

**TWO LECTURES, IN REPLY
TO THE SPEECHES OF DR.
CHALMERS, ON CHURCH
EXTENSION**

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Two Lectures, in Reply to the Speeches of Dr. Chalmers, on Church Extension by David King

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DAVID KING

**TWO LECTURES, IN REPLY
TO THE SPEECHES OF DR.
CHALMERS, ON CHURCH
EXTENSION**

AT THE REQUEST, AND UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE, OF THE
GLASGOW SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

TWO LECTURES,

IN REPLY TO

THE SPEECHES OF DR. CHALMERS,

ON

CHURCH EXTENSION.

DELIVERED IN GREYFRIARS' CHURCH, 18TH AND 22D OCTOBER, 1838.

BY DAVID KING,

MINISTER OF GREYFRIARS' CHURCH, GLASGOW.

With Notes and an Appendix.

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PREFATORY NOTICE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

HAVING spoken on Church Extension, at a Public Meeting in Paisley, and the speech having been reported in the newspapers,* I was requested, by the respectable Society whose designation appears in the title page, to state the same facts and views more fully, in two Lectures, in Glasgow. I did so, and after these Lectures had been delivered, it was proposed that they should be published—in which proposal I was induced to acquiesce: and this is the simple history of the humble tract now offered to the Public.

In one view, it may appear sufficiently assuming, and as I feel that there is seeming force in the stricture, I beg to observe, that circumstances have led me into a position which I would not, in the absence of such impulse, have presumed to occupy.

I have confined my reply to the speeches of Dr. Chalmers, leaving the refutation of his London Lectures to others better qualified for the task,† and more especially to a venerated

* It is due to the Reporter of the *Glasgow Argus*, to acknowledge the singular accuracy with which the speech was reported in that newspaper.

† Two highly talented articles on the London Lectures of Dr. Chalmers, appeared in the *United Secession Magazine*, for August and October, 1838.

friend, (the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw,) on whom it has been specially devolved by the deputies of the three denominations in London, with the high approbation of the entire dissenting interest, alike in England and Scotland.

The Lectures are published very nearly as they were delivered, but I have introduced some slight changes, where it appeared that perspicuity or accuracy might be thereby promoted.

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TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first impression of these Lectures, exceeding 5,000 copies, has been nearly disposed of within a few days. This wide and rapid diffusion of a production so diminutive and unimportant in itself, may serve at least as a leaf cast upon the waters of public opinion, to show at once the strength and direction of the current. My attention has not been called to any errors of the least importance, in the former edition, and therefore, I have made no changes for this new edition of several thousand copies, beyond a few verbal alterations.

LECTURE I.

AFTER an interval of comparative quiet, the kingdom is becoming more agitated than ever, by keen and prevalent controversy about the Civil Establishment of religion. Public meetings are being held in rapid succession, now in cities, and now in rural districts, now on one side, and now on the opposite side of the contested question; and the large numbers attending on these occasions, furnish unequivocal evidence of strong and general excitement. Such conflict is undesirable in itself. How much more pleasant, as well as seemly, would it be, to see the conflicting parties as brethren dwelling together in unity,—assembling to remove the obstructions, to retrieve the injuries, and to celebrate the successes of our common Christianity? It is well that Christians are united by ties which they cannot, even if they would, cut asunder, and that the Master is more forbearing than are his servants, condescending to hold fellowship with us severally, when we have ceased in the fervour of our zeal, or the altitude of our dignity, to associate with one another. The day is certainly coming, when these breaches shall be healed, when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, or Judah vex Ephraim; when present differences shall be forgotten, or remembered only to enhance the serene delights of confiding and affectionate brotherhood.

Meanwhile, that we may not in avoidance of one extreme, run upon another, let us remember, that the love of peace, like every Christian grace, admits of being counterfeited, that it may amount to nothing more than a dislike of being troubled, and may weakly surrender important interests, for want of magnanimity to defend them. Let us remember that much of our Lord's time was spent in controversy,—that a great part of Paul's epistles are controversial,—that the evil must consequently lie not in the use, but in the abuse of free discussion; and that it may even be productive of the highest good, if only prosecuted in that spirit which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Whatever may be the issue of the war now waged, we do well to keep in mind, that the individual certainly loses the victory, who loses his temper, who loses his Christian charity, who loses the testimony of a good conscience, and the still higher approbation of a divine witness.

Knowing how easy it is to make such general acknowledgments, and yet practically abandon them on a first provocation, I have sincere satisfaction while I enter on the task which has been assigned me, in reflecting that I shall have so little temptation to cherish, and so great inducements to repress all unbecoming asperity in remarking on the statements of a Minister, Professor, and Author, holding in these several departments a status of such merited celebrity, as Dr. Chalmers. And if I am not prevented by personal respect, from offering a correction of what I must consider mis-statements, and a confutation of what I must consider fallacies, unqualified by compromise of conviction, or affectation of candour, I shall find ample apology for such freedom in the copious sanction of his own high example.

The object for which more immediately he has been delivering addresses throughout Scotland, is the furtherance of his favourite scheme of Church Extension. For the sake of order and perspicuity, I shall discuss the subject under these divisions.

I. The alleged destitution, which lies at the foundation of all these demands for additional Endowments.

II. The alleged causes of this destitution.

III. The alleged inability of the Voluntary principle to meet the supposed emergency.

IV. The remedial measures proposed by the Church Extensionists.

V. The success with which these measures have been attended.

VI. The probable results of the present agitation.

First:—It is proposed to consider the alleged destitution, lying at the foundation of all demands for additional Endowments.

Here we are told, that the population of the kingdom at the time of the Reformation, was one million, and that it has subsequently increased to two millions and a half, while the amount of Church accommodation has been stationary. This representation, as Dr. Heugh very clearly showed in his excellent speech at Kilmarnock, is altogether deceptive. The older churches have been generally pulled down, and the law provides that new churches shall be of sufficient dimensions to accommodate the examinable population. Then numerous Chapels of Ease have been erected—though these perhaps are needful to compensate for the reduction caused by the union of parishes. But finally, this computation wholly overlooks the fact, that Dissent did not exist when the Church of Scotland was first established, and that the increase of population has been accompanied by the rise of above eight hundred Dissenting places of worship.

This reply is as explicit in its nature, as the averment which it meets. But there is no necessity for dealing in general statements, to settle a point of plain arithmetic.* By the census of 1831, the population of the country was 2,365,114; due

* For a fuller statistical view of the religious denominations, and the amount of instruction they afford, than is given above, see a paper by the Rev. James Elles of Saltcoats, in the *United Secession Magazine*, for June, 1838.