

was held last autumn, under the auspices of another distinguished nobleman (the Duke of Richmond), with whose presence we are again honored to-day. When we speak of raising a sum of £2,000 for each of twenty chapels in this northern province, or a gross amount of £40,000, it may be thought that we have entered on a task that exceeds our strength. But large as the sum to be raised is, I think you will not regard the case as desperate, when I now tell you that the result of our Elgin meeting has been that more than a full third of it, or upwards of £14,000 is already subscribed. Meetings have lately been held in furtherance of the subscriptions for this province, in Wick, Golspie and Inverness; and I am deeply gratified to be able to state that, in all these districts, the members and friends of the Church are prepared to second our efforts with the liveliest zeal. The evils to which it is the object of the Endowment Scheme to apply a remedy, are now well-known to the country. The social changes which have taken place within the last fifty years, whatever counterbalancing advantages may have attended them, have left large masses of our fellow-citizens destitute of adequate means of religious instruction and training. The result, as might have been expected, is, that in our principal towns and other great centres of population, multitudes are found to be wholly regardless of religious ordinances. Estimates have been made with reference to some of our more densely crowded districts, by Dissenters as well as Churchmen, which would make the proportion of the population in this unhappy condition, amount to nearly a half. Perhaps there may be some exaggeration in those estimates, but the fact is not to be denied that the proportion is very large. That this is a sore evil, and one that calls loudly for remedy, every man who calls himself a Christian must at once acknowledge. Even if no dangerous consequences should appear to result from it, still, on the principles of the gospel, it cannot but involve danger. On these principles it is righteousness only that exalteth a nation, and that only is a righteous people whose God is the Lord. Besides, the question touches each of us personally. Our faith in the gospel cannot be genuine—we cannot be made partakers of its blessings—we cannot escape the penalties due to an unworthy profession of it—if we fail to charge ourselves with its grave responsibilities. And is it not one of the very first of these responsibilities that, as we have freely received, we should also freely give? If, then, we have been neglecting the duty of communicating with our brethren in need, we have been but too surely exposing both ourselves and our country to God's righteous judgments. May it not be the fact of our having been thus hiding ourselves from our own flesh, that has meanwhile provoked God to put forth his hand to vex us in a distant part of the empire? That the grievous mutinies and

India are wholly unjustifiable on the part of those who have excited and abetted them makes it but all the more clear, that this thing is from God. Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Assuredly the grave circumstances in which we are placed as regards India are an impressive call addressed to us to search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. "Is not this," he says, "the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" We cannot, therefore, be guiltless of the blood of those of our brethren who are living in ignorance of God, if we fail to improve every opportunity that we can command, of commending ourselves to their consciences in His sight, by manifestation of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Regarding the work in which we are engaged as properly the work of the Christian community, we hold that if it is to be accomplished in the most efficient manner, the whole body of the members and friends of the Church must take part in it. The moral and religious elevation of the classes which are meanwhile sunk beneath the level of society, vitally important as this elevation undoubtedly is, is yet not the only end that we have in view. We would have the members and friends of the Church do something for themselves, at the same time that they relieve the spiritual necessities of their destitute fellow citizens. Could the latter, we ask, have fallen so low, if the former had been faithful to the solemn trust reposed in them? By raising a part, then, we hope to raise the whole; and we firmly believe, that there is no man, whatever be his rank in life, who shall cordially co-operate in our work, but will derive the greatest benefits from it, both for himself and for others. I will bless him in his own soul—it will bless him and make him a blessing in all the relations of life. It were, indeed, a benefit of unspeakable moment to the whole country were there to be awakened and called into lively exercise in each of us a just sense of that obligation, of the very essence of the Gospel, which binds the Christian to be his brother's keeper. Did we truly fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, what humble yet assured confidence should we be enabled to repose in all the dispensations of Providence towards us? I have already observed that a living Christianity, instead of having lost its power, is the only real power in the world—a power, in truth, of irresistible might, sustained by the arm of the Omnipotent Himself. This truth, so apt to be forgotten in prosperity, yet in times of trial and adversity indelibly impresses itself on every mind that is open to conviction. What is

our hope, to-day, amidst the swellings and tumults that have arisen in a distant part of the Empire, but that, by humbling ourselves before the Lord our God, we may move Him to dissipate the clouds of judgment which threaten us, and to gladden us anew with the light of His countenance. To this duty we have been called by the pious injunction of our beloved Sovereign, and I trust we shall engage in it, as with one heart and with one soul, mingling our prayers with hers, confessing our sins, and resolved to turn from them, in the Divine strength, with full purpose of, and endeavour after new obedience. Would we but observe, as becomes a Christian people, the day that has been set apart as a public day, of solemn fast, humiliation, and prayer, we can doubt that we should have our burdens lightened, our souls refreshed, and our strength made equal to the duties required of us? Yes, Christianity is power that power, indeed, against which no combination of the so-called forces of unrighteousness, let them be ever so firmly knit, shall be able to make good its ground. Keep ye the fast which the Lord hath chosen, that we hide not ourselves from our own flesh nor suffer the poor of our land to be without the bread of life, God himself will be our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Our light shall break forth as the morning, and our health shall spring forth speedily; our righteousness shall go on before us; the glory of the Lord shall be our rearward. Is it not He that went up with His people of old, in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, to cast out the heathen before them, and to plant them in the land which he had promised to their fathers to give unto them? He is still the same, and we have but to plead our just cause before Him with broken and penitent hearts, to have Himself for our defence, and to see enthroned on the brows of our warriors that manly resolution and energy which their treacherous and cruel adversaries shall be unable even to look upon. Keeping the fast which the Lord hath chosen we shall be kept by him in return, as the apple of his eye; we shall be saved out of all our troubles; we shall have our mouths filled with songs of deliverance. The Duke of Richmond then said—My Lord Haddo, Ladies and Gentlemen, after the powerful and very eloquent appeal which has been made both to your judgment and to your feelings, I feel that it would be inconsistent with my duty, not being a member of the Established Church, to detain you at any length upon the present occasion, but I, might, if I were to do so, perhaps weaken the able arguments of the rev. gentleman. It would be impossible for me to speak more strongly than he has done. I cordially and entirely concur in every sentiment which has fallen from him—(cheers). And may I be permitted to express the hope that we in the northern counties, may be the first to raise the necessary funds for an object of such essential importance to the vital