

We understand that application has been made for a missionary to labor within the bounds of the Presbytery of Halifax.

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FROM OUR SCOTCH CORRESPONDENT.

Very few of your readers, I dare say, have seen the General Assembly of the Kirk. Were they only present on some great field night, they would certainly be more anxious to have a similar Court on their own side of the Atlantic. The hall is right noble: but the scene in the inside is nobler far. An impressionable man cannot help being stirred: one who thinks is awed. Three or four hundred of the wisest and most reverend of the sons of the National Church have met as her supreme judges and legislators. Every decision is felt from Edinburgh to the Hebrides: it puts down or sanctions innovations: it authoritatively originates universal movements, or smiles encouragingly on small ones.

When you enter the Hall its appearance is not so sombre as might have been expected. The black coats of the members are strikingly relieved by the bright dresses of the ladies in the throne gallery; and besides, the Lord High Commissioner has generally some scarlet coats about him. In the background, again, is a somewhat dingy mass of students and licentiates; and next to them the motley public, of all conditions, hues and ages. The side-galleries along the area are filled with ministers and elders who are not members. The general aspect is dignified and quiet, but by no means freezing.

The last seems to have been the best Assembly that has met for some years back, both as respects the ability and eloquence of the speakers, and the importance of its decisions. The subject of lay-preaching came up, on account of the Synod of Aberdeen having censured Mr. Smith of Greyfriars for admitting into his pulpit a layman who gave revivalist addresses. Mr. Smith, a plain, heavy-looking man, defended himself in a very fair speech, very badly delivered. Dr. Pirie, who appeared for the Synod, is quite a different style of man. With a strongly-marked, rather plebeian expression of countenance, and strong Aberdonian accent, he is sure to attract a stranger's attention. There is a good deal of humor, and still more cheeriness, about his face, and both his head and his speeches indicate plenty of hard, clear, logical talent. If he commenced an argument with one, I am certain he would argue fiercely all night, never be at all out of humor, and perhaps end with confessing that he had proved more than he had intended. His logical head would carry him further than his heart would consent unto. You can guess how quickly he compressed Mr. Smith's general reasonings into mathematical shape, and then annihilated them. However, he had different

men to deal with when Dr. Robertson, Dr. Norman McLeod, and Principal Tulloch appeared on the stage. The first of these is an extraordinary man;—one of those self-educated prodigies, of whom Scotland has ever had her fair share. First a ploughman: then a schoolmaster: then a minister: now a D. D., a Professor, a Dean of the Chapel Royal, and one of the leaders of the Church. A man possessed of sound common sense to an extent rare in those days, and of irresistible energy; proved by the fact that he has raised some £340,000 for the Endowment Scheme; yet with a crudity of ideas on some points that is perfectly charming. He has the largest head I have ever seen, and the strongest lungs I have ever known. At 2 o'clock in the morning, after hard work all day, he will still speak with the same invincible freshness and strength which has hours before wearied out his opponents on other questions; and next morning he is first at the Assembly. His Aberdonian accent is perfect, and he seems proud of it.

Dr. McLeod, again, you all know. In wit, and impassioned all-embracing eloquence, he is unrivalled. A truer friend of all Nova Scotians, too, is not in Scotland.

Principal Tulloch is the youngest of those who are called the leaders of the Assembly, but he is always listened to with the most profound attention. The dignity and earnestness with which he speaks, his rich full voice, and above all, the philosophic breadth and high-toned liberality of his sentiments, render him one of the most admirable speakers I have ever listened to. He is one from whom the Church and the literary world expect much, his first-fruits having given promise of a rich harvest.

Opposed to these on Mr. Smith's case were, Dr. Robert Lee, who appears desirous of atoning for his own innovations and liberality by eagerly condemning such a spirit in others; Mr. Phin, a hard-headed, combative champion of law and order from the banks of the Gula, a man who has a seeing eye, and can express what he sees, but who speaks too often and too pugnaciously; and others of less note. A motion was proposed by Dr. Robertson, suited to unite all parties, and by which, as Dr. Lee was sorry to say, "Mr. Smith lost his case formally, and gained it virtually." The resolution affirmed the law of the Church, which prohibits laymen from unwarrantably performing the solemn services of the sanctuary; but to this was added a clause declaring that such declaration extended only to the stated services. Dr. Robertson affirmed that it was only part of the Christian liberty of a minister that he should be allowed to invite pious laymen to speak their hearts to the people; and that he would rather have his hand chopped off than draw up a resolution that would prevent them doing this.

The Assembly was occupied with other important questions, most of which were settled satisfactorily. By far the best debate was on Dr. Robert Lee's innovations, which I may