

But, Fathers and Brethren, while the circumstances are many that are fitted to excite anxiety or apprehension, there are at the same time not a few calculated to awaken hope and trust, and so to encourage us to go on steadfastly and zealously in the discharge of our duties to the Church and its great Head; and of these latter circumstances it may be proper for me—not to excite within you a feeling of self-complacency, or render you supine, but to stir up your energies by giving you the hope of success—that I should mention some that have been most forcibly presented to my own mind.

Right Reverend and Right Honourable—I have already adverted to the fact—the gratifying fact—that among the various matters brought before this General Assembly, there has not been, with the exception referred to, any charge of immorality preferred against the ministers of our Church; and this circumstance, you, I am sure, will concur with me in regarding as a token for good. It proves, or at least gives us ground to hope, that the unclean have been banished from our camp. It shows that the standard of morals among the pastors of our Church has been raised. We may indulge the pleasing idea that this has resulted from a larger effusion on the souls of the restraining grace of God, and of the persuasion that he hath not cast us off, but, on the other hand, is reviving us.

The peaceful settlements of ministers on the presentation of patrons, proving, as it does, that they are exercising their right of nomination with discretion, and that the people are using that right of objection which was lately conferred on them, not in a capricious but in a Christian and conscientious spirit, may be regarded, too, as a token for good on the part of Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, and through the guidance of whose spirit alone either patrons or people can be disposed and enabled to do that which is right and conducive to the good of the Church of His Son.

The harmony by which the proceedings of this General Assembly were, speaking generally, characterized, prevails over the Church to an extent which, I believe, it never before reached. Party spirit is among the things that were. The two parties into which the office-bearers of the Church were formerly divided, have now become, so to speak, bone of each other's bone, and flesh of each other's flesh. We have come to understand each other. We have learned that we do not differ from each other to the extent that aforesaid we apprehended we did. We meet in our judicatories as men who are the same great object in view, and are most frequently at least at one as to the means to be employed for the accomplishment of it. When we differ, we judge each other in the spirit of charity and candour. The wranglings of former days, grating to the ears and wormwood to the soul, are sounds well-nigh unknown; may we not hope that this is the result of the spirit of grace, and may be regarded as an encouraging cir-

cumstance, a token of the favour of God.

Fathers and Brethren—The greater interest that is now taken throughout the Church in our schemes of Christian benevolence, must be looked upon surely as a farther indication of our being regarded with favour by Him who alone can make his people willing in the day of His power, who alone can infuse into us a missionary spirit, and make us pant earnestly for the advancement of His glory. True, it may be, that, in consequence of particular circumstances, the contributions of last year fell somewhat short; but no one who mixes with mankind, can hesitate to believe that, among the adherents of the Church of Scotland there is a growing anxiety as to the salvation of others. This can have come only from God. Let us rejoice and be glad in the proof it furnishes that He is watching over us for good.

Right Reverend and Right Honourable—I might mention many other circumstances indicative, as I think we may, without presumption, say of the favour with which, notwithstanding our unworthiness, God regards us as a Church of his Son.

Fathers and Brethren—Can I close and bid you farewell, without tendering to you from the very depths of my heart, my thanks for the honour you have done me in placing me in the Chair that I am now about to vacate. I felt myself to be both absolutely and comparatively very unworthy of that honour, the highest that can be conferred on a minister of the Church of Scotland. I humbly and gratefully felt, that I owed it much more to your kindly feelings toward me than to any merits, public or private, of my own. I have endeavoured to discharge the duties of my honoured office so as to justify, to some small extent at least, the good opinion which what you had done proved that you entertained of me. With much imperfection I know that I may be charged, but the merit of good intentions I feel that I can claim to myself. For any errors into which I may have fallen I ask your forgiveness; for your indulgence and support of me I offer you my tribute of grateful feeling. To the General Assembly of 1855 I shall ever look back with such pride as may be innocently indulged by one who is but dust and ashes, and in the remembrance of it I hope I shall ever find a motive to impel me not to degrade, but to honour you by my life, alike personal and professional.

Fathers and Brethren,—I feel myself knit to you all by the ties of gratitude and affection. May the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of peace and love shall be with you.

The Moderator then dissolved the Assembly in the usual form, and announced that the next General Assembly would be held

on Thursday, the 22nd May, 1856. He then briefly addressed His Grace the Lord High Commissioner, thanking him for the courtesy and hospitality which he had extended to the members.

His Grace having shortly acknowledged the address of the Moderator, dissolved the Assembly in the name of the Sovereign, and appointed the next General Assembly to meet on the day above named.

After prayer and praise, the Moderator pronounced the benediction, and the Assembly broke up about half-past two A. M.

COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.—The stated meeting of the Commission took place yesterday at twelve o'clock noon.

It was unanimously agreed to issue a pastoral letter to the people of Scotland in reference to the present war.

There being no other business before it, the Commission then adjourned.

Presbytery of Edinburgh.

MISSIONARY TO THE PUNJAB.—At a *pro re nata* meeting of this reverend court, held on Wednesday—Dr. Muir presiding—Dr. Macfarlane, Convener of the General Assembly's Committee on foreign Missions, laid on the table a certified extract of the deliverance of the General Assembly authorising the Presbytery to take on trial, for license and ordination, Mr. Thomas Hunter, who has been selected by the committee as a missionary to the Punjab—the first appointed by the Church of Scotland to labour in that important province of our Indian empire. A committee was instructed to examine Mr. Hunter, and to report to an adjourned meeting to be held on Wednesday next, at a quarter to twelve o'clock.

MUNIFICENT BEQUEST.—We understand that Sir Hugh Munro of Foulis, Bart., has bequeathed his estate of Milton in Ross-shire to found a Free School in Perth, for the education of the Children of tradesmen belonging to the town. The rental of the property, being about £300 per annum, is to be applied to the support of the Institution; and the sum of £1000 is left for the building of the School-house. The School is to be in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, and under the superintendence of the Presbytery; and to be visited by the Government Inspector. The Trustees entrusted with its management are the Moderator of the Established Presbytery, the Lord Provost of Perth, and the Sheriff-Substitute at Perth. No school fees are to be charged, and books are to be supplied gratis to the scholars. The branches of education taught are to be such as in the Parish Schools, but without Latin or any of the Classics.

Induction.

The Rev. Thomas Leishman, late minister of Collace, was inducted minister of the parish of Linton, in the county of Roxburgh, on Thursday, 7th instant, and on Sabbath last was