

more tightly round the emaciated body, that the chief may do the thing bravely, and astonish the Sahibs by the greatness of his magnificence.

The Duke arrived on Thursday of last week (Dec. 23rd) and since then, and for all this week, we hear and will hear of nothing but processions, fireworks, illuminations, fêtes, chapters, levees, drawing-rooms, balls, &c., &c. But stop: if I attempt to give you an idea of the way they do the "big thing" here, I must plunge into a sea of troubles out of which the few inches of paper I have left will never float me. So I will have done; and, if I feel in the humor for it, will give you some account of these matters in time for next *Record*.

C. M. GRANT.

ANTI-PATRONAGE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE Committee has published a statement on the history of patronage, its evils, the attempts of the Church to get rid of it, and the present attitude of the Church and people of Scotland towards it, especially for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, who are asked either to bring in a bill for its abolition, or to look favourably on any measure having that end in view. The statement, it is understood, was drawn up chiefly by Dr. Norman McLeod and Dr. Pirie, the Conveners. We have not seen it, but find it spoken of very differently by different authorities. The *Scotsman* implies that much of it is borrowed from Dr. Buchanan's "Ten Years Conflict"; Dr. Cook dissents from it as giving a one-sided and unfair historical view of the whole vexed question; and Principal Tulloch seems partly to agree with him. Both of these gentlemen have in consequence written to the newspapers, disclaiming any responsibility in the matter. Others, again, extol the statement as a masterly document. Many express surprise that it does not even profess to answer Mr. Gladstone's question as to how the proposed change will be looked at by the Dissenters who at different times have gone out from the Church on the ground of Patronage, and whose views the Church as a whole is now adopting. For ourselves, we cannot see how the Committee could have ventured to speak for those religious bodies. They must speak for themselves, and take the responsibility of saying their yea or their nay.

At the same time, it is a total mistake to suppose that because men adhered to the establishment in the past, they therefore approved of patronage. There may be many improvements that we see to be desirable in our house, but if we cannot get them made, we don't therefore pull the house down. We wait patiently till we can get them made honestly. And time does work wonders. Our standpoint to-day must be far in advance of what it was twenty years ago. And had the Non-Intrusionists remained in the Church, it wouldn't have taken so long to bring things to their present ripeness.

Neither do we consider patronage to be so very crying an evil. It is antiquated, and contrary to the spirit of the age, but it is absurd to talk as if it were the only or the giant evil, or its abolition the reform that is to bring about an ecclesiastical millenium.

Whether the Church will get this reform or not, we can hardly venture to predict. The Gladstone Government did not receive much support from the Kirk at the elections, and it will not put itself about much for the Kirk, or risk alienating any of its keen supporters from mere philanthropy. The Church embarked on a risky voyage when it resolved to go to Parliament, and its only course now is boldness. It cannot go back. It cannot hedge. It must go forward boldly, knowing that, let governments do what they will, Christ's Church will stand.