

appointed Mr. Harris to preach among the Holland and Sullivan requisitionists the second Sabbath of September, among those of Brant the third Sabbath; and it was left to his own prudence to select any desirable place for the fourth Sabbath. Mr. Torrance was appointed to supply by pulpit on the first Sabbath of his absence, and Mr. Duff on the third. A general congregation to be given the interesting Sabbath. The Presbytery resolved that the expenses attending these Ministers of the second ministers of the Presbytery, shall be defrayed by a collection made through their boards, on the days of their annual visitation of their respective congregations.

Mr. Duff intimated that a number of Presbyterians in Peel had presented a petition to the Session and congregation of Elora, to grant them a share of Mr. Duff's services, that the request had been complied with, and that a station had been opened in Peel which promised exceedingly well.

The Clerk was instructed to write to the Committee of Distribution for a share of the services of preachers. He was likewise instructed to provide himself with the necessary Presbytery books.

Appointed next meeting of Presbytery to be held in Guelph, on the Tuesday after the fourth Sabbath of November. Mr. Duff to give an address.—*Con.*

Original Articles.

[FOR THE CANADIAN PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.]

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HISTORY

BY THE REV. DR. FERRIER, CALIFORNIA.

Among the causes of growing corruption in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, as constituted after the Revolution, which led to the origin of the United Presbyterian Church, we shall only take notice of the two prominent ones. These were, first, the headstrong eagerness and growing zeal with which the law of patronage, restored in 1712, was reduced to practice, and conducted for twenty years; and secondly, the mournful departure from evangelical truth, as taught in the Westminster Standards, till the great majority of the ministers had rejected, and, in many cases, were disposed to ridicule the doctrines of grace.

In regard to the first of these causes, it was found that evangelical doctrine had been extensively propagated in Scotland, and so much relished and valued by the serious and intelligent among the laity, that, when left to themselves, so tenacious were they of the doctrine of free grace, they uniformly made choice of ministers who were sound in the faith and zealous for the Redeemer's glory and the salvation of souls. But this did not forward, but tended greatly to frustrate the policy of the government, and the secret wishes of the moderate party, in the Assembly, which were to secularize the Church, and it is believed, if possible, to subvert its Presbyterian constitution, with a view to the restoration of Episcopacy. Hence the law of patronage was revived, and although for a time it was exercised with a prudential regard to the wishes of the people, and no minister was inducted into a charge if found unacceptable; yet, by and by, when the exercise of this law became common, and congregations were trained to expect its exercise as a thing of course, the patrons ventured on more arbitrary procedure, till at length the inclinations of the people were totally disregarded, and in many cases resisted with insult and violence. The records of the General Assembly during the years that immediately preceded the origin of our Church, furnish numerous cases of appeal on the part of the people against the decisions of the inferior courts in regard to the settlement of ministers. The issue of these appeals was almost uniformly unfavourable. The law of patronage was imperative, and when both Patron and Presbytery were firm in demanding that it should be carried into effect, the scruples of some members of Presbyteries and the objections of the people were of no avail.

"The violent intrusion of ministers," says Dr. McKerron. In his history, upon re-claiming congregations prevailed in every part of the country. At every meeting of the Assembly, for several successive years, no small portion of our business consisted in considering cases of appeal that were occasioned by the attempt to impose ministers upon parishes, in opposition to the wishes of the people. In the journal of the Assembly's proceedings for 1730, there are recorded no fewer than twelve cases of this description. The mentioning of this fact may serve to give some idea of the agitated state of the country at the time immediately preceding the commencement of the Secession. Some of these cases were protracted from one

Assembly to another, and during the time that they were thus kept in dependence, the minds of the people were kept in a state of the greatest excitement. In certain instances the Presbyteries and Synods were inclined to support the claims of the people, but when this came to be discussed at the bar of the Assembly, or when it was referred by the Assembly to the Commission, their appeal was almost uniformly unsuccessful. In certain cases where the people proved refractory, and where the Presbytery was resolved in grant induction to an unpopular candidate, an armed force was employed to carry into effect the decisions of the Church Courts, and the unseemly spectacle was now and then exhibited of the ministers of religion being guarded in church on a Sabbath by files of dragoons amidst the noise of drums and the flashing of swords, that they might avert the effect of a hurling, to whose injury the people were resolved not to submit.

"In 1730, the Assembly, having affirmed the sentence of the Commission, expounded the Presbytery of Clonmel to proceed with a violent settlement in the parish of Hutton. Several ministers claimed that their dissent from this decision might be recorded. This was refused on the ground that the granting of it would 'tend to disturb the peace of the Church.' And before the Assembly dismissed it was solemnly enacted, that hereafter no reasons of dissent against the determination of Church judicatories shall be entered on the record.

"By such arbitrary proceedings as these, the minds of the people, and of not a few of the ministers, were much irritated, and that a revolt should ere long take place against the misgovernment of rulers who showed such a total disregard of the feelings of those whose spiritual interests they were bound to promote, was nothing more than might have been expected. In looking back to the transactions of that period, inquired or wondering that so many excellent men left the pale of the Establishment when the Secession commenced, not only surprise is, that they continued so long to abide in her communion. No measures could have been adopted that were better fitted for secularizing the Scottish Church than those which the dominant party in her ecclesiastical councils actually pursued."

After the yoke of patronage was imposed, the exertions of the faithful for reformation were much counteracted and a new line secured to corruption. The struggles, indeed, against patronage were in a considerable degree adventurous, being primarily, as we may afterwards find, struggles for the greater objects of evangelical truth and order, the possession of which, already so much lost, was more endangered by wresting from the people the exercise of their right to choose their ministers.

By such violent proceedings as those to which we have referred, the tide of corruption was rolling on, and there occurred numerous examples of insult, outrage, and deflection, respecting which, were it necessary, we might make ample extracts. In particular, in regard to patronage, the first cause of Secession, which we are now considering, it may be noticed, that this violent settlement of ministers was all along permeated with increasing eagerness. Hence in the diary of one of the fathers of our Church it is said:—

"The violent settlement of ministers was still carried on. In the month of March, 1732, Mr. Charles Felt was ordained in Kinfalus, upon a call signed by seven heritors and life-renters, one of them, viz.: Mr. Craigie, of Glendog, was an elder, and the only gentleman of our communion, who signed the call. All the rest of the elders, being six, together with the whole congregation, were re-claiming against the settlement.

"The elders and people at Kintore, complained to the Assembly at this time, against the proceedings of the last Commission in the settlement of Mr. Stark at their minister. He was ordained by a committee of the Commission appointed for that purpose. All the elders, except one or two, and the most part of the people of the parish, as also the Presbytery, re-claiming. But the Assembly dismissed their complaint, and appointed the Presbytery of Dunfermline to receive and enroll Mr. Stark as one of their number. This was one of the violent intrusions too common at this time; but complaints to our Assemblies for redress were all to no purpose."

The Assembly of 1732, likewise passed an act, by which it was provided that where the patrons declined or neglected the exercise of their rights, the ministers should be chosen, not by the Christian people, but by the majority of elders and heritors, if Protestants. "This measure had