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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

(Concluded from *The Guardian Extra*, July 17.)

Friday, May 24.

Dr. CHALMERS read the report of the Assembly's Committee on Church Extension.

The following is a statement of the leading facts of Church Extension during the last five years:—

In 1835 there were reported	62 churches,	and	£65,626	1	11½
— 1836 —	26 ditto		32,359	12	5½
— 1837 —	67 ditto		59,311	6	0
— 1838 —	32 ditto		46,683	1	4¾
— 1839 we announce	14 ditto		25,413	5	4¾

Making in all 231 churches, and £231,398 7 3

Dr. LAIRD moved that the report be approved of, and that the committee be reappointed with its former powers, and that the cordial thanks of the Assembly be given to the Convener, Dr. Chalmers.

Captain TROTTER seconded the motion.

The MODERATOR—Although I well know that the approbation of your own mind and conscience, in extending the interests, along with the accommodation of this Church, is your dearest and your noblest reward, yet I cannot but believe that you are not insensible also to the approbation of this church; and it is most gratifying to me to be the organ of this Court in communicating to you their renewed and most hearty acknowledgements, for your most zealous and most efficient services in this great cause. To see the servant of Christ devoting the talents, the opportunities, the influence with which the great Head of the church has endowed him—to see him devoting those talents, those opportunities, and that influence to the great cause of Christianity, and of the salvation of souls—must, under all circumstances, and on every occasion, be a source of pious satisfaction; but when we see the servant of Christ so employing those talents, those opportunities, and that influence, as to become an instrument of great and extensive good to the church—when we see his Christian labours conducted with wisdom and crowned with success—it is the duty and the privilege which we owe to ourselves and to the church—while we give the glory to the great Head of the church as only due to him—it is our duty and our privilege to render to that individual, as an humble instrument in the hand of Providence, the tribute of our gratitude. Continue, Sir, to pursue the important course which you have so successfully begun—continue to “spend and be spent” in the cause of our great Head. And may God spare your valuable life—may he preserve you in your mental and in your bodily vigour, till there shall not be one spot in our beloved Zion unblest with the Christian labours of a pious pastor, and the active and efficient parochial agency which you contemplate along with it! The sympathies, and the hopes, and prayers of this church go along with you in this great cause. May the blessing from on high rest on your head—may the unction of the Holy One, as you have so beautifully expressed it in your report, rest upon you, and all who are engaged in this great and good work! and may you continue to be an ornament to the society in which you dwell—a pillar of the church of Christ, of which you are a member! And when God is pleased to call you from this earthly field, may you have the happiness of meeting with thousands and tens of thousands of those who under your influence, and by your instrumentality, have been brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus!

Dr. SMYTH hoped he would be indulged in offering a single suggestion. He was sure there was not an individual in the Assembly

who had not listened with pleasure to the address they had just heard from the chair. A cause of such magnitude, to the present and everlasting interests of their fellow men and fellow Christians, demanded the special gratitude of the Assembly to Him who had so long spared that distinguished individual, whose report they had just heard, to carry forward his important labours. It was seventeen years, this very week, since he (Dr. S.) had the privilege of accompanying that distinguished individual to Glasgow; and he well recollected with what intensity of feeling he was then devoting his mind to that great cause; and it was especially due to him that they should offer up their earnest prayers to God, who had continued him as an instrument for so much usefulness, and spared his valuable life for still more abundant labours for the glory of God in that cause. He begged pardon for intruding himself on the notice of the Assembly. He could not do any thing like justice to the intensity of his own emotions on the subject; but when he considered how much they owed to that individual, and how much the Church of Scotland owed him, and whilst they esteemed him very highly for his work's sake, let them, with united hearts, thank Almighty God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, and implore that His blessing might rest upon him. Hear, hear.

The MODERATOR was quite sure that the proposal that they had just heard met with the wishes of this Assembly; and he thought he might add, that there was no member of Assembly who would not join with him in requesting that their devotions might be conducted by Dr. Smyth himself. (Hear.)

Dr. SMYTH then offered up a very impressive prayer. Mr. BURNS proposed the addition of Dr Mackintosh M'Kay of Dunoon to the Church Extension Committee, and eulogised that gentleman for his persevering and successful exertions to promote the cause of religion both at home and abroad.

Mr. ALEXANDER E. MONTEITH remarked, that there was nothing in the report that had afforded him greater satisfaction than the proposal it contained to engraft on the scheme of Church Extension the employment of the probationers of the church, as it removed an apprehension of the church, as it removed an apprehension of the enormous expenditure of money in the erection of churches, would not be followed with a corresponding increase of the means of religious instruction to the people.—The proposed plan was calculated entirely to afford the very best answer to this objection, as affecting the scheme of Church Extension.

The following overture was then taken up—  
OVERTURE ON SEAT RENTS.  
“Whereas a practice prevails in some churches within the bounds of this Synod, and in other parts of the church, of letting or selling the seats, even in those parishes whose ministers are upheld by teinds, and whose churches are built and upheld by heritors, as “a burden under which they have acquired and hold their legal, and subversive of the privileges of the people of Scotland, and has been condemned by the Assembly in 1830—It is humbly overtured by the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, that the General Assembly devise the best method for removing the evil complained of, and giving effect to the said declaration of 1830.”

Mr. CLARK of Inverness said he would rest contented with merely moving, in the present state of this question, that the Assembly appoint a Committee to enquire throughout all Scotland into the extent of the practice of letting seats in churches, into the origin of the practice, into

the arguments by which it is defended, and into the means that ought to be adopted for the removal of the evil, and to report to the next General Assembly. The question was one of a very grave nature, and required all the deliberation they could afford it.

After some remarks from Dr. Brown of Aberdeen, and Dr. Flemming of Neilston, the motion was agreed to.

### PROBATIONERS.

An overture having been read from the Synod of Perth and Stirling, representing that the number of theological students had greatly diminished, and suggesting, with the view of providing a remedy, that an act should be passed requiring each Presbytery to support a bursar.

Mr. WALKER supported the overture in a speech, which was very imperfectly heard, as was the whole of the subsequent discussion.

Dr. COOK moved that the overture be remitted to the committee on theological education, with instructions that they pay the most marked attention to the subject; to report next year.

Mr. PAUL seconded the motion, which, after some remarks from Dr. BURNS, was adopted.

### DEPUTATION TO THE HIGHLANDS.

Mr. GRANT of Leith read a report of the deputation which had been sent to enquire into, and report upon, the state of the parishes in the Presbytery of Skye. It gave a melancholy account of the state of some of the parishes, in some of which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not even dispensed once a year, and others not once in nine or ten years. In some parishes numbers of even grown up persons were unbaptised, and throughout the Presbytery of Skye it was calculated that there were not fewer than 1000 unbaptised persons. The report went at some length into the causes of this state of things, and suggested that as these were not fully expiated by the last deputation, from various causes, it should be reapportioned.

Dr. DEWAR said the church was under great obligations to Mr. Grant, for the very able report he had given on the subject. He was aware of his ability to discharge the duty imposed upon him, and of his regard for the interests of the church.

After some farther conversation, Mr. DUNLOP moved that a committee be appointed, to whom the whole of this matter shall be submitted for consideration, with power to correspond with all the different ministers in the Western Isles, and with power, if necessary, to send a deputation, and to report to next Assembly.

Agreed to. The thanks of the Assembly were then given by the Moderator to Mr. Grant, for his zeal and activity as the Convener of the deputation.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON POKERY.

Dr. MUIR, as Convener of the committee on Pokery, suggested that the committee should be renewed with additional names, and with the power of opening up a correspondence with the sound evangelical churches of the Reformation, that additional facts might be gathered as to the enquiry for which the committee was appointed.

The suggestion of the Rev. Doctor met with the unanimous concurrence of the House. The committee was renewed with its former powers and instructions, and with authority to correspond with other evangelical churches and intelligent persons, beyond the bounds of the church, with the view to the collection of additional facts, in order that measures should be adopted to counteract the evils which were ascertained, and such as might afterwards come to the knowledge of the committee.

## CANADIAN CHURCHES.

Mr. DUNLOP moved that the Assembly should hear a statement from the Rev. Mr. Machar, who had just arrived from Canada, on the state of the Canadian churches.

Mr. MACHAR was then heard at considerable length.\*

Rev. Mr. CLARK moved that the Moderator do from the chair, express to the member of the Synod of Canada, who has now addressed the House, the thanks of the Assembly, and the deep interest which the Assembly takes in the spiritual condition of the churches in connection with the Synod of Canada, and their anxiety to do their utmost to promote the spiritual interests of the Scottish settlers in that interesting country.

Rev. Mr. ROBERTSON of Ellon seconded the motion, and begged to suggest, in addition, that Dr. Lee should be requested to address a pastoral letter to the members of the Synod of Canada.—Agreed.

Dr. DEWAR said that justice would not be done to the Synod of Canada until a deputation be sent to it under the sanction of the General Assembly and be instructed to bring back such information as they could collect regarding the state of religion in those provinces.

The MODERATOR.—Mr. Machar, it is quite unnecessary for me, after the expression of feeling which you have witnessed from every part of this House, to say that the General Assembly return their thanks to you for the communication you have now made, and that we feel a most deep and most brotherly interest towards the Synod of Canada, and for all of our countrymen who sojourn in that interesting country; that we will do all we can to promote their spiritual interests; and that our regret is that we can do so little. The interesting statement you have made will stimulate our desires; and I do hope that in a short time you will find the voice which you have brought across the Atlantic, calling on us to come over and help you, responded to in the manner you have yourself pointed out.

The assembly adjourned till to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

Sabbath, May 25.

After the minutes of the former seditant were read, the Moderator called the attention of the Assembly to a letter received this morning from her Majesty's Secretary of State, in reply to the answer of the Assembly to her Majesty's gracious letter to the Assembly. It intimated that the Assembly's letter had been delivered to her Majesty, and had been received in the most gracious manner.

## OVERTURE ANENT UNION WITH SECEDERS.

Mr. CANDLISH congratulated the Assembly on the prospect of a happy reunion with the Seceders, who had gone out from among them, but who were now ready to return to strengthen the hands of the church. He congratulated the Assembly on this the more, as it might be regarded as an encouragement to the church amid all her difficulties, that those who had stood aloof from her for so long a time, were now prepared to return into the bosom of the Mother Church. (Loud cries of Hear, hear.) That Church had ever stood faithful to the principle of a National Establishment, and they felt that they had now the way clearly opened for their return to the Mother Church. It must be satisfactory to all of them to know the deep interest which that body had felt in the critical position in which the church had lately been placed. They had solemnly held a meeting of their supreme judicatory to unite in earnest prayer for the blessing of the Head of the church on the National Establishment. And it must be also interesting to them to learn that that body had stood fast and firm in their attachment to our national church; and the result come to at the meeting of her Synod recently was, to express their fullest confidence in the church. He trusted that the way was now thoroughly and practically opened for the

accomplishment of that happy union which had been in contemplation, and sought after for some years past. He congratulated the House on the happy termination of the negotiations which had been going on; and he could not but augur the best things for the Church, that, in the time of difficulties, which he trusted would soon be removed, they had the sympathies of this body along with them. He trusted this was but the beginning of that ingathering by which the Church of Scotland might yet be the church of all the people of the land. (Hear, hear.)

The Assembly then unanimously agreed to convert the overture into an interim act of the Assembly.

## OVERTURE ON PROFESSORSHIPS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Dr. COOK said that they were all deeply interested in raising the standard of the knowledge and qualifications of their students as high as possible, and he had no doubt but the Assembly most heartily concurred in their approval of this overture.

Mr. CANDLISH suggested that they should refer the matter to the committee on Theological Learning, to take such steps to accomplish the institution of the Professorship as seemed to them most desirable.

Mr. EARL MONTEITH stated that the Aberdeen University Commission, in their late report, unanimously recommended to her Majesty's Government to institute such a Professorship.

Mr. BISSET concurred heartily in the approval of the overture; but care should be had to increase as little as possible the expense of theological learning.

The overture was agreed to, and was remitted to a committee to consider how its recommendations should be carried into effect.

## REPORT ON EDUCATION.

Dr. DICKSON, in absence of Principal Baird read the report of the Assembly's committee on Education.

Dr. M'KELLAR of Pencaitland would not enter into the subject of education in general, or the duty of the church to see that proper education was provided for the young. In such an Assembly as the present it was taken for granted, as a first principle, that as children were connected with eternity as well as time, no system of education could be considered as sufficient which did not combine training them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with their acquisition of secular knowledge. The knowledge they required was such as would be profitable for them, not in this life only, but in that which is to come. This principle in the education of children is as early as the light of the Reformation. Our fathers saw the closeness of the connection, and they made it a first principle that in the education of children there should be included a Scripture training; and it was this principle, carried into practice, which mainly contributed to raise Scotland to the high moral eminence which she occupied in the scale of nations.

He would conclude by proposing the thanks of the Assembly to the committee and to Principal Baird, with whom they most sincerely sympathise under his present indisposition; that the committee be re-appointed for the same purposes as before, and for the additional purpose of pursuing the plan of having schools established in all the *quoad sacra* parishes; that the thanks of the Assembly be given to the committee on Highland destitution for their liberal grant of £500—to the gentlemen of the counties of Inverness and Ross for their handsome subscription of £50 a-year; that the committee be instructed to apply to other counties to enable them to extend their scheme to the Lowlands as well as to the Highlands; approve of the committee's plan of publishing reports as to the state of the schools, and enjoin the Presbyteries to report regularly on the progress of the scheme within their bounds; approve of the conduct of the committee in reference to

the subject of new school-books; recommend their continued attention to this subject; and that the thanks of the Assembly be given to Mr. Wood for his attention to the Normal Schools.

Principal MACFARLAN, in seconding the motion, said he was sure they would all agree in the tribute which had been paid to the Reverend and Learned Principal at the head of the committee, who he hoped would be consoled in his present distress by the recollection of the great success which had attended his exertions in this matter, and how much these exertions were appreciated by the General Assembly and by the country at large.

The MODERATOR.—Dr. Dickson, it gives me great pleasure to be the organ of the Assembly in conveying their thanks to the Educational committee, and to yourself, Sir, as Sub-Convenor, in the absence of the venerable father (Principal Baird), whose case has been set before us, and has affected the feelings of the House, for the zealous and efficient labours of that committee in the important business intrusted to their care. The cause of education has always been a subject of high importance in the eyes of the church of Scotland, as laying the foundation for fostering that knowledge, which maketh wise unto salvation; and it is the glory of the system of instruction which we have adopted, that its object is to combine Divine and human learning, and to train immortal souls, not merely for the business of time, but for the blessedness of eternity. Sir, it is one proof, among many, of the wisdom of our forefathers, that, in planting the tree of knowledge, they found it necessary to plant it under the shadow and protection of the tree of life. You, Sir, and your committee, have proved yourselves to be animated with the highest spirit of the church, whose agents you have the honour to be; and the success which has attended your labours in the important sphere in which they are expended, in dispelling ignorance, and shedding light over the youthful mind, both for time and eternity, will, I am sure, meet with the approbation of this Assembly, and incite you to new exertions in so important and holy a cause.

## THE FOUR SCHEMES.

On the motion of Mr. Dunlop, it was agreed that separate collections should be made for the four schemes yearly, in the months of July, October, January, and April; and that the different schemes should once in four years have a collection made in each of these months; that is, that if this year the July collection should be for the education scheme, next year it should be in October; in 1841, in January; and in 1842, in April. After some conversation it was agreed to send this recommendation to all the ministers of the church.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE JEWS.

Rev. Mr. CANDLISH—I regret that the Convener is not here, as he would have gone with his whole heart into this interesting question. I do not mean to read the report, as it will be in the hands of the members of the Assembly immediately; but shall content myself with giving an outline of what it contains to show you what the committee has been doing. I conclude with laying the report on the table.

Dr. GORDON—I beg to move that this report be received and approved of. I would also move that the thanks of the Assembly be conveyed to the committee, and especially to the venerable Convener Dr. M'Gill.

Mr. MURRAY of Aberdeen spoke briefly on the subject, but was not heard by the reporters. The motion was unanimously agreed to, and the thanks of the Assembly given to Dr. M'Gill and the committee.

## QUEEN'S PRINTERS' PATENT.

Principal MACFARLAN introduced the following overture:—

Whereas the patent of printer to her Majesty for Scotland, conveying the exclusive privilege of printing the Holy Bible, will expire in July next; and whereas it is of un-

\* His speech has already been published in the Guardian.

speaking importance to the present comfort and everlasting welfare of the people of this country, and members of this church, that the Scriptures should be circulated not only in pure and accurate editions, but under such safeguards as will command confidence in their accuracy, and consequently, keep up the reverential feeling with which the Sacred Volume is generally and justly regarded—the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr humbly overture the Venerable the General Assembly of the church of Scotland to take this subject into their immediate and earnest consideration, and to adopt such prudent and energetic measures as to their wisdom shall seem meet and expedient, in order to secure and perpetuate to the inhabitants of this land the free and unlimited circulation of the Word of God, in all the purity, correctness, and authenticity, which can, under the Divine blessing, be attained by the employment of human means.”

The Rev. Principal moved that the Assembly present a loyal and dutiful address to the Queen and petition both Houses of Parliament on the subject, praying that measures may be adopted to secure the accurate printing of the Bible after the expiration of the Queen's Priater's patent, and appoint a committee to adopt such measures as may appear to be necessary for insuring that Scotland may be provided with accurate copies of the Scriptures.

After a few words from Mr. COLLINS and Dr. LEE, the committee was appointed.

#### OVERTURE ANENT PRESBYTERIAN CHAPLAINS OF REGIMENTS.

Dr. SMYTH moved an overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow to the Assembly, to petition the Legislature that Presbyterian chaplains and schoolmasters be appointed to Presbyterian regiments.

Dr. BRYCE seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

Dr. MUIR said, that he held in his hand a letter subscribed by the Moderator of the General Synod of Ulster, containing a copy of a memorial on the subject sent to the Secretary of War. In the concluding sentence, he says, “there can be little doubt that the Church of Scotland will move in the matter with the determination that becomes her, and if so, a happy issue will not be long delayed.”

Dr. LEE suggested that the motion should include a clause to the effect, that the religious instructors to be appointed to the Presbyterian soldiers of the British army, should be confined to the licentiates of their own church, and those of the Synod of Ulster, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at eleven o'clock, till eleven on Monday forenoon.

Monday, May 27.

Letters were read from Lord John Russell, thanking the Assembly, in name of her Majesty, for a Report relative to the Poor-laws in Scotland; and intimating that copies of the Report would be sent to each Presbytery in Scotland; as well as to the Assembly; and that a number would be sent for sale at a low rate to Messrs. A. & C. Black. The Moderator returned thanks to the Commissioner for the gift of the copies of the Report.

Dr. CHALMERS then said—I rise to propose that the following gentlemen should be appointed a committee for the purpose of considering in what way the privileges of the National Establishment, and the harmony between Church and State, may remain unimpaired, with instructions to confer with the Government of the country if they shall see cause:—The Rev. the Moderator, Dr. Muir, Mr. Candlish, Dr. Gordon, Alex. E. Mortreith, Esq. J. Maitland Hog, Esq. Dr. Mackellar, J. J. Hope Johnstone, Esq. Sir C. Fergusson, Bart. James Smith, Esq. Jordahill, Dr. Smyth, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, Principal Macfarlan, Robert Bruce, Esq. of Kennet, Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas, Claud Alexander, Esq. Dr. Cook, Principal Dewar, Mr. Robert

son of Ellon, J. C. Brodie, Esq.; G. Buchan, Esq. Alexander Dunlop, Esq.

The committee was then appointed, with the addition of Dr. Chalmers, the Procurator, and J. Stewart, Esq. and with power to add to their numbers. Dr. Chalmers Convener.

#### SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Several overtures having been read on the subject of Sabbath observance, it was agreed to forward an address to her Majesty, a memorial to the Treasury, and petitions to both Houses of Parliament on the subject—the petitions to be presented by Lord Haddington and J. H. Johnstone, Esq.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF PROBATIONERS.

Dr. CLASON gave in the report of a committee, the object of which was to inquire as to how far the probationers could be made available for extending the influence and usefulness of the church. It appeared, by returns given in the Presbyteries (several had not made any), that there were 592 probationers residing within their bounds; and making allowance for those not returned, and for those out of Scotland, the committee calculated that the whole number of licentiates could not be fewer than 760. Of the 592 returned, 276 were employed as assistants or missionaries, 148 as teachers, 131 were unemployed, and 37 were engaged in secular employments, and 65 of the whole number could preach in Gaelic. The committee submitted, that they should be re-appointed, and authorised to issue schedules to Presbyteries, with queries as to the number, names, qualifications, and occupations of all licentiates within their bounds, requesting answers to be forwarded to the committee before the meeting of next Assembly—that they should also be instructed to forward returns of all the destitute portions of their parishes, and of the number of probationers who were willing to labour in those localities. By these means, the committee would be able to devise some means in order to counteract the increase and prevalence of spiritual ignorance in our land.

The Assembly approved of the report, and voted thanks to the committee, which was re-appointed in the terms proposed.

#### STRACHUR CASE.

Mr. MACFARLANE read the report of the committee to which the case of Strachur had been referred. The committee recommended that an assistant should be continued during Mr. Ferguson's incumbency—to be filled up in future out of a list of three licentiates proposed by Principal Macfarlan, Dr. Muir, and Mr. Paton, it being understood that Mr. Tulloch shall not be put on any such list, and that Mr. Ferguson be relieved from any existing inconvenience from putting the arrangement into effect; and that the case be remitted to the Commission, by whom the arrangement shall ultimately be carried into execution, should any of the parties object.

#### PRESBYTERIAN SOLDIERS.

Mr. DUNLOP read the draft of the petition to Parliament, ordered by the Assembly on Saturday to be prepared on the subject of Presbyterian soldiers. The petition was approved of.

#### REGULATIONS ON CALLS.

Mr. SHAW STEWART rose to present the Report on Regulations on Calls. He said that the Regulations on Calls had not been approved of by a majority of Presbyteries; and, looking to the position of the church, the committee thought that the becoming course for the church was to allow matters to remain in their present state. The Regulations had hitherto existed altogether as an interim act; and the committee were of opinion that the Regulations should be again transmitted to Presbyteries, and passed as an interim Act, so that matters should be maintained in their present state. Returns had been received from thirty two Presbyteries; eight of them disapproved; nine approved absolutely; while fourteen suggested various alterations; and one made no report. Many

Presbyteries which formerly approved had not done so now from some misapprehension.

THE PROCURATOR begged to move that the General Assembly re-transmit the Regulations, and re-enact them as an interim act; but having by a resolution declared that it is deeply impressed with the unhappy consequences which must arise from any collision between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and holding it their duty to use every means, not involving any dereliction of the principles and fundamental laws of this constitution to prevent such unfortunate results, appoint a committee, &c. and feeling that it is inexpedient to do anything which may tend to embarrass the committee then appointed, do direct Presbyteries to report all disputed cases to next General Assembly.

Mr. DUNLOP supported the Procurator's motion, and maintained that the four chief Courts of the country, the Criminal, Civil, Fiscal, and Ecclesiastical, were independent of each other.

#### THE ELDERSHIP.

The overture on representative elders having been approved of by a majority of Presbyteries.

Mr. DUNLOP moved that the overture be now adopted as a standing law of the church.

Dr. COOK approved of the overture in many respects; but objected to its vagueness. He did not mean, however, to offer any opposition. The motion was then adopted.

#### ASSEMBLY HALL.

Mr. DUNLOP read a report from a committee recommending the Assembly to disapprove of the site for the Assembly Hall, and, as some new circumstances had transpired, to re-appoint the committee.

The report was approved of.

A long discussion ensued with regard to the funds of the church; but ultimately, at the suggestion of Mr. Robertson of Ellon, a committee was appointed to consider the most prudent means of raising funds for defraying the expenses incurred in the actions at the instance of the Earl of Kinnoull.

The committee on Theological Teaching recommended that an application should be made to her Majesty for the institution of chairs of Biblical Criticism in the Universities. The report, which contained some other suggestions of a subordinate kind, was agreed to.

The PROCURATOR made a verbal report with regard to the position of the Lethendy case.

Mr. CANDLISH moved that the Assembly do record their approbation of the conduct of the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and their sympathy with their brethren of that Presbytery in the painful circumstances in which they are placed.

It was also remitted to the Commission to advise with the Presbytery as to the course to be adopted by them.

Dr. SMITH seconded the motion, which was adopted.

The minutes of the sederunt having been read over, all causes not decided by the commission of 1838, and all that had not been decided in this Assembly, were remitted to the commission which is appointed to meet on Tuesday.

The MODERATOR then addressed the Assembly as follows:

#### RIGHT REVEREND AND RIGHT HONORABLE.

It has been the becoming and useful practice of my predecessors in this chair, to close the proceedings of the General Assembly with an address, intended to carry home to the hearts of those over whom they presided, the practical lessons which these proceedings were calculated to teach, that they might bear along with them a salutary impression when about to return to the superintendance of the flocks among which, as ministers and elders, the great Head of the church had appointed them to labour. I could have wished, in following this worthy example to have had an opportunity of addressing you at a time when your attention was less pre-occupied, and your spirits were less exhausted by weighty and long-protracted duties; and I do feel that, at this late hour, neither your patience nor my own strength will permit me to trespass long on

your time. Nevertheless, I am urged, by an imperative sense of duty, to claim your attention to a few parting words; and my hearts desire and prayer to Almighty God is, that I may be directed to speak to you with a wisdom, a plainness, and an unction, more suitable to the dignity of the office to which your partiality has raised me, than consistent with my own humble acquirements; and that while the treasure is in a mean "earthen vessel, the excellency of the power may be of God."

In reviewing the proceedings of this venerable Court since it was convened, so many important subjects crowd into my mind, that it is difficult to know where to begin. You have had under discussion measures of vital importance, connected not merely with the bulwarks of our beloved Zion, but with its very existence as a National Church. You have been led seriously to consider, not only how "to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes," but how to guard against enemies, who although disunited among themselves, have zealously combined to raze her from the foundations. No period since the great civil revolution restored our Presbyterian Church to its ancient privileges, has been pregnant with events of greater importance to her welfare; and it does appear to be a token for good, that the very circumstances which seemed to darken her prospects, have, by the good hand of God upon her, been overruled to promote her steadfastness, to deepen her spiritual views, to extend her influence, and eminently to advance her best interests.

If we turn to the controversy which the foes of the Establishment, reviving the equivocal spirit engendered in the times of the commonwealth, have so keenly excited against the connection between church and state, while we find much to lament and to deprecate in the spirit itself, we perceive, in its results, a quickening spirit on our people, and an infusion of greater energy into our institutions. The zeal of many, which, during a period of long uninterrupted peace, had begun to wax cold, has been re-animating: reformation of existing abuses has been extensively effected; a vast accession to the efficiency of the church has already been made, and is still proceeding; a more devoted attention has been excited to whatever can promote the usefulness of pastoral labours; and, above all, a spirit of revival has been shed abroad over the face of christian society, which it is our hope and earnest prayer may be only the harbinger of still better things:

If we turn to the steps which have been taken by the church to prevent the intrusion of obnoxious presentees to the pastoral charge of a parish, we observe, amidst some anticipated discouragements and irregularities, occasioned by the unaccustomed working of the measure, many circumstances which incite to perseverance, and open the brightest future prospects. A body of faithful pastors has been introduced into the church, whose active and efficient services have endeared them to their respective flocks, and afforded additional strength to the Establishment; the people have become more affectionately attached to the church of their fathers, which has made such disinterested efforts to secure their privileges; and a foundation has been laid for the progressive increase of a Christian spirit among all parties, which, under the blessing of our Supreme Head, cannot fail to promote the welfare of our Zion.

If, again, we direct our attention to the great question which has arisen out of this measure, as to the spiritual independence of our National Church, and which has occasioned a collision between the ecclesiastical and civil powers, we may confidently rely that, under the guidance of Him whose unseen hand brings good out of seeming evil, and who causes not only the wrath, but the prejudices and selfish views of men to praise him, even this apparent discouragement will eventually tend to the best interests of our beloved Establishment. If, in the meekness of wisdom, and with the humble but unswerving

spirit becoming a Church of Christ, we stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, we shall find the way cleared by a wisdom not our own, and the difficulties in which has placed us, overruled as the means of imparting purity, influence, and stability to our spiritual institutions.

Besides these evidences and anticipations of the protection and favour of our Divine Head there are others for which we have scarcely less cause of humble thankfulness. Nothing can more unequivocally prove the predominant influence of genuine faith in a Church of Christ than the awakening of an enlightened zeal for the diffusion of pure and undefiled religion throughout the world. I need not remind you that after a long period of lukewarmness and inactivity, such a zeal has sprung up, and has been remarkably blessed by Divine countenance and support. The unwonted efforts which have of late years been made for extending the blessing of religious education throughout the ignorant and neglected districts of our northern population, and for besetting regular Gospel ministrations, and for bestowing efficient parochial superintendence—efforts which have, in various instances, been blessed with a spiritual revival, not less remarkable than it is gratifying to the pious heart; the zealous exertions which have been made to relieve the spiritual wants of our expatriated countrymen in Canada and Australia, and which, although attended with difficulties and discouragements, continue still unrelaxed, and promise ultimately to produce the most important consequences; the impression already made on the vast regions of heathen India, and the enlarging prospect of success, unmissionaries, which we are privileged to entertain; and lastly, the measures adopted by the preceding General Assembly, and sanctioned by you for the important object of enlightening and favouring, and still reserved for a glorious destiny—measures which have been so judiciously followed up by your committee, and which seemed only wanting to comprehend all the great objects of missionary enterprise that a christian church important, and successful exertions of christian benevolence, at once display a principle of spiritual life and vigour in the church, and afford an evidence that the Saviour's blessing roasts upon its labours. Nor can I omit to notice other transactions of this Venerable court, which evince the same spirit of christian benevolence. The zeal with which you have seconded the efforts made by some of our inferior courts as well as by associations and private individuals, for checking the fearful progress of Sabbath desecration within the bounds of the church—the testimony you have borne against the unspeakable atrocities of the slave trade, with which unhappy Africa is still cursed, and to which, after all the efforts that have been made to abate its horrors, continue to fall a yearly sacrifice, and under the effects of which, the whole population—a hundred millions of immortal souls—are sunk in hopeless barbarism—and the anxiety you have shewn to countenance and support the Presbyterian churches in England, Ireland, and America, which have claimed your aid or craved your friendly co-operation—your solicitude, I say, and your judicious intervention in regard to these important objects, are worthy of your character as a church of Christ, and entitle you to the gratitude of your fellow-creatures.

Fathers and Brethren! While it is doubtless both useful and gratifying to call to remembrance the gracious dealings of our Divine Head towards our ecclesiastical Establishment, in the protection he has bountifully vouchsafed, and the Christian spirit he has been pleased to infuse, a more painful task remains to be performed. The Church is still beset with difficulties, and troubled on every side: "without are fightings, and within are

fears." Nevertheless, we are comforted with the undoubting conviction, that the combined efforts of Papists, Dissenters, and Infidels, which are the natural consequence of the awakening and increasing spirit of Christian devotedness within the walls of our Zion, are but one of the means which her heavenly king employs still farther to excite the faithfulness of her members, and to purify her from remaining corruption. Rest assured that so long as she proceeds in a course of spiritual improvement—so long as, with humble prayer and unflinching fortitude, she perseveres, through god report and through bad report, in rectifying abuses, in removing obstacles, in stirring up Christian virtues and graces, in affording new means of religious instruction and missionary enterprise, at home and abroad, and in zealously "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her." The Heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; worldly politicians may combine with ambitious sectaries to plot her destruction; but He that is for her is greater than all that can be against her." She will rise more graceful and more mighty from the conflict, and will discover in future, as she has experienced in times past, that the fire of persecution, while it consumes her bands and enables her to walk more freely and more firmly, shall not pass upon herself to injure her; for the Son of God will walk with her in the midst of the furnace: and the more intensely the flame glows, only so much the more shall she be warmed and enlightened, melted and purified.

Right Reverend and Right Honourable,—I cannot conclude without reminding you that additional faithfulness and devotion to the cause of our Divine Master are required of us. While the framework of our Church, being founded on the Word of God, and beautifully adapted to the important purposes of parochial instruction and spiritual edification, is worthy of admiration and deserves all your zeal, such are the evil dispositions with which it has to deal, such the weakness of the human instruments by which its functions are exercised, and such, also, the inadequacy of its provisions for supplying the spiritual wants of a rapidly increasing population, that much lamentable defection prevails among its members, much lukewarmness, many corrupt practices, much open profligacy. These require to be restrained and corrected with a paternal hand. On you, Fathers and Brethren, this important task devolves; and my earnest prayer for you is, that, on returning to your respective parishes, you may carry along with you a portion of that quickening spirit, which your important labours, while assembled in this place to consult and provide for the spiritual welfare of our much-loved country, were calculated, if prosecuted in a devotional frame, to cherish in your hearts. To all of you high interests are entrusted by our Spiritual Head, but especially to those who labour in word and doctrine. You, Reverend Fathers, are ambassadors for Christ, and stand in his stead to bear the message of salvation to perishing souls, and to offer them the means of salvation which he has purchased with his own blood. It is a duty of surpassing dignity and importance. "Who is sufficient for these things?" Well might we tremble and despair if left to our own strength; but we are re-assured when we call to mind the promised aid: "My grace is sufficient for thee," says our Divine Master, "my strength is made perfect in weakness." Trusting in this gracious promise, let us go on our way fearless and rejoicing.

Beloved brethren!—The task is arduous; but the aid is ample, and the reward unspeakable. To instruct the willing, to encourage the fearful, and to build up believers in their most holy faith, are labours of love with which the heart goes along. But faithfully to warn, wisely to reprove, gently yet firmly to correct, meekly and patiently to confute those who oppose themselves—these are duties more painful and more difficult, demanding a zeal, a prudence, a devotedness, a Christian charity, which those alone can attain who have felt the power of the Gospel on their own hearts, and have deeply imbibed the spirit of their Divine Master. Yet how blessed the employment! To be a fellow-worker together with God himself, in saving but one soul from eternal destruction, and bringing it to the marvellous light of the Gospel—would not this beyond measure repay a whole life of toil and suffering? But what shall we say, if it should please Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, to employ us more extensively in his service—to use us as instruments for the convic-

For remainder see Guardian page 46.