

# R E P O R T

OF

## COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER OVERTURES

FROM

THE PRESBYTERY OF GLASGOW AND FROM THE  
SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR ON "IRISH  
IMMIGRATION" AND THE "EDUCATION  
(SCOTLAND) ACT, 1918"

TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH  
OF SCOTLAND

29th MAY 1923

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### COMMITTEE 1923-1924.

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The MODERATOR.  
The PROCURATOR.  
Rev. Professor FULTON.  
" " W. P. PATERSON.  
" " MAIN.  
" " REID.  
" Dr THOMAS BURNS.  
" " R. H. DUNLOP.  
" " M'CLYMONT.  
" " DONALD MACMILLAN.  
" " MITCHELL.  
" " GORDON MURRAY.  
" " OGILVIE.  
" " GEORGE WALKER.  
" ROBERT BURNETT.  
" DUNCAN CAMERON (Kilsyth).  
" A. J. CAMPBELL.  
" W. M. CAMPBELL.  
" GEORGE CHRISTIE.  
" J. D. COCHRANE.

Rev. M. SCOTT DICKSON.  
" G. H. DONALD.  
" JAS. FERGUSON.  
" J. M. FORBES.  
" SCUDAMORE FORBES.  
" W. M. GOLDIE.  
" J. MACLAGAN.  
" J. S. MACNAUGHTON.  
" G. B. THOMSON MICHIE.  
" R. W. RUTHERFORD.  
" WILLIAM SWAN.  
The Right Hon. LORD SALVESEN.  
JAMES BROWN, Esq., M.P.  
JAMES TENNANT GORDON, Esq.  
JAMES MACFARLANE, Esq., LL.D.  
JOHN H. MACLEOD, Esq., M.P.  
DAVID MEIKLERID, Esq.  
W. H. MILL, Esq., S.S.C.  
GEORGE STEWART, Esq.  
ALEX. WALLACE, Esq., W.S.

THE HON. LORD SANDS } *Joint-Conveners.*  
REV. WILLIAM MAIN }

## R E P O R T.

THE Overtures on which the General Assembly took action show that the alarm and anxiety which prompted them have been occasioned by the incursion into Scotland of a large Irish Roman Catholic population within recent years. The question of the Scottish Roman Catholic population has not arisen, nor is there any reason why it should arise. They have a right to call Scotland their country, in common with their fellow-countrymen of the Protestant Faith. Nor is there any complaint of the presence of an Orange population in Scotland. They are of the same race as ourselves and of the same Faith, and are readily assimilated to the Scottish population. The Committee, therefore, interpret the Remit from the General Assembly as being an instruction to consider and to report on the problem of the Irish Roman Catholic population in Scotland. They cannot be assimilated and absorbed into the Scottish race. They remain a people by themselves, segregated by reason of their race, their customs, their traditions, and, above all, by their loyalty to their Church, and gradually and inevitably dividing Scotland, racially, socially, and ecclesiastically.

It is necessary to dispose of the possible objection that a considerable proportion of the Roman Catholic population in the industrial area of Western Scotland is of purely Scottish lineage. Statistics show that the only two counties in which a purely Scottish Roman Catholic population of any size exists are Inverness-shire and Dumfriesshire. The number of Roman Catholic school children on the Rolls of the Inverness-shire Education Authority is 1800, out of a total enrolment of 12,800. The number of Roman Catholic children on the Rolls of the Dumfriesshire Education Authority is 534, out of a

total enrolment of 12,711. The native Roman Catholic population in the uplands of Banffshire and in Aberdeenshire is so small as to be almost negligible. It is clear, therefore, that the surplus of the purely Scottish Roman Catholic population cannot be large, and cannot supply many recruits for the industrial areas of the country. Besides, it is well known that the Highland Roman Catholic clings to his home and his native soil, and therefore the relatively small number who do come south when spread over the centres of population form an insignificant section of the community. The problem, therefore, that has been remitted to the Committee for consideration is almost exclusively an Irish problem; and though recognition should be made of a certain number of Poles in the coal-mining districts, the fact remains that this is a question arising out of the abnormal growth of the Irish race in Scotland.

In no other European country did the Reformation have a more complete triumph than in Scotland. Sooner or later practically the whole body of the Scottish people adopted the principles of the Reformed Faith. Owing to the difficulty of providing preachers, certain isolated communities in remote parts of Inverness-shire adhered to the old Faith, and the influence of powerful Roman Catholic families in Dumfriesshire succeeded in keeping sections of the peasantry within the fold of the Church of Rome. It is true that the Reformed Faith did not adopt the Presbyterian form of Church government to the exclusion of every other form. Among many of the nobility and the landed gentry the Episcopal Church had devoted adherents, and in certain counties—notably Aberdeenshire and Forfarshire—a certain number of the humbler classes adhered to the Church of their territorial Superiors. But, generally speaking, the result of the Reformation was that the Roman Catholic Church was practically extinguished in Scotland, which thereby became homogeneous in Faith and ideals.

It was not until large numbers of Irish Roman Catholics came over from Ireland that the Roman Catholic Church began to grow, to feel her power, and to assert her influence, and this was the beginning of the destruction of the unity and homogeneity of the Scottish people. With the industrial

development of Scotland in the nineteenth century a demand for cheap labour arose. Industrial firms and great contractors advertised for labour in the Irish Press, and crowds of Irishmen and their families emigrated to Scotland to engage in building railways, to work in coal mines, in the great shipyards on the Clyde, and in the jute mills of Dundee, and to labour in the construction of public works, such as the Loch Katrine water scheme. When they had settled down they invited relations and friends to come across to Scotland, promising to find work and a home for them. All were welcomed by the employers of labour. The Irishmen worked well, accepted almost any kind of habitation, and were content with small wages. It was in the great plain of Scotland, stretching from the Clyde on the west to the Tay on the east, where is the mineral wealth of Scotland and where are her great cities, that the Irish race found their livelihood and made their home.

Meanwhile there was going on a great exodus of the Scottish race. They wished for better conditions of life, higher wages, and wider prospects. Compelled by the economic pressure of the Irish race, young Scottish men and women—the flower of the nation—left their native land, and sought to build up their fortunes in America and the Dominions. It was certainly to the advantage of the countries to which they went that the best of our Scottish people should have gone there, but it was a grievous loss to the land of their fathers. Their places were taken by a people of a different race and a different Faith, and Scotland has been divided into two camps—a Scottish and an Irish.

There is no parallel to these movements in modern or in ancient times. It is a thing unprecedented that one race should gradually by peaceful penetration supplant another in their native land. For this is what is happening. According to the 'Roman Catholic Directory' there is a total population of 2,070,000 in the Roman Catholic diocese of Glasgow, embracing Lanarkshire, Dumbartonshire, Renfrewshire, North Ayrshire, and a small part of West Stirlingshire. Of this great population at least 450,000 are Irish—that is to say, that in the crowded industrial area of the west almost every fourth person is Irish. In Lanarkshire alone, the most populous

county in Scotland, soon every third person will be Irish. It might be possible for the Scottish people to contemplate this situation with a certain equanimity were there the least likelihood that the Irish population in Scotland would not grow out of all proportion to the growth of the Scottish population. But, unfortunately, the evidence is overwhelming that the Irish race in our midst will increase, while the Scottish race decreases. The following statistics are eloquent; they tell their own tale:—

## IRISH POPULATION IN SCOTLAND.

1881.	1901.	1911.	1921.
327,239	432,900	518,969	601,304

The Irish population has almost doubled in the last forty years. What of the Scottish population? In the twenty years, 1881 to 1901, the Irish population increased by 32½ per cent, while the Scottish population for the same period increased by only 18½ per cent. In the twenty years, 1901 to 1921, the Irish population increased by 39 per cent, while the Scottish population increased by only 6 per cent. That is to say, that from 1881 to 1901 the increase of the Irish population was nearly twice as great as that of the Scottish population, and from 1901 to 1921 the increase of the Irish population was 6½ times as great as that of the Scottish population.

Statistics as to marriages show that the power of the Irish race in Scotland to increase more rapidly than the Scottish race will become greater in the future than it has been in the past.

The Report of the Registrar-General shows:—

	Total Marriages.	Roman Catholic.	
1861-65	109,063	10,378	1 in 10
1881-85	130,879	13,009	1 in 10
1901-05	159,192	16,712	2 in 19
1919-21*	130,176	16,204	1 in 8

\* Only three years are given, so as to avoid the abnormal years of the war.

The statistics of the Education Authorities of Glasgow, Lanark, Dumbarton, and Renfrew also provide evidence of

the certainty, under existing circumstances, of a still more rapid increase of the Irish population in Scotland in the future.

## GLASGOW AUTHORITY.

	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Scottish children on Roll	148,364	147,299	146,552	142,293
Irish Children on Roll	42,297	42,870	43,334	42,909
Decrease of Scottish children	.	.	.	6071
Increase of Irish children	.	.	.	612

Had the proportion remained unaltered there would have been an Irish decrease of 1211 and a Scottish decrease of 4246.

## LANARKSHIRE AUTHORITY.

	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Scottish children on Roll	76,962	78,934	79,898	76,787
Irish children on Roll	23,042	24,291	25,370	26,000
Decrease of Scottish children in three years	.	.	.	173
Increase of Irish children in three years	.	.	.	2958

Had the proportion remained unaltered there would have been an Irish increase of only 641 and a Scottish increase of 2344.

## RENFREW AUTHORITY.

	1919	1920.	1921.	1922.
Scottish children on Roll	41,164	42,351	42,367	41,465
Irish children on Roll	11,118	11,399	11,528	11,535
Increase of Scottish children in three years	.	.	.	301
Increase of Irish children in three years	.	.	.	417

Had the proportion remained unaltered there would have been an Irish increase of only 153 and a Scottish increase of 565.

## DUMBARTON AUTHORITY.

	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Scottish children on Roll	18,614	19,308	19,162	21,042
Irish children on Roll	5,520	5,695	5,777	6,729
Increase in Scottish children	.	.	.	2428
Increase in Irish children	.	.	.	1209

Had the proportion remained unaltered there would have been an Irish increase of only 831 and a Scottish increase of 2806.

There is a widespread impression that the rapid increase of the Irish population relative to the Scottish increase is due to the alleged fact that the Irish family is, as a rule, larger than the Scottish family. This is not true. The fertility of the Scottish working-class family is just as great as that of the Irish working-class family. The tendency to restrict the size of the family does not—as yet, at any rate—affect the Scottish working-class any more deeply than it does the Irish working-class. In one populous mining parish—where the Irish population is one-fifth of the whole—the Scottish birth-rate for 1922 was somewhat higher than the Irish birth-rate. But there are statistics to show that the increase in the Irish population and the relatively small increase in the Scottish population are due mainly to two causes—immigration of Irish into Scotland, and emigration of Scots from Scotland.

There were in 1901 no less than 205,064 Irish people living in Scotland, who had come over from Ireland; in 1911 there were 174,715. The figures for 1921 are not yet published, but, assuming that they are 170,000, it is clear that the natural increase of the Irish population in Scotland has been greatly enhanced by emigration from Ireland to Scotland. On the other hand, the emigration of Scotsmen from Scotland has been constant and large in recent years. It was very great between 1901 and 1914, while for this year it is reckoned that it will have reached the huge figure of 30,000. Comparatively few Irishmen emigrate from Scotland.

It is a notable fact that whenever the Irish population reach a certain proportion in any community, whether village, small town, or area of a great city, the tendency of the Scottish population is to leave as quickly as they possibly can. Many areas of the large cities, not a few villages, and even some small towns, are becoming exclusively Irish. In Port-Glasgow the number of Irish marriages in 1921 was 43, while the Scottish marriages were 89; in 1922 the number of Irish marriages was 40, while the Scottish marriages were 66—the percentage of Irish marriages increasing from 32·5 per cent

in 1921 to 37·7 per cent in 1922. In the Parish of Old Monkland on the 31st January 1923 the total number of Scottish children attending school was 8018, while the number of Irish children was 5000. The Croy district of the parish of Cumbernauld is practically Irish; the Scottish mining population, refusing to stay, have gone elsewhere. This social phenomenon has a very sinister meaning for the future of our race. The time is rapidly approaching when, through this racial incompatibility, whole communities in parish, village, and town will be predominantly Irish. It is, in fact, a sober and restrained prophecy to say that through the operation of the various factors now at work—immigration of Irish and emigration of Scots, disinclination of Scots to work alongside and live among Irish, partiality of Irish foremen for employing Irishmen—the great plain of Scotland stretching from Glasgow in the west to Dundee and Edinburgh in the east will be soon dominated by the Irish race. If, therefore, the Scottish people wish to safeguard their heritage, they cannot afford to lose time in taking whatever steps may be necessary to secure this just and patriotic end.

At present the problem is admittedly most formidable in the western industrial shires. But already there is conclusive evidence that the thorough permeation of the industrial east is merely a matter of time. Educational statistics for Edinburgh and Dundee tell their tale of a growing Irish population, overtaking—more gradually than in the west, it is true, but as surely—the Scottish population.

## DUNDEE AUTHORITY.

	1919.	1920.	1921.	1922.
Irish children on Roll . . . . .	5,439	5,532	5,612	5,609
Scottish children on Roll . . . . .	23,098	22,561	22,165	21,663
Irish increase in three years . . . . .				170
Scottish decrease in three years . . . . .				1435

Had the proportion remained unaltered there should be an Irish decrease of 241 and a Scottish decrease of 1024.

## EDINBURGH AUTHORITY.

	1920.	1921.	1922.
Scottish children on Roll . . . . .	57,668	56,766	56,320
Irish children on Roll . . . . .	5,854	5,999	6,029
Decrease of Scottish children in two years . . . . .			1348
Increase of Irish children in two years . . . . .			175

Had the proportion remained unaltered there should be an Irish decrease of 108 and a Scottish decrease of 1065.

The approximate increase of the population of Fifeshire for the past ten years is 25,000. Of this number 5382 are Irish. The Irish, therefore, account for approximately 22 per cent of the total increase, a percentage that is much higher than the Irish percentage of the population of Fifeshire, which is about 6 per cent. Wherever industrialism prevails the Irish race increases. West Lothian has one Irishman for every eight Scotsmen; East Lothian one for every twenty-five Scotsmen. Given the continuance of the present conditions, there is every certainty that the industrial east will soon become as Irish as the industrial west. Meanwhile the population of rural Scotland—in the Highlands and southern uplands, where the Scottish race is unadulterated—goes steadily down.

There are still some factors to be taken into account in estimating the relative positions of the two races in Scotland in the future. It is not likely that the establishment of the Free State will cause any return of the Irish race in Scotland to their native land, or that the Irish people will hereafter remain in Ireland. There are few important industries in Southern Ireland, and the Free State is always likely to remain a pastoral and agricultural country. Such a land cannot provide for the maintenance of the natural increase of a prolific race. The lure of reconditioning Scotland—to use the phrase of a prominent Roman Catholic layman—appeals strongly to the Church of Rome. If Scotland be won for the Roman Catholic Church, a mighty lever for the control of England—the greatest prize of all—will have been put into the hands of the Church. Already the Roman Communion is the largest in Glasgow, the second city of the Empire. This achievement could only have been regarded as the

dream of a visionary fifty years ago. But when such dreams come true, who can say that dreams of yet vaster triumphs will never be realised? The spiritual guides of the Irish people encourage them to come over to Scotland, and they are astute and far-seeing men. Within forty years the number of the Irish race in this historic home of the Reformed Faith has been almost doubled. It is not unreasonable to say that within the next forty years the Irish population in the industrial area of Scotland will approach 1,500,000, and the Scottish race will then have lost control of the populous and wealth-producing parts of their country. What will follow must be plain to any thinking mind—the rapid permeation of the whole of Scotland by an alien people.

Even now the Irish population exercise a profound influence on the direction and development of our Scottish civilisation. Their gift of speech, their aptitude for public life, their restless ambition to rule, have given them a prominent place in political, county, municipal, and parochial elections. They have also asserted themselves in co-operative and benefit societies. They have had an unfortunate influence in modifying the Scottish habit of thrift and independence. An Irishman never hesitates to seek relief from charity organisations and local authorities, and Scotsmen do not see why they should not get help when Irishmen receive it. Indeed, it must be said that the social problem has been complicated and increased by the presence of the Irish population. Generally speaking, they are poor partly through intemperance and improvidence, and they show little inclination to raise themselves in the social scale. The Irish race too modify admirable Scottish customs. The Scottish reverence for the Sabbath day is passing away: it has now become a day for political meetings and for concerts. It may be that there is in the Scottish mind a tendency towards the secularisation of the Sabbath, but indubitably this tendency has been increased and stimulated by the influence of the Irish race. It is not alone the unconscious influence of a large alien population in our midst that is changing the spirit and form of our Scottish civilisation: the Roman Catholic Church has definitely committed herself to the task of converting the Scottish nation. She has her missionaries in Glasgow, able men, who exhibit

the doctrines of Rome in guises calculated to persuade and convince Protestant minds. As yet the fruits of their labours are not plentiful, and it may be urged that the Protestant Church should make an effort to win over the Irish population to the Reformed Faith. It may be assumed, however, that neither Church will achieve much by the way of propaganda—the Irish will remain true to the ancient Faith, and the stubborn Scot will not forsake the Church of his fathers. This is recognised by the authorities of the Church of Rome, and their hope and method are the capture of Scotland for Rome through the incoming of the greatest missionary race on earth by the way of the great gates of the west—the ports on the Clyde.

The Education Act of 1918—passed through Parliament when Scotland was deeply and painfully preoccupied with the problem of the war—has proved an immense boon to the Roman Catholic Church. It has made her in proportion to her numbers the most richly-endowed Church in Scotland, and has securely entrenched her in the very schools she has either sold or leased to Education Authorities. Her control over these schools that are not now hers is as great as it was when they were her own property, and an over-taxed and financially distressed Scotland has to pay immense sums for the lease or purchase of buildings, which the Scottish people control only to a limited extent. The Glasgow Education Authority pays the Roman Catholic Church £25,000 a year for the lease of the Roman Catholic schools, and has paid £47,000 for their fittings and furnishings. The Education Act of 1872 made no such generous provision for the transference of the schools built by the Church of Scotland or the Free Church of Scotland. They could be transferred, it is true, to the newly-established School Boards. But no sums were paid by the School Boards to either Church for their purchase. Nor could any annual rent be offered for their lease. Every year £283,023 are paid in salaries to the Roman Catholic teachers of Glasgow, and the expenditure per annum on rates and taxes, fuel, light and cleaning, books and stationery, and repairs reaches the enormous sum of £107,225. Such an endowment of denominational schools in one city alone for the children of an alien race is surely unprecedented. The

financial burden on the country is wellnigh intolerable, and economy has to be practised, as some think, to the detriment of education. The salaries of the teachers are reduced, only absolutely necessary repairs are effected, additional building is engaged in only under the spur of the direst necessity, yet the annual rents are paid to the Roman Catholic Church for her schools, which are as useful for her purpose as they ever were. But this is not all. Under the Act of 1918 the Roman Catholic Church can claim that primary and secondary schools shall be erected wherever she thinks they are required. The Education Authority of Fifeshire have built a large secondary school in Cowdenbeath for the Roman Catholic children in the county. The Church will not allow the children of her people to attend Protestant secondary schools. The Authorities must either build or pay for the education of the children in the nearest Roman Catholic secondary school. And this has to be done when the economic life of the country is almost crushed out of existence under the burden of taxation. Meanwhile the Roman Catholic Church, loaded with wealth received from an overburdened nation, is using it for the purpose of securely establishing a Faith in their land that is distasteful to the Scottish race, or of supplanting the people who supplied these riches by a race that is alien in sympathy and in religion.

What, then, is to be the future of our land and of the Scottish people? The incursion of the Irish race has been a misfortune for themselves and for Scotland. Scotland is a small country. A small country divided by creed and race has never proved to be a happy or harmonious country. Ireland affords a striking illustration of the truth of this. Its racial and sectarian antipathies have embittered the soul of two peoples, and impeded the high enterprises of civilisation. The Dutch and the Belgians, under diplomatic pressure, entered into union in 1815—the one a Roman Catholic, the other a Protestant country. They failed to harmonise, and in fifteen years the union was dissolved. Fusion of the Scottish and the Irish races in Scotland—just as it was in Ireland—will remain an impossibility. The Irish are the most obedient children of the Church of Rome; the Scots stubbornly adhere to the principles of the Reformed Faith. The Irish

have separate schools for their children; they have their own clubs for recreation and for social intercourse; they tend to segregate in communities, and even to monopolise certain departments of labour to the exclusion of the Scots. Already there is bitter feeling among the Scottish working-classes against the Irish intruders. As the latter increase, and the Scottish people realise the seriousness of the menace to their own racial supremacy in their native land, this bitterness will develop into a race antagonism, which will have disastrous consequences for Scotland.

The loss of the Scottish race to civilisation would be immeasurable. In science, theoretical and applied, in art, poetry and prose, in government and industry, in philosophy and theology, their contributions to the advancement of knowledge and civilisation have been remarkable. It is idle to say that though they leave their native land they will still be Scotsmen, and will still maintain the traditions, ideals, and Faith of their fathers. When Scotsmen settle in other lands they become good citizens of those countries; and though they remember with warm affection and great pride the land of their fathers, still generations succeed them that know not Scotland. The formative and inspiring influence of the home land no longer shape the characters of their children. For them Scottish song and legend, the haunting memories of parish, village, or town, the social and spiritual atmosphere of the old land, are remote and ineffective influences.

It may be said, and, indeed, has been said, that on Christian principles the Scottish people should not object to the presence of the Irish in their midst. "Christ died for all." "We are all the children of the One Heavenly Father." There is no surer test of the validity of the application of a commonly accepted truth in all circumstances than its application all round. Would the Irish race, would the Church of Rome, welcome the incursion of half a million Scotsmen into the counties around Dublin? Would the English people receive with open arms five million Poles into the industrial areas of Yorkshire, Staffordshire, and Lancashire? God placed the people of this world in families, and history, which is the narrative of His providence, tells us that when kingdoms are divided against themselves they cannot stand. The

nations that are homogeneous in Faith and ideals, that have maintained unity of race, have been ever the most prosperous, and to them the Almighty has committed the highest tasks, and has granted the largest measure of success in achieving them. It is incumbent on the Scottish people to consider, before it is too late, the grave situation in their native land, and to devise means which, while they do no injustice to the Irish people whom they allowed to come into their country, shall preserve Scotland for the Scottish race, and secure to future generations the traditions, ideals, and Faith of a great people, unspoiled and inviolate.

*In name of the Committee,*

CHRISTOPHER N. JOHNSTON (SANDS), } *Joint-*  
WILLIAM MAIN, } *Conveners.*

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*Extract Deliverance of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the foregoing Report.*

At Edinburgh, the Twenty-ninth day of May, One thousand nine hundred and twenty-three years,—

Which day the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland being met and constituted,—*inter alia*,

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee to consider Overtures on Irish Immigration and the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, which was given in by Mr Main, the Convener, who moved—

1. The General Assembly receive the Report, thank the Committee for their diligence, and discharge them, and commend the Report to the earnest consideration of the ministers and members of the Church.

2. The General Assembly, impressed by the facts set forth in the Report, urge the Government to appoint a Com-

mission to inquire into the whole situation, with a view to the preservation and protection of Scottish nationality and civilisation.

3. The General Assembly call upon the Government to amend the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918, so that the right to impart religious instruction shall be accorded to all public schools as is accorded in transferred schools; and further, the General Assembly request that Section 18 of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 be so altered as to bring it into line with Section 38 of the Act of 1872, with the addition of the provision of Section 18 of the Act of 1918 as regards the appointment of teachers and religious instruction in transferred schools. The General Assembly also consider that sub-Sections 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Section 18 should be revised and altered.

4. The General Assembly remit the whole Report to the Committee on Church and Nation for further consideration, and report to next Assembly.

The Motion was seconded.

It was moved and seconded as an Amendment—

For Paragraph 4 substitute: "The General Assembly instruct the Committee on Church and Nation to take action as indicated in paragraphs 2 and 3, and to invite the co-operation of other Churches and any Associations interested in the question, and report to next Assembly."

The Amendment was with the permission of the Assembly accepted by the Convener, and the Motion, as amended, was agreed to.

*Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland by*

DAVID PAUL,  
*Cl. Eccl. Scot.*