged pardon for intruding himself on the notice of the Assembly. He could not do any thing like justice to the intensity of his own emotions on the subject; but when he considered how much they owed to that individual, and how much the Church of Scotland owed him, and whilst they esteemed him very highly for his work's sake, let them, with united hearts, thank Almighty God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, and implore that His blessing might rest upon him. Hear, hear.

The MODERATOR was quite sure that the proposal that they had just heard met with the wishes of this Assembly; and he thought he might add, that there was no member of Assembly who would not join with him in requesting that their devotions might be conducted by Dr. Smyth himself. (Hear.)

Dr. SMYTH then offered up a very impressive prayer. Mr. BURNS proposed the addition of Dr Mackintosh M'Kay of Dunoon to the Church Extension Committee, and eulogised that gentleman for his persevering and successful exertions to promote the cause of religion both at home and abroad.

Mr. ALEXANDER E. MONTEITH remarked, that there was nothing in the report that had afforded him greater satisfaction than the proposal it contained to engraft on the scheme of Church Extension the employment of the probationers of the church, as it removed an apprehension of the church, as it removed an apprehension of the enormous expenditure of money in the erection of churches, would not be followed with a corresponding increase of the means of religious instruction to the people.—The proposed plan was calculated entirely to afford the very best answer to this objection, as affecting the scheme of Church Extension.

The following overture was then taken up—
OVERTURE ON SEAT RENTS.
“Whereas a practice prevails in some churches within the bounds of this Synod, and in other parts of the church, of letting or selling the seats, even in those parishes whose ministers are upheld by teinds, and whose churches are built and upheld by heritors, as “a burden under which they have acquired and hold their legal, and subversive of the privileges of the people of Scotland, and has been condemned by the Assembly in 1830—It is humbly overtured by the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, that the General Assembly devise the best method for removing the evil complained of, and giving effect to the said declaration of 1830.”

Mr. CLARK of Inverness said he would rest contented with merely moving, in the present state of this question, that the Assembly appoint a Committee to enquire throughout all Scotland into the extent of the practice of letting seats in churches, into the origin of the practice, into

the arguments by which it is defended, and into the means that ought to be adopted for the removal of the evil, and to report to the next General Assembly. The question was one of a very grave nature, and required all the deliberation they could afford it.

After some remarks from Dr. Brown of Aberdeen, and Dr. Flemming of Neilston, the motion was agreed to.

PROBATIONERS.

An overture having been read from the Synod of Perth and Stirling, representing that the number of theological students had greatly diminished, and suggesting, with the view of providing a remedy, that an act should be passed requiring each Presbytery to support a bursar.

Mr. WALKER supported the overture in a speech, which was very imperfectly heard, as was the whole of the subsequent discussion.

Dr. COOK moved that the overture be remitted to the committee on theological education, with instructions that they pay the most marked attention to the subject; to report next year.

Mr. PAUL seconded the motion, which, after some remarks from Dr. BURNS, was adopted.

DEPUTATION TO THE HIGHLANDS.

Mr. GRANT of Leith read a report of the deputation which had been sent to enquire into, and report upon, the state of the parishes in the Presbytery of Skye. It gave a melancholy account of the state of some of the parishes, in some of which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not even dispensed once a year, and others not once in nine or ten years. In some parishes numbers of even grown up persons were unbaptised, and throughout the Presbytery of Skye it was calculated that there were not fewer than 1000 unbaptised persons. The report went at some length into the causes of this state of things, and suggested that as these were not fully expiated by the last deputation, from various causes, it should be reapportioned.

Dr. DEWAR said the church was under great obligations to Mr. Grant, for the very able report he had given on the subject. He was aware of his ability to discharge the duty imposed upon him, and of his regard for the interests of the church.

After some farther conversation, Mr. DUNLOP moved that a committee be appointed, to whom the whole of this matter shall be submitted for consideration, with power to correspond with all the different ministers in the Western Isles, and with power, if necessary, to send a deputation, and to report to next Assembly.

Agreed to. The thanks of the Assembly were then given by the Moderator to Mr. Grant, for his zeal and activity as the Convener of the deputation.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POKERY.

Dr. MUIR, as Convener of the committee on Pokery, suggested that the committee should be renewed with additional names, and with the power of opening up a correspondence with the sound evangelical churches of the Reformation, that additional facts might be gathered as to the enquiry for which the committee was appointed.

The suggestion of the Rev. Doctor met with the unanimous concurrence of the House. The committee was renewed with its former powers and instructions, and with authority to correspond with other evangelical churches and intelligent persons, beyond the bounds of the church, with the view to the collection of additional facts, in order that measures should be adopted to counteract the evils which were ascertained, and such as might afterwards come to the knowledge of the committee.