

well acquainted with all the forms of ecclesiastical procedure, and always prepared for every emergency. He generally led the debates on all important questions on the Evangelical side. It was admirable to observe the manner in which he could break a lance with an antagonist even before the general engagement began. For instance, on one occasion when the 'plurality' question was before the House, the son of Lord President Hope, who was at that time Solicitor General, had just taken his place, and the Doctor forthwith put the question to the Moderator, whether officers of State were allowed to vote on the question, upon which John Hope conceiving that he was the person alluded to, rose in a great rage asserting his right to vote; Dr. Thomson immediately said that he had only asked the question for information, without referring to any one in particular, and he could not help adding that the violent behaviour of the Solicitor General reminded him very forcibly of the man with the nose, who, whenever any one was spoken of, thought that himself was alluded to. To this the Solicitor General did not think proper to reply. His speech in the "Little Dunkeld" case, in which the question was whether the Assembly should sanction the appointment of a minister over that parish, who knew nothing of Gaelic, which was the language of nine-tenths of the congregation, was most effective, and he obtained a vote in accordance with the common-sense view of the case. But it would be endless to mention all the different occasions on which he distinguished himself. We will just mention one more instance, in which he was personally concerned. He was taken to task for praying for Queen Caroline. He made a most able defence, and dwelt chiefly upon the fact that there was no prescribed form of prayer for Presbyterian ministers. He said at one part of his speech, "Moderator, I stand at the bar of this house, accused of the great crime of praying for Queen Caroline. Yes, Moderator, I own I have prayed for Queen Caroline, and I will continue to pray for Queen Caroline, just as I would pray for any other poor deluded woman, such as Janet Wil-on," darting at the same moment a look at the Lord Justice Clerk, who had a mistress of that name at the time. It is scarce necessary to say that he was dismissed from the bar of the Assembly, and was left to pray for Queen Caroline as often and as long as he pleased.

Amidst his other numerous avocations, Dr. Thomson conducted with great ability, for many years, a Religious Magazine called the *Christian Instructor*, which consisted of reviews of religious publications, biographies, sermons, &c. It was considered a high standard of Christian doctrine and criticism, and its favourable verdict was highly valued. The famous papers entitled "Vindication of the Covenanters," by the Elder McCrie, were originally published in the *Christian Instructor*. These, as is well known, took their rise from Sir Walter Scott's novel of "Old Mortality," in which he greatly misrepresents these "Scots Worthies." Another subject, in which Dr. Thomson took a deep interest, was that of Church music. Having a fine musical taste himself, he thought it of great importance to have good music in the Church, and accordingly he had a well-trained choir of singers in St. George's. It was in this Church that the practice of singing sanctuses and doxologies at the conclusion of the service was first introduced, and with very good effect. It generally got a "hit" from the more rigid ministers, when the subject of the Psalmody came up for discussion before the Assembly; but nothing was done to put a stop to the practice. It is said by the Doctor's biographer, in the memoir prefixed to his Posthumous Sermons, that he had in contemplation a scheme for reforming the Psalmody in all the congregations of the Church of Scotland; but he was taken away by death before he could accomplish it. How he would have rejoiced to see the modern improvement of Psalmody in Scotland! The Doctor also took a very warm interest in the cause of Education, and in order to promote it in the parish of St.