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JOHN BROWN of HADDINGTON

A Centenary Memorial



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To the State Historical Society
of Wisconsin presented
your recognition of the great
heroism shown to him & his
electing him is commensurate
with his of the Society by
the an the John Brown
Haddington
1 February 1888

CENTENARY MEMORIAL

OF THE

REV. JOHN BROWN.

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REV. JOHN BROWN.

MARY MEMORIAL

JOHN BROWN

HADDINGTON

FAMILY RECORD

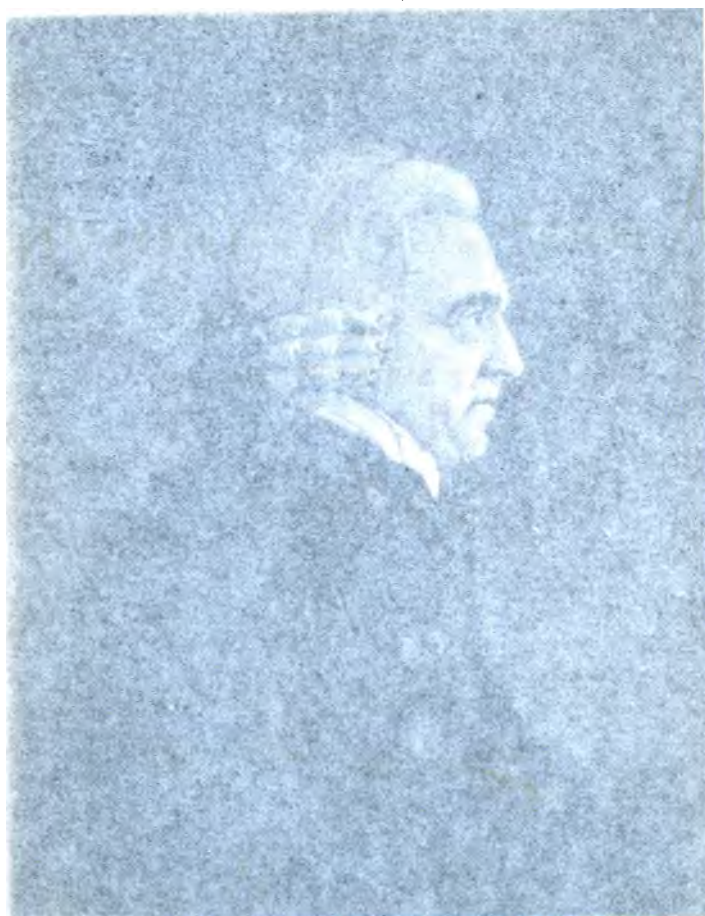
COMPILED BY HIS GRAND SON,

JOHN CROUMBIE BROWN, LL.D.

EDINBURGH:

NEW ELLIOT, 17 PRINCES' STREET

185



CENTENARY MEMORIAL

OF THE



REV. JOHN BROWN, ^{MD}

1784 - 1854

HADDINGTON.

A FAMILY RECORD.

COMPILED BY HIS GRANDSON,

JOHN CROUMBIE BROWN, LL.D.

EDINBURGH:

ANDREW ELLIOT, 17 PRINCES' STREET.

—
1887.

KIRKCALDY :
J. GRAM, PRINTER,
HIGH STREET.

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B 878

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE following compilation was prepared as a Memorial of a family gathering of descendants of the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, on the centenary of his death, by the distribution of which amongst the families of whom might be transmitted to the third and fourth generation information in regard to their common ancestor. It was an afterthought to throw off extra impressions for publication, that others besides these might have it in their power to possess themselves of copies without having to ask for them as a favour from any one. While effect has been given to this suggestion, the family character of the record has not been abandoned.

JOHN C. BROWN.

HADDINGTON, *28th September, 1887.*

Being the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Congregation.

“I will open my mouth in a parable ; I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He hath done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”—Ps. lxxviii. 2-7.

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CENTENARY MEMORIAL
OF THE
REV. JOHN BROWN.

TO DESCENDANTS OF REV. JOHN BROWN, HADDINGTON.

MY DEAR COUSINS,—In common with many of you who still live, and many of us who have gone the way of all flesh, I have felt at times an elevating, ennobling, sanctifying influence from the consideration of my descent from the honoured ancestor in whom the family of which he and we are members took a new departure, which has brought blessings to many in bye-gone days, and in the present in this, and in other lands ; my wife and I being, with the exception of one, the oldest surviving grandchildren, and we resident in Haddington, considering that it might be pleasant to you, as it would be to us, to have an opportunity of meeting together as members of the family widely scattered, but having a common interest in our common relationship, we felt that we might take upon us to offer to you such an opportunity. Accordingly we addressed to all of you, whose addresses we could obtain, the following letter :—

B

HADDINGTON, 28th April, 1887.

To the Descendants of John Brown of Haddington, and those connected with them by Marriage, or through the Marriage of a Parent.

“DEAR COUSINS,—Sabbath, the 19th June, being the hundredth anniversary of our grandfather’s death, ascension, and entrance on the joy of our Lord, we have asked our children and grandchildren to spend the day with us. It may be some of you, many or few, would be pleased to meet together on that occasion. We cannot provide sleeping accomodation, but we shall be happy to welcome as visitors for the Saturday all who may choose to avail themselves of the opportunity for a family gathering. Will you kindly inform us if you can come?

“WE ARE, &c.”

About fifty of us met on the day specified ; and from different parts of our native land, from Australia, from the Cape of Good Hope, from Russia, from Germany, and from Spain, there were received from kindred letters and telegrams expressive of hearty interest in our family gathering. To the writers of these, and others unable to meet with us, I desire to impart some participation in our enjoyment by telling them how we spent the day — and to supply to some who were present a memorial of our enjoyment, which others beside them may value. With this in view, I have addressed myself to the preparation of the following narrative,

I.

As successive trains arrived in the forenoon of the 18th we met in the County Assembly Room, whence, after friendly greetings and coffee and cake, we sallied forth in companies of five or six, formed by spontaneous aggregation, to ramble about and see what in the town was interesting to us as a family, and to see places of interest from historical associations. Amongst the former were the old manse, originally the entrance to the County Military Riding School, the site of which school seems to have been that of the Meeting House of the congregation, until some eighty years ago, when the Church now used was built; the family burying-ground, where lie the remains of our grandfather, and of his wife Janet Thomson, the mother of the older branch of the family, and of his wife Violet Croumbie, the mother of the younger branch of the family, and descendants and kinsmen, some buried in the same ground and others in other parts of the churchyard; and the houses occupied in the last century and in the present by kinsmen and relatives, several of which have legends and traditions associated with them, which reported on the spot seemed to give a realistic character to them beyond what they had previously borne.

Amongst places of historical interest visited there was the birth-place of Knox. Scarcely inferior in interest to this was the Parish Church, a fine structure, some 210 feet in length from east to west, and measuring 110

across the transept from north to south, surmounted in the centre by a square tower rising to a height of 90 feet. The western portion has been restored and is used for worship. The remainder is in well preserved ruins with interesting sculptures. It is called in a charter by David I., conveying certain lands to Richard, Bishop of St. Andrews and the Priory thereof, the Church of *St. Mary of Hadintune*. Five hundred years ago it was known as the *Paroche Kirk*, and placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of St. Andrews, it continued so until the Reformation. It has sometimes of late years been called the Abbey, but without any warrant for so doing. Again and again it is in old records spoken of as *the Paroche Kirk*, and as *Ecclesia de Haidinton*, but there is no indication of its ever having been connected either with nunnery or monastery in the parish. Here, near to the great eastern window, rest the remains of Jeanie Welsh, wife of Thomas Carlyle; hard by is the vault of the Lauderdales, associated in the minds of many with times and deeds of persecution, and interesting to others as the resting-place of the remains of the favourite Minister of James, with an elaborate monument, bearing amongst others an inscription composed by his Royal master; and not less interesting is it as the church in which, in remarkable circumstances, George Wishart preached his last sermon, he being on the evening of the day, to employ the words of another, "made captive and carried off to St. Andrews, there to be burned that he might regale the Cardinal Beaton and his friends. A fine spectacle it was, so fine that they put soft cushions, and nice hang-

ing curtains, that at their leisure they might behold it." The irony may seem bitter, but the perpetration of such things, professedly in the name of religion, and of service done to Christ the Saviour is such blasphemy that we may welcome every exposure of this.

The churchyard is overlooked by Haddington House, erected 200 years ago, as indicated by an inscription on the lintel of the front door "A. M., 1680, K. C." The initials are those of Alexander Maitland, a Bailie of the town at that time, and Katherine Cockburn, his wife. It stands upon ground anciently designated *the King's Yaird*. The history of it from 1477 has been preserved, and it embodies some interesting incidents reported in a small Guide to objects of interest in the town, published in 1883 by Mr James Robb.

Adjacent are numerous sites of ancient ecclesiastical structures: Bedlam Close, where stood the Bethlehem Hospital; the Friar's Croft; St. Katherine's Chapel; the Monastery of the Friars Minores of Haddington, the site of which is now occupied by the Episcopal Chapel. It was founded, as appears from an old charter of the friars, in 1258. From a charter granted to the magistrates and community of the burgh of Haddington in 1560, signed by the warden and one of the friars, it seems to have been the case that the "Friars' Kirk" stood within the grounds of the monastery; and it has been conjectured that this was the *Lucerna Laudoniae*, or lamp of Lothian, spoken of by Fordoun and Major.

On the opposite side of the street are buildings

long occupied as the Burgh schools, the history of which extends over five hundred years. In 1378 is recorded in the Exchequer Rolls a payment of £3 15s 2d made by the Chamberlain to the master of the schools of Haddington by command of the King; and again, in the Chamberlain's accounts for the year from 1st March, 1384, to 16th March, 1384, are entries of £4, paid by command of the King for the board of a certain poor scholar at the schools in the town of Haddington. At the Grammar School John Knox received his education, and in these schools Edward Irving was a teacher, and there Carlyle, as a visitor of his, taught for a short time, and gained the affections of Jeanie Welsh. Not far off is St. Anne's Place, the site of a chapel dedicated to St. Anne; and hard by is a bowling green, the oldest in Scotland, having been in use upwards of 200 years. At the further end of the bowling green is an old bridge, the age of which is unknown. It appears, from a record in the books of Council, under date of 27th August, 1672, that it had been built by the magistrates and community of Haddington, but at what time does not appear. Amongst other inscribed stones on the south side, at the east end is one bearing the date "Hadintoun, 1565." There are also records of its having been damaged by the ravages of war during the siege of the town in 1548, and again in 1598. It has successfully withstood many remarkable floods, some of which are mentioned by Mr Robb in the Guide already cited. On the south side of the westmost arch is a strong iron hook, from which criminals were suspended, when, in the language of the

period, they were "*taen down to the west bow of the brig, and hangit to the dead,*" or "*drownit to the deid,*" according to the sentence pronounced by the Judge. To the right, at the further end of the bridge, is the Gifford-gate, passing the birth-place of Knox. The bridge itself leads into the Nungate, at the Eastgate end of which are ruins, which are of great age, and which probably existed as a church when Alexander de St. Martin gave over to the prioress and nuns of the Abbey his lands and tenements of St. Martin's-gate. In regard to this building there has been considerable discussion which is referred to by Mr Robb in his Guide Book.

The Abbey is situated about a mile below, where the Tyne is crossed again by a beautiful bridge, which appears most picturesque as it is approached from Haddington by a footpath along the left bank of the river. I remember the ruins well, but the stones have been used in building walls and houses; and now ruins there are none.

In 1602, the last Protestant incumbent of St. Martin's, after the Reformation, being in great distress from inadequate support, he was, at the request of the magistrates of Haddington, translated and appointed second minister in the Parish Kirk.

Returning to the town near the northern end of the street leading past Haddington House and the Custom stone, towards the footpath referred to is Bothwell Castle, or, as it is designated in the old deeds, *the Maistre of Hailes' Place*. From near this, stretching to the westward, are remains of the old wall of the town, part of which was re-built in 1603. In the line of this

is the town library in what was previously a church, built on the site of a church long occupied by a congregation of which I shall afterwards have occasion to speak. And near to the place of our meeting is the Corn Exchange and the County Buildings: the latter on the site of the Palace of Haddington, in which Alexander II. was born on the 24th August, 1198.

The origin of the town is unknown. The learned author of *Caledonia* supposes the name to be derived from the hamlet of Haden, a Saxon settler. It was created a Royal Burgh by David I. "In 1189," says Robb, "the town and territory were given in dowry to Ada, daughter of the Earl of Warren and Surrey, on her marriage with Prince Henry, the son of David I.; and continued to be a favourite residence of royalty until about the year 1216, when King John advancing out of England into Scotland, compelled Alexander II. to retreat before him, devastated the land and country, and burned Haddington, Dunbar, and many places of lesser note." Thereafter the Kings took up a residence further removed from the English border. Haddington was a frequent scene of war. By Knox there is given a graphic description of the siege to which it was subjected in 1548, in the reign of Queen Mary. In 1298 the soldiers of Edward I., in the siege of Dirleton, rejoiced in the fertility of the land around, and subsisted on the pease which they found growing abundantly in the district; and of Cromwell's soldiers in 1650 it is recorded that they were surprised to find in this neighbourhood "the greatest plenty of corn they ever saw."

II.

AT two o'clock we met again in the Assembly Room for dinner, the guests of my son, Dr John Brown, Burnley, and his wife. Some had to leave instead of meeting with us. There were present about fifty representatives of the family, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren, including husbands and wives of some present; three great grandchildren of one of his sisters; there were present also the Rev. Mr Thomson and his wife, representatives of one section of the original congregation, of which he is minister; and the Rev. Mr Nelson representative of the other section, which was that to which he ministered, and who is under call to minister to the congregation. After singing

“ Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

We united in imploring a blessing on our meeting, prayer being led by the Rev. Mr Thomson. After dinner and coffee we sung the hymn—

“ Our God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come ;
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home !

“ Under the shadow of Thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure ;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

“ Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

“ A thousand ages in Thy sight,
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

“ Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away,
They fly, forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

“ Our God our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come ;
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home !”

When this hymn had been sung Mr Nelson led us in prayer and thanksgiving to God ; and afterwards addresses were given spontaneously by several of the party. There was not wanting in connection with these the hilarity often seen in connection with expressions of affection in after dinner speeches at a family party : such we were, and there was all the hilarity becoming a family gathering.

These spontaneous addresses were given by Professor Crum Brown, a great grandson ; by the Rev. David Cairus, husband of a great granddaughter ; by Pastor Fritz Fliedner, Madrid, husband of a great granddaughter ; by my son, Dr John Brown, Burnley, a great grandson, representative, through his parents, of both families of our grandfather ; and by myself, a grandson.

In the course of one or other of these addresses refer-

ence having been made to a ring containing the hair of my grandfather, to the New Testament obtained by him when a shepherd boy, to his Self-Interpreting Bible, and to his Dictionary of the Bible, there were handed round the table for inspection the ring in question; and a small Greek New Testament, with the following inscription in the handwriting of his grandson, the Rev. Dr John Brown, successively minister in Biggar, in Rose Street and Broughton Place, Edinburgh, and for twenty-five years Professor of Exegetical Theology in the Theological Hall of the United Secession and United Presbyterian Churches.

“He had now acquired so much knowledge of Greek as to encourage him to hope that he might at length be prepared to reap the richest of all rewards which classical learning could confer on him—the capacity of reading in the original tongue the blessed New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Full of this hope, he became anxious to possess a copy of the invaluable volume. One night, having committed the charge of his sheep to a companion, he set out on a midnight journey to St. Andrews, a distance of twenty-four miles. He reached his destination in the morning, and repaired straightway to a bookseller’s shop, asking for a Greek New Testament. The master of the shop, surprised at such a request from a shepherd boy, was disposed to make game of him. Some of the professors coming into the shop, questioned the lad about his employment and studies. After hearing his tale, one of them desired the bookseller to bring the volume, who accordingly produced it, and, throwing it down on the table, “Boy,” said he, “read that book, and you shall have it for nothing.” The offer was too good to be rejected, and the shepherd boy, having acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his judges, carried off his Testament in triumph, and, ere the evening arrived, was studying it in the midst of his flock on the hills of Abernethy.” *Excerpt from the Memoir of the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, by the Rev. J. B. Paterson, his grandson.*

“There is reason to believe this is the Testament referred to. The name on the opposite page was written on the fly-leaf. It is obviously the writing of a boy, and bears a resemblance to Mr Brown's writing in mature life. It is imperfect, wanting a greater part of the Gospel of Matthew. The autograph at the end is that of his son Thomas, when a youth at college, afterwards Rev. Dr Thomas Brown of Dalkeith.”—J. B.

There was passed round also a Bible with the following inscription :—

“This Bible contains the fragments of the fifth copy of the Scriptures which was worn to pieces by the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, in preparing the marginal references for ‘The Self-Interpreting Bible.’ On his death, 19th June, 1787, these fragments were bound up along with portions of the ordinary school edition of the Scriptures, and formed the ordinary study Bible of his son, the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn, from that time till his decease on 10th February, 1832.

“EDINBURGH, 11th March, 1832.”

And there was passed round the table an entire copy of the Dictionary of the Bible in the author's hand-writing.

There were also exhibited on a table apart the Records of the Session of the congregation to which he ministered, from the 4th July, 1851, the date of his ordination, to 8th September, 1851. From the date of ordination, the record is in his hand-writing, with a list of the elders, at that time twelve in number; of the deacons, six in number; the name of the clerk; and the name of the officer; and with these the general rules of the procedure, in the congregation and session. There was exhibited also a common place book in his

writing. The volume is largely filled with *resumés* of the contents of different volumes, which indicate somewhat the precision of his studies.

Along with these there were on the table a manuscript *resumé* of *Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric* indicative of the same, and the following manuscripts of his : A new and often paraphrastic version of Job, 11th February, 1772, c. xix. ; an autobiographic sketch ; dying advice to his congregation and other hearers ; and a letter addressed by him to his sister-in-law, Margaret Croumbie, afterwards Mrs Fife.

We were dismissed with the apostolic benediction ; and were re-assembled at the old Manse, which, together with the garden, was examined in all its parts ; and family legends in regard to incidents, generally of an amusing character, associated with these were given, carrying back our thoughts to the days of old, preceding the present by more than a hundred years, and enabling fancy more vividly to realise the incidents, with details of which many were familiar, than had previously been done.

We next collected in front of the old home of our fathers, and a photograph of the group was taken.

All then partook of a cup of tea in the old Manse, as the guests of my daughter, representative through her mother, of Janet Thomson, mother of the first family of our grandfather, and through me of Violet Croumbie, mother of the second family, who had successively dispensed the hospitalities of the place from 1753 till 1787, the date of his death—now an old-world story ;

and the tea was served from an old heirloom in the family — of which more anon.

After tea we adjourned to the church, where a devotional meeting was held. The ninety-first Psalm was read. Prayer was offered by Mr Cairns, Mr Nelson, and myself; some little time was also spent in silent worship; and the following psalms and hymns were sung:—

“ O God of Bethel ! by whose hand
 Thy people still are fed ;
 Who through this weary pilgrimage
 Hast all our fathers led :
 Our vows, our pray’rs, we now present
 Before thy throne of grace ;
 God of our fathers ! be the God
 Of their succeeding race.

“ Through each perplexing path of life
 Our wand’ring footsteps guide ;
 Give us each day our daily bread,
 And raiment fit provide.
 O spread thy cov’ring wings around,
 Till all our wand’rings cease,
 And at our Father’s lov’d abode
 Our souls arrive in peace.

“ Such blessings from thy gracious hand
 Our humble pray’rs implore ;
 And thou shalt be our chosen God,
 And portion evermore.”

“ One family we dwell in Him,
 One church, above, beneath ;
 Though now divided by the stream,
 The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
At his command we bow ;
Part of his host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

“ Our old companions in distress,
We haste again to see,
And eager long for our release,
And full felicity.
Even now by faith we join our hands
With those that went before,
And greet the blood be-sprinkled bands
On the eternal shore.

“ Our spirits too shall quickly join,
Like theirs with glory crowned,
And shout to see our captain's sign,
To hear his trumpet sound.
Oh that we too might grasp our guide !
Oh that the word were given !
Come, Lord of hosts, the waves divide,
And land us safe in heaven ! ”

“ The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want,
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green : he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
My soul he doth restore again ;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Ev'n for his own name sake.

“ Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill :
For thou art with me ; and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.
My table thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes ;
My head thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

“ Goodness and merey all my life
Shall surely follow me ;
And in God’s house for evermore
My dwelling place shall be.”

“ Now blessed be the Lord our God,
The God of Israel,
For he alone doth wondrous works
In glory that excel.
And blessed be his glorious name
To all eternity :
The whole earth let his glory fill,
Amen so let it be.”

At the close of this meeting most left, being accompanied to the train by many of the others.

It was a day of joy and gladness. In a letter received, while I was writing these lines, from one of our kinswomen who was present, a widow, who had to leave on the Saturday evening, and to whom I had sent a newspaper in which had appeared an account of our meetings, she writes :—“ Many thanks to you for sending to me the Haddington newspaper. Oh ! I am so happy that you have done so. I was longing to read all about the meeting of the Browns, and the blessings implored, and the thanksgivings, and the lessons, and the banquet. Oh ! the beauty of the flowers, and the dear old books, and the ring, and silver service, and the manse, and the beauty of the day, and the old Parish Church, and the willows seen through the windows of the ruins as if peeping in, and the river, and the quiet resting places of our loved ones who sleep in Jesus.

Ah me! it was truly more than earthly enjoyment that day! Surely Christ Himself was at the feast at the gathering! How sorry I was to leave. I could say: 'Lord it is good to be here, but duty called me away.'” And other similar expressions of hallowed joy I have received.

III.

By the congregation arrangements were made for special discourses and devotional exercises on the Sabbath, 19th June, the centenary of the death of our sire.

The Rev. David Cairns of Stiche, the husband of a great granddaughter of his, preached in the morning and evening. In the morning, taking as his text Psalms cxlv. 15, "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." He called attention to the fluctuating character of everything terrestrial and human, and contrasted with this the permanence and endurance of the Kingdom of God, referring specially to the immutability of righteousness, the laws of which are immutable as are the laws of numbers. And having illustrated the point from the nature of the case, he brought under consideration securities for the permanence of what is designated by Christ The Kingdom of God, and The Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, in the fact that the power of God will never be less to defend it against external violence; and the grace of Christ shall never be less to preserve His Kingdom from decay or destruction through internal dissensions. And on the standing-ground thus prepared he proceeded:—

"I have selected this text as not unsuitable to the special circumstances in which, as a congregation, we are met here to-day. You are all aware of the special

circumstances of this day—that one hundred years ago one of your former ministers, well known and of good report, passed away from this world where he laboured faithfully, zealously, and successfully for many years, and entered upon his reward in the upper part of the kingdom, which he had done so much to establish on earth. We are met in some connection with him to-day. He has long been gone to his reward, and yet the memory of the just is blessed, and blossoms as the rose. It is well to remember those good men. There is a distinct obligation on us coming after such men to take up the work that dropped from their hands. They were faithful in their work, and we, too, in our day, have such work before us, for we work in a kingdom which does not come to an end—a kingdom that is extending; a kingdom that will extend until it be commensurate with the whole earth; a kingdom, like its head and founder, everlasting, universal, and all blessed.”

Having referred to the celebrations then going on of the Jubilee of the reign of the Queen, he proceeded:—“We meet to-day in connection with another anniversary celebration in many respects more limited and local, but still important enough to awaken the interest and sympathy of many in this community, and far beyond it, and sufficient to justify a special service of commemoration. You are all aware that to-day is the hundredth anniversary of the death of the Rev. John Brown, who for nearly thirty-six years was the minister of this congregation, during twenty of which he also acted as Profes-

sor of Theology in the Divinity Hall of the Associate (Burgher) Synod. That a man should make such an impression on his own age, and leave such a name behind him as to warrant a special memorial service a hundred years after the man himself is dead, is proof sufficient that he must have been possessed of no ordinary force of character. A brief sketch of his life and work, which is all that I can furnish on this occasion, will make this clear. The facts are mainly derived from a short Memoir of him written by himself, and edited by his son, John Brown of Whitburn. He was born in 1722 in the village of Carpow, in Perthshire, of poor parents, his father being a weaver. The father died when the boy was about the eleventh year of his age, and his mother dying soon after, he was left a poor orphan, and as he himself says, had nothing to depend on but the Providence of God. The poverty of his parents did not permit them to continue him long at school, and the ordinary branches of reading, writing, and arithmetic, were all that they could afford to give him. One month at school, he says, and without his parents' allowance, he bestowed upon Latin. This appears to have been the whole literary education he received, so far as schools and universities were concerned. But his thirst for knowledge was great, and he applied himself with such ardour and diligence to the attainment of it that when still a youth he had acquired a vast and varied stock of erudition, both sacred and profane, and had mastered the principal modern languages, in addition to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

“After his parents' death he was engaged as a

shepherd lad, near Abernethy, and the story is told that after he had made some acquaintance with the Greek language, he was anxious to obtain a copy of the Greek New Testament, and having secured a substitute to take charge of his sheep, he walked all the way to St. Andrews to purchase the coveted volume. On entering the bookseller's shop, and asking for a Greek Testament, a gentleman present, one of the professors in St. Andrews University, surprised at such an unusual demand from a barefooted and unlettered-looking boy, said—'My boy, if you will read to me a verse of that book you seek, I will pay for it.' The book was produced, a passage was selected, and read with ease and intelligence, and it was honestly and triumphantly won. That New Testament is to-day treasured as a precious heirloom among the possessions of the great-great-grandsons of the shepherd lad of Abernethy. The facility with which he acquired the knowledge of languages was a matter of astonishment to many. He says in his autobiography—'My learning of these languages without a master, except for one month, occasioned my obtaining the favour of some and my meeting with the malice of others. By the last it was represented that I had certainly got my learning in some sinful way, and this groundless calumny spread far and wide.' So prevalent was this report that when Ralph Erskine proposed him as a student of Divinity to enter the Hall one of the members of the Presbytery objected on the ground that he had got his learning from the devil; and Erskine swept away the objection by the declaration, 'I think the lad has a sweet savour

of Christ about him.' It may readily be supposed that he was a diligent student. History and Divinity constituted his favourite reading, but, above all, he studied the Scriptures. His acquaintance with the Bible was remarkable. Seldom was a text quoted, but he could repeat it, explain its meaning, and point out its connection with the context. In 1750 he was licensed to preach the gospel, and on the 4th July, 1751, he was ordained minister of this congregation. Here he continued in labours most abundant during all the thirty-six years of his ministry.

"A specimen of the labours of a minister of the Secession Church of that day, might well appeal both to the ministers and the people of the times in which we live. We read that during the summer he preached three sermons every Sabbath, besides an expository discourse; in winter he preached two sermons, in addition to the lecture. All the families in his congregation were visited twice every year, besides diets of catechising, which he frequently held for the young. He rose between four and five in the morning during summer, and at six during winter, and continued his studies till eight in the evening.

"After he had been sixteen years thus engaged in the ministry, he was appointed by the Synod Professor of Divinity, as successor to the Rev. Professor Swanston. He was then in his forty-fifth year, and in the full maturity of his powers and attainments; and to the close of his life, and during a period of twenty years, all his gifts and acquirements were devoted to the teaching of those who were to be teachers of others.

“On looking over the Haddington Divinity Hall registers, as these are given by Dr M'Kelvie, I find that the number of students who entered the hall during his professorship amounted to 177. Those attending the hall each year of the five years' course, might number thirty; and one is struck with the large number of his students who became famous in their day as preachers of the gospel, and left their mark deep on the Secession Church. Their natural abilities were, under his instruction, so admirably cultivated for ministerial usefulness; and, as he was sole professor, his influence was the more deeply impressed upon the Church by the successive generations of ministers that came forth from the school of the prophets at Haddington. Almost every year of his professorship we find on the list of his students some one or more whose names were famous in their day, and which are still not without their potency in Secession households. We find such names as these—Dr George Lawson, Selkirk, his successor in the professorship; Dr Jack, Manchester; Peter Greig, Lochgelly; Dr Husband, Dunfermline; John Brown, Whitburn; Dr Hall, Broughton Place, Edinburgh; Ebenezer Brown, Inverkeithing; Dr Waugh, London; Dr James Peddie, Edinburgh; — Comrie, Penicuik; Robert Hall, Kelso; Dr Dick, Glasgow; — Aitchison, Leith; — Smart, Stirling; Benoni Black, Haddington; Dr Kidston, Glasgow; Dr Jamieson, Scoone: all of whom did splendid service in preaching a pure gospel in the various districts of our country where the cold blight of moderatism was overspreading the land. His own

manner of preaching was grave and solemn, he excelled in pointed appeals to the conscience, and he so spoke as one who felt the reality of what he said as to extort from an unwilling witness the confession that he preached as if Jesus Christ was standing at his elbow.

“The incessant labours of the Christian ministry, combined with the arduous duties of a theological professorship, did not exhaust all his activity. He became a voluminous author. I have seen a list of his published works, amounting to thirty-one, and though many of these were only ephemeral, born of the time and occasion, and now dead and forgotten, there are some which have come down to us across the century, and have still a living force, both in this country and in America. I may mention especially his Dictionary of the Bible, in two goodly volumes, which used to be my favourite Sabbath reading when a boy, and which though now to some extent superseded by newer and more learned encyclopædias, is a monument of industry and research which is simply marvellous. His ‘Self-Interpreting Bible’ also still survives, and shows his wonderful knowledge of Scripture and faculty as a commentator; and as the basis of other commentaries on the same method, has contributed perhaps as much as any other book of the kind to the devout and intelligent understanding of the Word of God. By these works especially, he though dead yet speaketh, and like the Divine Word, which it was his delight to study and illustrate, his line has gone out through all the earth and his words to the end of the world.

Having in these manifold ways served his generation according to the will of God, his health began to give way, and after a somewhat lengthened illness, on the 19th of June, 1787, just a hundred years ago to-day, he died. The last words he was heard to utter were—'My Christ.' Thus closed a most useful and honoured life, spent in the service of that Saviour in whom living he believed, and with dying breath claimed and appropriated as his own. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. Time would fail me, nor do I feel specially called upon to dwell further upon the influence which the first John Brown himself exerted on the religious life of his own times, or of that which his descendants in successive generations have exerted down to the present day. He gave four of his own sons to the ministry of the gospel, each of them distinguished by his own natural and gracious gifts, which made them notable men in their day, and worthy of their ancestry: John of Whitburn, Ebenezer of Inverkeithing, Thomas of Dalkeith, and William the venerable historian of missions; and in his own sphere as a citizen and general philanthropist, not less remarkable than his ministerial brethren, Samuel the founder and distributor of itinerating libraries, the fragrant memory of whose useful life has not altogether disappeared from his native Haddington. A single word only I must indulge myself in to speak of John Brown of the third generation, my own professor, who inherited not only the name but the spirit of his grandfather the commentator, and who laboured not unsuccessfully to inspire his

students with his own passionate desire to get at the exact meaning of what the Spirit of God taught in the particular passage for the time under discussion; and whose published works show with what conspicuous success he brought forth the treasure out of that mine of divine truth where like the land of Havillah there is gold, and the gold of that land is good. Literature and science too have had their distinguished representatives in the descendants of John Brown, some of whom, dearly beloved and longed for, have fallen asleep, and others are with us to this day, worthily doing the work, and sharing the honours of our times as their honoured ancestors did in theirs. May the Lord bless the wide circle of his descendants, now scattered over many lands, and make them more and more a blessing.

“It is not necessary for me to say anything to you, the members of the congregation, respecting the history of the congregation since John Brown’s death. For this I do not possess the requisite knowledge or ability. But speaking to you to-day, I preach to you no other Gospel than that which it was his life-long work to proclaim in his day, and I feel that I cannot close this service better than in the words which he addressed to his congregation from his dying bed. ‘Now’ he says, ‘I ask nothing for myself or any of my family. I make this my dying request that you would now receive my Master Christ into your hearts and houses. Could my soul speak back to you from the eternal state I would say, Oh, that ye were wise that ye understood this, that ye would consider your latter end! With respect to your obtaining another minister, let me beseech you by much

fervent prayer to get him first from the Lord, and let it be your care to call one whose sermons you find to touch your consciences. May the Lord preserve you from such as aim chiefly to tickle your fancy, and seek themselves rather than Jesus Christ the Lord. Let there be no strife among you in calling him, and when you get him, labour at his entrance to receive his message from Christ with great greediness. Let your vacancy make you hungry and thirsty for the Gospel, and let all hands and hearts be intent on raising up a seed for Christ in this corner of East Lothian.”

In the evening Mr Cairns referring to what might be considered the central doctrine of the evangelical preachers of the last century, and with marked definiteness of my grandfather, and the men of his school, took as his text Job xxv. 4—“How then can man be justified with God?” and read along with this Romans iii. 24-26. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness that he may be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” His discourse he devoted to illustrations of the following themes:—

I. Wrong answers that have been given to the question in Job (1) Man is not justified with God on the ground of his natural goodness; (2) on the ground of his religious duties; (3) on the ground of repentance and expiation of his own.

II. New Testament answer given in Romans, the true, the only, the all sufficient answer, which is likewise three-fold—Man is justified, (1) On the ground of his redemption ; (2) by means of man's own faith ; (3) and of God's own grace.

In the afternoon the Rev. J. Nelson conducted worship. After reading Haggai ii. 3-9,—“ Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory ? and how do you see it now ? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing ? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord ; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest ; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work : for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you : fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts : Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come : and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts ; and in this place shall I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.” And repeating, “ Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory ? and how do ye see it now ? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing ? ” he proceeded to show that in this he found a retrospect, an introspect, and a prospect,—setting forth under

each of these heads lessons derived from the history of the church, and appropriate to its present circumstances. "Soon" said he "they would review a congregational history extending over a century and a-half. A hundred years ago it was associated not only with what was best in the Christian life of that time, but it was the college of the future ministers of the denomination. Past history should be a present inspiration. Since John Brown's pastorate five ministers had had the oversight; and some of the present membership had sat under the ministry of four. There were families in the congregation to-day which bridge the gulf, and through the traditions of descendants they were linked in thought and feeling with the olden time. While the messengers had not been abiding the message had remained the same. To-day, if not in the same church, yet on the same site, were proclaimed the same old truths in which the old professor and pastor delighted, and of which he said, after nearly forty years of preaching Christ and His great and sweet salvation, he would be willing to beg his bread all the labouring days of the week for an opportunity of publishing the Gospel on Sabbath to an assembly of sinful men.

"Possible it is for this Church to attain former glory, but it is scarce possible for any pastor it may ever have to attain the deserved renown of the late pastor and professor. A man of whom Scotland's bard has sung, joining his name with that of Bunyan and Boston; a man who did much by training a ministry to make the United Presbyterian Church what it is to-day; a man whose learning and devotion were equalled only by his

humility and liberality. Yet he laboured under great disadvantages. He was a herald of a coming age. By this forenoon's service he has been brought nearer to many of us than ever he has been. What if he was never far away? Who can tell how near he is just now? There are sustaining powers in life—hints, helps, suggestions. From whence do they come? Sometimes we are astonished at what we do, and more astonished at what we are, and what we get grace to leave undone. From whence comes our aid to do good and resist evil? Primarily from the source of all good. But may there not be other sources? We have to do with our dead perhaps more than we think at times. 'We are come,' says an Apostle, 'to the spirits of the just made perfect.' 'Again we are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses.' History entails obligation. As every living man is so much character force for the bane or bliss of society, so no man dieth unto himself. God knows how near our dead are to us. God alone knows by whom, and by what we are surrounded. One moment the eyes of Elisha's servant looked into space. The next, in answer to his master's prayer, he saw the mountains full of horses and chariots of fire. The air may be peopled as it pulsates. Sound, we are told, never ceases. It pulsates in the air. Man, by his inventions, is fast converting the world into a whispering gallery. By science he is annihilating space and economising time. God has done so. Were our hearing sufficiently quick we would hear. Hear what? Many things possibly we would rather not. But we might have grand audiences.

We might hear God speaking to Adam. We might hear Moses and the Prophets, and the Prophet like unto Moses whom never man spake like. 'The chariots of God are twenty thousand.' What if the air around us to-day is pulsating with the utterances of the great good man whose memory we to-day revive. This is certain. It is in the narrowest possible sense that a man dies. The influence of a good man enters as a permanent power into society and is perpetuated from age to age. David soothed some by his music when he was in the flesh; but since it died he has inspired, soothed more than he did while it lived. Dorcas has gone, but her influence lives; thousands of hands are doing her work, and hundreds of societies bear her name. Luther has gone but his influence lives. Baxter has called to more Unconverted since he himself was called to The Saint's Rest than ever he did before. John Brown, through his 'Self-Interpreting Bible,' is proclaiming the truth of God daily in many families, and by his two Shorter Catechisms, guiding many young feet into the way of peace. We have entered into the labours of those who have been before us. We are the heirs of the past, and heritors for the future. Shame on us if our organisations, where there is a free field, do not equal or excel former in glory! We have opportunities to-day which were not a century ago. Aggressive work! Who thought of it then? Foreign Mission work had to be defended. Then Assemblies discussed whether revelation or civilization should take the precedence. All honour to the men who endured hardness that the Gospel might have free

course and be glorified! A century ago we are told £200 could scarcely be collected for Foreign Missions, now there are two and a-half millions in a year. Then here and there there were solitary labourers, now there are over 6000 pastors and teachers, and over 27,000 native converts labouring; and to-day the Word of God is being taught in twenty times as many languages as it was in the day of Pentecost. Notable illustrations are now being given of the self-sacrificing spirit of the Gospel. Men of titles and rank are putting their all into the Treasury of God and counting not their life dear unto the death. For the most unhealthy climes, when one falls another rises and takes his place. Prejudice has been outlived, and sceptics can be answered by the splendid rhetoric of changed lives, and pointed to the moral desert of heathendom budding in morality and blossoming in righteousness. At home, where there are earnest workers, there are earnest seekers after Christ. The congregation that is most aggressive is the one that adds most to the number of the saved, and is the greatest power in the community. Them that know God by following in the footsteps of his Son he is honouring. If we honour him in self-forgetting love, he will honour us here by giving us souls for our hire, hereafter by giving us a place with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the good of all time in his own kingdom. May God manifest his presence here by the triumphs of his grace! Here was a dying wish and counsel of the professor as applicable to-day to this congregation as it was to the one which worshipped here a century ago—'Oh how it would

delight my soul to be informed in the matter of the eternal state that Christ had come along with my successor conquering and to conquer! How gladly should I see you and him by hundreds at the right hand of Christ though I should scarcely have my ten! Oh, if Christ were so exalted, so remembered among you as to make me scarcely thought of!' We thank God for him; we delight to remember him, and while we call no man master, we cannot but be moved, be stimulated by his example. God grant that this day noted in the history of this congregation may be noted in the experiences of some as the day when they gave themselves to God in an everlasting covenant. May it be a day noted in the experience of many of us as one in which we vowed fuller consecration to the service of God, and begin as a congregation the new era—if the Lord will, a new century's history, with piety purer, dormant zeal awakened, and energy concentrated! With the enlarged opportunities 'be ye also enlarged,' and the latter glory of this house will excel the former. For even now extremes are meeting. Former ages have prepared for to-day. This day shall have its part in preparing for a greater—the 'great and notable day of the Lord.' Earth and Heaven are stretching forth their arms, and shall one day meet in loving embrace. Hitherto God has been hiding His power. Then His glory shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

'O Father, haste the promised hour,
When at Christ's feet shall lie
All rule, authority, and power,
Beneath the ample sky.'"

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Together with commemorative services held on Sabbath, the 19th of the month, the centenary of the death of our sire, there were several undesigned co-inciding ecclesiastical arrangements which were interesting to us as a family. One of our number, a great-grandson, was ordained on that day an elder in the congregation with which he is connected; in the course of the week another great-grandson was elected deacon in the congregation of which he is a member; on the Tuesday, the Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church unanimously appointed one of their number to preside while a call should be given by the congregation to one to be their minister; on the same day, arrangements were made by the same Presbytery for the ordination of a minister in the congregation of Whitburn, of which the oldest son of the deceased was the first minister; and on the Sabbath following, in more than one of the congregations with which we are severally connected, an opportunity was afforded to us to renew in the Sacrament of the Supper our covenant engagements with God. All of these serving to link on the coming century with that which was closed.

IV.

THE autobiography quoted by Mr Cairns in his discourse was that of which a copy, in the handwriting of the subject, was exhibited at the family gathering. It has appeared in a volume entitled *Select Remains*, edited by his eldest sons, the Rev. John Brown of Whitburn, and the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing, published about two years after his death; which volume passed through five editions; and in an edition published in 1856, edited by his youngest son, the Rev. Dr William Brown. Besides this, there is a biographical notice of him by his son, the Rev. Dr Thomas Brown, minister in Dalkeith, prefixed to his *History of the British Churches*; and a biography by his grandson, the Rev. John Brown Patterson of Falkirk, prefixed to editions of the *Dictionary of the Bible*, and of the "Self-Interpreting Bible" published by A. Fullarton & Co., Glasgow. A lengthened notice of him occurs in a paper entitled *The Browns of Haddington*, in a volume of week-day discourses by the Rev. Mr Lynch of London. And I am informed that a biographical sketch was prepared for the *Biographical Dictionary* now being published in London under the editorship of Mr Leslie Stephen.

Our grandsire, John Brown, was born in 1722 at Carpow, near Abernethy, about seven miles from Perth, the parish lying partly in Perthshire and partly in the kingdom of Fife. The town, in A.D. 476, was the capital

of the dominions of Nethan or Nectan, king of the Picts, by whom it may have been built—the modern name being an anglicised corruption of the Gaelic *Obair Neachtain*. It was also an early Archepiscopal See, which was removed to St. Andrews in A.D. 840, when the Picts were subjugated by Kenneth II. King of the Scots; after this it became the site of a university belonging to the Culdees, the Christians of Scotland prior to the domination of the land by the Church of Rome. Only one relic of Pictish rule remains—a round tower some seventy-five feet in height and forty-eight in circumference, built of massive hewn stones.

His father was of the same name, John Brown, and was what in my young days was known as a customary weaver, of whom I knew many. At that time the hinds, or farm servants, were allowed, amongst other perquisites, the use of a small piece of land upon which to grow flax, which was spun by the daughters, or spinsters, in their family; and the wife, or weaver of the family having other occupation of more importance in the household, the yarn was given out to be woven by weavers who relied on the custom of their neighbours instead of seeking employment from the enterprising manufacturers of the day, who occupied the place now taken with greater effect by the mill-owners of the present. His mother's name was Catherine Millie. Of his forbears I have heard nothing, but of his first and second cousins I have known several.

On his marriage with my grandmother, Violet Croumbie, she being unwilling that her brother John, then resident

in Haddington, and who was unmarried, should have no one to care for his comfort, got a niece, Katie Heggie, to come and take charge of his household. She married Francis Vert, also a customary weaver. I remember well her and her husband, and their two sons and three daughters. William, her youngest son, still resides in Haddington. His nephew, son of his brother John, was some years since Provost of the burgh. Two of his daughters, and a nephew, son of one of his sisters, Mrs M'Donald, were with us at our family gathering. He working on one occasion in early life in the neighbourhood of Stirling, met with two cousins, sons of a sister of his mother, who were also working there as carpenters.

In the prosecution of my study of forest science I had occasional correspondence with Dr James Brown, author of *The Forester: a Practical Treatise on the Planting, Rearing, and General Management of Forest Trees*, a work of recognised worth; and I have had, and still have, correspondence and intercourse with one and another of his sons doing good work in connection with forestry in Yorkshire, in the north of Scotland, in America, and in South Australia, where one of them holds the office of Government Conservator of Forests, and has in a great measure revolutionised the whole forest economy of the Colony. I was interested in learning that they are representatives of a collateral branch of the family,—Dr James Brown having been apparently a great grandson of a brother of John Brown of Carpow. One of the family bears the name of Erskine, a name now naturalised among the descend-

ants of John Brown of Haddington. I asked how that came about. The answer given was that it was the name of a good minister for whom my informant's grandfather had a great respect—so that apparently in both branches of the family Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine are represented in descendants or others bearing their name.

Of his childhood, boyhood, and early youth, he tells in the biographical sketch which has been referred to:—

“It was a mercy that I was born in a family which took care of my Christian instruction, and in which I had the example of God's worship, both evening and morning; which was the case of few families in that corner at that time. This was the more remarkable that my father, as I have heard, being born under Prelacy, got no instruction in reading, or next to none, but what he got from masters after he began to be a herd.

“About the eighth year of my age I happened in the crowd to get into the church on the sacrament Sabbath, when it was common for all but intended communicants to be excluded. The table or tables which I heard served before I was shut out were chiefly served upon Christ, and in a sweet and delightful manner. This captivated my young affections, and has made me since think that little ones should never be excluded from the church on such occasions. Though what they may hear may not convert them, it may be of use to begin the allurements of their hearts to the Saviour.

“My thirst after knowledge was great. My pride

not a little instigated my diligence, particularly in learning by heart what catechisms I could get. I have found not a little advantage by this, especially by my learning of Vincent's and Flavel's Catechisms, and the Assembly's Larger Catechism. My parents circumstances did not allow them to afford me any more but a very few quarters at school, for reading, writing, and arithmetic; one month of which, without their allowance, I bestowed upon the Latin.

“ My father dying about the eleventh year of my age, and my mother soon after, I was left a poor orphan, who had almost nothing to depend on but the providence of God.

“ Meanwhile, in 1734, and especially in 1735, the Lord by his Word read and preached, did not a little strive with and allure my soul. The reading of Alleine's *Alarm to the Unconverted* contributed not a little to awaken my conscience and move my affections. Some of his hints, made worse by my mind, however, occasioned my legal covenanting with God. I made much the same use of Guthrie's *Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*. Indeed, such was the bias of my heart under these convictions, that I was willing to do any thing but flee to Christ and his free grace alone for salvation. In these times I had no small delight in reading religious books, the Bible, Rutherford's *Letters*, and the like; and by means of these, particularly by means of Gouge's *Directions How to Walk with God*, was led into considerable circumspection in my practice. The sweet impressions made by sermons and books sometimes lasted several days on end, and were some-

times carried to a remarkable high degree. Under these I was much given to prayer, but concealed all my religious appearances to the uttermost of my power.

“Four fevers on end brought me so low within a few months after my mother’s death, as made almost every onlooker lose all hopes of my recovery ; only I remember a sister, the most simple but the most serious of all us children of the family, told me that when she was praying for me, that word, ‘ I will satisfy him with long life, and show him my salvation,’ was impressed on her mind, which she said made her perfectly easy with respect to my recovery. Apprehensions of eternity, though I scarce looked for immediate death in these troubles, also affected me.

“ But the death of my parents, and my leaving a small religious family to go into a larger, in the station of a herd boy, for two or three years, was attended with not a little practical apostasy from all my former attainments. Even secret prayer was not always regularly performed, but I foolishly pleased myself by making up the number one day which had been deficient in another.

“ It was my mercy, too, that in all my services I was cast into families, except perhaps one, where there were some appearances of the grace of God, beside useful neighbours.”

In a letter addressed to his eldest son, the minister of Whitburn, after his death, by one who seems to have been personally acquainted with him in early life, and with his life history in after days, it is stated :—

“ Mr Brown was born in poor circumstances. His infant age, through the death of near relatives, may be styled friendless ; but as soon as he could do anything Providence provided a friend for him on the neighbouring mountains to Abernethy, in John Ogilvie, a shepherd venerable for age, and eminent for piety. This worthy man, though intelligent and pious, was so destitute of education as not to be able to read English. Knowing the narrow circumstances of your father’s family, his serious disposition, his love of learning, his wonderful capacity, he was induced to engage him in his service to help him with his sheep, particularly to tend his lambs, but chiefly to read to him. They were not long companions until they became chief friends, and both of them found their connection mutually beneficial. To accommodate themselves they built a lodge on Colzie Hill, to which they repaired not only to screen themselves from the storm, but to read the Word of God, to pray, and sing the praises of the Chief Shepherd. Thus the wilderness and the solitary place was glad for them, and the desert rejoiced with joy and singing.

“ The ruins of this lodge are well known, and from its sacred use obtained, and yet bears, the name of the Tabernacle. But, however, the pleasant period comes to an end ; the farmer dispersed his flock, and the godly shepherds separated. The old man retired from business to Abernethy, of which parish he was an elder, and your father entered the family of Michael Bean. Here for a while his company was not comfortable. His fellow-shepherd, a boy of his own age, maltreated him,

but nothing retarded his progress in learning, and no ill usage provoked him to speak unadvisedly with his lips, or repay one mischief with another. On the contrary, his meek forgiving disposition turned his enemy into a friend. Henry Ferney, the name of his companion, when folding their flocks one Sabbath evening had strewed the ground all about the gate with whins of the most prickly kind, and had prepared a parcel of very coarse ones near the gate, it being your father's turn to close in the gate, to which he had to travel barefoot through the strewn whins. This he calmly did, and when withdrawing, his neighbour, who watched a time to sin, seized the opportunity, and suddenly shoved Mr Brown headlong into the midst of the parcel of coarse whins; he rose with his face, hands, and legs bleeding, and now when Henry expected he would be provoked to flyte or fight, all he said was 'O Henry whatfore do ye that on the Lord's night? I would have been loth to do that to you.' Henry stood astonished at his meekness, his conscience smote him, he abhorred himself upon comparing his conduct with the calm deportment of his companion whom he had so wantonly abused. He found no rest in his mind until Mr Brown showed himself reconciled to him, and from that evening it was Henry's study to oblige and obey him. A short time before Henry's death he acknowledged to my informers that he was unexpressedly obliged to Mr Brown for much useful knowledge, and for exciting him to be earnest in duty. He would have said at bed time—'Henry did ye go about prayer this night?' 'Yes.' 'When was it?' 'Such a time.' 'O

you was short, Henry, you must have little to seek at a Throne of Grace. O Henry if you but saw your many needs, and the many mercies God is ready to give you for the asking, you would not be so soon through.' Among other favours conferred by Henry on his companion, whom he now greatly venerated, one must not pass unnoticed. He engaged to let out and fold Mr Brown's flock, and tend them until he made a journey to St. Andrews in order to purchase a Greek Testament, for by this time he had acquired considerable skill in the Latin tongue, and could read Greek, though not so as to translate it. In all this he was his own preceptor, except sometimes he would run at mid-day to the Rev. Mr Moncreif, in Abernethy, or to the Rev. Mr Johnstone, Arngask, about three or four miles, who gave him information as to what nonplussed him. This last gentleman (father to Dr. Johnstone, Leith), was very communicative and obliging to Mr Brown. Mr Moncreif for a time was equally so, and would have set him a task which he thought would employ him sufficiently for some days to come, but it occurred that Mr Brown in a short time before he was long withdrawn, would have returned in an hour or less, able to satisfy Mr Moncreif as to all that was imposed on him from his astonishing display of abilities. Some foolish people about Mr Moncreif took occasion to say that he surely got his knowledge from the devil. But to return. Mr Brown, confiding in Henry's kind offices, one evening folds his fleecy charge, sets out on his journey of twenty-four miles in the night, and reached St. Andrews next morning. At length he discovers a bookseller's shop, he enters, and

calls for his much esteemed book. The gentleman of the shop surveyed his appearance, his youth, his rustic look and dress, his ragged appearance, and without stockings or shoes, says, 'What would *you* do with that book?' 'I would have it.' "'Tis vain for you to buy that book, you'll no can read it.' 'I'll try to read it.' In the course of this conversation some gentlemen entered the shop (said to be some of the professors of the college), who, while the bookseller was serving some customers, questioned Mr Brown as to his employment, residence, and teacher, found he had never been at school. They requested the bookseller to find the book for the boy. He went and brought it, and throwing it down on the table said, 'Boy if you can read that book you shall have it for nothing.' Mr Brown caught it greedily, and began to read. The gentlemen present approved of his essay in reading Greek, and the generous bookseller made a present of the Greek Testament to Mr Brown, who without delay retraced his steps, and arrived in time to liberate his flock from the fold in the afternoon."

Of the story of the gift obtained of a Greek New Testament there are sundry versions, some of them manifestly incorrect, and many of them showing evidence of colouring, and more than colouring, from a ready fancy, if not a desire to tell an effective tale. Of the facts of the case I know nothing beyond what has been stated. I have been in the shop in St. Andrews in which the incident is said to have occurred. To the mention of this I attach no importance beyond that

of its being a contribution towards giving a realistic effect to the narrative.

In Bruce's *Juvenile Anecdotes* it is stated :—" About twenty years after this, a well-dressed man came up to the same bookseller, who, as formerly, was walking before his door, but with a wig and staff, saying—" Sir, I believe I am your debtor.' The bookseller said, ' I do not know ; but step in and any of the young men will tell you.' ' But,' replied he, ' it is to you personally that I am indebted.' Looking in his face, he said, ' Sir, I do not know that you owe me anything.' ' Yes, I certainly do. Do you recollect that about twenty years ago a poor boy came and got a Greek Testament from you, and did not pay for it?' ' Yes, perfectly,' replied the bookseller ; ' I have often thought of it, and the boy was no sooner gone than I was angry with myself for not asking his name and where he resided.' ' I,' replied the clergyman, ' was the boy ; my name is Brown, and I live at Haddington.' Upon which, looking again in his face, and giving him his hand, he said, ' Mr Brown, I am glad to see you ; I have often heard of you. We have here in our shop, as they have in every University library in the kingdom, your " Self-Interpreting Bible," your *Church History*, &c., which have brought me as much money, and are more called for, than any books in my shop. Will you be so obliging as to dine with me?' This was done, and a lasting friendship contracted, while they discoursed of the days of former years."

The ardour of spiritual affection, consequent on conversion to God, seems to have afterwards cooled down

somewhat, and under a severe attack of fever, in the nineteenth year of his age, he bitterly repented his spiritual declension; and under a discourse from the words, "There are some of you that believe not," John vi. 64, which he heard after his recovery, he was strongly disposed to look upon all that he had experienced as self-delusion, when happily a discourse on the following day, by the Rev. Adam Gibb, from Isaiah liii. 4, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," restored to him the joys of salvation, and for more than a year he went on his way rejoicing. But why not give the statement in his own words? In continuation of what has been quoted he goes on to say:—

"At length, after a multitude of ups and downs, glowings of affections, and sad coolings, I, after a sore fever in 1741, which somewhat awakened my concern about eternal salvation, was providentially determined, during the noontide, while the sheep which I herded rested themselves in the fold, to go and hear a sermon, at the distance of two miles, running both to and from it. The second or third sermon which I heard in this manner (and I had no other opportunity of hearing the greater part of the year) being preached on John vi. 64, 'There are some of you that believe not,' by one I both before and afterwards reckoned a most general preacher, pierced my conscience as if almost every sentence had been directed to none but me, and made me conclude myself one of the greatest unbelievers in the world. This sermon threw my soul into no small agony and concern, and made me look on all my former experiences as nothing but common operations of the Spirit;

and in this manner I viewed them for many years afterwards ; and often in my sermons, after I was a preacher, I described the lengths which common operations might go upon this footing. But at last I began to doubt that I had been too rash in throwing aside all my former experiences as having nothing of the really gracious in them. And I saw that it was improper for a preacher to make his own experiences, either of one kind or another, any thing like the discriminating standard of his conceptions or declarations on these delicate subjects.

“ On the morrow after, I heard a sermon on Isaiah liii. 4, ‘ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows,’ which enlightened and melted my soul in a manner I had not formerly experienced ; and I was made as a poor lost sinner, the chief of sinners, to essay appropriating the Lord Jesus as having done all for me, and as wholly made over to me in the Gospel, as the free gift of God and my all-sufficient Saviour,—answerable to all my folly, ignorance, guilt, filthiness, wants, slavery, and misery. This sermon had the most powerfully pleasant influence on my soul of any that I ever heard.

“ By a sermon on Isaiah xlv. 24, ‘ Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength,’ my soul was also remarkably affected and drawn to the Lord. By means of these and other ordinances, the sweetness which I had felt about 1735 was not only remarkably returned to me, but I had far clearer views of the freedom of God’s grace, and of the exercise of taking hold of and pleading the gracious promises of the Gospel.”

To this period of his life have been attributed two of the papers preserved in his *Select Remains*, which has been referred to, entitled respectively: *Reflections of a Soul Shut up to the Faith*; and *Reflections of a Christian upon his Spiritual Elevations and Depressions*.

V.

HE seems always to have looked upon that year as the happiest in his life; but there followed four years of severe affliction occasioned by the clamour raised against him to the effect that he had acquired all his learning through Satanic agency. He goes on to say in his autobiographic sketch:—

“ I had not lived much above a year after, amidst many delightful breathings of God’s Spirit, intermingled with fears, temptations, and prevalencies of inward follies and corruptions together, when I was exercised with a new and sharp trial, especially on the account of the piety and influence of some that promoted it.

“ By means of my anxious pursuit of learning, as I could get any opportunity, I had, by the Lord’s assistance, acquired some knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, and was beginning to purpose to use it in the service of Christ, if he should open a regular door. My learning of these languages without a master, except for one month, occasioned some talk of me, and some small connection between some Seceding students and me, some of whom proved my stedfast friends, while others took a very different course. Having no knowledge of polite manners, being never more than a bashful herd boy, I did not know the danger of saying the truth. Accordingly, I was simply drawn into imparting to an intimate friend a hint which was thought not so honourable to one of the students, though I meant nothing but a simple declaration of

truth, in answer to the question put to me by my friend. This was represented by the student as false; my words were misrepresented, as if they had borne that I was as, if not more, learned than he; and to crown my afflictions, it was represented by him and his defenders that I had certainly got my learning from Satan.

“As scarcely any person had ever appeared noted for the knowledge of languages, but such as had learned at least some of them by their own mere industry, it manifested either strong prejudice or great ignorance of what had passed in the learned world, to put this construction upon what my hard labour, by the blessing of God, had acquired to me. It was, however, thought necessary by the managers of it to hunt me down with this malevolent reproach. Nor did they spare to invent or hand about many more fictions of their own, in order to make it gain credit.”

In connection with this statement the following letter was addressed by him to the minister of the congregation of which he was a member, in reference to the charges which had occasioned to him such distress. There were apparently three several sins in connection with the affair of which he was charged or suspected: falsehood, hypocrisy, and compact with the devil. He meets each of them without shrinking, and does so manifest feeling that by each a wrong was done wrong aggravated by the form given to the situation, and further aggravated by the the ecclesiastical court before which they

had been brought were dealing with the matter, shirking the responsibility of giving to him a formal open trial and a judicial decision, whereby he suffered in reputation, in the prosecution of what was now his life purpose, and in his temporal interests—desiring as he did to leave the locality, but being unable to do so satisfactorily while there was suspended over him the charge that he had acquired his learning through direct assistance from the devil in accordance with a compact between them. This was the charge to which the others were but accessaries, which, if established, would tend to confirm this, but if disproved would still leave the principal charge unaffected.

It is this consideration which gives its true significance and importance to what may appear to be an unnecessarily prolix and tautological defence of the truthfulness of statements which may seem of comparatively little importance, and his maintenance that he did pray to God, and was a worshipper of the Most High, which no one in formal compact with Satan would be and do.

In perusing this it may be well that the reader bear in mind that while the biographic sketch, from which quotations have been given, was written not long before his death, after considerable experience in the use of the pen, this was written while he was but a young man, almost entirely self-educated, and who had been more engaged in the study of ancient languages than in acquiring a ready use of his own.

I find it interesting as a record by himself of what he did; and of what he had to do in vindication of himself

ere he was able to attain to the position which he did ; and illustrative of psychological phenomena somewhat exceptional in their character ; on like grounds it may prove, notwithstanding its length, interesting to others.

The interlocutors in conversations cited in this letter are marked Y., R., H., &c. Having found this confuse some readers, I have authorised their being printed You, Roby, Henry, &c. Others are explained in an original footnote. All the footnotes, excepting those subscribed with my initials, are original. The following is a glossary of Scottish words made use of :—

Syne—at that time ; speir, or spier—ask ; speiring, or spiering—asking for information ; tell'd—told ; snaper—harmless misdemeanour ; fell way of snappering—a pretty considerable snappering ; mind—recollect ; Caml—Campbell ; chield—lad, or fellow ; admitted—permitted or sanctioned ; acceded—obtained ; widd—bet or wager ; ken—know ; Castel Law—Castle Law ; occasion of conference—opportunity of conversation ; bees—such as ; clatters—idle talk more or less defamatory ; count—account or statement ; testificate—certificate ; bleatness—becoming humility ; just now—still ; cognisance—investigation ; gar'd—compelled.

“ REV. SIR,—Although God has justly punisht me very sore for my exceeding great *unbelief*,* pride, perjury, &c., by specially carrying as an enemy himself, yet at the same time he has let loose men and devils against me, as instruments in pleading his just quarrel.

* These sins I visibly observe written on the judgments.

But among all other things the misunderstanding that is betwixt you and me is not the least part of the trial ; therefore I humbly wish you would give me leave to * inform you of the falsity of some stories which causes this misunderstanding ; and also to tell you wherein you have wronged me in some things, as also wherein I have wronged you. The story runs thus :—

“Somebody having (as I hear in a private unsubscribed letter) exceedingly defamed me—December 7th, I think. When I spoke to you, December 16th, the conversation was to this purpose—You. ‘Got ye a book from Roby Millar?’ I. ‘Yes, *Quintus Curtius*.’ You. ‘What was he doing when ye took it home?’ I. ‘Bigging his father’s wain.’ You. ‘Did you say to him that you could read it all?’ I. ‘No, I said, when he said, Can you read it all? Nay, for there are many sentences I cannot construct, and I mind of four or five words that I ken not the English of at all.’ You. ‘Did you speir these words at him?’ I. ‘I tell’d him them over that he might tell me their English.’ You. ‘Did he do it syne?’ I. ‘No. After this.’ You. ‘Do you pray evening and and morning?’ I. ‘Yes.’ You. ‘*When* † began ye to do so?’ I. ‡ ‘About seven or eight years since.’ You. ‘What put you first to it?’ I. ‘My father, when I was a little chield, gar’d me do it, but I often slighted

* As false information has begun the matter, so true information may end it, as a mean.

† If it was not this, it was How long have ye done so? But I am pretty sure it was the other, viz., When began ye to do so?

‡ The reason why I stretched this assertion to its direct bounds was 1st, that I might directly answer you ; 2nd, that I might put a stop to that slander of my prayerlessness.

it.' You. 'But did you never neglect these seven or eight years?' I. * 'Not that I mind of, but for the most part I did it at the fold when I let out and put in my sheep.' These answers concerning this last you look on as both proud and false; and in order to discover its fallacy John Ogilvie was brought, who when asked anent it, said, I cannot say I found him a person under the exercise of grace. But as it was impossible for him to know perfectly anent whether I did it or no, so his answer neither asserts nor contradicts;† and as for the pride of it, as I do not trust that ever I did an action all my days without pride at the highest rate before God, so really I do not see wherein my pride in the sight of men appears, seeing I know not of either its falsehood or its unnecessary at that time in order to vindicate myself; but if you will, you shall hear the sum of the whole story. My father having forced me to pray alone, when I was little, I, as oft as occasion served, neglected it, for which I had some disquiet of mind by Psalms ix. 17, and by Vincent *On Judgment*, and Alleine's *Alarm*. So after a formal slight using of Alleine's directions for conversion I dedicated myself to the Lord in solemn vow, as Alleine directs (summer 1735 or 1736, viz., the last, or last except one I was with John Ogilvie, for I went from him Nov., 1736),

* Nothing is requisite to the truth of this, but that I minded not at that instant of any neglect, viz., total.

† He does not say he was not a person under the exercise of prayer, but I add further—1st, God has commanded us to pray as well out of men's sight as possible; 2nd, It is possible for one in the station I was in to observe it daily, without the notice of any.

particularly I vowed to pray six times when I was herding, and thrice when I was not herding, in the day,* so I continued to do this ; and if I was deficient one day I made amends the next. If I fell into any known sin I prayed for forgiveness, and so was well ; all movings of the affections I took for special enjoyings of God, and now thought myself sure of heaven, if I was not a hypocrite ; to avoid which deceit I kept the whole of my religion as hid as I could, especially prayer, and to that end prayed almost ay in the field, where, if I was not pretty sure nobody was near, I was exceeding low of voice, and, lest my head being bare, might discover it, I cast my blanket over it, or else laid an open book before me so that they might think I was reading, and so made myself, in my conceit, as sure of heaven as possible. In this way of doing I continued from that time till June, 1740, or else 1741, at least, if not till now ; still putting my fashion religion in Christ's room, setting up my formal prayers, &c., for my Saviour, yea for my God.

“ Anent the other story it happened thus—December

* His son, Dr. William Brown, suggests that the cause of this difference may have been unlimited opportunities of praying in secret while herding, and difficulty in securing privacy when otherwise employed in work on the farm. He says :—

“The distinction which he made as to the number of times he prayed when he was herding and when he was not herding, arose, no doubt, out of the circumstance that in the latter case it was scarcely possible for one in the station he was in, engaging in prayer without being observed by others,—in other words, that he had less opportunity for prayer in the one than in the other.”—J. C. B.

18th, 1742—when I was before the elders.* You said, ‘You said you speired these four or five words at Roby Millar?’ Said I. ‘I only tell’d him them that he might tell me their English.’ You. ‘But Henry Ferney says you said to them you speired them.’ I. ‘I don’t think it, but if I said † speired it was a snaper.’ You. ‘That was a fell way of snapping.’ I. ‘It was much about one meaning, for I tell’d him them in a speiring ‡ way.’ You. ‘You use fell equivocating.’ I. ‘Henry Ferney said, I’ll tell you just the way, § as far as I mind, he said he let Roby Millar see these words.’ You. ‘Roby, did he speir these words at you?’ R. said ‘No.’ I. said ‘I am not saying speired; Roby did not I tell you over these words?’ R. || ‘You told me no such words.’ I. ‘Well Roby, I appeal to your brother and to your conscience to the contrary.’ R. ¶ ‘If so I did not hear you.’ I. ** ‘I do not ken whether you heard or no; but am sure I told you them.’

* It was no session, and so we have never been judged.

† In what form speired or tell’d were said the narration will show. Now, because I was not as sure as could be, I yielded so far.

‡ For, 1st, he could not be ignorant that I desired to know them, else why did I read at the book. 2nd, It was clear that I desired him to tell me them since I rehearsed them in his probable hearing, and told him I knew them not. Now is not the intimation of one’s desire that such a person should tell him such a thing, equivalent to a speiring?

§ From these we observe that Henry Ferney was at the utmost uncertainty about what he said.

|| This is a direct assertion.

¶ This is a concession. Now a concession from a direct assertion is a confession judicially.

** At the instant I knew not, not having called it to my mind.

“ You alleged that it was pride to say I knew all *Curtis* but five words, or to say Roby Millar did not tell me their English, and that it was as much as to say Roby knew them not. To answer which I shall narrate the whole story, and it runs thus :—I. said ‘ Roby have there your book.’ Roby said ‘ Have you got a story out of *Quintus Curtis*?’ I. ‘ Yes.’ R. ‘ Can you read it all?’ I. ‘ No, for there are many sentences which I could not construct, and I mind of four or five words I know not their English at all.’ I mind not whether he speired what they were or no, but however I repeated them — *Crudus, Arma, Maxæ, Diaë, and Calæ* ; at which time I affirm there was no natural impediment of his hearing. However he told me not their English. Now I using whiles to read over a story of it to John and Henry Ferney, they missing this, said ‘ Where is your book?’ I. ‘ Home.’ They. ‘ Could you read it all?’ I. ‘ No, for besides places which I cannot lay together, I mind * of four or five words which I know not the meaning of at all.’ They. † ‘ You should have speired them at him.’ I. ‘ So I did, or so I did tell him them.’ They. ‘ Did he tell you their English?’ I. † ‘ No.’ They. ‘ It may be that he could not.’ I. § ‘ I know not whether he could or not, but he did not.’

“ At this meeting also you said to me, ‘ Did you say I

* Now this is far from I know it all but five words, for one may mind but of one when there are a hundred.

† This is the form I spake it in by question and answer.

‡ Therefore I could not well eschew saying as I did, seeing this was asked.

§ This is a sufficient testimony anent his ability, &c.

can read all Ovid but five words.' I. 'No.' You. 'Alexander Blyth, said he it not to you?' Alexander said, 'I cannot be positive, but I think he said so.' I. 'I said never such a word,' he answered * not a word. 'You said to me, Said ye ever that for † as good a master Mr Caml is, some of his scholars are not very good?' I. 'No.' Y. 'Henry Ferney, heard ye ever such a tale about the hills?' Henry. 'No.' On the whole you concluded me to be proud with a witness, and said you thought it not fit such a proud chield should be a student.

"Some days after I desired conference to inform you more fully of these stories. You refused, May, 1733, I think Notwithstanding you knew of all this, you admitted me to ‡ accede an attestation from Andrew Ferney; but June in the beginning, I coming to speak with you before Stirling Communion, said you, 'I'll have nothing to do with you,§ because you dissembled to me.' I. 'I dissembled not to you.' You. 'Did not the lad say so?' || I. 'Did not I say the contrary?' You. 'Well, I shall consider it the first week-day's session; and so you may wait on.' You. 'You said to

* This is a sign of concession.

† And what though I had said this, for a good master may have bad scholars.

‡ Here you publicly owned me yourself to be in no scandal, and to this day you continue owing as much, by admitting these of the Society of Deacons, &c.

§ Here begins a suspension, which I do not look on as unjust, but by Mr Millar his admission to the Lord's Table, July 3rd, it appears to be a formal punishment as you know.

|| This is all your proof, which is very uncertain.

Alex. Blyth you knew all Ovid but five words.' I. 'Alex. Blyth would not say so; and I'm sure I did it not.' You. 'John Macarsy heard you say so.' I. 'Let John Macarsy come, I'll widd he shall not say it before my face.' * He was not brought. You. 'What was you doing when you was up in some hill?' I. 'What hill?' You. 'I ken not, some hill.' I. 'The way of that story is that I was in the Castel Law four nights on end, when I was with John Ogilvie, doing nobody knew what; but said I it is a lie, for I was never in the Castel Law † one night. I indeed watched my sheep some nights at the foot thereof, seeing it was my duty. ‡

"So the first week-day's session was June 28th, which day I in some measure attended on the session, but was never called in. That day I took occasion of some conferences, as 1st, with Mr Millar. I said 'As I would end the matter as peaceably as possible, so I offer if you'll go to the session and say, *It may be* I told you these words, to seek no more.' R. 'There is no matter betwixt you and me, § all the matter is betwixt you and H. Ferney.' I. 'You said, I told you not these words.' R. 'I said not you did not tell me them, for you might tell me them and me not hear you, &c.' 2nd, With Mr Macarsy. I. 'The minister says you heard me say to Mr Blyth, I knew all Ovid

* For he had never heard me speak ought to Mr Blyth.

† And what tho' I had, one may be better employed in a hill than in his bed.

‡ To keep my sheep in the fold.

§ By these he did as well as yield all that I affirmed; and I solemnly appeal to God as my witness that he did say so at Jean Sim's office house side June 28th, 1743.

but five words, and you know you never heard me speak anything to Mr Blyth bees that.' Mc.* 'I heard you never say it to Mr Blyth.' I. Well, will you but tell Mr Moncreif you did not hear me say so? Mc.† 'I'll bear no such message to the minister.' 'I said I hear there was an unsubscribed letter sent to the minister, saying a deal of ill of me. Was it you who sent it, or know ye ought about it?' Mc.‡ 'I know nothing of it; and for my part as much as I have been blamed, I never said ought to your disadvantage.' I. 'I hear you would not let my letters be seen, but destroyed them.' Mc. 'I did it out of love to you, for had they been seen they would have done you more ill than all that yet has appeared, for they were clatters, and founded on clatters.' I. 'I doubt if the two last would have done me any ill, but as for the first, I own there were some wrong things in it.' Mc. 'They were full of wrath and malice, and also in a letter to Mr Archibald, you endeavoured to make us all black,'§

* Here he owns that he heard me not, nor could.

† This was no good sign of his love.

‡ Mc. signifies Mr Macarsy; R., Mr Millar; Y., Mr Moncreif or you; I, John Brown, or I said.

§ As this letter was an informatory one, so it was necessary I should mention the wrong on both hands; and I am pretty sure I spoke more on my wronging you than of you wronging me, in the letter; for all that I said, as far as I mind of you, was Equidem, &c., and Matheum Moncreiphum, me aliquo exprobrasse—or else, Audive quosdam, ex tuis discipulis me exprobrasse, for I wrote two and sent one of them, and so am not sure in which of them, former or latter expressions were. Now how does this show my endeavour to make them all black? N.B. Mr Wilson was never in the matter less or more.

I. 'There I said no more of you than that—*Equidem audiui Joan Maccartium in Strathmiglo me esse diabolice doctum dixisse.*' Mc. 'I do not mind of ever speaking of your name in Strathmiglo. As for your learning, I'm in a strait about it as well as far better learned men are.' I. 'You told me the contrary at Calfargie' (*viz.*, that he spake of me to John Lumsden and Andrew Ferney), but that is but a mistake of the memory, which is fallible. I answer if he had been in any strait he was willingly in it, else he would have sought information.

"Now as there are several stories anent my learning as that it is unprecedented— from the devil—that I learned in hills and dens, without a grammar, a master, &c. I shall endeavour to satisfy you in this matter. Now I think it is not from the deil on these accounts: because 1st, I am, as I solemnly appeal to the God of heaven as witness, in no compact with him, nor did he ever speak to me *viva voce*, nor yet learned he me ought (as far as I know) by enthusiastick impulse, in which if I lie, may God avenge it. 1. I sought it from God by beginning my lessons of times with prayer, as God is witness. 2. Its reasonableness further appears in that I had an occasional master, Mr Reid, from whom I got many lessons, and at him I speired all the unknown words I minded. Now if a fixed master can learn, an occasional one may do it too, tho' more slowly, for *majus et minus non variant speciem.* 2nd, It is well known that all arts use to arise from men's reason by learning. 3rd, Learned men, as Locke *On Education*, and Clarke in his

Introduction, tell us one may learn by industry, 'nay,' says Locke, 'one's mother might teach him the Latin tongue,' &c. As to grammar, it is the consent I suppose of all men, it is not absolutely necessary, seeing it is only a superstructure founded on language. Now a foundation may well exist without a superstructure, at least Lilly, Watt, and Clarke, and Locke, are of this opinion. As the great question is anent the Greek, which I learned some of afore I got a Greek grammar, it runs thus:—

"I learned the letters from Orth. Tab. Gram., marginal words in Ovid, and names in the New Testament; for reason told me that at least our unaccidented tongue could not much change names from what they were in the Greek; as (*e. g.*) 1. words authoritatively interpreted, as Eloi lama sabachthani, Tabitha cumi, Siloam, Corban, Golgotha, Gabbatha, Emmanuel, Cephas, Aceldama; for if these be changed in any language,—as for example, if Aceldama be made Acerdama, it would be false, for it would say,—1st. That the Jews called that place Acerdama. 2nd. That Acerdama, *Hebraicé*, signifies a field of blood. And so in the matter of all words of this kind. 2. Words authoritatively called alien, as Abaddon, Armageddon. 3. Proper, obsolete, inequivalented names, as *Hebraicé*, Cainan, Arphaxad, &c., Luke iii., *Græcé*, Olympas, Priscilla, &c. 4. Names changed in one place from what they were in another, as Noah, Gen. x. 1,—Noe, Luke iii. Now, both being alike to our English, the reason of their change is the Greek; and, therefore, must be in the Greek as in ours. Now, all the Greek letters may be found by comparing

Eloi lama sabachthani, Arphaxad, Capernaum, Sem,
 Ελωι λαμα σαβαχθανι, Αρφαξαδ, Καπερναουμ Σημ,
 Aceldama, Booz, Ragau, and Salmos.*

Ακελδαμα, Βοοζ, Ραγαν, Ψαλμος.

“ Now, to prove the powers to be what you conceive or not, look other words: as for example, I would be sure of β that it is equal to b ,—I look Αβρααμ , Αβιουδ , Αβια , Ωβηδ , in all which, if I have hit right on the power β by calling it b , then the second form in all these four words must be like it; but this is true; therefore the former. This way I used.

“ Another rule I also walked by which is, cast your eyes on what form you will, and fancy it to be what power you will; then compare it with other words having powers equivalent, and if they confirm it not, fancy it to be some other power, and so do till you find some words to confirm you in your fancy; and then you may take it for probable that you have really lighted on its power. And if it can be found to be no single letter, fancy it to be some double consonant, diphthong, or syllable; as for example, I cast mine eye on β . I fancy it to be a . I look *Aram*, *Asa*, *Josaphat*, *Græcé*. I see nothing like it there; and yet the power a is there; *ergo*, it is not a . And, by the by, I remark that the power of a is found *Anglicé* four times besides capitals, and it only is so often found; but the Greek form a is found alone so oft; *ergo*, the form a has the power of a English. Again, I fancy β to have the power of our d by com-

* It may be observed that the Greek character T is not included in this list, but this must have been the result of oversight.—J. C. B.

paring Αμιναδαβ , Ωβηδ , Αβιουδ , Ελιουδ ; I say the antepenult and ult letter in the other three is *d* English; therefore, the antepenult form in Aminadab and the other three *Græcè* must have the power of *d*, by the rule anent obsolete names; but this form is δ , not β ; and so β is not equal in power or sound to *d*. But observing such a form in Ωβηδ ,—now, the second power there is that of *b* English; therefore, I fancy it to be *b*, and by comparing it with Ζοροβαβελ , Ιακωβ , I found it proven to be *b*.

“ Thus one might go through all the forms. Now, I knew proper names from the places they are put in with us *Anglicè*, the initiating capitals, their repetitions, &c. As for the other ways I used, it would weary you to hear them; so I forbear at this time.

“ When I had, by these means, got myself into a probability that I had the letters, I came down and sounded them before Mr Reid, and when he did not approve of my way, I called them his way, viz., n, u, &c.

“ Now, the way I took to learn the sense was much the same, by comparing the Greek words with the words in our Testament, beginning at the shortest verses, as 1 Thess. v. 16, &c; and as I had observed many terminations with some of their oblique cases in Latin Greek rudiments, so as I went along I made it my study to notice verbal terminations, right and oblique, still allotting them to that person, time, mood, voice, &c., their English agreed to. All this while I never thought of its dual number, middle voice, &c., which the Latin has not. Also I noticed prepositions, adverbs, &c. As to construction, Ruddiman told me

(Rud., p. 98, I think) that the Rules he has not distinguished by an asterisk are natural; therefore, I concluded, used in Greek. Some others I noticed, as *Ακρω*, 68, &c. All this time I got lessons now and then from Mr Reid; then I got a grammar and rudiments, &c. If you would bid me, I should satisfy you better with eye demonstration of its reasonableness. As for Hebrew, I got a grammar one hundred and ten days before I saw another Hebrew book, and am far from so exact in any of them as they (*i.e.*, his maligners) report.

“As to my letters, the story runs thus: About November 10th, 1741, I had some conversation with Messrs W. and Mat. Moncriefs, and John Macarsy. They caused me to read some lines of Terence and Greek Testament, then asked if I had a Greek Grammar. I said, ‘No yet.’ W. said (I thought it had been in jest), ‘I’m sure the deil has told you some words.’ Mac. ‘You begin at the top and build down to the bottom.’ Nothing more remarkable was here said. About November 29th, when I came to Mr Blyth’s school, without any provocation, I got two counts from them, *viz.*, Messrs M. M. and A. B. At this time I got some hard language. They also gave a count, as I was informed, to Mr Reid, I suppose in mockery, which much enraged me; as also I heard it commonly that Mac. and Mr M. M. had and were endeavouring to spread it that it was not possible for me to learn so without diabolick influence, with which I being enraged, sent with the pretended answer to their count these railing words: *Audivi vos dixisse me diabolice doctum. Sed qui scitis? Queisque signis*

probatur? Expertine estis Diabolum bonum esse doctorem. Egone Diabolicus? Vosne Diaboli? Imo videtar ratio est. Mimalloneis vestra impli cornua bombis. Τῷ Ματθαίῳ Μονκρειφῷ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς με διαβολίζουσι

“No more that I can know to be offensive is in it. With these I sent them a count. Sometime after, by means of Amos iii. 6, ‘Can there be evil,’ &c., I came in some way to see God’s hand in the affliction, by means of which about June 15th, 1742, I sent them two letters, confessing the wrong I had done them, and begging forgiveness, intimating that I forgave them whatever they had done against me. These letters were, as I heard, sore misrepresented, but as God is my witness that thus the matter ran, I desire to rest careless, seeing he is judge, as I told them.

“But, to return. The consideration of my character being neglected, June 28th, I several times entreated you to do it, according to your promise. At length, in harvest, 1743, Providence seemed (upon condition I brought a testificate with me) to invite me to another place, but, by the unreasonable refusal of a testificate, I was stopt. Then (as for bleatness, I feared to complain *viva voce* to the session of this their unjust treatment) I sent two letters to them, which, excepting some circumstances, I just now approve. They nothing prevailed, therefore I twice came personally to them and pleaded a cognisance, July 9th, 1744. You, in their name, I think, before them, said: ‘John, if you will come to the next week-day session and insist, we shall consider or *think on* methods for considering not only

the affair betwixt Mr Millar and you, but your whole character.' Said I, 'But how shall I know when the session sits?' Said you, 'You'll get word some way.' But several week-day sessions after this were kept so close (why, I know not), that in spite of my utmost enquiry I could never know when they were till they were past.

"So, being again disappointed here, I came again to you (thinking it was just much as if I had gone to the session, seeing at the session you ay gave the answer) in December, 1744. I desired you to cognise my affair. Said you, 'I am not to fash my head about it; but if you go out of the parish you shall get a testificate.' Said I, 'You did not give me one when I sought it.' Said you, 'You was not going out of the parish.' Said I, 'But I know I was (and I appeal to All-seeing God, that I was firmly resolved to dwell out of this parish, as soon as I got a testificate, both now and then.)' Said you, 'John, you want to be a scholar, and I do not want that.' I said, 'That is not the present thing I want; I want to have my character as it should be.' Said you, 'I did not break your character.'

"Here I take occasion to answer—1. That though I should seek to be a scholar, that is no reason why I should be unjustly punished. 2. You say you do not want me to be a scholar. Why? Say you, 'His reason for it is but a fancy.' I answer, it may be so; but thus it is:—Considering of a particular calling, it was born in on my mind, that everybody should serve God in that calling his faculty is best for, and considering that my learning faculty was strongest, therefore I

concluded it was my duty to serve God in some learning station. I rejected it because I thought I was not able to carry on learning; but that word, 'The Lord will provide,' Gen. xxii. 8, about the same time, Isaiah xliii. 2, were born in on my mind, so I yielded to essay it. Further, as far as I can discover, this impulse brings with it a sense of insufficiency, and impels regularly, so that notwithstanding of irregular doors being opened, with invitations to enter in, yet hitherto the Lord has kept my feet from thus falling, which I look on as a token for God. I add that often I've laid the matter before the Lord, but could receive nothing like a prohibition. (Indeed, in 1743, March, I think, I was haunted with this: 'This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait any longer.' I observed that this impulse carried with it a deadening carelessness about religion, and so concluded it to be a diabolick impulse.) About the same time there was an impulse. 'Thy way to God commit. Him trust, it bring to pass shall He,' &c.* This I took as savouring more of the Holy Spirit. This is it wherein I fancied my call to be a scholar lay. So if you would indeed convince me that it is all fancy I should be glad, and should no more seek to be a scholar. 3. Your other reason why you want me not to be a scholar, is my want of means. To this I answer, if the Lord ever shall open a door for my entrance to be a scholar, I hope to be in no way burdensome to the Presbytery or you either. But, to return. June 1st, I went away out of this parish (leaving commission to

* Psalms, Metrical Version, —J. C. B.

John Laurie to get me a testificate) and travelled in East Lothian some time, accounting it my residence (for I have none but a nominal residence here), but took no house till I was quite away. So coming back for my testificate, I caused Mr Marshall write a common one, and came and bade you, by Janet Din, sign it. You refused. I by her bade you put what you would to it, and then sign it. You said 'I have nothing ado with it.' Here appears a right cruel procedure, for—First, your promise of a testificate was that which moved me to seek one. Second, This, in my view, was equal to the greater excommunication materially, for it implies a total casting me out of your care, and so you would have nothing to do with my testificate. Thus you have punished me these two years on suspicion with a material excommunication, the evil of which I showed in my letters, March, 1744, and January, I think, 1744, or December, 1743. I add, sixthly, thereby I am exposed to the fury of men and devils; as 1, to soldiers taking me, as being under *mala fama*; 2, to adherents tempting to apostacy, of which tempting they make this, your unjust treatment, their occasion; 3, to devils and mine own lusts tempting me to vent anger at you, &c., to desert the cause, because of the bad usage I met with in it. Under which trouble, as I have acted most sinfully by trespassing more and more against the Lord, so I have been guilty of hatred at you, which I have especially discovered in not using due pains to restrain you in this course of injustice, and also in telling this your treating of me, unwarily, where I should not; for which as I wish for forgiveness of God, so I wish you'll

forgive me it, humbly intimating that through the grace that is in Jesus, I desire to forgive you and all men whatever they have done or said against me, as I would desire to be forgiven of God. So I earnestly beg and intreat you would from this time forth do me justice by bringing my character to trial, and if you find me then guilty of scandal, punish me with some formal censure, which thing I resolve to seek from the session as soon as possible.

“All this letter I write in presence of Almighty God, who punishes liars, Rev. xxi. 8, xxii. 15, and leave it to the management of Providence, desiring you to use it as the Lord shall direct you. So, farewell, August 6th, 1745,

“Your weak lover,

“JOHN BROWN.

“Carpow.

“N.B.—Sometimes the sense (not the exact words) is only kept.

“J. B.”

VI.

I CONSIDER it proper to abstain from any expression of my own feelings on the perusal of this letter. But in regard to the matter of the charge which it rebuts, I remark that, though it may be what would only excite laughter now, it was not so at that time. Multitudes had been murdered, with or without the formalities of judicial forms, on the ground of such a charge, or of a bare suspicion, or it may be of a wanton allegation advanced in sport that the woman was a witch. It was only a few years before this, in 1735, that penal enactments in England and in Scotland had been repealed, as many then thought by an act of sin against God and our holy religion; and a writer on the subject of witchcraft in the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* says it "gave such offence to a respectable sect of Christians in Scotland, that in their annual confession of personal and national sins they complained against 'the penal statutes against witches having been repealed by Act of Parliament, *contrary to the express law of God.*'" An execution of a woman, on the allegation of her being a witch, had taken place so recently as 1722. This was the last case of this being done, but the new law was in advance of public opinion at the time.

It was as an ecclesiastical offence that the ecclesiastical court of the congregation took cognisance of the matter in private sittings, and without formal charge, virtually, as he states, excommunicated him by withholding from him a certificate of his being in fellowship with the

church, to which he was entitled, doing so on the allegation or suspicion that he had acquired his learning through a compact with the devil.

When surprised at such charges being made in connection with religion, we may find it quieting to remember that a similar charge was brought against Christ by the religionists of His time. They said He was possessed of a devil, and that it was through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, that He cast out devils.

In the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, article "Roger Bacon," it is stated:—"Roger Bacon, the greatest philosopher of the thirteenth century, was reported to be addicted to necromancy and the unholy 'communion of devils;' and so powerful were the secret intrigues of his enemies, that though the heads of the University of Oxford, with which he was connected, were friendly to his interest, it was deemed expedient, not only to prevent him from taking any share in the instruction of the youth, but even to condemn him to a rigorous confinement, aggravated by the harshest of privations, and uncheered by the offices of friendship."

In the same *Encyclopædia*, in article *Printing*, it is stated that the second edition of the Bible, printed in 1462, of which copies were sold in Paris by Faust as manuscript, was regarded by the Parisians as having been executed by magic, and it is still a popular belief that Faust sold himself to the devil in return for supernatural powers given to him. In Scotland we have as one of our historical characters, Michael Scott. In times nearer to our own, King James VI., in his treatise entitled *Daemonologie*, writes, "The fearful abounding at

this time in this country of these detestable slaues of the diuel, the witches or enchanter hath mooved mee (beloued reader) to dispatcgh in post this following treatise of mine, not in any wise (as I protest) to serue for a shew of my learning and ingine, but onely (moued of conscience) to preasse thereby so farre as I can to resoluē the dcubting hearts of many; both that such assaults of Satan are most certainly practised, and that the instruments thereof merits most seuerly to be punished." And the opinion prevails amongst people sufficiently acquainted with the history of the past to qualify them for forming a judgment entitled to the consideration of others, that some, and it may be not a few of our countrywomen, who have been reproached as witches, were intelligent, observant, and wise persons, excelling their neighbours in these characters, and apparently for this very reason accused of witchcraft.

It is often alleged that now-a-days it is only among the uneducated and the poor that the superstitious belief in the black art and witchcraft lingers. In view of this I may mention an incident, or rather two, in my own experience some fifty years ago; they are not unlike to what has been stated in the text, but with this difference in effect, attributable to differences in time and circumstances, that what was then a sore trial was at this time productive to the accused only of amusement and mirth.

In 1833 I went to St. Petersburg to minister to the British and American Congregational Church in that city. Finding the young people of the congregation devoid of any interesting subjects of conversation

beyond what related to balls and parties, for politics were a forbidden subject at that time in Russia, and no provision existed for the dissemination of information in regard to either domestic or foreign politics, I commenced a class for the discussion in conversation of selected passages of Scripture, with the understanding that the conversation, so long as it was in no respect frivolous, might wander away from the starting point, to which we might hark back as occasion might suggest. The conversation diverged so often into matters connected with physical science, which could scarcely be discussed in dialogue, that I proposed they should meet once a week, or once a fortnight, and I should give them what might be called popular lectures, with experimental illustrations of modern discoveries in physical science. They and others met with me in my own apartments for these conversational expositions. After some of these some illustrations of chemical discoveries were given, and one day a merchant in high standing, a member of the church, told me that at a large dinner party two old ladies, moving in the same circle, said to him with all seriousness, and in an inquisitive tone (English ladies be it marked!) "You must have got a strange kind of minister to the chapel; they say he puts a number of bottles on a table and you all kneel round them and pray to them."

But the matter did not stop here. I afterwards learned that some pious Germans in St. Petersburg, having heard of our doings, from these they drew conclusions akin to those of the accusers in the case under consideration. They said that I put a number of

wine glasses on the table and poured water into one of these and it was white, into another and it was blue, into another and it was red, and into another and it was green. This they considered could only be done by the black art. They said they had evidence otherwise that I was a child of grace, but a Christian should have no dealings with the devil, and they appealed to Pastor Neilson, afterwards Bishop Neilson, of the Moravian Church, to meet with me and deal with me on the matter. I knew this: day after day we met: he said nothing and I said nothing. At length I said, "Have not you something to say to me from some of our Christian friends?" "Oh yes!" said he, with a strong German pronunciation, "O yes! my brother; but I do not believe with them. But — but ——" "Well," said I, "Come to one of my meetings, and after that we shall discuss the matter," "No; no; no; there's no need." But I said "Yes; yes; yes; you must, and satisfy them." "Well I will;" and he came, and at the close of my conversational lecture he came, and taking both my hands in his said, "Thank you! thank you, my brother! I only wish I could have something similar for my young men," and not another word was heard about black art or dealings with the devil. But there it was; the same idea amongst Christian people more than a hundred years after this more formal ecclesiastical proceeding in Scotland.

The mode of learning the Greek and Hebrew letters followed by him is one well known to experts in decyphering documents written in cypher, and inscriptions

in unknown languages. A graphic and interesting description of the application of it is given in Edgar A. Poe's tale of the *Golden Beetle*. Whether the application of it to the discovery of the powers of letters unlike to those in use in these lands was altogether original, or only original in the adaptation made of it, I have no information. I presume it to have been the former. Mrs Mary Somerville appears to have had a clear perception of certain mathematical truths before she had seen a treatise on mathematics, or read a scientific demonstration of a mathematical proposition or scientific solution of a mathematical problem ; and in this we may have a similar case in another department of study.

And the case of the attainment of some knowledge of dead languages by self-instruction in such circumstances, as those which have been indicated, is not unique. While residing in St. Petersburg I was informed one day by a distinguished student of Rural Economy, Admiral Count Mordvinoff, with whom I had frequent communication and hearty co-operation in works of benevolence and usefulness—that there had come to town one of his serfs, whom he had instructed to call on me, and whom he hoped I might be able to assist, as he had a great desire to learn English, that he might read in the original Milton's *Paradise Lost*, having found a leaf of a translation of it, by which he had been greatly interested, and as he had, by unaided effort, acquired some knowledge of Latin, he desired and hoped to acquire such a knowledge of English as would serve his purpose. At an hour specified the man called on me, and with strange feeling I heard myself addressed

in Latin by a poor mujik, in sheepskin shooob, and otherwise presenting the common unkempt appearance of his class; and my surprise was followed by a feeling of humiliation before him when I found that while he could talk glibly, intelligently, and intelligibly, in that tongue, I could on the spur of the moment scarcely find a Latin word with which to reply, and what I did find I could not arrange to my own satisfaction. As conversation advanced fluently with him, haltingly with me, he explained to me his purpose, and said that if I would show him the book he would satisfy me that he knew a little, but very imperfectly, of the language. This was done, and with strange accent, he read *ov man-es fi-erst di-sob-ed-i-ence I sin-g*—and he proceeded to translate it word by word into Russ, as a little boy beginning the study of Latin translates this into English.

Without having heard of what in Britain has been called the Hamiltonian system of learning a language, in which the Gospel according to John, or some other suitable book, is printed in alternate lines, the words of the original with underneath each the words of the translation—by a use somewhat similar of an English copy of the book, and the torn leaf of the translation which he had found, had he acquired the little knowledge of English which he possessed.

Without the help of books printed for the purpose on the so-called Hamiltonian system, it must have been a slow and somewhat tedious process that an illiterate man could thus prosecute his studies. It seems improbable that in some such way the knowledge of which was attributed to Satanic agency was acquired; and it is not

out of keeping with the device by which he acquired his knowledge of the characters in which the Greek and the Hebrew Sacred Scriptures were written; and this may have been the stage he had reached when he went to St. Andrews to purchase a New Testament in Greek. Mention is made of reading—there is nothing said about translating.

It may seem premature to speak here of other languages subsequently studied by him, but I do so for a purpose which will immediately appear. By his son, Dr William Brown, it is mentioned, "he was a good Latin scholar. Of Greek, but especially of Hebrew, he possessed a critical knowledge. He could read and translate the French, Italian, Dutch, and German languages; and also the Arabic, Persic, Syriac, and Ethiopic." It is further mentioned "he gave attention to natural and moral philosophy, but his favourite reading was history and divinity, his knowledge of which is sufficiently testified by his writings. His acquaintance with the Bible was singular. Seldom was a text referred to but he could repeat it, explain its meaning, and point out its connection with the context. But, though somewhat of a universal scholar, he made no display of his learning. It would almost seem as if he studiously concealed it. It is, we think, a defect in some of his writings, particularly those which relate to matters of fact, that he so seldom refers to his authorities. This probably arose, in a great degree from a wish to avoid everything like exhibition or display."

In St. Petersburg I had occasional intercourse with

George Borrow, author of the *Bible in Spain*, and several volumes illustrative of the life and history of the Gypsies. He was then engaged in transcribing for the British and Foreign Bible Society a translation of the Scriptures into the Manchow language, which he subsequently carried through the press. He was master of a great many languages. I never heard how his knowledge of these had been acquired. But one day meeting with a Tartar, whose dialect was different from any with which he was acquainted, he took him home; talked with him; and in a very brief time seemed to do so not only in phraseology intelligible to the Tartar, but to talk to him fluently in his own dialect. It seemed to me that he quickly acquired some acquaintance with transmutations of vowels and consonants characteristic of the dialect in question, and consciously or unconsciously—apparently unconsciously—acquiring and applying the principles underlying the transmutations observed, a knowledge of the new dialect was acquired in a period of time so brief, that to others it was astonishing. In the absence of all information, there is room for conjecture that by some such perception of analogies the acquisition of the languages mentioned may have been facilitated. If it was otherwise, and only by patient persevering study, with help of dictionary and grammar, the knowledge of each was separately acquired, the more remarkable is the manifestation thereby given of persevering industry, the more remarkable that the study appears to have been undertaken and prosecuted less from interest in physiology than from a desire of acquiring additional

means of getting access to stores of information of which these languages were the keys.

More than one of his grandchildren have engaged in the study of dead and of foreign languages under the influence of utilitarian or sentimental impulses. One of his grandsons, the only son of his son Ebenezer, minister in Inverkeithing, besides engaging largely in the study of the origin and physiological relations of different languages, published a series of grammars of these, prepared on the principle of more or less perfect uniformity in rules and statements, variation being entirely or mainly confined to the illustrations introduced: the types first set being kept standing, but examples from different languages being substituted in succession for those given in the first printed. In view of what is now known in regard to heredity, it may be surmised that possibly this was a development of an inherited embryotic tendency.

VII.

PROBABLY in consequence of consequences of the clamour against him as one in compact with Satan, who had by hellish bargaining obtained all his learning, he again left the locality for a time--it may have been he lost his situation as a shepherd through the prejudice against him,—and began to travel the country as a pedlar or chapman. Of this part of his life it is narrated in the biographical letter addressed to his son at Whitburn, by a personal acquaintance of the humble student, already cited:—

“Some time after this Mr Brown turned his attention to merchandise, and became a travelling merchant. His journeys were confined mostly to the inland parts of Fife and Kinross shires. In this line he did not much succeed; it was only families he called at who were reported to him as religious, and given to reading, and upon finding any intelligent person to converse with, or new book to consult, his merchandise was no more minded. Half days and more were spent thus, and when evening approached he had sometimes miles to travel to his lodgings, as he had what we call in this country only *feft* places he choose to lodge at. One of these, in this neighbourhood, was David Young’s, in Balgedie. There, that sensible man told me, Mr Brown would have staed two or three days and gathered in all the books he could get his hands on about the town, which he could scarce be withdrawn from to take his meat. Mr Young was acquaint with him from his

infancy, and used great freedom with him, and often represented to him the propriety of attending to his merchandise, and not to spend his time in what at that time he thought did not so much concern him, but his remonstrances were all in vain, for, said Mr Young, he was fit for nothing else but for being a scholar; and when he was but a child his mother seemed to have some persuasion, or at least fondness, that he should. She would have said, 'O when will I see the craws fleeing ower my bairn's kirk?' But on his return to Mr Ireland's, of Urquhart, or to Mr Robert Low's, in Roundil, from his trading excursions, for these were his headquarters and his home, his stock of goods stood in much need of a proper arrangement, which he was very well pleased to see accomplished by some of the family. His articles were often so displaced that upon laying hold of the end of a ribbon or garter two or three buckles were brought up, and these clasped some hanks of thread, and so on. About this time he was dressed in a whitish coat, which, with carrying his pack, was worn out on both shoulders, and mended with cloth darker than the coat. At this period he, in company with Mr Ireland, of Urquhart, and a number of people from this corner, went to Stirling to attend on the dispensation of the Lord's Supper by Mr E. Erskine. Mr Brown sometimes joined one company on the road and sometimes another, but Mr Ireland discerned his friend, if before him, by the back of his coat. At Stirling they were lodged in some respectable house near the town, in whose hospitality a considerable number of worshippers from various quarters also shared.

Mr Brown sat down in the kitchen in company with the servants and herds of the family. After supper the household and guests were called into a parlour for worship. The gentleman of the house requested Mr Ireland to take the lead in divine service. He excused himself as being at that time much fatigued with the long journey, but reaching the Bible to Mr Brown said, 'Johnnie Brown you'll do this service for me,' to which Mr Brown yielded, and went through the service to the satisfaction of all the company. On the after days of the solemnity he was no more left in the kitchen but preferred to a seat at the head of the table, close by the master of the house, and every respect shown him to which these talents, which his rustic garb could not conceal, evidently entitled him."

One day while going his rounds he saw a host of Highlanders in the interest of Prince Charles advancing, and, dreading their reputed thieving propensities, he hid himself behind a cairn of stones which happened to be near, and there lay till they had passed; and deeming, with his co-religionists, that civil and religious liberties were being imperilled by the enterprise of the Prince, he concealed his wares in the heart of a peat stack and enlisted in a volunteer corps which was then being raised in Fife in defence of the existing Government. To quote again from the narrative which has just been cited:—

"Soon after the rebellion in the year 1745 broke out, all ranks of people were alarmed, trade was at a stand, some concealing their money, and others

secreted their clothes. Mr Brown's little business was brought to a low ebb, but, like many others of his acquaintance, he was zealous for the independence of his native country, and the preservation of both civil and religious liberty, both of which were exposed by the artifices of France and a Popish Pretender to the throne of Britain. He was induced to become a volunteer, and for this purpose he, with some others, resorted to the coast of Fife. As a necessary precaution in these times Mr Brown placed his collection of goods in the midst of a peat stack on the farm of Cameron, which by the family on that farm was judged most eligible to preserve them from all moisture, and would not be suspected by the banditti who patrolled the country. In the following spring he finished his military career and was dismissed soon after intelligence reached Fife that Prince Charles and his party were defeated at Culloden. Upon his return to Cameron, the stack of peats, which had been gradually removing for the use of the family, was greatly reduced, and on the very next day of his arrival they came to the pack which was perfectly safe, and all things in good condition."

His grandson, the Rev. John Brown Patterson, parish minister of Falkirk, writes:—"The pay which he received during his term of service went chiefly to the bookseller's shop, so that when his regiment was disbanded, after the extinction of the rebellion by the decisive battle of Culloden, he left his quarters in Edinburgh Castle with a sum in his pocket amounting to *three pence sterling*. This

sum carried him across the Queen's Ferry into the scenes of his former sojournings, and the vicinity of the peat stack which contained his stock-in-trade, and where he found it perfectly safe, and in good condition."

Of his feelings during this period, and the preceding period of distress, he writes :—" While for several years this calumny was carried on, and spread far and wide, I enjoyed remarkable mixtures of mercy with the affliction. In my very entry on it, that word, 'The Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer to the God of my life,' was peculiarly sweet to my soul. The members of the praying societies to which I belonged all continued my steady friends. Not one that I know of who knew me, as far as I discovered, appeared less, but rather more friendly to me than before, except such as were very nearly connected with the raisers or chief managers of the calumnious report. Nay, my acquaintance with the world being extended, many others, upon my first acquaintance, were remarkably sympathising and friendly.

"Meanwhile, the Lord, by powerful and pleasant impressions of his Word on my heart, particularly at sacramental occasions at Dunfermline, Burntisland, Falkirk, and Glasgow, marvellously refreshed my soul, and made these years perhaps the most pleasant that ever I had, or will have on earth. Discourses on these texts,—Hebrews x. 37, Ezekiel xxxvii. 12, Psalm xci. 2,

and a Meditation on Psalm v. 7, were particularly ravishing.*

“Meanwhile, I was led out to ponder my own heart and way, and made to see myself as bad before God as a devil, and much worse. This I took God to be calling me to by the reproach. These things made me not a little content with my lot, and kept me from labouring to expose my reproachers, or even to defend myself, unless when I thought I had a plain call. And I then, and ever since have, found that the Lord most clearly delivered me and vindicated me, when I made least carnal struggling, but laboured to bear his indignation as quietly as I could. The sting I had found in my learning which I had so eagerly hunted after, tended to keep me humble under what I had attained, or afterwards attained. The reproach which I myself had met with, tended to render me less credulous of what I heard charged on others. On these and other accounts, I have since looked on that sharp affliction as one of God’s most kind providences to my soul.

“During these trials I had my own share of solicitations to desert the Secession, in which I was so ill used by some of the chief managers. But as I had not taken that side from regard to men, the Lord enabled me to take no offence at his cause, because of their maltreatment of me.

“Micah vii. 7-10 had been not a little impressed on my mind under my sore trial of about five years’

* “To some of these sweet transactions I allude in my ‘Christian Journal of a Spring, Winter, and Sabbath Day.’”

continuance ; and the Lord, by a connection of providences, gradually opened a way for my getting some regular instruction in philosophy and divinity, and I was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1750 ; and I could not but be affected that about the same time, if not the very same night, my primary calumniator, and whose part had been so earnestly maintained in opposition to me, was, after he had been several years a preacher, and a zealous preacher in appearance, necessarily excommunicated by his supporters as guilty of repeated acts, or attempts at acts, of uncleanness, even with married women. ‘Behold,’ O my soul, ‘the goodness and severity of God, towards him severity, and towards me’—who was perhaps ten thousand times worse before His all-seeing eye—‘goodness.’ Let me never be ‘high-minded, but fear.’ ”

Such was the case with a Robert Millar who studied and applied for license to preach the Gospel ; and I presume this was the Robert Millar of whom mention is made in his letter of defence against the charge of having got his learning from the devil.

VIII.

THE reference made by him to the Secession, and to endeavours made to induce him to rejoin the Established Church of Scotland, may call for some explanatory statement.

On grounds which to them seemed sufficient, four ministers—Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alex. Moncrieff, and James Fisher, seceded from the National Church in 1733. The following is a list of the grievances which drove them to do so: "The sufferance of error without adequate censure; the infringement of the rights of Christian people in the choice and settlement of ministers under the law of patronage; the neglect or relaxation of discipline; the restraint of ministerial freedom in opposing maladministration, and the refusal of the prevailing party to be restrained." Their seceding in these circumstances still commands the approval of a large section of the Scottish people. He connected himself with the Secession, and a hope of being able some day to enter the ministry of that church had considerable influence in prompting and sustaining him in entering upon and prosecuting the study of the Latin and Greek languages.

In this purpose he was baffled for five years at least by the clamour raised to his prejudice that his learning had been procured by Satanic agency. But at length the way opened up for him to prosecute his purpose with hope of ultimate success. This occurred through

a breach taking place in the Secession, arising out of existing differences of opinion on points of some importance in regard to authority claimed by and granted to the civil government to interfere with ecclesiastical arrangements, and in regard to practical matters resulting from this.

The immediate occasion of the breach, which occurred in 1747, was the terms of an oath required to be taken by burgesses of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth, but only in these towns, the import of which oath was understood differently by different persons, whence arose a difference of opinion in regard to the conduct of members of the church who might take that oath, and in regard to the ecclesiastical treatment to be exercised towards them.

Of a difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas in regard to the expediency of a measure proposed by the latter, the Son of Consolation, we read that the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder, the one from the other; so was it here, and that with the result mentioned.

The clause in question ran thus: "Here I protest before God and your lordships that I protest and allow with my heart the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorised by the laws thereof. I shall abide thereat and defend the same to my life's end; renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry." By one party it was alleged that by the true religion presently professed in this land was meant Protestantism, in contradistinction to what was then called Papistry; by the other it was alleged that it referred

to Protestantism as that was authorised by the laws of the realm. The latter said they could not make such a declaration, nor would they hold fellowship with any who did, and these broke off from their brethren who differed from them on the point in question. I have always understood from my father that his father said he would not have taken so equivocal an oath, but that he had no objection to ecclesiastical fellowship with others who might be required to do so, and could do so without violence to their conscience. At the breach he accordingly adhered to the first mentioned body; and as those ministers who had latterly been opposed to him on the alleged grounds referred to in his letter of defence took the other view, and formed themselves into a separate church the way was opened up for his prosecuting his purpose to qualify himself for the ministry of the church.

IX.

ON the way opening up for him to resume hope of being called of God to minister in his church by preaching the Gospel, and taking the pastoral oversight of souls, he forthwith resumed the preparation of himself for such service with this in view. He engaged in teaching a school at Gairney Bridge, near Kinross, whence he afterwards removed to the Spittal, a village near Penicuik, where he was similarly engaged, and he thus enjoyed an opportunity of studying philosophy and theology, studying first under the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine of Stirling, and afterwards under the Rev. James Fisher of Glasgow, two of the founders of the Secession Church, both of whom adhered to the section with which he had connected himself, "The Associate Synod," and generally known as the Burgers, in contradistinction to the Antiburghers, who took the designation "The General Associate Synod." In a paper entitled "Reflections of a Candidate for the Ministerial Charge," published in the *Select Remains*, we have apparently a review of his spiritual feelings at that time.

Of his life at this time his biographer, in the letter addressed to his eldest son, the minister in Whitburn, writes:—

"Soon after this he was advised to open the school at Gairney Bridge, where he taught with great success and much acceptance. He was accustomed on Saturdays seriously to address his scholars. His discourses on these occasions were very warm and pathetic. The late Mr Adam Low of Braclay informed me that for his part he was

often, by Mr Brown's rousing lectures, terrified from sin, and so strongly convinced of its evil that it cost him many nights want of sleep until he got clearer views than he thus had of the way of salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ. During his residence at Gairney Bridge he was a member of the church at Kinross, which at that time had a call made out for Mr John Swanson to be their minister. Mr Brown was appointed, with others, to prosecute the call, and went in company with some other members to attend a Presbytery at Falkirk or Stirling. He was at that meeting introduced to some clergymen with whom he afterwards lived in terms of the dearest friendship, but at that time to them all he was an absolute stranger.

"My informant told me that he was inquired of by one of the ministers—the late Mr Shirra—who this was, pointing to Mr Brown; it was answered jocularly 'Do you not know the man that got his learning from the devil?' alluding to the infamous and foolish calumny that was raised against him some years before at Abernethy. 'I warrant you he's a dungeon * then', replied Mr Shirra."

"I only add that it is worthy of observation that within fifteen years after this our poet, Michael Bruce, became teacher at Gairney Bridge, a school which had its formation from Mr Brown, and that he himself succeeded to the Divinity chair in about twenty years, vacant by the death of Mr Swanston, whose ordination he was now soliciting."

* A dungeon of wit or knowledge, and having a profound intellect.
J. C. B.

X.

SHORTLY after being licensed to preach the Gospel, he was called by two congregations to become their minister—that of Stow, in Mid-Lothian, and that of Haddington, the county town of East Lothian, where the minister, Mr Archibald, along with several members, had joined the other party, and separating themselves from them formed another congregation in the place.

The Presbytery left it to himself to decide to which he would go. "His choice was determined to Haddington," says his grandson, minister of Falkirk, "partly by feelings of sympathy with that congregation for disappointments it had already experienced, and partly by his modest estimate of his own qualifications, to which he felt the smaller of the two charges to be more suitable." When afterwards Professor, he wrote to his students encouraging them to follow the call of God, however small might be the congregation to which they should be called; telling them that on the great day of account they would find any congregation large enough for the responsibility in which the charge of it had involved them.*

* The following extract from a letter which he addressed to the Rev. Alexander Waugh, who had been lately settled over a small congregation in the village of Newtown, Roxburghshire, and who was afterwards translated to London, will show with what plainness and fidelity he wrote to them:—"I know the vanity of your heart, that you will feel mortified that your congregation is very small in comparison of those of your brethren around you; but assure your-

There are legends of incidents connected with his settlement still floating about Haddington: amongst others, it is said of one old woman of advanced Christian experience, a member of the congregation, that being asked which of the preachers who had ministered amongst them the words of life she thought most highly of, she, referring to him, said: "Oh! the lad wi' the tattit head, for there's a sweet savour o' Christ about him." *Tatty*, *tattit*, and *tattid*, are Scottish words, the synonyms of *matted* in English, and the root of which is preserved in the Icelandic word *taatta* applied to the teasing of wool. This speaks his personal appearance at that time.

There is another legend to the effect that there was a member of the congregation who refused to sign the call given to him by the congregation; and meeting the young minister some time after his ordination he said to him that his reason for refusing to sign the call was that he did not consider him qualified to take the charge of the congregation. To which he is said to have replied: "There you and I are of one mind; but both the congregation and the Presbytery think otherwise; and it's no for the like o' you and me to contrair them." The legend, whether stating a fact, or one only founded on fact, tells something of the impression entertained of the spirit in which the young minister entered on his duties—a tradition of well nigh a hundred

self, on the word of an old man, that when you come to give an account of them to the Lord Christ at his judgment-seat, you will think you have had enough."

and forty years. "A soft answer turneth away wrath;" and it is said the objector became one of his staunchest friends.

It is claimed on behalf of this congregation that it is one of the oldest in the Presbytery of Edinburgh. The following is given as an extract from the records of the Church:—

"They formed themselves into a praying society in East Lothian, March, 1737, and were publicly recognised as a congregation in connection with the Associate Presbytery in October of the same year, and sermon was appointed to them as the Presbytery could afford it, owing to the want of a sufficient supply of preachers, which was only one in six months. In February, 1741, it was increased by three elders and forty private members, who had withdrawn from the Established Church. The congregation worshipped in the open air during summer, and in barns during winter, until 1742-43, when they took possession of a place of worship which they had erected for themselves, Haddington being chosen the seat of the congregation as most central for the majority of persons composing it. A second church was built on the same site in 1765, and altered in 1806—sittings, 500. Before obtaining a fixed pastor, the congregation called Mr Brown, who was appointed by the Synod of Perth, and Mr Loch, who died while under call. The first minister was the Rev. Robert Archibald, who was ordained 10th September, 1744, and adhered with the minority of his congregation to the General Associate

(Antiburghers), while the majority adhered to the Associate Burghers' Synod. In 1747 the minister and minority withdrew, and formed the second Secession congregation.* Second minister, John Brown, from Abernethy, admitted to the Theological Hall without having previously attended college, his attainments in the learned languages and philosophy being found such as to warrant the Synod to make an exception from the general rule; called to Stow and Haddington, ordained at Haddington 4th July, 1751."

From this it appears that in March, 1737, there was planted the germ of the congregation, and the congregation was publicly recognised as a congregation of the church in the month of October in that year. Subsequent to the formation of the praying societies in March, but previous to the public formation of this as a congregation of the church, in October a congregation was organised at West Linton. It was not till the following year, 1738, that the congregation now known as Bristo U.P. Church, but originally as Braid Craig, was formed.

It may be mentioned that though he accepted the call to Haddington for the reasons stated, he continued

* The minority, with the minister, the Rev. Mr Archibald, worshipped in a church on the site of which the public library now stands. A subsequent division traversing both sections of the Secession, occasioned by difference of views in regard to the powers of the Sovereign in ecclesiastical matters, did not affect the Burgher congregation, but it did this congregation, and a section holding what were designated the New Light separated and founded the congregation now worshipping in the West United Presbyterian Church in the town.—J. C. B.

regularly to visit and examine the congregation at Stow until they also had a minister ordained.

The record I have cited goes on to say :—"He," Mr Brown, "was the first Secession minister who introduced the practice of dispensing the Lord's Supper twice in the year. Appointed Professor of Theology by the Associate Burgher Synod, 5th May, 1768 ; invited to be Professor of Theology to Dutch Church, at New York, but declined ; died 19th June, 1787, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and thirty-sixth of his ministry."

Amongst the papers published in the *Select Remains* is one entitled "Reflections of One Entered on the Pastoral Office," which may be considered expressive of his views and feelings at this time, and there is another entitled "Reflections of a Minister Encouraging Himself in Christ," which may be considered expressions of his feelings at a subsequent period.

XI.

MENTION is made in the *Church Records* of his having been the first Secession minister who introduced the practice of dispensing the Lord's Supper twice in the year.

His views became very decided in regard to the duty of frequent observance of the Lord's Supper, and long subsequent to his death there was published in 1804, a small volume by him entitled *Apology for the more Frequent Administration of the Lord's Supper*. A letter from him to the Rev. Mr M'Ewan, of Dundee, a transcript of which has come into my hands, of which the following is a copy, indicates the train of thought by which he arrived at the conclusion to which he came. I give it as a piece of biography, which I deem not unimportant, and only as such :—

“REV. DEAR BROTHER,—I received yours, but can't perform what you desire, as I am to be at Linton sacrament on the third Sabbath of this month. It is no wonder to see us disagreeing about the time of our sacraments, when I fear it will be no easy task to prove that our way of administering the Supper is agreeable either to the Word of God, or the Protestant principles of our covenants, or Directory for worship, or Acts of reforming Assemblies, all which we pretend to espouse in our Testimony. I see that communicating once a year was not known in the Church of Christ till the Papists, to please a careless generation, who could not give themselves the trouble to attend frequently, intro-

duced it. I find not one of the Protestant churches but has condemned it, and as few of the Greek churches that deserve the name.

“ I confess it is hard for me to think the present race of Ministers and Papists wiser than all the Apostles, Primitive Christians, and whole body of Reformers. That its unfrequency tends to make it solemn I do not see, for if it is so why not administer baptism but once a year also, as it, in its own nature, is as solemn as the Supper? Why not pray seldom, preach seldom, read God's Word seldom, that they may become more solemn too? How is it that the persons who communicate perhaps twelve times in a year have as solemn impressions of this ordinance, and get as much good by it, as those who cause once in two years serve them?

“ If the Passover's being received once a year is a reason for our custom, then how is it we keep it not at Pasch—and that the remembering Israel's deliverance out of Egypt is not a main ingredient in the work of communicating? And how is it that the Apostles and other great men in the church never took up the force of this reason? Is the withdrawalment of the Spirit in comparison of what it was in the Apostolic or reforming times, a reason for the seldomer administration of it? Then why should we not be unfrequent in prayer, reading, &c., when the Spirit is away? What if the unfrequency of this ordinance, through which the Spirit doth in an especial manner communicate his influences, be the spring of the want of his influences? If the pipes of a conduit be kept stopt can much water run out? Can even the human appendages of a fast, or two

of those sessions on Sunday and Monday, make up
 for the insufficiency of the Lord's Word as a means
 of instruction, though I think very good make-up for the
 want of what a full living instruction? Might not we
 as well take to this our heads to see what use of these
 laws for reading of God's Word, when we had a man
 to give a sermon, and then only say a sermon once
 every half-year, because no man could we get the
 lawless time for reading—would the reading time be
 less occasion make up for the long neglect of prayer?

Is the prejudice of custom, we had said, and may
 plunder from the Scripture that the Supper should be
 administered once a year only, that it is that a man
 should pray only once a month.

Is the notion I am seeming to favour being Independ-
 ent-like? Then why is the Apostolic practice Independ-
 ent-like? Why the first book of Discipline, the Assembly
 1638 and 1645, so Independent-like in their words?
 Why the Westminster Directory so Independent-like?
 Why the Testimony espouse the books of Discipline and
 Directory, and our ordination vows espouse it, if this
 notion be so Independent-like:

These doubts are the issue of my intended essay to
 examine the conduct of the Secession. I have hinted
 it then to you because we have had questions formerly
 together, and because I know you want, if you can, to
 be at the bottom of things.

“Rev. dear brother,

“Yours affectionately,

“(Signed) JOHN BROWN.”

The date of the letter is not given in the copy of the letter in my possession; but from the minutes of the kirk-session, which were exhibited at the centenary gathering, it appears that in 1756 he introduced into the congregation the practice of observing the Lord's Supper twice a year, of which, says his son, Dr William Brown, "Strange as it may seem, this was a daring innovation. Throughout the Church of Scotland the ordinary practice was to observe it only once a year; and in this, as in many other things handed down from our forefathers, she was followed by the Secession Church."

My conjecture is that in this letter we may find an indication of how the subject came to engage his attention. Both in the Eastern and in the Western sections of the early church, besides the daily—if it be daily—celebration of the mass, there is an annual celebration on the day consecrated to the commemoration of the saint to whom the church is dedicated, which is a High Day of religious solemnities, a Spiritual Festival, though the observance of this may have degenerated into a day of feasting, as have other festivals of the church; and in the parish sacrament I see a continuance of these adapted to the altered condition of the church now established in these lands.

Dr William Brown, in continuation of some appropriate observations, goes on to state, in regard to the mode of observing the Lord's Supper prevalent in times not very remote from the present:—

"There was, first of all, a fast-day on the Wednesday or Thursday of the preceding week, which it was con-

sidered a duty to observe as strictly, and by some, perhaps, even more strictly than an ordinary Sabbath. On the Friday there was, at least in some places, what was called an Exercise. On the Saturday there were often three sermons, two in the afternoon without any intermission between them, and one in the evening. On the Sabbath, the Action sermon, as it was called (for what reason we do not know), was preached by the minister of the place. This he followed up by what were called the *debarrings*, an address usually consisting of the marks or characteristics of worthy and of unworthy communicants, as helps to them in self-examination, and of encouragement to the one to come forward to the Lord's Supper, and of warning to the others to beware of partaking of it, lest they should 'eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body.' Having next read 1 Cor. xi. 23-32, as the divine warrant for the ordinance, he then offered up what was usually called the Consecration prayer, in the course of which he set apart so much of the bread and wine as might be used, from a common to a holy purpose. Meanwhile, a portion of the communicants took their seats in what were called the Table seats, which were situated in front of the pulpit, and usually ran the whole length of the church. The minister of the place now proceeded to address the communicants, commonly on topics connected with the love of Christ, particularly as manifested in his sufferings and death, with the view of exciting in them sentiments and feelings suited to the ordinance. He then put into the hands of the communicants at the centre of the

table, immediately before the pulpit, first the bread, repeating the words of institution: 'Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me;' and then the wine, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.' The bread and the cup then passed, under the eye of the elders, from one communicant to another, until the whole had partaken of them. The minister now continued his address on the same or similar topics as those already mentioned, or perhaps on the duties specially arising out of them, or out of the ordinance itself. Such is what is called in Scotland a Table service. Then followed a succession of similar services, perhaps five or six in number, or even, in some instances, so many as eight or ten, by the ministers of other congregations, who, on such occasions, were his assistants,—two, three, or four in number, and in some instances, perhaps, six or seven. Including the Psalms sung between the successive services, they might occupy about twenty minutes each. After the table services were concluded there was a lengthened address by the minister of the place, commonly in the way of application and improvement, and the whole was closed with a sermon by one of his brethren who were assisting, the whole occupying, without any interval, eight or nine hours, and in some cases a still longer period; while, during nearly all the time, the ministers, his assistants, were delivering one sermon after another from a wooden tent in the churchyard, or a neighbouring park. On

the Monday forenoon the work was concluded with two sermons. This was designed to be a thanksgiving service. Besides all this, the minister of the place was considered as not in the way of his duty if he did not preach in his own pulpit on the Sabbath before and the Sabbath after the observation of the Lord's Supper—the one as preparatory to, the other as an improvement of it.”*

* There were cases in which the number and extent of the services in connection with the Lord's Supper was much greater than we have stated. In the congregation of the Rev. James Fisher, at Glasgow, one of the four founders of the Secession, “there were at the administration of the Lord's supper usually *seventeen* or *eighteen* table services,” “and the communion service, which commenced at *nine* or *ten* in the morning, did not close sometimes till between *nine* and *ten* in the evening.”

The following abstract of the services in Mr Fisher's congregation, Glasgow, in connection with the observation of the Lord's Supper, in June, 1761, is taken from one of his note-books :—

Thursday: (Fast-day) forenoon, two sermons; afternoon, one sermon.

Friday: Evening, one sermon.

Saturday: Within (the church), two sermons; without (tent), two sermons; evening exercise.

Sabbath: Besides the action sermon and its appendages, there were *eighteen* table services. The whole began at half-past nine in the morning, and ended at half-past nine in the evening, thus occupying twelve hours.

Besides these services within the church, there were *nine* sermons preached by *seven* different ministers at the tent.

Monday: Within, two sermons; without, two sermons.

It would thus appear, that including the action sermon and the evening sermon on the Sabbath, there were no fewer than *twenty-four*

In this—in all of this, commencing with the fast-day, in which I see the Protestant modification of the fasting previous to confession, as a preparation for absolution, and for the observance of the sacrament, and including the assemblage of such crowds as are referred to by Burns in his Holy Fair—I see the Protestant modification, not of the daily mass, but of the parish annual festival.

In Haddington, as has been mentioned, we have a combination of two parishes, and as a consequence we have two festivals in the year, that of St. Mary, and apparently that of St. Martin—the one in the beginning of March and the other in the end of June. Probably the Seceders, without any reference to the occasion of this, followed suit, satisfied that this was not wrong, but was a right step in a right direction; and the congregation now observe the Lord's Supper four times in the year, besides the two observances in connection with the parish festival, in which they join, without thought of either St. Mary or St. Martin, only marking these masses of the saints named, from the others, by the observance of the fast-day, and showing how little

sermons preached on this "sacramental occasion," to which have to be added the table and other services connected with it.

On another occasion (1756) there were *seventeen* table services, and 1236 communicants.—*Memorials of the Rev. James Fisher, by John Brown, D.D.* Edinburgh: 1849.

There were some other places to which the flockings were very great, and at which the number of services and of assistant ministers must have corresponded; for example, Stirling in the days of Ebenezer Erskine, and Dunfermline, in the days of his brother, Ralph Erskine.

importance they attach to this by keeping the day more as a holiday, as that term is now conventionally employed, than as a day of fasting and humiliation before God, as used to be done; and the other week day meetings for worship have been abandoned as unremunerative in money, in enjoyment, or in spiritual benefit, of the sacrifice of time, and expense in money, thought, and toil, which they entail. In saying so I mean not either to commend or to condemn, but simply to state the fact.

If I be correct in my conjecture that it was thus that the attention of my grandfather was called to the expediency of a more frequent observance of the Lord's Supper—the more frequent observance of that sacrament in the different congregations of the United Presbyterian Church than was at that time prevalent in the congregations of the Secession, may be attributable to the circumstance mentioned in the commencement of this volume that a Protestant incumbent of St Martin's either could not, or would not, live on the emoluments of his office, representing the emoluments previously enjoyed by the Roman Catholic incumbents. And it may be that the extension of the more frequent observance of the Lord's Supper in this congregation to six times a year is the result of a compromise occasioned by the desire after a more frequent observance of that solemnity, and a dread of being considered like the Independents, who there, and still in England, observe it every month, and in Scotland, with others, observe it every Sabbath.

XII.

IN connection with his views in regard to frequent observance of the Lord's Supper, may be mentioned his views and practice in regard to the Sabbath. On this subject his son, Dr William Brown, writes :—

“ We cannot but here notice particularly his strict observation of the Lord's day. This was a marked feature in his character. He had none of those lax notions in regard to Sabbath sanctification which prevail so much in the present day, not only among men of the world, but among many professors of religion. He was never able to bring himself to believe that nine out of the ten commandments given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, with so much solemnity, were of moral and permanent obligation ; but that the other—that in reference to the Sabbath—was little better than a mere Judaical institution, and that its observation under the Christian dispensation was little more than a matter of expediency, and that man might cut and carve upon it just as suited his dispositions or convenience. Though he would no doubt admit that there were precepts in the laws of Moses in reference to the Sabbath, which had a special reference to the Israelites, just as there were precepts in reference to some other parts of the Decalogue, which were peculiar to them, yet he did not consider that these affected the substance and spirit of the commandments themselves as given on Mount Sinai.

“ With him the observation of the Sabbath did not consist in mere outward forms, or simply in attendance on public worship ; the private and family exercises of religion were, in his estimation, of no less importance and not less essential to its right observance. Such passages as Isaiah lviii. 13, 14, ‘ If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day ; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable ; and shall honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words : then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord,’ &c. ; and Rev. i. 10, ‘ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,’ (understanding these words as expressive of a spiritual state of mind), he considered as showing the manner in which the Sabbath should still be observed. To talk of worldly matters, of the public news, or common occurrences, or even of the external affairs of the Church, he considered sinful ; and as he would not allow himself in saying or doing what he deemed inconsistent with Sabbath sanctification, he endeavoured to restrain all within his house from such practices. His views and practice in regard to the Sabbath were of a truly spiritual nature, and while we are persuaded of their Scripturalness, they have also the recommendation of consistency through-
 six . . . Unless we draw a strong and marked line of
 ioned . . . tation between the Sabbath and the other six
 of that . . . the week,—such a line as is drawn in the
 the Indep^o . . . commandment,—we shall find it difficult, if not
 observe it^o . . . to draw any line at all. If, for example, we
 observe it^o . . . ever^o worldly matters, or of common news, why

may we not read the newspapers? And if the newspapers, why not history, ancient or modern, civil or ecclesiastical? And if history, why not works in philosophy or works of imagination? In short, why not in the whole range of science and literature?—thus destroying all distinction between the Sabbath and the other days of the week. Of the importance and value of the Sabbath he had a deep yet not too strong a conviction. Though the outward observance of it is no proof of inward piety, either in a nation or an individual, yet it is favourable to the production and cultivation of inward piety; while on the other hand the neglect of the Sabbath, if not a proof of the absolute want of piety in a nation or an individual, will generally be found to be an indication of a low state of piety, and will certainly lead to its still further decline. Of this, the state of religion among the nations of the Continent, Protestant as well as Popish, is a melancholy example.”

XIII.

HIS son, Dr William Brown, says of him :—" He was a *Seceder* of the age in which he lived. He was but a boy when the Secession took place, but his mind was early and thoroughly imbued with its principles. Though he stedfastly avowed the principle that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners, yet, in common with the Seceders and others of his time, he was accustomed to make frequent reference to the acts of the Scottish Parliament, and to the acts of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, particularly in what were held to be reforming times, to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, and to the sentiments of the leading Presbyterian ministers in Scotland, particularly in former times, as if they possessed weight and authority in matters of religion. He was particularly firm in his adherence to, and his zeal for the doctrine (then generally held by the professors of religion in Scotland), of the binding obligation of the National Covenant and of the Solemn League and Covenant on posterity. 'These covenants,' says he, 'do and will, to all generations, bind ourselves and all the posterity of these covenanters, and of the societies which adopted them, to every duty engaged in them, and against every evil abjured, according as their stations, callings, and circumstances, require or admit. And as God, to whom these vows are made, is ruler everywhere on earth, no removal from Britain to

another country does, in the least, alter the obligation in any thing so far as he is concerned in it.' " *

Though a decided Seceder he was not blind to the faults and imperfections of the Secession. "I look," says he, in an address to his students, "I look upon the Secession as indeed the cause of God, but sadly mismanaged and dishonoured by myself and others. Alas! for that pride, passion, selfishness, and unconcern for the glory of Christ and spiritual edification of souls, which has so often prevailed. Alas! for our want of due meekness, gentleness, holy zeal, self-denial, hearty grief for sin, compassion to souls in immediate connection with us, or left in the Established Church, which became distinguished witnesses for Christ. Alas! that we did not *chiefly* strive to pray better, preach better, and live better, than our neighbours." †

Mention has been made of the breach, the severance, the so-called Associate Synod,—the Burghers, and the so-called General Associate Synod—the Antiburghers.

The parties which were thus separated were afterwards re-united. An alteration in the terms of the burgess oath in the towns mentioned removed one occasion of severance, and the Associate and General Associate Synod combined and constituted the *United Secession Church*. Another party meanwhile had left the Established Church, seeking a relief from practical evils resulting from patronage. They, and the United Seces-

* Posthumous Works, p. 105.

† *Brown's Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion*, p. 16.

sion Church, subsequently united under the designation *the United Presbyterian Church*. A subsequent secession from the Established Church of such magnitude that it was considered a disruption of the National Church, issued in the organisation of what is known as *the Free Church*; and this gave occasion for unions among churches holding in common that the Sovereign has a right, and is bound to exercise it, in connection with the maintenance of the church.

In the last century the demand of the present for the disestablishment and disendowment of the National Church had not arisen. All that our grandsire contended for was perfect toleration of churches outside that church. Some of the early Seceders considered their secession but temporary; and they looked for an opportunity presenting itself for their return. A respected kinswoman of my own, whom I only saw in my childhood, lived in the Luckenbooths, near St. Giles, in the High Street of Edinburgh. Speaking one day to her son, now a venerable minister of the Free Church, then a little boy, of that church as their church, she was checked by him saying, "*That's no oor kirk; our kirk is yonder.*" To which she said in reply, "*Na na, ma laddie, yons oor meetin' house, but this is oor kirk; oo only meet there till the kirk's reformed, and oo can gae back.*" And I have heard of either her or another referring to the form of older meeting houses in support of this view, pointing out that they were so built that by simply introducing an upper floor on the level with the front of the gallery, and partitions, and fireplaces, they could be converted

into dwelling-houses at little expense when no longer required as meeting houses.

But with all this hope, and apparent longing for reunion, each party kept close to their own standard-bearers, and perhaps they knew but little of the worth of those from whom they stood apart. My father on one occasion, when his father was from home, and no meeting for worship was held in their own meeting house, went to that of the Antiburghers, and was surprised to find that they sang the same Psalms as did they. A friend who had the old session records of the Antiburgher congregation for some time in his possession told me that on one occasion the session admonished one member, and formally censured another, for having been present in a house while my grandfather conducted family worship in the house of a member of his congregation. He had been visiting members of the congregation at Samuelston, a hamlet three miles from Haddington, and slept at a farmer's who invited one of his neighbours to meet him at breakfast. After breakfast they had family worship, and while so engaged the griever, or head farm servant, came in and sat down. For this he was admonished only, because he had come in inadvertently; but the other was censured, because he knowingly remained while the family were so engaged. Another worthy member of the same congregation was brought before the session for having been present at the tent services of a congregation at East Linton, where he resided, and whence, with his family, he came regularly every Sabbath day to worship with his own people. But his defence, after some demur, was

sustained. It was in effect that he had not attended the meeting: he was passing along the road while they were worshipping on the other side of the hedge, and he only stood still there, and heard what was said.*

* There may be in such doings what provokes a smile, while they are condemned. It is otherwise with the treatment of similar offenders in the days of the persecution of those who were known as covenanters.

Dr John Kerr, in a posthumous work entitled *The Psalms in History and Biography*, writes in connection with remarks on the 23rd Psalm:—
 “Marion Harvey, a servant girl in Borrowstounness, twenty years of age, was executed at Edinburgh in 1681 for hearing Donald Cargill, and for helping his escape at South Queensferry. When annoyed on her way to the scaffold by a curate who wished to thrust his prayers on her and her fellow-sufferer, she said, ‘Come Isabella, let us sing the twenty-third Psalm,’ which they did; and having come to the scaffold, and sung the eighty-fourth Psalm, she said, ‘I am come here to-day for avowing Christ to be the Head of the Church and King in Zion. Oh! seek him sirs, seek him, and ye shall find him.’

“Isabella Alison, who suffered with her, belonged to Perth, and lived very privately till she was apprehended for having heard Donald Cargill, and for refusing the tests. On the scaffold she said, ‘Farewell all created comforts; farewell sweet Bible in which I delighted most, and which has been sweet to me since I came to prison; farewell Christian acquaintances; Now into Thy hands I commit my spirit, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,’ whereupon the hangman threw her over.

“No execution of those cruel times seems to have excited a deeper interest and sympathy throughout the country. Lord Fountainhall, a well-known judge of the period, twice notices their end, and tries to excuse their sentence. In his *Observes* he says, ‘There were hanged in Edinburgh, two women of ordinary rank, for their uttering treasonable words, and other principles and opinions contrary to all our Government. They were of Cameron’s faction. At the scaffold one of them told, so long as she had followed and heard the curates she was a swearer, a Sabbath breaker, and with much aversion read

I was told of two Christian friends resident in the neighbourhood of Kirriemuir, who had been as brothers till happening to take different views on one or other, or both of the subjects which occasioned breaches in the

the Scriptures, but found much joy upon her spirit when she followed the conventicle preaching.' ”

As with them, so with Margaret Wilson and Margaret Lachlan.

In writing of Psalm the 25th, quoting the lines :—

“ My sins and faults of youth
Do thou, O Lord, forgive :
After thy mercy think on me,
And for thy goodness great.”

Dr Kerr goes on to say :—

“ Touching words in themselves, and surely never more so than when they began the dying song of Margaret Wilson while the sea was rising round her at the mouth of the water of Blednoch, by Wigton. She was twenty years of age, blameless and gentle, but *had been in the habit of attending field and house conventicles*, and refused to take the test. For these things she was condemned to be drowned along with an elderly woman, named Margaret Lachlan, accused of *the same offences*. They were tied to stakes within the tidemark, where the Solway comes up quick and strong in the channel of the Blednoch. The older woman was placed farther from the bank that the sight of her struggles might terrify the younger, and cause her to give way. But she was faithful to the death.

‘ Oh ! do thou keep my soul,
Do thou deliver me ;
And let me never be ashamed,
Because I trust in thee.’

“ Desperate efforts were made to cast discredit on the narrative in *Napier's Life of Claverhouse*, but the question has been set to rest by the book of Dr Stewart, of Glasserton, *The Wigton Martyrs*. The two women are buried in the churchyard, a little above the place where they were drowned, and descendants of the family to which Margaret Wilson belonged are to be found near Glenvernock, on the water of Cree, where she lived.”

Look on that picture, and look on this.

Secession, they found themselves in membership with different churches; and forthwith intercourse was broken off. Years afterwards one of them felt that there was something wrong in this, and he resolved to take the first opportunity to seek to be reconciled to his brother. Meeting him one day as he was going to his work he said, "*There's a gran' day, Sandie!*" "*Wha's dooten't?*" was the curt reply, forbidding all further converse. Time passed on; but he felt ill at ease, and one day seeing his friend engaged in thrashing, he went, and leaning over the half door, he said, "*Sandie, man, I dinna think this is richt o' you and me.*" "*Ae Tam, man, naither do I,*" was this time the ready response. "*O then wull ee come doon to my hoose the nicht, and we'll talk it over?*" "*I'll dae that.*" "*Ae man I'm glad,*" said Tam, and held out his hand to his friend. "*Na na, Tam, it hasnae come tae that yet!*" No, they must discuss their differences before they be reconciled!

Such were the Seceders of those days. They were men of principle; and satisfied of the soundness of their principles, they could dare to carry them out strictly and thoroughly. We may think we have broader views of truths, and there may seem to us to have been in them a lack of the meekness of wisdom, and in their contentions a lack of the meekness of Christ; but there was much in their adherence to principles, and unhesitating conformity to these at all times, in all circumstances, and all places, which may well excite admiration as a manifestation of faith in conscience and faith in God.

Our grandsire was, I believe, in full sympathy with this adherence to principle, but I have never heard of any lack of charity. This I know that when told by my father of his discovery that the Antiburghers sang the same Psalms as did they he smiled complacently, as if pleased that his child had made this discovery for himself. In his lifetime he had intimate intercourse with the Rev. Mr Innes, parish minister of Gifford, where I have had pointed out to me a part in the wall of the churchyard over which they used to lean, one on one side and the other on the other, engaged in devout converse. And after his death one of the parish ministers of Haddington offered to adopt and educate one of his fatherless sons. The offer was not accepted, but its having been made is evidence of the catholic character of their intercourse.

XIV.

WE should err if we inferred from what has been advanced of his views in regard to the Lord's Supper and the Sabbath, &c., that such matters engrossed his thoughts to the exclusion of matters of infinitely greater moment.

In the brief autobiography drawn up by him a short time before his death, he says :—

“The morning before I was licensed that awful Scripture, Isaiah vi. 9, 10, ‘Go, tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes ; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed,’ was much impressed on my spirit ; and it hath since been, I know not how often, heavy to my heart to think how much it was fulfilled in my ministry. I know not how often I have had an anxious desire to be removed by death from being a plague to my poor congregation. But I have oft taken myself, and considered this as my folly, and begged of Him, that if it was not for his glory to remove me by death, he would make me successful in his work ; for as to transportations I had not a good opinion of most of them, and I looked on it as so far my mercy that my congregation was so small.

“After all, I dare not but confess Christ to be the

best Master I ever served. Often in preaching, and otherwise, I have found his words 'the joy and the rejoicing of my heart.' He hath often laid matter before me in my studies, and enabled me with pleasure to deliver it. God in our nature, and doing all for us, and being all to us—free grace reigning through his imputed righteousness,—God's free grant of Christ and his salvation, and of himself in Christ,—and the believer's appropriation founded on the grant, and the comfort and holiness of heart and life flowing from that, have been my most delightful themes. And though I sometimes touched on the public evils of the day, yet my soul never so entered into these points.

"No sermons I ever preached were, I think, sweeter to my own soul than those on Psalm cxlii. 7, first clause; Isaiah xliv. 5, first clause; Isaiah xlvi. 4; Isaiah lx. 20, last clause; John xi. 28; 1 Timothy i. 15, 16; and Rev. iii. 21. The little knowledge which I had of my uncommonly wicked heart, and of the Lord's dealings with my own soul, helped me much in my sermons; and I observed that I was apt to deliver that which I had extracted thence, in a more feeling and earnest manner than other matters.

"And now, after near forty years' preaching of Christ and his great and sweet salvation, I think that if God were to renew my youth, and put it entirely in my choice whether I would be King of Great Britain or a preacher of the Gospel, with 'the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,' who had to beg his bread all the labouring days of the week, in order to have an opportunity of preaching on Sabbath to an assembly of sinful

men, I would, by his grace, never hesitate a moment to make my choice. By the Gospel do 'men live, and in it is the life of my soul.'

"When I consider what the Lord has done for me, and what I have been doing against the Lord and his goodness, I know not whether to be most amazed at his kindness, or my rebellious treachery and ingratitude. God has been doing all that he can to save, smile on, and favour me, and I have been acting to my uttermost in opposing and dishonouring him. After all that he has done for me, I am good for nothing,—neither to teach nor learn, neither to live nor die;—but am both in heart and life evil—only evil—superabundantly evil, unto this very day. I am amazed to think how the Lord hath concealed my weakness and wickedness, and even rendered them useful to me. Considering the dreadful pride of my heart, what a mercy that God who gave me learning in so unexpensive a manner, annexed for a time such a sting of reproach to it; that my talents did not lie so properly in a quick and extensive view of things at first (for in this I saw that I was inferior to many of my brethren), but rather in a close, persevering, and unwearied application to what I engaged in; that notwithstanding all my eager hunting after most part of that lawful learning which is known among the sons of men, I was led generally to preach as if I had never read a book but the Bible. And the older I grew I more and more aimed at this (an observation which I had made in the days of my youth, that what touched my conscience or heart was not any airy flights or well-turned phrases, but either express Scrip-

tural expressions, or what came near to them), and led me to deal much in Scriptural language, or what was near it. My imagination being somewhat rank and inclined to poetic imagery when I commenced a preacher, sometimes led me into flighty thoughts or expressions. But the Lord made me ashamed of this as a real robbing of him, in order to sacrifice to my own devilish and accursed pride. It was my mercy, too, that the Lord, who had given me some other talents, withheld from me a popular delivery, so that though my discourses were not disrelished by the serious, as far as I heard, yet they were not so agreeable to many hearers as those of my brethren. It was a pleasure to me to observe many of my brethren possessed of that talent which the Lord, to restrain my pride, had denied to me.

“When I consider how many whose parents were spared with them far longer than I had mine, and whose station in the world and means of education were far greater than mine, are in deep poverty, or, which is infinitely worse, have been left to turn out abandoned rakes,* I am amazed to think by what kind and strange means the Lord hath carried through the poor young orphan till now, and taken him ‘from following the ewes with young,’ and exalted him to the highest station in the church of Christ, and by his mere grace made somewhat useful, not only in preaching and writing, but also in training up many for the ministry, whom I hope the Lord hath, or will make far more useful in winning souls to Christ than ever I have been. Notwithstanding he left me a young orphan, without any relations on earth that were able to help me to any

* *Ante p. 87.*

purpose, he carried me through to a larger stock of learning than many others who had the greatest plenty ; and all this without my being obliged to be ever in debt to, or dependent on, any person whatsoever. In this how plainly hath the Lord appeared as the ' Father of the fatherless, and the orphan's stay.' This kindness of the Lord to me, as well as Psalm lxxviii. 5, and cxlvi. 9 ; and Jeremiah xlix. 11, encourageth me to leave my former and present young family on him without the least anxious care or fear. I cannot leave them many pence poorer than I was left myself ; and though I would wish that God would render them more holy and useful in the world, I dare not wish them more easy, or more honourable, or wealthy, than God hath graciously made me.

" My vain curiosity hath lead me into not a little useless reading, to the mispending of much precious time. But even by this the Lord hath taught me what a mercy it was, that when I had not a director in the choice of books, nor money to purchase the best, he hath led me into acquaintance with the most useful ones, and did not permit me to take up with such as were erroneous or profane. From experience I have found that it is vain to attempt to be a universal scholar ; that a few books, well chosen, and carefully used, are better than a multitude of books ; that multitudes of books are scarcely worth reading, or if read, one had better extract the useful hints into a note-book, and never more look into the books themselves ; that abridging of more useful books, especially if they be large, is very useful ; that few plays or romances are safely read, as they tickle the imagination, and are

apt to infect with their defilement; and even those that are most pure, as of Young, Thomson, Addison, Richardson, bewitch the soul, and are apt to indispose for holy meditation, and other religious exercises, and so should be read, at most, but very sparingly. In reading histories, the Lord not only often made me take up the facts as the doing of the Lord, and as verifications of some part of his Word, but also made the stories to suggest some useful, and sometimes very sweet thoughts respecting the redemption scheme.

“Notwithstanding my minding earthly things, the Lord so managed my wicked heart that it has rather been my care to husband well what he provided for me, than to attempt a greedy catching of what did not come of its own accord; and notwithstanding my eager desire of books, I chose rather to want them, and much more other things, than run into debt. I have been helped to live as one that would gladly spend and be spent for my people, and aimed at seeking not theirs but them;—yet not I, but the grace of God did all. My congregation’s belief of this, I believe, not only disposed them to regard me, but even readily to concur with me in countenancing the erection of other congregations within our original bounds, while some other congregations, perhaps double our strength, opposed as for life any such thing within their bounds. By this means I have now, in my old age, the pleasure of seeing the Gospel fixed at Dunbar, North Berwick, and Tranent, all which places were in my original bounds, and I hope and heartily wish with more success than by me. This pleasure I would not lose for I know not

how large an advancement of my stipend. And yet to the Lord's honour, as well as that of my people, I have never lost a farthing by these disjunctions. I have always looked on it as a great and hurtful blemish in ministers, especially Seceders, to appear greedy of gain, as if they wanted to 'serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own belly and purse.'

"I have also thought it a remarkable management of my mind by the Lord, that though I often grudged paying a penny or two for a useless letter, I could have cheerfully bestowed as many or more pounds for promoting a pious purpose. For this end I for many years laid aside a certain part of my income when I got it. I think this having of a distinct purse for the Lord is very proper. And from experience I can testify, that liberality to the Lord is one of the most effectual means of making one rich. I have sometimes disposed of more this way than it could be thought I was capable of, and yet I never found myself poorer against the year's end. Nay, when I think on matters, I wonder that my wealth, instead of being diminished, is not a little increased. 'There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.'

"I lament that I have been so deficient in effectual fervent prayer for my flock, and for the church of God; and that my discourse in conversation in my family, or with others, has not been more spiritual. My sense of my weakness and unskilfulness in pushing religious discourse, made me keep company so little; and when at any time I was in company without something

serious, it was painful to me to reflect on it. It was on this account, as well as because I thought feasting improper on such occasions, that I much disrelished all feasting at the ordination of ministers, at baptisms, or on Mondays after the Lord's Supper, as little else than an ordinance of the devil, calculated to erase every serious impression which had been made by the ordinance. I had little better opinion of making the disputes or curiosities of religion the subject of conversation, especially on the Lord's day.

"I lament that though I pretty often attended the Society meetings for prayer and spiritual conference, yet I did not do it more, especially after my settlement in the congregation. I am persuaded that ministers encouraging of such meetings to the most of their power, and their catechising and exhorting of children after their settlement, are some of the best means they can use for promoting the welfare of souls. On things of this nature I would wish all ministers' zeal and care were chiefly spent.

"In public things I have been rather inclined to act up to my own views than to push others into conformity with me. I had little relish for making ecclesiastical rules without great harmony. I had found no small difficulty in fixing my sentiments on some things. This made me averse to urge my opinions on others, unless where I had plain Scripture to support them. I laid it down as a rule never to be very zealous in favour of any thing in which my own self-interest or honour was in any respect concerned. I found it was dangerous, even in the lawful defence of self, to go too far. My

sense of the forwardness of my temper, and that several of my brethren saw more quickly or further into a cause than I did, restrained me from obstinacy in judgment. My knowledge of the miserable effects of clerical contentions in the Christian church, and my strong inclination to peace, I believe, sometimes led me to undue yielding or silence."

It has been stated that there was exhibited at the family gathering the Records of session from the date of his ordination, with a statement in his handwriting of the general rules of the congregation. Of this the following is a copy:—

"1. There is a lecture, a sermon, and an evening exercise on Sabbath in the months of November, December, January, and February; and public worship begins at eleven o'clock forenoon. During the other eight months there is a lecture, two sermons, and an evening exercise; and public worship begins at ten o'clock. Only in the east country is there ordinarily no exercise on Sabbath evening.

"2. The congregation is visited once, and examined twice every year.

"3. The members of session meet for prayer about the first Monday in every month, except September; and the minister, with three of the elders or deacons, ordinarily pray on such occasions with singing of Psalms and spiritual conference between prayer.

"4. The tokens are distributed by the minister in presence of the elders, constituted with prayer.

"5. Young communicants are admitted with a

solemn renewal of their baptismal engagements, in presence of the session, and suitable exhortations."

In reference to the visitations and examinations of the congregation, his son, Dr William Brown, writes :—

"The visitation of a congregation consisted in the minister, commonly accompanied by one of the elders, visiting on an appointed day, intimated on the previous Sabbath from the pulpit, the families of the members in a particular district, when he catechised, first, the heads of each household, and afterwards the children, relative to the doctrines and duties of religion; he then addressed an exhortation to them, and closed the visit with prayer. The examinations were of a more public nature. On a day, often an evening, intimated in like manner from the pulpit, a diet of examination, as it was called, was held for the members of the congregation residing in a particular district, when they and their families were expected to attend in the church, or in some other appointed place, for the purpose of being examined in a similar way. The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly of Divines was commonly taken as a kind of text-book for these examinations. The minister would first of all call on one of the members to repeat a question out of the Catechism, and would then proceed to ask further questions explanatory and illustrative of it; and though the answers were often little more than Yes or No, yet they afforded him an excellent opportunity for communicating religious knowledge to his people, and to others who might choose to attend. These two exercises, the private

visitations and the public examinations of the families composing congregations, were (provided they were well conducted) admirably adapted to promote the knowledge and influence of religion in our churches; and we cannot but deeply regret that they have in the course of the present century fallen so much into disuse, especially the public examinations; and that even the private visitations, where kept up, are often only a shadow of what they were in former times. Even then they might not be equally useful as the course recommended by Baxter in his *Reformed Pastor*, and might not realise his views of dealing with the people's consciences and hearts; but yet they were well calculated to be useful to both ministers and people;—to the former by making them acquainted with their hearers, and with the measure of their religious knowledge, and to the latter by communicating to them much useful instruction, and stirring them up to diligence in seeking after it.

“The visitation of the sick was also a stated piece of ministerial duty. Mr Brown was diligent and conscientious in attending to this duty; not tedious, but according to his opportunities, frequent. When any of his hearers were in affliction he visited them immediately on being informed of it; nor was he backward to show the same sympathy towards persons of any other denomination, on his understanding that a visit from him would be welcome.”*

* Posthumous Works, p. 31.

XV.

IN connection with his statement of what was his practice in reference to books it may be mentioned that he is said to have so epitomised *Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England*, and the *Ancient Universal History*. It has been mentioned that at the centenary gathering there was laid upon the table his manuscript *resumé* of *Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric*, one of a new and often paraphrastic version of Job, and a common place book in his writing, largely filled with *resumés* of different works, all of these are indicative of the method of study referred to. In the common-place book are notes of Wodrow's *History of the Church of Scotland*, *Notes from Calvin Minor*, an *Abridgment of Robertson's History of America*, *Notes on Miracles*, by Bonnet, *Notes on a work on Universal Restitution*, and numerous statistical statements of population of different countries, and other matters. Each and all indicate the wide range of his studies, and the care with which even minute details were studied.

XVI.

IN reference to his giving of money freely and liberally, his son, Dr William Brown, writes:—

“In charity he was exemplary. His salary from his congregation was but small. For a considerable time it was only £40 a year, and it never exceeded £50. As professor of divinity he received no salary at all. He had, we believe, some other sources of income, but we have no reason to think they were considerable. With what he possessed it was his aim to do good, as far as lay in his power, especially to the household of faith. It was his opinion that every man is bound to devote at least a tenth of his income to pious and charitable purposes; and though he had a numerous family he often exceeded this proportion. He exercised a frugality in his expenses upon his own person which some of his brethren thought was extreme. It appeared, however, that his whole design in denying himself some of the conveniences or comforts of life was, that he might be the more able to supply the necessities of others. When he had opportunity he commonly accompanied his alms with good advice, that while the body was supplied the soul might be saved. To poor congregations who wished a collection from his people, as they wished a few and generally poor, he several times contributed sums out of his own pocket, and he frequently ‘the heart of the widow to sing for joy.’ And with ostentation in others, the alms which he

himself gave were so secretly distributed that they were seldom known except by those who partook of his liberality." *

Again, "as to making money by his writings, he appears never to have thought of it. He gave them to the publishers for nothing, hoping thereby to have them sold at a cheaper rate for the sake of the poor. Publishers and booksellers must have divided among themselves many thousand pounds, as profits derived from his writings, while he himself, strictly speaking, never derived a farthing from them; and his family, after his death, received only a very inconsiderable sum." †

And again, "to talk in company about the increase of ministers' salaries, he studiously avoided, as knowing well that 'they who minister at the altar' lie too often under the odium of mercenariness, and that nothing has a greater tendency to hinder the edification of the people than a suspicion that their minister preaches for worldly gain." ‡

Again in connection with another subject he writes:—

"We may here also take occasion to notice instances of his forgiving spirit. Notwithstanding the

* *Posthumous Works*, p. 29.

† One of his publishers, of his own good will, presented him with £25 or £30. § This sum he lent to the publisher of the first edition of his Bible, it being an expensive work to print. He, however, lost it; the publisher, we understand, having failed. After his death his widow received £90 for several of his works corrected by himself, and some MSS.—§ This sum has also been stated as £40.

‡ *Posthumous Works*, p. 27.

ill-usage which he had received from certain ministers in the early stage of his studies, it was remarked that he was never heard to speak evil of them, nor so much as to mention the affair. The Rev. Mr A., the Anti-burgher minister in Haddington, who had treated him rudely, being reduced to poverty, he sent him money, though in a way which concealed the donor; and on his decease he offered to take one of his destitute orphans, and bring him up with his own children." *

* Posthumous Works, p. 35.

XVII.

CHRIST follows up some hortatory remarks, on a request addressed to him by his apostles, with the injunction : "So likewise ye when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you say, We are unprofitable servants : we have done that which it was our duty to do." Few, I presume will, after serious consideration, attempt to controvert this by argument, even though they may have a much higher opinion of themselves than this would warrant. But there are not a few who consider that the expressions of self-abasement occurring in the preceding quotation from the autobiography, and appearing so constantly in his discourses and devout writings as to give character to these, exceed what is required ; and they have been spoken of as couched in the language of hyperbole, and as only being in accordance with what was the fashion of the day among men of a like spirit. To me they appear very different.

The perfection of holiness manifested in Christ is the Glory of God. Compared with this what is the conduct and spirit of men ? In the case of the apostle Paul, and in the case of him whose life is now in question, looking upon themselves as they were in themselves, stript of every adventitious imagined righteousness, and seen in the light ineffable which revealed what they were in comparison with God, in comparison with Christ,—they seem to have

felt as Isaiah felt many long centuries before them :
“ Woe is me for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts !” No wonder then that they declared, “ All have sinned and come short of the glory of God ;”— “ There is not a just man who doeth good.” And said I abhor myself ; knowing what I do—knowing all,—I seem to myself to be the chief of sinners.

When this view is taken we cease to see anything hyperbolic or extravagant in the language employed by him in reference to himself and in reference to others. Nor do we wonder that to him the language judged now to be hyperbolic and extravagant seemed indeed to fall far short of the reality.

Many there were in those days who shared these views of the Glory of God, and of the sinfulness of men, and of the sinfulness of their own life and spirit, when seen in the light of the Glory of God. If it be not so now, the more's the pity. And to the extensive prevalence of these views of God, of man, and of themselves, amongst readers of his works, and of feelings such as such views were likely to awaken, may be attributable the interest taken in those books in the latter half of the last century and in the earlier years of the present. Those people found in these works their theological views expressed in phraseology which treated them not as dogmata but as verities, and verities, as perhaps all verities are, of infinite and eternal moment :—Sin so exceeding sinful that nothing but the blood of God incarnate could make such atonement as would enable God to be a just God and a Saviour ; and nothing but

divine power specially exercised directly and immediately upon individual souls by a Divine person, a person not less really Divine than was Christ himself, could neutralise the depravity which sin had entailed, and renew in man the likeness of God and the Spirit of Christ ; and they found exhortations and warnings and encouragements based on these views and in this respect suitable for them and applicable to their case.

It may be it is the case that frequently the language of hyperbole is made use of in confession and prayer with a view "to magnify," as it is termed, "divine grace," and that it is the fashion with many to adopt such phraseology as being the right thing to do. It may be that some may be heard mouthing with ridiculous pomposity at utter variance with the prostration of spirit which the fact should induce: "We have erred and strayed from thy way like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. O Lord have mercy upon us miserable sinners." And others may be heard at times heaping up confessions of sins of which nobody ever imagined that they had been guilty, but all in such a tone as to suggest the thought that woe would betide the man who afterwards meeting them should accuse them of the sins they had thus confessed. This may be hyperbole, and following the fashion in such matters. But it does not follow that

thus it is with all ; there may in some cases be a verisimilitude in the tone which belies the supposition that it is so ; and it seems to me that the confessions which have been referred to have the ring of truthfulness ; and that this may be accounted for satisfactorily by the supposition that they were consequent upon a perception of what true holiness is as seen in Christ and in God.

There are many questions outside of this which may be raised, or which may be suggested thereby. I do not consider that I am called on to enter upon a discussion of these ; but to prevent misapprehension of my argument I may state in a few words that the Holy Scriptures do not teach that such a view of sinfulness, and such a view of holiness, is necessarily a proof of goodness ; they tell that "the devils believe and tremble." And what the apostles at Jerusalem called "repentance unto life" I understand to be what is described as such in the Shorter Catechism, "A saving grace whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his sin turn from it unto God with full purpose of and endeavour after new obedience."

XVIII.

IN the quotation given from his autobiography he speaks of his style and mode of preaching.

Of his preaching his youngest son, Dr William Brown, writes:—

“As a *preacher* Mr Brown was distinguished by great plainness, faithfulness, seriousness, and earnestness. His learning he never brought into the pulpit, unless by bringing down the great truths of religion to the level of common capacities. He was much of the mind of Archbishop Ussher, as expressed in that golden saying,—‘It will take all our learning to make things plain.’ The Rev. Robert Simpson, afterwards theological tutor of Hoxton Academy, London, who, about the year 1770, heard him for some time in his own meeting house at Haddington, made the following statement regarding his preaching:—‘I well remember a searching sermon he preached from these words, “What went ye out for to see?” &c. Although at that time I had no experimental acquaintance with the truth as it is in Jesus, yet his grave appearance in the pulpit, his solemn, weighty, and energetic manner of speaking, used to affect me very much. Certainly his preaching was close, and his address to the conscience pungent. Like his Lord and Master he spoke with authority and hallowed pathos, having tasted the sweetness and felt the power of what he delivered.’ He was not one of those preachers whose sermons were chiefly taken up in cold statements as to the doctrines and duties of

religion. These he did not neglect, but he ever brought them home to his hearers by earnest and close application to their consciences and hearts. Perhaps there was no part of his preaching so powerful and so heart-touching as his expostulations with the unconverted.* Probably few men have come nearer than Mr Brown to Richard Baxter's style of preaching, as described by him in these memorable lines,—

‘I preach'd as never sure to preach again ;
And as a dying man to dying men.’ †

“ Mr Brown's delivery was strongly characterised by that *sing-song* which prevailed much in the Secession, especially in his early days ; and though all departures from a natural delivery are greatly to be deprecated, yet this in him was singularly melting to serious minds. I can have no recollection of his delivery myself, but I have heard it imitated by my brother Ebenezer, and I

* Posthumous Works, p. 30.

† Poetical Fragments of Richard Baxter, p. 35.

We were told by an aged minister, who had been one of his students, that he once said to him, “ Mr Brown, you are often speaking against Richard Baxter, but I see no man so like Richard Baxter as yourself.” The compliment was high, yet it was not undeserved. In what we have said we do not mean to place him on a level with Baxter in point of genius, imagination, invention ; or of rich, felicitous, powerful expression : we refer chiefly to the earnest and melting appeals which both were in the habit of making to the hearts and consciences of their hearers, particularly of the unconverted. The above-mentioned lines of Baxter we were accustomed to quote as expressive of a resolution on his part ; but on lately turning to the poem from which they are taken we found they expressed not simply his resolution, but his practice in the early period of his life, when his ill health gave him a “ frequent sight of death,” and made him “ live as in the sight of heaven and hell.”

felt it so touching and overpowering that I question if the highest flights of oratory would have had anything like the same impression on my mind.*

"It was his usual practice, both before and after he came from public worship, to retire to his closet and pour out his heart to God in prayer. Trifling conversation at any time, and especially after being engaged in

* A *sing-song* delivery was not peculiar to the early Secession, or other Presbyterian ministers. It has prevailed extensively in religious services. Mrs Stowe, the authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, after attending the yearly meeting of the female quakers in London, makes the following remarks: "There are some things in the mode of speaking among Friends, particularly in their public meetings, which do not strike me agreeably, and to which I think it would take me some time to become accustomed, such as a kind of *intoning*, somewhat similar to the manner in which the Church service is performed in cathedrals. It is a curious fact that religious exercises, in all ages and countries, have inclined to this form of expression. It appears in the cantilation of the synagogue, the service of the cathedral, the prayers of the Covenanters and the Puritans."—*Mrs Stowe's Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands*, vol. ii., p. 79.

The only Chinese we ever heard read, read with a *sing-song*, similar to that which formerly prevailed in the Secession.

In the Memoir of the Rev. Dr Waugh, of London, we find the following statement regarding my father:—"Dr Waugh used to mention the following anecdote of his venerable instructor, which had occurred within his own knowledge. It happened that at some public solemnity, where the celebrated David Hume was one of the audience, Mr Brown was preceded by an ambitious young man, who delivered a very eloquent and florid address, the old divine following in one equally remarkable for its simplicity and earnestness, 'The first preacher,' said the sceptic to one of his friends, 'spoke as if he did not believe what he said; the latter as if he was conscious that the Son of God stood at his elbow.'"—*Hay and Belfrage's Memoir of the late Alexander Waugh, D.D.*, p. 51.

the solemnities of divine worship, he particularly detested.”*

To something in the character of their preaching similar to his may be attributable the interest taken in the preaching of his sons by many connected with different sections of the Christian church in the earlier decades of the present century. Once being taken to visit an aged bed-ridden Christian woman in Perthshire, who had been brought up in another section of the church, on her being informed that I was a grandson of John Brown of Haddington, she asked, “Are there ony feck—any number—o’ thae Brouns; for they tell me they are awfu’ poorfu’ i’ the poopit?”

I have no reason to suppose that he was of austere bearing, either in the pulpit or out of it; and I have reason to conclude that he was not. He was a Calvinist in theology, and all the dogmata of Calvinism were with him serious verities; and he had the courage of conviction. It appears that when called to speak or write of these he did so, speaking out his belief with no uncertain sound, or disposition to do otherwise. Mr William Hunter, an intimate friend of my father, though some years his senior, could imitate his voice and tone in preaching, though he could rarely be induced to do so, as it seemed to him at variance with his profound reverence for him to do so excepting in very exceptional circumstances. My recollections of these, or of what I heard about them, are that the

* *Posthumous Works*, p. 31.

voice and tone alike said "I speak because I believe; and I cannot but speak what I know to be truth relative to not only the temporal but the eternal interests of you to whom I speak."

Of John Knox it was told that when he was old he preached with such vigour that he almost broke the pulpit into splinters, and seemed as if he would fly out of it. Such was not the character of the imitation of the preaching in question.

The most earnest preaching to which I have listened—preaching suggestive of the statement of Paul in his Epistles to the church at Corinth "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be reconciled to God,"—was in the magnificent church dedicated to St. Lorenzo in the Escorial in Spain, and was by a priest, who was at the time Bishop elect to the See of Salamanca. There was vehemence, but it was subdued vehemence: again and again clutching off his University velvet cap, and crushing it in his hand in apparent self-oblivion, he personally besought and entreated, individually and collectively the assembled multitude, many of them the High and Mighty of the nation, for it was a High Festival. Neither was such the character of the preaching referred to. There was more of the solemn dignity in the bearing of the preacher suggestive of the first part of the Apostle's statement "We are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech by us," the preacher preaching with the calm earnestness of a man realising that position with a realising view of the doctrines propounded both in their import and their importance—

something which said in a way which could not be gainsaid, "We speak because we believe, and cannot but speak forth what we have seen and heard; Yea, Woe be to us if we preach not the Gospel!" Reminding one of what is written of what was experienced by Elijah on Mount Horeb, "Behold the Lord passeth by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice."

But even this fails to characterise it. It was so deep and solemn. His father is said to have said to his elder son, the minister at Whitburn: "John you and I try to preach; but Eben. *can* preach." But such, from what I have heard, was the type to which his own preaching belonged.*

I have been told of one of his sons being once deeply affected by an imitation of an imitation of his preaching; and my own memories are in keeping with this.

* This son Ebenezer, minister in Inverkeithing, was one year invited to preach the sermon in connection with the anniversary of the London Missionary Society, in Surrey Chapel. He had remained in the vestry till the close of the devotional exercises, and had not observed how these were conducted, if indeed he heard. At the close of his discourse he sat down in the pulpit excited, if not also exhausted, when to his surprise the organ pealed forth its notes of adoration. For this he was not prepared, and afterwards speaking of it, he told with his deep solemn voice, I thought I was in heaven. They called him in London the blessed Scotsman,

Yet there were those, as he intimates, to whom his preaching was not even as the "lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument." So was it also with Him who "spake as never man spake."

Reference was made by Mr Nelson in his sermon in connection with the centenary commemoration [*ante* p. 29], to his name being associated by Burns with those of Bunyan and Boston. The lines I may cite. They are these:—

"For now I'm grown so cursed dounce,
I pray and ponder butt the house;
My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin',
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston."

Any who could say this could not have sympathy with the preacher or with his discourses.

XIX.

At the family gathering there was exhibited a letter in his handwriting addressed by him to his congregation, and other hearers, shortly before his death. Of this letter the following is a copy:—

“MY DEAR HEARERS,—Having, through the patience and mercy of God, long laboured among you, not as I ought,—far, very far from it,—but as I could, I must now leave you, to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of my stewardship. You cannot say that I ever appeared to covet any ‘man’s silver or gold, or apparel,’ or ever uttered one murmur about what you gave me; or that I sought yours, not you. You cannot charge me with idling away my devoted time in vain chat, either with you or others, or with spending it in worldly business, reading of plays, romances, or the like. If I had, what an awful appearance should I soon have before my all-seeing Judge! You cannot pretend that I spared either body or mind in the service of your souls, or that I put you off with airy conceits of man’s wisdom, or any thing else than the truths of God. Though I was not ashamed, as I thought Providence called me, to give you hints of the truths presently injured, and the support of which is the declared end of the Secession, yet I laboured chiefly to show and inculcate upon your consciences the most important truths concerning your sinfulness and misery, and the way of salvation from both through Christ, and laboured to hunt you out of all your lying refuges, and

give your consciences no rest but in Christ and him crucified. The delight of my soul was to commend him and his free and great salvation to your souls, and to direct and encourage you to receive and walk in him. 'I call heaven and earth to record against you this day, that I laboured to set life and death, blessing and cursing, before you, and to persuade you to choose life that ye might live.' By the grace of God I have endeavoured, however poorly, to live holily, justly, and unblameably, among you. And now I leave all these discourses, exhortations, instructions, and examples, as a testimony for the Lord against you, if you lay not your eternal salvation to heart as 'the one thing needful, that good part which shall not be taken from you.'

"But I have no confidence in any of these things before God as my Judge. I see such weakness, such deficiency, such unfaithfulness, such imprudence, such unfergency, and unconcern, such selfishness, in all that I have done as a minister or a Christian, as richly deserves the deepest damnation of hell. I have no hope of eternal happiness but in Jesus' blood, which cleanseth from all sin,—in 'redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of my sins, according to the riches of his grace.' It is the everlasting covenant of God's free grace, well 'ordered in all things and sure, that is all my salvation and all my desire.'

"Now I die firmly persuaded of the truth of those things which I preached unto you. I never preached unto you any other way of salvation than I essayed to use for myself. I now, when dying, 'set to my seal

that God is true.' After all that I have said of the sinfulness of your hearts, I have not represented to you the ten thousandth part of their vileness and guilt. Knowing, in some measure, 'the terror of the Lord,' I endeavoured to persuade you that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of his wrath: but 'who knoweth the power of his anger?' Knowing, in some measure, the deceitfulness of sin, and the devices of Satan, I laboured to warn you of them. But what specially delighted my heart was, to set before you the excellencies, the love, the labours of our Redeemer, and God in him, giving himself, and applying himself to sinful men; and to represent to you the work of God on the heart 'in the day of his power,' and the exercise of the heart in its diversified frames. What I saw, and tasted, and handled, both of the bitter and the sweet in religion, I delivered unto you. Little as I am acquainted with the Lord, I will leave it as my dying testimony, that there is none like Christ,—there is nothing like fellowship with Christ. I dare aver before God, angels, and men, that I would not exchange the pleasures of religion which I have enjoyed, especially in the days of my youth, for all the pleasures, profits, and honours of this world, since the creation till the present moment, ten thousand times told. For what then would I exchange my entrance 'into the joy of my Lord,' and being for ever with him? Truly God hath been good to a soul that but poorly sought him. Oh! what would he be to yours, if you would earnestly seek him! With what heart-ravishing power and grace hath he testified against my wicked unbelieving heart, that 'he is God, even my God!' And

now, 'whom have I in heaven but him? nor is there any on earth whom I desire besides him. My heart and flesh fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.' Left early by both father and mother, God hath taken me up, and been the orphan's stay. He hath 'given me the heritage of those that fear him.' 'The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places. I have a goodly heritage. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup,—he maintaineth my lot : ' 'Yea, mine own God is he,—my God that doth me save.'

"Had I ten thousand worlds in my offer, and these secured to me for ever, they should be utterly contemned. 'Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; and I do count them but dung that I may win him, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God through faith.'

"Now, when I go to give my account to God, think what it must be! Alas! must it be, that in too great conformity to your careless neighbours, some did not attend the means of grace at examinations, meetings for prayer and spiritual conference, as ye ought? Must it be, that after labouring so many years among you, I left less lively religion in the congregation than I found in it at first? Must it be, that ye were called, but ye made light of the marriage with Christ, and of his great salvation? Must it be, that ye contented yourselves with a form of godliness, without knowing the power of it? Must it be, that some few, trampling

on their most solemn engagements, forsook me, 'having loved this present world?' Must it be, that others were not careful to train up their seed for the Lord? Must it be, that ye often heard the most searching sermons, or the most delightful, and went away quite unaffected? Or must it be, that ye were awakened, that your souls looked to Jesus and were enlightened; that ye believed with your heart unto salvation; that ye harrowed in the seed of the truth, which I sowed among you, by serious meditation and fervent prayer; that ye laboured to win souls to Christ? Alas! I fear many of you will go down to hell with a lie in your right hand,—go down to hell with all the Gospel sermons and exhortations you ever heard on your conscience, to assist it to upbraid, gnaw, and torment you! My dearly beloved hearers, shall I see you next, at the last day, standing at the left hand of your Judge? Shall I see those faces all in dismay, and those eyes which often looked at me, looking lively bright horror at the judgment-seat of Christ? Must I hear the Redeemer pronounce on you that awful sentence, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?' And must I, who have so often prayed for your salvation, and preached for your salvation, add my hearty Amen to the sentence of your eternal damnation? God forbid!

"Let me then beseech you now, without a moment's delay, to consider your ways. Oh! listen to the Lord's invitations! Believe his self-giving declarations and promises, which, times without number, have,

with some measure of earnestness, been sounded in your ears! For the Lord's sake dare not, at your infinite peril, to see me again in your sins, and refusers of my glorious Redeemer and Master! Oh! give him your hearts,—give him your hearts! I never complained of your giving me too little. Nay, I thought myself happier than most of my brethren as to all outward matters. But I always thought and complained that you did not use my Master Christ as I wished, in your hearts, lives, and houses. And now I ask nothing for myself, or any of my family, but make this my dying request, that you would now receive my Master Christ into your hearts and houses. Could all my soul speak back to you from the eternal state,—could my rotting bones and sinews, and every bit of my body, speak back to you from the grave,—they should all cry, 'Oh that ye were wise, that ye understood this, that ye would consider your latter end! Oh that ye would give my Master Christ these ignorant, guilty, polluted, and enslaved hearts of yours, that he, as "made of God upon you wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," might enter in and fill them for ever with his grace and truth! Oh, say not to a dying, a dead minister—rather, oh, say not to a living Redeemer, and to his Father, and to his blessed Spirit—Nay.'

"Dearly beloved, whom I wish to be 'my joy and crown' in the day of the Lord suffer me to speak from the dead to you. Let me exhort you, by all your inexpressible sinfulness and misery,—by all the perfections, words, and works of God,—by all the excellencies, offices relations, labours, sufferings, glory, and fulness

of Christ,—by all the joys of heaven and the horrors of hell,—now to make serious work of the eternal salvation of your souls. Try what improvement you have made of all my ministrations. Call to mind what of my texts, sermons, or other instructions, you can ; and pray them over before the Lord, applying them closely to your own conscience and heart. Wash yourselves thoroughly in the blood of Jesus Christ, from all the sins of holy things since you and I met together.

“I recommend to you, young persons, my two addresses annexed to my *Catechisms*; and to you, parents and masters, my address in the ‘Awakening Call,’ and my sermons on ‘Raising up Children to Christ,’ as a part of my dying words to you. They will rise up in judgment against you, if you contemn them.

“With respect to your obtaining another minister, let me beseech you, by much fervent prayer, to get him first from the Lord. And let it be your care to call one whose sermons you find to touch your consciences. May the Lord preserve you from such as aim chiefly to tickle your fancy, and seek themselves rather than Jesus Christ the Lord ! Let there be no strife among you in calling him. And when you get him, labour at his entrance to receive his message from Christ with great greediness. Let your vacancy make you hungry and thirsty for the Gospel. And let all hands and hearts be intent on raising up a seed for Christ in poor withered

“Let ^{Ed} East Lothian.

delay, to^w it would delight my soul to be informed, Lord’s inviⁿer of the eternal state, that Christ had tions and proth with my successor, ‘conquering and to

conquer !' How gladly should I see you and him by hundreds at the right hand of Christ at the great day, though I should scarcely have my ten ! Oh, if Christ were so exalted, so remembered among you, as to make me scarcely thought of ! I desire to decrease, that he may increase.

“ Now ‘ unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood,’ and ‘ hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,’ be honour and glory, dominion and blessing, for ever and ever.

“ ‘ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief.’

“ Your once affectionate pastor,

“ JOHN BROWN.”

XX.

IN the discourse by Mr Cairns on the centenary of his death, reference is made to his work as professor of theology in the church of which he was a minister ; and to the results seen in the subsequent usefulness of many who enjoyed his instructions. Of his discharge of the duties of the professorship, his son, Dr Thomas Brown, minister in Dalkeith, writes :—

“ To the duties of the minister were added those of the professor’s chair. In 1768, on the death of the Rev. John Swanson, he was elected by the Associate (Burgher) Synod to be Professor of Divinity. For this new station he was well fitted by his previous studies, and he filled it with universal approbation to the time of his death. In his conduct to his pupils he blended the dignity of the teacher with the affection of the friend ; and the respect he received from his students, was the unextorted homage of affection and esteem. He behaved to all of them with studied impartiality. He had no favourite. If he had his secret preferences he took care to conceal them. In his admonitions he tempered fidelity with gentleness. He was indeed among them as a father among his children ; he loved them and studied their good, and they loved him and regarded his counsel. No season of the year was so pleasant, both to the professor and students, as the two months of their attendance at the Divinity Hall.

“ In the course of their studies, which usually occupied five years, he gave them a connected view of

practical and polemical divinity. In his *View of Natural and Revealed Religion*, and the 'Cases of Conscience,' annexed to his *Practical Piety*, he has laid before the public the topics on which he insisted in his lectures to his students. He was also desirous they should be acquainted with ecclesiastical history; and he compiled his *General Church History*, and the *History of the British Churches*, originally for their use. But while he studied to inform their minds, he endeavoured also to impress their hearts. Piety he esteemed the first of ministerial qualifications. He earnestly cautioned his pupils against studying divinity as they would a system of philosophy. He pressed on them their own concern in the doctrines they were to preach to others, and assured them, that without personal religion they could never be profitable students of theology. At the close of each session he took a solemn leave of them. His addresses on these occasions were most impressive and pathetic; they were seldom heard without tears. The many intelligent, useful, and acceptable ministers educated under his care, evince the success with which God has crowned his labours."

In the *Memoir* of the Rev. Alexander Waugh, D.D., by Drs. Hay and Belfrage, are given specimens of these parting addresses, which are cited by his son, Dr William Brown, with the remark, the most profound silence reigned while Mr Brown addressed the students in these strains—such as the language, the tone, the general manner, as well as the sentiments—every circumstance in short was calculated to make a deep impression on their minds. And he tells:—

“ In fulfilling the duties of his important office he was little, if at all, in the habit of delivering lectures to his students. His instructions he communicated chiefly in the way of examinations. Several of the works which he published were prepared with a special view to the improvement of his students, particularly his *Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion*, his *General History of the Christian Church*, his *History of the British Churches*, and his *Christian, Student, and Pastor*. Previous to the printing of the first of these works, each student was, in the course of his attendance at the Divinity Hall, required to write out a copy of it. The manual labour of this could scarcely fail to be irksome, yet it would at least be attended with the advantage of deepening the impression of its contents on their minds. On this work they were subjected to careful examination; and they were required to commit to memory, and to repeat the numerous passages of Scripture which are referred to in it in support of the various positions laid down in it.

“ It was a custom of Mr Brown, when any of his students were settled in the ministry, to write to them letters containing salutary counsels relative to the work in which they were now engaged: and, on other occasions, he would also write letters to them in reference to their peculiar circumstances.” *

To a minister who he understood was careless in his preparation for the pulpit, he addressed the following solemn warning, which is given from the *United*

* Posthumous Works, p. 36.

Presbyterian Magazine, 1850:—"Think, as before God, my friend, that if you spend your devoted time—which ought to have been spent in religious reading, meditation, and prayer—in unnecessary sleep, in idle chat, or even reasonable conversation, in worldly business or recreation, or in reading of improper books, or even of proper books when it is not expedient;—if trusting to your own conceited or real abilities, or through sloth, you retail your raw, undigested thoughts, so as perhaps to render your sermons little better than a confused heap of truths, if not of trifles; or frequently repeat your old discourses,—think, as before God, whether you can expect any other sentence than 'O thou wicked and slothful servant! Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.' 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.' Alas! shall I at the last day hear—shall I heartily join in the curses which shall be thus publicly poured forth against you by the Divine Persons whom you have treacherously affronted and betrayed; by the angels whom you have provoked; by believers whom you have grieved; and by the wicked multitudes whom you have villanously damned by your sloth, and your unconcern for the edification of souls?"

In the preface to one of the volumes mentioned, prepared with a special view to their improvement, that entitled *The Christian, the Student, and the Pastor*, exemplified in the lives of a number of excellent ministers in Scotland, England, and America,

he thus writes:—"To disparage the fashionable, but soul-ruining flimsiness in religion," which so much prevails, "and to promote a distinct, deep, and heart-captivating experience of the gracious working of the Spirit of God, issuing in a devout, active, and orderly practice, is the aim of the subsequent *Exemplification*. The shame, the pain, the pleasure which my own soul felt in abridging these lives, makes me hope that others may experience the like in reading them.

"Might I prevail with my pupils or others, I would earnestly obtest you for the Lord's sake, and for the sake of souls unnumbered, to lay *deep* the foundation of your professed religion, if you wish the *ravishing delights* of it. Formal gnawings of the shell will but render it disgusting to you, and make your ministrations of the Gospel a task,—a burden to you, and a curse to your hearers. None that know how long and how eagerly I have hunted after human literature, as my circumstances permitted, will readily suspect me for an enthusiastic contemner of it. But as on the brink of eternity, I dare boldly pronounce it all 'vanity, and vexation of spirit,' when compared with, or not subordinate to the experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ as 'made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,' There is no *language*, ancient or modern, like that of the Gospel of the grace of God, pronounced by the Holy Ghost to one's heart, and of heaven-born souls to God under his influence; no *history* like that of Jesus Christ, redemption through his blood, and effectual application of his grace; no *science* like that of beholding the 'WORD

made flesh,' and beholding the infinite perfections of JEHOVAH in him, and through him, in every creature,—as from eternity manifested, and to be for ever manifested in our inconceivable happiness, 'to the praise of the glory of his grace;' no *pleasure* like that of 'fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,' and all that joy and peace with which the 'God of hope' fills men in believing,—that joy which is 'unspeakable, and full of glory.' Come, then, 'let us go up to the mountain of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.' Let us be no more 'slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.'"

XXI.

OF his published works, his son, Dr. William Brown, gives the following list and notices :—

Of the Holy Scriptures.

The Self-interpreting Bible, 2 vols. 4to, 1778.

A Dictionary of the Bible, 2 vols. 8vo, 1769.

A Brief Concordance to the Holy Scriptures, 1783.

The Psalms of David in Metre (Scotch Version), with Notes exhibiting the connection, explaining the sense, and for directing and animating the devotion, 1775.

Of Scripture Subjects.

Saared Tropology ; or, A Brief View of the Figures and Explication of the Metaphors contained in Scripture, 12mo, 1768.

An Evangelical and Practical View of the Types and Figures of the Old Testament Dispensation, 12mo, 1781.

The Harmony of Scripture Prophecies, and History of their Fulfilment, 12mo, 1784.

Systematic Divinity.

A Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion, 8vo, 1782.

Church History.

A General History of the Christian Church, from the Birth of our Saviour to the Present Time, 2 vols. 12mo, 1771.

A Compendious History of the British Churches in Scotland, England, Ireland, and America, 2 vols. 12mo, 1784.

An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Secession, 12mo, 1766.

Biography.

The Christian, the Student, and Pastor, exemplified in the Lives of Nine Eminent Ministers in Scotland, England, and America, 12mo, 1781.

Practical Piety exemplified in the Lives of Thirteen Eminent Christians, and illustrated in Cases of Conscience, 12mo, 1783.

The Young Christian ; or, The Pleasantness of Early Piety, 12mo, 1782.

Catechisms.

An Essay towards an easy, plain, practical, and extensive Explication of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, 12mo, 1758.

Two Short Catechisms, mutually connected, 12mo, 1769.

The Christian Journal ; or, Common Incidents Spiritual Instructors, 12mo, 1765.

Sermons.

Religious Steadfastness Recommended, 12mo, 1769.

The Fearful Shame and Contempt of those Professed Christians who neglect to raise up Spiritual Children to Christ, 12mo, 1780.

The Necessity and Advantage of Earnest Prayer for the Lord's special direction in the choice of Pastors, 12mo, 1783.

Miscellaneous Pamphlets.

A Brief Dissertation concerning the Righteousness of Christ, 1759.

Letters on the Constitution, Government, and Discipline of the Christian Church, 12mo, 1767.

The Re-exhibition of the Testimony Vindicated in opposition to the unfair account given of it by the Rey. Adam Gib, 8vo, 1780.

The Oracles of Christ and the Abominations of Antichrist compared ; or, A Brief View of the Errors, Impieties, and Inhumanities of Popery, 12mo, 1779.

The Absurdity and Perfidy of all Authoritative Toleration of Gross Heresy, Blasphemy, Idolatry, and Popery, in Britain, in Two Letters to a Friend, 12mo, 1780.

Thoughts on the Travelling of the Mail on the Lord's Day, 12mo, 1785.

Since his death the following have been published :—

Select Remains, 12mo, 1789.

Posthumous Works, 12mo, 1797.

Apology for the more Frequent Administration of the Lord's Supper, 1804.

It will be seen from this list that there was much of system in his writings. They consisted, in fact, of

classes of works of various kinds. Besides the two works on Church History which he published, he at one time contemplated a third, to contain a history of the Protestant churches of Switzerland, France, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and Hungary, which would have nearly completed a system of ecclesiastical history. Most of his works appear to have been prepared with a view to the supposed requirements of students under his charge.

He was perhaps the most voluminous religious writer of the day in Scotland. Some of his writings, during his lifetime, and still more since his death, designed for general use, passed through numerous editions, particularly his "Self-interpreting Bible," his *Dictionary of the Bible*, his *Concordance to the Holy Scriptures*, his *Christian Journal*, his *Catechisms*, both his large *Explication of the Shorter Catechism*, already mentioned, and his two small *Catechisms*.

Of these books the best known in the present day are "The Self-interpreting Bible," and the *Dictionary of the Bible*.

I have met, in this and in other lands, with not a few who bade me welcome as a descendant of the author of these; and more than one who has risen from humble life to high position in the Christian church, have told me the *Dictionary* was their first classic. One of these, Adam Niven, one of my fellow students, a preacher of great promise, who died young, attributed to it his conversion. He, too, had been a herd laddie, at first self-taught, but subsequently sent to King's College,

Aberdeen, by a gentleman who had perceived his worth. At college he carried every prize and honour; and in the highest test in mathematics no one would enter competition when it was announced that he contemplated doing so. The reward could only be obtained by a competition, and at length a student who had not the least chance of success, was induced, and consented on this ground, to enter the lists; and my friend showed his power by solving correctly every one of the problems proposed, which were the same as were being used at the time to determine the senior wranglership at Cambridge. While still a herd laddie, with little money, but an insatiable thirst for knowledge, a shepherd on an adjacent sheep walk lent to him the first volume of the *Dictionary*. In reading it he came upon a statement in regard to universal depravity. He thought it would be easy to demolish that notion; he made the attempt; he did not succeed to his satisfaction; he thought he would be more successful if he could bring forward cases of exception; he began with himself, but, to his astonishment and dismay, the more he pondered the case the more manifest did it become to him that whatever might be the case with others, he was a sinner, and had been a great sinner too; and he hated the book, and hated the author of it, and hated the shepherd who had lent it to him, as if all had been in conspiracy to disturb his peace. The book lay for weeks unopened, nor yet returned. But opening it one day without purpose he found a statement which brought home the conviction that though he was a great sinner, Christ was a great Saviour, and finding peace he resolved

to spend his life in telling of Christ and his love, and his power to save. Encouragements were given to him to enter the ministry of the Established Church if he were so disposed, but he found the fellowship after which he thirsted in the Congregational Church in Huntly. He subsequently went to the Congregational Theological Seminary at Highbury, where we met. He was invited to the pastorate of a church in Chatham of high reputation. Several conversions followed the ministrations of the first three Sabbaths; but before the day appointed for his ordination he burst a blood vessel and died.

That *Dictionary* was not written in vain.

A copy of it, in the handwriting of the author, was exhibited at the family gathering, and with it the fragments of the fifth copy of the Scriptures, which was worn to pieces by him in the preparation of the "Self-interpreting Bible."

The "Self-interpreting Bible" is so called because of the help given, or supposed to be given, by marginal references enabling the reader, without scholarship or teacher, to compare one statement of Scripture with another, on the same, or some nearly allied subject. It is still to a great extent the Family Bible of numbers in the humbler walks of life, but it is not confined to them. It may be it is kept more for show than for use; but even this tells something of the extent to which it may have been instrumental in forming the religious habits, and moulding the religious spirit of multitudes. The practical and devotional reflections appended to each chapter are read by many who neither care for the

marginal references, nor the commentary appended to the reflections. I have often been asked by strangers if it was my grandfather who wrote the Bible; I have heard of others being asked if they were descendants of him who did so; and I have heard of discussions among children whether he was the apostle John or John the Baptist! All which, even though attributable largely to mere inaccuracy of expression, speaks of the estimation in which this Bible is, or has been held. In distant lands it has been produced as forming a connecting link between my host or hostess and myself, and it is still appealed to as an authority on doctrinal and ecclesiastical subjects. A good many years ago I was travelling from Perth to Dundee. A farmer in the same carriage directed my attention to the site of Abernethy. I do not recollect in what connection. To his surprise I seemed to him to know more about Abernethy than he did, though he was a native of the neighbourhood; and on his asking how this happened to be the case, I told him of my grandfather having been born at Carpow, and lived in Abernethy. This led to enquiry as to my name. When this was given, he said with much gusto, "Eh! that's wonderfu; I belong to the Parish Kirk, and nae farther gane than last Sunday we had an ordination o' elders in the kirk; and the minister spak o' elders as if they were mair like augels than men. That wasna my experience o' them; and says I tae mysel', When I get hame I'll rax doun the Bible and see what John Broun says; and here I've met wi' his granson; Eh, man, Isn't that wonderfu'!" It might be wonderful to him, it certainly

was gratifying to me to learn that my grandfather was still a power in the land. Whatever may be said about conditional immortality, as that term is employed by some, there is a conditional immortality of another kind whereby a man may project his influence far into the future beyond his death, and though dead yet speak with effect; and that in yet another way than any which have been mentioned this may be done. In the preface to one at least of the editions of Scott's Commentary on the Bible it is mentioned by him that it was from the "Self-interpreting Bible" that he got what he considered the best plan upon which to work in the preparation of his.

I was amused with an incident communicated to me since the preceding pages were put to press. Speaking with a friend about the subject of this *Memoir* he told me that one day some time ago he saw in a shop window in Edinburgh, amongst other old and odd things, two portraits—one of him, and the other of his son Ebenezer, who was minister of Inverkeithing. He went in to price, and, if practicable, purchase them; and with affected carelessness, he said to the old woman in charge, "An' what will ye be asking for these?" He was told the price; and attempting to chaffer her said, "Ae, but ye'll tak' less than that?" "Tak' less than that!" said the woman, with real or well feigned contempt, "Tak' less than that! Laddie d'ye ken' wha they are? They're twa o' the Brouns!" He made the purchase, and the delight with which he told the story of his bargaining, and the result, spoke a modern

instance of what is referred to in the old, but not antiquated Hebrew proverb, which has come down from the days of Solomon, a thousand years before the coming of Christ, if not from a still more remote antiquity: "It is nought; it is nought, sayeth the buyer; but when he is gone he boasteth."

"The first book which he published," writes his son, Dr William Brown, "was that entitled *An Help for the Ignorant: Being an Essay towards an Easy Explication of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Composed for the Young Ones of his own Congregation*. On the publication of this volume (for a volume it was, of nearly 400 pages), a great outcry was raised against it by some few of the Antiburgher brethren, as containing new and strange doctrine; even the heavy charges of heresy, blasphemy, and the like, were not spared. A pamphlet by the Rev. Mr Dalziel of Earlston was characterised by peculiar bitterness and asperity. In his *Catechism* Mr Brown had taught that though Christ's righteousness is infinitely valuable in itself, yet it is imputed to believers only in proportion to their need, and to the demands which the law has upon them, so as to constitute them as perfectly righteous in law as the law requires them to be, but not in such proportion as to render them infinitely righteous. His assailants, on the other hand, maintained that in justification the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us in its *whole infinite value*, as it is formally the righteousness of a God-man, so as to con-

stitute us, in law-reckoning, as *infinitely righteous* as the person of Christ God-man.*

“ We would scarcely, however, have thought it worth while to notice the matter at all, had it not been that it gave occasion to an exemplification of the Christian temper of Mr Brown which is not undeserving of mention. In vindication of his sentiments he published a small pamphlet entitled *A Brief Dissertation Concerning the Righteousness of Christ*; and in the preface to it, after stating his own views on the points in question, he adds: ‘ I have much more charity for the ministers of that party than to suspect the bulk of them are capable of imbibing, even through inadvertency, an old Antinomian and Familistic error; or have so small acquaintance with the writings of Protestant divines as to imagine that I am the first who ever asserted that Christ’s infinite righteousness is imputed to believers *precisely in proportion to their need*, and the demands of the broken law on them, or so as to make them perfectly and completely righteous in law, but not *in such proportion* as to render them *infinitely* holy, righteous, comely, or valuable in law; and had these few, who, it seems, are otherwise disposed, signified their scruples to me in a Christian manner, either by word or writ, I doubt not but I should have offered them such replies and solutions as might have prevented that conduct, which (though charity obliges me to hope, was entirely an inadvertent and well-

* *Brief Dissertation Concerning the Righteousness of Christ* By John Brown. 2nd Edition, pp. 3-6.

designed mistake), some will readily reckon a wounding of truth, a dishonouring of Christ, an instructing of their people to revile, and in the issue, an injuring of their own reputation among impartial men. But now that the fact is committed, though I reckon it my duty to contribute my weak endeavours towards the support of injured truth, and to restore to the Scriptures and the most eminent Protestant divines, their due honour of being my instructors in this point, yet, instead of intending to resent, with similar conduct, the injury these reverend brethren have done me, I reckon myself, on account thereof, so much the more effectually obliged by the Christian law to contribute my utmost endeavours towards the advancement of their welfare, spiritual or temporal,—and am resolved through grace to discharge these obligations, as Providence shall give opportunity for the same. Let them do to or wish me what they will, may their portion be redemption through the blood of Jesus, even ‘the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;’ and call me what they please, may the Lord call them ‘the holy ones, the redeemed of the Lord, sought out and not forsaken!’” *

In another connection he writes :—

“Though Mr Brown early took his side, we never find him manifesting unchristian feelings toward the opposite party. In a letter which he wrote not long before his death to the Rev. Archibald Bruce, of Whitburn, the respected professor of divinity of the

* Dissertation Concerning the Righteousness of Christ, p. 3.

Antiburgher body, he thus expressed himself: 'Our conduct on both sides of the Secession I have often thought to be like that of two travellers, both walking on the same road, not far from one another, but in consequence of a thick mist suddenly come on they cannot see one another, and each suppose the other to be off the road. After some time the darkness is removed, and they are quite surprised to find that they are both on the road, and had been all along so near one another.'* And again:—

“The learning of Mr Brown was very considerable. His knowledge of languages will appear the more extraordinary, when it is considered that he never enjoyed the assistance of a teacher, except for about a month at the Latin. He was, notwithstanding, a good Latin scholar. Of Greek, but especially of Hebrew, he possessed a critical knowledge. He could read and translate the French, Italian, Dutch, and German languages; and also the Arabic, Persic, Syriac, and Ethiopic. He gave attention to natural and moral philosophy, but his favourite reading was history and divinity, his knowledge of which is sufficiently testified by his writings. His acquaintance with the Bible was singular. Seldom was a text referred to but he could repeat it, explain its meaning, and point out its connection with the context.† But, though somewhat of a universal scholar, he made no display of his learning. It would almost seem as if he studiously concealed it.

* *Christian Repository*, 1819, p. 610.

† *Posthumous Works*, p. 26.

It is, we think, a defect in some of his writings, particularly those which relate to matters of fact, that he so seldom refers to his authorities. This probably arose, in a great degree, from a wish to avoid everything like exhibition or display."

His first *Catechism for Children* has been translated both into Malay and Chinese. It is no disparagement to his other works that they are not in such demand now as they were a hundred years ago, and for many years before, and many years after that. What was in keeping with the demands of a former day may have been useful in its day, though it may not be in keeping with the demands of the present. Science is progressive, and it may possibly be correct to say the same of culture, though both sciences and culture have been lost. And amongst other memorable sayings of our Lord is this: "No man putteth a piece of new cloth into an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish. But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved." These works may be likened to old bottles which have served their purpose. But they may also be taken as high water marks, telling at once of his high estimation of spiritual truths, and of the advance made by him in theological views, prompting us to endeavours after higher growth in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, that we, with what we consider our superior attainments and greater privileges, may come behind in no gift.

I have often heard quoted by my father as a saying of my grandfather in effect : " I have hunted after all the lawful knowledge of the sons of men ; but all would I give to know more of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord." And another to this effect : " I do not know of any special intellectual gift which God has given to me unless it be the power of perseverance."

I have not met with any record of these expressions in full of the actuating principle of his studies ; but separate expressions of both statements are not wanting. Sayings or doings illustrative of these crowd upon me.

Of his hunting after knowledge the *resumés* of different works in his handwriting still existent, and already referred to, supply indications. These, together with the contents of his published works, indicate the wide range of his studies. Of his perseverance in study indications are given in the letter in which he defends himself against the charge of having got his learning through Satanic aid. And of his devout spirit illustrations innumerable may be found in the reflections appended to the chapters of Scripture in his "Self-interpreting Bible."

The sentiments indicated have been by inheritance transmitted to descendants of his, affected it may be to some extent by maternal influences, but without disturbance of the subordination of attainments in science, whether theological or physical, to the maintenance of a devout feeling of adoration and worship.

There have been amongst his descendants expositors of God's word, expositors of God's works, and expositors of God's law of working in creation, in physiology,

in ethics, and in politics, and recognised philanthropists and living apostles known and read by many. The lives of these, and the results of their life works, whatever these may be, are of much more importance than literary work done by them, but of this alone can mention be made in this connection.

I am of opinion, and that opinion is based on knowledge of facts, that with scarcely an exception, if exception there be, his writings are more generally diffused, and better known in Scotland, in Wales, in Canada, and in the United States, than are the writings of any one, and it may be of any or all of his descendants, with all the facilities of publication and other advantages which these have enjoyed. And I do not stand alone in holding this opinion.

XXII.

WHAT I have said in regard to certain expressions occurring in his autobiography, his letters, and his discourses, I think it well to repeat. I know it to be the case that by many the expressions employed by him in these in regard to sin, and guilt, and redemption, are deemed extravagant and hyperbolic. I believe this to be erroneous as to the fact, and indubitably erroneous in so far as it may be considered descriptive of the expressions as expressive of the feelings entertained by him, and which he desired to express.

Paul in an argument which may be considered an amplification of the principle underlying almost the whole of the teaching of Christ that the sanctimoniousness of the Jews was something altogether different from true sanctity, availing himself of an expression of David, says: "As it is written there is none righteous no not one," and amplifies this by citing other passages of the Hebrew Scriptures of like tenure; and in conclusion, affirms of Jew and Gentile alike, there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God. Nor did he consider himself an exception, but speaks of himself as the chief of sinners. And as felt the apostle, so felt he both in regard to others and in regard to himself. Neither in the one case nor in the other is there any such appearance of these expressions being used as mere words of course, as may be perceived in many of the general confessions of sinful-

ness heard in Christian churches; nor is there any appearance of their being made use of under an impression that their doing so would commend the speaker to men, and perhaps to God, as a very, very good person, such as often presents itself in the confessions of many who would probably be confounded and enraged if either men or God took the words made use of by them as exactly descriptive either of them, or of their estimate of themselves. By Paul and by him, by the expression "The Glory of God," appears to have been understood the absolute moral and spiritual perfections referred to, but not defined or described, by each and all combined of the moral excellencies attributed to him by mortals, who are the creatures of a day, knowing nothing, and which in recognition of this fact are spoken of by Christian agnostics only as *attributes* which they in their ignorance, and it may be intellectual and moral inability to comprehend absolute perfection, in human thought and human phrase only attribute to him—moral excellences which they attribute to him, as being something like unto that of which they fain would speak when they speak of the Holy Lord God dwelling in light which is unapproachable; Whom no man hath seen or can see; and in Whom there is no darkness at all, no imperfections, intellectual or spiritual, or of any other character whatsoever.

Nor were the perfections attributed to God mere fancies; they were excellencies seen in Christ, who was described by the apostle as "God manifest in the flesh;" of whom it was affirmed that in him "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" and who again was

described as "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person—" a living manifestation of goodness and love, of whom, irrespective of all that might be affirmed in philosophic theologic dogmata in regard to his nature, whether he were God or man, human or divine, or both God and man in two distinct natures, but one person, it was written by John the apostle,— "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life—for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us—that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you."

This was his standard of what was right; and his conception of this was the standard by which he compared himself, and compared others, when he had occasion so to do. And, as a consequence of this, we find that in private life, as in the church and the lecture room, he was the devout Christian. His son, Dr. William Brown, writes :—

"The personal religion of Mr Brown was of a high order. He was characterised by deep, serious, earnest piety. He was remarkable for a powerful sense of his own sinfulness, especially of sins of the heart. Many will perhaps wonder at the language which he often employs on this subject. Having no such feelings themselves, they may be apt to think it very extreme, but he had a more than ordinary lively sense of the strictness and spirituality of the divine law, and he saw

how much he fell short, both in heart and life, of its requirements. His deep sense of his sinfulness led him to give a cordial acceptance to the salvation of Christ as freely offered in the Gospel. Salvation by grace was a doctrine peculiarly precious to his soul, and it was his special delight to preach it to others. He felt that were it not for the rich, free, sovereign grace of God, neither he nor any other sinner of the human family could hope to be saved. He appears during the greater part of his life to have enjoyed a comfortable hope of his interest in Christ, and of 'the glory which shall be revealed.' On this subject he holds undoubting language—we recollect of no instance of his giving utterance to doubts or fears. He was little taken up about the world or worldly matters, but appears to have lived very much under the influence of spiritual and eternal things. The holy breathings of his soul may be seen in many of his writings."

And again, "Much study, combined with a temper naturally serious, gave a gravity to his manners which those who were little acquainted with him were apt to mistake for severity. But though grave he was not gloomy. Among his friends he was agreeable and cheerful. His conversation abounded with religious anecdote, and was at times enlivened with innocent pleasantry. But in general it was more distinguished for its solidity than its brilliancy; its seriousness than its humour."

And again, "He was remarkable for his *diligence* in study. As his congregation, though respectable for the character of its members, was not numerous, it

allowed him to follow in this respect the natural bent of his mind. He was never more in his element than when in his study, and here he spent the greater part of his time. He was an early riser. In summer he used to rise between four and five in the morning, and in winter at six. From the time he rose he usually continued, except during the intervals of meals and family worship, in close study till eight o'clock in the evening. Formal visits he disliked exceedingly, and often said he would rather write a sermon than spend an hour in them. His people knew his disposition in this respect, and seldom invited him out, or called upon him unless on some important or useful errand."*

Similar to this is the account which he gives of himself cited above [*ante* p. 124.] But be it noted the account speaks of cheerfulness, and anecdote, and innocent pleasantness; and this is in keeping with all that I have heard of his life and conversation.

One of my father's remembrances of his childhood was sitting on his knee having his head stroked, and being called Samuel my little Prophet, and all his associated feelings with this were pleasurable. His older sister, Janet, supplemented the pleasing memory by telling of her remembrances of sitting at the same time on the other knee, and listening with ever fresh delight to her father singing what seemed to be his favourite Latin song—the song was Horace's famous ode *Aquam Memento; Lib. II. Carmen III. ad*

Quintum Dellium. Of this my deceased brother, Dr. Samuel Brown, writes:—

“A kinsman of the singer’s (Dr. John Brown the physician, his great-grandson in the line direct, being the oldest son of his oldest son’s oldest son) says it is murder to do an ode by Q. Horatius Flaccus into English verse; but here is a bit of it in rather literal prose: ‘Remember to keep your mind easy in hard times, and restrain it from exultation in good fortune; for, Dellius, you are sure to die, whether you live all your span in sorrow, or bless yourself with choice Falernian lying on secluded swards the live-long festive day. So where the tall pine and the white poplar love to interweave a hospitable shade with their boughs, and the running stream labours to tremble up the sloping bank, bid them carry wines and oils, and the too short-lived flowers of the pleasant rose, as long as your purse and your age and the atrocious thread of the Sisters Three permit,’ &c., &c. A jolly sweet song for the manse of a Scottish puritan and nonconformist, all of the olden time, is it not!”

And he adds:—“It is pleasant to think of this the wittiest and the wisest, or at least the gayest and the sweetest, of Roman court-poets and worldlings, giving thus an evening voice to the peaceful feelings of the over-wearied Scotch divine, when resting from his labours in the bosom of his family. It is really curious to think of the writer of those ponderous editions and *Dictionaries of the Bible* coming down stairs to tea from his study, where he had been closely engaged (from four or five in the morning) perhaps inditing one

of his own terrible dehortations, or else adding Scottish intensity to a dogma of John Calvin's,—and then chanting among his children so graceful an exhortation to equanimity in the season of affliction from the page of the gayest and wisest of ancient courtly moralists:—but such are some of the slenderer living threads, by which the far-stretching community of human life is maintained !”

All that I have heard of his home life is in keeping with this.

Of his second son, Ebenezer, the solemn preacher spoken of above, there are no end of stories of boyish pranks which he played in his early life, the repetition of any one of which still provokes loud laughter—no mere smile. In one of the portraits of my grandfather which has been preserved (not that given as a frontispiece to this volume, which was said by my grandmother, in her widowhood, to resemble him most), there is an expression about the lip and about the eye which tells that he could, and probably did, enter into the fun of these, even while he either gently, like Eli, reprov'd, or more seriously admonished the boy—who was still a boy, and had not come under the deep spiritual influence which afterwards moulded his character.

Of the stories told of him some are certainly false; this I affirm on the assurance of my grandmother. Of others, it is affirmed by his son and biographer, that they are almost entirely without foundation. I enjoy greatly these stories; and it does not affect my enjoy-

ment of them whether they be true or greatly fictitious ; but I consider it due both to him and to his father to append the portraiture of him, drawn with filial affection by his son, the Rev. John Brown, a licentiate of the Secession Church, who writes : " Of the circumstances relating to his earlier years, few, except what are of a very general nature, can now be traced. His character, it has been stated, was marked by much liveliness of disposition, and an ardent love of active amusement. He was, if thought may for a moment glance to his own youthful feelings playfully expressed, ' the boy of spirit ;' and the consciousness thus intimated was quite in accordance with his general habits. These, however, were far from being uninfluenced by religion. He himself was wont, in after life, when urging on his family the advantages of early piety, to remark, that if ever he felt the sweetness of Divine truths, it was when he was comparatively a child. ' Those,' said he, ' were my best days. Then I felt delight in the things of God, far more than I have ever done since. I loved, indeed, my play, but prayer was at the same time peculiarly pleasant to me.' With him, as with the most of them who have been honoured with distinguished usefulness in the church, the foundations of future eminence were deeply laid in the devotedness of first years to the Redeemer.

" These impressions were, in all probability, to be attributed, under the Divine blessing, to the benign influence of parental instruction. Through this influence, undoubtedly, they became more deep and permanent. Sitting at the feet of a father, the

'hallowed pathos' of whose address was eminently calculated to affect the heart, he was frequently the subject of lively emotion. He 'heard him with delight, and was much impressed by his words.' The solemn feeling of the parent appears, indeed, even then, to have begun to descend upon the character of the son. For in nothing was he, of whom we write, from the first, more remarkable, than in the solemnity of his thought and manner, when the subjects of consideration were the great things of God.

"And, if the silent influences of maternal care were such as could always be followed by our observation, we would probably discover, that in the instance before us, these were by no means of a feeble nature; and that the religious affections of the youthful disciple, the future herald of the cross, bore, as they were matured into the piety of manlier life, the impress, deeply inserted, of a Christian mother's early superintendence.

"The death of this mother, when Ebenezer was about twelve years of age, is said to have greatly affected him; and, by some of his relatives, indeed, has been considered as the event which led to the all-important change implied in the heart being turned unto God. A treatise of Brookes (an author once well known in the religious world), bearing the title, *Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver*, is stated also to have contributed to this change of mind."*

* The change is said to have passed upon him while prostrated with fever. Seeing his father sitting by his bedside reading the newspaper

In my early life I heard many stories about the students from an estimable old lady, like to Scottish ladies of a century ago, who seems to have been somewhat of a flirt among them. Some of these were of a serious character. He used to visit them at their lodgings, as a father or a grandfather might his boys; and sometimes he did so before breakfast. On one occasion going to a room where two lodged, one only was up, but the other, hearing his footstep, got up at once, and slipped into a kind of dressing closet. On the professor asking for him he was told he's in the closet. "Oh," said he, "We're too little there," little suspecting the equivoque in the reply given. And in keeping with this were many of the stories told.

Another story, given on the authority of my grandmother his widow, is to the effect, that coming one day on some such visit upon some of his students making so great din in the room that they heard not his footstep; entering, without knocking—or if he knocked, his knock unheard, he said:—"Gentlemen, the *Spectator* says never more than six should speak at once." This might be said with cynicism or with severity, but it is more in keeping with all that I know to suppose it spoken with a roguish laugh. Such are the stories in regard to his personal intercourse with the students which

he said, "Father, are you reading the account of my death?" "No, my man, you are not dead." "Oh yes I am, but in the paper it does not give my name; it only says A young man."

From this fever he arose a new man, renewed in the spirit of his mind, generally solemn, but in every way the reverse of austere.

J. C. B.

have come down through the century, and I never heard one of a contrary character.*

There are not wanting other serious tales of him.

It is reported in the family that crossing the Firth of Forth, at Queensferry, along with a Highland laird in the boat, he was grieved with the ribald profanity of the latter. When they landed, and the other passengers had dispersed, he went up to him, and respectfully spoke to him regarding the sin of profanity. The laird

* One of the stories of these times of long long ago, told to me by my aged, but sprightly friend, known amongst the students, in the days of her youth, by the pseudonym of Miss Spry, related to this practice of the professor visiting the students, as a father might his children in lodgings from home, at all sorts of times; but which beyond this does not affect the subject of memoir. On one occasion a number of the students had a meeting for a *gaudeamus* or jollification in the back shop of one of the members of the church, and got him to procure for them a bottle of wine. While they were enjoying their merry-making there was heard in the shop a well-known foot-fall with rhythmic accompaniment of the professor's staff, and the enquiry: "Are there any of my young men with you, Mr Lilly?" And Mr Lilly's reply, "O yes, Mr Brown, they're in the back shop." Immediately there was a hurried emptying and pocketing of wine glasses, and endeavours to conceal the bottle, in the midst of which proceedings the door was opened, when, to the relief of all, one of them, choking with laughter, cried out, "Oh it's only Sandy Waugh." It was Sandy Waugh, afterwards the Rev. Dr. Waugh, of London, beloved by everybody who knew him, and supposed to have been the favourite of my friend who told me the tale. And with uproarious greetings, this prince of goodfellows, the sprightliest of them all, was welcomed among them with reciprocal explanations of why they had not asked him to join them; and how he had by sign indicated to their host, Mr Lilly, the prank he was about to play them.

courteously thanked him ; and thanked him for not exposing him under reproof, to their fellow passengers ; adding, " Had you done that, I might have run you through with my sword."

This incident must not be confounded with another which occurred to his son Ebenezer, the minister in Inverkeithing ; or with another which is said to have occurred to himself. In the former, his son, crossing the ferry, along with an officer who was profuse in the use of profane expletives, spoke to him of the evil of the practice. Being met with the cynical demand, " Pray, who are you ? Some poor Seceder minister I doot nae !" The minister of God replied with solemn voice and mien : " Sir, you do the Seceders too great honour in supposing that no one but a Seceder minister would dare to reprove a profane swearer taking God's name in vain."

In the other case, crossing the ferry it is said with a number of roughs, these took a malicious pleasure in jostling him ; but the boat being in peril before they landed, they besought him to pray with them, and on landing gathered round him and listened attentively, while standing on a cask he preached to them salvation.

But there are not awanting takes of pleasantries such as are referred to by his son in the statement I have quoted.

It is told in the family, and believed, that on one occasion riding a lame horse through Tranent, which is on the road between Haddington and Musselburgh, some one called after him : " Ae ! Mr Brown, the Bible says

'The legs o' the lame are no equal,' which called forth the prompt reply: "Ay, and it says: 'So is a parable in the mouth of a fool!'" In the same book of Proverbs it is written, "Answer a fool according to his folly; lest he be wise in his own conceit."

Apparently he could enjoy a joke, and friends could joke with him. Met one day by Skirving, the Scottish painter, Mr Skirving said, with assumed earnestness: "Mr Brown we've got a new moon; can you, with your extensive lore, tell to me what's done with all the old ones? I'll tell you what I think; and you can tell me if I am wrong. I think they are cut up and made into stars." Thus could these friends of the last century, now seen obscurely through the mists of four generations, while they were in the flesh chaff, and laugh, and banter, with laughing face and sprightly humour.

On another occasion going to visit some member of his congregation at North Berwick, he found it convenient to shorten the way by riding through the grounds of Balgone, the residence of the Suttie's. Meeting a man near one of the gates he accosted him, "Honest man, will you open that gate for me?" The man smiled, and did so. He afterwards learned that it was the Baronet himself! As a contribution to a cumulative argument I find the frank, familiar, courteous style of address, "Honest man," taken in connection with what has previously been stated, in accordance with the idea I have formed of him—a man of deep devout feeling, serious when seriousness was natural, but altogether devoid of sanctimoniousness or austerity,

In so far as my experience, my observation, and my knowledge of anatomy and physiology can throw light upon the matter, I see nothing in this incompatible with his religious views, such as they appear in his autobiography, his letters, and his published works. I do not find intensity of thought or feeling to be sustained by continuous mental pre-occupation with the subject matter to which it relates, but generally the result of a complete intermission for a time more or less prolonged, occupied with other matters, or spent in sleep. And it appears to me that so is it also with others. Apparently it is an organic law that action is followed by re-action, resistance to which is productive of damage to tissues, followed by dis-ease, in-sanity, and it may be death. I find the most healthful tone not to be the result of continuous uninterrupted excitement, but, when, of intention or otherwise, the stimulus has been withdrawn for a time, and thereafter brought into renewed action; and if it be admitted that the intense conviction and feeling underlying confessions and dehortations which have been under consideration be not incompatible with such gentle amiability as has been referred to, it may be that the very intensity which has been referred to may have been the result of his again bringing the mind to dwell upon the matter calling them forth after having rested or been refreshed by more comprehensive study, or by such a big-hearted view of nature as is manifested in a work to which he has himself referred, *The Christian Journal*; or *Common Incidents of Spiritual Instructors*, being a

series of Meditations on a Spring, Summer, Harvest, Winter, and Sabbath day.*

* There are several stories still floating about, which, though they may seem to have nothing to do with him, may be glanced at. Take one. The Earl of Wemyss of that day, in accordance with a usage then not uncommon with men in his rank, kept a fool, Willie Howison, of whom there are several traditions—some comic, some serious. He used to go sometimes to the Evening Exercise as it was called, in the Burgher Meeting-house. One evening one of the members of the congregation, a well-known dressmaker in the town, having fallen asleep, her head resting on the top of the book-board of the seat behind, her face turned up, and her mouth gaping wide. Willie saw this; leaving his seat he slipped away beside her, and looking to the minister said in a loud whisper, heard over the whole church, "Sir, wi'll I du'd?" And without awaiting the sanction, kissed her with a loud smack heard by all,—with what results any one may fancy. One of these was that she was never seen to sleep in the church again!

XXIII.

MY grandfather was twice married. His first wife, Mrs Janet Thomson, as she is designated in the notices of her about the time of her marriage, was a daughter of Mr John Thomson, a merchant in Musselburgh.

Mr Thomson was born in the parish of Strathmiglo, Fifeshire, in 1700. His ancestors had succeeded one another in the same farm for several centuries, contented with a simple competence, and unambitious of extending their possessions. His grandfather was a steady Presbyterian in the days of the covenanters, and was subjected to great hardships because he would not submit to the impositions of Charles and James.

He was early deprived of his parents, and was taken under the care of an elder brother who lived in Pathhead, Kirkcaldy, whose kindness he was able afterwards gratefully to repay.

He used to relate that in his eleventh year, when he was walking one Sabbath morning to public worship in the church at Abbotshall, he was arrested by the importance of the first question in the *Shorter Catechism*, "What is the chief end of man?" This led him into a train of enquiry, which was the means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, of making him acquainted with the fallen guilty state of man, and of the method of recovery through the mercy of God, by the righteousness of Christ. The grace of God which thus early appeared in him afterwards evidenced its

power by his sober, righteous, godly life. At Leith, where he resided for a few years, his knowledge of divine things was increased, and his religious principles were improved and strengthened by the ministry of Mr Shaw.

In 1727 he removed to Musselburgh, and there spent the remainder of his days, where by diligence in business, and solid piety, and inflexible integrity, he took a good position, and commanded universal respect.

After mature deliberation, and much prayer, he joined the four brethren who, seceding from the Established Church, founded the Secession; and he found himself happy under the ministry of Mr Adam Gib, in Edinburgh, and Mr Hutton, in Dalkeith. When the number of Seceders increased in Musselburgh, so that they were able to build a meeting-house for themselves, they called as their minister Mr James Scott, a gentleman described as possessing in an eminent degree the meekness, gentleness, and wisdom of his Master. Mr Thomson greatly enjoyed his ministrations; but he did not live long to do so.

His grandson, the minister in Whitburn, to whose notice of him, in a volume entitled *Memoirs of Private Christians*, I am indebted for these particulars, writes: "It is worthy of remark that in the rebellion of 1745 and 1746, Government was much indebted to the exertions of the Seceders in Scotland in opposition to the Pretender. Maintaining the principles of the Presbyterians, who had suffered under the tyrannical reigns of the royal brothers, the dissenters from the Church of Scotland were attached from principle and gratitude to the

reigning family under whom they enjoyed the inestimable blessing of liberty of conscience. Dreading a repetition of the severities under which their fathers groaned, they were the first to march into the field to oppose the re-establishment of the Popish family. Among the rest, Mr Thomson was a volunteer in the service, and suffered considerably from the Jacobites in Musselburgh for his attachment to the House of Hanover."

Of Mr Thomson I have often heard my father tell that at the time of the battle at Prestonpans a Highlander came into his shop and demanded his money, which in a calm but laconic answer, he refused to give him. The Highland soldier then locking the door, as he thought, and drawing his claymore, said, "Don't you know that your life is in my hands?" "I'm no sae sure o' that. My life's in God's hand!" was the answer. An officer of the highland host happened to be passing, and having heard the loud voice of the soldier, entered and at once arrested his assailant: thus he was delivered out of the hand of the enemy. It was always added "never before or afterwards was the lock known to have missed its hold." Without questioning the Providential character of the occurrence, I may state I suppose the would-be robber in his flurry turned the key before the door was completely closed, and thus the bolt missed the hasp. But be this as it may, I have ever admired the simple expression of faith in God given in reply to the boastful threat—"Don't you know that your life's in my hand?" "I'm no sae sure o' that. My life's in God's hand!"

“Mr Thomson,” writes his grandson in the volume cited, “was remarkable for the uniform fervour of his piety, and for his attention to the exercises of secret devotion. It was his meat and his drink to wait upon God in everything. To promote the vigour and application of his mind in these sacred exercises, he frequently imposed upon himself an abstinence from food, devoting whole days to personal fasting or solemn religious thanksgiving. So great was his delight in meditating upon the law of God, that it was his usual practice to choose a passage of Scripture for the subject of his meditation from the time that he retired to rest, till sleep should overpower his sense; and when he awoke he was still with God. Seldom did he display marks of displeasure, except when interrupted in these sacred exercises in his sweet communion with his Father in Christ. Being a man of prayer, everything almost occasioned an errand to the Throne of Grace.

“In his attendance upon public worship, he was regular and exemplary. No slight excuse was in his opinion sufficient to warrant absence from the ordinances of divine grace. Even in extreme bodily weakness, he lost no opportunity of attending the pleasing and profitable services of religious worship. At the dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper he often enjoyed communion with the God of ordinances. He sometimes mentioned, with that modesty which ever attends true religion, that this had been eminently the case in Edinburgh, Stow, and Linton in Tweeddale. Suitable to his personal religion was his desire to promote the extension of the Kingdom of Christ. As he was rich in

faith, so he was eminent for good works. He proved the reality of the Grace of God in his heart by living righteously in the world. An Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile, his conduct in business was marked by the strictest and most honourable integrity. As a neighbour he was remarkable for that meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.

“When it pleased the Almighty to appoint to him wearisome nights, he was patient under the hand, and resigned to the will of God. He studied to imitate the conduct of his great Master, and to be a follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

“His death was conformable to his life, and showed the power of religion in the last and trying hour. A short time before his death he begged his friends to sing the 91st Psalm from the 14th to the 17th verse.

Because on me he set his love,
I'll save and set him free ;
Because my great name he hath known
I will him set on high.

He'll call on me, I'll answer him ;
I will be with him still
In trouble, to deliver him,
And honour him I will.

With length of days unto his mind
I will him satisfy ;
I also my salvation
Will cause his eyes to see.

“After singing these lines as the sum of his experience, and joining in prayer with his dearly beloved

minister, Mr Scott, he fell asleep in Jesus, 1st December, 1774, aged 74."

Mrs Janet was his only daughter, and apparently his only child. She is described as similar to her father in piety, prudence, and gentleness of manners.

Their married life extended over about eighteen years. They had several children, but of these only two survived her—John and Ebenezer.

Speaking of her death, he says:—"I confidently trust she went to her first and best husband." In a letter written to an aged friend about this time, he also says, "I am the old man still, sinning over the belly of troubles, convictions, and everything else. Only God can tell how inconsistent my sermons and my inward life before God are; and yet, after all, I cannot say he is a 'barren wilderness or land of drought.' Even yesterday he seemed to smile, and enable my soul to say, Amen, to the last clause of Zech. xiii. 9. In short my life is and has been a kind of almost perpetual strife between God and my soul. He strives to overcome my enmity and wickedness with his mercies, and I strive to overcome his mercy with my enmity and wickedness. Astonishingly kind on his side, but worse than diabolically wicked on mine! After all, I wish and hope that he, not I, may obtain the victory at last. Time not allowing me to enlarge, I conclude, requesting your earnest prayers for me, and my congregation and students. One thing galls me with respect to my departed consort, that I did so little for the furtherance of her spiritual comfort and eternal salvation, and

profited so little by her. Take heed, you and J-----, and play not the fool as I did."

This reference to painful regret, and the occasion of it, throws some light on what to some has seemed strange. He married again, after about two years of widowhood. On the day after his second marriage, the daughter of one of the elders of the congregation, whom he highly esteemed, who was a personal friend of the bride, called at the manse, and learned that he was spending the day in fasting and prayer—Prayer, I doubt not, that he and his wife might be enabled to live together, "as being heirs together of the grace of life."

His second wife was Mrs Violet Croumbie, who also is so designated in notices of the time. She was the daughter of Mr William Croumbie, merchant in Stenton, a man of like character. In the old church-yard in Stenton is a tombstone with the following inscription :—

WILLIAM CROUMBIE,

Died January, 1723, aged 67.

KETTIE HIS SPOUSE,

Died January, 1749, aged

WILLIAM CROUMBIE SHAW,

Died 6th May 1742, aged about 42 years.

MARGARET NICOLSON, HIS SPOUSE,

Died 6th March, 1748.

The Croumbie's had their central store at Stenton, but they regularly at one time came to Haddington, and opened shop there on Friday, the market day; and Haddington became ultimately their sole place of business, whence they travelled the county for orders.

William Croumbie, the father of my grandmother, left a very large young family of orphans, who owed much to the motherly charge taken of them by a faithful old servant, whose praises I have often heard in the days of my childhood; and moved almost to tears I have sympathised with the sympathy said to have been felt by my grandfather on seeing the long row of fatherless-children's shoes, black and shining, laid out for them by her on the Saturday evening.

The common place book, in the hand-writing of my grandfather, which was exhibited at the family gathering, opens with the following family record of his second family:—

John Brown and Violet Croumbie were married January 19th, 1773.
Our 1st child, William, was born January 9th, 1774, and died February 4th.

Our 2nd child, William, born November 14th, 1774.

Our 3rd child, Thomas, born April 5th, 1776.

Our 4th child, Janet, born December 2nd, 1777.

Our 5th child, Samuel, was born April 30th, 1779.

Our 2nd child, William, died May 7th, 1779.

Our 6th child, Peggy, was born August 10th, 1780.

Our 7th child, David, was born April 2nd, 1782.

Our 8th child, William, was born on December, 1783.

Our 9th child, Kelly, was born May 7th, 1785, and died the 23rd.

On a second page is written in another hand—

The Rev. Mr John Brown died 19th of June, 1787.

Peggie Brown died March, 1790.

When on his deathbed, observing the concern about his welfare manifested by his wife, he said: "Now no doubt you do not wish to hear of my departure; but

thy Maker is thy husband ; the Lord of Hosts is his name. He can infinitely more than supply the want of me." And she was provided for in her widowhood. I have pleasant memories of hours spent by her side in her widow's chamber in Haddington. She afterwards removed to Edinburgh, where she resided with her daughter Janet, then also a widow, Mrs Patterson, till she died.

My brother, Dr Samuel Brown, writing of her in her widowhood, says :—" Violet Croumbie, by the consenting accounts of all who remember her, was a superior and even a remarkable woman ; clear-headed, critical, and acute in perception, at the same time that she was frugal, industrious, and a notable house-mother. In short, it is well known among her surviving connexions and relatives that, to a personal air and manners distinguished above her station in life, she added not only great economy and tireless industry, but also the charm of a stored and cultivated mind. She was especially voracious of books, a thing not to be commended perhaps ; and literally read the libraries of the burgh dry."

As has already been mentioned, at the death of my grandfather, the Rev. Mr Scott, one of the parish ministers, with Christian generosity, offered to my grandmother to take one of the sons, and educate and bring him up in his family as if he were his own son. In a spirit equally Christian the offer was courteously declined. But an offer somewhat similar, made by her brother in regard to my father, was accepted. Of him my brother writes :—

“ This self-constituted guardian of our little Prophet, John Croumbie namely, was an amiable, bountiful, singularly pious, and every way memorable Christian man ; as well as a rather ungainly, grim-visaged, overscrupulous, nervous, and eccentric old bachelor. Haddington is redolent of his good name yet. He too had been orphaned in childhood, together with quite a troop of young brothers and sisters. They were the children, and he proved the last representative in kind, of a family of what might be called Wholesale Pedlars. The Croumbies of Stenton had for generations supplied the travelling dealers of their day and district with their miscellaneous wares ;—a day of the minimum of centralisation, and a district co-extensive with the south of Scotland, and stretching down into the northern English counties. It was the business of people following their way of trade to stand between the manufacturer and the merchant proper, on the one hand, and those wandering waresmen of whom Wordsworth’s moralising Pedlar is the poetical type, on the other. In fact, though they did not mount the pack themselves, these Croumbies regularly belonged to the Guild of Travelling Packmen. As locomotion and transportation became easier, the process of centralisation advanced, and small places such as Stenton lost the possibility of importance ; and the like of Mr Croumbie is found fairly settled in the county town, under the style of what is still called a merchant in some parts of Scotland, a kind of tradesman now transformed into the commonplace shopkeeper. There were other Croumbies in the county, kindred with these, and moving in

the same good middle walks of life. The original name was Abercrombie; and it has been supposed that they were primarily brought to East Lothian in the persons of two puritan brothers of that surname, sentenced to the Bass Rock.

“It appears that East Lothian was the great centre of this extinct chapman trade, to which these Abercrombies and Croumbies belonged, before its removal to Kent. The Gild was large, far-travelled, and rich. Their *rendezvous* was at the foot of the fine old cross still extant at Preston Tower, the patrimonial relic from which that much-lamented philosopher, the late Sir William Hamilton, Baronet, drew his title. There they met in general assembly, elected their king and his lords-depute (for such was the style), and ordered their common affairs. The Bannatyne Club rescued the Cross and its appendages from ruin some years ago, revived the Gild, made gentleman-chapmen (including Sir Walter Scott), chose kings, ate gild-dinners, and otherwise played themselves on the sacred spot after the manner of antiquarian goodfellows. But it was right to save the Cross; where anybody, descended like the present writer from the real gild-brethren, may go and see perhaps the very ink-bottle (cut there in the stone) in which some wandering forefather was wont to dip his pen. Haply one of my forbears was a king! In the meantime I stand in possession of a document containing a list of the lords-depute for Haddington and North Berwick, and for Dunbar, from 1721 to '53 inclusive; and my great-great-grandfather (and surely that's great enough), with his son Thomas after him, are duly

chronicled as at least nothing less than representative lords at this the Court of the Nomads. In 1725 the latter is written down as Lord Thomas Abercroumbie !

“The most conspicuous feature in the secular character of this last of the line in question was an unbending and even chivalrous integrity; and the richest, or at least the rarest, quality of his Christian nature, was his real and almost prodigal liberality in the cause of his Lord. So fine a soul could almost afford to be peculiar, to live in a rough-spun bodily presence, and to do without some of the congenial graces of manner and appearance. Then the world never knows aught of those inward experiences which sometimes modify the whole exterior of such a deep, still spirit as this inflexible, sternly and tenderly pious, and (to Christ) open-handed country merchant. To John Brown the Commentator, and to some few more that knew him by heart, he was both lovely and beloved in no common degree. Talking of experiences too, he had at least one of the most extraordinary kind to carry to the grave with him, enough to make most men nervous and strange for life. He sold gunpowder. The store was in a cellar right below his shop. One summer evening, as he sat at the shop window over his ledger, an apprentice went below stairs candle in hand. A spark from the snuff did its work; the barrel exploded; the lad was killed; the flooring and window above were blown up; and John Croumbie was shot into the air and thrown up the street the length of the old Tron, where he was let down safe and sound,—but for the fall.

This Tron, the public weighing-machine, was just half-way between his window and the Cross;—a flight of some one-and-thirty yards. The shop doors being supposed to be shut for the night, the good man was doubtless projected by, and likewise safely carried within, the wind of the explosion, the terrible fragments going with him and around him, instead of dashing about him,—if not dashing him to bits, as they might have done but for his guardian angel, the Providence of God. It was, in any case, a solemn event. Its influence on his sombre and susceptible mind was deep and permanent. As long as he lived he religiously observed its anniversary. Regularly as the date came round, he shut himself within his bed-chamber the whole day long. Had he been a Purgatorian, as he might have been but for John Knox, the glory of Haddington,* it would have been lavished in costly masses for his poor boy. As it was, the day was spent in thanksgiving for the mercy of not having been hurried all too suddenly into the nearer and everlastingly fixed presence of Him who is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' He over-scrupulously, but peremptorily, declined the amount for which he was insured, because he judged himself guilty of a breach of duty in having handed over the care of a cellar containing combustibles to an inexperienced youth, instead of having attended to it

* Mr Croumbie was once on the point of buying the reputed birth-place of the Reformer, house and field, when Master Conscience (ever too masterful for him) stepped in and made him reserve the purchase-money for the more immediate service of their common Lord.

himself, seeing it had always been possible some such accident might take place. The Company acknowledged this unheard-of delicacy of conscience by a presentation of plate."

This service was bequeathed by Mr Croumbie to his niece, Mrs Patterson; and by her to her daughter Robina; by her it was bequeathed to her brother, the Rev. Dr. Alexander Simpson Patterson; and by him it was bequeathed to me. This was the tea service spoken of as having been in use at the family gathering.

XXIV.

ABOUT three years before his death he wrote and subscribed the following deed of remembrance of himself to God :—

“ HADDINGTON, *June 23, 1784.*

“ Lord ! I am now entering on the thirty-fourth year of my ministry,—an amazing instance of sovereign mercy and patience to a cumberer of the ground ! How strange that thou shouldst have, for more than sixty years, continued striving to exercise mercy and loving-kindness upon a wretch, that hath all along spoken and done all the evil that I could ; nor ever would yield, but when the almighty influence of free grace put it out of my power to oppose it. Lord ! how often have I vowed, but never grown better ; confessed, but never amended ! Often thou hast challenged and corrected me, and yet I have ‘ gone on frowardly in the way of my heart.’ As an ‘ evil man and seducer,’ I have grown worse and worse. But where should a sinner flee but to the Saviour ? Lord ! all refuge faileth me,—no man can help my soul. Nothing will do for me but an uncommon stretch of thy Almighty grace. To thee, O Jesus ! I give up myself, as a foolish, guilty, polluted, and enslaved sinner,—and I hereby solemnly take thee as mine, as ‘ made of God to me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.’ I give up myself as a poor, ignorant, careless, and wicked creature, who hath been ‘ ever learning, and yet

never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,'—to thee, O Lord, that thou mayest bestow gifts on the rebellious, and exalt thy grace, in showing kindness to the unworthy. O Saviour! come down, and do something for me before I die. I give up myself and family, wife, children, and servant, to thee, encouraged by thy promises, Gen. xvii. 7; Jer. xxxi. 1; Isa. xliv. 3, lix. 21. I commit my poor, weak, withered congregation, deprived by death of its pillars, that thou mayest strengthen, refresh, and govern it. I commit all my students unto thee, that thou, O Lord, mayest train them up for the ministry. May never one of them be so unfit as I have been! Lord! I desire to take hold of thy new 'covenant, well ordered in all things and sure. This is all my salvation and all my desire.'

“JOHN BROWN.”

His son, Dr William Brown, writes:—

“For some years before his death Mr Brown laboured under stomach complaints, the result probably of his studious habits. In the beginning of 1787 his disease greatly increased. His friends observed it with grief, and wished him to desist from part of his public work, but he said to them in reply, ‘I am determined to hold to Christ’s work so long as I can. How can a dying man spend his last breath better than in preaching Christ?’ On the 25th of February, which was his last Sabbath in the pulpit, he preached from Luke ii. 26, ‘It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.’ In the close of his sermon he

took a solemn farewell of his own congregation, and plainly intimated that in the pulpit they would see his face no more. Though he was now scarcely able to support himself, he preached the usual evening sermon, and seemed to preach with more earnestness than ever. This, his last sermon, was from Acts xiii. 26, 'To you is the word of this salvation sent.' As in the afternoon he had addressed the people more immediately under his pastoral charge, in the evening he, in a very affecting manner, bade adieu to his hearers, mostly members of the Established Church.

"Mr Brown had been little given, through life, to speak of his own religious experience. He was even reserved in giving utterance to his religious feelings, and especially to such feelings as might in any way be interpreted as reflecting honour on himself. But when he came to die he opened his heart very freely, and breathed forth many holy sentiments and aspirations, which are the more satisfactory, as they were in such perfect harmony with his life. The following notes of his dying sayings were taken down in writing by his son, the Rev. Ebenezer Brown of Inverkeithing, almost as they fell from his lips; but as he had to attend to his ministerial duties in a part of the country at some distance, much of what he said in his absence was forgotten." A few only can be cited here, but they all breathe the same spirit:—

March 4.—An acquaintance saying to him that it was pleasant to see the excellent Mr Hervey insisting so much on grace reigning through righteousness:

"Yes," replied he, "that is the doctrine which it is good to live with, and good to die with."

This being Sabbath, he went out to hear a sermon. After returning to his house he said, "Oh! what a happy life might a Christian have, if he were always persuaded of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! If there were such a thing as exchange of learning, I would willingly quit with all my acquaintance with languages, &c., to know, experimentally, what that meaneth, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'"

In the evening, being asked if he thought himself better, he answered, with a great deal of composure, "I am no worse; but I do not wish to have a will in that matter; only I would not desire to live, and yet not be able for Christ's work,—though perhaps, were God so ordering it, he would enable me to bear that too."

March 6.—He called his two eldest sons, the Revs. John and Ebenezer Brown, into his room; and, as they were about to leave him for a time, he exhorted them, in the most earnest manner, to trust in the Lord, and to be doing good. "No doubt," said he, "I have met with trials as well as others; yet so kind hath God been to me, that I think, if God were to give me as many years as I have already lived in the world, I would not desire one single circumstance in my lot changed,—except that I wish I had less sin."

"Oh! to be with God, to 'see him as he is,—to know

him even as I am known ;' it is worthy, not merely of going for, but of dying for, to see a smiling God."

March 20.—"Oh ! what a miracle to see me, the arrant rebel, sitting on the throne with Jesus ! And I hope I shall be seen there. What cannot Jesus do !"

"Oh ! how these words, 'He loved ME, and gave himself for ME,' once penetrated into my heart, and made me cry, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me be stirred up to bless his holy name.'"

"I 'desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better :' and though I have lived sixty years very comfortably in this world, yet I would gladly turn my back on you all, to be with Christ. I am sure Christ may say of me, 'These sixty years this wretch hath grieved me.'"

Some short time after, he said to them, "I know not whether I shall ever see you together again or not ; but oh ! labour, labour to win souls to Christ ;—there is none like Christ,—there is none like Christ,—there is none like Christ ! I am sure a poor worthless wretch he hath had of me ; but a precious, superlatively precious Christ I have had of him. Never grudge either purse or person for Christ ; I can say this, that I never was a loser by any time spent, or by any money given for him."

"Oh ! how the Lord hath borne and carried me ! He hath, indeed, given me my stripes, but never except when I richly deserved them. 'Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men !'"

"I was young when left by my parents, yet their

instructions, accompanied with God's dealings, made such impressions on my heart as I hope will continue with me to all eternity. I have served many masters, but none so kind as Christ; I have dealt with many honest men, but no creditor like Christ; and had I ten thousand bodies, they should all be employed in labouring for his honour."

March 22.—He had no sooner sat down to breakfast than, like a man enraptured with the views of glory, he gave vent to his feelings by repeating the following lines:—

" They with the fatness of thy house
Shall be well satisfy'd ;
From rivers of thy pleasures thou
Wilt drink to them provide."

PSALM xxxvi. 8. —*Scottish Version.*

These lines he repeated thrice, changing the words *they* and *them* into *we* and *us*; after which he added, "Oh! how strange that 'rivers of pleasure' should be provided for the murderers of God's Son, and the contemners of his Word!"

One of his sons alleging to him that he seemed to be quite indifferent about things here, he replied, "Indeed, I am so; only I would wish you my sons, my friends, my congregation, the Church, and all the world, so far as is consistent with the decree of God, were with Christ. From all other things my mind is weaned; yet, if the influence of God's Spirit were to be withdrawn for a moment, oh how horridly my heart would blaspheme!"

Being asked if he remembered preaching on that

text, Psalm lxxiii. 22, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee;" he replied, "Yes, I remember it very well; and I remember, too, that when I described the beast, I drew the picture from my own heart. But, oh! amazing consideration, 'Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand!'"

March 23—Having sat down to tea, he appeared to be in a peculiarly holy frame of mind, and could not forbear making mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord. "Oh!" he cried, "'God is love;' there is no enmity in him at all!" Again, "There are three things which are very sweet,—the sovereignty, the freeness, and the fulness of divine grace." Shortly after, he broke out in the following expressions: "Oh! wonderful, wonderful subject, *Grace!* Oh! wonderful, wonderful means by which it vents, *The Righteousness of Christ!* and wonderful, wonderful issue, *Eternal life!*"

March 24.—A friend reminding him that, through his instrumentality as a teacher of divinity, about sixty or seventy ministers were engaged in preaching Christ, he said, "Had I ten thousand tongues, and ten thousand hearts, and were I employing them all in commendation of Christ, I could not do for his honour as he hath deserved, considering his kindness to such a sinner."

When at tea he gave vent to his grateful heart in the following words: "I am much obliged to you all, and particularly to you," (addressing himself to his wife), "for your kindness to me; yet I must go back to this, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.'"

March 26.—On his expressing his resignation in this way, "I am entirely at the Lord's will," an acquaintance remarked to him that "such resignation was not the attainment of every Christian," he answered, "This is rather what I would be at, than what I have attained."

Happening to speak about the students of divinity who had been under his charge, he said, "I wish them all more serious and diligent than ever I have been. I hope, however, that God will not cast me off as a slothful and wicked servant. I am sure that he 'hateth putting away.'"

"I think the early death of my father and mother, the death of a wife and of children, wrought in a remarkable way for my good. I could not but notice, that when God took away these he always supplied their room with himself. May he deal thus with you when I die!"

"My mind is now so wavering that I have little remembrance of what is past, little apprehension of what is present, and little foresight of what is future. But, oh! what a mercy, that when once the everlasting arms of Jesus are underneath, he will not lose his hold. 'Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.'"

March 27—Asking if this were Saturday, he was told no, it was Tuesday, and that he seemed to long for the Sabbath; "I do weary," replied he, "for the Sabbath; and I would fain be at wearying for the everlasting Sabbath. Then I shall have no need of the assistance of preachers; nor will I even need the blessed Bible itself. God's face will serve me for preachers and Bible too."

March 28.—To his sons in the ministry he repeated the exhortations which he gave them before: "Oh! labour, labour to win souls to Christ. I will say this for your encouragement, that when the Lord led me out to be most earnest in this way he poured in most comfort into my own heart, so that he gave me my reward in my bosom; and when I have tried to help vacancies he hath repaid me well with glimpses of his glory. Were the Lord to make me young again, I think I would study to devise other means for gaining souls than those which I have used, and prosecute them with more activity than ever I did."

One of his children saying to him, "Father, we would fain have you to live;" he answered, "Well, I believe so; but I would fain be with Christ." "But," said the other, "would you not wish to take us with you?" He replied, "It is not I but Christ who must do that. However, as to my departure, I will not set the time of it to God; he is wise and I am a fool."

Ralph Erskine's poem, entitled "The Work and Contention of Heaven," being read to him, he remarked, "Well, though I should never wish to see contention in the Church on earth, yet I should be willing to join in Ralph's contention above. Were I once in heaven I think that I would contend with the best of them; and I know that our contentions there will not raise heats, but excite love to one another."*

* This Poem was one greatly enjoyed by many good people in the early part of this century, as it had been for half a century before. The following is a copy of it:—

At supper he, with his usual cheerfulness, repeated these lines :—

“They with the fatness of thy house
Shall be well satisfied,” &c.

and then added, “If earth transformed, partly by the instrumentality of men, is so delicious, oh ! what must

THE WORK AND CONTENTION OF HEAVEN.

In heavenly choirs a question rose,
That stirr'd up strife will never close,
What rank of all the ransom'd race
Owes highest praise to Sov'reign grace ?

Babes thither caught from womb and breast,
Claim'd right to sing above the rest ;
Because they found the happy shore
They neither saw nor sought before.

Those that arrived at riper age
Before they left the dusky stage,
Thought grace deserv'd yet higher praise,
That washed the blots of num'rous days.

Anon the war more close began,
What praising harp should lead the van ?
And which of grace's heavenly peers
Was deepest run in her arrears ?

“ 'Tis I,” said one, “ 'bove all my race,
Am debtor chief to glorious grace.”

“ Nay,” said another, “ hark, I trow,
I'm more obliged to grace than you.”

“ Stay,” said a third, “ I deepest share
In owing praise beyond compare,
The chief of sinners, you'll allow,
Must be the chief of singers now.”

the fatness of God's house be, the flesh and blood of the Son of God !”

March 29.—“ Walking out to the grass park behind his house, and happening to speak about the Antiburgher meeting-house, which was at a little distance from it, he could not forbear showing his zeal for the good of souls. “ I would be happy,” said he, “ if my Antiburgher brother had ten for my one, as crowns of joy at

“ Hold,” said a fourth, “ I here protest
My praises must outvie the best,
For I'm of all the human race
The highest miracle of grace.”

“ Stop,” said a fifth, “ these notes forbear,
Lo ! I'm the greatest wonder here ;
For I, of all the race that fell,
Deserved the lowest place in hell.”

A soul that higher yet aspired,
With equal love to Jesus fired,

“ 'Tis mine to sing the highest notes
To him that washed the foulest blots.”

“ Ho !” cry'd another, “ 'tis mine I'll prove,
Who sinned in spite of light and love,
To sound the praise with loudest bell
That saved me from the lowest hell.”

“ Come, come,” said one, “ I'll hold the plea,
That highest praise is due by me ;
For mine of all the saved by grace
Was the most dreadful, desp'rate case.”

Another rising at his side,
As fond to praise, and free of pride,
Cry'd “ Pray give place, for I defy
That you should owe more praise than I ;

the last day, though I must say that I would wish to have as many as possible ; but, oh ! it will be a strange honour for such a wretch as I to have half-a-dozen."

A friend observing that the Gospel was said to be spreading in the Established Church of England,—
 " Oh ! " said he, " well, well may it spread ! The Gospel is the source of my comfort, and every sinner is as welcome to this source as I. And, oh how pleasant,

" I'll yield to none in this debate,
 I've run so deep in grace's debt,
 That sure I am I boldly can
 Compare with all the heavenly plan."

Quick o'er their heads a trump awoke,
 " Your songs my very heart have spoke ;
 But every note you here propel
 Belongs to me beyond you all."

The listening millions round about
 With sweet resentment loudly shout :
 " What voice is this comparing notes
 That to their song sweet place allots ?

" We can't allow of such a sound,
 That you alone have such a ground
 To sing the royalties of grace ;
 We claim the same adoring place."

" What ? will no rival singer yield
 He has a match upon the field ?
 Come then and let us all agree
 To praise upon the highest key."

Then gently all the harpers round
 In mind unite, with solemn sound,
 And struck upon the highest string,
 Made all the heavenly arches ring.

that neither great sins nor great troubles do alter these consolations! These words were once sweetly impressed upon my heart, 'Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.' Oh! how it delighted me to see God taking advantage of my great sinfulness, to show his great grace!"

April 3.—Sitting down in the park behind his house, and the sun shining bright upon his face, he cried out

Ring loud, with Hallelujah's high,
To him that sent his Son to die ;
And to the worthy Lamb of God
That loved and washed them in his blood.

Free grace was sovereign empress crown'd
In pomp, with joyful chants around ;
Assisting angels clapped their wings,
And sounded grace on all their strings.

The emulation round the throne
Made prostrate hosts (who every one
The humblest place their right avow)
Strive who should give the lowest bow.

The next contention without vice,
Among the hosts of Paradise,
Made every glorious warbling throat
Strive who should raise the highest note.

Thus in sweet, holy, humble strife,
Along their endless, joyful life,
Of Jesus all the harpers rove,
And sing the wonders of his love.

Their discord makes them all unite
In raptures most divinely sweet ;
So great the song, so grand the voice,
Melodious music fills the place.

in a kind of ecstasy, "Oh? how pleasant to be for ever beholding the Sun of Righteousness in heaven! and how pleasant, even in time, to see him by faith!"

One of his brethren in the ministry paying him a visit, and saying, among other things, "Sir, we cannot well want you;" he replied, "O yes, you can easily want me, and I would wish to be with Jesus. Meantime, I am wholly at the Lord's disposal. If the Lord would make me useful in the Church, I have no objections against living; but if not, I would rather die." Upon his friend remarking that the Lord seemed to be very kind to him, he said, "Yes, God hath been heaping favours upon me the sinner these forty years past; and I will say to his honour, that he hath made my days of affliction always the happiest. Indeed, I think that I have seldom had very sweet days, except when I have met with affliction one way or another." Being asked by his brother if he felt no uneasiness at leaving his family and congregation, he answered, "I cannot say that I feel any such uneasiness; not but that I regard them, but I know that a God in Christ can infinitely more than supply my room. I might be spared, and be of little use to them; but God will be infinitely useful. My parents were taken from me when I was young, and God has been far better to me since than they could have been." "What think you," said the friend, "of the present state of the Church?" He replied, "The Church is at present in a very poor condition; but the Lord can revive her. I have often found, that when wicked lusts and wicked devils have caused great disorder in my heart, the Lord hath

brought order out of confusion. This partly encourages me to believe, that though wicked men and wicked devils cause disorder in the Church, yet the Lord will make all things to work together for good to his own elect. I do not expect to see it; yet it is the joy of my heart, that the time is coming when 'the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.' Dead Churches shall yet be quickened, apostate Churches shall yet be recovered, and Churches shall be planted where there were none before."

April 4.—Finding himself very feeble, he said, "My legs are of little use, my head is of little use, and my hands are of little use; but my God in Christ is the same to me now as ever."

Speaking about the Associate Synod, which was to meet in the month of May, he said that he believed he would not be able to attend it; and then added, "Oh, if the Spirit of God would bring me to the General Synod of the Church of the first-born, that would be far better! No idle words, no angry speeches, no sinful ignorance, no haughty pride there. After all, it is a mercy that Jesus, the great manager of the Church, can over-rule even our contentions here for his own glory."

April 5.—When he took his walk in the park, he pointed to several spots where he said his soul had been ravished with the views of divine grace. "Yea," said he, "on certain occasions my soul hath been so transported there, that, as the apostle speaks, 'whether I was in the body, or out of the body, I could scarcely

tell.' Perhaps it is superstitious in me, but I confess I have a peculiar love for these very spots."

Finding, after he came in to the house, himself tired with his walk, he expressed the feelings of his mind in these words: "Oh! that will be a pleasant journey, 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'"

April 9.—Sitting down in the park, and finding his eyes unable to bear the bright shining of the sun, he said, "Oh! how pleasant to be in that place where they are so overcome with the glory of the Sun of Righteousness, that they have to cover their faces with their wings!"

Having occasion to converse about young men coming out to the ministry, he said, "Well, though pride prevails much in my heart, yet I think I would trample it thus far under my feet, as that I would be glad to see all my students,—and not they only, but all the faithful ministers of Jesus,—bringing hundreds or thousands of souls with them to heaven, though I should have but five or six."

Taking him into his meeting-house, he looked round him, and said, "Now, weak as I am, I would try to preach yet, if I had none to preach in my stead. Oh! what sweet fellowship with Christ I have had here! That pulpit hath been to me the best place in all the house."

June 15.—A friend saying to him, "You are not now travelling to Stow sacrament, as you used to do about this time of the year," he replied to this purpose, "No, I wish to be travelling to God, as 'my exceeding joy.'

In the meantime I must say, that at Stow I have had such sweet hours, that neither Christ nor I shall ever forget them."

June 19.—He seemed to be frequently engaged in speaking; but, owing to the change in his voice, it was only a very few of his words which could be understood.

Upon a friend saying to him, "Sir, you seem to be sore distressed;" it was thought he made this answer, "The Lord hath his own way of carrying on his own work."

The last words which he was heard to utter were these: "MY CHRIST!"

About four hours after, he fell asleep in Jesus. His mortal remains were interred the following Saturday in Haddington churchyard, where a monument to his memory was erected by his relatives, with the following inscription:—

TO
THE MEMORY
OF
MR JOHN BROWN,
THIRTY-SIX YEARS MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
AT HADDINGTON,
AND TWENTY YEARS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
UNDER THE ASSOCIATE SYNOD.
AFTER MAINTAINING AN EMINENT CHARACTER
FOR PIETY, CHARITY, LEARNING, AND DILIGENCE,
HE DIED
REJOICING IN HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD,
AND ADMIRING THE RICHES OF DIVINE GRACE TO HIM
AS A SINNER,
THE 19TH OF JUNE A. D. 1787,
AGED 65 YEARS.
BLESSED ARE THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD : THEY REST FROM THEIR
LABOURS, AND THEIR WORKS DO FOLLOW THEM.

He left behind him a widow, six sons, and two daughters.

His descendants, including those who died in infancy, number about 347. Of these there are alive :—

12 Grandchildren.

49 Great grandchildren.

98 Great-great grandchildren.

20 Great-great-great grandchildren.

Of these there are in the ministry one grandson, myself, an adherent of the original congregation, but an ordained congregational ministry, whose ordination, as it happens, can be traced through that of Bishop Nielson, of the Moravian Church in St. Petersburg, in unbroken succession from the days of the Apostles. Two great-grandsons, the Rev. Robert Johnstone, D.D. Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in the Theological Hall of the United Presbyterian Church; and the Rev. John Cairns, A.M., minister of the United Presbyterian Church; and one great-great grandson, the Rev. Ebenezer Brown Hill, minister of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

XXV.

IN conclusion, my dear kinsmen, greatly desiring that we, and those who come after us, may be to the men of our respective generations what our fathers were to the men of their day, I deem it not improper to add a parting word which may not be unacceptable in reference to the ecclesiastical divergences which have occurred amongst us in following the examples set us of fearless study of truth, and unhesitating action in advancing whithersoever our discoveries of what we have deemed truth seemed to lead, counting it a small matter to be judged of man or of man's judgment: which divergences may probably be further increased in the coming century with perhaps a still clearer perception and deeper persuasion of the communion of saints, and not less serious, though perhaps less conscious effort to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, endeavouring with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering forbearing one another in love."

It is probable that I speak the sentiment of most, if not also of all, who met at the family gathering connected with the centenary of the death of our grand-sire when I express my own, which is, that we were prompted scarcely if at all by a desire to do honour to him—for we felt that we were honoured in our connection with him, not he in his connection with us; we were prompted largely by the prospect of enjoyment

from intercourse with one another in circumstances calculated to call forth strongly our family feeling; and some of us desiring, hoping, and praying, that thus we might communicate to the young amongst us, and through them to yet another generation, somewhat of the blessedness we had enjoyed through religious thoughts, and words, and deeds, attributable in some measure to realising our descent from him, who, a hundred years ago, entered on his rest.

The church of which he was a minister and teacher in the school of the prophets still exists, merged with other churches in the United Presbyterian Church; but to find a church which may be considered the counterpart to that of his day we must look elsewhere. Doing so we may find something like it in that of the United Original Seceders, in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and in what may be characterised as the constitutional party in the Free Church of Scotland. I am not aware of it if any of us be members of either of the first two churches, but in the United Presbyterian Church, in the Free Church, and in the Established Church, many among us have found an ecclesiastical policy, theological dogmata, and views of Christ's teaching, with which they have more or less of a thorough sympathy. Others have found these in the Scottish Episcopal Church, in Independent churches, and in like churches based on a belief that the baptism of infants is not in accordance with the records preserved of the teaching of Christ and his apostles, and is a practice which, if not expressly prohibited, it is not expedient to follow. Others deeming the funda-

mental principles of the doctrine of Christ and his apostles to have been that salvation—described by our grandsire, as “deliverance from all evil and restoration to all good”—is irrespective of all genealogical descent, or ecclesiastical connection, and of theological dogmata, derived from what may be designated, “philosophy, falsely so called,” find an expression of their views in what is thus stated by the apostle Paul in his Epistle to Titus: “The grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,”—understanding thereby the Jewish State as it then was;—“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.” And understanding this to be what the apostle referred to in many of the passages in his epistle, in which the term used by him has been translated The Holy Ghost, attach very little importance to membership with any so-called church whatever.

In these divergences, some of us, perhaps many of us, if not all of us, see manifestations of the spirit of our grandsire in joining the Seceders from the Established Church of Scotland; and in refusing to go with those who separated from their brethren at the breach—though holding with them that the terms of the burgess oath required, were such that he could not have taken it—because he had no scruples about maintaining ecclesias-

tical fellowship with those who put upon those terms a different interpretation; and yet could notwithstanding this esteem those who had separated from the Associate Synod highly in love for their works sake.

In so far as it is known to me, we all of us hold that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever;" and that "The only rule 'or canon' which God hath given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament." In so far as is known to me we all hold "that Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved therefrom, is not to be required of any man, that it should be delivered as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." So far as it is known to me, we all of us hold in regard to ecclesiastical courts that "forasmuch as they be an assembly of men whereof all be not governed with the spirit and word of God, they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority unless it may be declared that they may be taken out of Holy Scripture."

In view then of the common salvation, be it our aim and endeavour to secure that religion never die out of our hearts, or out of our families, or out of the churches with which we are severally connected.

May it ever be one of the songs of our pilgrimage,

sung with our children and our children's children around us: "I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works; and I will declare thy greatness."

JOHN C. BROWN.

THE END.

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