

this trying condition; and, after so long neglect, there were no less than about five thousand who gave in their adherence to the Church of Scotland. Who can measure the unbounded and unconquerable attachment that reigned in the breasts of these people, while every possible effort had been made to wean their affections from their Church? Who can fully enter into their feelings, or sympathise with them, when so sorely pressed to renounce their fondest attachment? And who can justify the Parent Church, in having so long neglected their devoted children? The only ground of palliation that can be offered, is, that Cape Breton was represented as having, to a man, renounced the Church of Scotland; and the Scottish Church was busied in supplying the pulpits, at Home and abroad, which had been suddenly deserted by those who vowed to sustain her banner, and to use no divisive courses from her Government.

However, it became the fortune of our people in that Island to have a short respite. A new element is introduced into Cape Breton which diverted attention from the Parent Church for a brief period. The Seceders or Antiburghers,—and many other epithets were at this time heaped upon them,—were now attempting to obtain a resting-place on this island. The keenest and most carefully prepared arrows were now aimed at them. Both press and pulpit—especially the latter, were burdened with denunciations against this “new sect.” It would be neither pleasing to ourselves, nor profitable to others, to introduce one sentence of the many hard speeches that were then uttered to exclude them from the island. The bare allusion is enough to show the sort of oratory this quiet people had to endure. So thoroughly was it felt that that Church had been blackened, that shortly thereafter, when union with them was made a question to be sent down from their respective Synods to the several congregations, some of these orators found it impossible to propose the question to their people; and when union was nominally accomplished, individual ministers repudiated the idea, and averred that it was not the case.

With the exception of one or two passing visits of members of deputations from the Scottish Church, and one visit from the Rev. John Martin, of Halifax—a thorough Gael by nature, though not by birth—our people were left entirely to the mercy or the severity of others, until within the last five years. But after having, in some measure, succeeded in re-building the walls of our Zion on the mainland, our efforts were at length directed to the Island, and many warm hearts were found ready to receive us. And what better proof could we desire that we had many warmly attached friends, than to have strong solicitations for services, and large assemblies in Churches and by the hill-side, after so many efforts had been used to alien-

ate their affections and prejudice them against our unwavering principles. And whatever blame might be attached to the Church of Scotland for having so long neglected this people, surely their long attachment, and the ardour of their devotion to us still, would render us highly culpable did we not embrace the first opportunity to look after their spiritual welfare. But this effort made to supply their deepest wants, and the manifest desire on their part, was enough to raise a new and heavy storm against us. The return, too, of one of the ministers to the bosom of the Church in which he had been educated and received ordination, rather than depart further—as he believed—from us, fired them with fresh animus against the Church of Scotland, and, if possible, still keener persecution against him who refused not to enter into the communion and fellowship of those whom they had so recently denounced. And yet, all must freely admit that no other clergyman had maintained a more spotless character than this one, who is so cruelly persecuted for no other reason than that he made choice of returning to his early espousals, and manfully carrying out his convictions in the face of all the torrent of abuse that could be heaped upon him. And pray where is the freedom of thought, or the least shadow of charity, if base motives are imputed, and persecution is raised, when ministers and people are so sorely and cruelly treated?

But this is not all that those who would express attachment to our Church had to endure. With one fell swoop of legislative enactment, their Church property, without, in some cases, consulting the people, is transferred to the Union Church, with the exception of certain Churches in which our then only resident minister preached. Not satisfied with the first act of spoliation, means are adopted to wrest by force from our adherents what could not be taken by Act of Parliament. And, in order to accomplish this end, means were adopted to exclude our people from their Churches,—which might serve to disgrace not only the Presbyterian, but also the Protestant name,—and measures only befitting the dark ages. And all this while it cannot be shown that any offence had been given by our ministers or people, save to endeavor, in the most conciliatory and unobtrusive manner, to observe the means and ordinances of grace among them.

But that which furnishes a fitting climax to all the past, and served to confound the minds of our considerate people, was the fact that shortly after a deputation had come to our Synod expressing kindly greetings towards our Church,—and that notwithstanding all the previous representations of us,—on the “very heels” of these friendly expressions and representations, another deputation goes from the same Synod down to Cape Breton, and the harshest and most ungenerous tirade is streamed forth against our