

should he still persevere in it,"—(hear, hear, and cheers).

During this day also, the Deputation from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland were introduced to the Assembly, and Dr. Brown of Aghaloney Moderator of the Irish Assembly; Dr. Stewart, Stewart of Broughshane; Mr. Johnston, of Tullylish, and Dr. Houston, of Macosquin, and delivered addresses of great eloquence, braving the strongest affection towards the Free Church, and exhibiting the most enlarged views, and the deepest interest respecting the condition and prospects of the Christian Church in the British Empire, and throughout the world. We regret that we cannot give extracts.

On Monday the 26th of May, various causes were discussed and decided. Mr. McKee, was translated from Tarbert to Kilmory, and the translation of Mr. McDonald, of Urray to Skye, was refused. At the evening sederunt of this day, the Report of Church deciding committee was read by Mr. John Hamilton, advocate, the able and indefatigable convener. The following short extract from the report will show the amusing progress which has been made in two years, in this great national enterprise:—

"In order to give some definiteness to our idea of our great Church Building Scheme, the Committee have been in the habit, from the first, of stating the number of Churches requiring to be erected, at 700; and then, estimating the average expense of the churches at £500 each, they have been in use to bring out the total sum requisite for the complete accomplishment of the undertaking as being £350,000.

"In last Report, the Committee stated the amount of funds collected, or that might be safely reckoned upon, at £211,000,—being more than two-thirds of the entire sum of £350,000, supposed to be the whole sum required. But, according to the returns recently made to the Committee, it now appears that the sum of money which has been actually expended on churches, already completed and used for public worship, amounts to the sum of no less than £286,000. Besides the churches completed and in use, there is a considerable number now in the course of erection; and the funds already raised towards the expense of erecting these churches amount to the further sum of £22,000; and yet again, in addition to the congregations whose churches are now in the course of erection, there is a still larger number, which, from a variety of causes (some of which will be afterwards noticed), have not yet commenced the erection of these places of worship, but which, by anticipation, have made collections with a view to the desired object,—the amount of which collections, as gathered from the returns to the Committee, may be stated at about £10,000. And, adding together these sums, which have been either expended on church building, or which are actually in hand, and applicable to that purpose, we have, as the total amount of funds applied or applicable to the erection of our churches, the sum of £317,000, or say £320,000; a sum that exceeds the estimate of probable funds given in last Report by no less than £30,000; and that falls short by no more than £30,000 of the entire sum of £350,000 which has hitherto been estimated as the sum total required for the erection of the complete number of 700 churches.

"This result is, no doubt, eminently encouraging, proving, as it does, that we have not hitherto been too sanguine in estimating the capabilities of our congregations, and shewing that, under the Divine blessing, our cause expands so rapidly, that anticipations which many were apt to consider as extravagant, are proved to have been, in truth, altogether inadequate, when compared with the results which are speedily realized."

At the same sederunt the Assembly heard the reports of Dr. Clason and Mr. Begg who had been deputed to visit the various localities in which sites for Church-building, are still refused. The

former reported on the cases of Wamphray, Wamlockhead and Canobie, the latter on the various districts in the North of Scotland, in which species of persecution is still persevered in. The deputations had investigated the various cases minutely, and their reports were full of painfully interesting statements.

The Assembly were then addressed by Mr. Cairment, Mr. Buchanan of Kelloe, Sacerd' Spiers, Dr. Candlish, and Mr. Guthrie. Ultimately, on the motion of Dr. Candlish, seconded by Mr. Guthrie, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by the Assembly:—"The General Assembly having considered the overtures, and heard Dr. Clason and Mr. Begg on the subject, deeply sympathizing with those of the ministers and people who are suffering under the oppression occasioned by the refusal of sites, and other grievances, and being deeply impressed with the importance of an immediate and decisive effort to obtain relief for those who have thus been called to endure so much hardship and persecution for conscience sake, resolve to petition both Houses of Parliament in regard to these systematic and continued violations of the whole spirit and tenor of that love of toleration which has ever been held to be one of the highest privileges of our free constitution; and also to send a deputation to London, for the purpose of enforcing their petition. Further, the Assembly, with the view of instituting a more thorough investigation into the entire state of their people in the Highlands and Islands, as well in regard to those grievances by which they are so much oppressed, as in reference to their destitution of the means of grace, and of adopting such measures as, by the blessing of God, may tend to alleviate these evils, are of opinion that it is their duty to hold a meeting of the General Assembly, at Inverness, in September next, and remit to a Committee to consider in what way this resolution shall be carried into effect."

On Tuesday, 27th May, the overtures respecting the endowment of Maynooth, were taken—the discussion of which was opened in a very able speech by Dr. Buchanan, of Glasgow. He was followed by Mr. Begg and Mr. Fox Maule, Dr. Smyth, of Glasgow, and others. We cannot refrain from giving the following remarkable passages—the first from Dr. Buchanan's speech—the next from Mr. Begg's:—

"If anything could increase the anxiety with which the passing of such a measure in the House of Commons must be contemplated, it is the argument, the general strain of reasoning, with which the measure has been supported. For what are the features which stand out most prominent in the course of that discussion on the part of the supporters of the measure? Are they not these?—In the first place, that a vast majority of the legislators of this country disclaim the power of distinguishing, in matters of religion, between truth and error,—that they have proclaimed themselves in the face of the country and of the world, as being incapable of distinguishing what is truth from what is error; and if this be so, then we have ceased,—and let us look at the fact, and be humbled before God on account of it,—we have ceased to have a Christian Legislature,—(hear, hear,)—we have ceased to have a Legislature which really recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ in his own glorious gospel, in his blessed Word,—as being himself the truth,—as himself supplying the rule by which, on all questions of duty and conscience, men, whether in a private or an official capacity, ought uniformly to be guided. And it is apparent that if this be the state of things, then the Legislature of this country has ceased to be Christian; and assuredly it is not a Christian Legislature that disclaims the power of deciding between Christ and Anti-christ."

Then I say here, as I have said elsewhere, that we may congratulate ourselves in not being, as a Church, in alliance with such a Legislature, (hear.)

because had we been in alliance with the Legislature, that alliance might have blinded us to our duty in relation to it—(hear, hear)—and might have diverted us from the right course, in reference to many public questions that are likely to arise. And I will say further here, what I have lately said elsewhere, that it is really so,—if the Legislature of Great Britain is to declare that it is no longer competent,—that it disclaims the power of distinguishing between truth and error, between the Church of Christ and the Church of Anti-christ,—then, Sir, I say, such a state of things does raise, and must raise, the question which the Churches that are in alliance with the State will have to consider, whether they can remain in connection with such a Legislature. (Hear, hear.) But if these be the features which stood out with painful prominence in the discussion of this bill in the House of Commons, then I must say, without meaning to speak offensively in reference to individuals, that these principles are sceptical, and that they are substantially infidel principles."

"We are all aware, and have always been, that all classes of politicians are too ready to act on such a maxim as that I am about to quote; but few have the hardihood to avow it; and it is an alarming sign of the times when one of our rulers comes forward and unblushingly avows such an impious maxim as that in accordance with which the affairs of the nation are hereafter to be conducted. Sir James Graham says, 'I am a firm believer in the great principle laid down by Burke in one of his last letters, I think, where he says (I do not pretend to quote the precise words), that whenever, in matters of State, questions of religion arise, those questions must be decided on political, and not on theological grounds.' In other words, all religions are to be dealt with as alike, and are to be subordinated to the sordid imaginations, the worldly schemes and theories, of secular politicians. I think this maxim, however, may be useful, as putting in a few words a great infidel principle, and as suggesting to Christians a converse proposition, which, I think, ought to be the maxim of all Christians throughout the land, and ought to rally in one united phalanx the whole body of true Christians, namely that whereas politicians hold that all religious questions ought to be dealt with on political grounds, we hold that all political questions ought to be dealt with on religious grounds—(hear, hear)—that whereas they hold that in matters of religion they can do what they like, we hold that in matters of policy they are bound to do for the glory of God, and that they are not entitled to trample on the authority of the Divine Word. (Applause.) How far will this principle of statesmen go? Why, it would justify, not only the endowment of the whole priesthood of Ireland, but the endowment of the whole priesthood of India, of Juggernaut, or whatsoever thing existed under Heaven, bearing the name of religion. (Hear, hear.) I cannot imagine anything more alarming than that a leading statesman, one of Her Majesty's counsellors, should come forward and unblushingly announce in the face of the nation such a maxim as this. (Hear.) In regard to the unchanging and unchangeable nature of Popery, we are all at one. We know from the Word of God that it will not change, but that it will be destroyed; and we know, not only from the records of history, but from the facts which are occurring under our own observation, that it is an unmitigated and unchanging system of Anti-Christ, superstition, and horrid tyranny. What are the groans which come across us from the dungeons of Madeira? What are the letters which are read from time to time in this Assembly, but awful enumerations of the truth, that at this moment, when the rulers of the land are proposing to pay with our money, and endow with the national countenance, this system which is condemned in Scripture, it is actually perpetrating cruelties under our own observation, and on the persons of our fellow-countrymen."