

with Port Elgin, which was granted. The auditors appointed to examine the Home Mission accounts, reported that they had examined them and found them correct.

Mr. Stevenson then read the Home Mission Report, which was received and its recommendations considered. Mr. Stevenson having resigned his office, as Home Mission agent, the following minute was adopted, and the Rev. A. Tolmie of Southampton appointed Mission agent: "The Presbytery accept the resignation of Mr. Stevenson, and record their sense of obligation, for the long, patient, and persevering efforts, in the arduous and trying position, in which he has served the church." Mr. C. Cameron brought forward his motive, of which previous notice had been given, which was duly recorded and carried, "That this Presbytery will meet once a year in Paisley."

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## Communications.

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### THE STANDARDS AND PRAISE

(We think it right to allow the writer of the following communication to state his views, being aware that he holds them very conscientiously. In regard to some points involved, no doubt, even thoroughly sound Presbyterians may not all entirely agree.—EDITOR.)

DEAR SIR,—I have long desired to see in the Record a statement of the doctrine contained in the Church's Standards on her service of praise; and I had hoped that some competent person would have written you on the subject. It is of great importance that the people be made acquainted through the pages of the Record, as well as by the pulpit, with their own standards in their historical import. The office-bearers of the church should be acquainted with them, as they are required so solemnly to "own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith," to "acknowledge the same as the confession of their faith," and "to adhere firmly and constantly thereto, and to the utmost of their power assert, maintain, and defend the same and the purity of worship as presently practised in this church."

In relation to Praise in the public worship of God I have frequently heard it stated, both as to its matter and manner, that the standards say nothing on the subject. And there are those who seem to think that both the matter and manner of praise are to be regulated by the general statement in the first chapter of the Confession, namely,—“There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed.” Such views, I am persuaded, are entirely aside from the fact, and that the standards fairly interpreted, in their historical meaning, do very clearly and positively lay down what should be both the matter and manner of praise in the public worship of God.

In order to understand rightly any documents, it is necessary to consider the circumstances in which they were framed, the views of the parties who may have had first to do with them, and how their provisions were originally understood and applied. Such an enquiry, I think, is of great moment as to the interpretation of the documents, concerning whose meaning I now write—especially in relation to worship.

Allow me then to go back to reformation times in Scotland. It will not be questioned that the steadfast aim and burning zeal of her reformers