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Review

ART. I.—*An Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship, of the Primitive Church, that flourished within the first three hundred years after Christ; faithfully collected out of the Fathers and extant writings of those ages.* By Peter King, Lord High Chancellor of England. With an introduction, by the American Editor. New York. Published by G. Lane and P. P. Sandford, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 200 Mulberry street.

THE republication of this rare and valuable work, which has given us much satisfaction, is but a natural consequence, of the revival of the conflict, between free ecclesiastical principles and the exclusive claims of prelacy. Though it was hardly to be expected that such a book should owe its republication and introduction to the American churches to the publishing office of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Here is surely a verification of Samson's riddle: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." But the gift is no less acceptable for the seeming incongruity of the hand that conveys it. Indeed, this incongruity of the publication, is itself congruous with the authorship of the book. And we have in it not only a book against episcopacy, published by the Methodist Episcopal church, but also a book against episcopacy, written by a member of the English Episcopal church. We know,

its origin to the purest Christian benevolence. We have never detected any lurking principle of iniquity or selfishness, in the whole operations of the American Colonization Society. A more purely philanthropic scheme, in its origin and progress, we have never known. And though at first, we apprehended that the enterprize would be found impracticable, and on that account our own zeal was faint; yet now we are persuaded, that the plan of colonizing the free people of colour in Africa, is founded in wisdom, as well as philanthropy; and therefore we believe, that, maugre all opposition, it will prevail. Reader, help on this noble cause. Now it needs your help. Contribute to its success, and you will be richly repaid.

By J. A. Alexander & Wm. Hooper
 ART. V.—*Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, May, 1843: with a Sketch of the Proceedings of the Residuary Assembly.* Edinburgh: Svo. pp. 254.

IT is now nine years since we laid before our readers a description of the Scottish Church Establishment, with some account of the Original Secession,* and a statement of the evils under which the system was still labouring, particularly that of unrestricted patronage, and that arising from the want of due proportion between the parochial arrangements of the country and the spiritual wants of the population. We dwelt especially upon the fact, that even where chapels of ease had been erected, with a happy effect upon the religious state of the people, their ministers, however useful and respectable, had no place in the judicatories nor any part whatever in the government of the church. Against this anomalous arrangement, and the still greater evils of inadequate provision for the wants of the people, and of patronage unchecked by any popular control, a vigorous and steady opposition had been making, for some years before we wrote, by a zealous, influential, and increasing party, led by Dr. Chalmers. This distinguished man, already well known to the public, both in Europe and

* Bib. Rep., 1835. pp. 1-41, and 189-233.

writer on Civic and Christian Economy, had announced, as early as the year 1816, in the General Assembly, and still more definitely three years after, his determination to assert the principle of non-intrusion, as a fundamental doctrine of the Church of Scotland. In this determination, which at first excited wonder and perhaps derision, he was gradually seconded by some of the most pious, learned, zealous and efficient members of the church, especially of that class which was then beginning to assume the active conduct of affairs.

The party thus increased and reinforced was in fact the offspring and the representative of one which had existed since the Reformation, sometimes obtaining the ascendancy, but much more frequently composing the minority of the assembly, if not of the church at large. The repeated secession of a part of this minority, in 1739 and 1752, had greatly strengthened and confirmed the power of the Moderate party under the influence of which and its successive leaders, Dr. Cumming, Dr. Robertson, and Dr. Hill, the rights of the people were denied or disregarded, doctrinal laxity too much indulged, and the extension of the church and of religion by aggressive movements, mournfully neglected, till a new and mighty impulse was imparted to the system, through the efforts of the party which has been described, as rallied and re-organized by Dr. Chalmers. In aiming at the greatest possible extension of the truth and of religion, as the end of their labours, these enlightened men proposed to themselves and to their people several harmonious but distinguishable objects. As the first of these, may be named the elevation of the ministerial character, and the securing to the people of appropriate ministerial service, by giving them a peremptory check upon the exercise of patronage; as a second, the more adequate supply of spiritual labour, by the division of overgrown parishes, and the planting of new churches in destitute districts; as a third, the promotion of religion at home, by liberal and zealous contributions to the spread of it abroad, among both Jews and Gentiles. There are other specific objects which might be detailed, as entering into this great scheme of reformation and extension; but the three which have been mentioned will suffice to give a general idea of the plan, the effects of which were soon abundantly apparent in the noble enterprise of Church Extension over which Dr. Chalmers personally presided, and in the missionary labours of the Scottish church, espe-

cially in India and among the Jews. By a large part of the church, however, even these great enterprises, if not discountenanced, were languidly supported; while the effort to protect the people from the intrusion of unwelcome ministers was steadfastly opposed, not only by the patrons, as an interference with their civil rights, but by the Moderate leaders, as a departure from the principles and practice of the church of Scotland.

Such was the state of parties, when about ten years ago, the evangelical or popular side found themselves in the majority of the General Assembly, which they have ever since retained, partly in consequence of one of their first measures, called the Chapel Act, in which the ministers of parishes erected by the church, without an act of parliament, and technically called parishes *quoad sacra* but not *quoad civilia*, were recognized as members of the church-courts and invested with precisely the same powers which belonged to the ministers of old established churches. By the introduction of these ministers, and of elders representing their churches, which had formerly been subject to the old parish sessions, not only was an act of justice done to a class of clergymen whom all unite in representing as among the most respectable and useful in the Church, but a decided ascendancy was given and apparently secured to those by whom this revolution was effected. Against this act of 1833, and the supplementary acts of 1834 and 1839, the Moderates, now in a minority, protested, as not only inexpedient but illegal, and beyond the constitutional power of the Assembly. And the same ground was taken with respect to another most important measure of the party now in power. This was the famous Act concerning Calls, or as it is more usually called the Veto Act, by which it was declared to be a fundamental doctrine of the Church of Scotland, that no presentee shall be obtruded on a parish in opposition to the wishes of the people. Out of the execution of this act arose the famous Auchterarder case, in which the Court of Session declared the Veto Law to be illegal, and the presentee to be entitled to the living. Of this case and the subsequent proceedings, we have given an account in a former volume,* and shall only mention here, that after this decision, although many insisted on the immediate repeal of the obnoxious act, the majority resolved to abandon the temporalities in question, but at

* Bib. Rep. for 1839, pp. 510-526.

the same time to assert their spiritual jurisdiction, by refusing to ordain the presentee. In this case, the Presbytery carried out the resolutions of the Assembly, in opposition to the civil courts; but in the Marnoch case, which afterwards arose, the majority of the Strathbogie Presbytery sided with the civil courts against the church, in consequence of which they were first suspended and then deposed by the General Assembly, and the members of the church forbidden to commune with them; a prohibition which by many was not only disobeyed, but treated as a nullity. The decision of the Court of Session, in these cases, having been carried by appeal into the House of Lords, was finally affirmed there, and the Veto Act declared to be beyond the legislative powers of the church.

By this decision a new face was put upon the controversy, as a total variance of judgment now existed between the highest civil and ecclesiastical authorities, as to the terms on which the union between church and state was to subsist. The position of the former, being matter of conscience, could not be abandoned, and unless the latter could be brought to recognize it, those who maintained it must withdraw from the Establishment. In view of this event as possible, extensive consultations took place, and prospective measures were concerted by the leaders of the popular party, for which purpose two great convocations of ministers and elders were held at Edinburgh two years since. At the same time steps were taken to obtain a final decision on the part of the state, for which end applications were successively addressed to the House of Commons and the Crown. The former led to an animated debate, in which the claims of the church were ably and zealously maintained by Fox Maule, late Under Secretary of State, Rutherford, late Lord Advocate of Scotland, Campbell of Monzie, Patrick Stewart, Sir George Grey, and others. The result, however, was a vote adverse to the pretensions of the church, by a large majority, in which only one-third of the Scotch representation was included. The reply of the Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, to the other application, being equally unsatisfactory, the leading members of the church reluctantly concluded, that the judicial exposition of the terms of the establishment must be considered final. Their expectations of relief were further damped by a new and most important decision of the civil courts, before which certain ministers, accused in the

church-courts of immorality, had brought the question, whether the acts of ecclesiastical bodies, in which *quoad sacra* ministers had seats and votes, were binding, and this question had been answered in the negative, by which decision the validity of various important acts was either called in question or at once destroyed, and the relative position of the two great parties very seriously altered.

It was under the impression made by these events, that all concerned looked forward to the meeting of the General Assembly on the eighteenth of May, 1843. The approach of that day seems to have excited an intense solicitude and interest, throughout all Scotland, and especially in Edinburgh, where an extraordinary number of strangers was convened, in expectation of some great event. The Moderate party would appear to have been under the impression, that their adversaries, when the crisis came, would submit to the civil power, and undo their own obnoxious acts, so far as to remove the collision between church and state. The strength of this persuasion, in the minds of some, is laughably illustrated by a story told at some public meeting, of a zealous Moderate who at the very moment of disruption was declaring to a friend, that if any after all seceded, he would eat them! It is certain, too, that some who agreed with the majority in principle, and ultimately followed them in act, still indulged a hope that something would be done by the government to hinder the catastrophe, and looked for the disclosure of this something in the letter which, according to custom, the Queen was expected to address to the Assembly. This was the case with the Marquis of Breadalbane, the only zealous champion of the Church in the House of Lords, and with other laymen of considerable note, such as Maitland Hog, Ewing of Levenside, and Dickson of Hartree, the last of whom signed the protest and withdrew after the Queen's letter had been read in the Assembly. This variety of judgment and of expectation, among those concerned, would naturally tend to make the public curiosity far more intense. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the day of meeting came, St. Andrew's Church, the place assigned for the sessions of Assembly, was filled to overflowing and surrounded by a dense crowd, long before the hour appointed. Many even of the members of Assembly, and especially of the Moderate party, were waiting at St. Andrew's, while the opening service was proceeding in another place, the High Church,

or old cathedral of St Giles, where the Rev. Dr. Welsh, the Moderator of the previous Assembly, preached from Rom. xiv. 5, (Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind,) and then proceeding to St. Andrew's, took the chair, and opened the Assembly with a prayer, after which instead of proceeding to make up the roll, he read a paper, signed by himself and above two hundred others, which we shall here insert, as an important historical document, and as an authoritative statement of the principles on which the party acted.

"We, the undersigned ministers and elders, chosen as commissioners to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, indicted to meet this day, but precluded from holding the said Assembly by reason of the circumstances hereinafter set forth, in consequence of which a Free Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in accordance with the laws and constitution of the said Church, cannot at this time be holden,—

"Consider that the Legislature, by their rejection of the Claim of Rights adopted by the last General Assembly of the said Church, and their refusal to give redress and protection against the jurisdiction assumed, and the coercion of late repeatedly attempted to be exercised over the courts of the Church in matters spiritual by the civil courts, have recognised and fixed the conditions of the Church Establishment, as henceforward to subsist in Scotland, to be such as these have been pronounced and declared by the said civil courts in their several recent decisions, in regard to matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, whereby it has been *inter alia* declared,—

"1st. That the courts of the Church as now established, and members thereof, are liable to be coerced by the civil courts in the exercise of their spiritual functions; and in particular, in their admission to the office of the holy ministry, and the constitution of the pastoral relation, and that they are subject to be compelled to intrude ministers on reclaiming congregations in opposition to the fundamental principles of the Church, and their views of the Word of God, and to the liberties of Christ's people.

"2d, That the said civil courts have power to interfere with and interdict the preaching of the gospel and administration of ordinances as authorised and enjoined by the Church courts of the Establishment.

"3d, That the said civil courts have power to suspend spiritual censures pronounced by the Church courts of the Establishment against ministers and probationers of the Church, and to interdict their execution as to spiritual effects, functions and privileges.

"4th, That the said civil courts have power to reduce and set aside the sentences of the Church courts of the Establishment, deposing ministers from the office of the holy ministry, and depriving probationers of their license to preach the gospel, with reference to the spiritual status, functions, and privileges of such ministers and probationers,—restoring them to the spiritual office and status, of which the Church courts had deprived them.

"5th, That the said civil courts have power to determine on the

right to sit as members of the supreme and other judicatories of the Church by law established, and to issue interdicts against sitting and voting therein, irrespective of the judgment and determination of the said judicatories.

“6th, That the said civil courts have power to supersede the majority of a Church court of the Establishment, in regard to the exercise of its spiritual functions as a Church court, and to authorise the minority to exercise the said functions, in opposition to the court itself, and to the superior judicatories of the Establishment.

“7th, That the said civil courts have power to stay processes of discipline pending before courts of the Church by law established, and to interdict such courts from proceeding therein.

“8th, That no pastor of a congregation can be admitted into the Church courts of the Establishment, and allowed to rule, as well as to teach, agreeable to the institution of the office by the Head of the Church, nor to sit in any of the judicatories of the Church, inferior or supreme, and that no additional provision can be made for the exercise of spiritual discipline among members of the Church, though not affecting any patrimonial interests, and no alteration introduced in the state of pastoral superintendence and spiritual discipline in any parish without the coercion of a civil court.

“All which jurisdiction and power on the part of the said civil courts severally above specified, whatever proceeding may have given occasion to its exercise, is in our opinion, in itself inconsistent with Christian liberty,—with the authority which the Head of the Church hath conferred on the Church alone.

“*And further, considering* that a General Assembly, composed in accordance with the laws and fundamental principles of the Church, in part of commissioners themselves admitted without the sanction of the civil court, or chosen by Presbyteries, composed in part of members not having that sanction, cannot be constituted as an Assembly of the Establishment without disregarding the law and the legal conditions of the same as now fixed and declared.

“*And further, considering* that such commissions as aforesaid would, as members of an Assembly of the Establishment, be liable to be interdicted from exercising their functions, and to be subjected to civil coercion at the instance of any individual having interest, who might apply to the civil courts for that purpose.

“*And considering* further, that civil coercion has already been in divers instances applied for and used, whereby certain commissioners returned to the Assembly this day appointed to have been holden, have been interdicted from claiming their seats and from sitting and voting therein, and certain Presbyteries have been by interdicts directed against the members prevented from freely choosing commissioners to the said Assembly, whereby the freedom of such Assembly, and the liberty of election thereto, has been forcibly obstructed and taken away.

“*And further, considering* that, in these circumstances, a Free Assembly of any Church of Scotland, by law established, cannot at this time be holden, and that the Assembly in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Church, cannot be constituted in connection with the State without violating the conditions which must

now, since the rejection by the Legislature of the Church's Claim of Right, be held to be the conditions of the Establishment.

“ *And considering* that, while heretofore as members of Church judicatories ratified by law and recognised by the constitution of the kingdom, we held ourselves entitled and bound to exercise and maintain the jurisdiction vested in these judicatories with the sanction of the constitution, notwithstanding the decrees as to matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, of the civil courts, because we could not see that the State had required submission thereto as a condition of the Establishment, but, on the contrary, were satisfied that the State, by the acts of the parliament of Scotland, for ever and unalterably secured to this nation by the Treaty of Union, had repudiated any power in the civil courts to pronounce such decrees, we are now constrained to acknowledge it to be the mind and will of the State, as recently declared that such submission should and does form a condition of the Establishment, and of the possession of the benefits thereof; and that as we cannot, without committing what we believe to be sin—in opposition to God's law—in disregard of the honour and authority of Christ's crown, and in violation of our own solemn vows, comply with this condition, we cannot in conscience continue connected with, and retain the benefits of the Establishment to which such condition is attached.

“ WE, THEREFORE, the ministers and elders aforesaid, on this, the first occasion since the rejection by the Legislature of the Church's claim of right, when the commissioners chosen from throughout the bounds of the Church to the General Assembly appointed to have been this day holden, are convened together, DO PROTEST, that the conditions aforesaid, while we deem them contrary to and subversive of the settlement of church government effected at the Revolution, and solemnly guaranteed by the Act of Security and Treaty of Union, are also at variance with God's word, in opposition to the doctrines and fundamental principles of the Church of Scotland, inconsistent with the freedom essential to the right constitution of a church of Christ, and incompatible with the government which He, as the Head of his church, hath therein appointed distinct from the civil magistrate.

“ And we further PROTEST, that any Assembly constituted in submission to the conditions now declared to be law, and under the civil coercion which has been brought to bear in the election of commissioners to the Assembly this day appointed to have been holden, and on the commissioners chosen thereto, is not and shall not be deemed a free and lawful Assembly of the Church of Scotland, according to the original and fundamental principles thereof, and that the claim, declaration, and protest, of the General Assembly which convened at Edinburgh in May 1842, as the act of a free and lawful Assembly of the said Church, shall be holden as setting forth the true constitution of the said Church, and that the said claim, along with the laws of the Church now subsisting, shall in nowise be affected by whatsoever acts and proceedings of any Assembly constituted under the conditions now declared to be the law, and in submission to the coercion now imposed on the Establishment.

“ And finally, while firmly asserting the right and duty of the civil magistrate to maintain and support an establishment of religion in

accordance with God's word, and reserving to ourselves and our successors to strive by all lawful means, as opportunity shall, in God's good providence, be offered, to secure the performance of this duty agreeably to the scriptures, and in implement of the statutes of the kingdom of Scotland, and the obligations of the Treaty of Union as understood by us and our ancestors, but acknowledging that we do not hold ourselves at liberty to retain the benefits of the Establishment while we cannot comply with the conditions now deemed to be thereto attached—we PROTEST, that in the circumstances in which we are placed, it is and shall be lawful for us, and such other commissioners chosen to the Assembly appointed to have been this day holden, as may concur with us, to withdraw to a separate place of meeting, for the purpose of taking steps for ourselves and all who adhere to us—maintaining with us the Confession of Faith and standards of the Church of Scotland, as heretofore understood—for separating in an orderly way from the Establishment; and thereupon adopting such measures as may be competent to us, in humble dependence on God's grace and the aid of the Holy Spirit, for the advancement of his glory, the extension of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour, and the administration of the affairs of Christ's house, according to his holy word: and we do now withdraw accordingly, humbly and solemnly acknowledging the hand of the Lord in the things which have come upon us, because of our manifold sins, and the sins of this Church and nation; but, at the same time, with an assured conviction, that we are not responsible for any consequences that may follow from this our enforced separation from an establishment which we loved and prized—through interference with conscience, the dishonour done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of his sole and supreme authority as King in his Church."

The moderator, and the other protesting members, then withdrew, and the remaining body organized itself, as an Assembly of the Established Church, by electing Principal Maefarlane of Glasgow to the chair, which he had filled more than twenty years before. This Assembly continued in session till the 29th of May, when it was dissolved, as usual, first by the Moderator in the name of Christ, and then by the royal commissioner (the Marquis of Bute) in the name of the Queen. The letter from her Majesty, delivered by this nobleman, at the beginning of the session, is as follows:

"VICTORIA R.—Right reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Faithful to the solemn engagement which binds us to maintain inviolate the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in all its rights and privileges, we gladly renew the assurance that we desire to extend to you the continuance and support which the General Assembly has long received from our royal ancestors.

"In other circumstances it might have sufficed to adhere to the forms which have been generally observed in our former communications to you, and to express our anxious hope, that Christian

charity will, as heretofore, abound among you, and restrain all animosities; but in the present state of the Church, and adverting to the discussions which of late have so unhappily disturbed its peace, we desire to address you with more than usual earnestness and anxiety.

“It behoves you to remember that unity in the Church is the bond of peace, but that schism and its pernicious effects may tend seriously to endanger that religious Establishment from which Scotland has derived inestimable benefits.

“The faith of our Crown is pledged to uphold you in the full enjoyment of every privilege which you can justly claim; but you will bear in mind that the rights and property of an Established Church are conferred by law; it is by law that the Church of Scotland is united with the State, and that her endowments are secured; and the ministers of religion, claiming the sanction of law in defence of their privileges, are specially bound, by their sacred calling, to be examples of obedience.

“The act ratifying the Confession of Faith and settling Presbyterian Church government in Scotland, was adopted at the Union, and is now the act of the British Parliament. The settlement thus fixed cannot be annulled by the will or declaration of any number of individuals. Those who are dissatisfied with the terms of this settlement, may renounce it for themselves; but the Union of the Church of Scotland with the State is indissoluble, while the statutes remain unrepealed which recognize the Presbyterian Church as the Church established by law within the kingdom of Scotland.

“We cannot doubt that your anxious consideration will be given to various important matters connected with the welfare of your Church, which require immediate adjustment.

“The act of Assembly passed in the year 1834, on the subject of calls, has come under the review of competent tribunals, and various proceedings, taken in pursuance of this act, have been pronounced by solemn judgments to be illegal. It has not yet been rescinded by the Assembly; and a conflict of authority between the law of the land and an act of the Church, in a matter where civil rights and civil jurisdiction are concerned, cannot be prolonged without injurious consequences.

“The Church of Scotland, occupying its true position in friendly alliance with the State, is justly entitled to expect the aid of Parliament in removing any doubts which may have arisen with respect to the right construction of the statutes relating to the admission of ministers. You may safely confide in the wisdom of Parliament; and we shall readily give our assent to any measure which the Legislature may pass, for the purpose of securing to the people the full privilege of objection, and to the Church judicatories the exclusive right of judgment.

“There is another matter not less important—the present position of ministers in unendowed districts. The law, as confirmed by a recent judgment, has declared that new parishes cannot be created by the authority of the Church alone, and that ministers placed in such districts are not entitled to act in Church courts.

“If it shall appear that the efficiency of the Church is thereby impaired, and that the means of extending her usefulness are curtailed, the law to which such effects are ascribed, may require consideration

and amendment; but until it be so considered by the Legislature, and while it remains unaltered, we are persuaded that it will be implicitly obeyed by the General Assembly.

“You will deliberate on such of these matters as fall within your cognizance, attentively and calmly; and we commend you to the guidance of Divine Providence, praying that you may be directed to the adoption of wise counsels, which shall promote the permanent interests and honour of the Church, and the religious peace and moral welfare of our people.

“We have again constituted and appointed our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, John, Marquis of Bute, K. T., to be the representative of our royal person in this Assembly; and we are certain that his prudence and approved merits, and his tried attachment to the Church of Scotland, will render him acceptable to you in the execution of the duties of his high office.

“He possesses our full authority for the exercise of our royal prerogative in all matters relating to the present Assembly, in which, in obedience to our instructions to him, he may be called upon to act for us, or on our behalf.

“We implore the blessing of God on your deliberations, trusting that He will overrule all events for the good of His Church, and for the spiritual welfare of the people committed to your charge; and we feel assured that Divine grace will not be withdrawn from the labours of the ministers of the Church established in this part of the United Kingdom, and so we bid you heartily farewell.

“Given at our Court at St. James’s, the 15th day of May, 1843, in the sixth year of our reign.

“By her Majesty’s command,
(Signed)

“JA. GRAHAM.”

The first three days of the session were spent in appointing committees, arranging business, and allowing the excitement and surprise of the great movement to subside. When at length the discussion of the necessary measures was begun, it soon appeared that the *residuary* body (as the other party call it,) was very far from being of one mind. The point of difference among them was the question, how the offensive legislation of the last ten years, and its judicial consequences, ought to be disposed of. Some were in favour of rescinding it as formally as it had been enacted, on the express ground, that it had been declared illegal by the civil courts, or as some suggested, on the ground that it was no longer practicable to carry the laws in question into execution. The former ground was taken by those members who to some degree had sympathised with the seceding party, or at least had felt and acknowledged the evils which that party sought to remedy, but were unwilling to go with them in forsaking the establishment, or in opposing the civil power. The Moderate leaders on the other hand, de-

nying the existence of any evils, which the church itself was not already competent to rectify, regarded the new law, and the judgments growing out of them, as useless, dangerous, and unconstitutional, and therefore wished to set them aside summarily and direct the Presbyteries to proceed according to the ancient practice. To this it was objected, that the church had for years been proceeding on the supposition, that these laws were in existence and in force, and was thereby precluded from now treating them as void *ab initio*. The veto law, moreover, had been passed, according to the provisions of the Barrier Act, by a majority of the Presbyteries, and could only be rescinded by the same authority. The Chapel Act stood upon a different footing, having been passed by an immediate act of the Assembly, without being previously overtured to Presbyteries; but even this law had been every where submitted to, and carried into execution, and could therefore not be legislated out of existence, though it might be declared to be illegal and invalid. To these reasonings the leaders of the party still replied that the obnoxious legislation was both needless and unlawful, and insisted on undoing it, by simply directing the inferior courts to act as if it never had existed. In this way the Veto Act was nullified without a division, and the Chapel Acts more formally rescinded, with a testimony to the usefulness of the ministers thus excluded from the church courts, and an expressed determination to restore them in a legal way. By these two acts of the Established Assembly, all restriction was removed from the exercise of patronage, so far as that restriction had arisen from the veto law, and all *quoad sacra* ministers reduced to their former character as teaching but not ruling elders.

Having thus disposed of the erroneous legislation of their predecessors, the Assembly now proceeded to undo, as far as as possible, the judicial consequences both of the Veto and the Chapel Acts. Under the former, several cases of disputed settlement were now disposed of, and one or two rejected presentees admitted and referred to the Presbyteries for ordination. But the most important judicial case, which had arisen from the Veto Law, was that of the Strathbogie Presbytery, already mentioned. From the majority of that Presbytery, while under deposition, commissioners, themselves deposed, were sent to this Assembly, and the question was suggested, at the very opening of the session, whether they should be admitted to their seats, and their names put upon

the roll at once. Against this several members earnestly protested, and one (Mr. Bruce of Kennet,) who had previously objected to Principal Macfarlane's being called to the chair, because he had taken part with the Strathbogie ministers in disobedience to the will of the Assembly, actually left the house because it was determined to postpone the decision of this question until after the repeal of the Veto Law; and several who condemned his rashness in withdrawing, and refused to follow his example, appeared nevertheless to share his feelings. The ground assumed by these was, that although the deposition of the Strathbogie ministers was unjust and cruel, it was done in due form by a competent authority, and therefore should have been submitted to, until the sentence was revoked or taken off; the rather as authority had been expressly given to the commission, by the Assembly of 1842, to remove the censure, if they saw fit, on receiving application from the parties; who, however, had made no such application, and who therefore should not be restored without some expression of regret for their contempt of church-authority. To this it was replied, that as the law, for disobeying which these persons were deposed, had been declared to be invalid, the offence of which they had been guilty must go with it, and they were now to be regarded not only as ministers in good standing thenceforth, but as having been so all along. Against this decision several members protested and assigned their reasons.

The only judicial cases connected with the Chapel Act, were those prosecutions for immoral conduct, which have been already mentioned, as the occasion of the decision that the *quoad sacra* ministers had no right to sit and vote in the Church courts. It might have been expected that, in order to remove the scandal of these processes, the Assembly would have summarily dealt with the offenders; but instead of this they leave it to the Presbyteries to examine and determine according to law and the practice of the Church.

The only further act of "reform" which we shall mention as performed by this body, is the re-enactment of the law of 1799, by which all ministers of other churches were excluded from the pulpits of the Scotch Establishment, but which had been repealed in 1842. This repeal was described, on the floor of the Assembly, as a disgrace to the records of the church, and as breaking down the only

hedge by which unsound and unworthy teachers were excluded from the pulpit. The principle laid down upon this subject was that the established church was bound to teach certain doctrines, and that of these the judicatories were the constituted judges, so that no individual minister had a right to determine who was sound in the faith; although it was admitted that there might be cases which deserved to be excepted, and for which provision might be subsequently made.

Having thus undone, as far as possible, the legislative and judicial acts of the seceding party, the residuary Assembly proceeded to sit in judgment on the seceders themselves. The only question which arose on this point was the question whether what was done already should be taken as a final act, or further evidence be sought of the secession, and space for repentance allowed to the seceders. This question was decided, in the midst of a discussion, by the arrival of a formal deed of separation, which will be adverted to hereafter. The seceding ministers and elders were of course declared to be no longer ministers or elders of the Church of Scotland, and incapable of holding any benefice therein, until restored by competent authority. Arrangements were subsequently made for the supply of the vacant pulpits.

The remaining acts of this Assembly had relation either to mere matters of routine and local interest, or to the schemes (benevolent enterprises) of the church, all which, and particularly Foreign Missions, it was resolved to prosecute with greater zeal than ever, and a body of influential laymen was said to have been formed, to supply the necessary funds. This new-born zeal for missions and its kindred objects, in the old Assembly, is among the most remarkable fruits of the secession. One distinguished member even went so far as to declare that if the Church of Scotland should lose the spirit of missions, it would be a sign of its approaching downfall. The reporter somewhat ungraciously asks, where was the missionary zeal of Moderatism in the eighteenth century, a question which, alas! might be extended to the other party also, and to almost every reformed church in Christendom. Let those who took the lead in this good work receive the praise which is their due, but let not those who follow their example be upbraided for so doing.

The only other act of any public interest is one sent down

by a preceding Assembly and confirmed by a majority of Presbyteries, which requires that every student received into the Divinity Hall (corresponding to our Theological Seminaries) shall have attended the Latin class of a university at least one year. This enactment, taken in connection with some observations made upon the floor and from the chair of the Assembly, seems to indicate that great remissness had existed with respect to the examining and licensing of candidates. In this point, too, the secession will probably have some effect, in raising the standard of professional acquirement even in the establishment.

The most conspicuous members of the Moderate party, who appear in this Assembly, are the two who had long been acknowledged as leaders, Dr. Cook, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen, and Mr. Robertson of Ellon, since appointed by the crown to succeed Dr. Welsh as Professor of Church History at Edinburgh. In coincidence with these an active part was taken by the Rev. Drs. Mearns and Forbes, while a more moderate and doubtful course was pursued by Mr. Bell (the Procurator,) by Professor Hill of Glasgow, and by Lord Belhaven, who for a number of successive years represented the crown in the General Assembly. A still stronger sympathy with evangelical and non-intrusion principles was exhibited by Mr. Storie of Roseneath, Mr. Tait of Kirkliston, Mr. Walker of Legerwood, and a few others.

The attendance of the public on the sessions of this body was irregular and scanty, and among the spectators there were probably at least as many foes as friends, since we read of hisses and commotion in the galleries, not only when Principal Macfarlane took the chair, but also during the discussion of the protest, and particularly during a violent harangue of the Rev. Mr. Proudfoot, charging the seceders with courting popular applause, and with forcing contributions from the poor of Scotland, who could only give what they had received in charity. With the exception of this speech, and what occurred in connexion with it, all the proceedings seem to have been marked by moderation and decorum; and were closed with an address from the Moderator, which appears to us to be a fine specimen of elegant and dignified discourse, however strange such a judgment might be thought by the reporter, to whom we are indebted for the facts which we have stated, and who gives as a reason for his comparatively slight account of this assembly, that

there is nothing in its doings "which either the Christian men of the present day regard with any interest, or which posterity will care to know." We look upon our own case as but one out of many contradictions to this sweeping declaration, and feel no hesitation in confessing that we have perused the sayings and doings of this body with much interest, though certainly with far less than we have felt and expect our readers to feel in the proceedings to which we now turn, those of the General Assembly of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The first point to which we shall advert is the popular feeling manifested towards the Free Assembly. When Dr. Chalmers and the other leading non-intrusionists made their appearance at St. Andrew's Church, they were greeted with enthusiastic cheering by the multitude assembled there. When they made the movement to withdraw, a loud cheer burst from the gallery, which, however, was suddenly hushed. When they appeared outside, they were received with a tremendous burst of applause, not only from the crowd about the doors, but from windows and roofs, along the whole line of street through which they passed to the Hall at Tanfield, Canonmills, whither they were accompanied and followed by a vast multitude, and found another awaiting their arrival. The Hall, which is described as being capable of holding more than three thousand persons, was completely filled, and seems to have continued so throughout the sessions, as we read that on the 30th day of May, when the Assembly was dissolved, there were present between three and four thousand, to the close of the proceedings, about one o'clock in the morning. From this vast body of spectators there proceeded constant tokens of unabated interest, and frequent expressions of enthusiastic approbation and applause. With all allowance for the British usages in this respect, and the unmeaning character of such expressions in a multitude of cases, it is still true that the facts which we have mentioned serve not only to illustrate the natural interest which Scotchmen feel in church affairs, but also to evince the peculiar interest excited in the public mind on this occasion.

The proceedings of the Free Assembly were opened and closed with an address by Dr. Chalmers, exhibiting in either case his usual characteristics both of thought and language, and distinguished by a striking combination of enlarged views and elevated purposes with deep religious feelings.

His appointment to the chair was proposed by his predecessor, Dr. Welsh, and voted by enthusiastic acclamation. During the session he was much employed, however, in preparing the reports of the Finance Committee, and the chair was consequently often filled by others. The terms of eulogy, in which this great and good man was repeatedly addressed, or described in his presence, however well deserved, can only be reconciled with good taste and Christian moderation, by considering the extraordinary circumstances in which they were uttered. And the same remark applies, though in a less degree, to the eulogistic tone in which several of the leaders and partakers of this movement publicly spoke of one another, and occasionally of themselves. The unparalleled excitement, the provocatives to self-defence, and the exhilaration of success, surpassing the most sanguine expectation, may suffice to justify a way of speaking, which would be without excuse, if still continued under other circumstances.

In connexion with these critical, it may be hypercritical, remarks, we take occasion to record the strong impression left upon our minds by the perusal of this narrative, as to the aggregate amount of strong sense, solid information, practical wisdom, energetic purpose, devout affection, enlightened zeal, and eloquence at once highly popular and scriptural, embodied even in the bare reports of the speeches made at this Assembly. Considered merely in the light of speeches, they convey a very favourable notion of the pulpit talents and capacity to influence the public mind upon religious subjects, possessed by the clergy of the Free Church of Scotland. Appeals to the understanding, the conscience and the heart, so spirited, so simple, so devoid of frothy declamation, and so deeply tinged with scriptural allusion, phraseology and spirit, must be highly efficacious especially when addressed to an intelligent and serious community.* We trust that the impulse which has

* It deserves to be noted as characteristic of the Scottish mind and education, that while mere declamation is excluded almost wholly from these speeches, the most powerful rhetorical effects appear to have been produced by scriptural allusions. Thus when Mr. McCrie, comparing the original secession with the new one, said, "ours was the Genesis, but yours the Exodus," and Mr. Guthrie illustrated the different feelings of the Voluntary towards the Church, before and after the disruptions, by the ease of Moses, who reproved two Hebrews for contending, but when he saw a Hebrew wronged by an Egyptian, killed the latter and buried him in the sand—these allusions, felicitous and striking as they are, would, we verily believe, have been comparatively thrown away on any audience except a Scotch one.

probably been given to the preaching of the Free Church Ministers by late events, will long continue, and be eminently salutary.

We shall not attempt to give a narrative, nor even a digested summary, of all the acts performed by this Assembly, much less of its various discussions, but content ourselves with stating, under several comprehensive heads, the facts which strike us as possessing most of a historical importance. In the execution of this plan we shall consider, 1st, the principles avowed by the seceding body, as the ground of their proceedings, and the position assumed by them as a church; 2d, the plans proposed and adopted by them for maintaining this position; 3d, their action in relation to the great work of evangelical benevolence; 4th, their relative position, tone and spirit, with respect to the other branches of the Christian church.

On the first of these points, there will be the less occasion for minute detail, because we have already introduced the Protest, which contains an authentic and authoritative statement of the grounds on which the separation was effected. Taking this important paper in connexion with the speeches of the leading members of the Free Assembly, we may state their theory of doctrine and of duty to be this; that every government is under obligations to provide for the religious instruction of the people, by supporting some branch of the Christian church; that the church is not, in any sense, the creature of the state, but an independent organized society, possessing certain powers, directly and exclusively derived from Christ; that by being legally established, or connected with the state, the church neither does nor can relinquish any of its spiritual powers; that any interference with the exercise of these, upon the part of civil governments, is sinful usurpation, and that all submission to such usurpation is a sinful dereliction of Christ's claim to be the head of his own church; that where such submission is required by the state, as an indispensable condition of establishment, the church is bound to sever the connexion, and, as far as possible, to execute its office, as the spiritual counsellor and teacher of the people, unaided by the state. From this view of the matter it follows of course, that what is called the Voluntary Principle is wholly repudiated by this body, which not only claims to be a National Church, but holds itself in readiness to be established, whenever the State shall assent

to its conditions. The Orthodox or Evangelical Dissenters of Scotland are of two kinds, those who deny the lawfulness of religious establishments, and those who hold it. From the former the Free Church is distinguished by maintaining that the Church and State not only may but ought to be united, provided such a union can be formed without a compromise of Christ's supremacy or of the church's exclusive spiritual jurisdiction. From the latter it is separated chiefly, and in the case of Presbyterian bodies only, by its claiming to be not a mere secession or a sect, but a National Church, the true Church of Scotland. As these distinctions have respect to points but little known among ourselves, it may be proper to define the difference between an Established and a National Church, as we have just distinguished them. The Free Church does not claim of course to be an establishment, or to have any claim upon the government, at present, for support or special favour. It acknowledges the body, from which it has just separated, as the religious Establishment of Scotland. When it claims, then, to be nevertheless recognised as the Church of Scotland, what it means is this; that the Reformed Church of Scotland had a separate and organized existence long before its full establishment by Act of Parliament in 1592; that it did not cease to be a church when united with the state, still less when it was disestablished, and even persecuted by the civil power; that this same church, which existed as a national institution before it was established, and which has survived the persecution of its enemies, has now, by its own act, separated from the state, but is still identical with the original National Church of Scotland, while the body now established is to be regarded as a new organization. Hence they refuse to be considered a secession from the Church of Scotland, or to recognise themselves and the Establishment as two parts of one and the same body. To this high claim of the Free Church, the Original Seceders, by their deputation, cordially responded. Mr. McCrie, the son of the historian, who was one of the representatives of that respectable sect, assured the Free Assembly that he looked upon them, and not upon the body left behind, as his mother church, as the first "free, faithful and reforming Assembly of the Church of Scotland," to which the Original Seceders had appealed.*

* See Bib. Rep. for 1835, p. 32.

As a necessary consequence of their asserting this identity with the ancient Church of Scotland, they were under the necessity of laying all their plans on a national scale, and instead of providing merely for their own congregations, and then trusting to Providence for their enlargement, as the various seceding seats had done, they were compelled, by their own principles, to make provision for the spiritual wants of the entire kingdom, and in doing so, to act as if no portion of the field had been pre-occupied; for nothing short of this, it will be seen at once, could justify their claim to be the Church of Scotland. This prodigious stretch of view and effort, while it made the task, to which the Free Church addressed itself, immeasurably harder than it would have been, if they had chosen to assume the name and character of a party seceding from the Church, and not that of the Church seceding from the State, at the same time tended to expand and elevate the whole tone and character of this great revolution, in a degree which cannot possibly be estimated. This conception, whoever be its author, is a grand one, and has given complexion to the whole affair. Even those who may have reason to complain of its practical effects, must admit that there is something really sublime in the determination to assume the rank of a National Church, not, like the Establishment, by mere force of law, nor, like the Episcopal Church in Scotland, by the impotent pretensions of a lifeless bigotry, but by the noble effort to make name and thing coincident, by carrying the gospel into every nook and corner of the kingdom. Even this, however, might have been attempted in a very different manner, by adopting measures suited merely *ad captandum*, without any provision for the real and permanent improvement of the people, as for instance by an itinerant and noisy agency, intended merely to excite and agitate and sway the public mind, without promoting its instruction or its spiritual welfare. But in nothing are the projects of the Free Church more conspicuously wise and good than in the broad and firm foundation upon which they rest in this respect, to wit, a universal and effective system of religious education in its several stages, to be furnished and secured, as Dr. Chalmers has repeatedly expressed it, by well-served churches and by well-taught schools. The profound views of duty and expediency, evinced by this proposal, so remote from the empirical and superficial remedies, which

common-place reformers are accustomed to apply to the diseases of society, distinguish the whole system as the product neither of fanatical extravagance nor abstract speculation, but of practical wisdom and a deep but sober piety, enthroned in some of the most powerful and cultivated minds of this or any other age.

The Free Church, then, assumes the position of a national organization, and undertakes, as its appointed work, to furnish Scotland with a faithful, educated, spiritual ministry, and with parochial schools, in full proportion to the wants of the community. In order to the doing of this work, she counts upon the active self-denying labours of the ministers who left the Establishment, of all the Probationers and Students who have followed their example, of a large and respectable body of experienced Schoolmasters, and of a multitude of young men whom she yet hopes to bring forward and employ in both these fields of labour. To provide for the support of these essential instruments, and at the same time for the erection of churches and other necessary buildings, a general fund was created by spontaneous donations, and a source of permanent supply secured by the extensive organization of local societies to be sustained by annual subscriptions. In the contrivance of these simple but effectual expedients, the Free Church had a great advantage in possessing Dr. Chalmers, who has always exhibited a singular aptitude and fondness for arrangements of this nature, and whose previous experience as leader of the Church Extension enterprise, had eminently qualified him both to counsel and to act in this emergency with mingled boldness and discretion, and without the risk of Utopian extravagance on the one hand or a narrow and ill-timed parsimony on the other. And it cannot be denied that in this most practical department, there appears the same enlarged originality of mind, in union with the same experimental wisdom, that has been already mentioned as imparting a distinctive character to the general conception, upon which the plans of the Free Church are built. This is especially apparent in the happy thought of blending the advantages which other public undertakings have derived from local and from general funds respectively, as well as in the sensible and manly views expressed upon the subject of paid agencies, which Dr. Chalmers thinks essential to the full success of such an undertaking, and to the "low-minded" clamour against which he ascribes his own withdrawal from the Church Extension enterprise.

His observations on the policy and justice of affording a liberal support to public servants, even at the expense of the *nati consumere fruges*, are not only true and important in themselves, but a striking illustration of the author's intrepidity. In the execution of these plans, their authors appear to have enjoyed the aid of some truly energetic coadjutors. Dr. Chalmers, in allusion to his having formerly expressed a wish that he had twenty Makgill Crichtons at command, says that of 720 associations organized before the rupture, 40 were owing to the personal exertions of the gentleman referred to. The general fund arising from occasional donations and from annual subscriptions through these local agencies is consecrated to the two great objects of erecting churches and sustaining ministers, in reference to both of which, the principle adopted would appear to have been that of an equal allowance in all cases, the additional amount, required or desirable in any case, to be supplied by local contributions. By this means, according to the statement made in May, the Free Church was already in a situation to allow to all the ministers cast out from the Establishment one-half of the average income which they had enjoyed before, and at the same time to reserve ten thousand pounds for the support of her Probationers. With respect to Churches, the proposal was that every parish which applied for it should be entitled to a sum sufficient for the speedy erection of a plain but comfortable house of worship, all attempts at any thing beyond this being laid aside until the whole land should be well supplied with what was absolutely necessary. There is something not a little striking in the earnestness with which the richer parishes are called upon to give of their comparative abundance to the poverty of others, or to the planting of entirely new districts, rather than lavish it on pleasing superfluities among themselves. Apart from the immense good which must be directly done by the success of such a policy the fostering of this heroic, self-denying spirit of the church at large, must tend still further to exalt its moral tone, already far above that of the Christian world in general. Another obvious advantage of this course is its securing uniformity precisely of the right kind, without attempting that which would be undesirable, by laying a uniform foundation for the superstructure in its whole extent, instead of suffering one part to be erected on a rock, and another to be built upon the sand, at the mercy of caprice or accident.

For the collection, the safe-keeping, and the distribution of the funds contributed to these great objects, a Treasurer and several distinct Boards were appointed, one of which was to direct the local agency employed in the original collection of the funds, another to attend to its disbursement, and a third to be the legal holders of invested property in trust for the Assembly. As the best arrangement for the temporalities of parishes, the order of Deacons is to be revived. In all these financial arrangements of the Free Church, the two members most conspicuously active were the Moderator and Alexander Dunlop, to whom the Church is deeply indebted for devoted services performed at no small sacrifice of comfort and professional emolument, and through a course of years. To this distinguished gentleman the Free Assembly rendered an enthusiastic tribute of applause and admiration, and on his declining to accept the Procurator's office with a salary, in order that his motives might be unimpeached, requested him, not only by a unanimous vote, but by acclamation, to act as the legal adviser of the church, without official title or emoluments. Mr. Dunlop, as chairman or convener of an important committee, brought before the Assembly several of the plans already mentioned, and to him no small part of the merit of devising them is doubtless due. But that the praise of having planned the ways and means of this great enterprise belongs to Dr. Chalmers, may be gathered from the fact that his proposals, when submitted to the Convocation which prepared the way for the disruption, were received with general distrust and incredulity as wholly impracticable, a fact to which the Doctor, with a pardonable triumph, more than once alludes, when looking back from the successful operation of these very plans beyond his highest expectations.*

With respect to the supply of ministerial labour, the plan proposed was to retain, as far as possible, the ministers adhering to the Free Church in their former parishes, with such alterations as might be rendered necessary by

* Having mentioned incidentally these two distinguished members, we may also specify as clergymen who took an active part in the proceedings of the body, and exerted more or less of influence upon it, Drs. Gordon, Candlish, Welsh, and Cunningham, of Edinburgh, Buchanan of Glasgow, and Macfarlan of Greenock, and as laymen, Mr. Erle Monteith and Mr. Makgill Crichton. Sir David Brewster, though illustrious in science, took no prominent or active part in the proceedings.

local circumstances or by the demand for labour elsewhere. In order to supply the vast deficiency remaining, all the Licentiates or Probationers, adhering to the Church, were to be instantly and actively employed, at first in itinerating through allotted districts, but as soon as possible in settled charges. Measures were also taken to accelerate the licensing of the more advanced students, by dispensing with some specified formalities, particularly with the rule requiring the reception of candidates by Presbyteries to be sanctioned by the Synod. This accelerating process, if it should be permanent, would certainly tend to lower the standard of professional acquirements. In this case, however, that effect may be counteracted by the operation of other causes; and that no such change is intended for the future, may be readily inferred from the pains taken to secure and perfect a system of general and theological education. We have seen already that parochial schools, closely connected with the church and under its control, formed an essential part of the general plan upon which the Free Church commenced its operations. A beginning was made in this part of the system by employing those teachers who had voluntarily left the schools of the Establishment or been ejected from them; and to secure a further supply of teachers a Normal Seminary was established, or rather that belonging to the old establishment was transferred to another place and there continued under the direction of the Free Church. In this, and in many other cases, not only the teachers but the pupils left the schools of the Establishment. Many of the parish schoolmasters throughout Scotland are licensed preachers, and these were encouraged by the Free Assembly to retain their places until forcibly ejected, in which case provision was to be made for the erection of new schools. To these arrangements for securing sooner or later a complete system of parochial instruction under the Free Church, was added a plan for the education of ministers. This in the first instance made provision merely for a single institution at Edinburgh, to be conducted on the method hitherto practised in the Scottish Universities, Dr. Chalmers to be Principal and Professor of Divinity, Dr. Welsh, Professor of Church History, and Dr. Duncan (lately a missionary to the Jews,) Professor of Hebrew. An additional chair was assigned to Dr. Cunningham, to be occupied hereafter. Having thus made provision for the highest and the lowest stages of education, the

Assembly, or rather its Committee, was divided, as to the expediency of founding separate institutions for the intermediate periods of study, to cover the same ground with the four universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrew's. To some it seemed that the expense of such a system would be counterbalanced by no proportionate advantage, as the means of general education were sufficiently afforded by the universities. Others, however, were disposed to think that a dependence upon these was dangerous, and that the Free Church could not be expected to attain complete success without a full control over the education of its children. On this point no decision was come to in the May Assembly, but the current of opinion was apparently in favour of aiming at the ultimate establishment not only of parochial schools, but also of universities or colleges. A more immediate object was the formation of a library for the use of theological students, to which liberal contributions were made before the close of the Assembly.

Another step necessary to the complete organization of the Church was the re-arrangement of its Synods and Presbyteries so as to fill up such as were left defective, and to equalize them generally. For this purpose two Presbyteries were in some cases united, while in others chasms were filled up by the addition of a few members. In constituting Church-courts, there was of course no distinction made between *quoad civilia* and *quoad sacra* ministers. In reference to the latter there arose, however, a question of much interest. Some of the *quoad sacra* ministers had charge of churches which had been erected by private individuals or societies on the express or implied condition that the ministers who preached in them should be admitted to the Church courts and enjoy all ministerial privileges. This condition had been performed by the passing of the Chapel Act, and now that it had been repealed, and the condition thereby violated, the property ought to have reverted to the proprietors by whom it had been ceded. The Established Church, however, made arrangements for supplying all these pulpits, and declared them vacant, which appeared to render legal process necessary to decide the question. There were cases, too, in which the proprietors themselves were divided, some preferring a connexion with the establishment, others willing to sacrifice it to the advantage of having a kirk-session and a minister of full authority. It was na-

tural that the members of the Free Church, by whose labours and contributions so many new churches had been brought into existence, should regret to see them lost, as they supposed, to the highest ends for which they were erected; and a feeling of peculiar indignation was excited by the statement of the fact, that the Establishment had laid claim even to some churches which had been brought in by the Old Light Seceders, on rejoining the establishment. The management of these disputed questions was referred by the Free Assembly to its Law Committee.

At the time of the disruption, the Established Church had five Schemes or benevolent objects under its direction—the mission to the Jews—the mission to the Gentiles—Colonial Churches—Education and Home Missions. The sums accumulated for these objects, and the real property held in trust for some of them, must all be abandoned; but the missionaries, we believe, without exception, have adhered to the Free Church. With respect to all the schemes it may in general be stated that the Free Church resolved to carry on the work with unabated energy, and such was the power of the impulse given to all church institutions by recent events, that nearly as much we understand has been collected in three or four months as was formerly raised by the whole church in a year. If this spirit of liberality and zeal should be permanent, the cause of Christian benevolence will owe much to the late disruption. But while the Free Church thus resolved to prosecute the Schemes with vigour, the change of circumstances acquired some alteration of the method in which some of them had been conducted. This was especially the case with the Home Mission, which had hitherto included several distinct branches, the building of churches, the aiding of poor parishes, and the encouragement of young men seeking the ministry. The first and second of these objects being merged in the general arrangements of the Free Church, the Committee of Home Missions was directed to confine itself to the remaining branch, which constitutes with us the business of the Board of Education, while in Scotland the Committee of that name has charge of all that relates to parochial and other schools, theological and general education. The Five Schemes of the Free Church are conducted we believe by as many distinct boards or committees, out of which is formed a general board to regulate that which is common to them all. There is also a Gene-

ral Agent and a monthly journal, in the service either of the Missionary Boards or of the Board collectively.

It was stated near the close of the Assembly as a matter of devout congratulation that there had not been a count or division in the course of the whole session. Most of the interesting questions had been settled by a kind of acclamation. There was one point indeed which seemed to threaten a considerable difference of judgment, and it may to some seem curious, that this point was the very one on which the Free Church had withdrawn from the Establishment, to wit, the method of electing ministers. There was no diversity of sentiment or feeling as to the main principles of non-intrusion, but merely as to the best method of securing it and putting it in practice. Some were disposed to leave the matter wholly to a popular election; others preferred a nomination by the session, or by a committee of the congregation in conjunction with the session, but giving the people an absolute veto upon such nomination. The question also naturally sprang up, who should be recognised as voters, all communicants, or only heads of families, and males to the exclusion of females? A report by Dr. Cunningham, prescribing general rules for the formation of churches, ordination of elders, and election of pastors, but leaving the details to the discretion of the judicatories, and to further experience, was adopted after some discussion and haasty expression of extreme opinions on the part of a few members.

The only other point to which we think it necessary to advert is the position taken and the tone adopted by the Free Assembly with respect to other churches. The predominant feeling of the body seemed to be decidedly opposed to all compromise of their distinctive principles, and to all amalgamations or incorporating unions. Towards evangelical Christians in general the tone assumed was one of friendly recognition and respect. Towards other Presbyterian bodies we find in the speeches of the leading members not a friendly spirit merely, but proposals of familiar intercourse and co-operation, so far as these can be maintained without a compromise of principle or the incorporating union of the bodies. Thus far we see nothing but the proofs of an enlightened and profound view of the principles of Christian union, as distinguished from sectarian exclusiveness on the one hand, and a sentimental latitudinarianism on the other, the extreme of yielding

nothing and the extreme of yielding all, from both of which the church has suffered much and is perhaps to suffer more. But while there is so much to commend in the principles adopted by this noble band of confessors, and so much to admire in their conduct, we feel constrained to express our dissent from the principles, which, in some instances, have been avowed by some of the leading organs of the body in reference to the present Established Church of Scotland. They have not only declared their purpose of acting as if "the Established Church had no existence whatever;" but say it is impossible "even occasionally to have fellowship with them;" that "the idea of the Residuary Establishment doing anything valuable for the salvation of souls is ridiculous;" that "they have virtually thrown off the character of a church of Christ." "Let the parish minister," it is said, "be regarded as virtually the one excommunicated man of the district; the man with whom no one is to join in prayer, whose church is to be avoided as an impure and unholy place, whose addresses are not to be listened to, whose visits are not to be received, who is everywhere to be put under the ban of the community."

This course, if right, will be found expedient; if wrong, it must prove disastrous. We are constrained to think it wrong, because it proceeds on the false assumption that the present Established Church of Scotland is not a church of Jesus Christ. That this is a false assumption is to us plain, because according to the common standards of the Free and of the Established Church, and according to the common doctrine of Christendom, and the plain teaching of the scriptures, a church is a body of men professing the true religion. That the Established Church do profess the true religion is plain, because they have the very same Confession of Faith, and therefore make the very same profession that is made by their seceding brethren. If it be said that they differ as to the important doctrine of the lordship of Christ over his church, the answer is, first, that both parties hold to the same verbal statement of that doctrine, and differ only as to the application of it, or as to the principles which flow from it; and secondly, that admitting the Establishment to be in error as to that doctrine, such error cannot work a forfeiture of their church state, unless it cuts them off from Christ and the hope of salvation. This it cannot do, because, according to the scriptures, all who

repent of their sins and put their trust in Christ are in a state of union with him, and of course in a state of grace and salvation. Besides, the doctrine that a church is not to be regarded as a true church of Christ unless perfectly pure as to its doctrines, is inconsistent with our common standards; it is inconsistent with the Bible, and with common sense and the common judgment of the people of God in all places and in all ages. There is also a glaring inconsistency, in making the practical recognition of the spiritual independence of the church necessary to its very existence, with the past and present conduct of these brethren themselves. It may even be doubted whether, according to their principles, the Church of Scotland itself, before the passage of the Veto Act, had not practically for many generations, renounced this very doctrine of spiritual independence; for it had not only submitted to the domination of the state, but had lent its aid in crushing the rights of the people, and the independence of the church courts, which it now so nobly vindicates.

But without urging that point, it is acknowledged that the church of Scotland, and these brethren themselves, have ever recognised and do still recognise the church of England, the Evangelical church of Germany, and the church of France to be true churches. But with regard to the two former especially, there never has been and is not now any acknowledgment or any practical recognition of the independence of the church. In England the canons of the church have no force but as acts of Parliament, the crown appoints all the bishops, the state or lay patrons appoint to the vast majority of benefices having the cure of souls; no minister can refuse to baptize or administer the Lord's Supper to any and every applicant; he is bound to read the burial service expressing the sure hope of a blessed resurrection, over any baptized person who does not die excommunicated or by his own hand; and he can excommunicate no man except by a long and expensive process before a lay judge. The church of England is bound hand and foot by the state. It is Erastian in principle and Erastian in practice. The same thing is true perhaps even in a greater extent, with regard to the Lutheran or Evangelical church in Germany. All church power has there been practically in the hands of the princes ever since the reformation. They stepped into the places of the bishops and assumed the whole administration of the affairs of the church. They appoint the

consistories, which are civil and ecclesiastical tribunals, composed in part of laymen, which have the power of examining and collating ministers, and of exercising discipline. The whole legislative power is in the state, in whose name and by whose authority even the liturgies are introduced or altered. A doctrine which leads to the conclusion that the church of England is not and never has been a church of Christ, and that there has never been a true church in Germany, is refuted by the *reductio ad absurdum*.

The attempt which has been made to draw a distinction between these cases and that of the present established church of Scotland, on the ground that the churches of England and Germany never had the truth on this subject committed to them, or never had the light to see it, and the grace to profess it, and therefore are not guilty of the apostacy chargeable on the Scottish establishment, which once professed, but has since practically rejected the doctrine of the independence of the church, cannot we are persuaded satisfy any mind not perverted by undue excitement. By the very statement of the case the error is admitted not to be deadly; and it is hard to see how a body of men falling into an error in which other churches have always been involved, should forfeit thereby the character of a church of Christ. This assumption is in the present instance the more unreasonable, inasmuch as the doctrines professed by the present establishment, are admitted on this as well as on all other points to be, in the view of these brethren, far more pure, more coincident with their own view of the meaning of the word of God, than those professed by other Christian communities whose church state they continue to acknowledge. Here are two bodies, the one far more correct in doctrine, discipline, and government, and far more independent of the state than the other, and yet the latter is a church and the former is not! This is a judgment which cannot command the assent of the people of God.

If the Established Church then is still, on all grounds of principle, to be regarded as a true church, it is in itself a great evil, to treat it as though it were a synagogue of Satan; and this evil must be productive of many others. It need not be remarked that it must produce that alienation and even exasperation which injustice always excites in those who are its objects. Instead of peace and charity, there will be conflict and enmity. And enmity and contention

when not directed against evil, must, as we learn from scripture, grieve the Holy Spirit from whom all spiritual good comes down. This is the great evil which we apprehend from the course which some of our Scottish brethren seem disposed to pursue on this subject. If they are wrong in denying that the Established Church is a true church, they must be wrong in acting on that principle, and such action must be offensive to God, and must have a tendency to grieve from them that Spirit, on whose presence and blessing the success of their noble enterprise entirely depends.

It is a subordinate but still a serious evil, that the course to which we have adverted must in a measure deprive them of the good opinion, sympathy and co-operation of the friends of the Redeemer, in Scotland and other countries. Though we believe that the Established Church is still a Church of Christ, we have no doubt of the wisdom and necessity of the separation, of which we have given a general outline in the preceding pages. It is often the duty of men to separate from a true church. As we are bound to obey God rather than men, so are we bound to withdraw from any community, when we are required either to profess or to do anything contrary to his word, as the condition of our continued union with it. It is because we believe the Free Church to be right in forsaking the Establishment, because we consider the 'principles which led to this separation true and important, because we admire the talent and decision which the seceders have so conspicuously displayed, and because we revere the moral excellence, the fidelity to God, and his cause, which at so great a sacrifice they have exhibited, that we have felt bound in conscience, while giving expression to this admiration, to dissent from the principle to which we have just adverted, and which we believe to be erroneous and of very evil tendency.

There is one other point to which, in this connexion, we wish to call the attention of our readers. They have seen, and doubtless with regret, the expression of opinions and feelings in several quarters, suited to create a misgiving as to the propriety of the cordial co-operation of American Christians in aiding the Free Church of Scotland in her present gigantic struggle. The grand difficulty it seems is, that our Scottish brethren are not "voluntaries," but still adhere to the doctrine of Establishments, and assert the

propriety of a union between the Church and State. What they mean by these avowals we must learn from their own language and not from our own pre-conceived opinions on the subject. "We hold it," says Dr. Chalmers, "to be the duty of governments to give of their substance and means for the maintenance of religion in the land. . . . We hold that every department of the government should be leavened with Christianity, and every functionary in it, from the highest to the lowest, should be under its influence. . . . We are the advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion." It may be proper first to inquire how the doctrine thus expressed differs from that which prevails among ourselves. All admit that the government should be leavened with Christianity, and all that its functionaries should be under its influence. All admit that there should be a national recognition of religion, as in fact there is in our own constitution, in a multitude of our laws and institutions, in the often repeated acts of our chief magistrates, and in the decisions of our judges, declaring Christianity to be a part of the law of the land. But have we any provision by the state for the support of religion? To a certain extent we still have, and formerly we had to a much greater extent. It is the almost universal opinion in this country, that there should be common schools supported by the state or by the law of the land, and that religion should be taught in such schools. The good old plan of having a teacher sustained at public expense, and the people allowed to determine what, and to what extent, religion should be inculcated, has indeed been denounced and opposed by the infidel and irreligious part of the community, but as far as we know it has never been condemned by Christians. Our Scottish brethren, as we understand the matter, go one step further. They apply to preachers the principle which we apply to teachers. They say that the state should make provision, not only for schoolmasters who teach religion, but for ministers, and allow the people, the church, to determine what ministers they shall have, what form of government and worship they shall adopt. what doctrines they shall hear. For various reasons, we do not think this the best plan; we greatly prefer that on which the church has so long and so prosperously acted in our country, and on which it acted for three hundred years after Christ. But will any man say that the difference between our Scottish brethren and ourselves,

as to this point, is so great, as to give a shadow of reason for withholding from them our full and cordial co-operation? Considering how many vital truths we hold in common, considering that they are suffering for the very principles of religious liberty, of which we are so constantly boasting, it does appear to us unaccountable that the mere fact that they apply to preachers the principle which we recognise in its application to teachers, should be regarded as a breaking point, by the strictest conscience. We cannot believe that those public bodies, and those newspaper writers, who have washed their hands so carefully from all stain in this matter, would have felt the necessity of such scrupulous exactness, had they really perceived how small is the difference between our Scottish brethren and ourselves. In this country, the very phrase "church and state" is enough to frighten us from our propriety. We conjure up in our imaginations not only the abuses of a lordly hierarchy, but all the horrors of papal cruelty and oppression. But how long is it since all union between church and state ceased in New England? Is it not evident that every thing depends on the terms of that union? And if for nearly two centuries it operated without serious evil in New England, it may not be so dreadful, when professed as an abstract principle, by brethren who are suffering the loss of all things, because they refuse to submit to such union on terms inconsistent with the spiritual liberties of the people.

We rejoice to believe that there is very little of this spirit of suspicion and spiritual prudery in our churches on this subject. The resolutions of many of our synods, the general tone of our religious papers, the spirit of the various meetings, some of them composed of members of several different religious denominations, which have expressed their views in relation to this matter, encourage us to hope that the expected delegation from the Free Church of Scotland, will be received by the free churches of America, as brothers of the same family, children of the same Father, servants of the same Lord; men, with regard to whom it will be said, in the last day, Inasmuch as ye did it unto these my brethren, ye did it unto me.

At the close of this article, it may be proper to say, in explanation of our silence with respect to the Second Assembly of the Free Church in October last, that we have not yet been able to procure a full continuous report of its proceedings, and not being willing to rely upon partial inci-

dental statements, we have thought it best to confine ourselves at present to the occurrences in May, reserving those of later date to be the subject, if we find it necessary, of a deliberate review hereafter.

A. B. D. C.

- ART. VI.—1. *Remarks on English Churches, and on the expediency of rendering Sepulchral Memorials subservient to pious and Christian uses.* By J. H. Markland, F. R. S. and S. A. Third edition, enlarged. Oxford. 1843. pp. 274.
2. *A Glossary of Terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian, and Gothic Architecture.* The third edition, enlarged. Exemplified by 700 wood cuts. Oxford. 2 vols. Svo.
3. *Anglican Church Architecture, with some remarks on Ecclesiastical Furniture.* By James Barr, Architect. Second edition. Oxford. 1843. pp. 216, 12mo.

THESE works are among the fruits of the increased interest which has been felt, within a few years, in the Architecture of the Middle Ages. The singular fate which the Gothic Architecture has undergone would warrant the inference that it gives expression to no general and permanent truth, were we not in a condition to account satisfactorily for the mutations to which it has been subject. Appearing in the early part of the twelfth century, it gave such a distinct and full utterance to some general sentiment of the age, that it spread at once over the whole of Christian Europe. So rapid was its transmission through Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and England, that it remains to this day, a matter of doubt where it originated, the most laborious and minute researches having failed to establish clearly a priority of date for the structures of any one of these countries.

Prior to the introduction of this style, there was no prevalent style of church architecture. The Roman architecture, in the course of its protracted dissolution, had assumed, in the East, the form of what has been termed the Byzantine style; in Italy and Germany it had degenerated into the Lombard, and in England into the Norman style. The churches erected in these several countries prior to the