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History of revivals of  
religion in the British





HISTORY  
OF  
REVIVALS OF RELIGION  
IN THE  
BRITISH ISLES,

ESPECIALLY IN SCOTLAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE "MEMOIR OF THE  
REV. M. BRUEN."

11.

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain."—*JOEL*, Chap. ii. v. 25.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE religious world of Great Britain has had its attention arrested for a few years past by lively and cheering information from the gigantic scion which has sprung from the parent stem on the other side of the Atlantic; and many have been aroused to emulous zeal and prayerfulness, by reading of American Revivals, and conversing with men, the fruits of those revivals, who furnish us with lovely exemplifications of Christian character. The question—"Why have we no Revivals in this country?" has been put, till it has been aptly answered by another. "*Is it true* that we have no Revivals in this country?" It is a curious evidence of the neglect to record these most interesting visitations of the Holy Spirit, that many have obtained, for the first time, an idea that God has at times dealt in this manner with His church in their native land, by reading the allusions made to such things by Jonathan Edwards, in his Accounts of the Revivals in New England.

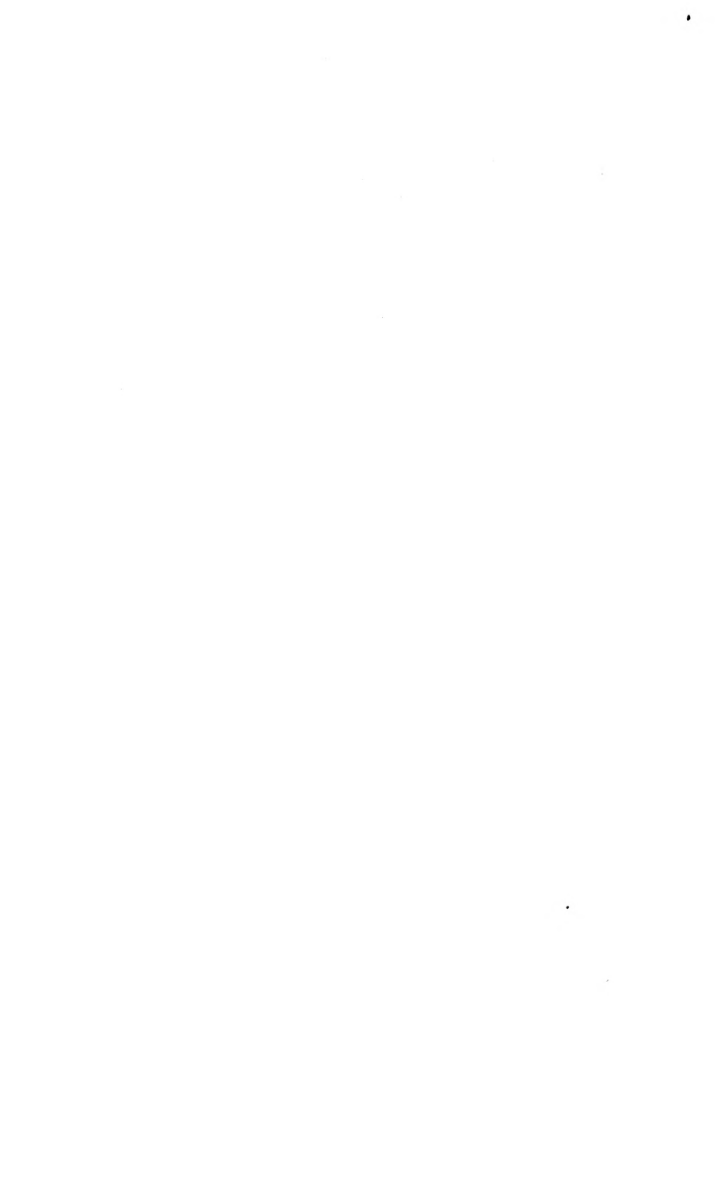
This little work took its rise from the enquiry, “*Is it true* that we have no British Revivals?” The farther the enquiry was prosecuted, the more did the information obtained rise in importance, until it seemed the line of duty to lay before the Christian community a result convincing as to the past, and cheering with reference to the future.

The history, as it relates to Revival influences exhibited in the Church of Scotland since the Reformation, is, it is hoped, not very incomplete, and, in the main, correct ; as, from local circumstances, materials and means of information relative to the Church of Christ there, were more easily obtained than as regards the Church in other parts of the United Kingdom. And proof is thus procured, that outpourings of the Spirit were not unknown in that country nearly two centuries before Jonathan Edwards was taken by surprise with the interesting visitation at Northampton. In one region of Scotland, also, we have the great happiness of exhibiting a spiritual work, in the Revival form, steadily going forward at the present hour, which ought to stimulate the prayers of those who look for the fulfilling of the promise of the Spirit in larger measure than it has yet been possessed.

With respect to England, Wales, and Ireland, such materials as came readily within reach have been employed, without any attempt to give a complete history of Revivals in any of these countries,

but aiming solely to produce convincing evidence that in all of them lively examples of such events exist. Imperfect as the accounts are, and to be found generally in books which mention them only incidentally, it is probable that all the materials of this description which might be assembled would swell to several volumes. The object of the compiler has been to avoid extraneous matter, and to present nothing of religious advancement which has not partaken of the Revival character, viz. an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which has consisted of deep conviction, followed by sound conversion, upon many souls about the same time, and under the same religious instructors. All these will be found of the same genus, though differing in species, according to the state of general cultivation and previous religious instruction of the people so influenced; and under whatsoever denomination the work may have taken place, its scriptural test of unity of character will be found in all the same—consisting of “repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.”





## INTRODUCTION.

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ON contemplating the works of the Eternal in their most minute details, as well as in their mightiest developements, we cannot fail to discover operations calculated at once to fill us with the most profound admiration of the divine perfections, and to overwhelm us with the deepest sense of our own limited powers. This is true, whether we turn our thoughts to the wonders of creation, or to the character of Providence, as displayed either in the history of human affairs or in the influences of divine grace. In them all we trace the most unequivocal indications of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, which yet are continually lost to our view in clouds and darkness. To a certain extent we can distinctly follow the designing and beneficent hand of an Almighty Ruler; we can see him working, as it were, in open day, and can confidently and exultingly say, here is the impress of an all-perfect mind; and while we gaze, a heavenly light seems to burst upon us, which opens the invisible world to our senses, and gives a wider range, and a higher elevation to our faculties. But at the moment when we feel raised, as it were, above the grossness of this nether sphere, and about to enter on brighter regions of knowledge and intelligence, we are suddenly arrested in our adventurous course—the beauty, order,

and harmony in which we already appeared to expatiate recede from our view,—the light grows dim and expires, and we shudder to find ourselves surrounded with a mysterious and impenetrable gloom.

These reflections, which the contemplative mind will own to be universally applicable, seem to present themselves with peculiar force to the attention of those who study the history of the Church, both under the Old Testament dispensation, and under that for which it was the preparation, the full and free revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we look at the broad features of the scheme of salvation, by which the original promise was fulfilled, and the seed of the woman bruised the head of the serpent—the incarnation, the sufferings, and the death of the Son of God,—the Just One pardoning sin, in consistency with his inflexible justice,—the Holy One rewarding the unholy with the blessings of his love, without tarnishing his purity, or abating the sanctions of his eternal laws, we see a system which, in the sublimity of its wisdom, and in the condescension of its grace, is worthy of all adoration and praise. But even here there are difficulties which human reason attempts in vain to overcome, and mysteries which must remain unrevealed till this mortal shall put on immortality.

The same character is observed in the progress of the Christian Church as in its commencement. Throughout its whole extent we see a checkered scene of light and darkness, of prosperity and adversity,—periods in which the Spirit of God is seen moving far and wide over the face of the moral chaos, and in the act apparently of restoring all things to primeval beauty, followed by long and dreary ages of gloomy superstition and spiritual death; spots bright for a time with the unclouded glories of the Sun of Righteousness, then darkening into an ominous

twilight, and seeming gradually to close in all the horrors of ancient night, till in some new spot the dawn appears, and a new alternation succeeds.

It is at once mournful and humbling to look back to the fate of the once highly favoured churches of Asia, and of those other churches which were founded in the apostolic age, when the deep and powerful eloquence of Paul thundered conviction into the souls of appalled multitudes, or the gentle and affecting voice of the beloved John drew them to his crucified master by the cords of love, or the impetuous zeal of the self-accusing Peter pricked them in their hearts, till they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And when we think of the palpable darkness which for many centuries has brooded, and still continues to brood, over those once highly favoured regions, where miraculous power ere-while bore testimony to the commissioned messengers of Heaven, we feel constrained to lay our hands upon our mouths, wondering while we adore. Nor is there less of a mysterious awe shed around the whole subsequent dealings of Providence in administering the affairs of his Church. The heresies which early sprang up in the bosom of Christian communities at the very time when, with such supernatural rapidity, the truth was breaking forth on the right hand and on the left,—the persecutions which, while they exterminated the faithful, displayed their Christian graces before a wondering world, and gave new energy and extension to the heaven-supported cause,—the countenance and support at length afforded by the civil government, which, on the one hand, gave triumph to the Christian name, and, on the other, debased it with superstition, contaminated it with false doctrine, and perverted it into an instrument of worldly ambition; the light which, gradually accumulating in ages of darkness, at last burst forth with such

power and brightness as suddenly to illuminate a large portion of the world called Christian; the alternate clouds and sunshine which attended this heavenly light, and continued to mark its path; the sects and divisions which have since prevailed in Protestant nations, sometimes removing errors, and at other times causing them to assume new forms, or giving strength and permanency to ancient heresies; a pervading spirit of coldness, indifference, and practical atheism, alternating with periods of divine illumination and zeal, or at least occasionally interrupted by partial displays of the hallowed and ennobling character of that revelation which is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Such is, in few words, the mysterious history of the religion of the Divine Being who came to "bring life and immortality to light by his gospel," and in whom ancient prophecy had foretold that all the families of the earth should be blessed.

These are events which deeply affect the hearts of believers, and strongly exercise their faith; but amidst them all they either trace the hand of unerring wisdom and goodness, or, when their spiritual vision fails, learn to turn inward on themselves, and to confess that the defect lies not in the ways of Providence, but in the weakness, the waywardness, and the ignorance of their own shortsighted and sinful minds; and hence to cherish more fondly the blessed hope, that the time is approaching when they shall no longer "see as through a glass darkly."

There is one thing, however, which, by a pious mind, engaged in reflecting on the history of the Church of Christ, can neither be overlooked nor misunderstood; we allude to the evident progress which, amidst all these advances and retrogressions, the cause of revealed truth is actually making when considered as a whole. If



periods of extraordinary light have been interrupted by periods of darkness, the effects of the former have not been entirely obliterated. Age after age divine knowledge has been accumulating; and even in days of the deepest gloom men have been gradually, though in many instances imperceptibly, laying up stores which were destined to be made available for the improvement of more favoured times. Every contribution to the stock of human learning,—every new discovery in science or in art,—every thing, in short, which has served to develop the mental powers, or to enlarge the intercourse of society, all have united, with the more direct influence of Christian principle, to give new range, expansion, and vital energy to the operation of revealed truth on the human mind. The instruments may have been “of the earth earthy,” but they have been secretly overruled by an unseen hand; the events may have seemed only to add vigour to the worldliness of selfish and unhallowed men, but they have also afforded new means, and prepared new instruments, for the accomplishment of the blessed promise, that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. The general progress of public opinion in this country has been justly and beautifully compared to the flowing tide; and the same comparison will apply, with an exactness singularly striking, to the progress of revealed religion. “Each successive wave rushes forward, breaks, and rolls back; but the great flood is steadily coming in. A person who looked on the waters only for a moment might fancy they were retiring, or that they obeyed no fixed law, but were rushing capriciously to and fro; but when he keeps his eye on them for a quarter of an hour, and sees one land-mark disappear after another, it is impossible for him to doubt of the general direction in which

the ocean is moved."\* An illustration scarcely less appropriate might, perhaps, be drawn from the advance of the seasons from winter to summer. We have not only short days, succeeded by long and dreary nights, but periods of beautiful sunshine and progressive light, followed by days of gloom and storm, which seem to throw nature back into all the horror from which it was emerging. The next day and the next again returns, and still the threatening aspect of the season may remain; but spring is nevertheless advancing—the sun, though obscured by clouds, has been steadily increasing in his meridian altitude, and day has, by unobserved degrees, been encroaching on the night, till, either gradually, or by a sudden revolution, the heavy clouds disperse, the keen air becomes soft and balmy, the sun looks forth in his strength, and the green earth and vocal woods rejoice in the genial influence. Other clouds may gather and other blasts may blight; but, amidst every vicissitude, the light becomes brighter and longer—the warmth more vivifying—buds and blossoms more profuse—and every thing proclaims the approach of summer. If, in simply comparing yesterday with to-day, or even the last week with the present, the progress might seem to be reversed, yet our judgment is infallibly corrected when we take in a more extended period, and compare month with month, and still more when we compare one season with another.

And just so it is with the history of the Christian Church—amidst every vicissitude the light of the Gospel has been progressive. Even in those ages which have been emphatically called dark, when fearful ignorance cast its Cimmerian shade over the Christian world, when phantoms of superstition stalked amidst the gloom,

\* Edinburgh Review, July, 1835, p. 280.

and when a grinding tyranny bound its chains round the soul, materials were accumulating in the cloisters of the monastery, and the closet of the philosopher, which were to furnish fuel for the flame about to be kindled at the great era of the Reformation, while among the mountains of the Alps and Apennines the sacred fire was kept alive which was destined to light that mighty torch. Nor must we forget, what is no unusual, though a very striking characteristic of the operations of Providence, that while these direct means were in progress, the very downward force of the opposite principle was destined to occasion a recoil, and accelerate the crisis; the yoke was to become too heavy to be borne, and the fetters were to be tightened till they burst. Ever since that memorable period, the history of the Church has continued to exhibit the same strongly-marked features,—alternate advance and retrogression in the shorter periods being uniformly accompanied with an obvious and triumphant progress in the longer. It is impossible, indeed, not to lament the counteracting power of evil, or to hide from our view the deep depravity of the human heart, which shuts out the light of heaven, and chills the vivifying influences of divine truth; but when we look at the general result in the sure and increasing diffusion of Christian truth, the mind is cheered and reassured. This result, harmonizing as it does with the language of prophecy, gives us additional encouragement in looking forward to the promised time when all the kingdoms of the world shall own but one King, whose kingdom is not earthly, and all their inhabitants shall be animated with but one ambitious wish, whose object is not the fame which perishes, but the glory which is eternal.

But the work now presented to the public takes in a far more limited range than that to which this rapid retrospect alludes. It is confined to the British Islands,

and even here professes not to give any thing approaching to so much as a sketch of religious history. The simple object of the compiler is to call attention to some of the more remarkable instances in which it has pleased the great Head of the Church to visit particular districts, chiefly within the last two centuries, with peculiar marks of his countenance, and striking influences of his spirit. In this more contracted survey, however, the very same character may be traced as is presented to our view when we examine the operations of Providence in the religious world on a larger scale. In both instances, the Spirit works in the same mysterious manner, by his sovereign power controlling events, and overruling intentions and motives, so as to confound the wisdom of the wise, and to bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent, pouring floods of unexpected light on dark and desolate places, by instruments, in the estimation of the world, weak and inadequate, and withholding the blessing from talents, zeal, and fervid eloquence, under circumstances which appeared to the shortsighted view of mortals to promise abundant success. Again, we see the progress of a work arrested which had been begun with the brightest prospects, and been the subject of many prayers, an event which appeared to give a long and alarming triumph to the powers of darkness; while, by a way wholly his own, He who brings good out of seeming evil was perhaps, by that very triumph, preparing for them the means of a signal overthrow. Mean while, amidst these alternations, the cause of Gospel truth advances, and, in a series of years, the fruits of apparently transient influences are distinctly seen in the increasing prosperity of the Church. Such influences, indeed, limited and partial as they appear, are often the very means by which the mightier and more extensive changes in the condition of religion are effected. It is by an accumu-

lation of many comparatively small operations that a city is built and becomes the emporium of commerce, and that a country is reclaimed from a state of nature and is converted into an enclosed and cultivated region; and again, to recur to a former illustration, it is by the united efforts of frequent, but not protracted, periods of sunshine, alternating with rain, that, notwithstanding the interruptions of chilling blasts, and lowering clouds, and bursting tempests, the year is at last crowned with plenty, and glows in all the beauty of summer. And so it is with the influences of the Spirit. From the visible effusion of that divine power on the assembled multitude on the day of Pentecost, down to the present time, his operations have been similar in their nature and effects, resembling rather gleams of blessed sunshine from a sky generally overcast, than the steady brightness of an unclouded atmosphere; but the genial light and warmth have been reflected and diffused—the gracious intentions of Heaven are accomplished and accomplishing—the seed is sown and grows—amidst all obstructions, the seasons advance, and harvest approaches.

Few exercises appear either more edifying or more delightful than those which employ the mind in tracing the operations of divine grace on the human soul; whether we seek for these operations in the lives of insulated individuals, or in those more rare and remarkable instances in which whole districts have been visited with peculiar manifestations of the power of religion, and the work of the Holy Spirit. By such an employment, when conducted in the spirit of humility and wisdom, we obtain clearer and more mortifying views of the natural corruption of the human heart, and of the necessity of divine illumination to enlighten us, and divine power to create right spirits within us. Nor can we engage in this study without having the truth impressed on our minds at every step, that the ways of God are not as our

ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. The conversions and revivals which form the subject of the following pages, have been regarded by the profane as too ridiculous to deserve any thing but contempt, while persons of a more sober and contemplative turn have joined with the votaries of a cold philosophy in viewing them with a suspicious eye, and have been inclined to attribute most, if not the whole, of the manifestations, to the excitement of powerful, or perhaps fanatical preaching, operating on the natural feelings, and increased by the effects of sympathy,—thus excluding supernatural influences, and ranking these operations of the Spirit among the phenomena of a heated imagination.

Now, that the imagination has sometimes a very surprising effect, both on the moral and intellectual powers, we have no wish to deny, and the connexion between these and the corporeal frame is too well known to make it wonderful, that a powerful mental excitement should be accompanied with a corresponding influence on the body. It must be owned, indeed, to be a matter of notoriety, that instances of violent and irregular excitement have not unfrequently occurred, both among individuals and in large communities, which, to a superficial observer, might seem to be of a nature not dissimilar to those recorded in this volume, and which yet have exhibited such characteristics as sufficiently to prove that they are not the effect of divine agency. Some examples of this species of false excitement will be found recorded in the Appendix to this work, which the reader will do well to study with care. He will thus be led to perceive the importance of the apostolical injunction,—“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God;” and this exercise, when conducted with a humble but earnest desire to know the truth, will not fail to increase our faith, by throwing new and important light on the operations of divine grace.

That Satan should counterfeit the appearance of an angel of light is no new device, nor are there wanting avenues by which he can gain access for this malicious purpose to the human heart. There are always materials at hand by which individuals and bodies of men can be excited and deceived, and the extravagances of which they may be guilty when under such delusion can scarcely be overrated. If we seek for an example of this on the largest scale, we shall be at no loss to find it in the history of the Crusades, when all Europe, by a simultaneous movement, threw its excited millions on the coasts of Asia, to rescue the Holy Land from the grasp of an infidel power. The spirit which, in more modern times, has filled nations with revolutionary frenzy, and led them to the most revolting excesses, is of a similar nature; and indeed we may trace the same tendency to undue excitement, aggravated by the powerful effects of sympathy, in the madness of every infuriated mob. But a species of hallucination, which apparently approaches nearer to the character of a revival, and sometimes, indeed, assumes an aspect but too well calculated to deceive the unstable, is to be discovered in the impulses of fanatical enthusiasm, which have not unfrequently disturbed the peace of society. Of this character are the extravagances of the Anabaptists in Germany, and of the more amiable Quakers in England. Nor must we forget the French prophets, who made their appearance about the beginning of the last century, and deluded so many with their bold and impious pretensions, both in that country and in England. Some notice of this extraordinary delusion, nearly resembling that which has appeared in our own day, supported by the talents and devoted zeal of an Irving and a Campbell, will be found in the Appendix already alluded to; and the reader will be particularly interested in the singularly ingenuous account of the attempts of this fanatical sect in the

capital of Scotland, detailed in the letters of a highly respectable clergyman, and now for the first time given to the public.

It were folly, however, to confound these false appearances with the genuine fruits of the Spirit, nor would it be more contrary to the dictates of revealed religion than inconsistent with sound philosophy to conclude, that, because the human mind may be hurried into extravagances by fanatical excitement, no faith is to be reposed in supernatural agency, where the effects are altogether of a different character. The delusive nature of the appearances above alluded to may be detected by various infallible tests; among which may be mentioned false doctrines, immoral practices, extravagant pretensions, childish or impious conceits, abortive expectations of supernatural interference, and prophetic utterances contradicted by the result. On the other hand, the distinguishing features of a real work of the Spirit consist in the absence of all these unsound views and practices, and in the exhibition of Christian virtues and graces,—especially a deep sense of sin, profound humility, and an entire reliance on the merits of a crucified Redeemer, accompanied by a love of holiness, displaying itself in the daily conduct, and not only surviving times of peculiar excitement, but continuing stedfast to the last.

This is true, whether we refer to individual cases of conversion or to those memorable occurrences in which a peculiar awakening of many souls to the knowledge and power of religion, by a simultaneous effusion of the Spirit, has been vouchsafed to particular districts of the church. The latter, indeed, do not differ from the former in kind but only in juxtaposition as to time and place. Every time a fallen child of Adam is brought out of his natural darkness into the marvellous light of divine truth, this work is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit.



This is conversion, whether it take place gradually and even almost imperceptibly in the use of the ordinary means of grace, or more suddenly and strikingly by arresting the sinner in the midst of a headlong career of worldliness. Many such conversions, occurring at the same time and in the same place, constitute what has been called a Revival. In both instances, the same sovereign will is displayed, and the same vivifying powers, and in both the believer traces and adores the same unerring wisdom and the same unspeakable grace. There is this only difference, that a Revival, coming with more outward observation, and operating more suddenly on friends and neighbours, excites a more powerful and glowing sympathy. The overpowering sense of sin, which, in the case of an individual conversion, would have been pent up, perhaps, in the secret recesses of the heart, obtains free vent where many are similarly affected; the perception of divine grace in the wonders of redeeming love, which might otherwise have caused the soul to overflow with love and gratitude only in its own inward feelings, is now cherished and brought to light by the warmth of congenial sentiments; heart communicates with heart—one sympathetic emotion runs from individual to individual, and from family to family; in the house of prayer, the fervid minds of the audience take fire at the words of the servant of God, and are torn with remorse, or glow with love, or melt with tenderness, as the corresponding chord is struck in the heart. Under such circumstances, can it be thought either wonderful or irrational that the deeply cherished, and unspeakably important sentiments of the heart should find expression in outward symptoms of astonishment, of sorrow, or of delight? “In a Christian assembly, blessed with the abundant pouring out of the spirit from on high,” says an enlightened writer, “I should not be surprised though the

impression of love or of terror from so mighty an agent should in some cases overwhelm for a time the powers of animal nature; or break in a little on that external order which dead formalists are left perfectly capable in all points to observe."

The truth is, that our holy religion presents to the mind subjects of such paramount importance, the hopes which it inspires are so exalted, and its terrors so tremendous, while the mercy and grace which it reveals are so engaging, that it seems impossible for any rational being to be awakened to an adequate sense of them without being filled with emotions for which language has no utterance. Were not the mind of man naturally blind to divine things, the agitation and excitement which have been ridiculed as so irrational in a revival, would be universal throughout the Christian world, and would be felt by all to be nothing more than the obvious and reasonable consequence of the perception of divine truth. The power of the Holy Spirit merely removes a veil from the heart, and a film from the eyes. It enables us to see clearly, to reason justly, and to feel correctly. It is our natural state of coldness and indifference which deserves to be branded with the name of folly. To tremble under convictions of sin, to flee from the wrath to come, to adore our Creator, to bless our Redeemer, and to feel and act as expectants of immortality,—this alone is true wisdom. And what is this but to be converted? The dispensation of the gospel is peculiarly a dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Though the mighty work which was "finished" on Calvary is the blessed—the unspeakable labour on which depends the redemption of lost millions, yet the Son of God would have died in vain had not means been provided for applying to all the subjects of his kingdom the salvation which he had purchased for them. In bestowing this inestimable gift, with all the blessings attached to it, the Holy Spirit is the agent.

Our Lord declared this to his disciples when he was about to quit the world. "When the *comforter* is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. He shall guide you into all truth. He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." \* Nay, so important are the influences of this comforter, that Jesus hastened, as it were, his departure to make room for him. "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you." † Thus then the completion of the "consolation" which had so long been waited for was remitted by the Lord himself into the hands of the Holy Spirit. The church has enjoyed the first fruits of that promise. First of all they were manifested in the persons of the disciples themselves. No sooner was the gift bestowed than they suddenly arose from a slough of prejudice, worldly ambition, and timidity, to courage, disinterestedness, and spiritual discernment. Who were presently so intrepid as they who had but recently deserted their master and fled in dastardly terror? Who so regardless of ease and temporal advancement as they who had formerly quarrelled for anticipated places of earthly honour? Who so faithful as they who had denied their benefactor and friend in the hour of his enemy's triumph? With what new fervour and emotion was their preaching distinguished? What holiness, meekness, and charity now adorned their characters and sanctified their lives? Under the influence of the Spirit of truth, the testimony which they bore to Jesus was attended with demonstration and with power. Thousands on thousands were converted and subdued, and wherever they went the cause of Christ mightily prevailed. If, while their master was alive, they returned to him with

\* John, xv. 26; and xvi. 13, 14.

† John, xvi. 7.

joy, saying, that even the devils were subject to them, with how much greater joy must they have exercised those gifts of the spirit which melted the hearts of both Jews and Gentiles, and constrained them to own that the crucified Jesus was both Lord and Christ!

Since those days of miraculous power the ordinary influences of the Spirit have not ceased to operate, and have, even in the darkest periods of ignorance and superstition, been advancing, as we have already observed, the interests of pure and undefiled religion. That its progress has been slow and sometimes even retrograde, while on the one hand it may be resolved into the sovereign will of Him who doeth all things well, must on the other be attributed to the perverseness and the enmity of those to whom the offer of salvation is freely made. If it be asked why the promise of righteousness and peace to the world is so long delayed, we may confidently answer, that it is not because the arm of God is shortened, or his ear heavy. The obstruction lies with ourselves. He calls, but we will not answer. He offers, but we refuse. The means of grace are ample, but our hearts are hard. In the ministers of the gospel there seems to be increasing life and zeal, but can it be said that the people second their efforts and gladly hear their voice? Alas! complaints of carelessness and deadness are heard on every side. In England the way of salvation is proclaimed from very many pulpits—sedulously and pitifully proclaimed; and yet, when you ask the pastors to show you the faithful of their flock, they reply with a groan, “Who hath believed our report?” The people crowd perhaps to church, and attend to all the outward decorum becoming Christian congregations, and then withdraw as uninfluenced by solemn warnings and earnest invitations as if they heard them not. In Scotland we have this testimony from one of its most faithful pastors about the end of last century: “The gospel is no where more ably or

more plentifully preached than in Edinburgh and its environs, but it is not apparently accompanied with that power which our fathers have told us it used to be. At the same time the servants of the Lord seem to be wonderfully assisted in boldly declaring the genuine gospel of Christ." Since that period faithful ministers of the gospel seem to have rapidly increased in every corner of the land; but we are still at a loss to discover any very marked effects of their zeal in giving rise to a praying people. How affecting is it to hear a minister of the free and blessed gospel say from his pulpit, "I have laboured among you for more than thirty-five years, and were any one to ask me 'where are the fruits of your labours?' I should be confounded, and know not what to answer!"

How long shall we hear sermons which shut us up to the only way of deliverance through the cross of Christ—Nay, how long shall the people demand such sermons, and admire them, and tolerate no other, and yet listen to them without conviction and without emotion? How long shall the gospel be preached in its purity and not in its power? Shall we make that condemnation and death to our souls which ought to be life and glory?

The quickening power is too often neglected in this mighty concern. We have the letter which killeth, but the spirit which giveth life is awanting. The distinguishing characteristic of the Christian dispensation, as we have said, is the work of the Holy Spirit. Do our pastors hold forth this characteristic with sufficient emphasis? While Christ is preached to us distinctly enough as the Saviour of sinners, is this all-important doctrine proclaimed as a fact to be believed, and to exercise the understanding, rather than as a truth which ought deeply to affect the heart, and entirely to influence the conduct? Is there any backwardness and reserve in bringing home to the minds of hearers the necessity of the divine Spirit's operation, or in faithfully warning them that with-

out power from on high they cannot savingly accept of the truth, or become wise unto salvation? While we are taught to believe that our souls must be born again, is there no reluctance freely to declare that, even after conversion, we can receive no spiritual gift, and make no advance in holiness, except through the medium of the Spirit? Under these impressions is there any lack of incitement ceaselessly and earnestly to pray for the aid of this life-giving agent? Assuredly if there be a defect in the preaching of the present day as to these vital principles, it cannot be matter of surprise that the influence of the pastor's ministrations should be feeble, and that the flock should languish for want of nourishment. Were the minister to enter his pulpit, and the people their seats, convinced that without the Spirit's intervention preaching and hearing are alike powerless, how different might be the result! Were it laid on our conscience and on our understanding that we must always in all duties, by prayer seek the teaching and assistance of the Spirit, that we must pray for this gift while we read, that we must pray for it while we hear, that we must pray for it while we speak, and even pray for it with every act of confession, supplication, or thanksgiving, might we not expect to obtain the inestimable blessing, and to be visited with some of those times of refreshing from the Lord, which should prove that he is amongst us of a truth?

What avails all the apparatus of Christianity without the living principle to give it efficacy? Our country is divided into parishes, each possessing its pastor and its eldership, with its church and its school; our cottages are furnished with Bibles; our scattered hamlets are strewn with religious tracts; Scriptural knowledge, though far from being universal, is not rare among us; daring vice and impiety are kept under restraint. But even in these advantages and privileges does there not lurk a snare? Have they not become to us as the Nile

is to the land of Egypt? We regard them as our fertilizing stream. We water the land with our foot, and trust that the fructifying influence is there; and thus we are visited with barrenness. If our work is to prosper, if our own souls are to prosper, we must look higher than ordinances for our refreshment; we must drink water of the rain of heaven. The Lord must care for us. His eye must be ever upon us, and his ear open to our cry. And surely, if we feel the helplessness of our natural condition, and apply for that strength which is made perfect in weakness, He who hath said "Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full," will not be unfaithful to his own promise.

Is it not a time for those who pray at all to arouse themselves, and seek more earnestly the best gifts, when the powers of our country, both political and religious, are in commotion; when many conflicting opinions and clashing interests are at work to unsettle old institutions; and when there may be a dearth of grace and wisdom to reconstruct the fabrics, or give strength and stability to their shaken foundations? While some of our legislators would make no difficulty about the re-establishment of Popery in a misruled and afflicted portion of our empire, and others would cleave to our Protestant establishments; some from enlightened and pious attachment, and others from more timid or prejudiced adherence to things as they are; and while a new and unlooked for party project to purify the Church of Christ, and strengthen and enlarge its borders by depriving it of all pecuniary aid from the state, and shaking it loose from the protection of constituted authority;—while men, entertaining these various and jarring sentiments, are each working in their own way to promote their own ends, where is our shelter? Where our deliverance? Is it not in Him whose name is a strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is safe? He passes by the minor differences, and disowns

the bitter contendings of party, while, without respect to church order and government, he pours out his Holy Spirit on the meek and lowly in heart, and revives the souls of the prayerful. Leaving men to arrange the local circumstances and conveniences of his church, he gathers out of all the denominations of worshippers who hold "the truth, once delivered to the saints," a people for himself. Christ is not divided, and his members must be knit together by holier and more indissoluble ties than those which are formed by sect or party. They are drawn together by the bonds of Christian love, and united, in one spiritual body, to the Head, by the plastic and constraining power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot hope that He who has been emphatically called the Prince of Peace will look down with favour on our land while Ephraim envies Judah, and Judah vexes Ephraim. But if believers would only unite in humble, earnest, and persevering prayer for those divine influences which he has promised to shed abroad on his church, we should soon have other work to do than to engage in unhallowed strife. A breath from the Spirit of Holiness, convincing the worldly-wise of their common misery and their common hope, would dissolve all their views of expediency and of self-aggrandizement like a morning dream; an effusion of that love which pervades the regions of heavenly peace would combine all the disjointed materials of which the church on earth is formed. Prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, would occupy bosoms which are now the seat of misgiving and coldness; one hope and one labour of love would blend the sympathies of believers; and while they united their efforts in guiding the perplexed through the mazes of doubt, and in conducting the convicted to the foot of the cross, angry contention would cease, sectarian prejudices would give way, and the servants of Jesus would wonder that they had ever differed.



# REVIVALS OF RELIGION,

&c.

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## CHAPTER I.

THIS and the three following chapters contain each an account of a work of grace in parts of England remote in situation, yet taking place within a few years of each other, and some of them going on at the same date. It does not appear that any of the excellent pastors who were the honoured instruments in promoting the work, were acquainted with the operations of the rest, or that their own religious impressions had commenced or been nurtured during their academic course. Nay, it is remarkable, that Walker, Berridge, and Grimshaw preached for years without knowing the true plan of salvation, and their own minds were disfranchised from the trammels of error and prejudice, only after periods of hard conflict. Venn and Berridge became attached friends late in life, and were both made instrumental in leading the minds of some members of the University of Cambridge to embrace evangelical truth. The fruit which sprung of this happy combination, in the characters of Simeon and others, remains to this day, and has furnished faithful guides to many English parishes, which were previously in a desolate condition. Walker was the friend of Romain, and through him, of several other good men of his day, and united with them in seeking to influence the minds of clergymen in various parts of the kingdom. Grimshaw seems to have stood alone in the energy of his eccentric faithfulness; and till he was sought out by

Whitefield, and through that circumstance shared his name of Methodist, he seems scarcely to have found a clerical friend who understood him. There arose soon after him, however, a band of holy men, who appreciated his worth ; and his life by John Newton, written thirty years after he had ceased from his labours, is a pleasing evidence that his work has left a long trace behind it.

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### REVIVAL UNDER VENN AT HUDDERSFIELD.

[1759.] THE Rev. H. Venn removed from Clapham, where he had not experienced the success which he hoped, and settled at Huddersfield, in Yorkshire. As soon as he began to preach there, the church became crowded to such an extent that many were not able to procure admission. Numbers became deeply impressed with concern about their immortal souls, and persons flocked from the distant hamlets, enquiring what they must do to be saved. He found them in general utterly ignorant of their state by nature, and of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. His heart yearned over his flock, and he was never satisfied with his labours among them, though they were continued to a degree ruinous to his health. He often addressed the congregation from the desk, explaining and enforcing the Psalms and the lessons. He would often begin the service with a solemn and most impressive address, exhorting them to consider themselves as in the presence of the great God of Heaven, whose eye was in a particular manner upon them whilst they drew nigh to him in his own house. His whole soul was engaged in preaching ; and as at this time he only used short notes in the pulpit, ample room was left to indulge the feelings of compassion, of tenderness, and of love, with which his heart overflowed towards his people. In the week, he stately visited the different hamlets in his extensive parish, and collecting the inha-

bitants at a private house, he addressed them with a kindness and earnestness which moved every heart. Opposition, however, followed him here. He was assailed with the old and slanderous insinuation, that while he preached the doctrine of justification by faith alone, he undervalued moral worth, and neglected to enforce works, though his whole life was a practical confutation of such a falsehood, and the lives of those who received the doctrines he preached became so strict and exemplary, that they were immediately accused of the opposite extreme of carrying holiness to an unnecessary length.

A club, chiefly composed of Socinians, in a neighbouring market-town, having heard much censure and ridicule bestowed on his preaching, sent two of their body, whom they considered the ablest to detect absurdity, and the most witty to expose it, to hear this strange preacher, and to furnish matter of merriment for the next meeting. They accordingly went; but could not but be struck, when they entered the church, to see the multitude that was assembled together, and to observe the devotion of their behaviour. When Mr Venn ascended the reading desk, he addressed his flock as usual, with a solemnity and dignity which showed him to be deeply interested in the work in which he was engaged. The earnestness of his preaching, and the solemn appeals he made to conscience, deeply impressed them, so that one of them observed as they left the church, "Surely God is in this place!—there is no matter for laughter here!" This gentleman immediately called upon Mr Venn, told him who he was, and the purpose for which he had come, and earnestly begged his forgiveness and his prayers. He requested Mr Venn to visit him without delay, and left the Socinian congregation, and from that time, to the hour of his death, became one of Mr Venn's most faithful and affectionate friends.

The deep impression made by his preaching upon all ranks of the people was indeed very striking. A gentleman, highly respectable for character, talents, and piety, the late William Hay of Leeds, who frequently went to Huddersfield to hear him preach, assured the writer of

his memoirs, that once on returning home with an intimate friend, they neither of them opened their lips to each other till they came within a mile of Leeds, a distance of about fifteen miles ; so deeply were they impressed by the very important truths which they had heard from the pulpit, and the very impressive manner in which they had been delivered.

At the distance of fifty years, the author of the life of Venn went to Huddersfield, to ascertain how far the recollection of his labours had survived the lapse of nearly two generations. We present a portion of the result of his enquiries, which marks how solemn and lively a work of the Spirit was carried on under his ministry in that place ; and also proves that it was not a mere transient excitement, but a solid operation of the power of divine grace, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in old age.

Mr Brook of Longwood states, that there was a meeting every Saturday night of the most pious people at Thomas Hanson's, sometimes near twenty, who sang and prayed together. " I was first," said he, " led to go to Huddersfield church by listening with an uncle of mine, Mr Mellor, at the door of the house in which this meeting was held. We thought there must be something uncommon to make people so earnest. My uncle was about nineteen—I was sixteen—so we went together to the church one Thursday evening. There was a great crowd within the church, all silent, many weeping. The text was ' Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.' Mr Mellor was deeply attentive, and, when we came out of church, we did not say a word to each other till we got some way into the fields. Then Mr M. stopped, leaned his back against a wall, and burst into tears, saying, ' I can't stand this ! ' His convictions of sin were from that time most powerful, and he became quite a changed character—a most exemplary person, as you will hear from the old people, even if they did not like his religion : he died some years after. I was not so much affected at that time, but I could not after that sermon be easy in sin, and I began to pray

regularly, and so by degrees I was brought to know myself, and to seek salvation in earnest. The people used to go from Longwood in droves to Huddersfield church, three miles off—scores of them came out of church together whose ways home were in this direction, and they used to stop at the First End, about a mile off, and talk over for some time what they had heard before they separated to go to their homes. Oh! that place has been to me like a little heaven below. I never heard a minister like him. He was most powerful in unfolding the law. When doing so, he had a stern look that would make you tremble—then he would turn off to the offers of grace, and begin to smile, and go on entreating till his eyes filled with tears.”

George Crow, aged eighty-two, when asked if ever he thought of old times, replied, “ Ah! yes, and shall do to the last. I thought when Mr Venn went I should be like Rachael for the rest of my days, weeping, and refusing to be comforted. I was abidingly impressed the first time I heard him, at an early period of his ministry. He was such a preacher as I never heard before nor since—he struck upon the passions like no other man. Nobody could help being affected—the most wicked and ill-conditioned men went to hear him, and *fell, like slaked lime, in a moment*, even though they were not converted. I could have heard him preach all night through.

“ There were many used to go from Lockwood every Sunday and Thursday—we had a meeting of the most pious at Mrs Scholefield’s, about twenty of us, where a subject given out one time was discussed the next—one of us was the leader, and opened with prayer—afterwards he asked all round their opinions, and concluded with prayer. It is kept up to this day, though now but a few of us. The meeting at Longwood had more than ours. There was another at Berrybrow; and one, a kind of general one, at the town.

“ I was one of those who went to Mr Venn with a large body of people, just before he left Huddersfield, to persuade him to stay. There were more than two rooms could hold. \* \* After Mr Venn left, the people

were all squandered away from the church, so some of us determined to begin a subscription for a chapel. I was one of the first who put their names down. I had only £5, and gave that; and I query whether I have ever had so much in my pocket since.

“I knew Mr Riland well (Mr Venn’s curate)—he was an excellent man; he used to visit much among the poor—he often came to me whilst I was at work, and sat down upon the block, or any thing, and would say, ‘Well, George, how are you? Either ask me something or tell me something. Be quick! for I have much to do and little time.’”

The religion of this poor man was of a very advanced and mature character. He quoted passages from Swedenborgh’s writings, which, he said, he had read a great deal of, but though there were some good things, “it was chiefly random stuff.”

Sally P——, aged seventy-four, spoke of my grandfather (Mr Venn), with great reverence, but with deep emotion. I asked her, whether she often thought about him? She replied, “Ah sir, I have often thought about him, and the pains he took with us; but it was all lost upon some of us. He had a most piercing tone, and things that he said have ever since stuck to my mind.” “I remember, that just before he went, he told us all, that he had broken up our fallow ground, and sown good seed, but that if we did not watch over it, and it did not become fruitful, it would be so much the worse for us; and so it has been with me. It is very sorrowful to think of these things; and sometimes it makes me very low.”

John Starkey, aged eighty, as I conversed with him, seemed gradually to wake up, till his countenance glistened with joy. His faculties are still perfect, and his recollection ready and distinct. There was in him an uncommon warmth of affection and benevolence. He said, “I esteemed Mr Venn too much for a man; I almost forgot that he was only a creature, and an instrument. His going away went nearer to my heart than any thing since. I was very wild and careless when

a lad, and would not go to church ; so Mr Whitaker promised me sixpence if I would go three times, but I don't know whether I earned it, I was so careless about every thing ; however, soon after, I heard one sermon which made me begin to think. The text was, ' God is no respecter of persons ;' and he showed that it was neither money nor learning, nor any thing else of the kind which could make us happy ; but that without holiness we were under God's frown and curse. I then saw something of my real state ; and from that time I did not want hiring to hear him. I do not think any thing would have kept me from him. He was a wonderful preacher. When he got warm with his subject, he looked as if he would jump out of the pulpit. He made many weep. I have often wept at his sermons. I could have stood to hear him till morning. When he came up to the church, he used to go round the churchyard and drive us all in before him. About seven or eight of us who lived at Cawcliff used to meet at each other's houses once a-week, for reading the Scriptures and prayer, but all my companions are now gone ; and I often think I am left alone, as David says, ' like a sparrow upon the house-top.' It is a grief to me that I have now no one to talk with about spiritual things, but then I think, I am almost turned eighty, and God has helped me hitherto—blessed be his name ! I cannot be much longer here, and I must not faint at last. That text has often cheered my spirits,—' Be content with such things as ye have ; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' These words gave me comfort, for He has not forsaken me ; and then there is another,—' With loving kindness have I drawn thee.'—Oh blessed, blessed be His name, for His great loving-kindness ! I often think time is too short to praise him. Eternity alone will be long enough. I have found it to be as the Scripture says,—' We must through great tribulation enter the kingdom of Heaven.' I have been tried in many ways."\*

\* Life of Venn, p. 49.

[1771.] Mr Venn's bodily strength failed under his ceaseless exertions. The gospel treasure retained its precious savour, but the earthen vessel was wellnigh broken. He had a cough, and brought up blood, and was able only to preach once in a fortnight, and even that exertion rendered him incapable of rising for several days. He was, therefore, induced to accept the rectory of Yelling, though his feelings were deeply wounded by leaving a flock, amongst whom he had laboured with so much success. The last two or three months of his residence were peculiarly affecting. At an early hour the church was crowded when he preached, so that vast numbers were compelled to go away. Many came from a considerable distance to take leave of him, and to express how much they owed to him for benefits received under his ministry, of which he had not been aware. Mothers held up their children, saying, "There is the man who has been our most faithful minister, and our best friend!" The whole parish was deeply moved, and when he preached his farewell sermon, neither could he himself speak without the strongest emotion, nor the congregation hear him without marks of the deepest interest and affection. Nor did the impression soon wear away: twenty years after, a stranger passing through that place, and enquiring about their former pastor, heard blessings showered down upon him and his family with deeply affected hearts, whilst they deplored their own loss.



## CHAPTER II.

## REVIVAL UNDER WALKER, AT TRURO, IN CORNWALL.

[1746.] AT the time when the Rev. Samuel Walker entered upon the curacy of the populous town of Truro, he was not himself acquainted with the doctrine of the complete depravity of man, and with justification by faith alone, but, like Mr Berridge, Mr Grimshaw, and many other successful preachers in England, and like Dr Stewart, and Dr Chalmers, in Scotland, he had preached for several years before he perceived distinctly that the object of his work was the conversion of men. He was, from the first, highly esteemed for the decency and regularity of his conduct, as well as for his learning and gentlemanly manners; but it was not till a year of his ministrations in Truro had elapsed, that he discovered the necessity of "putting off the old man and putting on the new." Being in company with some friends, the subject of whose conversation turned on justification by faith, he became sensible, as he freely owned afterwards, that he was totally unacquainted with that faith which had been the topic of the discourse, and also convinced that he was destitute of something which was of the greatest importance to his own salvation, as well as the salvation of the people committed to his charge. He said nothing at the time of the concern he was brought under to any of the company, but was ever afterwards, as opportunity offered, ready to enter upon the subject. He began to discover that he had hitherto been ignorant of the nature of gospel salvation, inattentive to the spiritual state of his own soul and the souls of others, and governed in all his conduct, not by the Christian motives of love to God and man, but purely by such as were wholly sensual and selfish; he found that he was a slave to the desire of man's

esteem, and, in short, as he himself expressed it, that all had been *wrong*, both within and without.

Upon this discovery, he applied himself with diligence and fervent prayer to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and having by these means gained a farther insight into the nature of man's spiritual disorder, and of the remedy afforded in the gospel, this necessarily led him to make a considerable alteration in his preaching, &c. &c. A meditation written about this time, when he returned from a meeting of neighbouring clergymen, expresses the state of his mind in a way that must interest a Christian reader.

“ For my own part, I lived many years in entire ignorance of a corrupted nature, although I had learnt to reason in a speculative and historical way upon man's degeneracy. Since it hath pleased God in some measure to enlighten the eyes of my understanding, I look back upon those days of blindness, and plainly see, that while I kept to an external customary decency, and in some sense regularity, I was influenced and acted upon by two hidden principles, as contrary to God as darkness is to light. *The one* a prevailing desire and reputation of being esteemed, which went through all I did, followed me into all companies, dictated all I said, led me to compliance often in direct opposition to conscience, made me above all things fearful of being thought little of, directed all my sermons, both in writing and in speaking them, and, in short, swayed my whole life, till, I hope, the latter years of it. *The other*, a desire of pleasure which rendered me slothful, indolent, and restless out of company, eager after amusement, &c.; but this was so subordinate to the other, that I was always best delighted with such entertainments as gave me opportunity of setting off any excellence I might seem to have, such as music and dancing. By these two the strong man kept the palace of my heart, and all was peace; and that in so strange a manner, that I do not recollect the least suspicion of my being out of the way, for I had learnt to rest upon my freedom from the grossest vice; and keeping a sort of strictness in attending upon the forms of my ministry, and especially in engaging others to attend

them. Were I to say with how many heartfelt pangs of fear and inquietude I have been brought, during these latter years, to any reasonable measure of indifference about the esteem of the world, I should describe the passages which have most engrossed my mind. The love of pleasure decayed first ; but yet, I could only part with it by degrees ; and many things of that sort I continued in when I had no pleasure in them, *because I was ashamed to leave them.*"

It need be no matter of surprise if many of the gay and worldly follow their unsatisfactory pastimes long after they cease to find them gratifying, the slaves alike of their own evil habits and fear of "the world's dread laugh," when a minister of the everlasting gospel confesses himself so completely the bondsman of the opinions of lookers on. No power, short of that which convinces that it will profit us nothing to gain the whole world and lose our own souls, can overcome the reluctance, the supineness, the timidity, which, each in succession, present themselves as obstacles to our changing our ways, and seeking new delights.

[1758.] Mr Walker published a letter to a clergyman concerning the first question in the office for the ordaining of deacons, in which he says of himself.

"As I was ignorant of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, and of my want of him in all his offices, so I had not taken the least notice of the spiritual state of others. It was to me as a thing I had no concern with, that sins of the grossest kind were committed on every side of me. And after I was ordained, I had no sight or thought of the condition my parishioners were in, though I had some desire that they should come to church and sacrament, and not drink, swear, and the like." Again he says, "It was at least a year after the kind providence of God brought me hither, ere I fell under considerable suspicions or uneasiness about myself and my manner of preaching ; when, by the frequent conversation of a Christian friend (verily the first person I had met with truly possessed of the mind of Christ), I became sensible all was wrong within and without. My uneasiness was

rather abiding than violent, possibly because my life had been free of gross sins, having in a good measure been used to follow the direction of my conscience, and the change wrought upon me was slow, till, under a variety of means, I was brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus."

In speaking of his motives for undertaking the curacy of Truro, Mr Walker often accused himself of the most unworthy views. He confessed that he was not actuated by the least measure of a *ministerial spirit*; but that his only motive for going to live in that populous town, in preference to any other place in the country, was the greater resort of company, and that he might take his pleasure at the assemblies, particularly in dancing. He proceeds—"As this work was going forward in myself, the people were made partakers of the effects of it;—by and by I began to deal with them as lost sinners, to beat down formality and self-righteousness, and to preach Christ. The fruit of this, by the mighty working of the spirit, quickly appeared. It was a new way to them. They were surprised and grew angry, not without an evident fear resting upon them, and an interesting curiosity to hear me again of this matter. I have reason to judge that almost all of them have been one time or other awakened more or less, although I fear many of them have rejected the counsel of God against themselves. But, in the mean time, some more sensibly pricked in their hearts, came to me enquiring *what they must do?* The number of these continually increasing, I thought my utmost diligence was needful towards them. They were universally ignorant in the grossest degree. I was glad to give them as many evenings in the week as I could spare, appointing them to attend me after their work was over at my house. As there was no knowledge of divine things among them, and, in consequence thereof, they were incapable of instructing each other, and withal, as they were marked out by reproach, and had every art tried upon them to draw them away, they needed from me both instruction and cautions, which I was obliged, for these reasons, to give them, either singly

or by two or three together. This I have continued to do to the present time, with no other variation but that of using the help of those who had made any progress to watch over beginners. I had, from the first, engaged them frequently to converse together, and pray with one another, as I could put them together; and though the far greater part of them fell away from their awakenings, yet when a number of them seemed to be somewhat confirmed, they of their own accord met together in large bodies in their own houses to read God's word, pray, sing psalms, &c. This became pretty much practised about two years ago, and herein I have left them to themselves, only giving them directions as need required.

“By the grace of God, the number of those whose conduct seemed to express a lively faith began now to be something considerable, for which reason, about the latter end of last summer, it was thought advisable to form them into a religious society, which, after some delays, was effected in the beginning of February. The number of members is now upwards of seventy.”

The editor adds, it was afterwards considerably increased.

“While I was deliberating about this society, which was to consist of such only as gave hope of an edifying example, it was thought proper to call together as many others as were willing in my house once a-week as a sort of nursery for the principal society, and, by talking and praying with them, we seem to have found some establishment among those who are weaker.

“This hath been the progress of the work among ourselves, wherein I have reason to believe we have been much forwarded by the blessing of the Spirit upon a free and practical exposition of the Church Catechism, which I have, after my poor measure, read by word of mouth, the Sunday evenings of half the year, an hour after service.

“I have to add farther, which I doubt not will give you pleasure, that, not long after the commencement of this work at Truro, several clergymen of us in the neighbourhood associated curselves, under the name of

the Parsons' Club, for mutual consultation and direction, in order to promote the great end of our ministry."

In the formation of his societies Mr Walker followed the plan laid down by the Rev. Dr Josiah Woodward in his treatise published in the reign of Queen Anne, entitled, "An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Religious Societies in and about London, and of their endeavours for the Reformation of Manners."

For his parochial society and clerical club he formed most judicious rules, some of which indicate his knowledge of the deceitful devices by which the conceit of self-applause, and the deceit of hypocrisy, are both able to mar a work which in itself seems simply edifying. He arranged also forms of prayer for their use, selected from Scripture, the Liturgy, the Whole Duty of Man, and Jenk's Devotions.

Mr Walker also delivered many occasional sermons and week-day lectures, which he thought produced the effect of casting an awe over the minds of the most hardened of the people, so that cock-fightings, stage-plays, &c., against which he bore an open testimony, were prevented. "But his heart was most set on the much neglected duty of *catechizing*, in which he passed the Sabbath evenings of several months in the year to a very numerous congregation. \* \* It pleased God that in the last two years of his ministry a considerable number of young people were awakened, on which occasion he set up a private lecture to them in his own room twice a-week in the evening. This meeting was so crowded and so hot that his friends evidently saw that his strength was much impaired, and that his life would be shortened by it; yet the undertaking was so charitable a design for the good of young souls, and he was so intent upon it, that they did not care to press him to desist from it. Indeed his compassion to the souls of perishing sinners seemed to be his shining grace, insomuch that when in conversation any hard and impenitent sinner was mentioned, he seemed to express an inward pungent distress of soul. \* \* His room for private advice was daily frequented, except on Saturdays, which he always reser-

ved for himself to prepare for the Sunday, so that from first to last he thought about a thousand of the inhabitants of the town, besides strangers from the adjacent parts, had been with him for private advice regarding the state of their souls. After he became so much engaged he had little leisure for studying the works of others—the Bible was then almost the only book he applied himself to—from this sacred fountain he drew that deep and practical knowledge which his charitable heart was always ready to communicate to others. After it had pleased God to bless his ministrations at Truro in so remarkable a manner that the number of people in whom an appearance of a real change of heart and life was visible became considerable, he felt that a new and spiritual relation commenced between him and his flock, and accordingly it became his settled judgment that he ought not, on any worldly consideration, to leave them, unless Providence should open to him a more extensive field of usefulness to the church of Christ, or he should be removed by superior authority. This may account for his giving up the vicarage of Falland, to which he was presented in 1747. Having the Bishop's leave for absence he held this vicarage for a time, till, growing dissatisfied in his conscience concerning the justifiableness of non-residence, he resigned it, and could never afterwards be induced to accept of another living, though he had the offer of four. Yet he went not about this affair with a precipitate zeal, but with his usual calmness of judgment and deliberation, and after consulting some able divines on the subject of *pluralities* and *non-residence*.

“ This circumstance, though often talked of between him and his friends, was never mentioned without his expressing at the same time how great a burden he found himself delivered from when he gave up a charge of souls whom he had it not in his power to inspect. After this he was not only content, but even satisfied in his low circumstances, though they became reduced beyond what might have been reasonably expected; and when he was no longer able to support the expense of house-

keeping, he went into poor lodgings, where, though his board and habitation were of the most ordinary kind, yet as his mind was wholly intent upon spreading the saving knowledge of the gospel, he lived in peace and calmness." \* \* \*

"In the beginning of November, 1756, three companies of General Anstruther's regiment of soldiers were sent into winter-quarters in Truro. The zeal of our pious minister engaged him to set to work to promote the knowledge and practice of religion among them, and it pleased God to give a peculiar blessing to his labours exerted on this occasion."

Mr Walker wrote on this subject thus:—"It is my way, in writing to my friends, to speak what is most nearly on my heart, and especially if it be any thing which I may hope will excite their praises, and engage their intercessions on my behalf. Such is the circumstance I have to communicate respecting the success of the Gospel among the soldiers quartered in this town. I endeavoured to lose no time with them from their first arrival, but without delay preached a sermon-extraordinary on their account on Sunday afternoon, called by the people here the *Soldiers' Sermon*. There was at first great difficulty to get their attendance to hear it, for though they were ordered to be at church in the morning, and brought thither by their officers, yet they used to turn off at the door. In this point I was helped by the zeal of my dear people of the society, who made it their business to speak to these poor creatures, giving them proper advice, and prevailing on a few of them to be at church as was wished. They soon became a larger number; and our labours were so blessed to them and us, that in less than three weeks a full hundred of them came to my house, asking 'what they must do?' This was what I aimed at, an opportunity of personal and free conversation. The effects have been very striking. One or two of the whole only excepted, you would have seen their countenances changing, tears often bursting from their eyes, and confessions of their exceeding sinfulness and danger breaking from their mouths. I have scarcely



heard such a thing as self-excusing from one of them ; while their desire to be instructed, and uncommon thankfulness for the least pains used upon them by any of us, have been very remarkable. Such promising symptoms gave me great confidence it would come to something, and more so when I found that many of them were greatly stirred up to pray. Many of them, as was to be expected, soon went back. Nevertheless, thus far, both they and the others who never came near me in private are plainly influenced, so that a certain fear has restrained them from swearing and cursing, which, when they came hither, was universally the practice ; has engaged them to attend public worship, and at least so far biassed their conduct, that military punishments are grown much less frequent among them. There are about twenty who have kept close to the means of grace, and concerning whom I have encouraging hope that a *good work is begun* in them. Indeed, conviction of sin appears to have gone deep with them, and they are crying after Christ with such marks of godly sorrow, as make me hope it is indeed a sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation.

“ These I intend shall be united together when they leave us, under the name of the Soldiers’ Society, having already drawn up regulations for the purpose. While they are here they make a part of our society, by the exercises of which, as well as by meetings I particularly appoint for their use, they seem to be much established. What such a society of soldiers may produce amongst that body of men, God only knows ; yet I would comfort myself with the hope it may please the Lord it shall go farther. It may be observed, that some of these, namely, six Scotchmen and one English dissenter, have enjoyed the benefit of religious knowledge in their youth ; the rest, excepting two, I find totally ignorant of every thing relating to Christ ; and this their total ignorance has made me lament the superficial use or entire neglect of catechising among the English clergy, by which, more than by any other thing, I am persuaded the kingdom of darkness and sin is established in England.”

The officers of these men waited on Mr Walker to return thanks for the great obligations he had laid on them, by taking so much pains with the men, and working such a reformation among them.

In August 1760, Mr Walker preached what, unexpectedly to himself and his people, proved his last sermon. The solemn transactions of the day of judgment formed his subject, and had he been aware that their next meeting must be at the awful judgment-seat, his address could not have been more solemn and appropriate. The reader may be glad to see one little specimen of that preaching which was employed as the instrument of arousing so many souls from the sleep of sin:—  
“ Well ; we shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ together. There the controversy between me, calling upon you by the terrors of the Lord, and you, determined to abide in your sins, will be decided. There it will appear whether your blood will be upon your own heads for your obstinate impenitency, or upon mine for not giving you warning. Christ will certainly either acquit or condemn me on this behalf ; and if I should be acquitted herein, what would become of you ? I tremble to think how so many words of mine will be brought up against you on that day. What will you say—what will you answer—how will you excuse yourselves ? O sirs, if you will not be prevailed upon, you will eternally curse the day that you knew me, or heard one word from my mouth. Why—why will you die with so aggravated a destruction ? O think of the judgment—think of it, and you will not be able to hold it out against your own souls. May the Lord incline you to do so ; may he cause this work to sink deep into your hearts ; may he show you all your danger ; and with an outstretched arm bring you out of the hands of the Devil, and translate you into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son, to his own glory and your unspeakable happiness, in the day of the appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Even so, most mighty God, and most merciful Father, for the same Jesus Christ’s sake.” These were the concluding words of the ministry of this faithful minister of Christ.

The state of his health occasioned his being removed to Bristol for a time, and by and by to the neighbourhood of London, where he expired in July, 1761. His removals brought him within reach of many pious persons, both of the clergy and laity, who resorted to him during his protracted illness, to whom his conversations were blessed in a very singular manner; so that, when bodily weakness prevented him from preaching, he was instrumental in promoting the glory of God, and the good of many souls, by his remarkable talent in experimental and holy conversation.

His hours of languor and death were not marked by lively joy, but by a quiet and firm confidence in that Redeemer to whom he had invited so many souls. Here, of course, his memoir and his work break off together, and the compiler is left without means of further tracing the work of God in the souls at Truro. It is very affecting to observe that the good shepherd is so frequently removed, not to make room for another his equal in gracious attainments, but as a judgment on the flock. We do not know if it was so in this case, or if the Spirit of God still continued to be poured out upon that people; but this we know, that those of them who, under Mr Walker's ministry, had joined themselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, shall never be cast out.

This brief narrative is extracted from a memoir prefixed to an early edition of Mr Walker's sermons.

## CHAPTER III.

BERRIDGE, AT EVERTON.

[1754.] THE Rev. John Berridge, who was born at Kingston in 1716, had reached his 39th year before he came to entertain any clear views of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. He had "lived proudly on faith and works for salvation," as he himself stated in the quaint and characteristic inscription which he prepared for his own tombstone, till the year 1754; and preached, as might be expected, with no visible effect, at Stapleford, near Cambridge, for several years. It was not, however, till three years after his first awakening, that his heart was fully interested in divine truth. He had then been for a full year Vicar of Everton, where he began to preach repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ with fear and trembling. After he had preached for some time in his new way, he began to pause and consider whether he was right, not having seen any particular effects from his discourses. While ruminating on this subject, however, one of his parishioners came to enquire for him. When she was introduced, "Well, Sarah," said he: she replied, "Well!—not so well, I fear."—"Why, what is the matter, Sarah?"—"I do not know what is the matter; but by those new sermons, I find we are all to be lost now. I can neither eat, drink, or sleep—I do not know what is to become of me." Here is an interesting era in the life of a bearer of good tidings. The first token of awakening among his hearers from the death of trespasses and sins—the first consciousness of want or of holy fear. With what anxiety must the faithful pastor, who looks for the work of the Spirit, watch for such a token of quickening into life. With what fresh courage and zeal must he go on to repeat his offers of salvation—how

much more frequent and hopeful will be his prayers ! Mr Berridge was surrounded by those who were not taught as he was, and from the peculiarity of his opinions and experience, he might have questioned his understanding of Scripture. But in the same week with poor Sarah came two or three more, on a like errand, which so confirmed him in the truth, that he resolved from that time to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Having changed his principles and manner of preaching, he destroyed his old sermons. All things became new to him. He was led soon afterwards, by a casual circumstance, to venture for the first time to preach extempore. His stock of new compositions being small, when he was asked to preach what was termed a club sermon\* in his neighbourhood, and finding that several of his own people would follow him there, before whom he was reluctant to repeat a recent discourse, he was drawn to adventure this unwonted achievement in the presence of many of the clergy. After struggling with embarrassment in the beginning, he was enabled to overcome it, and spoke with so much freedom that he was greatly encouraged ; and from that time felt a liberty and readiness in preaching which proved of the greatest service to his ministrations in after life. He was surrounded by a wide district, in which he perceived that the gospel, as he had now received it, was neither preached nor understood. He pitied the darkness which so universally prevailed, and felt constrained to devote himself to the service of his Divine Master in a wider field than the bounds of his own parish presented. He was well aware, not only of the bodily labour which the functions of an itinerating preacher would entail on him, but also of the obloquy and persecution which would attend a practice so contrary to the rules of the Established Church. But he was impelled by a sense of duty too powerful to be controlled by worldly motives ; and, having counted the cost, he took his resolution piously, strenuously, and perseveringly. Wherever he found an opportunity for spreading the light of the Gospel, he did

\* A sermon before a meeting of the clergy.

not hesitate to present himself; and where churches were not accessible to him, he addressed his hearers in dwelling-houses, in barns, or in the open air.

The counties of Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, Bedford, and Huntingdon, were the principal scenes of his labours, and in this circuit he preached, on an average, from ten to twelve sermons a-week, and not unfrequently rode on horseback a hundred miles. He rented places for worship, maintained lay preachers, and travelled at his own expense,—charges which his fortune inherited from his father, and his income from his preferment, enabled him to bear. He spent his ample fortune, indeed, in the service of religion; and his resources were so exhausted in his old age, that his friend Mr Romaine preached a sermon in his behalf, in which he interceded “for the support of two preachers and their horses, and several local preachers, and for the rents of several barns in which they preached.” Those among whom he scattered the seed of the word were chiefly a poor population of husbandmen, who lived truly by the sweat of their brow. This may serve to explain why they were unable to do much in supporting the gospel among themselves.

This was a method of conveying religious truth which had been rendered at that period common by the success of Whitefield and Wesley. It was peculiarly appropriate to the necessities of England at the time, the parishes being occupied by beneficed clergymen, many of them pluralists, who were strangers to evangelical truth. Mr Venn seems to have been, for a long time, the only enlightened pastor within the acquaintance of Berridge, if we except Mr Hicks of Wrestlingworth, his neighbour, who was among the first fruits of his itinerating labours, and became a very useful man, and a companion with him in his religious travels. It was not till the year after he began to itinerate, that Mr Berridge was led to preach in the open air. He says in a letter,—“On Monday se’ennight Mr Hicks accompanied me to Meldred. On the way we called at a farm-house. After dinner I went into the yard, and seeing near a hundred and fifty people, I called for a table, and preached for the

first time in the open air. We then went to Meldred, where I preached in a field to about four thousand people. In the morning at five, Mr Hicks preached in the same field to about one thousand. Here the presence of the Lord was wonderfully among us; and I trust, beside many that were slightly wounded, near thirty received heartfelt conviction."

It is evident that there must have been a great excitement in the country, when four thousand people were so easily assembled on the evening of a working day in a not very populous campaign district, and one thousand so early as five in the morning. His numerous itinerants went out from him with such apostolic instructions as these,—“ Never preach in working hours, that would raise a clamour. Where you preach at night, preach also in the morning; but be not longer than an hour in the whole morning service, and conclude before six. Morning preaching will show whether the evening took effect, by raising them up early to hear.

“ Expect plain fare and plain lodging where you preach, yet perhaps better than your Master had. Suffer no treats to be made for you, but live as your host usually lives, else he may grow weary of entertaining you; and go not from house to house. If you dare to be zealous for the Lord of Hosts, expect persecution and threats; but heed them not. Bind the Lord's word to your heart. The promise is doubled for your encouragement. The chief blocks in your way will be the *prudent Peters*, who will beg, entreat, and beseech you to avoid irregularity. Give them the same answer that Christ gave Peter, ‘ they savour of the things which be of men.’—Heed them not.

“ When you preach at night, go to bed as soon as possible, that the family be not kept up, and that you may rise early. When breakfast and morning family prayers are over, go away directly, that the house may be at liberty. If you would do work for the Lord, as you seem designed, you must venture for the Lord. The Christian's motto is—*Trust and go forward*, though the sea is before you. Do then as Paul did, give up thyself

to the Lord; work, and confer not with flesh and blood, and the Lord be with thee."

These instructions, which are copied from a letter to one of his subordinates, were to regulate their manners; and with regard to the matter of their preachings, we find such as the following:—

"When you state your commission, begin with laying open the innumerable corruptions of the hearts of your audience; Moses will lend you a knife which may be often whetted at his grindstone. Lay open the universal sinfulness of nature,—the darkness of the mind,—the frowardness of the will,—the fretfulness of the temper, and the earthliness and sensuality of the affections. Speak of the evil of sin in its nature—its rebellion against God as our sovereign—ingratitude to God as our benefactor—and contempt both of his authority and love. Declare the evil of sin in its effects—bringing on all our sickness, pains, and sorrows—all the evils we feel, and all the evils we fear—all inundations, and fires, and famines, and pestilences—all brawls, and quarrels, and fightings, and wars, with death to close these present sorrows, and hell afterwards to receive all that die in sin.

"Lay open the spirituality of the law, and its extent, reaching to every thought, word, and action, and declaring every transgression (whether of omission or commission) deserving of death. Declare man's utter helplessness to change his nature, or to make his peace. Pardon and holiness must come from the Saviour. Acquaint them with the searching eye of God, watching us continually, spying out every thought, word, and action, noting them down in the book of his remembrance, and bringing every secret thing into judgment, whether it be good or evil.

"When your hearers are deeply affected with these things (which is seen by the hanging down of their heads), preach Christ. Lay open the Saviour's almighty power to soften the hard heart, and give it repentance—to bring pardon to the broken heart, a spirit of prayer to the prayerless heart, holiness to the filthy heart, and faith to the unbelieving heart. Let them know that all



the treasures of grace are lodged in Jesus Christ, for the use of the poor needy sinner, and that he is full of love as well as power—turns no beggar from his gate, but receives all comers kindly—loves to bless them, and bestows all his blessings *tithe-free*. Farmers and country people *chop* at that. Here you must wave the Gospel flag, and magnify the Saviour supremely. Speak it, *ore rotundo*, that his blood can wash away the foulest sins, and his grace subdue the stoutest corruptions. Exhort the people to seek his grace, to seek it directly, seek it diligently, seek it constantly; and acquaint them, that all who thus seek shall assuredly find the salvation of God.” Of his own preaching, it has been said, that “When he explained the nature, end, and use of the law, he was very awful and affecting.” “And now” (to adopt his own words) “I dealt with my hearers in a very different manner from what I used to do. I told them very plainly, that they were the children of wrath, and under the curse of God, though they knew it not, and that none but Jesus Christ could deliver them from that curse. I told them, if they had ever broken the law of God once in thought, word, or deed, no future good behaviour could make any atonement for past miscarriages. For, if I keep all God’s laws to-day, this is no amends for breaking them yesterday; if I behave peaceably to my neighbour this day, it is no satisfaction for having broken his head yesterday. So that, if once a sinner, nothing but the blood of Jesus can cleanse me from sin.”

Jesus was a name on which he dwelt with peculiar emphasis and delight. With what melting affection would he extol the bleeding Lamb! How would his eyes stream when he pointed to His agonizing sufferings! How would they sparkle when he displayed the exceeding riches of His grace! And what a reverential grandeur marked his countenance, when he anticipated His glorious appearing!

“Nor was he less attentive to the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit in the application of redemption. No minister could with more judgment detect the human

heart in all its subtle machinations, or with greater accuracy describe progressive religion in the soul. Communion with God was what he much enforced in the latter stages of his ministry. It was, indeed, his own meat and drink, and the banquet from which he never appeared to rise."

We have taken pains to collect these short notices, which are all that can be now obtained of his method of preaching, that those who desire like precious fruits may go and do likewise.

"As to his *usefulness*, we learn from more sources of information than one that he was in the first year visited by a thousand persons under serious impressions; and it has been computed that, under his own and the joint ministry of Mr Hicks, about four thousand were awakened to a concern for their souls in the space of twelve months. Incredible as this history of his success may appear, it comes authenticated through a channel so highly respectable, that to refuse our belief would be unpardonably illiberal."

"This work was at first accompanied with bodily convulsions and other external effects on some of the hearers very unaccountable to us; a circumstance, however, not altogether unusual when God begins to sound a general alarm in the consciences of men, as appears from what took place in New England, Scotland, North Wales, and other countries. But those effects soon subsided, as did these, and the interests of religion were promoted more quietly and gradually.

"As his labours were prosperous, so they were opposed. It could not be grateful to the prince of darkness to behold his kingdom so warmly attacked, and his subjects in such numbers deserting his standard. Hence he stirred up all his strength, and a furious persecution ensued. No opposition was too violent—no names were too opprobrious—no treatment was too barbarous. Some of his followers were roughly handled, and their property destroyed. Gentry, clergy, and magistrates became one band, and employed every engine to check his progress, and to prevent him from preaching. *The old devil was*

the only name by which he was distinguished among them between twenty and thirty years. But none of these things moved him; he had counted the cost. The clamours of the multitude had no more effect upon his mind, in the regular discharge of his duty, than the barking of the cur has on the moon in her imperial revolutions. Vengeance was not his. The only revenge he sought was their salvation; and when they needed any good office, his hand was the first to render it."\*

“He loved the world that hated him; the tear  
 He dropt upon his Bible was sincere.  
 As-ailed by scandal, and the tongue of strife,  
 His only answer was a blameless life.  
 And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,  
 Had each a brother's interest in his heart.”—COWPER.

He was indeed a man of extraordinary benevolence—his ear, his heart, his purse were ever open to hear the tale of pity, to sympathize, and to relieve. On the Sabbath his congregation was collected from various parishes, and considerable distances. He had always a stable or field for their horses, and a cold collation for strangers. In itinerating, so far from being a burden to the poor, they were generally gainers by his visits in a pecuniary way. Besides the expenditure of all his income, even his family plate was melted to support itinerant preaching.

Above all his other virtues, he wore the garment of humility, and his language was remarkable for simplicity and spirituality, accompanied with a natural vein of wit and pleasantry. He was himself what he called his friend Rowland Hill, “a Comet.” In an extensive and eccentric orbit he was found shining and producing a lively sensation, then passing away, yet returning again at his appointed time, with the same brilliancy and the same impression as before.

To his Bishop it is not wonderful that he should have been an object of displeasure and annoyance; for though his character, both as a man and a Christian, might have

\* Life of Berridge. *Evangelical Magazine*. Vol. I.

borne the strictest scrutiny, his breach of Church order, and his encroachment, as it was accounted, on the departments of his brethren, excited the hostility of those whose indolence and unfaithfulness he thus silently re-proved; and notwithstanding the prudence with which he conducted himself, could scarcely escape the censure of his ecclesiastical superior. The Reverend Mr Sutcliffe of Olney has recorded a remarkable and characteristic conversation with Mr Berridge, which turned on this subject, and which we feel induced to transcribe without abridgement.

“ AN INTERVIEW WITH THE LATE REV. MR BERRIDGE,  
RELATED BY THE REV. MR SUTCLIFFE OF OLNEY.

“ About two years ago,\* a friend of mine wishing to enjoy an hour or two of Mr B.’s company, rode over to Everton for that purpose. He was introduced by a dissenting minister in the neighbourhood, with whom Mr B. lived in terms of friendship. When seated, my friend requested Mr B., if agreeable, to favour them with a few outlines of his life. The venerable old man began and related several things as narrated in the first number of the Evangelical Magazine. But as some are there unnoticed, I select the following, which I think will not be uninteresting :—

“ ‘ Soon after I began,’ he said, ‘ to preach the Gospel of Christ at Everton, the church was filled from the villages around us, and the neighbouring clergy felt themselves hurt at their churches being deserted. The squire of my own parish was likewise much offended. He did not like to see so many strangers, and to be so incommoded. Between them both, it was resolved, if possible, to turn me out of my living. For this purpose they complained of me to the bishop of the diocese that I had preached out of my own parish. I was soon after sent for by the bishop; I did not much like my errand, but I went.

“ ‘ When I arrived, the bishop accosted me in a very

\* This was first printed in the year 1794.

abrupt manner : " Well, Berridge, they tell me you go about preaching out of your own parish. Did I institute you to the livings of A——y, or E——n, or P——n ? " " No, my lord," said I, " neither do I claim any of those livings ; the clergymen enjoy them undisturbed by me." " Well, but you go and preach there, which you have no right to do." " It is true, my lord, I was one day at E——n, and there were a few poor people assembled together, and I admonished them to repent of their sins, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls ; and I remember seeing five or six clergymen that day, my lord, all out of their own parishes, upon E——n bowling green." " Poh !" said his lordship, " I tell you, you have no right to preach out of your own parish ; and if you do not desist from it, you will very likely be sent to Huntingdon gaol." " As to that, my lord," said I, " I have no greater liking to Huntingdon gaol than other people, but I had rather go there with a good conscience, than live at liberty without it." Here his lordship looked very hard at me, and very gravely assured me that I was beside myself, and that in a few months time I should be either better or worse. " Then," said I, " my lord, you may make yourself quite happy in this business ; for if I should be better, you suppose I shall desist from this practice of my own accord, and if worse, you need not send me to Huntingdon gaol, as I shall be provided with an accommodation in bedlam."

" His lordship now changed his mode of attack. Instead of threatening, he began to entreat. " Berridge," said he, " you know I have been your friend, and I would wish to be so still. I am continually teased with the complaints of the clergymen around you. Only assure me that you will keep to your own parish ; you may do as you please there. I have but little time to live ; do not bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." At this instant two gentlemen were announced, who desired to speak with his lordship. " Berridge," said he, " go to your inn, and come again at such an hour and dine with me." I went, and on entering a private room fell immediately upon my knees. I could bear threaten-

ing, but knew not how to withstand entreaty, especially the entreaty of a respectable old man. At the appointed time I returned. At dinner I was treated with great respect. The two gentlemen also dined with us. I found they had been informed who I was, as they sometimes cast their eyes upon me in some such a manner as one would glance at a monster. After dinner, his lordship took me into his garden. "Well, Berridge," said he, "have you considered my request?" "I have, my lord," said I, "and have been on my knees concerning it." "Well; and will you promise that you will preach no more out of your own parish?" "It would afford me great pleasure," said I, "to comply with your lordship's request, if I could do it with a good conscience. I am satisfied the Lord has blessed my labours of this kind, and I dare not desist." "A good conscience!" said his lordship; "do you not know that it is contrary to the canons of the Church?" "There is one canon, my lord," replied I, "which says. Go preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE." "But why should you wish to interfere with the charges of other men? One man cannot preach the Gospel to all men." "If they would preach the Gospel themselves," said I, "there would be no need for my preaching to their people; but as they do not, I cannot desist." His lordship then parted with me in some displeasure. I returned home, not knowing what was to befall me, but thankful to God that I had preserved a conscience void of offence.

"I took no measures for my own safety, but Divine Providence wrought for me in a way that I never expected. When I was at Clare-hall I was particularly acquainted with a Fellow of that college, and we were both on intimate terms with Mr Pitt, the late Lord Chatham, who was at that time also at the University.

"This Fellow of Clare-hall, when I began to preach the Gospel, became my enemy, and did me some injury in some ecclesiastical privileges which beforetime I had enjoyed. At length, however, when he heard that I was likely to come into trouble, and to be turned out of my living at Everton, his heart relented. He began to

think, it seems, within himself, we shall ruin this poor fellow among us. This was just about the time that I was sent for by the bishop. Of his own accord he writes a letter to Mr Pitt, saying nothing about my Methodism, but to this effect:—"Our old friend Berridge has got a living in Bedfordshire, and I understand he has a squire in his parish who gives him a deal of trouble; has accused him to the bishop of the diocese, and it is said will turn him out of the living; I wish you could contrive to put a stop to these proceedings." Mr Pitt was at that time a young man, and not choosing to apply to the bishop himself, spoke to a certain nobleman, to whom the bishop was indebted for his promotion. This nobleman, within a few days, made it his business to see the bishop, who was then in London. "My lord," said he, "I am informed you have a very honest fellow, one Berridge, in your diocese, and that he has been ill-treated by a litigious squire who lives in his parish. He has accused him, I am told, to your lordship, and wants to turn him out of his living. You would oblige me, my lord, if you would take no notice of that squire, and not suffer the honest man to be interrupted in his living." The bishop was astonished, and could not imagine in what manner things could have thus got round. It would not do, however, to object; he was obliged to bow compliance, and so I continued ever after in my sphere of action.'

"After this interesting narration was ended, which had alternately drawn smiles and tears from my friend and his companion, they requested him to pray with them one five minutes before they departed. 'No,' said the good old man to my friend, 'you shall pray with me.' 'Well; but if I begin, perhaps you will conclude.' He consented; after my friend had ended, he, without rising from his knees, took up his petitions; and with such sweet solemnity, such holy familiarity with God, and such ardent love to Christ, poured out his soul, that the like was seldom seen. They parted; and my friend thinks he will never forget the favour of the interview to his dying day."

It is impossible not to regret that so little has been left on record of the life and successful ministrations of this holy man ; and this regret is increased by the recent publication of the life of the Reverend Henry Venn, in which we find some detached notices of his character, at once interesting in themselves, and indicative of the spiritual intercourse and pious sentiments of these worthy individuals. It is but a passing glimpse which we thus receive of a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, with which it would be both delightful and edifying to be made familiar. With what we have been able to glean from the work alluded to, this account must close.

[Nov. 11, 1771.] “ Last Wednesday Mr Berridge was here, and gave us a most excellent sermon. He is a blessed man—a true Calvinist ; not hot in doctrine, nor wise above what is written, but practical and experimental. Summer differs not more from winter than this dear man from what he was ten years ago ; he is now broken in heart, though fervent in spirit.” Again, he says—

[1773, Dec.] “ Dear Mr Berridge preaches for me every month. Happy am I in having such a loving fervent minister of Christ.” Again—

[1776.] “ Mr Berridge is in London. He laboured for three months above his strength ; he had the largest congregations that were ever known for a constancy ; and greatly was his word owned of the Lord. He is as affectionate as a father to my son, and gives him many valuable books. He is often telling me he is sick of all he does, and loathes himself for the inexpressible corruption he feels within ; yet is his life a pattern to us all, and an incitement to love and serve the Lord with all our strength. Thus did my affectionate brother resemble that burning and shining light, who cried out, ‘ I have need to be baptized of thee !’ Thus I find it with him. Twenty-five years ago, I was certain I should be able to reconcile the word of God with all its parts, and be able to pray without distraction. Now I wait for the light of eternity, and the perfection of holiness, in order that I may know any thing as I ought to know.”



[1783.] We find the same excellent man rejoicing in Christian fellowship with his brethren, and give a brief extract, to show what are the enjoyments of those who possess the Revival spirit. "I wished for your presence with us on New-year's day. Princes have no such fare to feast on! Mr Robinson, from Leicester, was in the pulpit in the evening; and in a manner, masterly, solemn and affectionate to the last degree, he exhorted young men and maidens, old men and children, believers and unbelievers, to awake out of sleep, for it was high time. Many attended, and great was the seriousness of one and all. Mr Simeon, and Mr Farish from Cambridge, were here; and we all set out for Everton the next morning. The venerable father Berridge received us, though unlooked for, with open arms; and his prayer, and Mr Robinson's, were again most edifying and animating. We parted in fervent love, looking upward and forward, till we shall meet to dwell together in love for ever. Such is our present honour, to be with the excellent of the earth, educating together for glory in the highest heavens."

[1788.] Five years after, we find these faithful men meeting, and comparing the Lord's dealings with them when they are old and grey-headed.

"The Sunday before last, I preached in the afternoon at Everton; my brother Berridge in the morning. Four years have passed since we heard each other. We both perceived how our voices are weakened; but had a sweet interview while we talked of the pity and tender love of our adorable Master towards all his aged ministers when they are almost past the service of their office. He told me he could pray little out of his own mind; but the method he used was to read his Bible, and as he read, to turn the word into prayer for himself."

[1792.] We present another glimpse of the sunset of that glorious soul.

"I lately visited my dear brother Berridge. His sight is very dim, his ears can scarcely hear, and his faculties are fast decaying, so that if he continues any time, he may outlive the use of them. But in this ruin

of his earthly tabernacle, it is surprising to see the joy of his countenance, and the lively hope with which he looks for the day of his dissolution. In his prayer with me and my children (for two of them accompanied me), we were much affected by his commending himself to the Lord, as quite alone, not able to read, or hear, or do any thing, ‘But if I have, Lord,’ said he, ‘thy presence and love, that sufficeth!’”

[1793.] In January we hear from Mr Venn:—“My dear brother Berridge is dying, as a letter received last night informs me; and, at the same time, how supremely happy he is in his God and Saviour. He goes a little before us—we shall very soon follow after.” February 14, Mr Venn writes to his family:—“I gladly embrace an opportunity to send you an account of the last days of my dear brother at Everton, who was most affectionate towards all my dear children; and his regard for me was very great indeed. His departure is to me a loss unspeakable, and not to be repaired. The country will appear very dreary, now I have no friend there to whom I can unbosom my soul, as he was wont to do to me. You know that I had promised to preach his funeral sermon. My weakness of body and of mind prevent me fulfilling that promise; and I was, much against my inclination, obliged to refuse the application from Everton, to perform the last office for this eminent man of God. After increasing weakness, he was, on the 12th of January, seized with a violent asthma, in which his friends thought he would have died. He recovered, however, and lived ten days, unspeakably favoured with the presence and love of his adorable Redeemer, often expressing his full assurance of being with him for ever. Mr and Mrs Whittingham, Mr Ellard, and Mr Hewitt, were with him when he departed without a struggle or a groan. His funeral was very solemn. Six clergymen bore the pall. Mr Simeon preached from the very words I wished him to do; and showed how truly Mr Berridge might say with Paul, ii. Tim. 7, 8, ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,

which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.' The church could not contain more than half the multitude who came to the burial of their beloved pastor. Nor is it easy to conceive what tears and sighs were to be seen and heard from those who had been called to Christ through the word of the dear deceased. He is gone a very little before me. May I patiently wait till I meet him above!—an event which I hope is not far off!"

As Berridge was never married, he left no widow to deplore his removal, nor children to perpetuate his memory; but his bright example, and wise instructions, will for ever live in the affections of thousands who derived blessings through his ministry.

#### EPITAPH.

Here lie

The earthly remains of  
JOHN BERRIDGE,  
Late Vicar of Everton,

And an itinerant Servant of Jesus Christ,  
Who loved his Master and his Work;  
And, after running on his errands many years,  
Was caught up to wait on him above.

Reader!

Art thou born again?

No salvation without a new birth.  
I was born in sin, February, 1716;  
Remained ignorant of my fallen state till 1730;  
Lived proudly on faith and works for  
salvation, till 1754;  
Admitted to Everton vicarage 1755;  
Fled to Jesus alone for refuge 1756;  
Fell asleep in *Christ*, January 22d, 1793.

## CHAPTER IV.

REVIVAL UNDER GRIMSHAW, AT HAWORTH,  
YORKSHIRE.

MR GRIMSHAW was born at Brindle, near Preston, in Lancashire, on the 3d of September, 1708, and educated at the grammar-schools of Blackburn and Hetlim, in that county. He was admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, in his eighteenth year, where his intention was to study for the church; but the pursuits he followed, and the manners of those with whom he associated, were very unfavourable to such a design, and he soon became a proficient in wickedness. Mr Grimshaw was ordained deacon in the year 1731. Upon this occasion he was not without some serious thoughts concerning the weight of the ministerial office, but they were of short continuance, and produced little effect. He removed to Todmorden soon afterwards, from Rochdale, where he had for some time associated with a few religious persons. Being thus separated from them, his pious resolutions quickly passed away, and he retained just a sufficient regard for his character to restrain him from swearing and excess of drinking, when in company who disliked those practices. Thus he went on till the twenty-eighth year of his age (1734), when the spirit of God wrought a great change in him. He became alarmed for the salvation of his soul, and prayed much; but he waited long before he experienced that peace of mind which is the effect of lively faith in the Saviour. He was no longer a trifler. He had now neither time nor taste for amusements; he attended diligently to his duties, warned his people to flee from the wrath to come, and catechised their children. But, from the painful state of his own mind, it was some time before he felt himself able experimentally

to invite the weary and heavy laden to apply to Jesus, that they might find rest for their souls. He laboured, he fasted, he prayed, he aimed at great strictness and regularity of conduct. Yet he was almost driven to despair by new discoveries of the evils of his heart, and by a torrent of wicked and blasphemous thoughts. The Lord often causes those whom he designs to honour with eminent usefulness in the ministry, to pass through deep waters of soul distress, that they may, through humility and watchfulness, acquire the ability to speak a word in season to the weary. He continued praying earnestly for some years in the midst of all his discouragements, and in due time his prayers were answered. His progress for a time was slow, till at length the sun of righteousness arose with healing under his beams.

Then he gladly renounced all dependence upon himself either for righteousness or strength. He believed and was made whole. As the season of his consolation approached, his preaching became more savoury, experimental, and successful. How remarkably is the power of the Holy Spirit of God shown in such a case as that of Mr Grimshaw, when the views and habits of life are changed at once, so that he who was vicious yesterday becomes serious and prayerful to-day, the outward circumstances remaining the same !

In the year 1742 he was removed to the perpetual curacy of Haworth, near Bradford, in Yorkshire, to preach to a people, who, when he first went among them, were very ignorant, brutish, and wicked. But very soon, by the blessing of God upon his ministry, this wilderness assumed the appearance of a fruitful field, and the desert rejoiced and blossomed like the rose.

Mr Williams of Kidderminster, who had learnt many particulars of the distressing part of his experience from himself, wrote a letter on the subject of his conversion, dated in 1745, which was afterwards published in the second volume of the Evangelical Magazine. In this letter, having stated that after Mr Grimshaw had been eleven years in the charge of souls, he for the first time

came under terrifying convictions of his sinfulness and danger, he proceeds thus:—

“ Hereupon, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, he went about to establish his own, reformed in every branch and in every relation, said many prayers (but all in his own strength), and resolving to leave nothing undone he could possibly do, he kept two diaries. In one of these, after daily self-examination, he recorded all the sins of every day ; then confessed, renewed his repentance, begged pardon, resolved, watched, and prayed against them. Still he was conscious of many sins he had taken no cognizance of, was buffeted with most horrid temptations. \* \* \* \* Fifteen months he groaned under the spirit of bondage, and found, notwithstanding all his laborious endeavours, he got no ground of his lusts or temptations. Life became a burden, and he was sometimes tempted to take it away. At last, the time of his deliverance came. He met with *Owen on Justification* in the house of a friend, borrowed, studied it, and thus was led into God’s method of justifying the ungodly. He had a new heart given him, and now behold he prayeth.”

Mr Williams goes on to relate some particulars of a very remarkable incident which occurred to Mr Grimshaw in 1744, and to which he himself alluded many years afterwards, in a solemn and renewed dedication of himself to the Lord’s service ; \* but as the judicious Mr Newton evidently discredits some of the circumstances mentioned by Mr Williams, we forbear to record them, and shall merely state that Mr Grimshaw himself speaks of it as “ that wonderful manifestation ” of the Lord to him, which took place at church, and in the clerk’s house ; and Mr Newton refers to the testimony of an old servant who was present on the occasion, and who stated that her master had risen that morning before five o’clock, and had been much engaged in private prayer and in religious

\* Mr Grimshaw made frequent dedications of himself to God. He wrote one on 4th December, 1732, which is that alluded to in the text, and on 5th June, 1760, he renewed it, and wrote upon it, “ I purpose to renew this dedication with a quarterly fast.”

exercises with some of his people ; that he had gone to church, as she believed, without breaking his fast ; that while reading the second lesson he fell down, and was carried into the clerk's house, where he lay for some time seemingly insensible, with great coldness in his limbs ; that when he came to himself he appeared to be in great rapture, and exclaimed, " I have had a glorious vision from the third heaven ;" and that, having, while leaving the church, entreated the people not to dismiss, he entered the pulpit again at two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued the service so long that it was seven in the evening before he returned home.

Mr Newton adds, that although he was on terms of personal intimacy with Mr Grimshaw, and had long and interesting conversations with him, he never heard him mention the subject ; and Mr Williams says that he did not divulge the circumstance to every body, but only to those who, he thought, had ears to hear.

Mr Williams then continues : " Since that he has never lost sight of his evidences, has a flowing love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his ministry has been attended with a wonderful success. He reckons, at least, one hundred and twenty souls savingly renewed, whom he has formed into little classes. Over each class presides one man, who has the gift of prayer, whose business it is to converse as well as pray with the others, and watch over them ; and now and then he meets with these heads, who give him an account of the individuals. Such a diversity has there been in the manner of the spirit's operation, that scarce any two of them all have been wrought upon in the same manner. Some have cried out in the church, under overwhelming fears and terrors ; while others have been drawn with cords of love. Some have received a sense of pardon in a few days or weeks, while others have groaned several months under a spirit of bondage. He has about four hundred families in his parish, of which he visits ten or twelve every week in a ministerial way, at the same time that, with the help of an usher, he presides over a numerous school. He has generally one thousand or eleven hundred hearers. In summer about

one hundred flock to his ministry from neighbouring parishes, and scarce a Sabbath in which one or another is not laid hold on."

This letter was written about sixty years after Mr Grimshaw began to preach the gospel faithfully. He lived to reap a much more abundant harvest, as we shall see by returning to the narrative of Mr Newton.

The people of Haworth had not been used to faithful preaching before Mr Grimshaw's time, and, as under such a privation is always the case, many had become careless about attending public worship at all. But the tenour and energy of Mr Grimshaw's preaching soon attracted the attention of his hearers. His heart was engaged, he was pressed in spirit, he spoke with earnestness and authority, as one who was well assured of the truth and importance of his message. Nor did he long speak in vain. A power from on high applied to the heart what he could only declare to the ear. The effects were soon visible upon many of his hearers, who not only changed their views and sentiments, but their tempers and conduct. Many forsook sinful and vicious habits, and became sober, industrious, and prayerful. Mr Grimshaw was constantly labouring in his parish, going and declaring the gospel to those who either could not or would not come to him. He often exhorted in private houses, where people collected to hear him both from his own and neighbouring parishes; and being frequently requested to go beyond the limits of his own parish, and not daring to refuse, he gradually extended his range till he had established two circuits, one of which he went over every week. In the one week, which he used to call his idle week, he preached commonly twelve or fourteen times, and in his busy one he preached above twenty, and sometimes even thirty times. His church was crowded with hearers from distant places, who attended without regard to the weather. His sermons were very long, sometimes not less than two hours, but they were usually so animated, pertinent, and pathetic, that few persons who had spiritual discernment and the command of their time thought them too long. He preached with



the impression that he was addressing perishing sinners who might never live to hear him again, and he knew not how to be explicit enough, or how to stop. His congregation often consisted of many thousands, especially when Mr Wesley or Mr Whitfield was with them; on these occasions his communicants were more than the church could hold.

While this zealous servant of God was preaching he riveted attention by the earnestness of his manner and the weight of his exhortations. All eyes were commonly fixed on him, and not unfrequently the whole congregation were in tears.

But it was not in his public ministrations alone that the power of his talents and piety was felt. Some remarkable proofs are recorded of the hold which he had obtained by the strength of his Christian character on the minds of his parishioners, and it has been said that his presence had more effect in maintaining order and decorum, and in suppressing vice, than could have been produced by a whole host of justices and civil officers. The manner in which he exercised the commanding influence he had acquired was characteristic and sometimes eccentric. It was his frequent custom to leave the church while the psalm before sermon was singing, to see if any were idling their time in the churchyard, the street, or the alehouses, and many of those whom he found he would drive into the church before him. Mr Newton mentions an amusing instance of the dread with which he inspired transgressors. "A friend of mine," says he, "passing a public-house in Haworth, on a Lord's Day morning, saw several persons making their escape out of it, some jumping out at the lower windows, and some over a low wall. He was at first alarmed, fearing the house was on fire; but on enquiring what was the cause of the commotion, he was told that they saw the parson coming. His reproofs were so authoritative, yet so mild and friendly, that the stoutest sinners could not stand before him."

Mr Newton records another instance of a similar kind, which shows still more impressively the ascendancy he

had acquired over his parishioners, and the peculiar manner in which he exercised it. There was a spot at some distance from the village to which many young people continued to resort on the Sabbath for their amusement. Having often reproved them in vain for this unhallowed practice, he at last disguised himself one evening, and appeared unexpectedly among them, when he took down their names with his pencil, and ordered them to attend him on a day and hour which he appointed. They punctually obeyed his summons, and after kneeling down with them, and praying for them with much earnestness, he dismissed them with a close and affecting lecture. He thus entirely broke the custom, which was never afterwards resumed.

Sometimes he had recourse to other and less dignified means of influencing the minds of his parishioners. Having an intimate knowledge of the spiritual state of almost all his flock, he was fertile in expedients for reaching their consciences. For example, to one professor, whose charity to the poor he had reason to doubt, he went disguised as a beggar, and, on asking for a night's lodging, was driven away with abusive language—he cautiously approached another, an old half-blind woman, whose Christian temper he wished to try, and, placing himself behind her back, he continued touching her with his stick until she, supposing it was one of the children of the village, began to scold and swear. On such occasions he found an opportunity of addressing to them, with more than ordinary effect, those powerful and energetic exhortations which were so well calculated to reach their hearts. These may be regarded as eccentricities, and certainly cannot be proposed for imitation; but accompanied, as they were in him, with unaffected piety and a parental regard for the spiritual welfare of his people, they were not only tolerated, but even tended to increase his influence. Another proof is given of the extent of this influence in a slight incident which happened to a traveller, whose horse had happened to lose a shoe when passing through Haworth on a Sabbath day. He applied to a blacksmith, who positively refused to replace the shoe

without the minister's leave. Mr Grimshaw was therefore applied to, who finding on enquiry that the man was really on an errand of necessity, gave permission to the conscientious tradesman to do what was required of him.

The extraordinary energy and deep-rooted piety of Mr Grimshaw's mind are further illustrated by referring to his daily habits. He had a meeting for prayer and exhortation every morning when he was at home, in summer at five o'clock, and in winter at six, choosing these early hours that the labours of the industrious might not be impeded. Night and day were the same to him when he was desired to visit the sick; he has been known to walk several miles in the night on this errand of piety in storms of snow, when few people would venture out of doors. The exertions, indeed, of the most industrious man in trade, for his own worldly profit, could not exceed his in promoting the cause of God, and the practice of Christian duty. In all the actions of common life, in his most familiar and common conversations, he intermingled the spirit of his Lord and Master; and, like this divine pattern, would instruct his friends and hearers, by improving the most ordinary incidents, and teaching them lessons for eternity from the sea, the earth, and the sky, from passing events in public and private life, from the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the flowers of the field. His tender and anxious regard for the spiritual welfare of his flock was evinced on one occasion in a very striking manner. The late Mr Whitfield, in a sermon he preached at Haworth, having spoken severely of those professors who by their loose and evil conduct caused the ways of truth to be evil spoken of, intimated a hope that it was not necessary to enlarge on that topic to the congregation before him, who had so long enjoyed the benefit of an able and faithful preacher, and he was willing to believe that their profiting appeared unto all men. This roused Mr Grimshaw's solicitude, and, notwithstanding his great regard for the preacher, he stood up and interrupted him, exclaiming with much emotion, "O sir, for God's sake, do not speak so; I pray you do not flatter

them. I fear the greater part of them are going to hell with their eyes open."

It will not be known till the great day how many persons received their first religious impressions from casual interviews with this man of God, who embraced every opportunity of conversing on spiritual subjects with those whom he met on the road. If they were disposed to listen, he would alight from his horse, and address them with serious and pathetic exhortations, commend them to the blessing of the Lord by prayer, and then resume his journey.

It has already been remarked that Mr Grimshaw did not confine his ministerial duties to his own parish, and when we observe the minute attention he paid to his own particular charge, and his unremitting labours abroad, it seems astonishing that any one individual could accomplish so much. But he was exceedingly parsimonious of his time, and prudent in his arrangements. He had good health, a strong body, and a vigorous mind, and the severest weather made no alteration in his plans. He was sure to be where and at the time he was expected. He was so beloved, and so useful, that many people were not prevented from coming ten or twelve miles, when they heard he was to preach. He seldom staid longer in a place than to deliver his message; and, that he might not be burdensome to the house that received him, and to avoid loss of time, he frequently took some refreshment in his hand, and posted away to farther services.

Mr Grimshaw's disposition was tried, and manifested by the defection of many of his people, who, though awakened under his ministry, withdrew from him, and became dissenters. The occasion of this does not distinctly appear. No memoir of Mr Grimshaw's ministry having been written till thirty-five years after its close, few particulars have been preserved; but it is probable that the excitement produced by the itinerating labours of Whitfield and Wesley about that time unsettled and drew off many persons, who learned to estimate evangelical preaching by his instrumentality, and did not find it in

their parish churches. However trying to his feelings their withdrawing from his ministry may be supposed to have been, yet if he had reason to believe that, though they departed from him, they "cleaved to the Lord with purpose of heart," and walked in the path of truth and holiness, their change seemed not in the least to abate his regard for them. He saluted them with the same kindness when he met them, and received them at his house with the same cordiality as formerly. If good was done, he cared not who was the instrument, and his unaffected humility led him to hope that the ministers they preferred to him were more useful to them than he could himself have been.

Some idea of the extent of Mr Grimshaw's usefulness may be conceived, from the account which Mr Newton mentions having received from that worthy and simple-hearted man of the change that had taken place in the moral and religious aspect of the country around him in the course of his ministry. One day when Mr Newton and he were standing together upon a hill near Haworth, and admiring the romantic prospect, Mr Grimshaw gave vent to the grateful emotions which swelled his heart in the following observations.

"When I first came into this country, if I had gone half a day's journey on horseback towards the east, west, north, and south, I could not have met with one truly serious person; and now, through the blessing of God upon the poor services of one of the most unworthy of his ministers, besides a considerable number whom I have seen or known to have departed this life, like Simeon, rejoicing in the Lord's salvation, and besides five dissenting churches or congregations, of which the ministers, and nearly every one of the members, were first awakened under my ministry, I have still at my sacraments, according to the weather, from three to five hundred communicants, of the far greater part of whom, so far as man, who cannot see the heart, and can therefore only determine by appearances, profession, and conduct, may judge, I can give almost as particular an account as I can of myself. I

know the state of their progress in religion ; by my frequent visits and converse with them I am acquainted with their several temptations, trials, and exercises, both personal and domestic, both spiritual and temporal, almost as intimately as if I had lived in their families."

"A stranger," adds Mr Newton, in giving this account, "who had stood upon the same spot, from whence he could see little but barren mountains and moors, would scarcely think this declaration credible. But I know the man well, and of all the men I ever knew, I can think of no one who was less to be suspected of boasting than Mr Grimshaw."

This zealous and courageous servant of God was seized with fever, having caught the infection in visiting some of his people while labouring under that disease. After several days of severe suffering in his body, during which his soul was so sustained that he fervently said, "Never have I had such a visit from God since I knew him," he was admitted into the presence of the Lord whom he loved and trusted, in the month of August, 1763, in the 55th year of his age, and twenty-one years after his settlement at Haworth.

## CHAPTER V.

## REFLECTIONS.

It is particularly worthy of observation, that these last named eminent Christians and successful ministers, Berridge and Grimshaw, were contemporaries of Whitfield and Wesley, and ultimately became acquainted with them, and received occasional assistance from them. But it is an utter mistake that either of them derived their religious opinions from, or adopted their plans of operation in imitation of these celebrated individuals, who, though they were not the first, may be termed the Arch-itinerants.

Berridge's powerful mind had struggled eleven long years in laborious efforts to establish his own righteousness, before he became aware that it is in the Lord Jesus alone that a sinner can have righteousness and strength; and then, without communicating with flesh and blood, he began to proclaim what he had learnt of the Spirit, and an abundant harvest was given to him.

Grimshaw, a few years previous to that period, had encountered, while he was "going about to establish his own righteousness," and to make himself clean in God's sight, a most fearful furnace of temptation. He had truly experienced, that "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts and blasphemies," so that he abhorred himself, and feared continually; till he was guided into peace by learning the way of justification. He also preached what he had been taught of the Spirit, and his work was owned abundantly of the head of the Church. That both these men were constitutionally of a remarkably energetic temperament, and would have been observed as eccentric, whatever their professions had been, is very obvious. That the world should have hated them was to be expected, for it hated the blessed Lord, whose messages of peace they carried; and even Dr

Southey, who has not been able to restrain himself by a regard to the dignity and candour incumbent on a historian, from emitting scornful expressions against these good men\*—even Southey is constrained to confess, that “mad Grimshaw’s oddities did not prevent him from being very useful among a set of parishioners, who are said to have been as wild as the bleak barren country which they inhabited, and to have had little more religion than their cattle.” †

Berridge and Hicks were not “converted to Methodism,” as Dr Southey states it, but to the doctrines of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, and to the expectation of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, years before they became acquainted with the Father of Methodism; and it may truly be subject of wonder, that one spirit, shut up in its own clay tabernacle, should feel so assured of its having attained all experience of how other spirits may be dealt with, or what may be revealed to them by the Divine Spirit, as to set down at once, that a man of prayer and of deep spiritual experience “mistook delusion for reality,” because consolation was poured into his long wounded soul, by a method unexperienced by the historian. “Why herein is a marvellous thing, that *ye know not* from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes!” It may probably be true, that there was much of mere human sympathy, or imitations—the eye affecting the heart—in the strong emotions evinced at first by the multitudes who flocked to hear Mr Berridge. There might also be some who received the word with joy for a while, but who, having no depth in themselves, anon withered away. Nay, there might be a few who, from mere caprice or from interested motives, simulated convictions, fears, and hopes which they

\* Southey, in reference to Berridge and Grimshaw, speaks of “the violent influenza of fanaticism” with which they were infected, and says, that “success made Berridge glorious in his own eyes as well as those of the fanatics around him;” that “he mistook delirium for reality,” and allows himself to employ other opprobrious expressions equally false and calumnious.

† Southey’s *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 397.



never felt ; but he must be a man wise in his own eyes, indeed, who will presume to deny, that, of the thousands awakened under the preaching of Berridge and Hicks, both before they had ever seen John Wesley, and after he had come to witness the great work at and around Everton, *none* were truly, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, made new creatures. The brevity of the gospel narrative does not indulge us with a minute detail of the conduct of the multitude on that blessed day, when, under the preaching of Peter, there were added to the Church about three thousand souls ; but when they were “ pricked in their hearts ” they spoke during the service to the preacher and to the other apostles, saying, “ men and brethren what shall we do ? ” We are not informed that in that vast assembly some stood, some sat, some wept, some groaned, some wrung their hands in an ecstasy of grief and fear, and cried out, “ what shall we do ? ” Nay, that some falling down on their faces worshipped God, as was sometimes the case at Everton. Yet we cannot suppose three thousand beings of human mould simultaneously convicted of past sins and mistakes, and embracing the newly revealed redemption, to continue all calm and tranquil and still under so powerful an excitement. Man is a being capable of deep emotions ; it is through his feelings that he is wrought upon for good or for evil ; and he has the power not only of expressing his emotions, but of obtaining relief from their intensity by that expression. And on what subject ought he to feel so profoundly as on that which indicates his relation to his God, and his hopes and fears in reference to his eternal condition ? What would Dr Southey say to the eccentricities or improprieties, as he might perhaps call them, of King David when he complained, under the pungency of his convictions of sin, “ mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me. I am troubled ; I am bowed down greatly ; I go mourning all the day long. I am feeble and sore broken, *I have roared* by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee, *and my groaning* is not hid from thee. My heart

panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me." \* This description of the bodily effects of mental suffering in the Psalmist is more nearly a description of the state of many under the preaching of Berridge than we were aware of, till the cases came to be compared. They were feeble and sore broken, so that they fell to the ground. By reason of the disquietness of their hearts, they roared, they groaned, they panted, their strength failed, and for a time they were so absorbed internally, that the light of their eyes was gone from them. Will any one presume to say that this is mere poetical description on the part of the King of Israel? His description of his state also, when his terrors were removed, seems as if it had been personally realized in the experience of many of those convicted souls:—"He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet on a rock, and established my goings. And he put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." †

In almost all the outpourings of the spirit of repentance of which Great Britain affords us examples, we find that the outward emotions were most violent in the earliest periods of the visitation. After four months, the convulsions and unwonted commotions at Everton had nearly subsided. Such was also the case among the miners at Kingswood, and in the awakenings in North and South Wales, at Cambuslang and Kilsyth, in Scotland, and more recently in the isle of Arran and the Hebrides. The experience in revivals in the United States is similar to this, and it seems to be accounted for on reasonable grounds. Many souls are, in the beginning of a revival, arrested in the full career of thoughtlessness. The mind is suddenly aroused to the consciousness of the "horrible pit" on the brink of which it has been long trifling. It becomes sensible of "the miry clay" of evil habit and propensity which entangles it and impedes its flight from the awful danger, and then it "roareth by

\* Psa'ms, xxxviii. 4, 6, 8, 9, 10.

† Psalms, xl. 2. 3.

reason of its disquietness." Being swallowed up in one fearful conviction, outward restraints have lost their power, and self-control is for the time impossible. The bodily frame fails under such dreadful agitations, that those who have fled from church that they might not expose themselves, have sunk down in the churchyard ; and at Kilsyth, those who forcibly suppressed the cry of anguish, which is nature's mode of unburdening herself, were seized with bleedings from the nose, which annoyed and distressed their neighbours more than the convulsions of others, and left themselves sometimes enfeebled for weeks or months. That such emotions may be simulated—that credulous persons have admitted many things without sufficient examination—that true conversion and a lively work of the Spirit are not necessarily accompanied by such external demonstrations, every one must admit ; but that they are an unnatural or unreasonable expression of feeling, especially amongst uncultivated people, little used to the salutary discipline of self-control, ought not to be asserted. We hear of no such exhibitions when many hearts were melted during the seven days that John Wesley preached on his father's tomb-stone, at Epworth ; and he himself accounts for it. The converts were persons whose understandings had been cultivated, and whose minds had been occupied about religion before, under the preaching of his father, though till now their hearts had remained unaffected by the truth. They received their convictions with stillness and tears. This becomes the case during the progress of a prolonged revival—the careless have had their attention turned to their solemn responsibilities by degrees—their minds have, by what is passing around them, become more familiar with the subjects of judgment and eternity ; so that when their own hearts are convinced of sin, they are not so taken by surprise, and receive the conviction in a more quiet frame. In America it is perfectly understood that the excess of outward emotion depends much upon the character of the pastors. When they seem not to disapprove of it, the people stir up and infect each other. When they rebuke it, the emotion is

restrained, or rather changed from outward signs to deep inward and prayerful solemnity. The same result was experienced in the isle of Arran, and at Rothsay, in the isle of Bute, which latter place partook of a small portion of that good gift, more plentifully distributed in its neighbour isle. The ministers were there as new to such sudden convictions as Mr Berridge, and knew not how to deal with the subjects of them; or perhaps feared to put forth their hands rashly to touch the work of the Lord. An eyewitness states, that sometimes, though rarely, persons were seized with convulsions, so that four strong men could scarcely hold the individual thus affected. The agitation and distraction of attention from the truths of the Gospel thus produced, was of course very distressing; but it had been allowed to pass without notice from the pastor, because he was at a loss how to proceed. However, on occasion of the preaching of an aged and experienced minister, as soon as he observed symptoms of a rising commotion, he made a solemn pause, and then admonished his hearers that outward agitation might be exhibited, when the heart, to which alone God looks, remained hard and deceitful; and that he thought it became those who wished to deny themselves for Christ's sake, to restrain these bodily movements, and to pray for the power to do so. His address was accompanied with the best effect, as from that day the more disturbing part of the emotion was restrained, though the deep and overpowering inward convictions were still experienced.

The work of conscience being invisible, and the operations of the Spirit without voice or sound, it seems more suited to the recluse position of each soul that its changes should pass without observation. Yet it is probable that more practical and realizing views of the danger of a perishing soul and of the joy of its rescue, would lead all real Christians to sympathize with, rather than to censure the utterance of overflowing emotion. It was those who had no experience of the privation of blindness, who rebuked Bartimius, when he *cried out* to Jesus, and it was a personal sense of his own destitution which

induced him to cry out the more earnestly, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me!" Would any one rebuke a man who was suddenly aroused to behold his home in flames, and perhaps his wife and children involved in the conflagration, because his first expression of anguish was an exceeding bitter cry? Yet what is that sigh in comparison with the sudden and spiritual view of the awful truth, that his own soul is, at this very moment, under divine wrath, and that he has been leading all whom he loves in the very paths of destruction. Or what soul, embued with kindly sympathies, could witness the smiles, the tears, the ecstasies of joy which a mother or wife might exhibit, on catching a view of the vessel in the offing, which restores to her the long absent and long pined-for object of her best affections, without pardoning the extravagance of her emotion and partaking in her joy. Yet how small and how short-lived is that happiness, compared to the joy of a soul that is enabled to apprehend Jesus, as its complete and willing deliverer?—to the peace of a soul which has passed from the dread of God's just and inevitable indignation, to the inexpressible peace of knowing him as a reconciled Father? This was the experience which put "a new song" into the mouth of the King of Israel, and which led him to call for the sympathizing attention of all who fear God, that they might hear what he had done for his soul.

It has been truly said, that a feeble friend is often more injurious than an open enemy; and it seems to have been the lot of the excitement at Everton to be narrated by a weak-minded and single-hearted person, who seemed the more gratified the more the agitation and disorders increased. As a specimen of the cases he records, we select that of Thomas Skinner, which may serve to illustrate the above observations.

Mr Berridge had returned to his former charge, at Stapleford, with solicitude, after his views of the gospel were opened, that he might preach salvation to his old hearers. This created a considerable excitement, and Thomas Skinner seems to have been one of a party, chiefly farmers, who came to hear him with a determi-

nation to horsewhip any who might betray strong emotion. "He was," says the narrator, "the chief captain of Satan's forces; none was by nature more fitted for mockery; none could swear more heroically to whip out of the close all who were affected by the preaching." This man during the sermon was seized with most appalling terrors. "His face became distorted. He roared and clapped his hands together with his whole force. Several fled from him. After a while he began to pray aloud. Some of the triflers became very serious; his own kindred could scarcely believe the truth of what they saw. They wished to take him away; but he fell to the earth, crying—'My burden! my burden! I cannot bear it.' His brother scoffers were calling for horsewhips, till they saw him extended on his back at full length; they then said he was dead."

From this meagre account little can be gathered except that a strong vulgar-minded man of violent passions was under powerful agitation. We ought to know if he really came to true contrition, or if a mere temporary fear had surprised him. If from that day he became a new man, we cannot question that "the Word, which is stronger than a hammer breaking the rocks in pieces," was, with such fearful accompaniments, at that hour subduing his rebellious heart. But even if this were not the happy result, we do not see how it can be regarded as a mere physical affection, or called a "disease," in the common acceptance of the word. We must look higher than "influenza," or "epidemic," or sympathy, for the cause. The mind, the conscience, were, for the time at least, the seat of agitation; and if this was the commencement of a real conversion, perhaps it exemplifies somewhat of the meaning of John the Baptist when he said—"He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." David said—"My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy righteous judgments." Need we wonder that others should experience equal terrors? Is not the rational subject of wonder rather that any who have opportunity to hear of the terrors of the Lord should cease from trembling till

they have accepted the offers of pardon and sanctification which are proposed to the sinner through Christ Jesus?

We introduce here an extract from Richard Baxter's sermon on "Making light of Christ," which expresses the deep wrought sense in a rescued soul of what it is to be in danger for eternity. "Oh, sirs, they are no trifles or jesting matters that the gospel speaks of. I must needs profess to you, that when I have the most serious thoughts of these things myself, I am ready to marvel that such amazing matters do not overwhelm the souls of men; that the greatness of the subject doth not so overcome our understandings and affections, as even to drive men beside themselves, but that God hath always somewhat allayed it by the distance. Much more, that men should be so blockish as to make light of them. Oh Lord! that men did but know what everlasting glory and everlasting torments are; would they then hear us as they do? would they read and think of these things as they do? I profess I have been ready to wonder, when I have heard such weighty things delivered, how people can forbear crying out in the congregation, much more how they can rest till they have gone to their ministers and learned what they should do. Oh that heaven and hell should work no more on man! Oh that everlastingness should work no more! Oh how can you forbear, when you are alone, to think with yourselves, what it is to be everlastingly in joy or in torment? I wonder that such thoughts do not break your sleep, and that they come not in your mind when you are about your labour! I wonder how you can almost do any thing else; how you can have any quietness in your minds; how you can eat, or drink, or rest, till you have got some ground of everlasting consolation! Is that a man, or a corpse, that is not affected with matters of this moment? that can be readier to sleep than to tremble, when he heareth how he must stand at the bar of God? Is that a man, or a clod of clay, that can rise and lie down without being deeply affected with his everlasting estate; that can follow his worldly business, and make nothing

of the great business of salvation or damnation, and that when they know it is hard at hand? Truly, sirs, when I think of the weight of the matter, I wonder at the very best of God's saints upon earth, that they are no better, and do no more in so weighty a case. I wonder at those whom the world accounteth more holy than needs, and scorns for making too much ado, that they can put off Christ and their souls with so little. \* \* \* And for myself, I am ashamed of my dull and careless heart, and of my slow and unprofitable course of life; as, the Lord knows, I am ashamed of every sermon I preach: when I think what I have been speaking of, and who sent me, and that men's salvation or damnation is so much concerned in it, I am ready to tremble lest God should judge me a slighter of his truths and the souls of men, and lest, in the best sermon, I should be guilty of their blood. Methinks we should not speak a word to men, in matters of such consequence, without tears, or the greatest earnestness that possibly we can; were we not too much guilty of the sin which we reprove, it would be so." \*

\* Baxter's Sermon on Making Light of Christ, quoted from Prince's Christian History, No. 29.



## CHAPTER VI.

## WESLEY AND WHITFIELD.

[1739.] IN the history of British Revivals, the names of Wesley and Whitfield stand pre-eminent, as men zealous, prayerful, laborious, and successful. A few extracts from their journals are enough to refute the assertion that in England we have not seen any powerful and simultaneous awakenings of sinners. These journals are so universally known, that it seems unnecessary to make large extracts from them here. Besides, it may be as well to avoid encountering the prejudice which, in many minds, the name of Methodism does not fail to array in arms against the reality and solidity of a work of grace. We cannot, however, doubt that thousands have been converted, have exerted themselves in the Christian world, have walked consistently, and are entered into the joy of their Lord, by this instrumentality. The melancholy truth must be confessed, that in times of strong excitement there have been some partially awakened, who have seemed to run well for a while, have fallen asleep again, and have died in their sins. But happily man is not the judge of the individual, while he is called upon soberly and seriously to examine the broad features of those remarkable occurrences in the history of the Church which have been recorded as peculiar manifestations of divine influence, and to exercise his best judgment with regard to their genuine nature and Scriptural character.

It is lamentable to examine with a minute eye the general condition of Britain as to real Christianity. Christian England, as we gladly say, when we observe only the more prosperous spots, which are called into view because the rays of glory rest on them—Christian

England, which we fancy must send up supplications and praises from all her hills and vales, however remote—Christian England has, alas! her long tracts where the light of the true gospel shines not, where the Sabbath is but lightly esteemed, and where the little religious observance that exists consists in superstitious and heartless externals. The whole district of the Mendip hills might as well have been in a country where the sound of the gospel had never been heard, at the time when the energetic benevolence of Mrs Hannah More led her to operate upon it by her schools. Yet it was then as now, all divided into parishes, and each parish was decently furnished with its church and its taper spire, piercing the clouds to adorn the poet's description. But in these nine parishes of Mendip was not to be found one resident clergyman; and of those who galloped to the fane to "do duty" on the Sabbath, there was not one who understood the message of reconciliation that he was charged with, or cared for what saving results might proceed from his words. There are still whole serieses of churches through which a lover of the truth may pass without hearing a word of that regeneration, without which we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. There are spots where, under the guidance of teachers who know not the unbought pardon offered in the New Testament, the people are laboriously working out a righteousness for themselves, and seeking repose in the number of their prayers and the regularity of their family worship. O weary, stale, flat and unprofitable!—O heartless toil!—O unheard of bondage!—a Christless family altar!—a soul seeking to apprehend God, without knowing the illuminating power of his Holy Spirit. How beautiful upon the mountains, to such people, must be the feet of the preacher who brings the new and unexpected tidings of a justly offended God reconciled through Christ Jesus! What must be the glad surprise of their souls, to learn that He who has paid their debt is also at the right hand of God pleading for them now! Such welcome messengers were Whitfield and Wesley in their day to many a benighted soul; and almost simultaneously with the revivals attendant upon their ministry,

did the Lord vouchsafe an awakening in the Church of England also ; so that while they went to the highways and hedges, their brethren within the vineyard began to preach repentance unto life. Their successors in the faith continue to this day ; and if we expect to discover any very recent instances of revival among professing Christians, in the southern division of the kingdom, we must look for them chiefly among the Methodists.

As it is not consistent with the plan of this selection to swell it to a great extent, we shall take Kingswood as a very fair example of the effects of the joint labours of Wesley and Whitfield, who were, in the first instance, nearly equally engaged in the work accomplished there. Kingswood, which is a district near the city of Bristol, had formerly been a royal chase, containing between three and four thousand acres, but it had been gradually appropriated by the several lords whose estates lay round about its borders, and their title, which, for a long time, was no better than what possession gave them, had been legalized. The deer and the greater part of the wood had long since disappeared ; and coal mines having been discovered there, from which Bristol derives its chief supply of fuel, it was now inhabited by a race of people as lawless and untaught as their forefathers of the forest, but far more brutal, and differing as much from the people of the surrounding country in dialect as in appearance. They had, at that time, no place of worship, for Kingswood belonged then to the out-parish of St Philip, Bristol. Had the colliers felt disposed to travel three or four miles, they could have found no accommodation in the church of this populous suburb ; and if they could, would have felt as much out of their element as a sailor does in a city church. When Whitfield spoke of going to America to convert the savages, his friends at Bristol replied, " What need is there of going abroad for this ? Have we not Indians enough at home ? If you have a mind to convert savages, go to the colliers at Kingswood." Towards these colliers, Whitfield, from this time, felt his heart yearn, for they were very numerous, and yet as sheep having no shepherd. On the afternoon, therefore, of

Saturday, Feb. 17, 1739, he stood upon a mount in a place called Rose Green, *his first field pulpit*, and preached to as many as came to hear, attracted by the novelty of such an address. "I thought," says he, "it might be doing the service of my Creator, who had a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for a sounding-board; and who, when his gospel was refused by the Jews, sent his servants into the highways and hedges." Not above two hundred persons gathered round him, for there had been no previous notice of his intention; and these, perhaps being no way prepared for his exhortations, were more astonished than impressed by what they heard. Yet Whitfield was cheered by this first step, and says, in his Journal, "Blessed be God, the ice is now broken, and I have taken the field. Some may censure me, but is there not a cause? Pulpits are denied, and the poor colliers ready to perish for lack of knowledge."

Having once taken the field, he was not only encouraged to persevere in such a course by the multitudes that flocked to hear, but he was shut up to this as his only opportunity of proclaiming the gospel, as these new and irregular proceedings were the means of excluding him from all the pulpits of the Established Church, in which he held deacon's orders. He therefore soon went again to Kingswood. His second audience consisted of two thousand persons; his third, from four to five, and they went on increasing to ten, fourteen, and twenty thousand. "To behold such crowds," he says, "standing together in such an awful silence, to hear the echo of their singing run from one end of them to the other, was very solemn and striking. How infinitely more solemn and striking will the general assembly of the spirits of just men made perfect be, when they join in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb in heaven? Yet, as the scene was new, and I had just begun to be an *extempore* preacher, it often occasioned many inward conflicts. Sometimes, when twenty thousand people were before me, I had not, in my own apprehension, a word to say either to God or them. But I never was totally deserted, and frequently so assisted (for to deny

it would be lying against God), that I knew by happy experience what our Lord meant by saying, 'out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.'" The first evidence he observed of having made any impression on his rude auditors was their deep silence; the next and still more convincing was, his observation of the white gutters made by the tears which fell plentifully down their cheeks, black and unwashed from the coal-pits. "The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands, some in coaches and some on horseback, and some in the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together; to which was sometimes added the 'solemnity of the approaching evening,' was almost too much for, and quite overcame me."

As might have been expected from people so utterly untrained, except in the savage sports of bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and other works of the devil, as were the colliers of Kingswood, in no place was the preaching of the gospel accompanied with more unrestrained outward demonstration of feeling. Convulsions, cries, in some few cases blasphemies which led to the idea of demoniacal possession, were exhibited. Occasionally, even Wesley, who was accused of being more prone to credulity than his colleague, suspected that the emotions were feigned, and treated them accordingly. But in general, a great mass of the people were savingly converted, and stood well the test of being tried by their fruits. Whitfield was about to leave them in prosecution of his purpose to visit Georgia. He prevailed on Wesley to come down to Bristol to occupy his place, and introduced him to his many congregations. Wherever he took his leave, there was loud weeping. "Oh," he exclaims, "these partings!" An exclamation which, from the day when they whose hearts were knit to Paul at Ephesus "wept sore, and sorrowed most of all that they should see his face no more," till now, has repeated its painful echo in the hearts of Christians, and will continue to repeat it, till partings shall cease for ever in the general assembly and church of the first-born. When he forced himself away

from Bristol, crowds were waiting at the door to give him a last farewell, and nearly twenty friends accompanied him on horseback. "Blessed be God!" he exclaims, "for the marvellous great kindness he hath shown me in this city. Many sinners I believe have been effectually converted; numbers of God's children greatly comforted; several thousands of little books have been dispersed among the people; about two hundred pounds collected for the Orphan House; and many poor families relieved by the bounty of my friend Mr Seward. Shall not these things be noted in my book? God forbid they should not be written on the tables of my heart."

His road lay through Kingswood. It must have been very gratifying to him to find these people, so recently possessed with all the selfish and stormy passions, waiting to greet him with an entertainment prepared without his knowledge. He had preached to them on the duty of educating their children, and urged them to subscribe for the erection of a schoolhouse; and he himself was surprised to witness the cheerfulness with which they parted with their money on this occasion. On his farewell visit, they earnestly entreated Mr Whitfield to lay the first stone, which he did; after which he knelt, and prayed that the gates of hell might not prevail against the design, to which petition the colliers said a hearty Amen!

Mr Wesley succeeded him, and after a considerable struggle against his previous habits and ideas of order, took to the highways and hedges, with as much success as Mr Whitfield. His account, a part of which we extract, corroborates all that has been previously said of the state of these people. [November 27, 1739.] "Few persons have lived long in the West of England who have not heard of the colliers of Kingswood, a people famous from the beginning hitherto for neither fearing God nor regarding man; so ignorant of the things of God, that they seemed but one remove from the beasts that perish, and therefore utterly without desire of instruction, as well as without the means of it. Many, last winter, used tauntingly to say of Mr Whitfield, if he will convert heathens, why does he not go to the colliers of Kings-

wood? In spring he did so. When he was called away, others followed to compel them to come in; and, by the grace of God, their labour was not in vain. The scene is already changed: Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no more filled with drunkenness and uncleanness, and the idle diversions which naturally lead thereto. It is no longer full of wars and fightings, of clamour and bitterness, of wrath and envyings. Peace and love are there. Great numbers of people are mild, gentle, and easy to be entreated. They do not cry, neither strive, and hardly is their voice heard in the street, or indeed in their own Wood, unless when they are at their usual evening diversion, singing praise unto God their Saviour. That their children, too, might know the things which make for their peace, it was some time since proposed to build a house in Kingswood; and after many foreseen and unforeseen difficulties, in June last the foundation was laid. The ground made choice of was in the middle of the wood, between the London and Bath roads, not far from that called Two-mile-hill, about three miles from Bristol. Here a large room was begun for the school, having four small rooms at the end for the schoolmasters (and, perhaps, if it should please God, for some poor children) to lodge in. Two persons are ready to teach as soon as the house is fit to receive them, the shell of which is nearly finished; so that it is hoped the whole will be completed in spring, or early in the summer. Thus we see that in the middle of February Kingswood was a wilderness, and that when the month of June arrived, it was already blossoming like the rose.

The effect of the leaven which had been thus placed in this mass of barbarism was made conspicuous in the following year, in the case of a riot, of which Mr Charles Wesley gives the following account: Being informed that the colliers had risen in consequence of the dearness of corn, and were marching for Bristol, he rode out to meet them and talk with them. Many seemed disposed to return with him to the school which had been built for their children; but the most desperate

rushed violently upon them, beating them, and driving them away from their pacific adviser. He adds, "I rode up to a ruffian who was striking one of our colliers, and prayed him rather to strike me. He answered, 'No—not for all the world,' and was quite overcome. I turned upon another, who struck my horse, and he also sunk into a lamb. Wherever I turned, Satan's cause lost ground, so that they were obliged to make one general assault, and the violent colliers forced the quiet ones into the town. I seized one of the tallest, and earnestly besought him to follow me. Yes, he said, that he would, all the world over. I pressed about six into the service. We met several parties, and stopped and exhorted them to follow us; and, gleaning some from every company, we increased as we marched on, singing, to the school. From one till three o'clock we spent in prayer, that evil might be prevented and the lion chained. Then news was brought us that the colliers were returned in peace. They had walked quietly into the city, without sticks or the least violence. A few of the better sort of them went to the mayor and told their grievance; then they all returned as they came, without noise or disturbance. All who saw it were amazed. Nothing could have more clearly shown the changes wrought among them than this conduct on such an occasion. I found afterwards that all our colliers to a man had been forced away. Having learned of Christ not to resist evil, they went a mile with those who compelled them rather than free themselves by violence. One man the rioters dragged out of his sick bed, and threw him into the fish-pond. Near twenty of Mr Willis's men they had prevailed on, by threatening to fill up their pits and bury them alive if they did not come up and bear them company." \* \* \* "It was a happy circumstance that they forced so many of the Methodist colliers to go with them, as these, by their advice and example, restrained the savage fury of the others. This undoubtedly was the true cause why they all returned home without making any disturbance."\*

\* Watson's Life of Wesley, pp. 80, 81.



And now, after nearly a century has elapsed, Kingswood has its humanized population, its Christian ministers, its schoolmasters, its libraries. And it not only cherishes the gospel in its own bosom, but it forms its societies for extending the blessing, and possesses preaching stations where collections are made for the behalf of the heathen whom they themselves but recently resembled. The school which Wesley here describes is not now in the centre of a wood, but has a high road running close by it. It did not succeed well on his plan, perhaps in part from the style of education being too high for the inhabitants, but chiefly on account of the rules of monkish austerity with which he caused it to set out. For Wesley was in character a stern and high disciplinarian, and, mistaking the nature of youth, he exacted rising at five in the rigour of winter, and ceaseless application to some grave pursuit during all the waking hours. This failure of Wesley's school is only mentioned lest gainsayers should suppose the fact was purposely concealed. It does not in the least detract from the evidence that a great and sudden change was wrought, and continues to be visible, among the colliers of Kingswood.

## CHAPTER VII.

## WALES.

IT has been remarked that our mountain districts are those in which converting power has been exhibited more in the form of revival than on our plains and in our cities. The history of Christianity in Wales is an example of this. In 1649, the necessities of the Welsh had attracted the attention of the British Parliament. At that period the propagation of the gospel was so much an object of care to the state, that Friday in every week was devoted to consultation on the ways and means of promoting it. The language of Wales was little understood, the clergy ignorant and idle, so that there was scarcely a sermon in some places from one quarter of a-year to another. The people had neither Bibles nor Catechisms; nor was there a sufficient maintenance for those who were capable of instructing them. The Parliament passed an act on the 22d of February, for ejecting scandalous ministers and schoolmasters, and for the redress of grievances. In pursuance of this act there was placed one faithful minister in every market-town and two schoolmasters, "able and learned university men;" and in the thirteen Welsh counties there were placed one hundred and fifty good preachers, most of whom preached three or four times a-week. The tithes were recalled to their proper use of paying godly ministers and schoolmasters; and out of them was made a provision for the wives and children of the ejected clergy.

As it was impossible all at once to provide a full supply and regular succession of pious and well educated ministers who could preach in the Welsh language, in 1654 they appointed six itinerant preachers for each

county, to whom they allowed one hundred pounds a-year. Besides this they sent out thirty ministers, of whom twenty-four were university men, and some of the rest good scholars. But these, though indefatigable in their pains, were too few for the work. To supply what was further wanting, they approved of several gifted laymen, members of churches to travel in their neighbourhoods, and assist the people's devotions. This active agency produced a sudden change in the moral aspect of the principality, so that Mr Powel says, some hundreds, if not thousands, had been converted and reformed by the propagators.\*

Mr Hugh Owen is an example of the Welsh itinerant, —of his self-denial, exertions, dangers and usefulness—whom we select as a specimen of a whole set of useful men. He was a native of Merionethshire, and a candidate for the ministry, but it appears that he was never ordained, by reason of the passing of the Bartholomew Act. He fixed his residence on a little estate in his native county, and preached the gospel without price to the ignorant people around him. His preaching was affectionate and moving, and many were wrought upon by it. He was a burning and shining light in an obscure corner of the world. He went about proclaiming the gospel of salvation, through that and the neighbouring county of Montgomery, and sometimes extended his labours to Caernarvonshire and other parts. He had five or six places where he used to preach in Merionethshire, some of which were twenty miles distant from him. He had as many in Montgomery, of which some were about thirty miles from his habitation. He performed his circuit in about three months, and then began again. Great numbers of people attended his ministry, and were much affected with it. He laboured indefatigably, and much impaired his health, by riding often in the night and cold rains over the mountains. His principal food was milk, to which he had used himself by lodging in poor houses, where they had no malt-drink, and only beds of straw.

\* Neal's History of the Puritans.

He was a primitive apostolic Christian, eminently meek and humble; and would often style himself less than the least of all the ministers of Jesus Christ. He would say he envied no man's gifts, but desired faithfully to improve his own little talent for the service of his Lord. He was tender of grieving any one, and though strict in his own person, was yet candid and charitable towards those who differed from him. He used to say that he valued no man for his opinions, or his adherence to this or that party, but for what he saw of the grace of God in him. His unblemished conversation, and inoffensive deportment, procured him the esteem of the gentlemen of the county, to several of whom he was nearly allied. At one time, when he travelled to preach in a stormy season, he was benighted on the hills; the snow was driven so violently in his face, that his horse could not go forward. He let him move as he would, until he found him in danger of the bogs, and that it was not safe to ride farther. After he had committed himself unto God by prayer, he left his horse to shift for himself, and walked in his boots in a deep snow, until it was midnight, and he was so spent, and so nearly starved with cold, that he despaired of life. But it pleased God that in a little time he unexpectedly came to a cow-house, which was at a distance from the dwelling-house of the owner, as is usual in that country. When he got to the door, he found it barred within, so that he could not enter. He scrambled about the house for nearly an hour, attempting to get in, but to no purpose. At length, when all hope was gone, he discovered a hole at one end, that opened to a hay-loft, which he got into with much difficulty, and so lay between the cattle until morning. When it was day he crept out of his miserable lodging, and discovered a house near, at which he knocked; the master of the house arose and opened the door, and found his hair and beard frozen, his hands benumbed, his clothes stiff with frost and snow, and himself scarce able to speak. He made a good fire for him, gave him hot milk, and put him into a warm bed, where he lay some hours; and then got up so well refreshed, *that he went*

*that morning to the meeting-place, and preached without any sensible prejudice.* All who knew him own him to have been an Israelite indeed, without guile. He died in 1669, aged 62.\*

There seem to be no regular records of the state of religion in Wales; but frequently, when any lively ministration was blessed to the awakening of souls, an account of it found its way into the Glasgow Weekly History, or some similar religious periodical, and has thus been preserved from oblivion.

From these, and from Wesley and Whitfield's Journals, we are enabled to glean as much information as convinces us that there was a very lively outpouring of the Spirit for several years, under the ministrations of Howel Harris, a Dissenter, and Griffith Jones, a clergyman of the Established Church, the one in North, the other in South Wales. In a very interesting little work, "The History, Constitution, Discipline, and Confession of Faith, of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales," published at Chester in 1834, we find the following sketch of the lives and exertions of these holy men:—

"A gentleman of Trevecca, in Brecknockshire, Howel Harris, Esq., had intended to take holy orders, and for that purpose entered himself a student in one of the colleges at Oxford. He soon became disgusted at the disorderly and immoral conduct which he witnessed there, and consequently returned to his friends in Wales. He was not long at home before he ventured to go from house to house, in his native parish, to exhort sinners, and gradually he extended his sphere of usefulness to the adjoining parishes also. His fame soon spread itself over the whole country, and great multitudes attended his preaching. It is said that such was the authority and power with which he delivered his discourses, that many could not refrain from crying out aloud, being overpowered by the awful exposition which he made of their condition as sinners. Family worship was now set up in several houses which hitherto had never heard the voice

\* See Calamy's Life of Baxter, vol. ii.

of prayer. The enemy could no longer remain inactive ; and now he showed every opposition in his power, by mockery, derision, and threatenings. Nothing daunted, however, Mr Harris continued his 'labour of love,' without suffering very great inconveniency by these hindrances, until the close of the year 1736. At this period, by the desire of several individuals, he established a school at Trevecca, and thence removed it to the parish church, whither many of the youth flocked to him, to be more largely instructed in the things which concerned their souls. He frequently attended the meetings which they held for the purpose of teaching each other to sing the praises of God, that he might thus have an opportunity of impressing them with a sense of their eternal state. It appears that, on these occasions, many were convinced of their sinfulness. This encouraged Mr Harris to establish regular meetings of serious persons for religious conversation in several other places ; and this was the commencement of the private societies which have ever since (taking into consideration the great importance and strictness attached to their observance) formed a principal feature by which the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists may be distinguished from every other denomination of professing Christians. The following year, 1737, a gentleman of Radnorshire sent for Mr Harris, to preach at his house. This was the means of bringing many of the higher order of that county to hear him, and of causing him to be well received by them. Up to this period, he had continued to superintend the school, although he preached on week nights, on the Sabbath, and on holidays. He was now no longer allowed to take care of the school at the parish church. This prohibition turned out for good ; for now he was at perfect liberty to go whithersoever he was called, day or night, to preach, which he frequently did, three, four, and even five times a day !

“ As he became more and more successful, the opposition against him waxed stronger. The magistrates threatened to punish him, the clergy preached against him, and the common rabble were generally prepared to disturb and pelt him. At this time, he was not accus-

tomed to preach from any text, but merely to deliver to the people what the Lord at that instant gave him to say—generally in a thundering and convincing manner.

“The cause so greatly flourished, that, by the year 1739, he had established three hundred societies in South Wales, about three or four years after he commenced his public labours.” \* \* \* “We must be permitted a short digression from our own immediate history, to say something of a very eminent clergyman of the Established Church, the Reverend Griffith Jones, Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire, who at this period was a true friend to his countrymen, not only by the faithfulness of his public ministrations, but also by his unbounded charity and benevolence. He was instrumental in procuring for them two editions of the Bible, and in establishing free schools for the children of the poor in almost every part of the principality. For twenty-three successive years he published an annual account of these schools, from 1737 until 1760. In the last mentioned place he had 215 schools and 8687 scholars. He was an animated preacher well versed in scripture, diligent, laborious, and very successful in his work. Though this renowned champion for faith kept within the pale of the Established Church, yet he frequently itinerated to preach at many other churches besides his own, and was a means of preparing in that part of the country the way for the revival among the Methodists. He was in the ministry about twenty-eight years before Mr Harris began to preach; and we have been told, but cannot vouch for the authenticity of the statement, that it was through his ministry Mr Harris was called.”

“The first minister of the Establishment who ventured without her walls to assist Mr Harris in promoting the Revival among the Methodists, was the reverend and justly renowned Daniel Rowlands, of Llangeitho. His popularity and eloquence were such, that persons have been known to come the distance of one hundred miles to hear him preach, on the Sabbaths of his administering the Lord’s Supper! and it would appear that in the pulpit he seemed more like an angel sent down from the imme-

diate presence of Jehovah, with a commission to fallen man, than like a messenger chosen from among the children of Adam."

We subjoin an extract from a work, published by one of another denomination, who was contemporary with the above mentioned individuals, and acquiesced with them:—

"A great number of the youth and others in Wales were wholly irreligious, and accustomed to meet for the purposes of dancing, intoxication, and other sinful practices. These, for the greater part, reckoned themselves among the members of the Church of England. Mr Harris, in his journeys through the country, thundered terribly against swearers, blasphemers, drunkards, fighters, liars, Sabbath-breakers, &c., so that, if we may so speak, he showered among them living sparks of the fire of the bottomless pit. He exhorted in and out of doors, he cared not where, so long as he could attract people to listen to his message from God. In this respect he was preceded by Mr Walter Cradoc, and Mr Vavasor Powell, about a century before. But, in our days, this was a great novelty, and vast multitudes congregated to hear him. About the same time, the Reverend Daniel Rowlands, a clergyman in Cardiganshire, began to preach in a very extraordinary manner in the church. I recollect having heard him, about the year 1737, in Carmarthenshire. A great number were present, and I heard some of the Independents, in returning home, say,—'We never heard any one to be compared with him in the Church of England, unless it were Mr Griffith Jones. In our days there has appeared no such light amongst the members of the Established Church. Soon afterwards the Rev. William Williams and Peter Williams in Caermarthenshire, Howel Davies in Pembrokeshire, and several others in the principality left the church and attached themselves to the Methodists. They became itinerants through the whole country, and many arose of different degrees of usefulness to exhort the people; some of very bright talents, and others who preached occasionally, so that the country became greatly moved. The people forsook their sinful pleasures, and began to converse about reli-



gion, and to meet together as religious assemblies. Thus a great revival took place in the country ; and from that to the present period, the knowledge of God has been wonderfully diffused through Wales, and multitudes who were never used to approach a chapel, and seldom a church, now went gladly to hear the Word to dwelling-houses, yea even to the highways and hedges.\*

Another author speaks of the revival in this manner :—“ This awakening was the means of not only establishing a new sect in Wales, but also of reviving the old sects which had a previous existence there ; for, though there were celebrated and useful men among the Independents in the principality, yet a torpidity and listlessness in spiritual concerns had to a great degree crept over every denomination. This revival by the Methodists was hailed by all the Calvinistic sects in Wales and England as the longed for dawn of day, and the rising of the sun, after a protracted and wearisome and starless night. \* \* \*

“ The revival, like a mighty conflagration, spread wider and wider, in spite of all the torrents of opposition with which it had to contend ; they served only to make it burn brighter and stronger. Mr Harris, in a letter to Mr Whitfield, dated October 15th, 1742, observes, “ I have heard most glorious news from Wales, of the success which attends the brother Rowlands, and many others. Sinners are pricked to the heart by scores, and thousands assemble to hear the preached word. There are ten clergymen now in Wales who are owned in a remarkable manner of the Lord Jesus Christ.”†

We find the following notice in Whitfield's Journal, dated Cardiff, March 8, 1739 :—“ I was much refreshed by the sight of my dear brother, Howel Harris, whom, though I knew not in person, I have long since loved in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and have often felt my soul drawn out in prayer in his behalf. A burning and a shining light has he been in these parts,—a barrier against profaneness and immorality, and an indefatigable pro-

\* Harris y Bedyddwyr yn mhlith y Cymry, tu dal. 53.

† History of Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, p. 11.

moter of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. About three or four years God has inclined him to go about doing good. He is now above twenty-five years of age. He is resolved to go on in his work, and indefatigable zeal has he shown in his Master's service. For these three years he has discoursed almost twice every day, for three or four hours together; not authoritatively as a minister, but as a private person exhorting his Christian brethren. He has been in seven counties, and has made it his business to go to wakes, &c., to turn people from such lying vanities. Many ale-house people, fiddlers, harpers, &c., sadly cry out against him for spoiling their business. He has been threatened with public prosecutions, and had constables sent to apprehend him; but God has blessed him with inflexible courage; he is of a most Catholic spirit, loves all that love our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore he is stiled by bigots a Dissenter. He is contemned by all that are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; but God has greatly blessed his pious endeavours. Many own him as their spiritual father, and I believe would lay down their lives for his sake. He discourses generally in a field; but at other times in a house, from a wall, a table, or any thing else. He has established near thirty societies in South Wales, and still his sphere of action is enlarged daily. After I had saluted him, and given an exhortation to a great number of people who followed me to the town, we spent the remainder of the evening in taking sweet counsel together, and telling one another what God had done for our souls. We also took an account of the several societies, and agreed on such measures as seem most conducive to promote the common interests of our Lord. Blessed be God, there seems to be a noble spirit going out into Wales. They have many burning and shining lights, both among the Dissenting and Church ministers, amongst whom Mr Griffith Jones shines in particular. No less than fifty charity schools have been erected by his means, without any settled visible fund, and fresh ones are setting up every day. People make nothing of coming twenty miles to hear a sermon, and great numbers there are who have not only

been hearers, but doers also of the Word ; so that there is a most comfortable prospect of the spreading of the Gospel in Wales.

[1742.] In a letter from a dissenting minister in Wales, published in the Glasgow Weekly History, Oct. 26, 1742, mention is made of the same zealous man :— “ In Caernarvonshire there is one congregation of dissenters, who are very devout and zealous people, as perhaps any in the kingdom ; and three lecture places, all of them on that promontory or narrow neck of land that stretches out into the sea, and is the best inhabited part of the county. The minister is Mr John Thomas, a humble, meek, serious man, who preaches well. Mr Howel Harris, and some Methodists, together with Jenkyn Morgan, the schoolmaster, have been made instrumental to awaken and convert many in these parts, but were grievously persecuted ; they have even broke into the meeting-house and committed strange outrages, the devil, their master, being wonderfully nettled at his losing so many souls.

“ Pembrokeshire has been lately mightily roused up, and abundance of people convinced, reformed, and converted, by means of the exhortations of Mr Howel Harris, and other Methodist exhorters ; and contrary to Cardiganshire, 'tis the upper part of Pembrokeshire that has been roused and reformed, and that almost universally, to a concern about religion. Certainly a very great work has been done there. Among the clergy, Mr David Jones and Mr Howel Davies are very eminent, especially the latter, who is a mighty Boanerges, and very industrious in preaching, both in churches, houses, and fields.”

[1766.] This excellent labourer in the church is also mentioned by Mr Venn, in a letter descriptive of a tour, during which he sought out the zealous and faithful, and refreshed his spirit by their holy intercourse. His information refers to a period more than twenty years subsequent to Whitfield's, thus exhibiting that devoted man as an aged, persevering, and still highly honoured minister of Christ. “ From Bath, through Bristol and Gloucester, we arrived at Trevecca, in Wales. Howel

Harris is the father of that settlement, and the founder. After labouring for fifteen years, more violently than any other of the servants of Christ, in this revival, he was so hurt in body as to be confined to his own house for seven years. Upon the beginning of this confinement first one and then another whom the Lord had converted under his word, to the number of near a hundred, came and desired to live with him, saying that they would work and get their bread. By this means, near one hundred and twenty men, women, and children, from very distant parts of Wales, came and fixed their tents at Trevecca. We were there three days, and heard their experience, which they spoke in Welsh to Mr Harris, and he interpreted to us. Of all the people I ever saw, this society seems to be the most advanced in grace. They speak as men and women who feel themselves every moment worthy of eternal punishment, and infinitely base, and yet at the same time have such certainty of salvation through the second man, the Lord from heaven, as is indeed delightful to behold. My heart received a blessing from them and their pastor, which will abide with me.\*

The Rev. Griffith Jones is made honourable mention of in Whitfield's Journal, February 22, 1739:—"I went with some Christian friends to Bath, where I was much comforted by meeting with several who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity;—more especially, I was edified by the pious conversation of the Rev. Griffith Jones, whom I had desired to see of a long season. His words came with power; and the account he gave me of the many obstructions he had met with in his ministry convinced me that I was but a young soldier just entering the field."

In the "Glasgow Weekly History," 1742, he is also named. "Among the clergy is the famous Mr Griffith Jones, one of the most excellent preachers in Great Britain, for piety, good sense, diligence, moderation, zeal, and a mighty utterance, the like whereof I never heard.

\* Life of Rev. H. Venn, p. 122.

He is so catholic-spirited and charitable, that he allows his communicants to communicate with dissenters, and them with him. He hath set up movable Welsh free schools in every county in South Wales, and in some counties in North Wales, to teach the poorer sort to read Welsh, and hath thereby done unspeakable good."

So long after as about 1770, we find a venerable disciple of Griffith Jones, named Rees Hugh, mentioned as an important instrument in the conversion of Mr Charles of Bala. Thus does the stream of heavenly truth flow down through earthen vessels from one generation to another, and our God condescends to be glorified in the faithfulness of his redeemed. The records of gospel progress in Wales are scanty and indistinct, yet from occasional glimpses it seems that its mountains have been the scenes of repeated and lively outpourings of the spirit, and that it has possessed a few pastors abundant in labour and unshrinking in hardships as were the Apostles themselves.

In the Rev. Edward Morgan's preface to his "Life of Mr Charles," we have the following brief notice, which excites not only earnest curiosity, but deep regret that our information is so narrow, without the hope of extending it.

"The Welsh have been favoured during the last century with a few individuals, the memory of whom ought to have been preserved to the latest generation. The effects of their labours are still visible, and will probably continue so for many ages, but their names will ere long be forgotten, there being no records of their lives excepting a bare notice of them in some of the periodicals of the day. This may be said of the Whitfield of Wales, the Rev. Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho, the father of the Welsh Methodists, now by far the most numerous denomination in Wales, and who no doubt have done more towards evangelizing the country than all other denominations put together. Rowlands was allowed by all who knew and heard him to be a most extraordinary preacher. He possessed in a very high degree every qualification necessary for the purpose of arousing a

dormant people, sunk in ignorance and ungodliness. But no detailed account of his labours has ever been published. The same has been the case with respect to several of his fellow-labourers, one of whom is entitled to particular notice as having been the Watts of Wales, the sweet singer of our Israel. We allude to the Rev. Mr Williams, late of Pantycelyn, Caermarthenshire. His hymns, for deep experience and glorious views of the Redeemer, have few to equal them in any language; and they have been eminently blessed to the edification and comfort of thousands.\*

We have great pleasure in presenting a translation of one of these beautiful hymns, furnished by the kindness of a native of that interesting principality:—

“ Why should cruel beasts be suffer'd  
 To tread down the feeble vine?  
 Why should blossoms young and fragrant,  
 Through the mighty drought decline?  
 Bring the pleasant fruitful showers  
 That will cause the grapes to thrive;  
 May a shower in the morning  
 And at even-tide arrive!

“ Fix, O Lord, a tent in Goshen,  
 Thither come, and there abide!  
 Bow thyself from light celestial,  
 And with sinful man reside.  
 Dwell in Zion, there continue,  
 Where the holy tribes ascend;  
 Do not e'er desert thy people,  
 Till the world in flames shall end.

“ I am tired with Babel's rivers,  
 Nought but weeping there I find;  
 The melodious harps of Zion  
 Every day attract my mind.  
 Out of Babel's dismal thraldom  
 Bring us forth, a loving band;  
 And, until we come to Zion,  
 Let us not a moment stand.”

By means of the generosity of the same friend, we

\* Preface to the Life of Charles, p. v.

have been furnished with an autograph of Mr Williams' account of the superintendence of one of the societies in Glamorganshire, of which he was the secretary in 1743. The total amount of members is 168. They are arranged under the names of their villages, and again divided into married men, single men, married women, &c. At the head of some lists the word "justified" is written, at others, the word "law," indicative probably of the state of progress of the individuals. These terms are not so employed now in the sect. Such notices as the following are interspersed:—"Mrs Amy Price died, May, 1743, in full assurance of faith." "Br. William Lewis died in Liberty, June y<sup>e</sup> 4, 1743." Beside some names is written "justified bondage," and beside others, "justified law,"—marks which, though not distinctly intelligible to us, conveyed to the diligent superintendent information enough to guide him in his method of enquiry and instruction to the individual when next his circling duties brought him back to the same spot.

There are further notices of Daniel Rowlands in the "Life of Charles," which we extract entire:—

"These awakenings were new things at Bala and its vicinity, but not so in South Wales, under the ministry of Mr Rowlands. Many at different times had taken place there, and some far more extensive than those in North Wales; for they extended generally over several counties. They were not recorded except in Heaven, and therefore we have now no particular knowledge of them. The history of the labours of that extraordinary man, had it been written, would scarcely have found a parallel in the annals of biography. There are no doubt thousands, yea tens of thousands, now in Heaven, who acknowledge him as their father in Christ. But what must we say of these extraordinary awakenings? By what power were they produced? By human power? By human agency, no doubt, but *not* by human power. If the preacher's eloquence, earnestness, and zeal, or what the adversary would call vehemence and violent ardour, had effected them, how was it that the influence of these means was not universal, instead of being so occasional,

at the distance of several years, and confined at one time to this part and at another to that part of the country?

“ No, we must refer them to the power of Him who ‘worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.’ We are confirmed in this opinion by the character of the impressions produced, and by their effects. Deep convictions of sin, heart-rending concern for the soul, self-abhorrence, self-abasement, earnest entreaties for mercy, importunate supplications for reconciliation with God, through the merits of the Saviour, followed, after persevering prayer, by the enjoyment of peace, comfort, and gratitude,—what are these but the genuine impressions of that glorious Spirit who changeth the heart and renews the soul after the Divine image! And what were the effects manifested in the life and posterior conduct? Exactly such as bore the same marks and proofs of a Divine power,—departure from iniquity, and humble walking with God.

“ These awakenings, then, were substantially the same with what all true Christians undergo, however gradual and varied in manner. The difference is only in things that are circumstantial,—in the number awakened at the same time, and in the strength of the feelings experienced. With the exception of these minor points, there was nothing in them but what proved them to be the common genuine operations of the Spirit—operations without which there can in no case be any thing like true religion. O that we could see such awakenings in the present day; such manifestations of the Divine power; such evidences of the Divine favour! O that every part of the country could witness them; England as well as Wales; and not only England and Wales, but the whole world! What is the ‘nation that is to be born in a day’ but the effect of such simultaneous awakenings widely extended? The few extraordinary occurrences of this kind that have already been seen, are no more than small specimens and preludes of those wonderfully great and extensive awakenings, which, as we hope, are on the eve of taking place when a second and



still more glorious Pentecost shall be exhibited before the eyes of a wondering world, to the exaltation of saints, and the confusion of sinners. Great preparations preceded those awakenings which we have been recording; schools were established; the people were instructed; the gospel had for some time been powerfully preached; earnest prayers were offered up to heaven for success.

“The Lord heard, and showers of blessings were poured down, and a glorious harvest was vouchsafed. What do we now see in the Christian world? What but similar preparations, but on a much larger scale. If there be any thing wanting, it is the strong and earnest crying for the powerful visitations of heaven, for the outpouring of that spirit, without whose aid nothing effectual can ever be done. May then the spirit of prayer be more universal; may its entreaties be more ardent; and its importunities increase until they prevail! We shall then witness ‘the arm of the Lord revealed;’ the almighty power of his grace made known, and a nation born in a day.

“These singular awakenings, as we have already said, first began under the ministry of Mr Rowlands; the very first took place while he was officiating in the church, and occurred, perhaps many will be surprised to hear, while he was reading the litany. At that passage of it which begins thus, “By the mystery of thy holy incarnation,” &c. the effect was astonishing. The people were melted into tears and wept loudly. The impression spread widely through the whole neighbourhood. The most powerful awakenings took place in the three churches which he served, and many were savingly impressed. The next, according to my information, commenced at a prayer meeting held at Llangeitho Chapel. So that the two first had their beginning in prayer, which of all means is the most effectual to draw down upon us the blessing of heaven. Not less than six or seven of these extraordinary awakenings took place in the lifetime of Mr Rowlands, and were the means of large additions to his people; most of whom usually stood their ground, though not without some instances of defection.

And what is remarkable, several of them occurred at intervals of seven years. There are now old people living who have a perfect recollection of three of them successively occurring at this regular distance of time. One great awakening is mentioned from its having been more extensive than any other, during which many hundreds, and even thousands were, according to all appearances, savingly impressed. Whatever may be thought of some things that attended them (for whatever is done among men, always in a measure partakes of their weakness and depravity), yet they were most clearly the productions of a divine power, and the evidence of divine favour.”\*

This venerable servant of God has passed into eternity, and with him the great company who were, by his means, led to repentance unto life; but the seed of the righteous remains where he reaped his rich harvest. One who has heard of him from his forefathers, states, that Daniel Rowlands was obliged to have a private door from his house directly into his pulpit, that he might avoid the presence of the multitude, to speak, to look, to touch but his garments, which was inconvenient and trying to his feelings when he endeavoured to pass by the ordinary way; and that his preaching was with such power that a few sentences of his sermon would not have been uttered till hundreds were melted to tears. His voice was like a clear and melodious trumpet, and his manner full of energy and fervour. A few of his sermons remain. One, translated from the Welsh, has been published by the London Tract Society, called, “The Redeemer’s Voice.” Its force, rapidity, might in the Scripture, and careless richness in classical allusion, give us some idea, though doubtless a faint one, of that instrument so honoured of the Holy Spirit.

The Reverend Rowland Hill delighted greatly in Wales. Its mountain scenery and its mountain Christians stirred all the poetry of his genius, and all the ardour of his affections. In one of his last visits to the Societies in South Wales, he was much touched by, and

\* Life of Mr Charles, p. 292.

often after spoke of the following little incident. During the meeting of the Society, a man, verging towards a hundred years old, raised himself from the corner in which he was reclining, and, while he aided his feeble limbs by leaning on his trembling hands, he raised his quivering voice, and addressed himself to the young ministers, in his broken English, "Brethren, let me tell you this—I have heard Daniel Rowlands preach, and I heard him once say, 'except your consciences be cleansed by the blood of Christ, you must all perish in the eternal fires.'" Rowlands had been for half a century in glory, but here was a voice, as from the grave, bearing testimony to his faithful doctrine. Probably this sentence, so deeply engraved on the memory of the aged man, was the very one which first subdued his heart and brought him to his Saviour. It is with peculiar pleasure that we here introduce some letters, copied from originals never before printed, which remove us from the public ministrations, to exhibit to us the private thoughts and hourly pursuits of these holy and lively Christians. We begin with one from

#### MR ROWLANDS TO HOWEL HARRIS.

"October 20th, 1742.

"DEAR, DEAR BROTHER,

"I bless you for your letters, they were like showers of rain to a dry land; indeed the Lord gave you the tongue of the learned, but oh! oh what am I? A painted hypocrite, and a miserable sinner; I know all the to's and fro's and up's and down's that are in religion, but the blessed liberty remaining for the children of God is still hidden from me. I believe you pray for me; God grant you may prevail. I wish I could skip and leap over all mountains of pleasures, laziness, hard-heartedness, unbelief, &c., and rest upon the breast of the beloved, and never, never enough-praised Jesus. Oh come blessed time when all prisoners of hope shall be released, and enter into the rest of their dear Imma-

nel. I don't doubt but your soul joins with me to say Amen, Amen.

“I've been now of late in Montgomeryshire; had great power there to convince and to build; persecution increases, some of the brethren were excommunicated. (I hope you will consult with the brethren in London, and send us what is best to do.) Afterwards, at Brecknock, in several houses and churches, I preached with uncommon power; I heard since that I am put into the court by Mr Phillips of Built for discoursing at an ale-house there; your sentiments about this would be vastly serviceable. Brother Wm. Williams is put in too, for not living in the parish where he officiates, &c. The last week I've been in some part of Caremarthenshire and Glamorgan; and brave opportunities indeed they were; whole congregations were under concern, and such crying out that my voice could not be heard. Some persons of quality did entertain me with uncommon respect. Oh what am I that my ears and eyes should hear and see such things! Oh help me to bless the God of Heaven; I hope His kingdom begins to come; oh, Satan, be packing, fly, fly with trembling, lest the God of Israel come at thee. Oh Lord chastise him. Amen. Lord, down with him; let his kingdom shatter, and him be trampled under the feet of Thy children. How long shall he domineer over Thy little ones? My dear brother, up with your arms, give not an inch, the God whom you serve can, yea and will deliver us; in His might we shall win the field. Don't you hear all the brethren in Wales crying out loudly, Help! help! help! help! Brother Harris, thou bold champion, where art thou? What, in London, now, now in the day of battle? What, has not London champions enough to fight for her? Where are the great Wesleys, Cennick, &c. Must poor Wales afford an assistance to England? Oh, poor Wales! it is thy ingratitude altogether has been the cause of all this. Good Lord, pity poor Wales; send our dear brother among us with Thy power, and in the fulness of thy blessing, and let the Devil tremble before him. Amen, Amen. My poor flock do increase daily;

they would be heartily glad to see and hear you. Brother Win<sup>g</sup>. was here last Sunday, and a sweet day it was. I love him more and more because of his simple, honest, plain way of dealing with the people. His parishioners are highly incensed against him. \* \* \* Methinks I hear you enquiring after Caernarvonshire ; Benj<sup>n</sup>. Thomas is there ; they come by thousands to hear. Brother Howell Davis promised to go, but what detains him I know not. I can't possibly go this winter, for want of one to supply my room at my churches. The next week I promised to be at Pembroke and the lower part of Caermarthen ; shortly after at Convil, &c. Dear brother, never fail to intercede for me, who am your loving friend, well-wisher, and unworthy brother,

“ DAN. ROWLANDS.”

#### GEORGE WHITFIELD TO HOWEL HARRIS.

“ Feb. 27, 1741.

“ MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

“ Forgive me for not writing to you—indeed the Lord has not given me freedom. Besides, I waited for an account of your meeting, and the letter which brought the account did not reach me till my coming up to London. I am glad the blessed Jesus was amongst you. I approve of your determination, and hope yet to see a glorious harvest in Wales. I fear I cannot possibly come in March. The Lord will send me in his own due time. I have been lately in Gloucester and Gloucestershire. Such an awakening I never knew before in those parts. Brother Charles followed me immediately, and I fear, with his brother,\* will sow tares, and set the poor souls disputing. I have conversed freely with them both, especially brother John. Oh that the Lord would lead him into all truth ! I hope you have dropt your notion about the soul's receiving a kind of Pentecost, whereby it shall be delivered immediately from all sin, as it were,

\* The Wesleys

root and branch? My dear brother, the work of sanctification is a *gradual* work, and the Redeemer gently leads on his children, step by step, till he brings them to eternal glory. I know you will not be offended at this plain dealing. Use the same liberty with me, I beseech you. I came hither" (supposed to London) "on Wednesday evening. Brother Cennick has been ill of a fever, but the Lord has rebuked it, blessed be his name! I have not yet seen Brother Rowlands, and indeed as yet have not time to read it, for I believe forty letters now lie by me unread. Glorious news from New England, Scotland, Carolina, &c. The Lord Jesus hath been pleased mightily to bless my poor ministry—oh that I were humble! The inward trials and temptations my dear wife and I have undergone are unspeakable. \* \* \*

"I have had sweet conversation with some of the Moravian brethren. Surely the time will come when all God's children shall unite together—I know you say Amen. God hath much blessed my preaching. At every service the Lord hath been with me. To-night he gave me to look into his bleeding heart. It inflamed my heart, and out of the abundance of my heart my mouth spake. The Holy Ghost was much amongst us—O may it fill your dear soul, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God, prays, my dear Brother Syms and my dear Brother Harris,

"Your most affectionate, though most unworthy,  
Brother and Servant in Jesus Christ,

"G. W."

"Br. Rich<sup>d</sup>. Ellis is dead, as also Br. Kenchin and his sister. The Lord prepare us for our great change."

We have an opportunity of presenting also a letter from the Moravian Bishop Gambold to the same zealous man.

#### BISHOP GAMBOLD TO HOWEL HARRIS.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"Your loving visit has left such an impression on me,

as I could not easily forget, though I have so long omitted writing to you. I embrace the correspondence with great joy and pleasure, as an acknowledgment of the union subsisting between all those who love the Lord Jesus, and have no other trust but his blood-purchased righteousness, however distant they may seem to be in respect of outward regulation or method. Indeed, this distance always appears greatest to a shallow observer, and least to those who are concerned about the central point itself, and enter with all their heart and affections into the mystery of the cross, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which not only shall follow, but lies already therein. There is nothing important but to profess them, enjoy our Redeemer, walk before him unto all well pleasing, rejoice over other souls whom sin and misery have driven, like us, to this remedy, the everlasting righteousness of his blood, and apply by preaching the indefeasible energy of his propitiation to the enlightening and quickening of many more who are still blind and dead, and do not know what has been prepared so long ago by the counsel of God for their relief. I am well persuaded these are the things you are employed in, the object of all your labour and comfort; and through grace they shall be mine also, according to my small measures, while I am in the body. 'Tis really a sweet truth to me that Jesus Christ has loved me, and died for me before I was born, and that now I can have access to him for every thing I want; and I wish this rich salvation could but enter into, and establish itself in all human hearts and minds. \* \* \* \* I wish you success in the Lord's work, and abide,

“ Your poor fellow-believer and fellow-labourer  
in his vineyard,

“ J. GAMBOLD.”

“ My wife desires her hearty love to yours.

“ Mr Bowers, in Nevil's Alley,  
Fetter-Lane.  
Nov. 23, 1750.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CHARLES, OF BALA.

MR CHARLES describes himself as having been the subject of religious impressions at the age of twelve, during his residence at school. His lively and susceptible temper having thus early received a gracious bias, he went on deriving additions to his stock of knowledge, and increasing in devotional feeling from all the helps which Providence put in his power.

[1773.] In his eighteenth year he first heard Mr Rowlands preach, and in his Diary, says of that time, "This is a day much to be remembered by me as long as I live. Ever since that happy day I have lived in a new heaven and a new earth. The change which a blind man who receives his sight experiences, does not exceed the change which at that period I experienced in my mind. It was then that I was first convinced of the sin of unbelief, or of entertaining narrow, contracted, and hard thoughts of the Almighty. I had such a view of Christ as our High Priest, of his love, compassion, power, and all-sufficiency, as filled my soul with astonishment, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. My mind was overwhelmed and overpowered with amazement. The truths exhibited to my view appeared for a time too wonderfully gracious to be believed. I could not believe for very joy. The glorious scenes then opened to my eyes will abundantly satisfy my soul, millions of years hence, in the contemplation of them. I had before some idea of gospel truths floating in my head, but they never powerfully, and with divine energy, penetrated my heart till now. The effect of this sermon remained on my mind for half a year; during which time I was generally in a comfortable and heavenly frame. Often, while walking



in the fields, I looked up to heaven with joy, and called that my home, at the same time ardently longing for the appearance of the glorious Saviour to take me for ever to himself. At times doubts would come into my mind, and I would say within myself,—‘ Can it be possible that these things are true?’ The Lord would reply,—‘ I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger; I will not return to destroy Ephraim, *for I am God and not man.*’ ‘ Praise the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits.’ ” \*

Such is a specimen of the quickening exercises by which this servant of God was prepared for the service he was to be honoured to perform; and, as was most natural for his grateful heart, the time of this blessed experience, and Mr Rowlands, its instrument, are never alluded to, even at the distance of years, but with the warmest thankfulness and most ardent admiration. For example, in 1780, he writes,—“ I think with you, that not only *Bala bach* (dear Bala), but Wales itself, is a highly-favoured country. That aged herald of the King of Glory, D. Rowlands, is, and will be, an eternal honour to it. I seldom can speak of him in moderate terms. I love him dearly, and honour him as my father in Christ, and not without reason; for to him, under God, I am indebted for whatever light I have into, and experience I have of, the glorious salvation through Christ. I hope to see him once more, if the will of God be so, before he takes his flight. I shall never forget a sermon I heard him preach, from Heb. iv. 15, January 20, 1773. I remember the blessed time with infinite delight.” †

The remembrance of his early experiences seems, as the Psalmist says, “ sweeter than honey to his mouth.” As thus, on revisiting the home of his childhood.—“ On the 13th of August we arrived safe at my father’s, and found all my friends and relations well; most of them going on in their usual way. I looked on those little corners of the house, and sequestered hedges of the fields, where my soul in former days struggled with God in

\* Life of Charles.—P. 7. † Ibid. P. 57.

prayer and obtained his blessing, with inexpressible pleasure. I could not but view those spots in which I enjoyed refreshing communion with God, as holy ground. My father's farm wore the appearance of Paradise. The memory of the various blessings at different times enjoyed filled my heart with joy and praise." \*

Such was the preparatory work by which the Head of the Church fitted his servant for labour and filled his heart with matter; so that not in the pulpit alone, but in the schools, in the huts, and on the highways and wild mountains, he was ever fraught with a prayerful concern for souls.

"If he met a poor man or woman on the road, he would stop his horse and make the enquiry,—'Can you read the Bible?' He was so much in the habit of doing this, that he became every where known from this practice. The gentleman who kindly asked the poor people about the Bible and their souls, was Mr Charles. His fame reached far beyond the circle where he was personally known. Meeting one day with an old man on one of the mountains, he said to him,—'You are an old man, and very near another world.'—'Yes,' said he; 'and I hope I am going to heaven.'—'Do you know the road there; do you know the Word of God?'—'Pray, are you Mr Charles?' said the old man. He suspected who he was, from his questions. When asking the poor people he met with about their eternal concerns,—'Pray, are you Mr Charles?' was often the enquiry which met him. When he had time, he scarcely ever passed by a poor man on the road without talking to him about his soul, and his knowledge of the Bible. When he found any ignorant of the Word of God and unable to read it, he would represent to them, in a kind and simple manner, the duty and necessity of becoming acquainted with it, and feelingly and compassionately set before them the awful state of those who leave the world without knowing the Word of God, and the way of saving the soul. He sometimes succeeded in persuading them to learn to read; and the good he thus did was no doubt very great. \* \* \* The example of an old man undertaking the

task, the unusual task, of learning to read his Bible, tended more than any thing else to induce others to make the same attempt. What could have been a more practical imitation of Him 'who went about doing good,' than this conduct of Mr Charles?"\*

A short extract from a letter to his wife exhibits his strong faith in the work of the Holy Spirit, and his own internal experience of those gracious influences which sustained him in, and dictated, his abundant and multi-form methods of fixing the attention of careless sinners.

#### LETTER TO MRS CHARLES.

"God is so rich, so powerful, so unchangeable, and so near at all times and in all places, that those who are the objects of his love cannot but be inexpressibly happy and infallibly safe. I firmly believe that nothing so effectually promotes holiness as a true belief of His love to us in particular. I have found this afternoon more comfort and joy than I have experienced for some time past, in reflecting on the love of each of the Divine Persons engaging themselves respectively to accomplish the work of redemption. The Father loved us freely and gave his Son. The Son loved us freely and gave himself for us. The Holy Ghost loved, and still loves us freely, and comes to sanctify and comfort us, and to dwell in our hearts. The love of the Spirit affected my mind most particularly. As no unworthiness prevented the Son of God from coming to redeem us, so also no depravity prevented, or prevents, the Holy Ghost from coming to sanctify and comfort his people, and to dwell for ever with them. He has loved them freely from all eternity, in all their sin and abomination; he therefore comes to them and abides with them for ever. Christ came freely to do all for them; the Holy Ghost comes as freely to do all in them; and all his workings in them are infinitely free from beginning to end. May the Lord help

\* Life of Charles.—P. 265.

us to believe this! I experience the difficulty of it at this moment. This single consideration is all my present comfort, when I think of the great work I am engaged in. The Spirit can do every thing, and He works freely. The thought of being an instrument in His hand is comforting indeed; but to think of the ministry without that, is, beyond expression, dark and dismal.”\*

“Many parts of North Wales never heard the sound of the Gospel. The work, therefore, in which Mr Charles was now engaged, was in a great measure a missionary work. No more knowledge of God, or of his Word, was to be found in most places, than in a heathen land. The immoralities and ungodliness which prevailed were such as might be expected from this state of spiritual ignorance. The Bible was almost an unknown book, seldom to be met with, especially in the houses of the poor. In many parishes, not even ten could be found capable of reading it; and in several parishes in Anglesea, not even two or three. Where darkness exists, the works of darkness will be carried on.”†

In 1785, Mr Charles first began to organize his circulating schools; and twenty-three years later, he gives the following account of them in a letter:—

“Bala, September 1808.

“In my travels through different parts of North Wales about twenty years ago (in 1785), I perceived that the state of the poor of the country in general was so low as to religious knowledge, that in many parts not one person in twenty was capable of reading the scriptures, and in some districts hardly an individual could be found who had received any instruction in reading. I found then, and still do find, daily proofs of the ignorance of the poor people who cannot read, and have never been catechetically instructed, even where constant preaching is not wanting. This discovery pained me beyond what I can express, and made me think seriously of some remedy, effectual and speedy for the redress of this grievance. I

\* Life of Charles.—P. 216.

† Ibid. 249.

accordingly proposed to a few friends to set a subscription on foot to pay the wages of a teacher, who was to be moved circuitously from one place to another, to instruct the poor in reading, and in the first principles of Christianity by catechising them. At first only one teacher was employed. As the funds increased, so in proportion the number of teachers was enlarged, till they amounted to twenty. Some of the first teachers I was obliged to instruct myself, and these afterwards instructed others, sent to them to learn to be schoolmasters.

“The fruit of these circulating schools are our numerous Sunday schools all over the country; for without the former, we could not have found teachers to carry on the latter.”\*

\* \* “I also set up Sunday and night-schools for those whose occupations and poverty prevented them from attending the day-schools. Whatever we attempted of this nature succeeded wonderfully; till the whole country was filled with schools of some sort or another, and all were more or less under tuition. The blessed effects were correspondent. A general concern for eternal things was manifested in many large districts. Many hundreds were awakened to a sense of sin and of their need of a Saviour; and are now, I have every reason to believe, his faithful followers. The schools are still carried on, and the effects are the same in a greater or less degree. The numbers of teachers increase or diminish according to my finances. All the income I derive from the chapel I serve, I devote wholly to their support; being supported myself by the industry of my wife. I pay every teacher L.12 per annum. They continue half a-year or three quarters in a place, then they are removed to another. Three quarters of a-year are found fully sufficient to teach our children to read the Bible well in the Welsh language. I visit the schools myself, and catechise them publicly. I have the unspeakable satisfaction to see the general aspect of the country most amazingly changed.

“The wilderness blossoms as the rose, and the thirsty

\* Life of Charles.—P. 257.

land is become springs of water. Through the schools and the preaching of the gospel the spread of divine knowledge is become universal. Bless the Lord, O my soul!" \*

What soon became a peculiar feature in these schools, was the attendance of adults as scholars. On this subject Mr Charles says :—" The attention is engaged with such intensesness that in some instances which I have known, the greatest part of the night is spent in learning chapters, or in searching the scriptures on points given them to be elucidated by scripture passages. All will easily perceive how rapid the progress in the acquisition of divine knowledge must be, when the mind is so attentively engaged, if assisted by proper instruction. It has been great and very rapid. I have known young people emerge at once as it were from a state of idleness, profaneness, and ignorance, to diligence, sobriety, and pleasing attention to divine things. They are delighted with the work, and you may distinguish those who are thus engaged, from the idle and ignorant, by the comfort and joy manifested in their countenances.

" We have also this year held *associations of the different schools*. They meet in some central place to be publicly catechised. Three meetings of this kind have been held in North Wales, and three in South Wales. A subject is given to every school, on which they are examined, and which they are to elucidate by repeating appropriate passages from the sacred writings. At the appointed time—generally a Sabbath-day—the children of the different schools assemble, accompanied by their teachers. Some of the schools have walked ten miles by eight in the morning. The children being scattered in their different habitations over the country—for they dwell not together in hamlets as in England—all meet at an assigned place, and at the appointed hour pray and sing a verse of a hymn together, and then march cheerfully and orderly for the place of destination.

" As no place of worship is spacious enough to contain

\* Life of Charles.—P. 260.

the immense concourse of people who attend on these occasions, we have been obliged to erect stages out of doors, in the fields, a large one for the children, containing two or three schools at a time, another for the catechists, opposite to that of the children, at fifteen or eighteen yards distance—the space between is for the assembled congregation to hear. We begin the work early in the morning, and the whole day is spent in these examinations. Every examination lasts three or four hours, and is generally concluded by an address to the children and the congregation. In the short intervals between the examinations, the children of each school are conducted by their teachers into a room engaged for the purpose, to partake of a little refreshment; and at the appointed time they are reconducted to the place of meeting. We have had, on these occasions, from fifteen to twenty schools assembled together. Hitherto these associations have been most profitable. The previous preparation gives employment for two months to all the youth of both sexes, in which they engage with great eagerness and delight. The public examinations, we have every reason to conclude, are also very profitable to the hearers assembled. This is clear from their great attention, and the feelings produced by hearing the responses of the children. I have seen great meltings, and tears among them. When the work of the day is over, the children are reconducted by their teachers to their respective houses, or committed to the care of their parents. Every thing has been conducted hitherto with great order and decorum, and the utility of these meetings has been ascertained beyond a doubt. The schools acquire publicity and importance by these public exhibitions. They animate both teachers and children. They bring others in who have hitherto been negligent, and powerfully excite the people to set up new schools where there are none.

“ I shall conclude this long letter by adding, that many children and also grown up persons have manifested a serious concern for their souls, as the effect of the instruction they have received in the schools, and some

hundreds in different parts of the country have joined our religious societies.”\*

“Thousands of young people all over the country have at this time their attention engaged upon divine things. They are learning catechisms and chapters from the Bible with wonderful facility. It has been my delightful work, since I left London in December, to catechise publicly every Sunday, and to hear them repeating chapters before thousands of people. Whole families, young and old, the governors and the governed, learn the catechisms and chapters of the Bible together.” \* \* \*

“The Sunday schools and the public examination of them have undoubtedly done wonders in Wales, and have succeeded in some places in moralizing the people, when all other means failed. One case, in particular, of this kind was very remarkable. There was a certain town which seemed to grow worse and worse, increasing daily in all kinds of wickedness, though the gospel had been regularly preached there for more than twenty years. The people, young as well as old, became more and more depraved. They ran into all manner of excesses, especially at the annual wakes. The most faithful and awful warnings were delivered from the pulpit, but with no effect. The state of things here was mentioned to Mr Charles. Having considered the subject, he made up his mind to make an attempt to storm this stronghold of Satan in a way different from preaching. About two months before the wakes, he sent word to the teachers of their Sunday schools, requesting them to get the children to search the Bible for texts which prohibit, directly or indirectly, such evil practices as dancing, drunkenness, fornication, &c., and to commit them to memory; saying that they might expect him there at the feast to catechise the children. The young people set to work, and there was a great deal of talk in the town and neighbourhood about the subject. When the time arrived, Mr Charles went there; and most of the people of the place, led by curiosity perhaps

\* Life of Charles. —P. 270.



in a great measure, went to hear what the children had to say on these subjects. The meeting began, as usual, with singing and prayer. Then Mr C. began to ask them questions on the points given them to learn. 'Is dancing, my dear children, a sin?' 'Yes,' said one, emphatically, 'it was owing to dancing that the head of John the Baptist was cut off.' 'Is drunkenness set forth as bad and sinful in Scripture?' 'Yes,' answered another, and repeated these words,—'Wo unto them that follow strong drink; that continue until night till the wine inflame them, and the harp and the viol, the tabret and the pipe are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operations of his hands.' *Isaiab, v. 11, 12.*—In this way he proceeded with them concerning the other sins, and the answers were given with great propriety and seriousness. The people began to hold down their heads, and appeared to be much affected. Observing this, he addressed them in the kindest manner, and exhorted them by all means to leave off their sinful practices, to relinquish the works of darkness, and to attend to the concerns of their never-dying souls; to learn the Word of God after the example of the children, and to try to seek superior pleasures and a better world. The effect was so great that all went home, and the houses of revelling were completely forsaken. The following day the harper was met going home by a person on the road, who, surprised to see him leaving the place so soon, asked him what was the reason. 'Some parson,' said he, 'with a black cap on' (Mr Charles wore a black cap), 'has been catechising there, and persuaded the young people not to attend the feast.' Poor fellow, he went home quite disappointed! " \*

Such are some specimens of the preparatory work of sowing the seeds of knowledge which was used before the great revival of true religion which took place in North Wales, beginning in the year 1791. We now proceed to make extracts, exhibiting the seed springing up and bearing the fruits of repentance towards God, and

\* *Life of Charles.*—P. 275.

faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We quote from Mr Charles's own letters.

“ Bala, September, 1791.

“ You inquire about the state of the churches in Wales. I have nothing but what is favourable to communicate. We had lately a very comfortable association at Pwllheli. Some thousands attended, more than ever were seen before. And here, at Bala, we have had a very great, powerful, and glorious outpouring of the Spirit on the people in general, especially on the children and young people. Some of the wildest and most inconsiderate young people of both sexes have been awakened. Their convictions have been very clear and powerful, and in some instances so deep as to bring them to the brink of despair. Their consolations have also been equally strong. If the Lord should be graciously pleased to continue the work, as it has prevailed some weeks past, the devil's kingdom will be in ruins in this neighbourhood. Ride on, ride on, thou King of Glory ! is the present cry of my soul, day and night. I verily believe that the Lord means to give the kingdom of darkness a dreadful shake ; for he takes off its pillars. Those that were foremost in the service of Satan and rebellion against God are now the foremost in seeking salvation through the blood of the Lamb. It is an easy work to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom here at this time. Divine truths have their own infinite weight and importance on the minds of the people. Beams of divine light, together with divine irresistible energy, accompany every truth delivered. It is glorious to see how the stoutest hearts are bowed down, and the hardest melted. I would not have been without seeing what I have lately seen, no not for the world.

“ These are the blessed things I have to relate to you, my dear brother, respecting poor Wales. The charity schools here are abundantly blessed. Children, that were beforetime like jewels buried in rubbish, now appear with divine lustre and transcendant beauty. Little children, from six to twelve years old, are affected, astonished, and

overpowered; their young minds, day and night, are filled with nothing but soul concerns. All I say is matter of fact. I have not exaggerated in the least degree, nor related more than a small part of the whole. The Lord hath done great things for us, and to him be all the praise." \*

An eminent Scotch minister, hearing of the good tidings from Wales, enquired of Mr Charles further particulars; and in his letter says—

“Edinburgh, March 11, 1792.

“No doubt you know that a similar revival took place in this country about fifty years ago. Many were at that happy era brought to the knowledge and real experience of the truth. But there were some who afterwards turned away from feeding beside the Shepherd’s tents, thereby declaring that their former profession was not altogether sterling, and giving occasion to many to condemn the whole that was done, though I have seen several living incontestible witnesses of the solidity of the work, whose Christianity I doubted less than my own. It is amazing how some, even of the Lord’s people, love to cavil and carp at that which others admire and praise the Lord for.”

To this Mr Charles answered—

“Bala, May 2, 1792.

“That it was the work of God, I am not left to doubt in the least degree. It carries along with it every scriptural satisfactory evidence that we can possibly desire—such as deep conviction of sin, of righteousness, of judgment—great reformation of manners—great love for and delight in the Word of God, in prayer, in spiritual conversation, and divine ordinances. These, even in young persons, occupy the place, and employ the time, that was spent in vain diversions and amusements. No harps but the golden harps of which John speaks have been played on in this neighbourhood for several months past. The

\* Life of Charles.—P. 277.

craft is not only in danger, but entirely destroyed and abolished. The *little stone* has broken in pieces and wholly destroyed these ensnaring hinderances. But I am far from expecting that all those who have experienced these impressions, are savingly wrought upon, and really converted. If that were the case, all the country must have been converted; for at one time there were but few who had not felt awful impressions on their minds, producing foreboding fears respecting their future existence in another world. It was a most solemn time, indeed! I never saw a livelier picture of the state of men's minds at the day of judgment, according to their respective conditions. That awful dispensation lasted but for a few weeks. But the ministration of the Word is still lively and powerful, and fresh awakenings take place, though not so numerous as at first. Perhaps it will not be known till the day of judgment how many of these new converts are actually brought into a state of salvation, nor who they are. But hitherto we have every reason to be thankful for the good progress they continue to make. Among so many there must be great variety, and we may have better hopes of some than others; but hitherto *none* have turned away from feeding by the Shepherd's tents.

“As to the further spread of the work, the prospect in our country is in general very pleasing. In Caernarvonshire and Anglesea the congregations are very numerous. Thousands flock together at the sound of the Gospel trumpet, and hear with great earnestness and attention. Awakenings also are frequent; but as to any extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit, there is none at present but in two places, besides this neighbourhood; and in those places it does not carry with it the strong marks of irresistible power and convincing demonstration which attended it here. The report of what had been going on in this place awakened the attention of the whole country, and filled the churches every where with the spirit of thanksgiving and prayer. The beginning was so glorious, that I cannot but think that it precedes

great things. The churches every where are, if I may so speak, in labour; and I cannot but expect that a ‘man-child is to be born.’ They are prepared, they are praying; they are waiting and longing for his coming. He has indeed done already great things in this principality.

“Within these fifty years there have been five or six very great awakenings—a land of darkness and the shadow of death hath seen great light. O may we live to see still greater things! Your saying that a similar work took place in your country about fifty years ago, has enkindled a spirit of prayer in me for the return of your jubilee. I am persuaded that, except we are favoured with frequent revivals, and a strong and powerful work of the Spirit, we shall in a great degree degenerate, and have only a name to live; religion will lose its vigour; the ministry will hardly retain its lustre and glory, and iniquity will of course abound. I am far from supposing this to be the case in your country. I am only speaking of the thing itself. Scotland, I know, in ages past has been a highly favoured country. I hope it still continues so; but I am perfectly ignorant of the present state of religion in it. May the good Lord hasten that blessed time when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ! I beg my love to all Christian friends with you, and an interest in all your prayers. Blessed be God that I have an Advocate with the Father. He sees, commiserates, and can relieve and succour as necessity requires. From this joyful consideration alone proceeds my resolution to go on. You may well suppose that while God is among us, Satan is not asleep. He is alive, and goes about, possessed of his usual diabolical dispositions. In the church and out of the church, he is always plotting some mischief. I would wish to be watchful, to observe all his motions and machinations. The God of peace shall bruise him *shortly* under our feet. I am your unworthy companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.”\*

\* Life of Charles.—P. 281.

“ Bala, Jan. 1794.

“ I have received your favour of November 24, and must request your pardon for being so slow in answering you. My only apology is my many avocations, which are so numerous that I have not that time to pay proper attention to friends which I could wish. As to the present state of religion in this country, through distinguishing and unspeakable mercy I have nothing to complain of unless I complain of myself; for which there is abundant cause. In the course of last year the almighty power of the gospel has been most gloriously manifested in different parts of our country. I think that, in general, it never presented a more promising aspect. There was, last year, a very great and general awakening through a very large and populous district of Caernarvonshire. In the space of three months some hundreds were brought under concern about their souls. I travelled last March through that part of the country, and the prospect still continues delightful indeed. Ah, my dear sir, it is a melodious sound, yes, in the ears of God himself, to hear poor perishing sinners crying out, ‘ What must we do to be saved?’ But this was the sound I heard in almost every congregation, as I lately passed through that part of the country. The subjects of this work are much the same as here at Bala; children and young people, from eight or ten to thirty years of age. The effects also on the country at large are very similar—a general reformation of manners—the most diligent attendance on the means of grace, private and public—thirst after Divine knowledge, such as is practical and spiritual. The sound of the gospel brings heaven to their thirsty souls, whilst the miserable captives of sin and misery are set at liberty. Here at Bala, through mercy, we go on well, and have much cause for thankfulness; though not favoured with the wonderful scenes with which we were gratified two years ago. Most of those of whom we had any satisfaction as to a work of deep conviction on their minds, have stood their ground amazingly well. We have lost very few of them; and many, respecting whom we had no satisfaction at

first, have come on well. At first, perhaps, only a little terrified, yet being by this fright brought to attend the preaching of the word, they have been gradually enlightened and wrought upon, and are now hopeful characters in our church. There is a work going on among us still, though not so powerfully as at the period alluded to above. We are continually increasing, and our congregations continue as large, if not larger, than ever; and at times the Word seems to have a wonderful effect. I must also add, with sorrow, that a great many, who have felt most powerful impressions on their minds, have been entirely lost; they are quite fallen off. They still come to hear; but hearing is all. But some even of these have been again visited by the Lord more effectually than at first; and we have received them again with joy. We have had many instances of young children who, having once experienced these powerful impressions, have had them again renewed, and are now in the church, comforting our hearts with very promising hopes. \* \* \* \* \*

“I have drawn up a little form, comprehending the first principles of Christianity, according to which they are instructed. In some of the schools we have had general awakenings among all the children. They have been the means of sobering the minds of young people, of drawing their attention to the Bible, and of giving them a taste for reading; and the next step will be to attend preaching, which is seldom without producing some effect on their minds. We take great care that the teachers be men of piety, and of zeal for the conversion of sinners. We have but one point in view in these institutions, that is the salvation of souls. We endeavour to set this point before them in all its infinite importance, as far surpassing all other matters whatever. This is what we aim to do; but, ah! how little would all avail, were it not for the powerful agency of the Holy Spirit. Blessed be God, we see Him evidently and gloriously at work among us,—never more so than at the present time, taking the country at large. Bless the Lord on our behalf, and pray for a continuance of His loving kindness. My love

to all who love the Lord Jesus. He is our common friend. O, what a friend! Blessed be God for Him. He is our all. Who would not serve Him, and live to Him! He deserves more than we can give Him to all eternity."\*

“ Bala, 1813.

“ It is a high favour to be in any degree employed in forwarding so important and glorious a cause. I rejoice to find that your heart is so warmly engaged in it. I pray the Lord that by fresh supplies from the fountain of all good, it may continue warm, vigorous, and active, till it ceases to beat. It is a very favourable season to work, for the Lord, in these happy days, crowns the labours of all, however weak, with some degree of success. I have great expectations from the rising generation in our country. They are trained up to activity and exertion. The old professors, many of them have accustomed themselves to an idle way of spending their time. They cannot, without great difficulty, break off old habits, and are not easily brought under the yoke; but the young work with skill, diligence, and cheerfulness. In a religious and moral point of view, the state of our peasantry is gradually and continually improving. Fresh advances are made every year. Hundreds of children and young people have this year joined our societies. On September 27, the children and young people of a whole district were publicly examined by me in our chapel. I never witnessed so affecting a scene. They could hardly make their responses, being so overcome with weeping, and the whole congregation was similarly affected. All these young people experienced religious impressions on their minds within these nine months, and a very striking change has taken place in their moral conduct. May God make the work on their minds deep and lasting! In repeating scriptures descriptive of the misery of the ungodly who die in their sins, they wept bitterly.”†

This is amongst the last letters in print in which this

\* Life of Charles.—P. 287.

† Ibid.—P. 380.



servant of God expressed his ardent concern for the advancement of the Kingdom of Grace. We give the very last within our reach, written little more than three months before his death :—

“ Bala, June 24, 1814.

“ I comfort myself much with the thought of Mr A——’s care and activity about the juvenile and adult schools. It is a very important work, and its success is connected with the welfare of immortal beings for ever ; therefore every exertion to promote it is important. Care for them is interwoven with all the feelings of my mind ; and while my pulse beats at all, I cannot be indifferent about their success. We had, last week, our great annual (Association) meeting here. The congregation, though always large, was more numerous by some thousands than we have ever witnessed before. The meeting lasted part of four days. There were fourteen discourses delivered, and four private meetings held. Great harmony prevailed in the private meetings, and love, which is ‘ the bond of perfectness.’ The public discourses were edifying and powerful, and commanded the attention of between 15,000 and 20,000 people without intermission. The order and decorum which prevailed among such a large concourse of people was great and pleasing. No signs of intemperance or disorder were perceived among them. Nothing but the hand of God could have preserved so much order among so many corrupt sinners for so long together. It was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous, surpassingly marvellous, in our eyes. When I was young, the Lord brought me into his house, and goodness and mercy have followed me all my days ; and I have been preserved by undeserved grace to see these wonders of His kingdom. Great additions have been made to our churches in general, last year, about 2000 in all. The Bible Societies, the schools, and every good work set on foot, succeed among us ; and we hope the kingdom of the little stone will soon fill our land. May thy kingdom come speedily, O Lord ! ”\*

\* Life of Charles, p. 383.

[1814.] In September, this year, this man of God sickened, when from home. He was desirous to reach Bala once more; and when that favour was granted him, he said, on entering his dwelling, "Now I have nothing to do but to die." This was the utterance of a heart contented with all the divine appointments in reference to him, and willing to lay his labours aside. He was not yet old, and might have moved about among his populous congregations for years, being aged only fifty-nine. But he had lived a long life, compared to other men, of holy contemplation, heavenly communion, and toilsome exertion. Yet of this he made no account in the eye of the Head of the Church, in whose sight all his works had been carried on. He frequently said to the friend who sat up with him, "Charles is only a poor sinner, a poor unworthy sinner. I know I cannot be saved without forgiveness; but there is forgiveness with God." He said several times, "I have settled the few things I have in this world, and have committed my soul to the Lord; 'and I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.'" Thus departed the apostle of North Wales, and thus did "*Bala bah*" lose the man who travailed for her souls. Yet though he be fallen asleep, some remain until this day. Why should it be that man is consistent only in his unfaithfulness; that when a great instrument expires, his work melts away, and the stream of grace which fructified the region and made the wilderness and solitary place glad, seems to have sunk into the barren sand, or to have been exhaled to its native heaven? Is it to be ever thus, that the Lord magnifies his respect for prayer, by sending down blessings in reply to the petitions of his *solitary* servants? That, as he dealt with Israel of old, so now he deals? As long as Moses pleads he cannot but bless. He says in his indignation, "*Let me alone*, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven." Nevertheless, when his servant cries mightily to him, his avenging wrath is stayed, and his people are blessed. Do those who believe on his name see this and

believe it, and are they yet slow to pray, and slack in waiting for a blessing? Are those gardens of the Lord to have their walls broken down, and their fertile places laid waste, for lack of faithful men to sustain them? O let it not be. Let our people sustain our teachers, and uphold their hands in prayer, till all know the Lord from the least to the greatest, and till the Spirit be poured out on the young and the aged, and till the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.

We conclude the notices of this good man by taking up the tender and mournful strain of the historian of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales. He mentions, that when, in 1785, the aged Daniel Rowlands heard him preach, he exultingly exclaimed, "Charles is a gift bestowed by the Lord on North Wales!" "Yea," truly adds his admiring biographer, "and on South Wales also."

"We cannot, however, pass on without saying something of one, the Rev. Thomas Charles, A. B., of Bala, who will not be forgotten when the billow of time shall have cast many a generation yet unborn on the shores of eternity; the loss of whose labours from the pulpit and by the press has caused Wales to assume the widow's mournful attire, and of which she can never be induced to divest herself. Though we have mentioned him last, it is only that we may the more uninterruptedly indulge our griefs, and give full vent to our sorrows, when we contemplate the removal of so excellent and so revered a parent. We may with the greatest propriety say of him, as Solomon does of the virtuous woman, 'Many have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.'"<sup>\*</sup>

We close this account, which gives but a few hints of what the Lord hath wrought by reviving his church in the Principality of Wales, by extracting a few stanzas from a poem written by Mr Jones of Liverpool, first in the Welsh language, and afterwards, at the request of friends, translated by him into English, but still retaining the measure which suits the beautiful old air to which it is adapted; and also retaining the Welsh rule of versifi-

<sup>\*</sup> History of Calvinistic Methodists, p. 19.

cation, which does not, as the English, require that the penultimate syllable should rhyme as well as the last. This renders it less harmonious to an English ear. The burden of the verses, which is also the burden and name of the old air, is retained untranslated, but admits of being rendered, "By night"—"During the night"—or "All through the night," as best suits the sense.

The poem is called "God's Defence of his People," and, beginning with the earliest history, assembles together the times when their deliverances and supports were communicated during the night, till the reader feels astonished by their multitude and truth. And one cannot but feel, that, instead of driving the harpers out of the land, as if they resembled the wizards and those who had familiar spirits in Saul's days, we should rather anticipate the time when the bards of the mountains shall minister no longer to the levity and folly of their countrymen, but, tuning their strains like David, sing to the glory of God and the edification of his people.

The verses are taken almost at random ; and cheer us with the thought, that, though W. Williams is now tuning his harp in heaven, Wales is not left without a bard whose songs still assist and enliven her devotions.

" Jacob once lay on a fallow,  
     Ar hyd y nos,  
 Far from home ; stones were his pillow,  
     Ar hyd y nos.  
 There he dreamed he saw a ladder  
 Joining heaven and earth together,  
 Angels on it passed each other,  
     Ar hyd y nos.

" Where, said he, have I been lodging,  
     Ar hyd y nos,  
 What great wonders were unfolding ?  
     Ar hyd y nos.  
 Dreadful is this place and holy,  
 God's own house—the gate of glory ;  
 Yea, in Bethel I did tarry,  
     Ar hyd y nos.

“ In the lions’ den lay Daniel,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos,  
 But his guardian was God’s angel,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.  
 The fierce lions durst not harm him,  
 Safely with them he could rest him,  
 Though King Darius’ sleep had left him,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

“ Who doth fear the Lord among us,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos,  
 Harkening to the voice of Jesus ?  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.  
 Tho’ in darkness he doth labour,  
 Sees no light and finds no succour,  
 Let him trust in God his Saviour,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

“ None shall hurt or injure Zion,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos,  
 Her stronghold is God’s salvation,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.  
 For a cloud by day shall shade her,  
 Lest the sun or heat should harm her,  
 And a shining fire shall light her,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

“ While the wicked ever toileth,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos,  
 God’s beloved safely sleepeth,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.  
 When I wake I’ll sing ‘ salvation,’  
 This is all my consolation,  
 And my reins give me instruction,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.

\*        \*        \*        \*        \*        \*

“ To see Jesus I am longing,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos,  
 And for Heav’n I’m always panting,  
                                   Ar hyd y nos.

When I shall have passed o'er Jordan,  
From the reach of sin and Satan,  
I shall sing in happy Canaan,  
    ' Adieu to night. ' ”

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A WARNING TO CARELESS SINNERS.

Oh, ye careless ones, consider  
    What of the night !  
Dreadful gloom awaits the sinner ;  
    How long the night !  
All your joy will turn to mourning,  
And your mirth to bitter wailing ;  
In Hell-fire there is no resting  
    All through the night.

## CHAPTER IX.

## REFLECTIONS.

IN reviewing the few English and Welsh revivals here presented, the most prominent fact is, that they were all, excepting those under Walker and Venn, brought about by methods differing considerably from each other, though the truth which operated, and the ultimate effects produced, were the same. The zeal of the pastors and the necessities of the people, alike concurred to induce a departure from common rules; and those forms which, at periods of supineness, are found sufficient and satisfactory, become, under the urgency of fervent desires after religious instruction, barriers and impediments, which strong necessity overleaps.

Rowlands, Grimshaw, and Berridge were suffered to remain in the Established Church, though none of them escaped his portion of rebuke and censure for irregularities; and in the path of the Welsh Boanerges, as well as in that of the eccentric apostle of Haworth, there sprung up many dissenters of various denominations, yet all of them adhering to the hope of salvation in Jesus Christ alone. Whitefield, Wesley, and Charles were cast out of the church solely on account of breaches of form. Their influence was thus more widely extended, since by being deprived of the hope of the usual promotion and support to be derived from man, they had nothing to lose, and were called upon the more zealously and fearlessly to devote themselves to the service of God. And thus, what Dr Chalmers has termed "the stationary apparatus of a country where Christianity is established," was most materially aided and quickened by what he calls "a movable one," which he contemplates as adapted to missionary exertion amongst the heathen alone.

There was a period in the Church of England, from the time of the restoration of the Stuarts, when *conformity* was so much the object of all those who wished to overcome the confusion produced by the conflicts of Papists, Puritans, and Episcopalians, that its pastors forgot the vital and spiritual parts of religion in contending for its external order. They passed by the poor soul dead in trespasses and sins, while with a refined and cold style they addressed the reason, and flattered the pride of man. They employed, without comprehending it, a liturgy happily ardent with the contrition, humiliation, and prayerfulness which the Gospel alone can teach ; and immediately after presented to their hearers a cold and motionless, but symmetrical and complimentary essay, which must have led them to wonder, if they reflected at all, at the humility of the expressions, and the intense earnestness of the appeals in their previous prayers. Berridge, in his " Christian World Unmasked," says, " men are rightly treated in the reading desk, and called by their proper names of miserable sinners ; but in the pulpit they are complimented on the dignity of their earthly, sensual, devilish nature ; are flattered with a princely *will* and *power* to save themselves, and are ornamented with a lusty badge of merit." From this dead sea of soulless conformity, which might tranquillize the fears of the mere lovers of order, the Church was awakened by the instrumentality of such men as Venn, Cadogan, Newton, Romaine, and Simeon, among those who adhered strictly to her regulations. And among those whose zeal or fearlessness led them to a wider and more extended style of exertion, of such as Berridge, Fletcher, Whitfield, Wesley, and Hill. And however observers may have differed in opinion as to the modes of operating upon lost sinners, all have been constrained to confess, that the spirit of God owned the work of each after his peculiar manner. Whether the first token of spiritual life was in many, as during the early preaching of Berridge, and in much of Wesley's course, an overpowering emotion which enfeebled the frame, and produced fainting or convulsion ; so that, " falling down before the Church they worshipped God,



and reported that God was in the preachers of a truth" (1 Cor. xiv. 25); or whether it was by silent tears, or a quiet and unobserved reception of saving convictions, it is certain that the spirit of all truth accompanied the word, and that thousands of souls, after witnessing a good confession, have, by their instrumentality, entered into the joy of their Lord. Tens of thousands of British Christians are at this day the offspring, and have been trained by those converts. Christians *ought*, from these varied operations, to learn a lesson of distrust in their own opinions, and of lowliness in the contemplation of their own mistakes, by the conviction that many even of their cherished views may be tinged with error. The Head of the Church bears with our folly, and will show it to ourselves when we are delivered from this world of prejudice and misapprehension. And in the mean time, wherever regeneration and justification by faith in Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, are taught, there He unites himself with his ministers, as making them fellow workers with him; and there souls are won, in spite of all those minor differences in doctrine, and those variations of Church order, which have excited so much anxiety and heart-burning among men.

Independent of the really weighty errors in doctrine which have divided the Church from the earliest ages, and assumed the form and name of such a variety of *isms*, that both memory and imagination flag in recalling them—and independent of the surprising emphasis laid by some Episcopalians on the transmission of their divine ordination from St Peter, through all the corruptions and errors of Rome, to the present day—it is curious to mark the power that habit has on even rational and sensible minds. Men trained in college halls, and accustomed to the magnificence of cathedrals, and to be summoned by chimes of bells to their religious services under roofs of consecrated cedar, scarcely feel themselves justified in using the canopy of heaven, or the amphitheatre of a mountain side, or the free and direct light of the blessed sun, for the purpose of worshipping the God who created this glorious natural temple for the use

of man. Their souls shudder at the disorderliness of John Fletcher or John Berridge, in giving notice of a field-preaching from their pulpits, and inviting their hearers to attend. John Wesley's remarks on his first attempts at field-preaching are genuine and simple, exhibiting a mind overcoming his taste, habits, and will, in a conscientious pursuit of duty.

“ March 31st, 1739.—In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr Whitfield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life-time, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church.”

“ April 1st.—In the evening, Mr Whitfield being gone, I began expounding our Lord's Sermon on the Mount—(one pretty remarkable precedent of field-preaching; I suppose there were churches at that time also);—to a little society which was accustomed to meet once or twice a-week in Nicholas Street.”

“ Monday, 2d.—At four in the afternoon I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highway the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people.” \*

Men can hardly own that souls awakened under such circumstances have been won by the same gospel, and feel themselves obliged to form something very like apologies for the blessed Lord himself, that mountain, ship, or wilderness were as welcome to him for the purpose of teaching perishing souls as were the synagogue or the temple. Yet it appears that wherever a more than usually powerful work of the spirit is vouchsafed, it is either the result of extra-official efforts, or leads to them. The Lord stirs up his people to watching, mutual consultation, and prayer, as before that blessed revival at the Kirk of Shotts; and manifests his attention to their

\* Wesley's Journal, vol. i. p. 178.

petitions by a shower of blessings ; or he comes among them unexpectedly, and arouses them suddenly, as by the preaching of Whitfield and Wesley among the Kingswood colliers ; and immediately watching, mutual consultation, and prayer follow. Sabbath-day opportunities then are felt to be too rare, churches too limited in their capacity of accommodation, and usual religious services too scanty to satisfy the hungering and thirsting after the word of life ; and thus a necessity is laid on those whose part it is to instruct and comfort, to use methods and hours unemployed before.

These extra efforts, of which various examples are here presented to the reader, have been the means of drawing down more tokens of the favour of the divine Spirit, or at least in a more remarkable manner, than the beaten track of Sabbath and pulpit services. Need we refer to the school examinations at Bala, and all over North Wales, by Mr Charles and his coadjutors, where much important truth was conveyed for the first time to the grown up population, by means of the answers of their children ; or to the tent-preachings and “ speaking to the question ” in the Highlands of Scotland ; or to the evening and early morning services of some of the lively itinerants named above ? To these we might add, what we have good reason to know of the fruits of weekly prayer meetings in England and Scotland, where the pastor has presided, and selected missionary intelligence, or passages from authors, which have been refreshing to his own spirit, or accounts of the answers to prayer, and the manifest work of the spirit in other ages, or in other churches. Of these unofficial and unusual methods a very interesting example was witnessed by the Rev. John Fletcher of Madley, when he was travelling on the border country which unites France and Switzerland, in 1778. He describes it in a letter as follows :—“ I was better satisfied in passing through a part of the vale which belongs to the King of France. I saw a prodigious concourse of people, and supposed they kept a fair, but was agreeably surprised to find three missionaries, who went about as itinerant preachers to help the regular

clergy. They had been there already some days, and were three brothers, who preached morning and evening. The evening service opened by what they called a *conference*. One of the missionaries took the pulpit, and the parish priest proposed questions to him, which he answered at full length, and in a very edifying manner. The subject was the unlawfulness and the mischief of those methods by which persons of different sexes lay snares for each other, and corrupt each other's morals. The subject was treated with delicacy, propriety, and truth. The method was admirably well calculated to draw and fix the attention of a mixed multitude. This conference being ended, another missionary took the pulpit. His text was our Lord's description of the day of judgment. Before the sermon all those who could kneel for the press did kneel, and sung a French hymn to beg a blessing on the word; and indeed it was blessed. An awful attention was visible upon most, and for a good part of the discourse the voice of the preacher was almost lost amid the cries and bitter wailings of the audience. When the outcry began the preacher was describing the departure of the wicked into eternal fire. They urged that God is merciful, and that Jesus Christ has shed his blood for them. 'But that mercy you have slighted' (replies the Judge), 'and now is the time of justice; that blood you have trodden under foot, now it cries for vengeance. Know your day, slight the Father's mercy and the Son's blood no longer.' I have seen but once or twice congregations as much affected in England." \*

The happy influence exercised by this superlatively gentle and amiable Christian (Mr Fletcher) over young persons is pleasingly described by himself, when he was residing in Noyon, his native town, and could not be employed to preach by the regular pastors. He says—“The birds of my fine wood have almost done singing, but I have met with a parcel of children, whose hearts seem tuned towards singing the praises of God, and we sing every day from four to five. Help us by your

\* P. 243 and 244 of Benson's Life of Fletcher.

prayers. \* \* \* Grown up people stand fast in their stupidity, or in their self-righteousness. The day I preached I met with some children in my wood, walking or gathering strawberries. I spoke to them about our Father—our *Common Father*. We felt a touch of brotherly affection. They said they would sing to their Father as well as the birds, and followed me, attempting to make such melody as you know is commonly made in these parts. I outrode them, but some of them had the patience to follow me home, and said they would speak with me: but the people of the house stopped them, saying I would not be troubled with children. They cried and said, ‘*they were sure I would not say so, for I was their good brother.*’ The next day when I heard it, I enquired after them, and invited them to come to me, which they have done every day since. I make little hymns, which they sing. Some of them are under sweet drawings. Yesterday I wept for joy on hearing one of them speak of conviction of sin, and joy unspeakable in Christ which had followed, as an experienced believer would do in Bristol. Last Sunday I met them in the wood; there were a hundred of them, and as many adults. Our first pastor has since desired me to desist from preaching in the wood (for I had exhorted), for fear of giving umbrage; and I have complied, from a concurrence of circumstances which are not worth mentioning. I therefore meet them in my father’s yard.” \*

It is common to hear worldly people talk of the folly of supposing that there is reality in the conversions of children. “Poor little things, they repeated like parrots what their mother taught them, and were exalted into saints.” As if the Holy Being who has created man only takes cognizance of his spiritual condition at a certain age, or as if there is a period at which His Spirit is not able to adapt itself to the instruction of a child. How foolish, how daring is the thought! Such persons must conclude Samuel to be a most unfit messenger to Eli, and the selection of Jeremiah to bear the prophecies to Israel

a most injudicious deed; for Jeremiah said, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, say not I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak." There were many hundreds of young people drawn to the love of the truth by the preaching of Whitfield in particular. An eyewitness has described them clustered round his station in Moorfields, listening with uplifted eyes, stretching their little arms to prevent the vile missiles that were directed against him by a viler mob, and shedding tears of love and pity on one occasion when they saw him wounded and bleeding. God has had many witnesses to his truth amongst children, and even the noble army of martyrs has been swelled by their numbers. In all revivals there has been a proportion of children, and in the United States we have heard of so solemn a spirit pervading a town and neighbourhood where the Holy Spirit was peculiarly poured forth, that the children would cease from their sports, and be found on their knees under hedges or in gardens, crying for mercy.

Missionaries employed by the Irish Society have found the method of conveying instruction by holding a dialogue with some one of the company who has more gospel knowledge than the others, a more potent way of commanding attention than that of preaching. One who passed several years in the vicinity of Cork states, that he referred the opening of many minds there to his dialogues, chiefly with a pious female, who sometimes put questions to him, and at other times the order of question and answer was reversed. After the discussion of a doctrine in this manner, he found the hearers more able to comprehend a sermon on the subject.

In the East, the messengers of the gospel would not be able to penetrate the minds of any native by regular discourses. Our language of religion is all applied to other meanings in the lands of idols. Preach to a Hindoo about internal pollution, and his mind will run back to some time when he ventured to eat something forbidden by his Shaster. Tell him of transgressions of the law,

and he will fix his contrition on the day when he touched a dead body, or some carcase of an animal, or when his humanity so far overcame his ideas of duty as to induce him to draw a perishing fellow-creature of another caste out of a pit. Speak of the washing of regeneration, and he will think you mean to exhort him to set forth on a pilgrimage to the cleansing streams of Gunga. It is obviously then, not by formal discourses, but by conference, by reiterated explanation, by questioning and being questioned, that the missionary can discover misapprehensions of his meaning, and can convey distinct instruction to the heathen. The scenes depicted by the American teachers in the Burman empire convey a lively picture of the conversational mode of instruction, as the most successful method of breaking up the fallow ground and introducing the blessed word. Our ideas of a church, a pulpit, a minister, and a congregation, are so settled, that we require an effort to emancipate our imaginations, so as to place a church under a banyan-tree, and a preacher submitting to all manner of interruption and enquiry, and breaking off from the subject which he had purposed to treat of, to diverge into that which may be occupying the mind of one of his hearers. This, however, seems to have been the method pursued by the blessed Lord himself, who was not only enquired of by his disciples, but by any one of the company, whether it were an ensnaring Pharisee, or a sincere investigator of truth. These all by their questions furnished occasions which Jesus never failed to improve by his pertinent, weighty, and heart-searching answers. We trust no reader can so far mistake our meaning, as to suppose that we esteem lightly our privileges of well-ordered churches, and regular opportunities of hearing the gospel. These are among the highest gifts of a gracious Providence to our country. They have been secured in return for the steadfastness, the prayers, the sufferings, and the blood of our forefathers. They have been the means of retaining a steady ministration of gospel truth amongst ourselves, and have enabled us to send forth messengers of good tidings to our various colonies, and also to heathen regions where

we had no previous footing. We would deprecate any revolution in our church order ; but we earnestly desire to impress on those who have charge of the altar, that they ought to feel themselves at liberty, nay, urged to apply other means, according to the condition and local circumstances of their flocks. If they desire great things of the Holy Spirit, they must not expect them in return for supineness, or the mere routine duties which the ritual exacts. These are the “in season” operations which command the common blessings. The “out of season” operations draw down an uncommon or out-of-season blessing. Truly we are not straitened in the Lord, but in ourselves. Our want of zeal and courage and industry confine our expectations, and act as dampers to our hopes ; and thus, instead of “expecting great things from God, and asking great things of God,” we are guilty of the sin of tempting Him to abandon our Zion, by “limiting the Holy One of Israel.”



## CHAPTER X.

## IRELAND.

DURING the period when the house of Plantagenet reigned in England, a great portion of the north of Ireland was settled by Englishmen, who, in comparison with the natives whose places they usurped, were a people of high cultivation and moral advancement. Many of the most able and influential of these English settlers were recalled to assist in the protracted civil war which devoured the prosperity of England during the conflicts of the White Rose and the Red.

The native Irish, smarting under the usurpation of their neighbours, seized the opportunity afforded by the absence of the leading men, to rise upon the defenceless who remained, either exterminating whole families or expelling them from the country. The natives of Ulster, having thus recovered their original possessions, were enabled exceedingly to molest the English settlers in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, so that many of them also were glad to retreat from the island. These Irish rebels, as they were called, were left pretty much to themselves till the reign of Elizabeth, who took such measures as the energy of her character dictated, and presently brought them into subjection to her dominion. Yet even then the north of Ireland was often a resort for discontented persons, and the Highlanders of Scotland joining them occasionally, the country was kept in a state of turbulence entirely adverse to moral improvement.

Till the accession of James VI. the English dwellers in Ulster possessed but some towns and castles, places capable of defence, while the adjacent and intervening lands lay waste. In his reign, however, the desolate

lands were taken possession of, and many Scotsmen, knowing at what an easy rate the fertile ground of Ulster might be obtained, emigrated, taking with them flocks and herds, so that the country obtained quickly a sufficient population. Though centuries have passed since the English first made a conquest of this beautiful island, and though the religion established in England, whether Popery or Protestantism, was nominally established also in Ireland, it is matter of grief and humiliation, that to this day, no *general* rational measures have been taken to urge gospel truth into the remote and uncivilized districts. It seems as if the "wild Irish," as they were called, had been no more considered in providing the ministrations of religion, than if they had possessed no immortal part, and their language had not been capable of conveying more rational ideas than the chattering of baboons. Centuries have elapsed, and millions have passed into eternity, who transferred their worship from the gods of their forefathers, to the images of saints and the virgin. And though they may have seen a crucifix, they have known in truth as little of him who hung on the cross, and of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they might have done had they still retained their Pagan names and observances.

Amongst the settlers in Ulster in James Sixth's time, there was a mixture of characters ; there were some men eminent for talents, education and birth ; but the majority were persons whose spirit of adventure, or poverty, or, it may be, loss of character, rendered a change of country agreeable or convenient. It may therefore be supposed that the propagation of religion was not much on their minds, and that such preachers as followed them were persons too generally of a character assimilated to their own. It pleased God however, for the benefit of the north of Ireland, to furnish some excellent exceptions to the character of the mass of settlers—both amongst the gentry and the clergy sent from Scotland, the fruits of whose labours, and whose faithfulness in prayer, it is delightful to dwell upon.

Ulster was under an Episcopal Establishment, like the

other Irish provinces. But some of its bishops were lenient persons, especially Knox, the Bishop of Rapho, who regretted the wants of the uninstructed multitudes in his diocese, and when either the scarcity of clergymen of his own church, or the strong preference of the Scotch settlers for Presbyterian pastors rendered it convenient, he winked hard at the admission of Scottish ministers, nay, sometimes, omitted a portion of the appointed service, which might have been offensive to their consciences.

The Lord Clanniboy was a useful and zealous supporter of true religion, and under his protection a few eminent men from Scotland were tolerated for a time. It was not long till the restless aim at conformity, or rather uniformity in the church, was the means of disturbing them from their stations, and leaving their poor flocks to seek pasture where they might; but during the time they were suffered to remain, they were made useful in conveying truth to many; and though upwards of two centuries have elapsed, the leaven of righteousness then deposited in Ulster has not ceased to operate, and is still productive of a higher tone of morals, a more correct deportment, and a clearer comprehension of divine truth, than is to be found in any other part of the Island. In 1623, Robert Blair overcame a very strong aversion to settling in Ireland, and accepted the invitation of Lord Clanniboy to become minister of Bangor. He stated his opposition to episcopacy and the liturgy, very distinctly to Bishop Knox, expecting that this obstacle would prove insurmountable. But the Bishop of Rapho was a man of a truly Catholic spirit, and told Mr Blair that he was so well satisfied of his piety that he would impose no condition inconsistent with his principles, only he must in conformity to the law ordain him. When the staunch presbyterian objected to his *sole* ordination, the bishop, who proved both his wisdom and humility by yielding to informality when the exigences of perishing souls demanded it, replied, "whatever you account of episcopacy, I know you count a presbytery to have divine warrant: will you not receive ordination from Mr

Cunningham and the adjacent brethren, and let me come in among them in no other relation than a presbyter?" This proposal Mr Blair accepted, and thus he was ordained minister of Bangor.

He found the people so ignorant, that besides preaching twice in the week as well as on the Lord's day, he found a more familiar method necessary, and passed as much time as his strength would allow in exhorting and catechising from house to house. A lively interest was presently awakened, and he mentions two sermons in particular, one on the glory of heaven, and another on the torments of hell, which so much affected the people, that Lord Clanniboy requested him next Lord's day to repeat them, reversing the time of the day when he did so, that those persons who lived at a great distance and remained but half the day might hear. As no part of these very striking discourses had been committed to paper, he found it impossible to repeat them.

A circumstance which he mentions as a "memorable passage of divine Providence," which occurred in the second year of his ministry, evinces a lively faith in the efficacy of prayer, not only in himself and his neighbouring ministers, but in the mass of the people, and in "the wise heritors and whole possessors of the lands," who gave glory to the Lord for hearing their prayers; and many after that set up the worship of God in their families, who, previous to that event, had turned a deaf ear to Mr Blair's exhortations on that subject. The "memorable passage" was this. There having been incessant rain for a month in harvest, the corn was growing a finger length in the sheaves, and the whole crop was in hazard of perishing. "In this deplorable situation, they resolved solemnly, by humiliation and fasting, to beseech the Lord to avert the threatened famine. When the day came it rained heavily from morning till night; so that the Lord seemed to be thrusting out their prayers from him. But that same night he sent a mighty wind, which did fully dry the corn and check the growing; and this wind continuing to blow fair for two days, the people ceased, neither night nor day, till the

whole corn was got in. During these two days, I and two neighbour ministers, were continuing our supplications and thanksgivings to the Lord for this great mercy.”\*

“ The knowledge of God increasing amongst that people, and the ordinance of prayer being precious in their eyes, the work of the Lord did prosper in the place ; and in this we were much encouraged both by the assistance of holy Mr Cunningham, and by the good example of his little parish of *Holywood* ; for knowing that diversity of gifts is entertaining to the hearers, he and I did often preach for one another ; and we also agreed to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper four times annually in each of our congregations ; so that those in both parishes who were thriving in religion, did communicate together on all these occasions.† \* \* \*

“ Mr John Rigg, the judicious and generous minister of Antrim, perceiving many people on both sides of the Six-mile-water awakened out of their security, made an overture that a monthly meeting might be set up at Antrim, which was within a mile of Oldstone, and lay central for the awakened persons to resort to, and he invited Mr Cunningham, Mr Hamilton and myself, to take part in that work, who were all glad of the motion, and heartily embraced it.

“ This meeting did continue for many years ; in the summer day four did preach, and when the day grew shorter only three ; and through the blessing of the Lord on our labours, religion was spread through the whole county and into the borders of some others.‡ Mr Livingston, in his memorable character, mentions that Mr Blair was a chief instrument of that great work at Six-mile-water and elsewhere, in the north of Ireland, and this not only by his own ministry, wherein he was both diligent and faithful, but also by stirring up others.

“ About the year 1630, Mr John Livingston, helper at Torphichen, and who was greatly beloved by good people there, having been oppressed by the bishops in Scotland,

\* Life of Blair, p. 55.

† Ibid. p. 56.

‡ Ibid. p. 61.

came over to Ireland, and Bishop Knox of Rapho, refusing no honest man, Mr Livingston got in by this chink, and was settled at Killinchie ; where, being a man of gracious melting spirit, he did much good, and the Lord was pleased greatly to bless his ministry ; and much about the same time, Mr Andrew Stuart, a learned gentleman and fervent in spirit, was settled at Dunagor, and was a successful minister during the short time he lived, for he died in the midst of his trials. The blessed work of conversion, which was of several years continuance, had now spread beyond the bounds of Antrim and Down to the skirts of the neighbouring counties ; and the resort of people to the monthly meetings and common occasions, and the appetite of the people, were become so great, that we were sometimes constrained, in sympathy to the people, to venture beyond any preparation we had made for the season. One time, I having been an assistant to Mr Welsh at the administration of the sacrament in his congregation, and having delivered one discourse on the Saturday, I was to preach again on the Sabbath evening, which exhausted all the provision I had made for that time ; but many at a distance, who had been hindered by the rising of the waters from coming up on the Saturday, arrived on the Lord's day ; so that I behoved to turn aside, with a considerable auditory, to the court of the Castle-yard, where I taught them as the Lord furnished ; and at night closed with the doctrine of thanksgiving.

“ Having already preached once more than I intended, I was far from expecting that I would be more employed on the occasion, but the Lord thought otherwise. For on Monday morning many of the people having, on account of the crowd, gone into the kirk very early, some of the elders came to me and entreated me that I would go and read a piece of scripture to them if I could do no more till the appointed preacher came in. My want of preparation might have been accepted as an excuse, especially considering how often I had been engaged already, but they would take no naysay. So to the kirk they went, and standing below the pulpit I offered such notes as did cast up from the reading of a portion of scripture,

not doubting of my being relieved in due time. But when the minister of the place (upon Mr Edward Bryce's refusal to preach that diet) was entering the church to relieve me, the people without, who were generally those who had heard me in the Castle-yard the day before, laid hands on him, and without much ceremony or many words, they carried him to the same place, and sent an elder to acquaint me that I needed not expect any preacher to assist me at that time.

“ This message troubled me so much, that some of the spectators afterwards told me the blood went out of my face in a moment. In this perplexity I knew not what to do. But to frustrate the expectation of so many people as had waited there since day, in expectation of the word of life, grieved me exceedingly ; and to go to the pulpit altogether unprepared as I was, especially at a time when much was expected, and when there were several persons present who were eminent for learning and knowledge, this looked like tempting Providence. Yet after some short ejaculations, and looking to him who is a present help in straits, I adventured to go to the pulpit ; and in my preface before prayer, though I never durst do the like before or since, I promised a blessing from God to those who would seek the same and open their hearts to receive it, seeing neither art nor industry had any part in that exercise.

“ After calling upon the name of the Lord, and earnest wrestling for his presence with us, I read out a text ; and the Lord so assisted, that, after a little explanation of the words, a proposition to speak on was presented to me ; and as I was just closing that, a second and after that a third occurred to me, the discussing of which exhausted an hour-glass, and when that was run, three other weighty points, all concatenated together, were offered to me, the uttering of which might, I think, take as long time as all I had delivered. After I had ended speaking to the people I closed with prayer and praise ; I then hastened to my chamber to spend some time in admiring the Lord's condescension. And though in all this I was

but the voice of one crying, and he who sent me to preach the gospel might have been seen to be my prompter, yet so much applause was given me, that the next time I was invited to the like occasion in that country, I was sore tempted to be wholly silent. But dear Mr Cunningham, though he approved my jealousy, yet reprov'd my backdrawing, and did chide me out of that snare. In my haste I had vowed not to set my foot in a pulpit at that time, yet I yielded standing below to be doing something, which I learned thereafter was followed by no small blessing; and indeed preaching and praying were so pleasant in those days, and hearers so eager and greedy, that no day was long enough and no place large enough to answer their strong desires and large expectations."\*

"One of the remarkable subjects of this work of grace, was one Andrew Brown of the parish of Lern, who, though he was born deaf and dumb, and had been of a vicious loose conversation, yet of late years was so remarkably changed to the better, not only in forsaking his evil ways, but also joining himself to religious company, going apart at least mornings and evenings for secret prayer, attending to the public worship of God, and even weeping in time of sermons and the like, that with the consent of all the ministers that dwelt at Antrim, he was admitted to the Lord's table."†

[1642.] The faithful ministers who had been the happy instruments of this work in the north of Ireland, were silenced and driven away by the prelatical party in 1634, and the flocks were left without shepherds for eight years, when the settlers from Scotland applied to the General Assembly for a supply of ministers. This request was complied with as far as the scarcity of useful pastors at that time enabled them. Eight ministers were sent annually, two at a time, who remained three months, itinerating in the district of Ulster, establishing sessions, selecting elders, and ordaining such young men as offered themselves to the ministry there. The Scots ministers

\* Life of Blair, pp. 65, 66, 67.

† Ibid. p. 87.



who had formerly been settled in Ireland were among the first who were sent back, and we find the following account of the contrition of the people who had been drawn aside by false teachers, or driven away by the Rebellion, in the Life of Robert Blair.

“ During all the months Mr Blair was in Ireland, he generally preached once every day, and twice on Sabbath, and frequently in the fields; the auditories being so large that no house could contain them; and in some of these he administered the Lord’s Supper. But because many of the people had formerly, through constraint, taken an oath imposed by the lord-deputy, abjuring the national covenant of Scotland, Mr Blair, after a pathetic discourse laying out the guilt of that black oath, charged all, whose conscience accused and condemned them, to separate themselves from amongst those who were not involved in that grievous provocation. And they having willingly done so, and stood in a body on his left hand, he, as a son, first of thunder, and then of consolation, did, with great vehemency, energy, and warmth, set before them the awful threatenings held forth by the holy law against such transgressors; and then endeavoured to display the exceeding greatness of God’s mercy and grace, exhorting them to fly to God for reconciliation and pardon through Christ. And after the guilty had willingly, and with great expressions of grief and sorrow, confessed their sin, they were received as sincere penitents, and admitted to the holy communion.

“ Of that solemnity several old experienced Christians declared, that they never saw the like, nor ever heard the gospel so powerfully preached, and pertinently applied, with such variety of threatenings, promises, exhortations, motives, comforts, and cordials; and that they never saw such commotion and heartmelting among the hearers, both guilty and innocent; so that it might be truly said, that ‘ they gathered together ’ to that place ‘ and drew water and poured it out before the Lord, and said we have sinned against the Lord.’—1 Sam. vii. 6.”

“ During this short visit to Ireland, both ministers and professors had many sweet and soul-refreshing days of

the gospel, and some solemn high Sabbaths ; the like of which Mr Blair seldom enjoyed in St Andrews." \*

In the preceding extracts given from Mr Blair's Life, mention has been made of Mr Livingston's translation to Ireland. Some interesting particulars of the proceedings there, confirmatory of the previous statements, are afforded by him, which we shall now quote. He says, during the winter after his settlement at Killinchie, " I was often in great heaviness, for although the people were very tractable, yet they were generally very ignorant, and I saw no appearance of doing any good among them ; yet it pleased the Lord that in a short time some of them began to understand somewhat of their condition. Not only had we public worship free from any inventions of men, but we had also a tolerable discipline ; for after I had been some while among them, by the advice of the heads of families, some who were thought most able for that charge, were chosen elders to oversee the manners of the rest, and some deacons to gather and distribute the collections. We needed not to have the communion often, for there were nine or ten parishes within the bounds of twenty miles, wherein there were godly and able ministers that kept a society together, and every one of these had the communion twice a year, at different times, and had two or three of the neighbour ministers to help thereat, and most part of the religious people used to resort to the communion of the rest of the parishes. These ministers were Mr Blair of Bangor, Robert Cunningham of Holywood, James Hamilton of Ballywater, John Ridge at Antrim, Henry Colvert at Oldstone, George Dunbar at Lerna, Josiah Welsh at Templepatrick, and Andrew Stuart at Dunagor. Most of these used to meet the first Friday of every month at Antrim, where was a great and good congregation, and that day was spent in fasting and prayer and public preaching ; commonly two preached every forenoon, and two in the afternoon. We used to come together the Thursday

\* Life of Blair, pp. 96, 97.

night before, and stay the Friday night after, and consult about such things as concerned the carrying on of the work of God; and these meetings amongst ourselves were sometimes as profitable as either presbyteries or synods; and out of these parishes now mentioned, and some others also, such as laid religion to heart used to convene to those meetings, especially out of the Six-mile-water, which was nearest, and where was the greatest number of religious people; and frequently the Sabbath after the Friday meeting, the communion was celebrated in one or other of these places.

“ Among all these ministers there was never any jar or jealousy, yea nor among the professors, the greatest part of them being Scots, and some good number of very gracious English, all whose contention was to prefer others to themselves; and although the gifts of the ministers were much different, yet it was not observed that the people followed any to the undervaluing of others. Many of these religious professors had been both ignorant and profane, and for debts and want, and for worse causes, had left Scotland; yet the Lord was pleased by his word to work such a change, that I do not think there were more lively and experienced Christians any where than were at that time in Ireland, and that in good numbers, and several of them persons in good outward condition in the world. Being but lately brought in, the lively edge was not yet gone off them; and the perpetual fear that the bishops would put away their ministers, made them with great hunger wait upon the ordinances. I have known them come several miles from their own houses to communions for the Saturday's sermon, and spend the whole Saturday night in several companies, sometimes a minister being with them, sometimes themselves alone, in conference and prayer, then wait on the public ordinances the whole Sabbath, and spend the Sabbath night likewise, and yet at Monday's sermon they were not troubled with sleepiness, and so have not slept till they went home. Because of their holy and righteous carriage, they were generally revered even by the graceless multitude among whom they lived.

Some of them had attained such dexterity of expressing religious purposes by the resemblance of worldly things, that, being at feasts and meals in common inns, where were some ignorant profane persons, they would among themselves entertain a spiritual discourse for a long time, and the others professed that, though they spoke good English, they could not understand what they said. In those days it was no great difficulty for a minister to preach or pray in public or private, such was the hunger of the hearers, and it was hard to judge, whether there was more of the Lord's presence in the public or private meetings." \*

Mr Fleming, in his work on "The Fulfilling of the Scriptures," alludes to this lively work as follows: "I shall here also instance that solemn and great work of God, which was in the Church of Ireland some years before the fall of Prelacy. About the year 1628, and some years after, which, as many grave and solid Christians yet alive can witness who were there present, was a blithe and hot sunblink of the gospel. Yea, it may with sobriety be said to have been one of the largest manifestations of the Spirit, and of the most solemn times of the downpouring thereof, that almost since the days of the apostles hath been seen. The power of God did sensibly accompany the word with an unusual motion upon the hearers, and a very great tack † as to the conversion of souls to Christ. The goings of the Lord were then full of majesty, and the shout of a king was heard in the solemn meetings of the people. As a judicious old Christian who was there present did express it, he thought it was like a dawning beam and ray of God, with such an unusual brightness, as even forced bystanders to an astonishment. A very effectual door opened, with more than ordinary enlargement, which the ministers of Christ there did find in preaching the Word; whilst the people might be seen hearing the same in a melting frame, with much tenderness of spirit. Surely

\* Life of John Livingston.

† "Tack," a Scotch word, implying a great draught of fish.

this was the very power of God, a convincing seal to the truth and ministry of his servants, who were then persecuted by the prelates; yea, a thing which, as it was known, had an awful impression, and was a terror to their adversaries. I remember, among other passages, what a worthy Christian told me, how, sometimes in hearing the Word, such a power and evidence of the Lord's presence was with it, that he hath been forced to rise and look through the church to see what the people were doing—thinking, from what he felt in his own spirit, it was a wonder how any could go away without some change upon them. And then it was easy for Christians to come thirty or forty miles to the solemn communions which they had, and there continue, from the time they came until they returned, without wearying or making use of sleep; yea, but little of either meat or drink: and as some of them professed, they did not feel the need thereof, but went away most fresh and vigorous, their souls being filled with the sense of God.\*

The blessed time of refreshing at the Six-mile-water was during the primacy of Archbishop Usher, and the Presbyterian ministers, who were the instruments of that revival, were indebted to the connivance or mollifying counsels of that liberal and devout prelate for all the indulgence which was extended to Ireland. During the same period Bedell was bishop of Kilmore. This holy man's industry in his diocese, but particularly the pains he took to acquire the Irish language, rendered his services peculiarly acceptable and influential. His biographer relates, that "Every day after dinner and supper" (and be it marked his table was often crowded by the poor in rags, as well as by those who might have been deemed more meet associates for a bishop) "there was a chapter of the Bible read at his table, whosoever was present, Protestant or Papist, and Bibles were laid down before every one of the company, and before himself either the Hebrew or Greek, and in his last years the Irish trans-

\* "Fleming's Fulfilling of the Scriptures."—Vol. i. p. 357.

lation was laid, and he usually explained the difficulties that occurred." \*

His accomplishing his Irish translation, so as to have it added to the number of copies of the Holy Scriptures laid on his table at family worship, must have afforded one of the purest satisfactions of his life. But the fearful rebellion which broke out in the last year of his life, and rendered that devoted country an *Aceldama*, dispersed his flock, and rendered much of his work abortive, so that many years passed away before his Irish Bible was made available for Ireland. The impression made by his character and preaching was shown in the conduct of the rebels at his death. It must be remembered, that this took place at a time when every Protestant in the vicinity of Kilmore had been destroyed, with the exception of those who fled or took refuge under the Bishop's roof. "The Irish did him unusual honour at his burial, in 1642, for the chief of the rebels gathered their forces together, and with them accompanied his body from Sheredan's house to the churchyard of Kilmore in great solemnity, and they desired Mr Clogy to bury him according to the office prescribed by the Church; but though the gentlemen were so civil as to offer it, yet it was not thought advisable to provoke the rabble so much, as perhaps that might have done; so it was past over. But the Irish discharged a volley of shot at his interment, and cried out in Latin, '*Requiescat in pace ultimus Anglorum,*' for they had often said, that as they esteemed him the best of the English bishops, so he should be the last that should be left among them." †

In July, 1649, the celebrated Dr Owen went to Dublin, where, by his own account, he was engaged in constant preaching to a numerous *multitude of as thirsting* people after the gospel as he had ever conversed with." In February, 1650, Dr Owen having returned to London, was appointed to preach before the Parliament on a day of humiliation. His heart was full of anxiety about

\* Life of Bedell, p. 222.

† Ibid. p. 218.

Ireland, and he used the opportunity to plead for her destitute and thirsting population. "God has been faithful in doing great things for you, be faithful in this one—do your utmost for the preaching of the gospel in Ireland. Give me leave to add a few motives to this duty. 1. They want it. No want like theirs who want the gospel. I would there were for the present one gospel preacher for every walled town in the English possessions in Ireland. The land mourneth, and the people perish for want of knowledge; many run to and fro, but it is upon other designs—knowledge is not increased. 2. They are sensible of their wants, and cry out for supply. *The tears and cries of the inhabitants of Dublin after the manifestation of Christ are ever in my view.* If they were in the dark, and loved to have it so, it might somewhat close a door on the bowels of our compassion, but they cry out of their darkness, and are ready to follow every one to have a candle. If their being without the gospel move not our hearts, it is hoped *their importunate cries will disquiet our rest*, and wrest help as a beggar doth an alms." The expressions in this sermon indicate a state of lively hungering among the Irish Protestants after religious truth, and many such excitements have originated and expired without obtaining the aid longed for in the extent required. It is not the purpose of this work to dwell on the neglected and desolate regions of the earth, but rather to select the cultivated and prosperous spots which have so well repayed the culture, so as to encourage Christians to extend and redouble their labours.

About the end of the seventeenth century, the unsettled state of the British Government, and of the religious opinions of men, had occasioned a fearful and daring exhibition of vice and practical infidelity; but still the Lord had a watching and praying people, who groaned over the wickedness of the land. In London first, that centre of the power both of good and evil in this country, originated Reformation Societies, which had recourse to the strong arm of the law for the re-

pression of profligacy, while to this they joined private prayer and the dissemination of knowledge by conference and by the distribution of little books and cheap tracts, much in the form of the Tract Societies of the present day, but with less publicity, and on a smaller scale. These measures excited jealousy in the reign of James II., so that the societies narrowly escaped being dissolved by authority of the Bishop of London; and for their security they found themselves obliged to have recourse to the device of holding their meetings in retired rooms of coffee-houses, under the name of clubs. Even under such impediments they were very useful, and by their influence and exertions, swearing, drunkenness, Sabbath-markets, &c., were banished from the streets, and shops were not permitted to be opened on the Lord's day. When William and Mary came to the throne, a better spirit was introduced in the highest quarter, and under the influence of Dr Stillingfleet, the Queen set herself publicly to patronize all these hitherto concealed societies, by which means many joined them who were before unconscious of their existence. Churchmen and dissenters united their strength, and worked indiscriminately in this matter. The money which was levied as mulcts or fines, was given to the poor, or expended in the dissemination of tracts. Several evening lectures, which still exist in the city of London, had their origin at this time, and various companies for visiting the sick poor at their houses arose out of them. This excellent leaven extended itself to many other cities in England, and (which is the reason for mentioning it here) Ireland also was made a partaker in the blessing, so that Kilkenny, Drogheda, Maynooth, &c., but especially Dublin, became the seats of similar societies. The Bishop of Dublin and the inferior clergy were not jealous of them as the London clergy had been, so that at one time nine or ten were in full operation at once. "These persons meet often to pray, sing psalms, and read the Holy Scriptures together, and to reprove, exhort, and edify one another by their religious conferences. They, moreover, carry on at their



meetings designs of charity of different kinds, such as relieving the wants of poor housekeepers, maintaining their children at school, setting of prisoners at liberty, supporting of lectures and daily prayers in our churches. These are the societies which our late gracious Queen, as the learned bishop that hath writ an essay on her memory tells us, took so great satisfaction in, 'that she enquired often and much about them, and was glad they went on and prevailed,' which, thanks be to God, they continue to do, as the Rev. Dr Woodward, who hath obliged the world with a very particular account of the rise and progress of them, hath lately acquainted us. And these likewise are societies that have proved so exceedingly serviceable in the work of reformation, that they may be reckoned a chief support to it, as the late Archbishop Tillotson declared, upon several occasions, after he had examined their order, and enquired into their lives." \*

It would appear from an expression of this author, in his own quaint manner, that the Reformation societies had an influence in Ireland *more* powerful than in England, and thus;—"very little honourable to the country where they took their rise," the work began there among persons of the lower orders, and of little influence; and the real vigour and wisdom with which they proceeded, by and by drew in the archbishop, clergy, magistrates, and gentry; "some of whom have shown a zeal which, if it prevailed the three kingdoms over, might soon produce a glorious reverse of the state they are now in, and which, in less than two years, hath succeeded, though not without such various opposition as might be expected from combinations of bad men, to that degree in Dublin, that the profanation of the Lord's Day, by tippling in public-houses, by exercising of trades, &c. &c., is almost suppressed; so that public disorders are remarkably cured, and, in short, vice is afraid and ashamed to show its head where, within a few years past, it was daring and triumphant." †

As an individual instance illustrates a matter, and in-

\* Gillies's Collections, vol. i. p. 429.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 434.

terests more than many general observations, we introduce one example of the kind of benefits derived from these exertions.—“ I was once present at one of their conferences, when a poor man came with most earnest affection, to return them thanks for what they had done, both for his body and soul. It seems he was a perfect stranger to them all, and to every other person in the place, where God cast him down with a sharp sickness, in which, as he said, his body and soul had like to have perished together. He had lived a very ill life, and been much disused to the ordinances of God by reason of his seafaring life; and being now come on shore sick, and being about a hundred miles from his abode and acquaintance, he fell into great want. Upon which some of this society, perceiving his distress, recommended him to the rest; and they readily allowed him a weekly pension for eight weeks together, till he was recovered. And one of the society being a surgeon, carefully dressed a very grievous sore which he had; and, by God’s blessing, restored it to perfect soundness. Others of them went to him, and read good books by his bed, which tended to the improvement of God’s visitation upon him. They also fetched the minister of the place to him, and got a collection from some charitable neighbours. And, upon the whole, he recovered, and seemed to be a reformed man, and came then to render his praises to God, and thanks to his Christian friends. I mention but few, of multitudes of such instances.”\*

Such strenuous exertion, and so much of the spirit of love and of prayer, was not likely to limit itself to the native land, and accordingly we find, that out of the Reformation societies arose “ The Society for Propagating the Gospel in foreign parts,” in 1701, William III. being the patron. Their endeavours are chiefly to promote Christianity, after the Episcopal form, in the English colonies. And about the same time, the “ Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,” the design of which was the erection of schools in all parts of Eng-

land and Wales, and the dispersion of Bibles and other tracts of religion, and to advance the honour of God and the good of mankind both at home and abroad, by the best methods that should offer.

In 1707, we find the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland publishing a paper, entitled, "Proposals concerning the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and foreign parts of the World;" and, in 1709, royal letters-patent were obtained, establishing such a society. Thus is true religion naturally disposed to propagate itself, and thus, though the means seem weak, and the progress slow, we can comprehend the method by which the Lord will evangelize the world, and also, which is for us a very solemn consideration, how our supineness and prayerlessness may impede the progress of the Holy Spirit's work, and delay the glorious era when the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.

It is particularly affecting to see places which once have flourished as the garden of the Lord, allowed to return to their wilderness condition. This has been peculiarly the fate of poor Ireland, where, whenever the Lord had a people, his dealing with them seems to have been to "show them hard things," and whenever they who feared him would have displayed their banner because of the truth, they have been trodden under foot of savage men, or scattered abroad to seek freedom of worship in foreign countries. Yet one who knew them well, and judged them kindly, said, "The native Irish have passions the most susceptible of impression of any people, I believe, in Europe; if, therefore, their warm affections can be engaged on the side of truth, they will probably become one of the most religious nations on the globe." Dr Coke, who thus remarked, is surely right, for where are there such zealous, frank-hearted, and laborious Christians as the few Irish specimens that we have seen? And here and there, where readers, missionaries, or teachers have had room to make any impression, it is affecting to hear how much danger they will encounter

from persecutors, and how much ardour they will display to spread "the Story of Peace" around them.

The Synod of Ulster, which, through many trials by persecution, by false doctrine, and by false brethren, has been for a century satisfied if it could maintain itself undiminished, instead of making inroads on the Popish or heathen people who are mixed up in its borders, is at last happily alive to its position and its duties. Instead of contenting itself with keeping together its few sheep, it has recently awakened to the conviction that it is a Christian duty to gather in all those who are out of the fold. A missionary, and consequently a prayerful and a revival spirit, has of late been bestowed upon them; and in September, 1833, they met, in their united character of a Synod, not in their usual places of resort, but in Dublin, for the purpose of mutual counsel and encouragement. Some days were spent in seeking the Lord, and advising with and cheering each other to the honourable work. During this period four most animating discourses were preached, and many speeches delivered, which breathe so much of the spirit of grace and of faithfulness, that the Christian world is on tiptoe to see when the Holy Spirit shall pour out of his promised blessings. The writer who reports this interesting conclave of servants of the Redeemer says—"The Lord in his inexpressible mercy has visited our church with a season of abundant refreshment from his presence. In every direction there are evident signs of a revival. \* \* \* We bless God that he is raising up men of the true missionary spirit. Simple, self-denying, energetic men, of strong faith and fervent love, who seem to live for the gospel. The Synod of Ulster, we rejoice to say, are taking a prominent share in the heart-stirring operations of the present time. They have made a more decisive advance in spiritual life and power within the last few years than in the previous half century." \*

It were out of place here to recite much of the contents of the report, but we introduce two brief extracts. The one from the speech of the Rev. Duncan Macfarlane

\* Introduction to Report of Special Meeting of Synod of Ulster.

of Renfrew, one of two clergymen from Scotland, who went over, as in the old time, to take sweet counsel with their brethren; and the other from the speech of the Rev. James Alfred Canning, a youth whose zeal and love seem calculated to encourage and excite very many.

“It was for the accomplishment of the conversion of sinners, and the building up of churches, that the spirit was specially given to the church. The words of our Lord, as well as the history of the Apostles, are very expressive on this point. He commanded his disciples to remain at Jerusalem, and not to go forth preaching the gospel at large till they had received the promise of the Father; and then it is added, ‘But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the *uttermost parts of the earth.*’ The spirit was given to the church to qualify her for carrying into effect our Lord’s command, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;’ and it was affixed as an express condition that the power thus obtained should be employed in bearing witness to the truth in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. So long as the church did act upon this principle the power of the spirit in the conversion of sinners was manifestly present with her; and is it to be wondered at, that when she ceased to act upon it, this power should be withdrawn? If it were for this end that it was given, did not the very pursuance of this end require that when it ceased to be so employed, it should be withdrawn? The power of the spirit, as experienced by the church, is a talent intrusted for a particular end; while that end continued to be served the talent increased, but when it was wrapped in a napkin and buried, it was taken away; or, like the manna laid up contrary to the divine command, it gave way to corruption in the church.”\*

“If the nature of prayer be but imperfectly understood in our day, I believe that the necessity and the

\* Speech of Rev. Duncan Macfarlane of Renfrew.

efficacy of prayer in promoting the interests of the gospel are still more imperfectly felt and applied. I fear, sir, that we have become so conversant in our day with human prudence and human plans in spreading the gospel, that believing and humble prayer has been jostled out of that prominent and commanding station which it ought ever to occupy among them all. If this be not the fact, I would ask you, sir, to account for the comparatively little success which has attended the operations of our almost innumerable societies for diffusing the light of the gospel; why has so little work been done by a power which seemed effective? I know no other answer which can be given to the question than this, that while we have gotten together the strong bones of prudent plans, and laid upon them the powerful muscles of untiring diligence, and wound around them the nerves of undying zeal, we have not been careful to prophesy upon the frame we have thus constructed, and by believing prayer to get into it the breath and the blessing of heaven. We have exercised our ingenuity, sharpened I do believe by the Spirit's aid, in constructing splendid machinery; but we have too often forgotten, by earnest and believing prayer, to bring down upon it the moving power, which must still be the Spirit of God." \*

We know of no church honestly and heartily engaged in the great mission of converting the world which is not itself a living church; and they who do not occupy themselves in enlarging their borders are sure to have them straitened by reason of their own coldness. This missionary movement in Ulster is not mentioned as a solitary instance, for while Britain has at last, in many ways, been seeking to act upon Ireland, Ireland has also at various points been acting on herself. But if Mr Blair's estimate of Ulster's influence on the other parts of the kingdom be true, namely, that "Ulster being for supposition like the thumb in the hand, which is able to hold against the four fingers," then we may anticipate powerful results from its present measures.

\* From Rev. James Alfred Canning's Speech.

## CHAPTER XI.

## SCOTLAND.

WHEN the darkness of Popery first began to be dispersed by the rays of truth, which feebly penetrated it, Scotland, like other European countries, received occasional gleams of the true light, which irradiated a scanty portion of the land, and generally were smothered in the fires of persecution. Early in the fifteenth century some of the opinions propagated by Wickliff were carried to Scotland, and so far does the church seem to have been ripe for reformation, that it at least felt the burden of its ceremonies, and was become sensible of its corruptions; so that no man lifted his voice against them without quickly obtaining willing followers.

In 1422, James Risby was put to death for denying that the Church of Rome was head of all other churches. That the bishop of that See (meaning the Pope) had pre-eminence over bishops in other countries, and that the clergy and monks ought to possess temporal power. These sentiments he adopted from Wickliff, and for his propagation of these he paid the forfeit of his life. It does not appear whether there was converting power with his preaching, or what was the character of the effect produced among his followers. But his execution seems to have been among the first of a series of scenes of tyranny and bloodshed arising from papal animosity against the truth. His fate is mentioned in the Records of the city of Glasgow.

The most affecting case of all the early martyrs of the Reformation was that of Patrick Hamilton, a man had in admiration and reverence by many on account of his learning, integrity, and singleness of purpose in propagating the truth that he had been taught. His heart could not find satisfaction in the German Univer-

sities, where the society of Luther and Melancthon and the tuition of Lambert might have attracted him to pass his days, “but the zeal of God’s glory did so eat him up, that he could not rest till he returned into his own country, where the bright beams of the true light which, by God’s grace, were planted in his heart, began most abundantly to break forth, both in public and in secret.”\* His influence was too powerful and too hateful to such men as Beaton, Archbishop of St Andrews, to be left long without a check. As he was allied to the highest rank in the kingdom, and as his holy life had filled many with reverent admiration, it required the stratagem of procuring the absence of the King, and exciting the nobles into a ferment, before the Archbishop dared to perpetrate his dark purpose. In 1527 this triumph of the enemy of all truth was accomplished, and the faithful, the noble, the valiant Patrick Hamilton expired at the stake, because he denied the use of pilgrimages, prayers to the saints and for the dead, purgatory, &c. He died testifying that “though this death is bitter to the flesh, and fearful before men, yet it is the entrance into eternal life, which none shall possess who deny Jesus Christ before this wicked generation.” He obtained the crown of martyrdom at the early age of twenty-four.

The desire of this holy man’s heart was fulfilled as much by his death as it could possibly have been by his life; and the “wolves who had devoured the prey” found themselves in a worse case than before. For men in all parts of the kingdom began to enquire wherefore this flower of the land had been put to a violent death—and upon hearing the articles of faith for which he suffered, many began to question the truth and authority of that which they had formerly implicitly believed. So that presently not only novices, but the subprior even in the popish seat of St Andrews, black friars and grey, began to “smell somewhat of the verity, and espy out the vanity of the received superstitions.” By this means the

\* Gillies’s Collections.



persecutors had soon more work on hand, and new consultations were taken there that some should be burnt, for men began to speak freely. "A merry gentleman, named John Lindsay" (query, a jester?), "familiar to James Beaton, standing by when consultation was had, said, my Lord, if ye burn any more, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves; if ye will burn them, let them be burnt in hollow cellars, for the smoke of Mr Patrick Hamilton hath infected as many as it blew upon."\*

[1543.] Sixteen years after the death of this excellent man, during which period many besides had showed that they valued the truth as it is in Jesus more than life, an act of Parliament was obtained, which rendered it lawful for every man to use the benefit of the Scriptures in the translation which they then possessed; and "thereby did the knowledge of God wondrously increase, and God gave his holy Spirit to simple men in great abundance."

The next individual who commands our especial esteem and admiration, and on whose faithful and undaunted labours the head of the church commanded a blessing, is George Wishart. After learning the truth at Cambridge, he began his ministrations in Ross-shire, and afterwards in the populous town of Dundee. He was listened to with great admiration, and the word was with power to many souls, till Cardinal David Beaton, nephew of James, and instigated by an equally persecuting spirit, incited a leading man in the place to prohibit his troubling that town any more by his preaching. Wishart then went to the West, and made offers of God's word to willing hearers, till the Cardinal induced the Bishop of Glasgow (Dunbar) to pursue him to Ayr, with a view to silence him. In our peaceful days of gospel privilege, we can with difficulty imagine the state of mind in which saving truth was offered and accepted, when threatened arrest on one hand, and armed protection on the other, were the destiny and deliverance of the

\* Knox's History of the Reformation, B. 1st.

preacher. The Earl of Glencairn and other gentlemen hearing of the design of the Bishop, came also to Ayr, and when the Reformer was excluded from the pulpit, which was taken possession of by the Prelate, he bravely went to the market-cross, where he preached such a sermon that his very enemies were confounded.\* For some time after this Wishart preached in various places in the West, and on one occasion, finding the church of Mauchline shut against him, he prevented those of his friends who would have forced an entrance, saying, "Jesus Christ is as mighty in the fields as in the church, and himself often preached in the desert, at the seaside, and other places. It is the word of peace God sends by me, the blood of none shall be shed this day for the preaching of it." He then took his station on an earthen fence, where he continued preaching to the people above three hours, and God wrought so wonderfully by that sermon, that one of the wickedest men in the country, the Laird of Sheld, was converted by it, and his eyes ran down with such abundance of tears, that all men wondered at him.

Presently tidings reached Wishart that the plague had broken out in Dundee, and in spite of the importunities of friends, this servant of God went thither, saying, "They are now in trouble, and need comfort; perhaps the hand of God will make them now to magnify and reverence the word of God, which before they lightly esteemed." He chose his preaching station at the East-gate, having the whole within and the sick without, and adopted for his subject, "He sent his word and healed them," Psalm cvii. "By which sermon he so raised up the hearts of those who heard him, that they regarded not death, but judged them more happy who should then depart, rather than such as should remain behind." He

\* Knox's Specimen of the Bishop's sermon is curious, and that which was delivered at the market-cross must have formed a striking and salutary contrast to the babblings of the poor dignitary.—"They say we sould preich. Quhy not? Better lait thryve, nor nevir thryve. Had us still for your bischope, and we sall provyde better the nixt tyme."

visited without reserve all such as lay in extremity, and so influenced the healthy to distribute to the afflicted, that he was enabled to provide for all their wants. In the very midst of these exertions, which could not have been ventured upon except by one strong in the faith, the miserable Cardinal stirred up a wicked man, one of his minions in the priesthood, to assassinate Wishart. He waited to waylay him as he descended from church, when the people had departed, but his victim being warned by the agitation of his manner, and spying the hilt of the dagger, went calmly up and seized it. The caitiff fell on his knees to implore forgiveness, but news of this reaching the dispersing multitude, they would have torn him in pieces, and burst in at the gate. The man of God took the trembling villain in his arms, saying, "Whosoever hurts him shall hurt me; for he hath done me no hurt, but much good, in teaching me more heedfulness for the time to come," and thus he saved the priest's life. After this he continued preaching in various places, the people every where flocking to hear him.

In 1546, the Cardinal had Wishart brought before him, to give an account of his heretical and seditious doctrines. And here, after the example of his blessed master, he hid not his face from shame and spitting, being exposed to the most opprobrious words and spiteful conduct that human animosity could suggest. A priest, named Lauder, was set up as his accuser, and read a scroll of bitter accusations and curses, which made the poor ignorant auditors look to see the earth open and swallow up Mr Wishart. He concluded his imprecations by spitting in the face of the faithful martyr, and said, "What answerest thou, thou runnagate, traitor, thief," &c. Then did Mr Wishart fall on his knees, and make his prayer to God, and afterwards said, calmly, "Many and horrible sayings unto me a Christian man, many words abominable to hear have ye spoken this day, which not only to teach, but even to think, I ever thought a great abomination," &c. Then he entered on an account of his doctrine, answering to every article as far as they would give him leave to speak. But they, disregarding

the reason, sobriety, and godliness of his answers, condemned him to be burnt. After which sentence he again fell on his kness, and prayed audibly : “ O immortal God, how long wilt thou suffer the ungodly to exercise their fury upon thy servants, which do further thy word in this world ; whereas they on the contrary seek to destroy the truth, whereby thou hast revealed thyself to the world. O Lord, we know certainly that thy true servants must suffer for thy name’s sake persecutions, afflictions, and troubles ; yet we desire that thou wouldst preserve and defend thy church, which thou hast chosen before the foundation of the world, and give thy people grace to hear thy word, and to be thy true servants in this present life,” &c. His power over the people was too well known, and had become too formidable to the bishops for them to suffer him to be heard, in pleading his cause either with man or God, and therefore the crowd was driven out, and he hurried to the castle to be kept till the executioners should have prepared their torments. He requested in this interval to see the sub-prior, who had been employed to preach before his public accusation, and after some conference with him, the man was melted to tears, and went to the Cardinal, not to plead for Wishart’s life, for that was beyond hope, but to make known his innocence to all men. The captain of the castle came to offer him some food, and having accepted the offer, he used this occasion to discourse with him and some friends about the Lord’s last supper, his sufferings and death for us, exhorting them to love one another, laying aside all rancour and malice, as becomes the members of Jesus Christ, who continually intercedes for us to his Father. After this he blessed the bread and wine which had been prepared for the meal, and distributed them in the name of the Lord, desiring them to remember that Christ died for them, and to feed on him spiritually. His companions at this solemn hour must have been those who had received his doctrines ; and strange and new was it to such as had been accustomed to worship a wafer, and to believe that it was transmuted into the real body of Christ by the prayers of a

priest, thus hastily to return to the simple ordinance of remembrance, as it was instituted by the Lord himself, and this too under circumstances of such close resemblance, when Wishart also was about to be offered up for the truth. He then gave thanks, and prayed for them, and retired to his chamber to wait the executioners. His prayers and his exhortations during the slow progress of his death, are full of love, of forgiveness, and of zeal. He earnestly exhorted that those brethren and sisters whom he had so often taught should persevere in their study of the Word of God, and not be driven away by the terror of his sufferings, "for had he taught men's doctrines, he should have had greater thanks from men," but for the Word of God's sake he now suffered, not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart. He called them to observe that he should not change countenance, for he feared not them who could kill the body, and after that had no more that they could do. His prayers for his accusers and murderers, and his tranquil joy to the last, were like the death of the first martyr Stephen, filling the bystanders and all who heard of it with admiration and wonder, so that, like Patrick Hamilton, his death aroused more from a state of carelessness, and awakened more distrust in the church which suffered not such men to live, than all his public ministrations, numerous, faithful, and efficacious as they had been. It was but two years after his return from Cambridge, fraught with divine zeal, that he was summoned by means of martyrdom to appear before his Lord in Heaven.

In pursuing the work of the Spirit, it is remarkable that we are called upon not to follow it from district to district, or from church to church, but rather from one faithful preacher to another, for God is true to his purpose of propagating saving truth by the exertions of his servants. We are called, therefore, to attend to the result of individual labour rather than of general saving impression. The next man with whose labours the blessing seems to have gone in a prominent manner is William Cooper, who lived less than half a century after Wishart. Scotland had, in 1560, held its first

General Assembly. Somewhere between 1580 and 1590, the Assembly appointed Mr Cooper to the charge of the parish of Bathkenner, in Stirlingshire. When he came there he found only four ruinous walls, without roof, door, or window, for a church; yet it pleased God to give such a blessing to his ministry, that within half a year the people, of their own accord, repaired and adorned the church with great pleasure. During seven or eight years of a very successful ministry in that place, it pleased God to begin to acquaint him with his terrors and with inward temptations, so that his life was almost wasted with heaviness; yet thereby he learned to know more and more of Christ Jesus. He was afterwards removed to the North of Scotland, where, for nineteen years together, he was a comfort to the best, and a wound to the worst sort. He had a public meeting in the evenings of Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, concerning which he says himself, "It would have done a Christian's heart good to see those joyful assemblies, to have heard the zealous cryings to God among that people, with sighings, and tears, and melting hearts, and mourning eyes." Of himself he says, "My witness is in Heaven, that the love of Jesus and his people made continual preaching my pleasure, and I had no such joy as in doing his work." All the time that this lively work was going on, the Lord still exercised him with inward temptations and great variety of spiritual combats, the end of all which, through divine mercy, was joy unspeakable, as himself testifies. "Yea, once," saith he, "in the greatest extremity of horror and anguish of spirit, when I had utterly given over and looked for nothing but confusion, suddenly there did shine in the very twinkling of an eye, the bright and lightsome countenance of God, proclaiming peace, and confirming it with invincible reasons. O what a change was there in a moment! The silly soul that was even now at the brink of the pit, looking for nothing but to be swallowed up, was instantly raised up to heaven, to have fellowship with God in Christ Jesus; and from this day forward, my soul was never troubled with such extremity of terrors. This confirmation was

given to me on a Saturday morning ; there found I the power of religion, the certainty of the word ; there was I touched with such a lively sense of the divinity and power of the Godhead, in mercy reconciled with man, and with me in Christ, as I trust my soul shall never forget ; glory, glory, glory be to the joyful deliverer of my soul out of all adversities for ever."

Such are the joyful expressions of this holy man, when delivered from conflicts of which half the Christian world have only heard by the hearing of the ear ; and by such severe discipline does the master of assemblies train his servants for enduring hardness like good soldiers of Christ. In the midst of his inward wrestlings Mr Cooper was not without his combats with wicked men, but all outward trial seemed small to him after his inward experience. He never had a controversy with any man but for his sins, and the Lord assisting him, " the power of the word did so hammer down their pride," that they were all of them brought to acknowledge their evil ways. " It was no marvel," says the quaint historian, " to see Satan stir up his wicked instruments to molest him, for he professed himself a disquieter of him and his kingdom." Mr Cooper ceased from his labours in 1619.\*

\* Clark's Lives.

## CHAPTER XII.

## JOHN WELSH.

MR JOHN WELSH, who was the son of a gentleman in Nithsdale, was, in boyhood, cause of much affliction to his parents. Those fine mental energies which, when sanctified by the Divine Spirit, made him a man eminent for faithfulness in the church, in his unsanctified days led him to various and strange excesses; and so strong was the spirit of adventure in him, that he actually joined himself for a short time to the thieves who dwelt in the Debateable Ground on the English Borders. His father received him again, after much entreaty by a female friend who acted as mediator, and he went to college by his own desire, having said that if he should break off again, he would be content that his father should disown him for ever. He soon became a student of great promise, and selected the ministry as the profession of his choice. His first charge was at Selkirk, and though but for a short time there, his ministry in that place was not without fruit, though "he was attended by the prophet's shadow, the hatred of the wicked." A boy in the house where he boarded was so affected by his holy conduct, that till old age he never forgot it. It was Mr Welsh's custom on going to rest to lay a plaid above his bed-clothes, so that when he arose to his night prayers he could cover himself with it. He used to say he wondered how a Christian could lie in bed all night and not rise to pray. From the beginning of his ministry till his death, he reckoned the day ill spent if he staid not seven or eight hours in prayer.

He was for a short time in charge of the parish of Kirkcudbright, and was transported to Ayr in 1590, where he continued till he was banished.



The generation that had profited under the preaching of Wishart had passed away, and as was to be expected in such a period of false doctrine, their faith had expired with them, so that John Welsh found the hatred of godliness so great that no one would let him a house, and he was thankful for a time to find shelter under the roof of Mr John Stewart, a merchant, who was some time provost of that borough, a man still had in remembrance as an eminent Christian, who was a great comfort and assistant to his young minister. On his first entrance on his charge there, Ayr was the seat of faction and of bloody feuds, so that no one could walk the streets in safety; and Mr Welsh there, like Bernard Gilpin on the Borders, was often obliged to rush between parties of fighting men, in the midst of bloodshed, his head shielded by an helmet, but with no weapon except the message of peace. He adopted this singular practice, which was doubtless recommended by the custom and spirit of the times, and its success prevents us from stigmatizing it as whimsical. After having, by his personal interference, terminated a skirmish, and done what he could to pacify the angry passions of the combatants, he was accustomed to cause a table to be covered in the street, and beginning with prayer, he prevailed on the parties to eat and drink together, concluding the whole by singing a psalm. Indeed, after the rude people had begun to hearken to his doctrine, and observe his heavenly example, he obtained such influence over them, as to become their counsellor and pattern in all things, so that this town of blows and animosities was presently converted into a scene of peace. We cannot pass this unusual employment of a minister of the gospel without observing on the deep plans of Providence, which can turn even the experience obtained by transgression to the glory of God. How little did the youth think when, in rebellion against his father, and in the love of adventure, he united himself with marauders on the Border, that he was there at a school of training to undaunted coolness in the midst of battles, that he might overcome the violent, and shed abroad, in the name of the Prince of Peace, the spirit of peace.

He was most diligent in labours, never preaching less than once every day; and, having a strong constitution, he was enabled to devote all the hours he required to prayer and study, without diminishing his time for exertion amongst his people. "But if his diligence was great," says his biographer, "so it is doubted whether his sowing in painfulness, or his harvest in success, was greatest; for if either his spiritual experience in seeking the Lord, or his fruitfulness in converting souls be considered, they will be found unparalleled in Scotland—and many years after Mr Welsh's death, Mr David Dickson, at that time a flourishing minister at Irvine, was frequently heard to say, when people talked to him of the success of his ministry, 'the gleanings in Ayr, in Mr Welsh's time, were far above the vintage of Irvine in his own.' Mr Welsh's preaching was spiritual and searching, his utterance tender and moving. He did not much insist upon scholastic purposes, and made no show of his learning. One of his hearers, who was afterwards minister at Muirkirk, said that a man could hardly hear him without weeping, his mode of address was so affecting. Sometimes before he went to preach he would send for one or two of his elders, and tell them he feared to go to the pulpit, because he found himself so deserted; he would desire them to pray, and then would venture to the pulpit. These painful exercises, which were so calculated to empty him of self, it was observed were ordinarily followed with unusual assistance. He would retire to the church of Ayr, which was at some distance from the town, and not find it an irksome solitude to pass the whole night there in prayer. His choice of this place does not seem to have arisen from any superstition about its being a sacred edifice; but he thus obtained liberty to give full expression to his strong emotions, and prayed not only in an audible, but often in a loud voice. His wife, who was an excellent woman, a daughter of John Knox, not unfrequently sought him in his midnight watchings, and has found him lying on the ground, weeping and wrestling with the Lord. On one of these occasions, when his wife found him overcharged

with grief, he told her he had that to press him which she had not,—the souls of three thousand to answer for, while he knew not how it was with many of them. And at another time when she found him alone, his spirit almost overwhelmed with anguish and grief, upon her serious enquiry he said, that the times that were to come on Scotland were heavy and sad, though she might not see them, and that for the contempt of the gospel.\*

“On a certain night, being under an extraordinary pressure of spirit to pour forth his heart to God, he left his wife in bed, and going out to a garden spent most of the night in that exercise. His wife becoming at last uneasy, went to seek for him, but missing him in his ordinary place, entered other gardens by such passages as she knew; at last she heard a voice, and drawing near to it, could hear him speak a few words with great force and fervency accompanied with audible expressions of inward anguish, which were these, ‘O God, wilt thou not give me Scotland? O God, wilt thou not give me Scotland?’ She being afraid to interrupt him, went back, and heard not the close. At length he came home, and having returned to bed, his wife began to reprove his unmercifulness to his own body, and then enquired what it was that he prayed for, telling him that she had overheard him. He replied she had better have been in bed, but since she heard, he would tell her that he had endured a great fight for Scotland this night, and hardly could he get a remnant reserved, ‘yet,’ said he, ‘He will be gracious.’

“Another night he arose, but went not out of doors, but in a chamber travailed and groaned so, that his wife several times called him to bed. He, however, waited his time, and when he came she began a modest expostulation with him for tarrying. ‘Hold thy peace,’ said he, ‘it will be well with us, but I shall never preach another preaching in Ayr.’ He fell asleep, and before he awakened the messenger was come who carried him prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh.”†

\* Fleming’s Fulfilling of the Scripture, vol. i. p. 364.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 381.

These examples of Mr Welsh's earnest importunity in prayer, show us what must have been his influence in his day. He wrestled, like Jacob of old, and had power with God and prevailed. His discernment and sagacity in studying the dealings of God and the ways of men retrospectively, gave him skill to perceive the probable turn that future events would take, in so much that his calculations were almost confided in as predictions; while the solemnity of mind produced by the emergency of his country, and his deep communion with the God from whom he looked for help, cast a mysterious grandeur around his person, which conferred on him an influence far above the measure of Christians in general. In our less exciting times, there are not wanting those who impute to John Welsh "monkish austerities," as if a man could not arise in the night to prayer, but at the summons of a midnight vesper bell and for the purpose of telling a certain portion of his rosary. If we consider his early history, we shall find that he was no monk either in his own person and practice, or in the training of his pious father. His own spiritual condition, and the state of his church, are not without precedent in Scripture, for Judah exhibits the same experience. "With my soul have I desired thee *in the night*; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early; for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."\* It was a time of judgment and sore trial for the Church of Scotland, when her faithful pastors were spared to their attached flocks only by sufferance, and were in hourly danger of arrest, imprisonment and banishment. Instead then of speaking of "enthusiasm and fanaticism," let us rather consider, that if he were beside himself it was in zeal for God, and if he were sober or dejected, it was in the service of his people and of his country. We ought to reverence the character guided to superior spiritual attainment by means of divine judgments, and contemplate him as one of the few righteous for whose sake, and in answer to whose intercessions, our church has been preserved to us.

\* Isaiah, chap. xxvi. v. 9.

Mr Welsh, and Mr Forbes, another great witness for the truth in those days of trial, were, in 1606, sentenced to die at the assize at Linlithgow. While under that sentence Mr Welsh wrote in this exalted strain of joy to his friends the Melvilles, then in London. "Dear Brethren, we dare say by experience, and God is witness we lie not, that unspeakable is the joy that is in a free and full testimony of Christ's royal authority; unspeakable is the joy of suffering for his kingdom. We had never such joy and peace in preaching it, as we have found in suffering for it. We spoke before in knowledge, we now speak by experience, that the kingdom of God consists in peace and joy. \* \* Our joy has greatly abounded since the last day" (the day of their sentence of death), "so that we cannot enough wonder at the riches of his free grace, that should have vouchsafed such a gift unto us, to suffer for his kingdom, in which there is joy unspeakable and glorious, and we are rather in fear that they" (the sufferings) "be not continued, and so we be robbed of further consolation, than that they should increase. Surely there is great consolation in suffering for Christ; we do\* not express unto you the joy which our God hath caused abound in us."

His preaching in prison, both in Edinburgh and in Blackness, was not without fruit—and we find his friend John Stewart following him to his place of confinement, with the love that became him to such a servant of their blessed Lord.

James VI. was induced to commute the sentence of death into banishment, probably because of his aversion to shed the blood of one whose reputation was so high, and whose labours were so had in reverence of the church. He therefore retired into France, and there learned quickly to preach in the French language, and was honoured to bear witness to the truth before the King and his Court, and to win a rich harvest of souls.

After some time he obtained leave to return to England, and languished in London till he died. The King

\* Are not able to.

was often entreated to suffer his return to Scotland on account of his health, but never granted this boon. He was afflicted with languor and great weakness in the knees, occasioned by his continual kneeling at prayer; so that though he was able to walk, yet he was wholly insensible in them, and the flesh became hard and horny. King James had been much importuned to suffer him to preach, but always refused the request till he was become so weak that his friends thought it impracticable. Yet as soon as he obtained permission, "he greedily embraced this liberty, and having access to a lecturer's pulpit, he went and preached both long and fervently, which was the last performance of his life; for after he had ended his sermon he returned to his chamber, and within two hours, quietly and without pain, resigned his spirit into his Maker's hands, in 1622, having lived fifty-two years."

During his prolonged time of languor and feebleness, he was so filled and overcome with the sensible enjoyment of God that he was sometimes overheard in prayer to use these words, "Lord, hold thy hand, it is enough, thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more."

The Josiah Welsh who was minister of Temple Patrick in the north of Ireland, and one of the happy society of ministers who were the instruments of the revival there in 1629, was the son of this man, and the heir to his father's graces and blessings.

At this remote period, we cannot obtain much information as to the people who were called under the revival at Ayr, though we have abundant evidence of a great change being wrought there, and many characters formed to holiness. But a few anecdotes are still extant of individuals who were members of Mr Welsh's flock, that furnish a sample of what fruit that vintage produced. Hugh Kennedy, who was at the time Provost of Ayr, and one of Mr Welsh's choice friends, met a man in the town who had done a most unprovoked injury to one of his sons, by throwing his sea-chest into the water. The Provost said in wrath to the man, "Were it not for the awe of God, and the place that I bear, I judge that you deserve that I should tread

you under my feet." About two o'clock next morning the Provost came to his friend John Stewart, and called him up, desiring him to go with him, telling him that he could not eat or sleep because of the injurious boasting words he had spoken to that man; and as he had confessed his fault to God, he behoved now to go and confess it to the man. They went together to the house, and the man hearing who called at such an untimely hour, drew his sword in bed, to defend himself from the attack of the angry Provost. His expected assailant, to his astonishment, fell on his knees before him, and said, "Brother, I wronged you and the office I bear, in boasting and threatening you, and I can get no rest till you forgive me;" and he would not rise till the man solemnly forgave him. It is also related of Hugh Kennedy, that being one day for many hours engaged in prayer, he came out at last to his Christian friends who had waited long for him, his countenance beaming with unusual cheerfulness. When they enquired of him relative to his long stay, he replied, "it was no wonder, for he had that day got mercy to himself and all his;" and it was very evident, for each of his children gave "large ground" to judge that they were truly godly.

Whilst he was dying, Mr Ferguson, a faithful minister who stood by, said to him, "You have cause, sir, to be assured that the angels of God are now waiting at the stoups \* of this bed, to convey your soul into Abraham's bosom." To whom his answer was, "I am sure thereof, and if the walls of this house could speak, they could tell how many sweet days I have had in secret fellowship with God, and how familiar he hath been with my soul." Mr Welsh wrote from France of this good man. "Happy is that city, yea, happy is that nation that hath a Hugh Kennedy in it; I have myself certainly found the answers of his prayers from the Lord in my behalf."

John Stewart, the only man who would give a lodging to Mr Welsh on his first going to Ayr, was the fast friend of Hugh Kennedy. It is interesting to look back

\* Posts.

through centuries, and study the influences of Christian friendship, in knitting hearts together, and causing them to walk to the house of God in company. This John Stewart having come to the inheritance of his patrimony, was so moved with the straits that many who loved the Lord Jesus were reduced to, that he deliberately resolved to distribute his substance to his distressed brethren. He therefore called as many together in Edinburgh as he had means to collect,—and having spent some time in prayer, took their solemn promise not to reveal what he was about to do while he lived. He told them he knew what straits many of them were in, and had brought a little money to lend to each, but that they were not to repay him till he required it of them. This deed of love was not known till his death. Some time after he had thus denuded himself, the plague broke out in Ayr, in consequence of which, trade fell into decay, and Mr Stewart himself got into difficulties. The profane of the place began to upbraid him, saying that religion had made him poor, and his giving to others, like a fool, now made him want bread. The good man, somewhat like Joshua when he prayed, “what wilt thou do unto thy great name,” could not bear that his profession of religion should bring the good Providence of God into disrepute even with the wicked; he therefore left the country to conceal his straits, and went to Rochelle, in France. When he was there, he found that the obstacles to trade had reduced the price of salt and various other articles, so as to encourage him to load a ship upon credit. This he did, and hastened home through England to be ready to receive his cargo. After long and anxious waiting, he was informed that the vessel had fallen into the hands of the *Turks*. This intelligence so overcame him, from the fear that the mouths of the wicked should be opened to reproach his profession, that for many days he kept his chamber. At last a maid, who heard among the people that John Stewart’s ship was arrived in the Roads, came running, and called at the door that his ship was come. “But he being at prayer, could not be moved from his Master’s company till he was satisfied, and then



went forth and saw it was the truth." His deep exercise of mind was not, however, to end here; for a worthy Christian, and his great intimate, John Kennedy (supposed to be the seafaring son of Hugh), had gone out in a small boat for joy to meet the ship. A storm arising, his little boat was carried out to sea, and in the judgment of all who looked on, he was supposed to be swallowed up by the raging ocean. The storm so increased that the loss of the ship was hourly expected also, and this gracious man was so overpowered with grief, that for three days he could see no one. At last, having gone to visit the supposed widow of his friend,—while they were mutually weeping and condoling with each other, John Kennedy came home, having been cast away on a distant part of the coast. The ship also at last came safely into port. Thus God heard their cry and delivered them out of their distresses; and here at once did many mercies meet. The sale of his cargo enabled him to pay all his debts, and returned him twenty thousand merks besides. Thus the bread on the waters was returned after many days, and the liberal heart was made to rejoice in the kind and watchful Providence of God.

On his death-bed, John Stewart exhorted all who came to visit him *to be humble*; and of himself he said, "I go the way of all flesh, and it may be some of you doubt nothing of my well-being; yea, I testify, that except when I slept or was on business, I was not these ten years without thoughts of God so long as I should be in going from my own house to the Cross; and yet I doubt myself and am in great agony,—yea, at the brink of despair." A day or two before he died, he turned his face to the wall from the company for two hours, and then Mr John Ferguson came in, a grave and godly minister of that place, who asked what he was doing, upon which he turned himself, with these words, "I have been fighting and working out my salvation with fear and trembling; and now I bless God it is perfected, sealed, confirmed,—and all fears are gone." \*

\* Fleming's Fulfilling of the Scriptures, vol. i. p. 397.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ROBERT BRUCE.

MR ROBERT BRUCE began his ministry in Edinburgh about 1590, so that he was a cotemporary of Mr Welsh. He is thus described by Fleming :—“ He shined as a great light through the whole land, the power and efficacy of the Spirit most sensibly accompanying the word he preached. He was a terror to evil doers, and the authority of God did so appear in his carriage, with such a majesty in his countenance, as forced fear and respect from the greatest of the land, even those who were most avowed haters of godliness.” Livingston, in his memoir, says, “ He had a very majestic countenance, and whatever he spoke in public or private, yea even when he read the Word, I thought it had such a force as I never discerned in any other man. I heard him once say, ‘ I would desire no more for one request, but one hour’s conference with King James. I know he hath a conscience, I made him once to weep bitterly in his own house at Holyrood.’ ” He was a man that had much inward exercise on his own personal case, and had often been perplexed about that great foundation truth, “ if there is a God,” which cost him many days and nights of anxiety. When he had ascended the pulpit, after being, as was his custom, for some time silent, he would say, “ I think it a great matter to believe that there is a God,” telling the people it was another thing to believe that than they judged. But it was also known by his familiar friends how strong and undoubting his faith became, and with what ardour and joy his communion with his heavenly Father was accompanied. Livingston mentions an incident which occurred at Larbot, where he had frequent opportunities

to hear Mr Bruce preach, that gives us a glimpse of the spirit of those ministers who are generally honoured as instruments to revive the church. "He used after the first service to retire to a chamber near the church. Some noblemen having come far to hear him, and having the same distance to return to their homes, became impatient from the minister's delay to return to church, and sent the bell-man to hearken at his door if there were any appearance of his coming. The bellman returned and said, 'I think he will not come out this day at all, for I hear him always saying to another that he cannot go, except the other go with him, and I do not hear the other answer him a word at all.' The foolish bellman understood not that he was dealing with his God." The great success of his ministry at Edinburgh, Inverness, and other places whither Providence called him, is abundantly known. Whilst he was confined at Inverness, that poor dark country was marvellously enlightened, many were brought in to Christ by his ministry, and a seed sown in those places, which even to this day is not wholly worn out. There are interesting anecdotes still on record of his being made useful to individuals, some of whom became themselves preachers of the truth. The closing scene of his ministry is as remarkable an example of the reviving influences of the Holy Spirit as any preserved about that period. "A little before his death, in 1632, when he was at Edinburgh, and through weakness kept his chamber, there was a meeting of divers godly ministers at that time assembled on some special concern of the church. Hearing Mr Bruce was in the town, they came together and gave him an account of the actings of these times, the prelates then being resolved to introduce the service-book. After which Mr Bruce prayed, and did therein tell over again to the Lord the very substance of their discourse, which was a sad representation of the case of the church. At which time there was such an extraordinary motion on all present, so sensible a down-pouring of the Spirit, that they could hardly contain themselves. But what was most strange, there was even some unusual motion on

those who were in other parts of the house, not knowing the cause at the very instant. Mr Weems of Lochacker being then occasionally present, when he went away, said, ‘O how strange a man is this, for he knocketh down the Spirit of God on us all.’ This he said, because Mr Bruce did divers times knock with his fingers on the table.” This was related to Mr Fleming by a worthy Christian gentleman, whose mother’s house was the scene of this visitation.

Six years after Mr Bruce began his ministry, there was a lively movement from the Holy Spirit on the whole General Assembly of the Church, while their devotions were conducted by an intimate friend and fellow-labourer of Bruce, the Rev. Mr Davidson.

This memorable occurrence is related by Mr Fleming nearly in the following words:—“In the year 1596, upon Tuesday the 30th of March, the ministers and other commissioners of the General Assembly, met at Edinburgh, found it a duty by themselves to convene in the church at nine o’clock, one of the doors being shut, and the other kept open for the meeting only. Their object was to humble themselves and wrestle with God, to pursue a national as well as a personal reconciliation. The whole number amounted to four hundred ministers, and some select Christians and elders of the church with them. After prayer, Mr John Davidson was chosen to preside amongst them. He caused the third and thirty-fourth chapters of Ezekiel to be read, and then said, ‘Since it pleased the Lord to move them to choose him who was the unworthiest and unmeetest of the number, for the place of a preacher that day, they were not to look\* that he came to be censured by them, but to use the authority of a teacher to hearers, without any prejudice to that liberty given them of the Lord, to try the spirits whether they be of God or not.’

“He showed what was the end of their meeting, that it was the confession of sins, and to promise a forsaking thereof, to turn unto the Lord, and enter into a new

\* Expect.

covenant and league with him, that thus by repentance they might be the meeter to provoke others to the same. In which he was followed with that power for moving of their spirits in application, that within an hour after they were entered into the church, they looked with another countenance than that wherewith they entered. He exhorted them to that retired work of meditation and acknowledgement of their sins, even whilst they were together, that for the space of a quarter of an hour they were thus humbling themselves" (during which time it is probable the preacher was silent), "yea, with such a joint concurrence with those sighs and groans, and with shedding of tears amongst the most, every one provoking another by their example, and the teacher himself by his, so as the very church resounded, and that place might worthily be called a Bochim, for the like of that day had not been seen in Scotland since the Reformation, as every one that was present confessed. There have been many days of humiliation for present judgments, or imminent dangers, but the like for sin and defection was never seen since the Reformation. After prayer and public confession, Mr Davidson treated on Luke, xii. 22, 'Take no thought for your life,' &c., wonderfully assisted by God's spirit, to cast down and raise up again the brethren. The exercise continued till near one afternoon. When the brethren were to dissolve they were stayed by the Moderator, and desired to hold up their hands to testify their entering into a new league and covenant with God. They held up their hands presently and readily, which was a moving spectacle to all who were present."\* And that afternoon, by the General Assembly, was the renewing of the covenant in particular synods resolved upon.†

"On the 12th of May, in the same year, the covenant was renewed in the synod of Fife, met at Dunfermline,

\* Fleming's "Fulfilling of the Scriptures."

† This remarkable outpouring is also noticed in Calderwood's History of the Church. It was quickly followed by a similar visitation in the Synod of Fife.

when Mr James Melville discoursed on the last chapter of Joshua with such power and force, that all were forced to fall down before the Lord with sobs and tears, and to search their own ways in private meditation. Thereafter he made open confession, in name of the rest, of unthankfulness, undutifulness, negligence, coldness, hardness of heart, instability, vanity of mind, folly of speech, and conversation fashioned after the world, &c. Finally, trembling and weeping for the misusage of so honourable a calling, and quaking for fear that such a weight of God's wrath was lying upon them for the blood of so many souls belonging to their charge, they weeped bitterly, and sought grace from God for amendment. After this confession, the Moderator proceeded in his discourse,—and after diverse other points of doctrine, admonition and exhortation, delivered for the purpose, every one, by lifting up of the hand, testified before God mutually, one before other, the sincere and earnest purpose of their heart to study to amend, and serve God better in time to come, both in their lives and in the great office of the ministry. James Melville then discoursed further on 'ye are witnesses against yourselves this day,' and urged their consenting to register the whole transaction in the minutes of Synod as a testimony. He then invited some of the ancient fathers, for the benefit of the younger brethren, to declare what they had seen of God's Providence in planting and preserving the gospel and the liberty of Christ's kingdom in their country.

“ ‘David Ferguson, the oldest minister in company, discoursed how that a few preachers, viz. only six, whereof himself was one, went forward without fear or care of the world, and prevailed when there was no name of a stipend heard tell of, when authority, both ecclesiastical and civil, opposed themselves, and there was scarce a man of note or estimation to take the matter in hand. But now the fear and flattery of men, care of purchasing, or fear of losing money or stipends, had weakened the hearts of a number of ministers.’ Mr John Davidson and Mr David Black followed with powerful exhortations, and the affecting service was closed with earnest prayer by the

Moderator, that they might be enabled to perform the vows they had made.”\*

O, that Scotland would now take up the prayer of the Church of old, and never cease till the petition is granted ! “ Return, we beseech thee O God of Hosts : look down from Heaven, and behold and visit this vine ; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom thou madest strong for thyself. So will not we go back from thee : quicken us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts, cause thy face to shine ; and we shall be saved.” †

During the times of persecution Scotland was blessed with various similar outpourings, which varied from these only in being of a more extended character, embracing not the clergy and elders only, but the whole mass of the people. How glorious a sight, to witness men, women, and children, with strong crying and tears, lifting up their hands to Heaven, and swearing to adhere to each other, and to suffer the loss of all things rather than accept a religion which was contrary to conscience. How solemn to hear the soldiers of a whole army, when retired to their tents at night, engaged in reading the word, in praise and in prayer ; calling on their God to witness their sincerity, and to assist their just efforts to defend themselves from oppression in the great cause of his truth. And what an admonition and example to those who toil for worldly prosperity by earthly instrumentality,—neglecting to seek the blessing of Him who maketh rich and addeth no sorrow. What an admonition, in spite of the scorn and satire which talented men of our days have tried to cast upon it—to see whole regiments prepare for battle, not by furbishing their arms only, but by hearkening to their preachers ; learning at their feet what doctrines they ought to reject and what they ought to aim at establishing ; clearing their un-

\* Calderwood's Hist. 323, 324.

† Psalms, lxxx, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19.

derstandings about these affairs of eternal concern, and willing to sacrifice themselves, so that they might for their children and for their country procure the unsophisticated waters of life.

War, we are aware, is a weapon which human corruption alone has brought into use. Victory, it is confessed, proves no truth. But our God, knowing what instruments the wicked would resort to, and what defences those who fear him would be constrained to employ, has condescended to be called "the King of Glory, the Lord mighty in battle." He has declared that "the battle is not ours, but God's," 2 Chron. xx. 15; and if ever there was a war, which had neither pride nor ambition for its basis, the conflict of "the Congregation" was that war.

Fleming, in his very peculiar but solemn manner, alludes to these times:—"It is astonishing, and should be matter of wonder and praise for after ages, to consider that solemn time of the Reformation, when the Lord began to visit his church. What a swift course the spreading of the kingdom of Christ had, and how professors of the truth thronged in, amidst the greatest threatenings of those on whose side authority and power then was. O! how astonishing and extraordinary was this appearance of the Lord there on all ranks, so that they offered themselves willingly for the truth; and upon such of his servants as were sent forth on the work of the ministry, with such zeal and oneness of spirit as on the furthest hazard of their lives and estates, they did enter into covenant for mutual defence, for the truth of Christ and a free profession thereof, as is set down at large in the history of the Reformation, first in the year 1557, and after at Perth in 1559, and by the congregation of the west country, &c. Their mutual bond was, to concur, assist, and convene together, and not spare labour, goods, substance, bodies and lives, to maintain the liberty of the congregation, and every member thereof, against whomsoever that should trouble them for the cause of religion. Thus was this promise accomplished in that age, "That they who wait upon the Lord, shall mount



up as with eagle's wings, and shall run and not be weary," &c. \* Knox, in his *History of the Reformation*, remarks, p. 303—"For what was our force or number, to bring so great an enterprise to such a close? Our very enemies can witness in how great purity did God establish his true religion amongst us—and this we confess to be a strength given us from God, because we esteem not ourselves wise in our own eyes; but knowing our wisdom to be foolishness, we, before God, laid it aside, and followed that which was only approved of him. In this point could never our enemies cause us faint, whilst for this we wrestled, that the reverend face of the first primitive and apostolic church should be reduced to the eyes and knowledge of men; and in that point hath our God strengthened us, till the work was finished as the world may see." †

"That was also a remarkable time wherein the Lord did let forth much of the Spirit on his people in 1638, when this nation did solemnly enter into covenant, which many yet alive at this day do know, how the spirits of men were raised and wrought upon by the word, and ordinances lively and longed after. For then did the nation own the Lord, and was visibly owned by him. Much zeal and an enlarged heart did appear for the public cause—personal reformation was seriously set about,—and then also was there a remarkable gale of Providence, that did attend the actings of his people, which did astonish their adversaries, and forced many of them to feign subjection. Alas! how is our night come on, for the Lord hath in anger covered the face of our Zion with a dark cloud. Must not we also say, since the land was engaged by covenant to the Lord in these late times, what a solemn outletting of the Spirit hath been seen, a large harvest with much of the fruit of the gospel discernible, which we may say with a warrant hath been proven in the inbringing of thousands to Christ; a part whereof are now in glory, and many yet alive who are a visible seal to this truth, some of whom I am sure will not lose the

\* Fulfilling of Scripture, vol. i. p. 305.

† Knox's *History of Reformation*.

remembrance of these sweet refreshing times which the land did for several years enjoy, of the gospel and of many solemn communions, where a large blessing with much of the Spirit was felt, accompanying the ordinances."\*

Livingston, the friend and coadjutor of Blair, in his *Memoirs*, gives, in his brief and terse manner, a hint of the great emotion with which the Covenant was signed, which makes us long for a more detailed account. "I was present at Lanark, and several other parishes, when on Sabbath, after the forenoon's sermon, the covenant was read and sworn; and I may truly say, that in all my life time, excepting at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. All the people generally and most willingly concurred. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and the tears falling down from their eyes; so that through the whole land, excepting the professed Papists, and some few who adhered to the prelates, people universally entered into the Covenant of God."†

The Rev. Mr Aiton, in his *Life of Alexander Henderson*, just published, a work exhibiting laborious research, and much judgment in its interesting details of the second Reformation in Scotland, presents an account of the reception of the second Covenant in Edinburgh, which must be a welcome addition to the hints we are able to give on this subject.

The Presbyterians had crowded to Edinburgh to the number of sixty thousand, and on the 28th of February, 1638, a Fast had been appointed in the Grey Friars' Church. Two was the hour agreed upon for a meeting of all the barons and gentlemen, with the clergy, for the purpose of entering into the Solemn League and Covenant. "Long before the appointed hour," says Mr Aiton, "the venerable church of the Grey Friars, and the large open space around it, were filled with Presbyterians from every quarter of Scotland. At two o'clock Rothes, Loudon, Henderson, Dickson, and Johnston arrived with a copy of the Covenant, ready for signature.

\* Fulfilling the Scriptures, vol. ii. p. 357.

† Life of Livingston, p. 22.

Henderson constituted the meeting by prayer, 'verrie powerfullie and pertinentlie' to the purpose in hand. Loudon then, in an impressive speech, stated the occasion of their meeting. After mentioning that the courtiers had done every thing in their power to effect a division among the Presbyterians, and when thus weakened to introduce innovation, and that they should therefore use every lawful means for keeping themselves together in a common cause, he said, that in a former period, when Papal darkness was enlightened only from the flaming faggot of the martyrs' stake, the first reformers swore in Covenant to maintain the most blessed word of God even unto the death.

"In a later period when apprehensions were entertained of the restoration of Popery, King James, the nobles, and people throughout every parish subscribed another Covenant as a test of their religious principles. The Covenant now about to be read, had a similar object in view, and had been agreed to by the Commissioners. In conclusion, he in their name, solemnly took the searcher of hearts to witness, that they intended neither dishonour to God, nor disloyalty to the king. The Covenant was next read by Johnston, 'out of a fair parchment, about an elne squair.' When the reading was finished there was a pause, and silence still as death. Rothes broke it by requesting that if any of them had objections to offer, he would now be heard. They were told that if these objectors were of the south and west country, they should repair to the west end of the Kirk, where Loudon and Dickson would reason with them; but if they belonged to the Lothians, or to the country north of the Forth, they were to go to the east end, where he and Henderson would give them any satisfaction. 'Few comes, and these few proposed but few doubts, which were soon resolved.' These preliminaries occupied till about four o'clock, when the venerable Earl of Sutherland stepped forward, and put the first name to the memorable document. Sir Andrew Murray, minister of Ebdy in Fife, was the second who subscribed. After it had gone the

round of the whole church, it was taken out to be signed by the crowd in the churchyard. Here it was spread before them, like another roll of the prophets, upon a flat gravestone, to be read and subscribed by as many as could get near it. Many in addition to their name, wrote *till death*, and some even opened a vein, and subscribed with their blood. The immense sheet in a short time became so much crowded with names on both sides, and throughout its whole space, that there was not room left for a single additional signature. Even the margin was scrawled over; and as the document filled up, the subscribers seem to have been limited to the initial letters of their name. Zeal in the cause of Christ, and courage for the liberties of Scotland, warmed every breast. Joy was mingled with the expressions of some, and the voice of shouting arose from a few. But by far the greater portion were deeply impressed with very different feelings. Most of them, of all sorts, wept bitterly, for their defection from the Lord. And in testimony of his sincerity every one confirmed his subscription by a solemn oath. With groans and tears streaming down their faces, they all lifted up their right hands at once. When this awful appeal was made to the Searcher of hearts at the day of judgment, so great was the fear of again breaking this Covenant, that thousands of arms which had never trembled even when drawing the sword on the eve of battle, were now loosened at every joint. After the oath had been administered, the people were powerfully enjoined to begin their personal reformation. At the conclusion, every body seemed to feel that a great measure of the Divine Presence had accompanied the solemnities of the day, and with their hearts much comforted and strengthened for every duty, the enormous crowd retired about nine at night. Well, indeed, might Henderson boast, in his reply to the Aberdeen doctors, 'that this was the day of the Lord's power, wherein we saw his people most willingly offer themselves in multitudes like the dew drops of the morning—this was indeed the great day of Israel wherein the arm of the Lord was re-

vealed—the day of the Redeemer's strength on which the princes of the people assembled to swear their allegiance to the King of Kings.'”\*

Thus did a nation lift up their hands unto the Lord the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth. It is in vain that politicians, poets, or prelatists, impute such motives as they can comprehend. It has in vain been asserted that the lords forced the people to sign, that profane and ungodly men, as well as women and children, added their names to this remarkable document. Who ever heard of such an act of mere human policy, or even of political or fanatical excitement? When we hear of sixty thousand persons voluntarily assembled in one place, on a great public call of duty, weeping for their sins, trembling lest they should fail in the performance of their vows, and under this awful feeling coming deliberately forward to subscribe a document which might be construed as treason, and seal their death-warrant, and then holding up their hands to heaven and confirming their Solemn Covenant by a still more solemn oath; and when after this sublime and soul exciting transaction, we see the mighty crowd peacefully dispersing, each to their several homes, and before nightfall leaving the dwelling-place of the dead where they were assembled, to its wonted loneliness and silence, it is impossible for the candid mind not to perceive and to own, that this was nothing less than a great act of national devotion, performed under a divine and holy impulse. If the generous heart swells with admiring sympathy at sight of a nation striving for mere political rights, or if joy fills the soul when the bands of slavery are burst and the captive is set free, with what feelings, should we contemplate this wonderful scene? We know of nothing to be compared with it in moral grandeur among the national transactions which earth has ever witnessed, except that solemn assembly of the Jews when, after the seventy years' captivity, on their restoration to the place of their fathers' sepulchres and the city of their God, Ezra

\* Life of Henderson, p. 254-5 and 6.

“blessed the Lord the great God, and all the people answered, Amen, Amen! with lifting up of their hands, and bared their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.”\* After their solemn fast and humble confession, “God made them to rejoice with great joy; the wives also and the children rejoiced.”† And so was it with Scotland—and they were strengthened to do and to suffer great things for His name’s sake, after the Holy Spirit was communicated to them at the time of this solemn transaction.

We can spare but little space for the work of grace in the army of the congregation, but make a brief extract from the Rev. Robert Blair’s account of that which he witnessed in person. Mr Blair was at that time a placed and highly acceptable minister at St. Andrew’s. But so important was the edification of the army deemed, that he was called from his charge in 1640, to share the vicissitudes of battle with those who went to war.

“With this army the Church sent an able minister attached to every regiment. The chaplains jointly were vested with the powers of a presbytery.” These were not, as it appears, priests-errant, men of inflamed passions, half insane with religious frenzy, as they have been represented by the man of whose talents Scotland has so greatly boasted herself, but men tried and found faithful in the private duties of the ministry, selected carefully by the Church, and invested with the grave powers of a church court.

“Mr Blair went with Lord Lindsay’s regiment; and when the treaty was set on foot, the committee of estates sent him up to assist the commissioners with his best advice.

“Amongst all the Scots army, there was scarce a man without a Bible; a great part of them were devout and religious persons; so that when they came to their quarters, there was little else to be heard but reading, prayer, and solemn melody.”‡

\* Nehemiah, viii. 5, 6.

† Ibid. v. 6.

‡ Memoir of Robert Blair, p. 94, 95.

Such is the short but very satisfactory account given by Mr Blair of the religious condition of the Covenanting army. This eminent individual will be recognised as the same man of God who was a chief instrument in the deep religious impression which was made at the Six-mile-water in Ireland, nearly twenty years before this. He was, besides, honoured to revive his Master's work in Glasgow and the west, in Ireland, and in St Andrew's. Livingston describes him as "a man of a notable constitution both of body and mind, of a majestic yet amiable countenance; one thoroughly learned, of strong parts and solid judgment, and of a most public spirit for God. \* \* \* He spent many days and nights in prayer alone and with others, and was one very intimate with God."\*

Mr David Dickson, whose ministry at Irvine was attended with so much fruit, was sometimes engaged at Stewarton, where he says "The Lord had a great work in converting many. Numbers of them were at first under great terrors, deep distress of conscience, and afterwards attained to sweet peace and strong consolation. I preached often to them in the time of the college vacation" (of Glasgow where he was a regent), "residing at the house of that famous saint, the Lady Robertland, and had much conference with them, and profited more by them than I think they did by me; though ignorant people and proud secure livers called them 'the daft people of Stewarton.' Mr Robert Boyd of Trochrigg" (principal of the College of Glasgow, and minister of Govan) "came from his house in Carrick to meet with them; and having conferred with both men and women, he heartily blessed God for the grace of God in them. The Countess of Eglinton did much countenance them, and persuaded her noble lord to leave his hunting and hawking for some days to confer with some of them, whom she had sent for that purpose. After conference with them, his lordship declared he never spoke with the like of them, and wondered at the wisdom they mani-

\* Memoir of Robert Blair, p. 94, 95.

fested. Such of them as were able to travel went to the Monday market at Irvine, the next parish, with such little commodities as they had, but their chief design was to hear the Monday lecture by Mr Dickson, the minister of Irvine, which was so prudently ordered by him, that it ended before the market began. And many of that parish following their example (their minister, Mr Castlelaw, encouraging them to it), and some out of other parishes went thither also, whereby the power of religion was spread over that part of the country."

"I bless the Lord," says Robert Blair, "that ever I was acquainted with that people, and for the help I had by corresponding with blessed Mr Dickson after he left the college and settled at Irvine."\* There is little mention made of Mr Castlelaw, who was minister of Stewarton during the revival there, but we may judge that he was a man of an excellent spirit, from his encouraging his people to wait on Mr Dickson's Monday lecture, and also from a little incident mentioned by Robert Blair:—"The day I left Glasgow, riding to Dumbarton in the company of Mr William Castlelaw, minister at Stewarton, in whose pulpit I had often preached, I was so filled with the consolations of the Holy Spirit, that I could not conceal my joy; and most part of the way, which is about ten miles, he and I sang to the Lord's praise with great cheerfulness." †

The revival at Stewarton, it appears, began in 1625, and lasted for five years. "This," says Fleming, "by the profane rabble of that time, was called *the Stewarton sickness*,—for in that parish first, but after, through much of that country, particularly at Irvine under the ministry of Mr Dickson, it was remarkable. It can be said (which divers ministers and Christians yet alive can witness) that for a considerable time few Sabbaths did pass without some evidently converted, or some convincing proof of the power of God accompanying his word; yea, that many were so choked and taken by the heart, through terror, the Spirit in such a measure convincing them of

\* Life of Blair, pp. 18, 19.

† Blair's Memoir, p. 47.



sin in hearing of the word, that they have been made to fall over, and thus carried out of the church,—who after proved most solid and lively Christians. And as was known, some of the most gross who used to mock at religion, being engaged upon the fame that went abroad of such things, to go to some of these parts where the gospel was most lively, have been effectually reached before their return, with a visible change following the same. And truly this great spring-tide, as I may call it, of the gospel was not of a short time, but for some years' continuance. Yea thus, like a spreading moor-burn, the power of godliness did advance from one place to another, which put a marvellous lustre on these parts of the country, the savour whereof brought many from other parts of the land to see its truth."\*

Mr David Dickson was ordained in Irvine in 1618, and continued minister there for about twenty-three years, when he was removed to the College of Glasgow. He was a man singularly gifted with an edifying way of preaching, and his painful labours were eminently blessed with success. His conversing with those persons in Stewarton and other places in the west, on whose hearts the Spirit of the Lord had wrought in an extraordinary manner, enabled him, with much experience, to deal with awakened consciences; and therefore he was resorted to by such from all parts; yea, Christians from many other places resorted to the communion at Irvine twice in the year. Woodrow says of him, "Mr Dickson's ministry was singularly countenanced of God—multitudes were convinced and converted, and few that lived in his day were honoured to be instruments of conversion more than he. Not a few came from distant places and settled in Irvine that they might be under his ministry. Upon the Sabbath evenings, many persons under soul distress used to resort to his house after sermon, when usually he spent an hour or two in answering their cases, and directing and comforting those who were cast down, in all which he had an extraordinary talent. In a large

\* Fulfilling of the Scriptures, vol. i. p. 354, 355.

hall in his house in Irvine there would have been, as I am informed by old Christians, several scores of serious Christians waiting for him when he came home from church. Those, with the people round the town who came in to the market, made the church as throng, if not thronger, on the Monday than on the Lord's Day. The famous Stewarton sickness spread from house to house for many miles in the Strath, where Stewarton water runs on both sides of it. Satan, indeed, endeavoured to bring a reproach upon the serious persons who were at this time under the convincing work of the Spirit, by running some, seemingly under serious concern, into excesses,—both in time of sermon and in families. But the Lord enabled Mr Dickson, and other ministers who dealt with them, to act so prudent a part, that Satan's design was much disappointed,—and solid, serious, practical religion flourished mightily in the west of Scotland about this time." \* Mr Livingston, who had the privilege of this good man's acquaintance, used a portion of the forty-eight hours spared to him by the council before he was banished from Scotland to visit David Dickson [1662], then aged and lying on his death-bed. "He told me that, as our acquaintance had continued near to forty years, he was glad that now we suffered for the same cause" (refusing to take the oath of supremacy); "for he also upon that account was removed from his own place in the College of Edinburgh. I enquired how he found himself; he said, I have taken all my good deeds, and all my bad deeds, and cast them together in a heap before the Lord, and have betaken me to Jesus Christ, and in him have full and sweet peace. Within a few days after he died." †

\* Wodrow's preface to Dickson's *Truth's Victory over Error*.

† Livingston's *Memoirs of Good Men of his Time*.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## JOHN STEVENSON.

WERE it the object of an author to publish an account of the righteous men in the army of that period, a volume of biographical sketches, both interesting and edifying, might still be recovered from the stream of time, down which they are floating to oblivion. When men of pacific occupations and prayerful dispositions resign the ploughshare for the sword, we may rest assured that the influence of wrath and vengeance have no power over them. John Stevenson, a farmer in the parish of Dailly, was one of those who fought at Bothwell Bridge; his own account of his motives for joining the army is most satisfactory, but before extracting that passage from his little memoir, we shall more justly appreciate the character of the man, by reading his account of his conversion and general practices as to spiritual concerns. This also gives us a view of the style and power of the preaching of John Welsh, not the faithful minister of Ayr, for he was banished long before the birth of Stevenson, but one of the faithful men who, driven to the fields by persecution, delivered the message of peace there. John Stevenson relates that his heart was "first sensibly engaged to the good word of the Lord in his youth, when there was no open vision, because faithful pastors were driven into corners." He heard Mr Kennedy in the Hall of Killechan, he being thrown out of his church of Lasswade by the rage of the prelates. "Then and there," says he, "I fell in love with the ordinances of God, and, through grace, have, through several tribulations, adhered to the purity and doctrine, discipline, government, and worship which is now established in the church of Scotland." He then relates his discouragements because of his ignorance, want of Christian experience, and temptations to atheistical

thoughts, with which he had a grievous conflict, and was only delivered from them as from a fearful pit and miry clay.

“ After this, in the year 1678, August 12th, I heard Mr John Weish, on Craigdow Hill, who preached on 2 Cor. v. 20., and insisted chiefly on this, ‘ *We beseech you be reconciled to God.*’ In speaking to which words, the Lord helped his servant, not only to show what it is to be reconciled to God, but also earnestly to press reconciliation ; and to make a free, full, and pressing offer of glorious Christ as mediator, and day’s-man, and the great peace maker who would make up the breach, and bring about this much needed reconciliation. I, being fully convinced how greatly I needed this reconciliation and day’s-man, who is the only way to the Father, with all my heart and soul did cordially and cheerfully make the offer welcome ; and, without known guile, did accept of and receive Christ, on his own terms, in all his offices as mediator ; and did give myself away to the Lord in a personal and perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten, accepting of God for my Lord and my God, and guide to death, and great reward after it ; resolving, though strange Lords had had dominion over me, yet henceforth I would be called by his name, whom I now avouched for my only God and Lord. Upon which I took the heavens, earth, and sun in the firmament that was shining on us, as also the ambassador who made the offer, and clerk who raised the psalms ; I say—I took all these to witness in the judgment day, that I had uprightly and cheerfully entered into this everlasting covenant, and resolved through grace to be steadfast in it till death. After which my soul was filled with joy and peace in believing ; it was a joy unspeakable and glorious, having now got good hope through grace, that though he was angry with me, yet his anger was turned away, and he was become my salvation. I rejoiced in the thoughts of my new relation to God the Saviour, and felt the ravishing sweetness of a reconciled state, and went away firmly resolving that I would walk all my days in the bitterness of my soul, and never be vainly lifted up, but would fear the Lord and his goodness,

who had so far condescended to stoop so low as to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me after all I had done. And all my bones at this very time shall and do cry out, 'Who is a God like unto thee, a God keeping covenant, and whose faithfulness and mercy endure to all generations.'

"Though after this sensible and sweet covenanting with God on the hill of Craigdow I always studied to improve this covenant relation with God according to my various cases, temptations, necessities, and distresses; yet the most memorable time of my renewing this covenant was at Craigdarroch, in Nithsdale, in the year 1686; where, in secret prayer, the Lord determined me to renew that covenant I had entered into with him on Craigdow hill, and wonderfully condescended, as it were, to bring me nigh to his seat, and filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me to plead with him as a man doth with a reconciled friend. There was I helped with great enlargement to renew and adhere to the everlasting covenant; and there the kind God manifested himself to me otherwise than to the world; and I may say that truly my fellowship was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, in as sensible and eminent a degree as I ever met with before or since, though many times since he has been kind to my soul.

"Soon after this, while at Craigdarroch, my spirit was overwhelmed within me, on account of a rising generation, and for fear of a departing God and glory. I was frequently obliged to retire to solitary places, and with an aching heart, trembling soul, and wringing of hands, bewail the sad circumstances that poor posterity would be in if God should leave these lands. I saw that the rage of a prelatie persecution had banished many faithful shepherds—had put some of them to death, and that they were restless in pursuing others—so that they had scattered the Lord's flock, and made them wander on the mountains in the dark and cloudy day; which obliged Christ's sheep, who know his voice and will not follow a stranger, to wander from sea to sea, and from one part of the land to another, to hear the pure and good word of the Lord, and many times could not find it. All this made my soul cast down within me, for all flesh had corrupted

their way. Those who were in power and authority seemed to bid Christ depart out of our coasts, and many also were the provocations of sons and daughters. Our solemn covenants, by which we had bound ourselves to the Lord, were too little regarded by a great many. All this filled my soul with fear, lest glorious Christ should be provoked not to return again to poor Scotland. Then I thought if he would not return with a preached Gospel, in plenty and purity, we had been the cruel generation who had sent him away from ourselves and poor posterity; which obliged me, in deep distress, to lament over a rising generation, and earnestly to entreat that glory might yet dwell in our land, and that he would return to us with a departed glory.\*

“I shall only add one thing more, which is, that I frequently came to Kirkoswald, to spend a day in the church in prayer and meditation, that I might be at some distance from the hurry and noise of the world, for my convenience was not great at home, that so I might serve the Lord without distraction. It was my ordinary to set apart one day in the month for fasting and humiliation, prayer and meditation, and I found great quiet for it in the church of Kirkoswald. I staid in the minister’s when I was in that place, and went into the church in the morning about sun-rising and came not out till sun-setting in the longest summer day. And in case matters went not well with me the first day, I usually spent the second and sometimes the third in the foresaid duties, and found this a great mean of holding my soul in life. Then I could say, O how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day, and it was ever with me; and I rejoiced when I found his word as one who findeth great spoil, and could say that I esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.” †

Such was the state of self-denied and well disciplined feeling with which Stevenson joined the army of the covenant, and we have reason to believe that he was one of many such Christians. He mentions being a soldier incidentally, when relating to his children and grandchild-

\* Life of Stevenson, p. 6, 7, 8.

† Ibid. p. 41.

dren his experience of "*remarkable providences, and returns of prayer.*" But he shall speak for himself.

"The first I shall mention is what I met with at Bothwell. I am not ashamed to own I was there; and do declare it was not a spirit of rebellion against the king and government that took me there, as that rising up is slanderously reported by many. That which moved us to join together, yea appear in arms, was the necessary defence of our lives, liberties, and religion; for it is well known how the enemies of God, and the enemies of our holy religion did cut up the people as bread, and called not on his name; and wherever they met with honest ministers or private Christians, they either shot them, banished, or dragged them to prison; and for no other reason but because we worshipped the covenant God of our fathers, according to our conscience, and in the way we judged was appointed of God. We would have taken cheerfully the spoiling of our goods, had not our enemies sought to lord it over our conscience, while we could not submit to them without incurring the displeasure of God. I own many of us could not be edified, by a set of men forced on us by the prelates. And it is well known how scandalous and immoral the generality of them were; and yet for not joining in communion with men who were a scandal to the Christian religion, we were hunted like partridges upon the mountains, and exposed to the rage of the bloody soldiery, whose tender mercies we found to be cruelty: yea, when we complained of our grievances to those in power, in the most humble, dutiful, and loyal way, we were the more harassed and oppressed, as if our persecutors had a mind to show to the world, that they were entirely void of humanity. All which considered, it was no wonder we joined together for our common safety. And our uniting together was on the very principles which our happy revolution was afterwards brought about, namely the preserving ourselves and posterity from Popery, slavery, and arbitrary power.

"Having shown you what moved us to take up arms at Bothwell, I come now to let you know the providence I met with there. While we lay at Hamilton before the engagement, I observed all my acquaintances and others

providing head-pieces and breast-plates, and what was necessary for their safety in the day of battle. I not having money to spare on these things as some others had, looked up to God, and took him for a covering to my head in the day of battle, as he had been to David of old; for I observed that, whatever pieces of armour they had prepared for their safety, there was still a possibility of their being slain. Wherefore, I humbly told the great God I would entirely depend on him for a covering in the day of battle. Accordingly, when our forces fled from before the enemy, and all took what way they judged most proper for their safety, I rode not through Hamilton with the rest, but went about the town; and having crossed a glen, when I got to the other side of it, I espied a party of the enemy just below me, and in the very way by which I behoved to ride. I could not turn back without alarming them, and therefore rode on. My comrade was riding just before me with his head-piece, and other pieces of armour which he had provided for his safety. I saw him dismayed, and that he could not well sit his horse from fear. On which I whispered him to go on composedly; and I went before him with my carabine over my head, and my sword drawn in my hand. The enemy came so close up to the way, all standing under arms, that I could not avoid touching clothes with them. On which their commander, in a threatening way, asked me the word. I had resolved not to speak, whatever they asked of this nature, because I knew not their word, and thought it would irritate them the more if I told them what was not their word. As I spoke nothing but rode on, depending entirely on the God whom I had chosen as my covering in the day of battle, I got past them unmolested. But when my comrade came up, I heard the officer ask him the word 'dog;' on which through fear he told them what was not their word, which so provoked the commander that he struck him over the head with his broad sword; which, by reason of my comrade's head-piece, was broken in two. This so enraged the commander, that he ordered some of his men to fire, which they did, and killed him on the spot. I still stepped on without the least hurry or con-



fusion, and they never in the least molested me. Just as I passed by them, I saw Colonel Burns lying in his blood, whom they had shot a little before. So that I must own the Lord was my safety and the covering of my head in the day of battle. He hid me as in the hollow of his hand, and set remarkable bounds to the wrath of the enemy. So the snare was broken, and I escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; and my sure and all-sufficient help was in Jehovah's name who made the heavens and the earth.

“From this time till our happy Revolution I was obliged for nine years to retire and hide myself as much as possible from the rage of my persecutors; and fearing if I were taken by them I should be tempted through my weakness to any sinful oaths which they contrived to ensnare souls, or be exposed to dreadful sufferings, I set apart time for prayer, and pleaded with God that he would make out graciously to me what he had promised to do for his church and people in days of fiery trial \* \* \* “And I must own, he remembered the word on which he caused me to hope, and preserved me remarkably from the enemy.”

“Some time after this a troop of the enemy were quartered about Dailly, and five were quartered upon my father in Camragen. As they came to my father's they were informed that I was that morning come to the house; for there were many informers in the country, who sold themselves to destroy innocent blood, and that for a piece of bread; they had described me to the soldiers, and it was so that I had come from my hiding-place into the house to get some refreshment. I had not designed to sit down, when all of a sudden my sister and I heard a great noise before the door. We ran to see what was the matter, and found three of the five dragoons, who asked if I was the good man of the house, or if I belonged to the family? I answered I was not the head of the family, but I belonged to it. I expected the next question would be, ‘are you his son?’ but the Lord restrained them from it for his wise ends and my safety. They told me they were to quarter with us, and dismounted, and were in great rage. The Lord ordered so that

neither my sister nor I were the least daunted before them. I spoke civilly to them, and told them to be calm and easy, and they should get for themselves and horses in great plenty. I offered them straw, hay or corn, and took them into the garden and made up a bundle for each of them of what they desired; and I made up also one for myself. I let them take up their bundles first and return to the stable, and I followed. But when they entered the stable door, I skipped back, and got over the garden ditch, and so escaped from them. They were in great rage at the disappointment, and when they met my father, threatened to have him ruined for entertaining such as I in his house. But he turned the charge upon them, and threatened to tell their commander, that they had let me go after they had me in their custody; upon which they held themselves quiet. And so the Lord kept me from that hour of temptation, as I had begged, and as he had made me hope.

“Some time after this, some of the dragoons being quartered in my father’s, I was lying out by night and by day on a neighbouring hill, to which I had my meat sent me for ordinary. It fell out that the several troops which lay at Girvan and Dailly were all to rendezvous, and they which were quartered at my father’s went to meet with the rest at Girvan. I, seeing them go off, came down from the hill where I used to lurk, and came with a design to get some refreshment. Whilst I was taking it, my father came in, and told me he saw some dragoons coming back in great haste, and that they were just at hand. He desired me to fly for my life, and he would divert them at the entry till I could hide myself in the garden. I told him I would lie on the other side of the garden in a blackberry-bush till he had got them settled; and when he had done so, he might bring me an account, and I would go off. Accordingly, I went out, and hid me in the bush, while my father helped them to lay off their furniture; for they were the dragoons who used to stay with him, and had been sent back in haste. Before they would go into the house, they would put their horses to grass that night in the place where I lay hid. Whereupon one of the dragoons, seeing the fruit,

came to eat blackberries off the very bush at the root of which I lay. My father, seeing him at the bush where I was, cried to him that he would poison himself, for in harvest these berries were full of worms; and in order to draw him from the bush, he desired him to bring a berry, and he would show him a worm in it. The dragoon went to him with a berry, and my father opened it, and showed him a worm in it, which is not uncommon at that season of the year; and thus he was persuaded to go into the house with the rest, and take meat. When they were set down, my father came out, as if to take care the horses should not break in upon the corn, and told me they were settled; and so I stepped off to my ordinary lurking-place upon the hills. And here again it is evident that I dwelt under the shadow of the Most High, and lay in the secret places of the Almighty, when my enemy was so nigh and did not discover me—and I may call the name of that bush Jehovah Jireh, for there he was seen to appear for me, for now, when in great danger, he did not inclose me in the enemy's hand."\*

It may be thought that a portion of these extracts diverges from the purposes of the work. The reason they are given is to prove more fully the spirit of prayerful dependence in which such men lived; and to exhibit the minute and tender care of the God whom they served, when for conscience sake they were reduced to great straits. John Stevenson lived till 1728, so that he enjoyed the rich reward of seeing the church for which he had fought, fasted, and wandered about, hiding in holes and dens of the earth, established according to the desire of his conscience. One cannot but sympathise in the feelings of such a man, when from a position of security he could "call to remembrance the former days in which, after he was illuminated, he endured a great fight of affliction, being made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly because he became a companion of them that were so used. He had taken joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that in heaven he had a better and an enduring substance."†

\* Life of Stevenson, p. 21, 22, 23, 24.

† Heb. x. 33.

## CHAPTER XV.

## GUTHRIE, AT FINWICK.

MR WILLIAM GUTHRIE was, in 1644, ordained to the sacred office, and settled in the west, over the newly erected parish of Finwick. But before the first year of his ministry had elapsed, when his solemn and lively representations of Christian truth had but just attracted the attention of the neglected and barbarous people over whom he was placed; when also he had but just entered into the holy bond of matrimony, a circumstance which under the Mosaic economy would have formed an exemption from that service, he was appointed by the General Assembly to attend the army. He severed for a time the ties of home, and obeyed with cheerfulness a mandate to which duty and patriotism alone could have reconciled him. After exercising an energetic influence over his comrades, and sharing with them some perilous encounters and some remarkable deliverances, he returned to his people at Finwick, and recommenced his exertions there with a powerful effect.

His biographer states, that “the heavenly zeal for the glory of his great master which animated the labours of this excellent minister, his fervent love to the souls of men dying in their sins, and his holy wisdom and diligence in reclaiming and instructing them, were so honoured by God, and accompanied with the powerful influences of his holy Spirit, that in a little time a noble change was wrought upon a barbarous multitude; they were almost all persuaded to attend the public ordinances, to set up and maintain the worship of God in their families; and scarce was there a house in the whole parish that did not bring forth some fruit of his ministry, and afford some real converts to a religious life. And

thus he was made the instrument of many notable triumphs of victorious grace, which Jesus Christ leads over the souls of obstinate transgressors, when he turns them from their ways, and subdues the people under him." \* \* \*

The historian dilates with much pleasure on Mr Guthrie's skill in attracting the young, his power in opening the Scriptures in catechising, his industry in private instruction, his experience in mental conflict and temptation, which taught him to sympathise with and to succour the tempted, his success and the divine blessing on his endeavours to reclaim sinners even on their deathbeds. Another feature of his zeal to recover those who were out of the way, reminds us of Charles on the mountains of Wales, and of Grimshaw in the wolds of Yorkshire.

"The state of his health made it necessary for him to use frequent and vigorous exercise; and this made him choose fishing and fowling for his common recreations; but as he was always animated by a flaming zeal for the glory of his Master, and a tender compassion to the souls of men; and as the principal thing that made him desire life and health was, that he might employ them in propagating the kingdom of God, and turning transgressors from their evil ways, so the very hours of his recreation were dedicated to this purpose. He knew how to make his diversions subservient to the nobler ends of his ministry; he made them the occasion of familiarizing his people to him, and introducing himself to their affections, and in the disguise of a sportsman he gained some to a religious life, upon whom he could have little influence in a minister's gown. Of this there happened several memorable examples.

"Some of the parish were so extremely rude and barbarous, that they never attended upon divine worship, and knew not so much as the face of their pastor. To such every thing that regarded religion was distasteful; a minister would have been enough to frighten them; nor could he have access either to visit or catechise them. But what Mr Guthrie might almost otherwise have

despaired of, he effected by his diversions. In the habit which he then wore, he conciliated the esteem and love even of those ignorant creatures, and made use of their curiosity, as well as nobler arguments, to bring them to church; so that the pulpit was the first place which discovered to them that it was their minister himself who had allured them thither. So condescending a method of gaining them procured a constant attendance on public ordinances; and was at length accompanied by the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ unto the praise of God." \*

Livingston describes him in the following terms:—  
 “ Mr William Guthrie, minister of Finwick, was a man of a most ready gift and plentiful invention, with most apposite comparisons, fit both to awaken and pacify consciences, straight and steadfast in the public cause of Christ. He was a great light in the west of Scotland.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ In his doctrine he was as full and free as any man in Scotland had ever been, which, together with the excellency of his preaching gift, did so recommend him to the affections of people, that they turned the corn field of his glebe to a little town, every one building a house for his family upon it, that they might live under the drop of his ministry.”

Many men would have felt the loss of the corn field, owing to their straitened circumstances, enough to damp their joy at being rendered so useful. But a bountiful Providence enabled Mr Guthrie to welcome such encroachments on his field, as he was the owner of the estate of Pitforthly in the shire of Angus. This crowding to his ministry from great distances arose from the persecutions, which had silenced, one after another, most of the experienced men who were valiant for truth in those days; so that the scattered flocks thankfully took shelter in the fold, at whatever inconvenience. Mr Crawford says of Mr Guthrie, that “ he was a burning and shining light, kept in later than many others by the influence of

\* Life of Guthrie, p. 11, 12.

the old Earl of Eglinton, father-in-law to the Chancellor. He converted and confirmed many thousand souls, and was esteemed the greatest practical preacher in Scotland.

“As God had designed and prepared him for eminent and extensive services during this period, his excellent accomplishments now exerted themselves with the greatest efficacy, and his usefulness was diffused more universally through the whole country, which was in a great measure deprived of pastors. Many there hungered after the word of the Lord, and this made them with more eagerness embrace the advantage which a merciful Providence afforded them in Mr Guthrie’s ministry. Great multitudes resorted to him from all parts of the west country; his large church was crowded with hearers from Glasgow, Paisley, Lanark and Hamilton, and other distant places, and his strong and clear voice enabled him to extend the profit of his discourses to the many hundreds who were obliged to stay without doors.

“An extraordinary zeal then enlivened the souls of sincere Christians; they were animated by a warm affection to the truth, and an uncommon delight in hearing the joyful sound; and this made them despise the difficulties that lay in the way, and bear cheerfully with many inconveniences, which attendance upon the sacred ordinances was then accompanied with, so that we are assured by several worthy persons who enjoyed Mr Guthrie’s ministry, that it was their usual practice to come to Finwick on Saturday, spend the greatest part of that night in prayer to God, and conversation about the great concerns of their souls, attend on public worship on the Sabbath, dedicate the remainder of that holy day to religious exercises, and then on the Monday go home, ten, twelve, or twenty miles, without grudging the fatigue of so long a way, and the want of sleep and other refreshments, or finding themselves less prepared for any business through the week, so much was their heart engaged in the attendance they gave to these sacred administrations. A remarkable blessing accompanied ordinances that were dispensed to people who came with such a disposition of soul; great numbers were converted to the

truth, and many were built up in their most holy faith. A divine power animated the gospel that was preached, and exerted itself in a holy warmth and sanctified affections, a ravishing pleasure in divine fellowship, and a noble joy and triumph in their King and Saviour, which were to be visibly discerned in the hearers; many were confirmed in the good ways of the Lord, strengthened and comforted against temporal fears and discouragements; and the fruits of righteousness discovered in the excellency of a holy conversation, were a glorious proof of the sincerity of their profession, and the wonderful success of Mr Guthrie's ministry. Some of these attested afterwards much more than is now said, and never could think without an exultation of soul, and emotions of revived affections, on the memory of their spiritual father, and the power of that victorious grace which in those days triumphed so gloriously." \*

It was impossible that Mr Guthrie should have become the centre of such a circle without exciting peculiar malice in the prelatical party. The wrath of the Archbishop of Glasgow became at last so hot, that no great man's patronage was sufficient to protect him. The long threatened hour approached, and in preparation to meet it, Mr Guthrie and his flock kept a congregational fast on the 20th July, 1664. He preached from the words of Hosea, xiii. 9, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." "And indeed," says the narrator, "the place was a Bochim." His own people and many others met him at the churchyard of Finwick next Lord's day, between four and five in the morning, when he preached two sermons to them from the close of his fast-day text, "But in me is thy help." He took leave of them, dismissing them before nine in the morning, commending them to the great God, who was able to build them up, and help them in the time of their need. Mr Guthrie had much ado to protect the soldiers who came to take him from the just indignation of his people. His influence prevailed, however, and the soldiers were permitted

\* Life of Guthrie, p. 22.



to declare the church vacant. His sentence of suspension was uttered, but he remained in the parish for more than a year, his church being shut up, as no curate was ever settled.

In October, 1665, this righteous man expired, when he was in Angus settling some affairs relative to his estate there. A contemporary remarks of him: "The Presbyterian church lost one of its pillars in him, as he was one of the most eloquent, successful, and popular preachers that ever was in Scotland." \*

To obtain the view required by this work, we are constrained to pass from point to point, with what may, to a cursory reader, seem a neglect of dates and a confusion of periods. But in fact, the desire of furnishing a glimpse of the spiritual influences which accompanied the army through a long period of vicissitudes, can only be accomplished by such hints as are here drawn together. The renewals of the Solemn Covenant, too, which arose and subsided,—now, according to the political aspect of affairs, seeming little the subject of care, and again engaging all hearts in the religious world, in proportion as the spirit of devotion ebbed and flowed in the country,—occupied such a variety of stations, and occurred at such a variety of dates, that it has seemed best, as no accurate history of that memorable period is contemplated here, to afford a specimen of the pervading spirit here and there as it presents itself, without solicitude as to binding it together.

It has been objected, that the revivals which took place in 1590, and afterwards under the preaching of Welsh, Bruce, and others, arose so soon after the Reformation, and in times of such public excitement, that they are not to be trusted,—as men's minds were in a state of ferment on the subject of religion, and they adopted opinions in the spirit of party, rather than principles in the spirit of faith. Will any candid reader of the fruit of the Ayr revivals, seeing a town of blows and strife turned into a town of peace and love; and such

\* Life of Guthrie, p. 56.

examples of the power of Christian principle as are exhibited by Kennedy and Stewart, persist in calling this a political excitement or a religion of faction? It is true these events occurred during the progress of the Reformation; and had that been a mere human or political work, it might be suspected. But did the Reformation originate with man or with God? Was there not every thing of earthly interest to quash enquiry, and rivet people silently in their errors? Were not tranquillity, the esteem of man, property, country, life, often the forfeit of enquiring into the truth? Is it the Spirit of God that alone can change the heart, and are we to cry out enthusiasm and excitement at the news of a great conversion work, because it took place near the time of the Reformation? What constituted the Reformation? It was a poor imperfect work, indeed, if it only made such a revolution in men's opinions as the introduction of the Newtonian system did in science. No; it is because the Reformation touched souls—it is because it is the work of the Holy Spirit, that it remains to this day. And we ought to bless the Lord continually that he “excited” men's souls at the time of the Reformation. Again, it has been said that the revival at Stewarton was a mere popular commotion against the purposes of Charles I. and the court, who were attempting to impose Episcopacy on an unwilling people. And in the same spirit it has been alleged that, because the great day of the Lord at Shotts, the particulars of which we shall presently relate, occurred when the people must have met under terror of the High Court of Commission, which we feel disposed to entitle the Scottish Inquisition, therefore the work could not be genuine. It is true that minds agitated by civil and religious oppression are more easily excited than they are in ordinary times of quiet. But it is also true, that the Lord takes advantage of times of affliction to press the hearts of men into his peace; and happily, in these cases, the fruits have proved that they were not the emotions of emulation, wrath, and strife; but of love, joy, and peace in believing.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## KIRK OF SHOTTS.

JOHN LIVINGSTON, who was the immediate instrument of the awakening at Shotts, preached his first sermon six years before. He had the happiness of early religious training, and the advantage of attending the ministry of many excellent men, such as Robert Bruce and Patrick Simpson. It is interesting to observe the progress of his mind. His own wish to study medicine, and his father's wish that he should, for some politic reason, marry, and settle early on his estate, both lost their influence, when the desire to become a preacher of the gospel took possession of him. In great perplexity of mind he retired to a cave on the south side of Mousewater, to spend a day before God; a place endeared to him, doubtless, by the most deeply cherished associations, as he takes pleasure in describing the spot minutely after the lapse of years. After much tossing of mind, and confusion and fear about the state of his own soul, it seemed clearly his duty to preach Christ Jesus. "Upon this," he says, "I laid aside all thought of France, and medicine, and land, and betook me to the study of divinity."

Mr Livingston, when a preacher, was affectionately called by the people of Torphichen, but because of his non-conformity, was refused ordination by the Bishop of St Andrews. He was frequently engaged to preach there, as well as in the parish of Shotts, which borders on it. Of his last Sabbath at Torphichen he says, "it was the sweetest, though sorrowful, that I had seen there. The people were very desirous to hear the word, and the Lord furnished the more to be preached to them."

In the memoir of his own life, Livingston gives a brief account of the day at Shotts, which we are now to record, but he omits some particulars which are related by Gillies, while the others are exactly the same; we, therefore, extract from Gillies's Collections, rather than from the memoir.

A few circumstances connected with the Kirk of Shotts, previous to the memorable 21st of June, 1630, will put us in possession of the state of the parish and neighbourhood, and prove again, what has been shown ever of old, that when the Lord designs mercy to his people, he awakens the spirit of prayer, so that their hearts may be prepared to receive the blessing. It also proves that there "is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few;" for it was not an experienced servant of the church, nor a man possessing weight in a worldly point of view, whom the Lord honoured in this affair; but a young preacher, as will be seen, who was so intimidated at the idea of addressing an audience which contained many experienced and prayerful members, that in the morning he actually set out to absent himself from the congregation, that he might escape the duty imposed upon him. Gillies thus describes the parish and neighbourhood:

"As the Kirk of Shotts lies on the road from the west to Edinburgh, and is distant from any convenient place of entertainment, some ladies of rank, who had occasion to pass that way, met at different times with civilities from the minister, at his house, which was situated where the public inn is now. Particularly once, when some misfortune had befallen their chariot, they were obliged to pass a night in the minister's house." (This minister was Mr John Hance.) "They observed that the house was much out of repair, and very incommodiously situated, and used their influence to get a more convenient house built for him in another place. After receiving such a substantial favour, the minister waited on them to enquire if there was any thing in his power by which he might testify his gratitude. They replied, that he would oblige them much by inviting

certain ministers, eminent in promoting practical religion, to assist at his communion. It is said that Mr Robert Bruce was one of the number engaged by Mr Hance in consequence of this request. The report of this spreading far and near, multitudes of persons of different ranks attended there, so that for several days before the Sacrament, there was much time spent in social prayer.

“It was not usual, it seems, in those times, to have any sermon on the Monday, after dispensing the Lord’s Supper. But God had given so much of his gracious presence, and afforded his people so much communion with himself on the foregoing days of that solemnity, that they knew not how to part without thanksgiving and praise. There had been a vast confluence of choice Christians, with several eminent ministers, from almost all corners of the land, who had been many of them together several days, hearing and joining together in companies in prayer, praise, and spiritual conferences. While their hearts were warm with the love of God, the desire of a public service on the Monday became general. John Livingston, chaplain to the Countess of Wigtoun, aged 27, not ordained, was with much ado prevailed upon to think of giving the sermon. He had spent the night before in prayer and conference; but when he was alone in the fields, about eight or nine in the morning, there came such a misgiving of heart upon him, under a sense of unworthiness and unfitness to speak before so many aged and worthy ministers and so many eminent and experienced Christians, that he was thinking to have stolen quite away,—and was actually gone away to some distance. But when just about to lose sight of the Kirk of Shotts, these words, ‘was I ever a barren wilderness, or a land of darkness?’ were brought into his heart with such an overcoming power, as constrained him to return and comply with the call to preach.

“This he did with good assistance, for an hour-and-half, on the points he had meditated, from Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness,—and from all your

idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.' As he was about to close, a heavy shower made the audience hastily put on their cloaks and mantles. But instead of hurrying to seek shelter, they remained where they were, and the preacher began to address them to the following purpose: 'If a few drops of rain from the clouds so discompose you, how discomposed will you be, how full of horror and despair, if God should deal with you as you deserve? and thus he will deal with all the finally impenitent. God might justly rain fire and brimstone upon us, as upon the cities of the plain. The Son of God, by tabernacling in our nature, and obeying and suffering in it, is the only refuge and covert from the storm of divine wrath due to us for sin. His merits and mediation alone are the screen from that storm, and none but penitent believers shall have the benefit of that shelter.' In these, and expressions to this purpose, he was led on for about an hour after he had done with what he had premeditated, in a strain of exhortation and warning, with great enlargement and melting of heart.\*

In reviewing his life as a preacher, Mr Livingston says, "I was often much deserted and cast down in preaching, and sometimes tolerably assisted. I never preached a sermon that I would be earnest to see again in writ, but two. The one was at a communion on a Monday at the Kirk of Shotts, and the other on a Monday after a communion in Holywood (Ireland), and both these times I had spent the whole night before in conference and prayer with some Christians, without any more than ordinary preparation; otherwise my gift was suited rather to simple common people, than to learned judicious auditors." †

Fleming makes mention of the day at Shotts in his own peculiar manner of solemn joy and thanksgiving.

\* Gillies's Collections.

† Life of Livingston, p. 62.

“ I must also mention that solemn communion at the Kirk of Shotts, at which time there was so convincing an appearance of God, and downpouring of the Spirit even in an extraordinary way, which did follow the ordinances, especially on Monday, 21st of June, when there was a strange unusual motion on the hearers, who in a great multitude were there convened of divers ranks. It was known, as I can speak on sure ground, that near five hundred had at that time a discernible change wrought on them, of whom most proved lively Christians afterwards. It was the sowing of a seed through Clyddisdale, so that many of the most eminent Christians of that country could date either their conversion or some remarkable confirmation of their case from that day. It was the more remarkable, that one, after much reluctance, by a special and unexpected Providence, was called to preach that sermon on the Monday, which was not then usually practised; and that the night before, by most of the Christians there, was spent in prayer; so that the work of that Monday might be discerned as a convincing return to prayer.” \*

Dr Gillies, with his usual caution, furnishes testimonials to the credibility of Mr Fleming as a man of high integrity and piety; and also states, that his opportunities of information with regard to the revival at Shotts were not to be doubted. His ministerial life was passed at Cambuslang, within twelve miles of this interesting spot, from 1653 to 1661, just twenty-three years after; and being a minister in the same presbytery, he must have enjoyed frequent opportunities of conversing with some of the subjects of that refreshing visitation, and with others who had opportunities of observing their consistent Christian demeanour during a course of years. As particular instances are more edifying than general statements, we again are called upon to regret the absence of more ample details, both of the effect of the sermon at the time it was preached and afterwards. However, the evidence is indubitable that here, as in the

\* Fleming's Fulfilment of the Scriptures.

revival at the city called Sychar, of old, the narrative of which is as brief, many were brought to "know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

"The following instances of sound conversion are well attested, and were it proper, the persons could be named. On that remarkable Monday, three gay young gentlemen of Glasgow were travelling to Edinburgh, for the purpose of enjoying the public diversions there. They stopped to breakfast at Shotts. One of them proposed to his associates to stay and hear the young man who was to preach, while their horses rested. And that they might not lose time, they agreed to quit the worship at the end of the sermon, and not wait for the concluding devotional exercises. But the power of God so arrested them, that they could not quit the spot till all was over. When they returned to the public house to take their horses, they called for some refreshment; but when it was placed on the table, they all looked to each other, no one durst touch it till a blessing was asked, and as it was not their manner formerly to be careful about such things, one of them at last proposed,—'I think we should ask a blessing to our drink.' The others readily agreed, and put it upon one of the company to do it, which he at once agreed to. When they had done, they could not rise until another should return thanks. They went on their way more sober and sedate than usual, but none of them mentioned their inward concern to another, only now and then they remarked, 'Was it not a great sermon we heard?' or, 'I never heard the like of it.' They went to Edinburgh, but instead of plunging into light amusements, as they had designed, they kept their rooms great part of the two days while they remained; and then, being quite weary of Edinburgh, they returned home. They still did not open their minds to each other on their way, and when they reached home they kept their apartments, and came little abroad. At last one of them visited another, and discovered to him what God had done for him at Shotts. The other frankly owned the concern he was brought under at the same time. Both of them went to the



third, whom they found in the same case, and they three agreed directly to begin a fellowship meeting. They continued to have a practice suitable to their profession as long as they lived, and some of them lived to an advanced age, and were eminent and useful men in Glasgow.

“ Another instance, still preserved, is that of a poor man, a horse-hirer in Glasgow, who had been employed by a gentlewoman to carry her to Shotts. He was engaged in pasturing his horse at a small distance from the tent, not concerning himself about the occasion of meeting at all. In the latter part of the sermon, when the power of God was so much felt, he apprehended that there was a more than ordinary concern among the people ; his own mind was affected in a way that he could not account for ; he hastily rose up and ran into the congregation, where he was made a sharer of what the Holy Spirit was distributing among them that day.”\*

Mr Andrew Gray of Chrystoun, an eminently pious gentleman, whose name has descended in sweet memorial even to this day, states the following particulars of the more diffused effects of this period of awakening, which we select from some others.

“ Two springs of the revival of religion in this corner were the famous sermon at the Kirk of Shotts, and the labours of Mr Robert Bruce. As at the sermon at Shotts, a good number of people were by grace made acquainted with the life and power of religion, so several of them were eminently good men, and remarkable not only for a pious, inoffensive behaviour, but also for their abounding in all those good fruits which pure and undefiled religion enables its sincere followers to produce. This made them not only esteemed and revered by many of their neighbours, but also produced some respect for religion itself, from which they procured many advantages, its followers being readier to do them all kind of good offices than other people. Among other good fruits, you cannot doubt a strong inclination to promote

\* Gillies's Collections, vol. i. p. 310, 311.

the spiritual good of others was a principal one. As the labourers were then few in this part of God's vineyard, he seemed to have inspired these private Christians with an uncommon degree of love to the souls of men, inciting them to labour by all proper methods, to bring others acquainted with that grace which had produced such blessed effects on themselves; and their labours were not without a considerable effect. They were called the Puritans of the Muir of Bothwell, perhaps by way of reproach, by those who were ill affected towards them."

Messrs Bennet, Ramsay, and Carstairs were cotemporary, shortly after the time of Bruce and Livingston, and were mutually helpful in promoting a lively work of grace in the west. And Mr Thomas Melvin of Calder, of whose ministry it is stated, that in a few years the worship of God was so generally set up in families in his parish that it was counted a scandal to such as neglected it, and the number of praying societies rose from one to eight or ten. These men were blessed in extending the knowledge of the gospel by the more ordinary means; but as we are in search of singular effusions of divine grace, that, on a Monday after the celebration of the Last Supper at Kirkintilloch, comes more under our particular notice. "The people being detained in church by a sudden fall of rain, Mr Carstairs (not their own minister, but the minister of Cathcart) stept into the pulpit, and in an extempore discourse, wherein he described the nature of faith, and cautioned them against mistakes about it, especially against depending on a sort of faith that they had all their days, and knew not how they came by, declaring faith to be a work of the Spirit of God with power—there arose a mighty commotion in the congregation; many were brought into a deep concern about their soul's condition, the good fruit of which appeared in their after life and conversation. A similar instance is remembered at Calder, where the same Mr Carstairs officiated for Mr Melvin, who had been taken with a fit of sickness during the sacramental solemnities. While they were singing part of the 24th Psalm, 'Ye gates lift up your heads,' &c., before the blessing of the elements, there was a

mighty melting of heart seized the congregation, and the spirit of God, like a mighty wind, burst open the everlasting doors, and took possession of the hearts of sinners, several people from that day dating their first soul-concern and conversion. Mr Carstairs used to say, he had three days of heaven upon earth, and one of them was at Calder. The exemplary life and conversation of the clergymen we have mentioned, as well as their labours and zeal for winning souls to Christ, raised the credit of the ministry high among good people. They loved them as their own souls, attended the ordinances with earnestness and joy, and considered the want of them as the greatest loss they could possibly sustain. This appeared when, after their ministers were turned out at the Restoration, multitudes attended their preaching in the fields at the hazard of their lives.”\*

Gillies also affords some hints, which one cannot but regret, for the benefit of later ages, he has not extended to full and particular accounts—such as “ I have seen a manuscript in which there is an account of a remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God on a company of ministers and Christians, at a private meeting at Sheens, near Edinburgh, on the day when the five articles of Perth were voted and passed in Parliament; particularly when Mr David Dickson” (then a young man) “prayed. I have often heard that the period between 1650 and the Restoration was a very remarkable one in Scotland for the success of the Gospel. I have heard old Christians speak of a remarkable reviving and uncommon power attending the word, immediately after the Revolution, in the West and South of Scotland, in Fife, Lothian, &c. Particularly I have heard of a remarkable communion at Stow, near Galashiels, just about the time of the Revolution.” In short, there are abundant and continually recurring evidences that the power of the Holy Spirit has been manifested in this country, in the revival form, and in no scanty measure. And again and again, the earnest enquiry returns, Why is it not so

\* Gillies’s Collections, vol. i. p. 314.

with us now? It will be found that it is our infidelity on the subject which straitens our expectations and stints our petitions. We are so filled with suspicion and incredulity, that we require more evidence to prove what God has really done, what he has many times promised in his word to do, and what a lively faith would lead us to be daily looking and watching for, than we should require to convince us of any most improbable or unlikely thing. Our eyes are so bent earthward, looking on the corruption of man and his inaptness to acquire a spiritual mind, that we contemplate nothing but hypocrisy, delusion, enthusiasm, and falling away. Why do we thus forget the Almighty arm that upholds every faithful soul? Why do we not believe the promise of the very God of peace, that He will bruise Satan under our feet? Why do we lose sight of Christ the anointed King, who reigns now in the souls of thousands, and who must reign till all enemies are put under his feet? Let us accept with gladness the evidences that our King is still walking in the midst of his church; and while we try the spirits, and make sure work of conversion where our own influence reaches, let us not, by our cold and thankless reception of good tidings, quench the spirit of hope and the spirit of prayer, and render ourselves unmeet for the reception of so great a blessing.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CAMBUSLANG.

It is interesting, when entering on the revival in this parish, to remark that it was the scene of Mr Fleming's labours for eight years; and though that faithful man, whose whole soul seems absorbed in observing the Lord's goings in the sanctuary, and the progress of the knowledge of divine things in the world, was removed from that place eighty years before the awakening in 1742, yet we are disposed to think the societies for prayer, alluded to in the narrative as having subsisted several years before, might have taken their origin during his ministrations.

The church seems to have been so little in the attitude of looking out for the conversion of souls, as the effect of its own ministrations, or so many years had elapsed since the Lord had manifested himself in great power after that manner in it, that the good news from Cambuslang is presented not in the simple and attractive form of a plain and unsuspected statement of what the Spirit had done, but in the more repulsive shape of attestations to its truth. This mode, however, has its advantages, especially as regards those who may be inclined to be sceptical, and we retain it on account of the well known names of eminent Christians which are appended to the attestations, rather than weaken its force by casting it into the shape of narrative.

Cambuslang is only four miles distant from Glasgow, several parishes of which, but chiefly the Barony, were made partakers of the good gifts dispensed at that period. Many of the neighbouring clergy attested what they witnessed; M'Knight from Irvine, Webster from Edinburgh, and Willison from Dundee, also came to behold

that blessed sight. The first letter, dated May 8, bears no signature:—

“ SIR,

May 8, 1742.

“ As the report of the good work at Cambuslang, which has for several weeks engaged the attention of numbers in this city and country in the neighbourhood, is now spread over a great part of the nation, it is no wonder that one who lives at the distance you do should be curious to have a true relation of it; and as I would be glad of any opportunity to serve you, it is very agreeable to me to think that I can gratify you in this matter; especially in what concerns the people in that parish and some other parishes near it, having had opportunity to converse fully with the minister of Cambuslang, and with many of the people there who are under this spiritual exercise, and also with some other ministers who have several in their parishes who appear to be under the same happy impressions.

“ There is one thing in the entry I must apprise you of, viz., That I am to confine myself to a simple narration of facts, as the evidences on which the opinion of many concerning the present happy change that is wrought in that people is founded, without entering into any reasoning, but leaving it to yourself to draw proper conclusions from the facts, after comparing them with scripture rules and instances.

“ I must also acquaint you, as it was natural to expect, when, on a singular occasion of this sort, great numbers of people from adjacent towns and country came flocking to a place that became so remarkable, that in such a promiscuous multitude some counterfeits would readily happen. It was the early care of ministers who interested themselves most in that matter to enter into a strict examination of those who appeared to be under more than ordinary concern, so as to obtain satisfaction to themselves whether the work was solid, being justly apprehensive that the powers of darkness would not fail to employ their devices to bring contempt on what would tend so much to the honour of the gospel.

“ In these watchful endeavours it must be owned, that some impostors were found to have mixed with the sincere ; but there is reason to bless God that, so far as yet appears, they have been very few ; and as these have been severely rebuked, so the most awful warnings have been given against all such insincere pretensions, which warnings, there is reason to believe, have had very good effects.

“ Now, sir, to give the short history of this matter :—

“ The minister of that parish, in his ordinary course of sermons for nearly a twelvemonth before this work began, had been preaching on those subjects which tend most directly to explain the nature and prove the necessity of regeneration, according to the different lights in which that important matter is represented in holy scripture : and for some months before the late remarkable events a more than ordinary concern about religion appeared among that people ; one good evidence of which was, that about the end of January last a petition was given in to the minister, signed by about ninety heads of families, desiring a weekly lecture should be set up, which was readily granted, and the day fixed on Thursday, as most convenient for the temporal interests of the parish.

On Monday, the 15th of February, 1742, there was a general meeting at the minister's house of the particular societies for prayer that had subsisted in the parish for several years before : on Tuesday there was another meeting for prayer there, the occasion of which was a concert with several serious Christians elsewhere about solemn prayer relating to the public interests of the gospel ; in which concert only a small number of people in Cambuslang were engaged at first, but others getting notice of it desired to join, and were admitted. The people who met for prayer these two days apprehended they had been so well employed, and found so much leisure for it, that they had a third meeting on Wednesday ; but on all these three days they returned timeously in the evening to their own houses, so far is it from being true

that they rushed from some of these meetings to the church, where they continued for some days and nights, as was reported.

“ Before Thursday, February 18th, they had weekday sermons only on Thursdays, according to the above-mentioned desire of the parish ; and before that day, though several particular persons came to the minister from time to time, under deep concern for their salvation, yet there came no great numbers together. But on that day, after sermon, a considerable number of people, reckoned by some present about fifty, came together to the minister’s house, under convictions and alarming apprehensions about the state of their souls, and desiring to speak with him.

“ From this unexpected number coming in an evening in so great distress, and the necessity of the minister’s exhorting them in general, and conversing with many of them separately, you will easily perceive that he behoved to spend that night with them, as he did the best part of two or three more since this work began, which is now about twelve weeks.

“ After this, numbers daily resorted to that place, some to hear the word, some to converse with those who were under this remarkable concern, and others with different views ; and the desires and exigencies of those were such, that the minister found himself obliged, without any previous intimation, to provide them with daily sermon, a few days excepted ; and, after sermon, usually to spend some time with them in exhortations, prayers, and singing of psalms, being especially encouraged thereto by the extraordinary success with which God was pleased, from time to time, to bless his own ordinances ; in so much that, by the best information that could be had, the number of persons awakened to a deep concern about salvation, and against whom there is no known exception as yet, has amounted to above three hundred. And through the blessing of God, the work seems to be still making considerable progress every week, and more for some weeks of late than sometime formerly.



“ Of the number just now mentioned, the far greater part have already given, both to ministers and other serious Christians, a good account of what they have felt in their convictions and humiliation for sin, of the way of their relief by faith in the mercy of God through Christ, and of what they feel in the prevalent inclinations and disposition of their hearts.

“ As to their devotion and other parts of their practice, which is that which chiefly attracts the attention and regard of this country, there are comfortable accounts given of it by those who have the best and most frequent opportunities of knowing their daily behaviour.

“ The parish of Cambuslang being of so small extent, that most of the people live within a mile of the church, and some who have the best intelligence being almost every day with the minister, he and they have abundant opportunities to know the practice of such of the people I am speaking of as live within their bounds ; and the account they give of it is, that they appear to be in a very hopeful way ; and the like good accounts are given by several ministers and others of such of those people as belong to the neighbouring parishes.

“ Among the particular good fruits already appearing, both in Cambuslang and elsewhere, the following instances seem very encouraging. A visible reformation of the lives of persons who were formerly notorious sinners, particularly the laying aside of cursing and swearing, and drinking to excess among those who were addicted to that practice ; remorse for acts of injustice, and for violations of relative duties, confessed to the persons wronged, joined with new endeavours after a conscientious discharge of such duties ; restitution, which has more than once been distinctly and particularly inculcated in public since this work began ; forgiving of injuries ; all desirable evidences of fervent love to one another, to all men, and even to those that spoke evil of them ; and among those people, both in Cambuslang and other parishes, more affectionate expressions of regard than ever to their own ministers, and to the ordinances dispensed by them ; the keeping up divine worship in families

where it was neglected very often by some, and entirely by others ; the erecting of new societies for prayer, both old and young, partly within the parish, where no less than twelve such societies are newly begun, and partly elsewhere, among persons who have been awakened on this occasion ; and, together with all these things, ardent love to the Holy Scriptures, vehement thirsting after holy ordinances, earnest desires to get private instructions in their duty from ministers and others, with commendable docility and tractableness in receiving such instructions.

“ This thirst after knowledge is particularly remarkable in those who were more ignorant, several who cannot read, and some of them old persons, being so desirous to be better acquainted with the word of God, that they are resolved to learn to read, and some of the younger sort actually putting themselves to school.

“ I would farther add, that these good impressions have been made on persons of very different and opposite characters and ages—on some of the most abandoned as well as the more sober ; on young as well as old ; on the illiterate as well as the more knowing ; on persons of a slower as well as those of a quicker and more sprightly genius ; and, which seems to deserve special attention, on persons who were addicted to scoffing at sacred things, and at this work in particular at the beginning of it.

“ The sum of the facts I have represented to you is, that this work has been begun, and carried on under the influence of the great and substantial doctrines of Christianity, pressing jointly the *necessity of repentance towards God, of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and holiness in all manner of conversation* ; that it came after such preparations as an extensive concern about religion gradually increasing,—together with extraordinary fervent prayer in large meetings, particularly relating to the success of the gospel ; that great and successful pains have been taken to discover and discountenance hypocritical pretences, and to warn people against what might have the least appearance of enthusiasm or delusion ; that the account given by a very large number of people of their

inward exercises and attainments seems to agree with the Scripture standard, and they are bringing forth in practice fruits meet for repentance, comprehending the several branches of piety, and of the most substantial morality, that can entitle men to the regard of friends of religion and virtue.

“ And now, sir, I have given you a plain and simple account of the most material facts relating to this extraordinary work at Cambuslang, and those awakened there belonging to other parishes,—in all which I have avoided disputing, and studied brevity.

“ I leave it to you to judge how far such facts make it evident that this work is from God, when (to use the words of a pious divine treating of a subject of the same nature) he that was formerly a drunkard lives a sober life ; when a vain, light, and wanton person becomes grave and sedate ; when the blasphemer becomes a praiser of God ; when carnal joy is turned into heaviness, and that professedly on account of their soul’s condition ; when the ignorant are filled with the knowledge of divine things, and the tongue that was dumb in the things of God speaks the language of Canaan ; when secure sinners have been roused with a witness about the state of their souls, those who were ignorant can speak skilfully about religious things, and even the graceless are increased in knowledge ; swearers drop their oaths, and speak reverently of God. Vain persons, who minded no religion, but frequented taverns and frolics, passing their time in filthiness, foolish-talking, and jesting, or singing paltry songs, do now frequent Christian societies (for prayer), seek Christian conversation, and talk of soul-concerns, and choose to express their mirth in Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. Those who were too sprightly to be devout, and esteemed it an unmanly thing to shed tears for their souls’ state, have mourned as for an only son, and seemed to be in bitterness as for a first-born ; and persons who came to mock at the lamentations of others have been convinced, and by free grace proselyted to such ways as they formerly despised.

“ I am, sir,” &c.

*Attestation by Mr John Hamilton, Minister of the  
Gospel in Barony.*

“ I understand it is expected from me, that I should declare my sentiments of the extraordinary work at Cambuslang, as a good many of my parishioners have lately been awakened there to a great concern about their souls’ happiness.

“ As soon as I was informed of their condition, I made it my business to wait on them, and found a good many persons under the deepest exercise of soul, crying out bitterly of their lost and miserable state by reason of sin, of their unbelief in despising Christ and the offers of the gospel—of the hardness of their hearts, and their former gross carelessness and indifferency about religion; and though some of them said they had regularly attended the preaching of the gospel, yet they acknowledged with much regret their misimprovement of it. How many sweet sermons they had heard without any benefit, and they came to church without any design to be instructed, but only, as they said, to see and be seen.

“ I have heard them expressing a great deal of sorrow for these things, and seemingly in the most serious and sincere manner; and not so much, as some of them have told me, from the fear of punishment, to which they had thereby exposed themselves, as from a sense of the dishonour they had done to God and the blessed Redeemer, and frequently aggravated their sins, from this consideration, that they had been the betrayers and murderers of the Lord of glory.

“ And though I have seen some of them under extreme affliction and distress, I could never observe the least disorder in their judgments; but their complaints are always suitable to their condition. Neither have I found any of them carried away with despairing thoughts of the mercy of God, but all of them seemed to be seeking relief in the method the gospel proposes, and expressed the warmest desires after an interest in Christ, to obtain which they said they would cheerfully lay down

their lives, and part with every thing that was dear to them in the world

“ I have at several times conversed with many of these persons, and have received no small satisfaction from such conversations. When speaking of prayer, they have told me how much that duty had been neglected by them, and in what a cold, lifeless manner it had been performed, from which therefore they neither did nor could reap any satisfaction ; but now, said they, it was an exercise in which they found much sweetness and comfort. Their love to the Holy Scriptures all of them express in the most lively and moving manner, frequently calling it a precious and invaluable treasure, greatly surprised how they could possibly slight it in time past, and declaring they now saw many things in it highly useful and comfortable to them, which they never before imagined had been there.

“ They express a great love to and desire after the public ordinances. When I asked some of them if they had such affection as the Psalmist speaks of in the beginning of the 122d Psalm, when it was said to him, ‘ Let us go up to the house of the Lord,’ they have told me, that though it was quite otherwise with them before, yet now they found a vast pleasure in attending the church and public worship of God, and a great unwillingness to withdraw from it when the service was over. They are likewise exceedingly desirous of more private instruction in their duty, and take all opportunities of waiting on those that can be of use to them, and such of them as are near at hand do frequently come to my house, and receive my advice and assistance, and I never saw persons more docile than they are. I must own, indeed, that when I first conversed with them, I found some of them pretty ignorant of the principles of religion ; but this was what they seemed deeply grieved and afflicted for, and much condemned their former sloth and negligence, and since that time have been making use of the proper means of knowledge, and I think I can say with no contemptible success, considering the short time they have had.

“ Some of them seem to discover devout breathings of soul after God, and the blessed Redeemer, and resolutions through grace to depend on him in the worst of circumstances, often making use of these words of Job, xiii. 15, ‘ Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.’ I have been much surprised to see how readily, and even judiciously some of them who had been formerly ignorant and unconverted, have spoken of some of the most important points of practical religion, and with what facility they have adduced passages of Scripture very suitable to what they were speaking about.

“ There is another branch of Christian duty that I do think they are likewise studying conformity to. And that is love to mankind : I have often heard them wishing, and desiring that all men might be brought to Christ and the knowledge of the truth ; and particularly expressing a great regard for all that are the Lord’s people. So far as I have yet access to know them, they seem to be of a meek and quiet spirit, and willing to forgive ; telling me they desire to wish well and to pray even for the happiness of those who had been injurious to them.

“ More might be said on this subject, but I choose rather to be sparing, till time make a fuller discovery of them.

“ The persons I have conversed with, were of different characters, some of them had all along been pretty regular and sober in their lives, and duly enough attended the ordinances of the gospel ; others of them were very careless this way, and addicted to many sins, but even those who were more blameless in their lives, have declared that their hearts till now were never touched with any thing they heard from the word of God ; that they had never lived under the influence of religion, and were grossly unconcerned about their salvation.

“ These now are some of the appearances I observe among some of my people, who were awakened to a concern about their souls at Cambuslang ; which do strongly incline me to think that it is the work of God.

“ JOHN HAMILTON.

“ *Glasgow, 26th April, 1742.*”

*Attestation by Mr M'Knight, Minister of Irvine.*

“ REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

“ AS I had by information from letters conceived a good opinion of the extraordinary and surprising work at Cambuslang before I went thither upon an invitation from you to preach there last Sabbath ; so my said opinion has been very much confirmed by what I was eye and ear-witness to during my abode with you, from Saturday to Tuesday last ; being still more and more persuaded that it is the real work of the Spirit of God.

“ While I joined with your congregation in public worship, I observed among the vast number that flocked to hear the gospel preached at Cambuslang, not only the serious looks and the close attention of the multitudes to what was spoken, but also the weeping eyes of many that appeared to be in the greatest distress and trouble.

“ Again, in the evenings after public worship was ended, and when I had occasion to converse with several of these afflicted persons, I found their wounds and anguish of soul, together with their tears, did proceed not from a whimsical and enthusiastic imagination, but from a deep conviction of the great evil and demerit of sin, original and actual, particularly of their sin of unbelief, and slighting precious Christ, and the gracious offers of salvation by him ; and when I exhorted and directed them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as St Paul did the convinced and troubled gaoler (Acts, xvi. 31), they answered ‘ Lord help me to believe, gladly would I believe, but I cannot.’ However, while under their soul exercises for sin, and because of God’s wrath, I heard them expressing ardent desires after Christ, and an interest in him, and salvation by him, and a great thirst after the word, the knowledge of God and divine things, and after a saving faith in a crucified Jesus, which gave me ground to hope that our dear Redeemer Jesus would soon accomplish these longing desires in relieving them from their distresses of both body and mind.

“ Likewise I conversed with others who were under

piercing and deep convictions for sin, and have felt the sharp arrows of the Almighty sticking fast in their souls, and to whom the Spirit of God had, upon their believing in Jesus Christ, applied his precious blood to heal these wounds, and herein had granted relief and comfort, hath delivered their souls from death, their eyes from tears, and their feet from falling; for which distinguishing mercies they were exalting free grace, saying with the apostle Paul, it is by grace we are what we are, and blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

“ They, when I conversed with them, declared distinctly the way and manner how their convictions began, and how the relief they got from soul-troubles came to them. They also discovered the gracious work of the spirit of God upon their souls, in their confession of sin with shame, sorrow, and blushing; in their professing a hatred of it, and loathing themselves on the account thereof, crying out, Behold we are vile, we abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes; in their love to God and his ordinances, in renouncing their own righteousness, and in relying wholly on Christ for righteousness and strength; in their high esteem of and ardent love to their Redeemer, in their charity and love to one another and to all Christians, and especially to those who are the real disciples of the Lord Jesus, and bear the image of their heavenly Father; in their tender sympathy with, and affectionate concern for, those that fall under distress and anguish of spirit for sin, and in their endeavours to relieve them, by good advices and proper exhortations, and to comfort the dejected and disquieted in mind with the consolations wherewith they themselves had been comforted. These are a few of the good fruits of the Spirit of God I observed among several I conversed with at Cambuslang.

“ Therefore I cannot but bear testimony, that, in my apprehension, the surprising work with you, dear brother, for these several weeks past, is of God. And if the work be of God, then neither the devil nor all his agents shall



be able to overthrow it; yea, I hope through the divine blessing on the seed sown and to be sown, to hear more of this remarkable success with you. As I desire to join you in giving thanks to God for this remarkable countenancing of your sacred ministrations to many in your parish and neighbourhood, so I entreat you may constantly remember me and my flock at the throne of grace; and join with us in earnest and repeated prayers to God, that the like observable outpourings of the Holy Spirit may visit my congregation and the neighbouring parishes to revive his work in this west country; and may it spread not only through all the churches in Britain and Ireland, but throughout all the churches in the world for building Zion; yea, that the heathen may be given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

“ That a rich and powerful blessing from heaven may crown your ministerial labours with more and more success, is, and shall be the earnest prayer of

“ Your affectionate brother

“ And servant in the Lord,

“ WILLIAM M'KNIGHT.

“ *Irvine, 6th May, 1742.*”

It might be tedious to insert all the attestations given by ministers who went to witness the great sight at Cambuslang. A few examples, however, extracted from the attestations of the effect of converting power upon individuals of various characters and conditions will be instructive. Mr Connell, minister of Kilbryde, relates his interview with a young woman, who gave him a distinct account of her distress and *outgate* (deliverance). She said, “ ‘ I have lived about twenty years in the world, and all that time the devil had possession of my heart, and I am sure he is a bad guest; but blessed be God, I hope he is now in a great measure dispossessed, and shall never, through the strength of Christ, recover that power over me that formerly he had.’ Mean time, I observe to you, this person had always been of a blameless life,

and not chargeable with any scandal; yet she with tears regretted her careless way of going about secret duty, reading the Scriptures and hearing sermons, or neglecting these altogether; but with much humility and seriousness, in the strength of divine grace, expressed her resolution that she would do so no more.

“ Upon the whole, in most of all I have seen and conversed with, I observed, and have daily occasion to observe, the effects of godly sorrow mentioned by the apostle, 2 Cor. vii. 11.”

Mr M'Laurin of Glasgow remarks:—“ From the best observation I could make on their dispositions and behaviour, compared with the observations made by others, they seem in a particular manner to excel in meekness, humility, self-denial, and charity; in the wisdom from above, described by James, iii. 17, as ‘ first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits,’ &c., in aversion to things that tend rather to strife than edification, and in ardent desire of the conversion and salvation of others.

“ An unknown person very lately wrote a letter to Mr M'Culloch, dated 29th April, in which was enclosed another letter with a twenty shilling note to Mr J. J——, merchant in this city, on account of wrong done to his father of two or three shillings value, many years ago; and that unknown person desires, that in the printed account that is expected of the work at Cambuslang, there may be some instructions about restitution.”

There is not in all the attestations one more instructive than that of Mr David Connell, preacher, as it exhibits the manner in which the conversions of some affect the bystanders, giving them the first conviction of their dangerous position; and also, how the present operations of the Holy Spirit spread a prayerful solemnity even over the impenitent. This effect is continually remarked during revivals in America, and so has it recently been in more than one favoured spot in Scotland. Mr Connell says, “ I have conversed with a good many in this parish (Kilbryde) that have been affected there

(at Cambuslang). Some have told me, that by what they heard, they had great desire raised in their minds to be burdened with sin, that so they might come to Christ; and then have got so great a sense of sin and guilt as to be more than they could well bear. Others that have come to me in great distress, when I asked them how they came to be in that condition, answered, that while they were hearing some private exhortation of the minister, a great many of their sins were brought to their remembrance. They thought they had been doing nothing but sinning all their days, that they were empty of all good, and that they were undone without Christ. Some have told me that they met with great opposition in going to attend upon the ordinances, but they became resolute and went; and what parts of Scripture fastened any sense of sin upon their minds; how this was more and more increased; and what texts kept them from despair amidst the greatest terror one could readily be under.

“Others told me that all things in the world were now become tasteless to them, seeing the danger their souls were in. I have seen some sitting alone all in tears, and when I asked them what was the matter, they said they were afraid lest their convictions should go off without any good effect, and expressed a strong desire after Christ. Others that seemed to be under great concern, on being asked what they wanted, said, ‘Conviction of sin, and faith in Christ.’ I have been greatly surprised to hear such a distinct account of the provoking nature of sin, and the terms of our acceptance with God, given by those that are reputed the most ignorant, and who, I believe, knew scarce any thing at all of religious matters till this work began. I cannot say, that among all I have conversed with, I have found one in despair, but have heard them expressing a great sense of their inability to believe. I have heard them expressing the highest esteem of the mercy of God and the mediation of Christ. \* \* \* I have heard them expressing a sense of the evil of sin, and their own vile-

ness by it ; earnest desires after perfection in holiness, and fears lest they should fall back into their former sinful state ; mentioning the promises that supported them under these fears. \* \* \* Their earnest desires and diligent endeavours after more knowledge ; the deep sense and sweet relish of divine truth ; their readiness to apply what they hear to themselves, even those things that discover more of the corruption of their hearts, and errors of their lives ; the pouring out of their souls to God in prayer," &c. In short, every mark of a genuine work of grace, from its earliest to its closing stages, are mentioned by Mr Connell as being evidenced in the converts at Kilbryde, who had been awakened first under the revival at Cambuslang.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CAMBUSLANG.

MR M'CUCCLOCH'S account of the second commemoration of the Redeemer's death we shall give nearly entire, as an example of the diligence, the liveliness, the delight in ordinances which the Holy Spirit's presence gives. Would that Scotland would place this in contrast with the formal half-dead ordinances with which she has too frequently and too long been satisfied, and never rest till the Lord hears her cry, and returns to his church, and dwells in the midst of it!

“REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

“You know that we had the Lord's Supper dispensed here on the 11th of July. It was such a sweet and agreeable time to many, that a motion was made by Mr Webster, and immediately seconded by Mr Whitfield, that we should have another such occasion again in this place very soon. The motion was very agreeable to me, but I thought it needful to deliberate before coming to a resolution. The thing proposed was indeed extraordinary,\* but so had the work in this place been for several months past. Care was therefore taken to acquaint the several meetings for prayer with the motion, who relished it well, and prayed for direction to those concerned to determine in the matter. The session met next Lord's day,

\* It may be necessary to explain, that, after the Reformation, it had been the custom to observe this ordinance seldom, at first, perhaps from the difficulties attending it in troublous times, and also from the willingness of devout persons to travel many miles for the purpose of enjoying the privilege repeatedly in other parishes.

and taking into consideration the divine command to celebrate this ordinance *often*, joined with the extraordinary work that had been here for some time, and understanding that many who had met with much benefit to their souls at the last solemnity, had expressed their earnest desire of seeing another in this place shortly, and hearing of many who intended to have joined at the last occasion, but were kept back by inward discouragement or outward obstruction, it was therefore resolved (God willing) that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be again dispensed in this parish on the third Sabbath of August. And there was first one day, then another, appointed for a general meeting of the societies for prayer at the manse, who met along with some other Christians from the neighbourhood. When the manse could not conveniently hold them, they went to the church, and at one of these meetings, when light failed them in the church, a number of them, by their own motion, came again to the manse, and continued at prayer and praise till about one in the morning. The design of these meetings was to ask mercy of the God of heaven on ourselves; to pray for the Seceders and others who unhappily oppose this work of God here and in some other parts where it takes place. That God would forgive their guilt in this, open their eyes, remove their prejudices, and convince them that it is indeed his work; and that the Lord would continue and increase the blessed work of conviction and conversion here, and in other places where it is begun, and extend it to all corners of the land; that he would eminently countenance the dispensing of the Holy Supper here the second time, and make the glory of the latter solemnity exceed that of the former. Much of the Lord's gracious presence was enjoyed at these meetings for prayer, returns of mercy were vouchsafed in part, and are still further expected and hoped for.

“ The second occasion did indeed much excel the former, not only in the number of ministers and people, but, which is the main thing, in a much greater measure of the power and special presence of God in the sensi-

ble experience of multitudes that attended. Webster, M'Laurin, Gillies, Robe, M'Knight, Bonnar, Whitfield, and several others were among the clergy who partook of and assisted at this solemnity. The venerable Bonnar, whose frailty required him to employ three days in travelling eighteen miles from his parish of Torphichen to Cambuslang, when he was helped to ascend the tent, preached three times with great life, and journeyed to his home with much satisfaction and joy. Mr Whitfield's sermons on Saturday, Sabbath, and Monday were attended with much power, particularly on Sabbath night about ten, and that on Monday, several crying out; and a very great but decent weeping and mourning was observable throughout the auditory. On Sabbath evening, while he was serving some tables, he appeared to be so filled with the love of God, as to be in a kind of transport, and communicated with much of that blessed frame. Time would fail me to speak of the evidences of the power of God coming along with the rest of the assistants. The number of people that were there on Saturday and Monday was very considerable; but the number present at the three tents on the Lord's day was so great, that, so far as I can hear, none saw the like since the times of the Reformation. The lowest estimate I hear, with which Mr Whitfield agrees, and he has been much used to great multitudes, makes them to have been upwards of thirty thousand. The number of communicants appears to have been about three thousand. Some worthy of credit, and that had opportunities to know, give it as their opinion, that such a blessed frame fell upon the people, that, had they possessed means to obtain tokens, there would have been a thousand more."

This concourse of people was assembled from many and remote places; besides Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Kilmarnock, even England and Ireland having furnished a portion, it is interesting to see a hundred reckoned from Irvine, and a hundred from Stewarton, the scenes of similar divine influences in former days.

"One young man, who had a view to the ministry,

and had been for some time under great temptation to believe that God's presence was no more to be enjoyed, either in the Church or among the Seceders, communicated here, and returned with great joy, full of the love of God. \* \* \* The tables were all served in the open air, beside the tent, below the brae. The day was temperate, no wind or rain in the least to disturb. Several persons of rank and distinction who were elders, most cheerfully assisted our elders in distributing the elements.

“ But what was most remarkable, was the spiritual glory of this solemnity ; I mean the gracious and sensible presence of God. Not a few were awakened to a sense of sin, and their lost and perishing condition without a Saviour. Others had their bands loosed, and were brought into the marvellous liberty of the sons of God. Many of God's dear children have declared that it was a happy time to their souls, wherein they were abundantly satisfied with the goodness of God in his ordinances, and filled with all joy and peace in believing. I have seen a letter from Edinburgh, the writer of which says, ‘ that having talked with many Christians in that city, who had been here at this sacrament, they all owned that God had dealt bountifully with their souls.’ Some who attended, declared that they would not for a world have been absent from this solemnity. Others cried, ‘ Now let thy servants depart in peace, since our eyes have seen thy salvation here.’ Others wishing, if it were the will of God, to die where they were, attending God in his ordinances, without ever returning again to the world or their friends, that they might be with Christ in heaven, as that which is incomparably best of all.

“ I thought it my duty to record the memory of God's great goodness to many souls on that occasion. \* \* \* May our exalted Redeemer still go on from conquering to conquer, till the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen. So let it be.

“ In him, I am yours, &c.

“ WILLIAM M'CULLOCH.”



We add here a brief extract from Whitfield's Journal, where, in conformity with the openness of his character, he states what he saw and heard, without the caution and misgivings which rendered so many attestations necessary before some could dare to believe that God had visited his church of a truth. His frank credulity forms a curious contrast to the circumspection of his associates. He doubted not that the Spirit of power was there, and did not stop the current of his thankful joy by questions if there were some hypocrites and some enthusiasts mingled amongst the servants of the Lord.

“ I preached at two to a vast body of people, at six in the evening, and again at nine. Such a commotion surely never was heard of, especially at eleven at night. For about an hour-and-half there was such weeping, so many falling into deep distress, and expressing it in various ways, as is inexpressible. The people seem to be slain by scores. They are carried off, and come into the house like soldiers wounded and carried off a field of battle. Their cries and agonies are exceedingly affecting. Mr M. preached after I had ended, till past one in the morning, and then could scarce persuade them to depart. All night in the fields might be heard the voice of prayer and praise. Some young ladies were found by a gentlewoman praising God at break of day : she went and joined with them.”

At the second occasion he returned there to assist as before, and says, in the month of August, “ Scarce ever was such a sight seen in Scotland. There were undoubtedly upwards of twenty thousand persons. Two tents were set up, and the Holy Sacrament was administered in the fields. When I began to serve a table, the power of God was felt by numbers, but the people crowded so upon me that I was obliged to desist, and go to preach at one of the tents, whilst the ministers served the rest of the tables. God was with them and with his people. There was preaching all day by one or another ; and in the evening when the Sacrament was over, at the request of the ministers, I preached to the whole congregation. I preached about an hour-and-half. Surely it was a time

much to be remembered. On Monday morning I preached again to near as many ; but such an universal stir I never saw before. The motion fled as swift as lightning from one end of the auditory to another. You might have seen thousands bathed in tears : some at the same time wringing their hands ; others almost swooning,—and others crying out and mourning over a pierced Saviour.”

It does not appear that this lively work was prolonged beyond 1742, but during its existence, it was computed that, by the instrumentality of the regular pastor, aided by many pious ministers, about four hundred individuals were brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It were tedious to recite the many testimonies to the genuineness of this work of grace, which Mr Robe, in his zeal and industry, has collected in his narrative. It suffices to give a testimonial from Gillies, the well-known author of the Collections, eleven years later. His letter is directed to the hearers in the College Kirk of Glasgow, dated Feb. 16, 1751.

“ Many of you, from what you saw of that concern (at Cambuslang), and some of you, from what you felt, were convinced that it was the work of the Spirit of God ; and blessed be his name I am now personally acquainted with several of you who were subjects of it, and who continue, to the glory of free grace, to bring forth the fruits of a sober, righteous, and godly conversation.

I know there are some melancholy instances of back-sliding ; our Lord has plainly taught us to expect such things. But that the revival which was at Cambuslang, and other places in the country, in 1742, *has come to nothing, has not been followed with any good fruit in people's lives* (as I understand some in Holland,\* who are not as yet favourable to the work there, are in danger to imagine), you and I both know this to be otherwise. And I think it my duty to declare so much to his glory, who I am persuaded was the author of that work.”

\* A revival began at Nieuwkerk, in Holland, in 1749, and spread into the duchy of Guelderland, &c., extending to 1751.

There is also a most satisfactory attestation from Mr M'Culloch himself, which is too long for insertion. We give an extract from the passage in which he describes the *highway-side hearers*.

“ There were some that were gross *counterfeits*, who, a little after the awakening broke out here in 42, crowded in among the *really distressed*, and observing and imitating their *manner*, pretended to be also in spiritual distress, when there was no such thing. But these were detected to be mere pretenders, either by their own confession soon after, or were plainly enough discerned to be so by others. The number of these *counterfeits*, for what I know, was never any way considerable, and in a short time they disappeared. There were also numbers of idle boys in Glasgow, apprentices and others, who pretending, or seeming to be under some concern about their souls, came often out to Cambuslang, as they pretended, to hear and join in prayer in the fields; but these appearances with them generally came to nothing, and they brought much reproach on the work here, by so often leaving their masters' work, and strolling idly through the fields.

“ There were those who came here in 42 with a design to find *matter of diversion* or cavil, and to *mock* such as were in spiritual distress. The bands of such mockers were, no doubt, made stronger by their so coming, and so behaving when they came; and yet some of these were made happy monuments of victorious grace, and of sovereign preventing mercy themselves, a remarkable instance of which I had lately sent me in a letter from an aged and experienced Christian of great integrity, whom I can fully credit, especially in testifying what he cannot but certainly know. A part of this letter I subjoin, because it serves to confute what some opposers have asserted, that there are no instances of any grossly vicious sinners reformed or converted at Cambuslang in 42. Glory to God, a number of other instances of this sort can be given. ‘ I have to say, for my own part (says the letter), that I am able to go to death with it, that the Spirit of God was so powerfully at work in

Cambuslang, that not only sinners who knew nothing of God before, were reached both by conviction and conversion, but even saints themselves were made to attain to that which they had been strangers to in religion. I am able, if time would allow, to give a most satisfying account of not a few, both men and women, who I hope will bless God to all eternity for that happy time. Particularly there were, among others, two young men, living not far from me, who came over to you in 42, on purpose to mock the work; and as they had formerly been horrid cursers and swearers, the one swore to the other, he would go see the *falling* at Cambuslang, asking his comrade if he would go with him. The other swore that he would go too, but that they should not make him *fall*, for that he would run for it. And upon their going there together, they were both caught the same day; and for a quarter of a year afterwards they continued under very deep convictions, and have ever since kept fellowship-meetings weekly; and I have been sometimes with them, and heard them both pray and converse in Christian experience, to my great satisfaction.'

"As to the contents of this letter, I only add, 1. That the writer of it, a little after, sent me a very satisfying account of a considerable number of the subjects of the work, known to him, and living near him, as to their blameless walk from that time to this. 2. And as to these two youths, it is well known here, that instead of being able to run away, if either found himself in hazard of being affected, as they proposed, they fell both under awakenings together, or nearly so, and were glad to get into a stable hard by, and to get to their prayers there, on their knees, among the horses; and 3. As to what these called the *falling* at Cambuslang, it was a way of speaking among mockers at that time, occasioned by their seeing some fall down in time of sermon." \*

\* Robe's Narrative, p. 302.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## REFLECTIONS.

A REVIVAL of religion does not partake of the miraculous. It is a multiplication of *individual* instances of conversion occurring nearly at one time. Sir Henry Moncreiff has made some philosophical and most dispassionate remarks on the subject of the revival at Cambuslang. He says “ a strong view of his own character, and of the irreparable consequences of an irreligious life, clearly stated and deeply impressed on the conscience, may be conceived in very different circumstances to produce the same effects on any individual who attracts no public notice, and of whom nothing more is known, than that from that time he exhibits in private life a different character from that which before belonged to him. The mental or bodily agitations occasioned by his first alarms, from the apprehended effects of his unprincipled conduct, may not have been essentially different from those which occurred at Cambuslang, though his circumstances have not subjected him to the enquiries or observations of others. He may feel as much agitation as the converts of that time, though the situation in which he has received his convictions, has confined the cause of them to his own bosom, or to the confidence of his intimate associates. It is equally certain that the same feelings may exist, and may even be experienced in the same degree, when they are accompanied by no such agitation of body, and by nothing but their moral effect to render them visible to the eye of the world.”\*

In the notes to this volume, we find the author suggesting a perplexing question which occurs to many minds,

\* Moncreiff's Life of Eskiue, p. 116.

on the subject of one solitary revival. "Supposing the facts related to have been correct, how do we account for the narrow sphere within which the consequences of all these extraordinary events were limited? We see many converts in the course of a few months. But very soon we hear of nothing more of the same kind, though the same individuals continue to preach occasionally in the same country for many years. We naturally ask, supposing all that was extraordinary in the events related to have been directed by Providence, why was the same influence no longer continued by the same instruments, or why did it not operate afterwards by means of others in the same manner? For what visible ends were such remarkable events directed, of which we see no more than the immediate effects on a few individuals? However permanent their consequences with regard to them, they were followed by none of the great and signal events which so many anticipated, or by any change in the state of the Christian church, which we can possibly connect with them."

"All that can be said on this subject amounts to nothing more than what resolves itself into the ignorance of man with regard to the laws of Providence. It is clear that no remarkable change on the state of the world was designed.\* But supposing the conversions at Cambslang to have been real (of which we can say nothing more than has been related), the effects produced in the progress of practical religion might go much farther than we have the means of ascertaining. The converts of that time who persevered to the end, would leave the impression of their characters on the society in which they lived, on the families whom they left behind them, and on all those who had the means of observing the effects of genuine religion which they exemplified; while the marked and continued testimony given by them in private life to

\* Dr Erskine had published a pamphlet entitled "The Signs of the Times considered; or the high probability of the present appearances in New England and the West of Scotland are a prelude to the glorious things promised to the church in the latter ages." Edinburgh, 1742. His biographer's remarks form a reply to this pamphlet.

the efficacy of genuine religion, might go much farther. It might operate widely during their own lives, it may be operating still in many forms which our observation can never reach. "All these conclusions are conjectural. But there is nothing more definite on the subject for which there can be any authority." \*

It is not for the unlearned and simple to confute the learned and the wise, yet one mind may not, by years of reflection, arrive at a conclusion which arises almost spontaneously in another. Independently of the "*some hundreds*," whom even their enemies admit to have been converted at Cambuslang, and independently of the precious leaven of Christian faith which has descended from these converts and expands its holy influence over the country to this day, we think we can see another weighty reason why the Holy Spirit, under whose dispensation we dwell, should appear in his sovereignty, and arouse us to a conviction of his power by occasional, partial, and brief, but lively outpourings in his church.

God, in his *providential* government, has not left himself without a witness, in that the ordinances of the sun and moon remain. There is no tongue nor speech where their voice is not heard. Even the benighted heathen gathers some knowledge of a creating power, by the recurrence of night and day, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest. Then again, God, in his government of grace, by means of his dispensation of prophecy, kept alive in the Church of Israel the expectation and faith of what he designed to accomplish. At some periods, two or three prophets would at once be engaged in stirring up the people, and preaching the coming of the Lord; at other times, "the word of God would become precious, because there was no open vision;" and after perhaps a long period of silence, as if the Lord had forgotten his purposes, would arise a solemn voice by the waters of Chebar, or a cry in the wilderness, which aroused the people into a waiting attitude, and taught them to look for the consolation of Israel.

Our dispensation is that of the *Holy Spirit*. We are

\* Moncreiff's Life of Erskine, note, p. 500.

privileged to expect His blessed influences, not only individually, but collectively—in the church as well as the closet—in hearing as well as in reading the Word. Our promises embrace not only the lands already called Christian, but the dark places of the earth, which are full of the habitations of cruelty. Our hopes are directed, not only to the heathen, who have never heard the name of Messiah, but to that unhappy and wonderful people who crucified and slew him. The waters which at first only issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward presently reached to the ankles of the prophet, then they reached the knees, then they arose to the loins, and at last they became waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. “The waters go down into the desert, and every thing shall live whither the rivers cometh.”\*

In his Word, on which he hath caused us to hope, our God has given rise to the most expanded expectation. We cannot desire or pray for greater things than are in conformity with the purposes of him who teaches us to ask for the coming of his kingdom, and promises that “the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.” “He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”—Ps. lxxii. 8.

Is it, then, improbable that he should, at his own times, visit the world with somewhat of an anticipation of those promised glories? Would it be in conformity with his providential dealings, and with his dealings with the Church of Israel during the dispensation of prophecy, that he should leave himself, in the Christian Church, and under the dispensation of the Spirit, without a witness which shall arrest the observation of the most regardless.

The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, and entereth many souls, but the world heeds it not. The small still voice testifies in many spirits, but the world hearkens not. Then comes the Spirit as a rushing mighty wind, and shakes the house, so that, whether all

\* Ezek. xxxvii.



who are within hearing believe or not, certainly they are all within reach of conviction, and it remains with them whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

Besides the solemn testimony of the reality of converting power, which is thus laid before the unbelieving, is not the Church, by this means, refreshed and strengthened? The children of Zion learn to lift up their heads, for the time of their redemption draweth nigh. They seem, so to speak, to be admitted into the secret that is with those who fear the Lord. They comprehend, that though the time seems long, "the Lord will hasten it in his time." To him there is no restraint, to save by many or by few, and they see how He, who wrought on the multitude at the day of Pentecost, can work still, so that thousands shall be born in a day; and they comprehend, when the fulness of time shall arrive, how speedily He will possess himself of all hearts, so that the uttermost ends of the earth shall be the Lord's. In times of revival, not only do new souls flow into the Church, but its former members are urged to more earnest prayer, and fresh efforts after sanctification. Hearing from afar the good tidings, has refreshed very many. The translation of the Narrative of Cambuslang into the Dutch language, by one of our Scottish pastors who was settled there, was the remote cause of a revival of religion in Holland. The tidings from New England Christians encouraged the brethren here, while the good news which went forth from us, revived and cheered them. Besides the many spots in Great Britain which have been thus favoured, Holland, Germany, Prussia, France, Switzerland, nay, even Italy itself, have had their times of visitation, and each awakening has had some useful effect on other Christian countries.

The revivals in the United States, which have of late years been more frequent and copious than those experienced by any other region of the earth, have not alone rescued thousands under their immediate influence from the way of destruction, and placed them in the way of life; but they have fixed the attention of the multitude, who are crowding from the haunts of civilized life, to

form settlements in impenetrated forests. They have been the occasion of many carrying with them to the wilderness impressions never to be forgotten. They have awakened the zeal of those who dwell within the region of churches to pursue the emigrants; forsaking the comforts of refined society, to dwell among them, that they may convey to them like precious faith. And besides all the powerful effects produced by these revivals in their own country, which it would not suit our purpose here to enumerate, their effect on the churches of Europe has not been unimportant, and we may well expect that it will be more important still. How many prayers have ascended from England alone, how many works have been reprinted and read with avidity, how many have been written, in consequence of what we have heard of the state of things in America! If the religious world, or any part of it, is on its watch-tower, looking earnestly for the dawning of the day of glory, it is partly in consequence of having good tidings from afar, and of longing to partake of the abundant rain with which the Lord has promised to confirm his inheritance when it is weary. We cannot, therefore, accede to the question of the eminent divine—"For what visible ends were such remarkable events directed, of which we see no more than the immediate effects on a few individuals?" Nor can we say with him, that "it is clear no remarkable change on the state of the world was designed." Every revival is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to prepare our hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. And if no other results had followed but the establishment of that concert of prayer, which took its rise in the west at that time, and is observed by many still, though nearly a century has rolled away, that one event is of an influence in the spiritual affairs of many, which will only be computed in the eternal world.

The most weighty objection urged against revivals is whether such a system of things is right in itself. It is alleged that the very term revival implies a periodical relapse, which must be highly injurious and hardening to the heart. This supposes what is not the fact—that the

persons called in a new revival are backsliders from the profession they made at some previous time. At such an interesting period, without doubt the spirits of Christians are much stirred in them; they experience more zeal and more prayerfulness,—and if so be that there exist backsliders amongst them, that is a promising time in which their backslidings may be healed; but, in general, a revival is the flowing of new souls into the church—the awakening of those who have been dead in trespasses and sins. Souls then make a shoot in the growth of holiness, and become more quickly confirmed and established; so that, instead of lingering under doubtful convictions, and growing up tardily to a settled faith and love, they, under this more lively work of grace, are made decidedly, and in haste, living members of the body of Christ. What an advantage is it to the faithful pastor to have thus obtained a band of fellow-workers, who promote his views, and aid him with their prayers! Even the strenuous advocates of the more deliberate operations of the Holy Spirit, to which we are accustomed, where the perpetual dew of the Divine blessing fructifies and matures the seed of the word by slow degrees, and sometimes at the expense of years, must admit, that in the more rapid and lively operations of a revival, there are abundant advantages, if the fruits be equally mature.

Nor let it be thought that the intervals between revivals are all deadness and inaction. The work of conversion is still proceeding throughout the church, and every where individuals are silently added to those who believe. Mean while, the faithful pastor is actively engaged in sowing the seed, and his church are strengthening his hands by their prayers and example; and as the husbandman waiteth for the early and latter rain, so does he till it shall come in its season, and cause the seed to grow.

Another objection to the doctrine of revivals is, that though this mode of the Spirit's operations may be in conformity with the circumstances of a newly-settled country, where nearly all the ground is lying fallow, or to a republican government, or a voluntary church, where no

particular form of religion happens to be supported by the state, yet it is altogether inconsistent with the constitution of an established church. This difficulty we conceive to arise in part from the imperfect notions derived from descriptions of revivals written sometimes by enemies, or at best by men who possess little of the lively revival spirit. The technicalities adopted in some churches in the United States—such as “anxious seats,” “protracted meetings,” &c. &c.—sound rather absurd in narration; and yet an eyewitness might see circumstances which may render such things both natural and useful. This has been experienced at home, and we are forced to smile at the futility of human devices in observing the progress of matters in Robe’s narrative. Considering in his own mind what was done at Cambuslang, and hearing the criticisms of the world on the week-day services, the many hours spent in church, &c., Mr Robe, while he prayed for a time of refreshing from the Lord on his own people at Kilsythe, made various secret resolutions as to how he would arrange matters to avoid censure, should his prayers be answered. But when the time came, the exigencies of the souls crying out, “What shall we do?” overset all his preconceived plans; and though he used not the names of “anxious seats” and “protracted meetings,” he adopted the things; for when the good man had closed his services, and saw many of his people sit gazing upon him as if they were still hungering for more, he was constrained to begin anew. And when the agitation among the people became overpowering, he was forced to descend amongst them, and employ his elders to converse with those whom he could not reach. Nor was this all; for when, at late hours, he retired to his house, he was accompanied or followed thither by those who were in tears, or in terror too deep for tears. In these circumstances, his strength was wasted, and he naturally asked of his friends to come over and help him, both that they might teach the people, and see the wonderful thing that God wrought; and thus, for many months, he was doing daily what in his inexperience he had resolved not to do.

Another objection commonly brought against the Transatlantic method of conducting revivals is, that some congregations are neglected and left, while their pastors are called to assist the agitated souls in their vicinity. If this were fact, in a case of extreme necessity, we should say it had better be so. Nor would such neglect be without precedent in England, where it not unfrequently happens that one curate has charge of the duties in three parishes, and accomplishes one short service in each, by means of galloping from church to church, without residing in any of them. And in Scotland, too, it is by no means uncommon, both in the Establishment and amongst the Dissenters, to leave a place of worship vacant a whole Sabbath, while the minister is assisting a friend in the dispensation of the Lord's supper. These are less excusable times of leaving a flock unfed, than when the extreme distress of a neighbouring flock calls for the aid of other pastors. The shepherd in the parable left ninety-nine in the wilderness, while he went after one that was in jeopardy. In the period when cholera was making its ravages in one town, no one thought of censuring the medical men of another, who left their regular station to go to their aid. This, however, is meeting an objection as if it were valid, which is not so. For, if an experienced man is called to aid a flock under lively convictions, it is to be supposed, that he not only appoints a substitute for the period of his absence, but that he returns to his post so quickened by what he has witnessed, and relates so many affecting proofs of the Spirit's way in the church, that his own people are much refreshed by the circumstance. This was decidedly the case at Cambuslang and Kilsythe, for many were the parishes that tasted of the good gift after their pastors had been assisting in the congregations already under the visitation. Some writer on this subject, in his unthinking inexperience, has accused the American Churches of having a set of men, whom he names "revival-makers," who, from their peculiar gift at stirring the passions, go from place to place making an excitement, which for the time assumes the appearance of a genuine work of the Spirit, but subsides and leaves its

subjects just as it found them, when the exciting cause is removed. This seems too absurd to reason upon, and imputes to Christians conduct like that of the poor barbarians in South Africa, who in time of drought send for the rain-makers, and join them in all manner of noisy invocations of the clouds. But it would seem we have had revival-makers in England also—Whitfield, Wesley, Hill, Fletcher, were revival-makers; and not only they, but some of the more correct and orderly members of the Established Church.—Bernard Gilpin was not only an itinerant in various counties around his vicarage of Houghton-le-spring, but an awakener of sinners, so that robbers and thieves made restitution, and men of blows and blood left their feuds to follow him. Romain comes under the same description, in his movements from St Dunstan's to St Ann's, whereas he was the instrument of arousing hundreds. Had he entered more tenderly into the cases of distressed souls in private, instead of referring all private applicants to his public instructions alone for help, he would in all human probability have been still more successful, and might have arrayed a phalanx of dearly united and praying people around him, who would have materially promoted his work and strengthened his hands. Venn and Scott were revival-makers. Alphonsus Gunn was a revival-maker, for which trespass he was driven from the curacy of Farnham, where the people had been used to live in pleasure, and were dead in spirit. Yet those who were brought to true spiritual life under his ministry, thought it not much to walk nine miles to hear him every Sabbath when he was removed to Odiam in Hampshire. From this place also he was driven for the same cause. This holy and faithful man was refused admission by the rectors to two lectureships in London, after having been duly elected by the people, *lest he should make a revival*; and he never found rest for the sole of his foot till he came to be curate to John Newton, at St Mary Woolnoth, where many of the people were revived already, and the rest were longing to partake of the blessing. Charles Bridges, the well-known commentator on the 119th Psalm, has won many souls in every parish he has occupied, though they might

have been dead before. Basil Woodd, who was for many years actively engaged in preaching the gospel in London, kept account of those who came to him in distress of soul from Bentinck Chapel alone, till they amounted to three hundred, and then his biographer mentions that he left numbering them, not having leisure for the interesting numeration. In short, we must plead guilty to the disorderliness of having revival-makers in the bosom of our established churches. For where the truth is preached in the spirit of prayer, there has the divine teacher often owned his work, and acted on souls in the revival form.

In thus parrying some of the objections which the fears of many upright and sedate Christians have led them to entertain, we would be reluctant to be understood as advocating mere excitement, or the adoption of superfluous and unwonted arrangements for novelty's sake. Even in this little volume will be found various examples of nervous irritation being mistaken for mental conviction. Deplorable cases have occurred in various revivals, of persons under this mistake, fancying themselves real converts, because they could look back on a date at which they wept or trembled, and thus they have settled down in a state of insensibility in which they have died. Dr Sprague, in his very judicious and dispassionate work on the subject, not only admits, but points out most of the dangers which suggest the great difficulties to our careful watchmen in this country. They are not unperceived or undreaded by those who long for revivals here. All that we would plead for is, that good men will not condemn a name merely because it is new, or stamp a work as enthusiasm or hypocrisy, merely because it is not in the form to which they have been accustomed. We have sat so long under the calm possession of Christian privileges in this country, that we are apt to lose sight of the method by which the gospel first gained access to Britain, of the many lands yet unpossessed even of the name of Christ, and of the immensely accelerated progress of the Spirit's work, which must take place before we can enter on the promised course of millennial ages. We indulge a mistrust of methods diverse from our past experience, forgetful

how little we know of the endless variety of appliances in the divine treasury, all in consistency with the purposes of salvation, and in conformity with the dispensation under which we live, which may remain to be revealed to us, and put into operation upon or around us.

It is discouraging, nay, even alarming, to hear men of genuine piety, who know what the conversion of a soul means, and who know something of its immense value, say that a system of revival is inconsistent with the constitution of their Church. Is it consistent then with the constitution of their Church that few should be converted—that those few should tarry long in the unprofitable debateable ground between the world and the cross—and that their pastors should be content with this as the more excellent way, thus keeping down their own hopes, deadening their own prayers, and limiting the Holy One of Israel? Are not such men like the good man of the house whose door was shut, and whose children were with him in bed, so that he did not wish to be disturbed? O that an holy quickening were imparted to all such, and then should our churches behold the goings of the Lord in his sanctuary; we should comprehend better what is the state of deadness in which we have been contentedly resting, and see more clearly how the spirit must work before all the ends of the earth are filled with his glory. Is it so that the kingdoms of nature are liable to all varieties of excitement, and is man alone to remain insensible? Does the wind swell in all the degrees from the gentlest breeze to the hurricane? Do the clouds at times sleep immovably in the moon-beams, and at times become the rack driven by the tempest across the face of heaven? Does the ocean sometimes lie in breathing slumbers, and again boil and toss his waves towards the skies? Nay, does man himself yield to all the paroxysms of despair and joy, of anger and of love, of ambition and of patriotism? But on this one subject, the eternal prosperity of his soul, the achieving of the great purpose for which he was born, and which, if he achieve not, he had better never have been born,—on this one subject, is he to be ever cool, ever deliberate, ever on the reserve? Is he to



care for his soul as it were by stealth, and banish from his conversation the topic which ought to touch him most nearly? Is his pastor to be satisfied if he finds out by accident, as it were, that lately such an one has begun to study the holy Scriptures, and so he may hope well of him—and again at a long interval, he discovers that the same man has established a family altar, and anon he sees him approach the Lord's table—and all this in so cautious a manner that a question might seem intrusive, and the physician of the soul, set there for the express purpose, dares not approach to feel his pulse and ask "how is it with thee?" Such slow work may in the end be prosperous, but how much of Christian enjoyment and usefulness does its subject lose during its tardy progress,—how much of what strikes upon the observation and conscience of others! The day of small things is subject of gratitude to the God who bestows it; but if it satisfies us, if it makes us rest there, if it circumscribes our desires in prayer, if it lowers our hopes, if it chills our zeal, it becomes a snare. Our minds are more conformed to the divine purposes as revealed in the Gospel, when we ask of the Redeemer to take to him his great power and reign, to take "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." The Lord said to his disciples shortly before he left them—"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; *but ye see me.*"\* That is the distinguishing mark of his disciples, the eye of faith sees him, sees his dealings, sees his purposes, sees his promises. The stronger is faith the clearer is its vision. O let us not lack the plentiful aids of the holy Spirit, for want of faith to expect them and to pray for them. Truly we are straitened in ourselves and not in our gracious Lord—for he says to us, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."†

\* John, xiv. 19.

† John, xvi. 24.

## CHAPTER XX.

## KILSYTH.

SOME Tracts on the subject of Revivals of Religion have been published by Mr Gallie of Glasgow, and though their number be few and their extent limited, their authenticity is unquestionable. That entitled "Kilsyth, 1742-3," contains an abstract of Mr Robe's Narrative, so suited to our purpose, that we take the liberty to appropriate it in part. The only alteration made, is the omission of a passage or two, and inserting from the book itself, a few particulars which the small compass of a tract has necessarily excluded.

"Among the many godly ministers who frequently visited Cambuslang on this memorable occasion was the Rev. Mr Robe, minister of the neighbouring parish of Kilsyth. Like Mr M'Culloch, he was a man of prayer, deeply aware of the responsibility attending his office, and anxiously solicitous for the eternal welfare of his people. Every time he visited Cambuslang he seems to have returned to his own charge as if 'anointed with fresh oil,' resolutely determined to know nothing among them but 'Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' By this time he had laboured in the parish of Kilsyth for the space of thirty years, without being aware of any remarkable success having accompanied his ministrations. During that period, the parish had been visited with a severe fever, by which many, particularly of the godly, were suddenly cut off. That visitation was followed by a famine, and shortly after, in the summer of 1733, great loss was sustained by a destructive storm of thunder and lightning; but, instead of these judgments leading the people to think of God, whose displeasure they had incurred, and to seek Him 'with weeping and with sup-

plication,' wickedness seemed to increase. Mr Robe, in his narrative, testifies that no one appeared to be affected with sin, the cause of all the evils that were complained of. On the contrary, the Societies for prayer declined, the love of many waxed cold, the spirit of formality seemed to prevail, and open transgression greatly abounded. In these painful circumstances the good man betook himself to prayer in behalf of his people, and continued still most faithfully to set before them life and death—the blessing and the curse. In the year 1740, he commenced a series of practical discourses on the doctrine of regeneration. He explained and applied, with all faithfulness and scriptural simplicity, the nature, the importance, the necessity, the evidences of this spiritual transformation, and although these discourses were listened to with apparent seriousness, yet no visible effects followed at the time. When Cambuslang and other parishes were sharing so copiously of the Divine influence, it was matter of grief and discouragement to Mr Robe that not one of his people seemed as yet at all to be awakened. He continued to wrestle much in prayer, and still with affectionate earnestness to exhibit to his people a full and a free salvation. 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' Like Jacob, he wrestled; and like Israel, he prevailed.—The Lord did in due time send a 'plenteous rain.' The first symptoms were the reviving of many of the meetings for prayer, the institution of some new associations, and particularly of one composed exclusively of females, from ten to sixteen years of age. These movements were hailed as the harbinger of brighter days.

"Mr Willison of Dundee, 'whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches,' being on a visit to Cambuslang, spent a few days at Kilsyth, on his way home. Being requested to preach, he did so, on a Friday morning, when a multitude of people met, though the warning was short, and delivered 'a distinct, plain, and moving sermon,' from these words:—'He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.'

Many of those who were afterwards effectually awakened dated their first serious concern about their souls from hearing that sermon. On the Sabbath following, 18th April, 1742, Mr Robe preached from these words:— ‘ My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.’ He experienced more than usual tenderness in reading the text, and could not refrain from tears. On the Sabbath immediately following, one woman was awakened to a very distressing sight of her sinfulness and consequent exposure to misery. She was observed by some in the congregation to be under great uneasiness. When the congregation dismissed, she was not able to proceed on her way home, and soon after was found in a field, crying out, like the jailer, ‘ what shall I do to be saved?’ She was brought back to the minister, who conversed with her for a considerable time. She said that in hearing the sermon she was made to see that she was unlike Jesus Christ, and like the Devil, and altogether in a state of unregeneracy. She had strong impressions of the greatness of the wrath of God, to which, on account of sin, she felt herself liable. She parted with Mr Robe considerably composed. She continued for some time to endure occasionally very great mental anguish, but soon after obtained sensible relief by ‘ an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ.’

“ On Sabbath, the 9th of May following, five persons were awakened to a distressing sight of their sinful and lost estate. Mr Robe, and the praying people around, fondly cherished the hope that this might be but as a few drops before a plentiful rain.

“ And now the period of peculiar favour to this parish was come,—the time that God had set. Mr Robe in his narrative states,—“ On May 16th, I preached as I had done for some time, on Gal. iv. 19: ‘ My little children, of whom I travail in birth until Christ be formed in you.’ While pressing all the unregenerate to seek to have Christ formed in them, an extraordinary power of the Divine Spirit accompanied the word preached. There was a great mourning, as for an only son. Many cried out, and these not only women, but some strong and

stout-hearted young men. After the congregation was dismissed, continues Mr Robe, an attempt was made to get the distressed into some barn, but their number was so great this was impossible, and I was obliged to convene them in the kirk. I sung a psalm and prayed with them, but when I essayed to speak to them I could not be heard, so great were their bitter cries, groans, and the voice of their weeping. After this, I requested that they might come into my closet, one by one. I sent for the Rev. Mr John Oughterson, minister of Cumbernauld, who immediately came to assist me in dealing with the distressed. In the mean time, I appointed psalms to be sung with those in the kirk, and that the precentor and two or three of the elders should pray with them. The noise of the distressed was heard from afar. It was pleasant to hear those who had been in a state of enmity with God, despisers of Jesus Christ, and Satan's contented slaves, crying out for mercy;—some, that they were lost and undone; others, 'what shall we do to be saved?' others praising God for this day, and for awakening them; and not a few, not only weeping and crying for themselves, but for their graceless relations. And yet it would have moved the hardest heart, that many of them, like the Israelites under Pharaoh's oppression, harkened not when I spoke unto them, they were so overwhelmed with anguish of spirit, because of the spiritual bondage they felt they were under.—There appeared about thirty awakened this day, but afterwards I found that the number was considerably greater.'

“ On the Wednesday immediately following this day of the Redeemer's power, there was a sermon for the first time on a week-day. Mr Warden, minister of Campsie, and Mr M'Laurin, one of the ministers of Glasgow, preached on the occasion. The number of the awakened this day was as great as on the Lord's day. Nor did this movement of Divine grace soon terminate. The blessed work of conviction and conversion went on. The Redeemer did 'ride prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.'—His 'arrows were sharp in the heart of the King's enemies.'

“ When the revival commenced, such was the desire of the people to hear the Word of God, that, as has been just stated, it was found necessary to institute a week-day lecture. Wednesday was the day selected for that purpose ; and on that day there were sometimes two and even three discourses. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday were appropriated for conversing with the spiritually distressed. Notwithstanding such abundant labours, Mr Robe was enabled to persevere—his bodily health suffered not, and his inward man prospered day by day. His friends sometimes tried to persuade him to relax his excessive labours, but,—growing love to Jesus, intense compassion for perishing souls, ardent zeal for the promotion of God’s glory, constrained him to persevere in his arduous but interesting duties. ‘ It soon became,’ says he, ‘ the pleasantest work in which I ever engaged. Though I was wearied when I went to bed, yet, like the labouring man, my rest was sweet to me. The Lord gave me the sleep of his beloved, and I was fresh by the morning. The way of the Lord hath been my life and my strength.’

“ The ordinance of the Supper was, as usual, dispensed on the second Sabbath of June, and was attended by the happiest results in the experience of many. The blessed work of conviction and conversion continued greatly to increase after that solemn communion service, and it was intimated to the minister in the middle of September following, that a general desire existed among the people for another and an early opportunity of observing that ordinance. After much prayer and conference on the part both of the minister and the people, it was resolved that the death of our Lord should be a second time celebrated that year ; which was accordingly done on the third Sabbath of October. The account given by Mr Robe of that interesting solemnity is truly heart-stirring. Upon the Fast-day, sermon was in the fields to a very numerous and attentive audience, by three ministers, without any intermission, because of the shortness of the day. Upon the Friday evening there was sermon in the

kirk, and there was a good deal of concern among the people. Upon Saturday, there was sermon both in the kirk and in the fields. Upon the Lord's day, the public service began about half-past eight in the morning, and continued without intermission till half-past eight in the evening. I preached the action sermon, by the Divine direction and assistance, from Eph. ii. 7. 'That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.' There were twenty-two services, each consisting of about seventy persons. The evening sermon began immediately after the last table service. And though I desired that the congregation in the fields should be dismissed after the last service, yet they chose rather to continue together till all was over. During all the services there was the most desirable frame and observable concern among the people, that had ever been any where seen. It began to be considerable, when Mr Warden of Campsie preached, and it continued and greatly increased while Mr Spiers preached, who concluded the public work of the day in the fields. On Monday there were sermons both in the kirk and in the fields. There was a good deal of observable concern; and several were brought under spiritual distress in the fields. In the evening, two ministers preached to the numerous distressed convened in the kirk. On Tuesday morning there was a sermon preached, and a discourse by another minister, containing suitable instructions and directions, both to the awakened and to those who had never attained to any sight or sense of their sin and danger. The spiritual fruits of this solemn and extraordinary dispensation of Word and Sacrament were truly animating. Many secure sinners were awakened. Zion's mighty King brought the wheel of the law over them, and sent them home with broken and contrite hearts. Some who came hither in a state of spiritual distress and law-work, felt such a time of the Mediator's power as enabled them to embrace Jesus Christ with such distinctness, as to know that they had done it. Many had the love of Christ so shed abroad in their hearts by

the Holy Ghost, that they could not contain, but were constrained to break forth in floods of tears, in the most significant expressions of their own vileness and unworthiness, and of the deep sense they had of the exceeding riches of God's grace, in his kindness towards them by Christ Jesus.'

"It is delightful to contemplate the solid nature of this work of revival. It was far removed from enthusiastic fanaticism on the one hand, and presumptuous Antinomianism on the other. Although some who seemed to be awakened ultimately fell away, yet the experience of many made it unequivocally manifest, that 'the Lord himself had given the word.' Deep humility, hatred of all sin, love of holiness, aspirations after conformity to the image of God, fervent prayers and endeavours that others might be brought to the same views and the same enjoyments, characterised the greater number of the individuals with whom Mr Robe was called to converse. Indeed, the views of sin, and of the way of salvation, entertained by the individuals brought under the power of this blessed work of the Spirit, were, generally speaking, of the most scriptural and enlightened description. One man being asked 'what he took closing with Christ to be;' made this most intelligent reply:—'I take closing with Christ to be, a receiving of him as a Prophet, to teach me the way of salvation; as a Priest to atone for me, and to be my righteousness in the sight of God; and, as a King, to rule over me, and to subdue sin and corruption in me: and that without Christ's righteousness imputed, I can never be accepted in the sight of God.' One woman, after she was brought distinctly to receive, and rest alone upon Christ for salvation, thus expressed herself:—'Worldly thoughts are away from me now, and oh! that they would never return again. Ten thousand worlds could not give me the love and joy with which Christ now fills me.' When asked some questions by Mr Robe, she said, 'Sir, though you put questions to me, as was done to Peter, Christ, who knoweth all things, and who knows my heart, knows that I do love



him, and I am resolved, in the strength of imparted promised grace, to show my love to him by keeping his commandments.' She sometimes gave utterance to such words as these—'He is my sure portion, whom I have chosen for ever. O, what hath he done for me! I desire to have all the world brought to him, that they too may partake of his rich and sovereign grace.'

"Although the greater number, like the awakened at the day of Pentecost, or like the convicted jailer at Philippi, were made to cry out, under a sense of sin and apprehension of coming wrath, and could not conceal their distress, yet many were brought to Jesus in a more gentle and silent manner, whose cases were not made known to Mr Robe till they had obtained peace in believing. One or two instances of this kind may be given, nearly in Mr Robe's own words, from among the many that might be quoted :—A woman who was brought to concern on 16th May, waited upon Mr Robe the following week, manifesting great anxiety for the salvation of her soul. 'I was,' says he, 'much pleased with the character of her convictions, with her knowledge, and the longing desires she expressed after Jesus Christ. I said to her, 'essay to accept of Christ, bestir yourself, rise up at his call, and invite him to enter into your heart, into your soul.' Without intending or meaning what she did, she arose with great composure, stood and prayed in a most scriptural style. She acknowledged sin original and actual, her utter want of righteousness, the wonderfulness of God's patience to her. She prayed for mercy, to be drawn to Jesus Christ, and that she might be clothed with his white raiment. Sometimes in her address, she would say—'Sweet Jesus;' 'He is precious;' 'He is altogether lovely.' She first came to sensible relief from a sermon I preached on John, xvi. 10, 'Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.' In her return home that day, these words were strongly impressed on her mind—'My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.' She fell down upon her knees; her heart being

filled with joy in the Lord, and her mouth with his praise.—

—“ ‘ C. D. came first under convictions by hearing the doctrine of regeneration stated, as it is the writing of God’s law upon the sinner’s heart, from Heb. viii. 10. He was made distinctly to see that it was not as yet written upon his heart, and that if he would be happy hereafter, it was indispensably necessary that it should be so. Upon the evening of the day when he received his first impressions, he conversed with a friend concerning the resurrection, the general judgment, and the sad state in which impenitent sinners must be throughout eternity. By such converse his impressions were deepened. Every sermon and every awakening experienced by his neighbours, was blessed for the same end. He told me that he could apply to himself the greater part of a sermon he heard from me concerning the Spirit’s convincing the world of sin ; such as, that he usually begins with one sin, and after that proceeds to convince of particular sins. He was convinced of the sins of his heart, and of the evil nature of sin. He was not so much distressed about sin, as exposing him to hell, but he felt particularly grieved as it was an insult offered to a holy God. He got such a sight of the filthiness of sin, as to loathe himself on account of it. He was also convinced of the great sin of unbelief, of the sinfulness of the least thought of iniquity, though not consented thereto : of the evil of self-conceit, a sense of the sinfulness of which stuck as long with him, as he termed it, as any thing else. He was also sensible of his inability to help himself, of his own want of righteousness, and that he could not work out a righteousness for himself. He was brought to see the sufficiency of Christ’s righteousness, and that he, to use his own words, was always ready, if he would but trust in him. Seeing that he had not informed any one of his spiritual distress till he got relief by believing in Christ, I asked what it was that kept up his spirit under fear and trouble of mind, continuing so long ? He told me that when his heart was like to burst in prayer, that word came constantly in his mind, and encouraged him to wait

for the Lord with patience and hope:—‘ I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.’ His first relief came in this manner. In the society for prayer of which he had become a member, he enquired, ‘ What was the most proper exercise for a person under convictions ?’ to which it was replied by a very judicious Christian, ‘ That it was to behold the Lamb of God,’ which he essayed to do.—When I gave, in a public discourse, the marks of those who had Christ formed in them, he said that by the help of the Spirit he could apply them all to himself, and that during prayer and after sermon he was in a frame surprising to himself; that his whole heart and affections went out in closing with Jesus Christ, and that he was filled with rejoicing and wonder at his love.’ ”

Mr Robe had, with wonderful care and diligence, recorded particular accounts of the cases of young and old, male and female, of those who received conviction in silence, and had the work of faith wrought in them before he was aware, and of those who could not refrain from crying out for anguish of spirit. We add brief examples, besides those given in the tract, to exhibit how carefully it has been proved that this work was of the Spirit of truth:—

“ *June 11, 1742.*

“ Because I know what joy and thankfulness it gives you ” (says Mr Robe, in a letter to a friend), “ to hear of our dear Lord’s appearing in his glory and majesty, in conquering his enemies to himself, I embrace the opportunity to write to you, that this hath been a good week, one of the best I ever saw—though of the greatest labour, yet of the greatest pleasure. I had a closet full of little ones yesternight, making a pleasant noise and outcry for Christ, and two of the youngest, one of them but ten, fainting and so distressed, they could scarce go home. I cannot write unto you the wonders I saw—one of eleven crying out she was sick of sin, with hands uplifted to Heaven. When I told her that if she were willing to take Christ he would heal her,—‘ I am willing with all my heart, and from the bottom of my heart, to take him !’ I bade her wait with patience, and told her she minded the 40th Psalm. She noted over the first twelve

lines with great calmness. I hear they have been very distressed last night and this day ; I would fain hope that relief may not be far from them. O, pray for the poor young babes. — tells me just now she is come to joy and peace in believing, for which I beg you will praise the Lord, and employ others to do it. Poor little — speaks to the distressed like herself. This is a pleasant countryside by it was. I wish you were here. Wednesday was a wonderful day, when we were afraid that the work was like to stop. There have been ten new ones belonging to this congregation since last Lord's day ; so that, if I count right, they are about or near seventy, besides those who belong to other congregations, of which I can have no account."\*

" R. S. was first touched with convictions on the Lord's day, May 16th. He heard sermon on Wednesday at Kilsyth, and on Thursday at Kirkintilloch, but struggled with his convictions till Thursday night, when he could hold no longer, but getting up from his father's fireside, ran out to the fields, where he cried out violently under his distress. He came to me on the morning of the 21st of May, with great outcries. He had a distressing sight of particular sins, such as Sabbath-breaking, cursing, swearing, evil thoughts. He was grieved for sin as an offence against God, and said, with great earnestness, he would give a thousand worlds for Christ. May 24th, he said he saw he had a corrupt nature, and the evil of despising Christ through unbelief, and that he would, not for all the world, *not* have this uneasy sight of sin, nor be freed from it, until he came to Christ.

" [June 8th and 10th.] His spiritual distress continuing, and complaining of the hardness of his heart, I endeavoured to instruct him in the nature of faith, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ.

" [June 17th.] He said he was very uneasy in the kirk on Tuesday evening, after he heard the valuable Mr Whitfield preach. He said that his heart warmed to Christ. I asked him why ? He replied, because of

\* Robe's Narrative, p. 183.

his love to poor sinners, and to me the chief of all sinners. I enquired, if it was accompanied with hatred at sin? He cried out, for having offended such a just and holy God, and that he hated every thing that was offensive to him. He said he had essayed to close with Christ, and that his very heart warms when he speaks of him. That this word came home to him, and runs continually in his mind, Mat. xi. 28, 29, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' &c.

" [June 24th.] He said he was some easier since he was last with me, and that he had endeavoured to close with a whole Christ, and counts all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and that he has now an inclination to Christ, and that his heart flutters in him like a bird, when he thinks of him. July 3d, he told me he is now well, for Sabbath last, while a reverend minister was speaking of the prodigal son, and that his father ran to meet him, he thought what a prodigal he had been, and that Jesus had come to him. He was filled with such a sense of it, that he was like to flee from the seat where he was sitting. He said he was filled with love to Christ from a sense of Christ's love to him, and that he had closed with Christ in all his offices, and laid the stress of his whole salvation upon him. He said, 'Sir, many a day I have had a light heart in sin, but now my heart is light indeed, and my love to Christ every day grows.'

" [July 13th.] When at the Lord's table, to which he was admitted last Lord's day, he had the greatest comfort in closing with a whole Christ in all his offices, and his heart warmed in him. He had large views of what a vile sinner he had been, and of the wonders grace and mercy had done for him, particularly in bringing him to his holy table. He blessed the Lord with heart, and soul, and spirit, and all that was within him, for Christ, and what he had done for him, and that he had fears lest he should fall away, and made application to Jesus Christ to keep him; and that it was a joyful sight to him when he saw the bread broken, a sign of Christ's body broken for him, which he believed."

“ Y. Z. was frequently under concern last winter, while the doctrine of regeneration was preached ; he examined himself by the Scripture marks given of regeneration, but could find none in himself. Yet his concern came no length. He was brought under deeper concern on Sabbath fortnight, in hearing the marks of unbelievers, in a sermon I preached from John, iii. 36. These cut him wholly off. He was convinced of particular sins, of the evil of unbelief, the corruption of nature, and the need of a new nature. He is sorry for sin, and would be so, though it did not make him liable to hell, because he hath offended and dishonoured God by his sins. As to self-loathing, he says that he hates himself for his sins, and is convinced that no suffering of his can ever satisfy the offended justice of God for the least of his offences, and if he could abstain from all sin for the time to come, and keep the law perfectly, it could not satisfy for the evil of sin already past. This is only to be obtained by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

“ [July 6th.] By the account he gives of himself, I am persuaded he hath closed with Christ. I endeavoured to answer and satisfy many objections and doubts he proposed to me. I advised him to receive the Lord's Supper, but he durst not adventure, being doubtful about his faith and interest in Christ, though he had been formerly a communicant. He has since attained to some satisfying Scripture marks of his interest in Christ, has received the Lord's Supper, and continues to walk in the fear of the Lord, and some measure of the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”

“ B. A. came to me, June 18th. She had been uneasy since the 16th of May. Her concern increased upon her, Sabbath, Monday, and Tuesday last. She was convinced of unbelief, and the evil of it, and was very uneasy about the sin of unworthy communicating, but did not seem to be convinced particularly of her other sins against the law, nor of the corruption of her nature ; and was sorry for sin only because of its making her liable to the wrath of God. I gave her instruction and direction suited to my view of her case.

“ [July 5th.] She then saw particular sins, but was most of all uneasy about unworthy communicating, and the sin of unbelief. She professed that she was sorry for sin because she had offended God by it, and also that she loathed herself for sin. She did not as yet appear to be convinced of the corruption of her nature. I advised her to cry to God to convince her of it, to give her faith to embrace Christ, &c.

“ [July 9th.] She now saw that she brought a corrupt nature into the world, that is enmity to God and all good, and that she is lost and undone by it. She had accepted Jesus, in all his offices and his righteousness, to be hers in the sight of God, seeing all her own righteousness to be but filthy rags. After instruction and direction, I admitted her to the Lord’s Table. [July 19th.] She was under much fear and terror before she came to the Lord’s Table, but said, ‘ I will go in the strength of God the Lord.’ When she was there, she was filled with joy in Christ, as a sufficient Saviour. She had a view of her sins piercing him, and sorrow on that account. She continues to live and to walk as becometh a good Christian.” Such are some of the fruits of the revival at Kilsyth.

“ It is emphatically said by an inspired writer, that ‘ the grace of God which bringeth salvation, teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world.’ This declaration of holy Scripture, received remarkable illustration at Kilsyth. The number of individuals who were awakened, and who afterwards publicly professed the faith of Christ, was about three hundred, and by various authentic documents recorded in Mr Robe’s Narrative, it is ascertained that the conversation of *all* these was such as became the Gospel. The moral influence on the parish generally was remarkable.

“ Mr Robe thus writes—‘ Among the instances of the good fruits of this work upon the people, may be mentioned visible reformation from many open sins, particularly cursing, swearing, and drinking. In social meetings, edifying conversation has taken place of what was frothy,

foolish, or censorious. Instead of worldly and common discourse on the Lord's day, there is that which is spiritual and good to the use of edifying. There is little of what was formerly common, strolling about the fields, or sitting idle at the doors of their house on that holy day. There is a general desire after public ordinances. Before this, I could never prevail with the best to attend the preaching of the Word during the week, and therefore could have no stated weekly meeting for expounding: now, however, they desire it, and the generality of the people attend as regularly as upon the Lord's day. The worship of God is set up and maintained in many families, who formerly neglected it. There are many new societies for prayer, composed of individuals of all ages, and not only of those who have been lately awakened, but of those who before had a character for seriousness. Former feuds and animosities are in a great measure laid aside and forgot, and this hath been the most peaceable summer amongst neighbours that was ever known in this parish. I have heard little or nothing of that pilfering and stealing that was so frequent before this work began. Yea, there have been several instances of restitution, and some of these showing consciences of more than ordinary tenderness. The change of the face of our public meetings for worship is visible; there was never such attention and seriousness seen in them as now. The change is observed by every one who formerly knew the parish. One observing person said to me, that if there was no more gained by this wonderful work of the Spirit, there was at least a great increase of morality.'"

In the revival at Kilsyth, nothing is more worthy of remark than the character of Mr Robe himself. Thirty years their pastor, he had prayed and pined in secret, and watched with a discouraged spirit to see some token that his words did not all fall to the ground. Pestilence swept away many of his praying members; and instead of others coming up in the time of calamity to fill up the gaps and cry to the Lord, it seemed that their hearts were deadened by the stroke, and the praying companies dwindled away. Famine succeeded, but with no better effect—their hearts were not broken but hardened under the in-



fliction. Yet, as it was with Israel of old, the Lord was thus preparing his way in their hearts, and in the heart of his servant who mourned over all that was lost, without ceasing to supplicate that the Lord would return and visit them. He was directed to a course of preaching on regeneration, which, though he saw no immediate result, he found when the set time was come, had been silently working in the minds of many. When he heard the glad news from Cambuslang he rejoiced exceedingly, and hastened to obtain a portion of the anointing that was shed on pastor and people there; and then he inwardly prayed and longed and watched more than they that watch for the morning, to see the good gift extended to his own dear people—and sometimes he told them to go to Cambuslang, and sometimes he reproached them that they came as unaffected as they went. O, that more of those who look that the salvation of Jesus shall overspread the earth, were but on tiptoe as this servant of God was, looking out for it, and urging it onward by all scriptural means. What a period of hungering and thirsting was that with Mr Robe, between Februrary, when he heard of the first souls awakened at Cambuslang, and April, when he saw the same blessed influences extending to Kilsyth. He exclaims in the simplicity of a glad heart, “how pleasant a part of the country this is by” (in comparison of) “what it was formerly.” Pleasant, because “the Lord was there.” And again, “It became soon the pleasantest work ever I was engaged in. I found the distress profiting under the means of grace by the Lord’s blessing, first coming to hate sin and mourn for it, out of a regard for God,—and pressing after an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. It *diverted*” (delighted) “me to see young and old carrying their Bibles with them, and either reading some passage that had been of use to them, or looking out and marking some that I recommended to them. The world appeared changed to me, and as I noticed to them, when I came to their doors to catechise them once or twice in the year, the least trifle hindered their attendance, but now they were glad to come twice or thrice in the week, and greedy to receive

instruction ; and what cold soul would not have rejoiced in such a change, and welcomed them in the name of the Lord ? Though I was wearied when I went to bed, yet, like the labouring man, my rest was sweet to me—the Lord gave me the sleep of his beloved, and I was fresh by the morning ; and now, after labouring so much for these four months, and preaching more than at any time, I mention it to the praise of my Great Master's goodness—my body is like those of Daniel and the three children,—fatter in flesh than when I began, and my bodily ails nowise increased—the way of the Lord has been my life and strength." Happy man ! He waited on the Lord till he gave him the desire of his heart ; and four months of success made him forget thirty years of prophesying in sackcloth.

We shall use No. III. of Mr Gallie's Revival Tracts in the same manner as we have used No. II., making additions and omissions as seem convenient. It is pleasant to mention even the names of parishes, which could produce their forty, sixty, or an hundred, who had been made partakers of the gracious influences in 1742 and 1743 ; and the names of the men employed in promoting the work, many of whom are honoured for their holy lives, and for their writings. It is particularly worthy of remark, that in the districts where a spirit of controversy had got a footing, by means of the secession from the church, which had recently taken place, neither church nor secession partook of the good gift which God was bestowing. Hearts hot with contention are not in a position to receive divine truth. Conviction of sin will not enter where party spirit rules, and the Spirit of Peace hath no place in the bosom given to human strife. The revival spread to the north and west of Kilsyth, but its progress to the east was met by this evil influence, and it stayed. The minds of many were strangely disturbed by political projects and secret plots at the period. It will be remembered that this was only three years before the Rebellion of 1745. But before that spreading evil arrived many had been gathered into the fold, many established in their faith, and many taught to pray for peace

and the preservation of their privileges,—whose influence must be counted among those things which prevailed to produce a termination to that rebellion so favourable to the confirmation of our Christian rights.

“In the parish of Torphichen, to the eastward of Linlithgow, at that time under the ministry of Mr Bonar, seven persons were awakened at the dispensation of the Supper of the Lord, on the first Sabbath of August, 1742, who afterwards were enabled to give scriptural evidence of being in Christ by a living faith.

“The case of the parish of Baldernock deserves to be particularly noticed. Few of the people had visited those places in which the revivals took place; and although for some years there had been no regular pastor, yet about ninety individuals were brought under the quickening influence of the Spirit of promise. Mr Wallace, who had previously laboured amongst them in holy things for about fifty years, had been faithful and zealous; and perhaps the many conversions that now took place, might be remotely traced to his ministrations. The seed which lies long concealed may spring up in an abundant harvest. But in the absence of a regular ministry, God, who can accomplish His purposes of mercy with weak as well as with powerful means, raised up and qualified Mr James Forsyth, who occupied the humble but honourable station of parochial schoolmaster, as the instrument of carrying forward, in that parish, the good work that had made such advances in the surrounding country. He was evidently a good man. He had been long distinguished for godliness. His experience of the preciousness of Christ, could not but prompt him to embrace the opportunity, which his profession furnished, of diffusing the knowledge of that Name, and of that Salvation, which he knew to be so essential to the true happiness of the people with whom he was brought in contact. He partook of the joy with which the news of God’s dealings with his church was received by such as had themselves tasted that the Lord is gracious; and in the peculiar circumstances of the parish, he endeavoured, by every means in his power, to infuse the same spiritual

life among the people. He spoke, more especially to the young, with earnestness and affection about their lost condition by nature and practice, about the love of God manifested in the gift of his Son for the salvation of sinners ready to perish; and the Holy Spirit was pleased to convey these simple but impressive truths to the souls of his interesting charge, who, in their turn, were enabled to leave a testimony to the truth in the consciences of the adult population. Would there were many such teachers of youth! Would that they felt that they and their youthful charge shall stand together in the judgment, and must render an account of their important stewardship! Religious instruction was made to hold a prominent place in the school under the charge of Mr Forsyth; and for the encouragement of all in like circumstances, these instructions were rendered instrumental for the conversion of many. God countenanced his feeble endeavours, and made him the honoured instrument of winning many souls to Christ. His own account of the matter is detailed in letters to Mr Robe, and will be felt deeply interesting and animating, by all who have any love for ardent piety or disinterested zeal. In a letter, dated 17th July, 1742, he thus writes:—  
‘ Since the first of February last, I endeavoured, to the utmost of my power, to instruct the children under my charge in the first principles of religion—that they were born in a state of sin and misery, and strangers to God by nature. I pressed them, with every argument I could think of, to give up their sinful ways, and flee to Jesus Christ by faith and repentance; and, by the blessing of God, my efforts were not made in vain. Glory to His holy name, that that which was spoken in much weakness, was accompanied by the power of His Holy Spirit. I likewise warned them against the commission of known sin. I told them the danger of persisting contrary to the voice of conscience, and the plain dictates of the Word of God; assuring them, that if they did so, their sin would one day find them out. These exhortations, frequently repeated, made at last some impressions on their young hearts. This was used as a means in God’s

hand for bringing the elder sort to a more serious concern, and a greater diligence in religious duties. One of the school-boys, who went to Cambuslang in March, was the first awakened. He, in a short time thereafter, asked permission to meet with two or three of the other boys in the school-room, for the purpose of praying and singing psalms. I had great pleasure in granting this request. Very soon after, a few more of the boys manifested deep concern for their souls; and in fourteen days after the opening of this youthful prayer meeting, ten or twelve were hopefully awakened; none of them were above thirteen years of age—a few of them were so young as eight or nine. These associated together for devotional duties. Their love for these services increased; so much so, that they met sometimes three times a-day,—early in the morning,—at noon, during the interval of school hours,—and in the evening. These soon forsook all their childish fancies and plays, and were known to their school companions by their general appearance, by their walk and conversation. All this had a happy effect upon the other children. Many were awakened by their means. They became remarkable for tenderness of conscience. A word of terror occurring in their lessons would sometimes make them cry out and weep bitterly. Some of them could give a most intelligent account of their experience of divine truth. They were sensible of the sin of their nature, of their actual transgressions, and even of the sin of unbelief; for when I would exhort them to believe in Christ, who was both able and willing to save them to the uttermost, they would reply, in the most affecting terms, that they knew He was both able and willing, but their hearts were so hard that they could not believe aright of themselves, till God gave them the new heart—that they could do nothing for their hard hearts.’

“It has been often illustrated, that ‘out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God perfects praise.’ What heart that reads this narrative can feel unmoved at the striking illustration thus furnished of this scripture saying, in the case of the youth of the parish of Baldernock,

under the care of Mr Forsyth! Who would not pray that all teachers of youth were blessed with piety like his, with zeal like his, with success like his!

“Respecting the people in general, Mr F. thus writes: ‘Some were awakened at Cambuslang, others at Calder and Kirkintilloch, but the greater number at the private meetings for prayer held in the parish. These meetings were held twice a-week, and all were admitted who chose to attend.’—These meetings were eminently countenanced. Many who attended were blessed with the communications of Divine grace, and made to experience the image and the earnest of the fellowship that is above. ‘Two young women,’ says Mr Forsyth, ‘who had been at Cambuslang, and who brought back an evil report, saying, that they wondered what made the people cry out, on the 22d of June, came to one of these meetings in Baldernock, as was supposed, with no good design. Before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, they were brought under serious convictions, and continued in distress during the remaining exercises of the evening.’

“These details of the awakening in Baldernock furnish an impressive commentary on these words of scripture—‘Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord:’ ‘I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion’—and should stimulate every Christian, in his own sphere, to labour for Christ, trusting that the Divine Spirit will come ‘and leave a blessing behind Him.’

“At the parish of Killearn, about sixteen miles north from Glasgow, there was a considerable awakening at the dispensation of the Lord’s supper, on the third Sabbath of July, 1742. This was particularly the case on the Monday, when sermons were delivered by Mr Michael Potter, professor of divinity in the University of Glasgow, and Mr Mackie, minister of St Ninians.

“There were about a hundred awakened in the parish of Campsie; and about the same number in the parish of Calder, in the immediate neighbourhood. The circumstances connected with the revival at Calder are

somewhat remarkable. Mr Warden, the minister, was accustomed to give a weekly lecture in a small village at some distance from the church."

This lecture he intimated from the pulpit on the Sabbath day. He had kept his appointment week after week, and found the congregation had dwindled away, so that in a state of deep discouragement on the occasion, just before the revival, he added, in a voice of tender pathos, after his intimation, "But why should I tell you, for you will not come." In this state of feeling he went to the place, having resolved to discontinue the lecture. The people having been touched with pity for the evident sorrow and disappointment of their minister, said to each other, "Poor body, let us go this time." He, unconscious of this purpose of theirs, went unprepared with a sermon, and was much dismayed when on looking into the room he found it crowded. "Oh," cried he in the genuine simplicity of his character, "I have often been here with a sermon when there were no folks, and now when there are plenty of folks I have no sermon." "He retired into a wood at a little distance, earnestly to implore Divine direction and blessing. Immediately he returned to the people, and preached from these words which had been suggested to his mind while in the wood—'Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men,' Prov. viii. 4. From this text he opened up the fulness, the freeness, the grace of the gospel proclamation. The Holy Spirit accompanied the word spoken with power. Many were brought under His humbling influence, and ultimately made to bow to the sceptre of Jesus."

Tradition has not preserved any mention of a movement on the minds of the people which led to this act of pity, as it is termed on their part; yet it is probable that tidings from the revived places around, or that the unseen influences of the Divine Spirit, or both, operated on them, so as to prepare the way for the power with which the sermon came to their hearts. The Lord condescends to use such mixed motives as human beings are liable to be affected by, to do us good. The same compassionate friend, who cast his eye up to the tree which Zaccheus

had climbed, perhaps from no better motive than curiosity, and said, "this day hath salvation come to thy house," looked on the country folks, who assembled out of pity to his humble and single-hearted servant, and that night sent salvation to their hearts.

"In May, 1742, Mr MacLaurin of Glasgow, and Mr Robe of Kilsyth, preached in Kirkintilloch on the Fast day previous to the dispensation of the Supper. Mr Burnside, the minister of the parish, preached in the evening. The work of conviction that day was general and powerful. In the words of Mr Robe, 'Zion's mighty King did appear in His glory and majesty, and His arrows were sharp in the heart of His enemies.' About a hundred and twenty applied to the minister, anxiously seeking the way to Zion, evidently with their faces thitherward. About the same time there were fourteen or fifteen awakened at Cumbernauld, under the preaching of Mr Whitfield; and about eighty individuals by the ordinary ministrations of their own pastor Mr Oughterson.

"At the dispensation of the supper, in St Ninians, on the first Sabbath of August of the same year, there were several awakened by means of the sermons on the Saturday, many more on Sabbath, and a far greater number on the Monday, which was, on the testimony of Mr Robe, 'one of the greatest days of the Mediator's power ever beheld.' On Thursday immediately following, at the usual week-day lecture, a considerable number more were awakened. Mr Mackie, the minister of the parish, was instrumental in leading many of the enquirers to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Some time after, Mr Mackie states, 'that impressions upon the people are far from wearing off. Their behaviour is such that their enemies themselves cannot find fault with it. It gives me great pleasure to hear them pray and converse. Our audience is most attentive to the preaching of the word.'

"In the parish of Gargunnoch there were about a hundred awakened, the greater number of whom were brought to a state of concern for their souls, while attending the dispensation of the supper at Kilsyth, on the



second Sabbath of July, or the dispensation of that ordinance at Campsie, on the last Sabbath of that month, or at St Ninians, on the first Sabbath of August. At the week-day lecture, on the 5th of August, there were eighteen awakened; and in the week following many more. In a letter, of date 17th March the following year, Mr Warden, the minister of the parish, writes,— ‘ The concern in a great measure continues; fellowship meetings increase; and even the meetings for prayer among the children. The impression among the people, in general, is still apparent, by a diligent attendance upon ordinances, love to our God and Redeemer, and to all the children of our Lord’s family; crying to Christ, and rejoicing in Him; and all this associated with a sober and blameless walk and conversation. A few are under spiritual concern in the parish of Kippen, and there is some stir in the parish of Monivaird.’ ”

Of the parish of Muthill, in Perthshire, there is a full account by Mr Halley the minister, in Robe’s Monthly History, No. VI. p. 53. 1744. Extracts of the circumstances which most display the reality and peculiarity of that work are all that we can afford.

“ Muthill, Sept. 28th, 1742.

\* \* \* “ In general, for about a year, there has been an unusual stirring and seeming concern in this congregation, and some now and then falling under conversions. A closer attention to the word preached and receiving it with apparent appetite was, by myself and others, observed—until the Lord’s Supper was dispensed here, the third Sabbath of July, at which time I think our conquering Redeemer made some visible inroads on the kingdom of Satan. \* \* But whatever the Lord was pleased to shed down of the influences of his Spirit upon that solemn occasion, comparatively speaking, may be accounted but a day of small things, in respect of what he has been pleased to do amongst us since. I must acknowledge, to the praise of our gracious God, that an unusual power hath attended the word preached every Sabbath day since; few, if any Sabbaths have passed

without some having been awakened, and particularly last Lord's Day, which I hope I may say was a day of the Son of Man in this place; for besides the general concern that was seen in the congregation, about eighteen persons which I came to know of that night, were pricked at the heart, and deeply wounded by the arrows of the Almighty. I have been very agreeably *entertained* with the visits of distressed souls crying out for Christ, and "what shall we do to be saved?" The work of the law has been severe and outwardly noticeable upon all that I have conversed with,—their convictions have been deep, cutting, and abiding. And yet I have not observed the least tendency to despair, but giving satisfying evidence of a kindly work of the Spirit, the law acting the part of a schoolmaster, leading them to Christ, in whom I hope a great many of them are safely landed, and have had their souls filled with joy and peace in believing; and some have received such a measure of the joy of Heaven, that the narrow crazy vessel could hold no more. Though some old people have been awakened, yet this work is most noticeable among the younger sort,—and some within twelve years of age have been observably wrought on, and the fruits are very agreeable; among others their delight in prayer, and their frequent meeting together for that end." \* \* "We have also seen a down-pouring of His Spirit at our evening exercise on Sabbath nights. Immediately after public worship is over, such crowds of people come to the manse as fill the house and the close before the door, discovering a great thirst after the word, and such a concern in hearing it, that their mourning cries frequently drown my voice, so that I am obliged to stop till they compose themselves. Many on these occasions fall under deep and abiding convictions, so that I am taken up in dealing with them some hours after the meeting is dismissed. Many here give such evidence of a saving real work of the Spirit, that to call it in question, would be to put old experienced Christians to doubt of their own state, yea, to call in question the experience of the saints recorded in Scripture. And yet there are here, as well as elsewhere,

who are contradicting and blaspheming—they are objects of pity and ought to be prayed for.”

On the 29th of October, Mr Hally writes, — “ It gave me much pleasure to hear Mr Porteous and some of my people giving such an account of the work of God with you at your last sacrament. Such of my flock as attended that solemn occasion, I hope have not lost their travel. About seven-and-twenty of them, all in a company coming home, were, by a kind of Providence, overtaken on the road by Mr Porteous, Mr David and Mrs Erskine, who, by the blessing of the Lord, were made eminently useful to them. Such was the distress of many of them, that, to all appearance, they had lodged in that desert place all night, if the Lord, by means of these instruments, had not sent them some support and relief. So much did their soul distress affect their bodies, that they seemed not able to travel much further. The same good work upon souls is daily advancing in this parish. Every Sabbath day since I wrote to you last, I may say, to the glory of free grace, has been a day of the Son of Man. The arrows of the Almighty King are still flying thick amongst us, and wounding the hearts of his enemies. \* \* \* For months past I have observed a general and unusual concern upon the whole congregation, their hungry attention to the word, the serious and concerned air appearing on their faces; many being so deeply affected in hearing, that frequently the general sound of weeping through the whole congregation rises so high, that it much drowns my voice. Their carriage and converse in coming and going to public ordinances, and the many prayers that are put up through the parish—these make me, through the blessing of God upon his ordinances, expect greater things.

“ I told you in my last, what multitudes attend the exercise on Sabbath evening. But now, though the day be short, I am obliged to go to the kirk with them, where almost the whole congregation (which is very great) wait and attend; many not regarding the difficulty of travelling through a long dark moor under night. A good number stay and retire to the school-

house, and spend some hours in prayer; and the Lord has signally owned them, not only to their mutual edification, but to the conviction of bystanders, and such as have heard them without the walls of the house. Our praying societies are in a most flourishing condition. The meetings for prayer, both among boys and girls, give me great satisfaction. One began soon after the sacrament. Several of them falling under deep concern, I was sent for to speak to them, where I found some of them in tears. Since that time, that I may have them near me, I give them a room in my house, where they meet every night. And O, how pleasant it is to hear the poor young lambs addressing themselves to God in prayer! O, with what fervour, with what proper expressions do I hear them pouring out their souls to a prayer-hearing God! so that, standing at the back of the door, I am often melted into tears to hear them.

“ We have another praying society of young ones, lately erected in another corner of the parish. They desired leave to meet in the school-house, and there about twenty meet twice a-week, though they have some of them a good way to walk in the night. Such a praying disposition as appears among this people, both young and old, was never heard of before, which gives me ground to expect more of divine influence to come down amongst us; for where the Lord prepares the heart, he causes his ear to hear.

“ In the parish of Madery, soon after the sacrament at Fowels, some few boys met in the fields for prayer, and when observed were brought to an house, to whom many others, both young and old, resorted since, and are now, according to my information, in a flourishing condition.

“ This presbytery are resolved to divide themselves into societies for prayer, for the progress of this blessed work, and to have frequent meetings for that end.

“ Yours, &c.

“ WILLIAM HALLY.”

In a letter to a friend in Edinburgh, 29th August, 1743, Mr Hally, among other statements, says,—

“ I have been filled with wonder to hear some of them pray, who, I had reason to believe, wholly neglected secret duty till of late. Before this good work began, we had but two praying societies, and now they are increased to eighteen, to which many resort, both men and women. We have six praying meetings of young ones. One of them meets twice a-week in my house. I have frequently wished to have had some of the contradicters and blasphemers standing with me at the back of the door, to hear these dear young lambs pouring out their souls to a prayer-hearing God, with such fervour, with such copiousness and propriety of expression, that I have not only been filled with wonder, but melted down into tears to hear them. With great satisfaction I admitted forty of these young ones to the communion-table this summer, which occasion the Lord signally owned.”

In February, 1751, the same good and energetic man writes :—“ The remembrance of the glorious goings of our God and King in his sanctuary in this place, in 1742 and 43, gives me still much pleasure, and cannot but beget a longing to see such days of the Son of Man again. I am fully persuaded that the gracious fruits of that work will abide with many in this congregation to eternal ages. I never did expect that all that were awakened, should arrive at a real conversion. I doubt not when the spirit of the Lord is in some extraordinary way concurring with gospel ordinances for the conversion of the elect, but others may feel of his common operations, which may vanish as a morning cloud. About six of those persons that were the subjects of that glorious work, are gone to partake of the rest remaining for the people of God. As they had a gospel walk, so at their death they gave a noble testimony to the truth and reality of religion. Some of them who had been long in the dark about their state, with them at eventide it was light, doubts and fears dispelled, and an abundant entrance was ministered to the heavenly

kingdom of our Lord. There are a great many in this and neighbouring parishes yet living, who were the subjects of that work, to whom it has been saving, so far as man can judge, if we judge the tree by its fruit."

" ' Godly sorrow for sin, universal hatred at it, renouncing their own righteousness, and embracing the righteousness of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, embracing him in all his offices, universal reformation of life, a superlative love to the blessed Redeemer, love to all who bear his image, love towards all men, even to enemies, earnest desires and prayers for the conversion of all others: '—' These,' says Mr Robe, ' are the happy fruits of this blessed work, and sufficiently demonstrate that it is of the operation of the Spirit of God.'

" This may be better illustrated by one or two examples of individual experience. ' L. M, aged about twenty-eight years, and formerly of a blameless life, was awakened by conversing with his brother under spiritual distress. On that night he was so deeply affected, that he could not sleep. Next morning, his distress was increased by reading that passage of " Alleine's Alarm," in which he discourseth of God's being an enemy to unconverted sinners, which passage he met with at the first opening of the book.' Mr Robe continues—' He was brought to me the following day, and though he was a very strong man, I found his mental disquiet had greatly affected his body. I observed that his reason was clear and undisturbed, as he was able to give a distinct account of himself. He was impressed with particular sins, and in a lively manner felt himself to be a guilty condemned sinner. He had a deep impression of original sin and corruption, as rendering him liable to eternal wrath, even though he had not been guilty of actual sin. He had also a deep sense of the hatefulnes of sin, as committed against God, and of the sin of unbelief, as hardening his heart against the voice of Christ, in the reading or hearing of his word. He was struck with dreadful fears of falling into the state of torment, and saw the great goodness and long suffering of God, in not cutting him off in the midst of his iniquity. He

was supported sometimes by views of the remedy, Christ Jesus ; that He had come into the world to save sinners, which he desired to lay hold of, for the ground of his hope. He soon attained to some composure of mind, in essaying to close with Jesus Christ.' Conversing with L. M. again eight days after, Mr Robe writes—' He declared that when engaged in prayer, he felt his soul going out in the acceptance of a whole Christ as his only Saviour ; his Prophet to teach him by his word and spirit ; his Priest to reconcile him to God by his sacrifice ; his King to subdue his sin, sanctify, and rule him. He disclaimed all confidence in his duties, and desired to rely on him alone for salvation ; withal, giving himself to the Lord to be saved, upon his own terms, to live unto him, and to serve him in newness of life—resolving also, in the strength of Jesus Christ, to live a holy life to his glory, and yet not to rest on it as a ground of peace and acceptance. He said he was greatly afraid lest he should fall back unto sin, and be a scandal to religion, after what God had done for him. He was exercised with the fears of hypocrisy and presumption in receiving Christ, against which it relieved him to look unto Christ anew, who came to save the chief of sinners, and who is offered to him, in common with all others."

" L. M.," says Mr Robe, " who was, before this blameless in his life, is now spiritual, edifying, and exemplary in his ordinary conversation and deportment."

One other instance may be quoted from the narrative of Mr Robe :—

" After a sermon preached on the Monday of the sacrament, by Mr Webster of Edinburgh, a young woman was brought to Mr Robe, who found her so filled with a sense of the love of God to her soul, and with love to Jesus Christ, that she was all in tears, and could not refrain from weeping with joy. She had been awakened at Kilsyth about the beginning of July, but had obtained no sensible relief till she heard Mr Webster. Before her awakening, she was of a blameless life, but when brought to feel the spirituality of God's law, she was

filled with alarm on account of the coming wrath. Sometime after hearing Mr Webster, she was enabled to state distinctly the consolation she experienced in taking hold of Christ in all his offices. Her subsequent conduct in life was of such a kind as to make it manifest that she was now born from above."

We shall conclude this brief narrative, which exhibits revival work as done in many parishes in the West of Scotland, by a letter from a countryman to Mr Robe:—

" February 4, 1743.

" Indeed the going to Kilsyth and Cambuslang has made me to be hated by some that formerly loved me, but I desire to bless the Lord that led me by his Spirit. I many a time think that such days of power have not been seen since the apostles first preached the glorious Gospel. O Lord never let my soul forget what I did see at Kilsyth and Cumbuslang of thy glorious power! On Saturday night, before the Sacrament, after the sermon was over, I went to the *brae-head*, eastward, and looked around; the candles were burning in every place;\* that blessed echo of prayers and sweet singing of songs made me almost faint for joy, and lament over my dead heart that was so lifeless; and put me in mind of the sweet songs that are sung in heaven at God's right hand. On Sabbath, at his table, the Lord did manifest himself to me as he does not to the world; I never did think to see so much of heaven as I was eye and ear-witness to on this side of time. " O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens; out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength," &c. &c. We will but darken the light of thy power when we speak of it. O Lord, let that cloud that has appeared in the West of Scotland spread east, west, north, and south, that thy glory may fill the whole earth. O Lord, let thy heavenly dew come down upon our souls, that we may grow as the willows by the water courses. O Lord, let not

\* Lighted by the cottagers only for the purpose of reading the Scriptures.



our sins provoke thee to restrain the downpouring of thy Spirit on these sinful lands. O Lord, for thy name-sake, pass not by this poor parish; and, O Lord, may these that thou hast brought in to thyself, in a remarkable way, evidence themselves to be thy children, by their good works, they being the fruit of true faith and love; help them to forgive their enemies, and to pray that their sins may be forgiven them. They have been praying for the day of the Lord; and now, because it has not come in the way that they looked for, they are grieved and wish it away again; it is darkness and not light to them. O dear sir, exhort them to beware of carnal security, and the *pride of humility*, for I have found them to be two great sins." \*

"It is now nearly a century since the revivals which have just been related took place, but the traces still remain—many prayer meetings exist, and not a few of them in Glasgow, that can date their institution from the period referred to. The work of the Lord has been going on, though silently, in Scotland ever since. Many have been the faithful pastors that have been instrumental in gathering strayed sheep, in feeding the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood."

In 1744, a concert for prayer was entered into by clergymen and others in Glasgow, which was made known only by private correspondence. In 1745, an account of it was first printed in the Monthly History, and after that the association was extended to many parts of the kingdom. A memorial was then circulated, and the original concert, which had contemplated its continuance for two years, was extended to seven. A part of Saturday evening and Sabbath morning every week, and the first Tuesday of each of the great divisions of the year (that is, each quarter of the year), were the times appointed for this exercise. The reasons and advantages of such a concert are set forth in the memorial. Many years are now past and this concert has descended through three or four generations, without expiring, as merely human things

\* Gillies's Collections, vol. ii.

ever do. It has been as the fire upon the altar of incense, burning on and on—and has within the last year (1835) been stirred up afresh, and fresh fuel added, by remodeling the regulations, and again sending memorials to various parts of Scotland \*

Almost simultaneously with, or shortly after, the original arrangement for prayer amongst the clergy was entered into, there were partial revivals in many parishes in the north-east, where such things had not been seen before. In the parish of Nig, under the ministry of Mr Balfour, the preaching of the word had not been without visible fruit from 1730, and in 1739, there was a more animated concern visible, so that each day of the week, some who had been secure before, would be coming to state their case and make private enquiries of the way of salvation. The general meeting for prayer, which at one time consisted only of the members of session and a few others, became so numerous that it was necessary to divide it into two—at these meetings the pastor always presided. But presently the concern so extended, that these meetings were not sufficient, either in frequency or capacity of receiving numbers, to satisfy longing souls, so that ten societies sprung up who met every Saturday for religious exercises. At all of these meetings an elder was present, and each member, before admission, was obliged to state his motives and desires to the minister. There were but four families in the whole parish where family worship was not kept up. After public worship, neighbouring families joined in prayer, reading, and repetition of sermons, and yet care was taken that such exercises did not interfere with private and family devotion. The religious catechisings were crowded by persons from other parts. Neither the civil magistrate nor the kirk-session had, for many years, any thing in the public department to interfere with; and it was observed that the people were so industrious in their secular affairs, that the labours of the husbandman were more advanced in Nig than in

\* See Dr Hamilton of Strathblane's posthumous sermon on the advantages of social worship, preached on this account.

the neighbourhood. The people were much refreshed with the accounts they had of the glorious work of God elsewhere. They affectionately remembered their brethren, both in prayer and conference, and were much afflicted on account of the reproaches cast upon the blessed work, and the contradiction and opposition of those from whom such conduct would have been least expected. So far in 1739, and after, but in 44, after the concert of prayer was entered into, Mr Balfour writes, 'the work of awakening proceeds on new subjects more currently, with several it appears to be more distinct and lively, than formerly.' The mass of the people were illiterate, knowing no language but the *Irish* (that is to say, Earse or Gaelic), but that is no hinderance to their edification and instruction in religion. I never conversed with more intelligent, savoury, and distinctly exercised private Christians than some illiterate men in this country, or that had more respect, on a religious account, from their acquaintance. They are industrious in learning to read, and some read the Psalms without knowing or attending to the power of the letters, by considering the words as complex characters, which are to be always pronounced in the same way. Others assist them by reading the Scriptures and other good books, which they translate currently without any stop. This has become quite easy to those who understand both languages. It is astonishing to observe what a copious and pertinent use of Scriptures many illiterate persons have acquired, and with what readiness and fluency they pray in Scripture language. The men of letters *dispute* heaven, these *live* it. O what a sweet significancy is in our Lord's words, "unto the poor the Gospel is preached!"

In January 45, Mr Balfour still continues his pleasant tidings. "Things proceed in my parish as formerly. New awakenings continue, and those formerly awakened persevere, and I hope are making progress in Christian experience."

Mr Sutherland at Golpy writes, in May 1745, "I often regretted to you the wretched situation of my parish in former times, but, since November last, the Lord has,

in his wonderful mercy, granted cause of praise and thanksgiving. From that time, upwards of sixty persons have come to me under kindly awakenings of conscience, many of whom have since that time been helped, so to increase in knowledge and experience, that the work appears to be from the Spirit of God. Sundry of them have felt such shocking temptations, from the malicious and spiteful enemy, that I must conclude this must be a work destructive of Satan's interest. \* \* \* I had a thanksgiving day in the parish three weeks ago, on account of this manifestation of grace; and I began, at their desire, a weekly lecture on Wednesday last; and I was told that the Lord gave countenance, by awakening one on that day, who came not yet to me." The parish of Golpy had formed a shelter for many refugees in the troubles of 1688, and their posterity, at the time of Mr Sutherland's admission in 1731, were many of them devout and exemplary characters. But when most of these had been called to the joy of their Lord, it seemed that but few were awakened to fill up their places. Their minister mourned over this, and stated to them all that he heard of the success of the Gospel elsewhere, in the British American colonies, and at home. Especially in 43, when he attended the General Assembly, he visited Kilsyth, Muthill, and Cambuslang, that he might be revived himself, and report the happy change to his people. This, however, produced no effect. When he lamented this to his friend Balfour, he told him that he had seen no decided work at Nig till he had instituted societies for prayer. Mr Sutherland forthwith assembled the few pious of his flock, stated the matter, and divided them into three bands, to meet on Saturday night, for the purpose of seeking a blessing on the Sabbath ordinances. Still they were called on to wait for a year longer,—But when their hopes were wellnigh gone, the great and bountiful God, who is ever faithful to his promise, was pleased to breathe on a number of dry bones, and to visit them with his salvation; for, from November to August, upwards of seventy came to him under various exercises of soul. "Some mentioned that they had been bowed

down under a sense of guilt for months, but for various reasons could not take courage to open their case to him. About forty of them have, with weeping eyes and trembling hands, received tokens for the Lord's Table at the late solemn ordinance, and it is hoped the rest will be encouraged to follow their example in a little time. Even the secure multitude attend ordinances better, and seem to listen to the word preached with greater attention than before. The greater number of the awakened are of ages from twenty to fifty; few below twenty, and but four from sixty to seventy. Many of them state, that a course of lectures on the Gospel by Matthew, especially the conclusion that narrates the sufferings and death, and resurrection of Christ, were the means the Lord had blessed to their edification."

In the neighbouring parish of Rogart, in 1740, fifteen persons were awakened; but they, and other serious persons, felt themselves in a sad state of decay of soul during the two following years. They also observed that all around them continued in their former stupidity. They then formed associations for prayer, and, at their meetings, mourned and wept over the causes of the Lord's withdrawing from their own souls, and prayed earnestly for powerful days of the Son of Man. In 43 and 44, there were about fifty more awakened, who went on in a hopeful way.

The parish of Rosekeen obtained its first Presbyterian minister in 1717, and its first exhibition of the death of Christ in the Last Supper was in 1721, when only seven dwellers in the parish were amongst the communicants. For nine or ten years after, there was a pleasant appearance of good, the number of the pious increased, and love and holiness was maintained amongst them. But from 32 to 42 things were at a stand, and a general state of deadness seemed to overspread them, "though during that space one and one was engaged to the Lord, and a testimony left in the consciences of some which appeared thereafter. From harvest 42 to 43, there came a surprising revival and stir among that people; about six-and-thirty men and women fell under a concern about

their salvation, and were some weeks after received into the monthly fellowship meeting, and are since admitted to the Lord's Table. Their minister found that the subjects which the Lord had blessed for awakening them, together with close catechising in his parish, were Hosea, xiii. 13, "He is an unwise son, or he should not stay so long in the place of the breaking forth of children;" and Gal. iv. 13, "My little children, of whom I travail again in birth, till Christ be formed in you;" and John, iii. 8, "Except a man be born again," &c. It is hoped the Lord has not ceased to add to the number of these, for some are still coming to the minister to communicate the afflicted case of their souls, and others he hears of are on the way of coming.

"A company of children, between nine and fifteen years of age, began in winter to meet in the house of a godly poor widow, every Lord's day and Monday night, where they pray, sing, and confer about what they hear in public. They keep strict discipline, and admit none but such as undertake to pray with them. At first, some of the serious people of the place came over to hear without their knowledge, who were greatly surprised and affected with their massy sound expressions, and the savour they found with them in prayer. And now one or other of the serious people join often with them. They watch over the behaviour of each other. They are constant hearers of the Word, and examine each other about it. Their outward deportment is grave and quiet, without any childish levity. They are illiterate, but fond of learning."

Rosemarky also experienced a visitation in the same blessed spring of 1744. Mr Wood, the minister, a man of a humble and steadfast spirit, says it would ill become them to despise the day of small things, or to conceal or disown it. He had been groaning under the burden of labouring in vain for some years before. His Christian people had been gathering to their eternal home, and their places were left empty. But since the communion in the previous July 1743, the bulk of the congregation seemed to have a desire of instruction. The winter and spring examinations were crowded, not only by those

whose turn it was to be catechised, but by persons from other corners of the parish. After that, about thirty persons of different ages and sexes came to their minister, under convictions and awakenings of conscience through the Word. Some of them, though they had not before discovered it, had been under a gradual work of conviction for some time. Prayer-meetings were then established in various quarters, weekly, or once in two weeks, and one general monthly meeting, at which the minister attended. Many more were mentioned by friends as in a promising state, but they had not spoken to Mr Wood,—it being the character of this work, that its subjects never revealed their condition as long as they were able to conceal it. The piercing looks, and serious greedy desire of many of the congregation for instruction gave promising appearances that this was but the first ripe fruit. But the Monthly History, from which all the preceding extracts are taken, leaves the matter in the midst. The names, however, are all written in Heaven, and therefore we may rest satisfied, though we know no more of them. Many other places are named as receiving divine influences at this time, but the particulars are too brief to make it of use to note them.

Before closing this period of good things for Scotland, it is to be observed, that this was the time when the Wesley and Whitfield Revivals occurred in England, which was immediately succeeded by a revival in the Established Church there also ; so that it seems the Lord of the harvest had his eye on our land for good, and shed down his blessings, and gathered in his sheaves where he would. The same exertions and the same prayers might be expected to be followed by the same effects. Are we then, who live at this day, at liberty to rest supine, or are we blameless if our churches are not revived ?

## CHAPTER XXI.

## MOULIN.

1800. WE have deep cause of thanksgiving that the Lord hath not ever left himself without witnesses in the Church of Scotland since its reformation, but we have also reason to regret that there are no consecutive annals to which reference can be made for accounts of the prosperity of particular parishes. Had the Church adhered to the useful arrangements pointed out by those who established her order, we should not have found occasion for this regret. If at the meetings of Synod, the clergy had accustomed themselves to commune with each other on the spiritual condition of their people; if they had taken counsel of each other in cases of souls' difficulties; if they had pointed out plans which they had pursued with good effect; if they had stirred each other up to zeal and love in their profession; above all, if they had prayed together for the powerful coming of the Redeemer's kingdom in their parishes—then we should in each Synod have found records of the progress of the truth; wherever there had been an awakening we should have found it stated. But farther than this—ah how much more weighty!—we should have had more faithful and zealous ministers, and more conscientious and watchful hearers, and more enlivened and affectionate churches. Those who formed this regulation for the Synods, which has dropped not only out of use, but almost out of mind, were guided by their knowledge of human nature, and were sensible of the power of such a practice to influence and invigorate the exertions of the clergy, of the utility of mutual consultation, and gathered experience, and of the refreshing effect of united prayer, and that holy emulation which is excited by hearing of the work of the Lord prospering in the hands of



others. Shall we not see this most useful rule restored to its authority? Shall those who are spiritual ever be borne down by those who are carnal; and because some might feel the exercise irksome, and some finding they have *no work of the Spirit* to state in their own parishes, might cry out, of indelicacy, or boasting, or hypocrisy in those who have—is the arm of the Lord to be concealed? Are those who are wise to win souls to hide what he doeth, and be ashamed of being employed as his instruments? Are they to shrink from this cross, and hide his glory? No, let them rather, by their humble and affectionate bearing under this honour which the Lord the Spirit alone confers, by their wisdom and prudence, by their zeal and fortitude, awaken their sleeping fellow-watchmen, and win not their own flocks only, but the shepherds of other flocks; till all feel that they are stationed at different points of the same fold, and the spirit of distrust or criticism perish under the warmer and holier influences of the Spirit of union and love.

It may be that there are other spots in Scotland, where in the interval between 1745 and 1800 the ministering of the word and prayer have been accompanied by general awakenings. But no record of the kind is within our knowledge, and as far as appears, nearly as long a period elapsed between the livelier times of Cambuslang and Kilsyth and those of Moulin, as formerly between the revival at the Kirk of Shotts and that at Cambuslang.

The parish of Moulin, in Perthshire, contained a population of respectable industrious habits, with little knowledge of any description, save what their agricultural pursuits required; they were most imperfectly instructed in Divine things, and were in that condition of dead contentment which accompanies a state of unreconciled alienation from their Father in Heaven. In 1786, when Mr Alexander Stewart was settled as their pastor, he was like his people a stranger to vital godliness. In his most unpretending narrative of the revival which took place there afterwards, he mentions that he had reason to believe that there were a very few spiritually-minded person in the parish when he entered it, “but their life was

hid, and they had left the world all but one or two before they could acknowledge me as a brother."

"While I was yet ignorant of the truth, and unacquainted with Christian experience, two persons, under conviction of sin and terrors of conscience, applied to me for advice. They supposed that one in the office of the ministry must of course be a man of God, and skilled in administering remedies for the diseases of the soul. They were widely mistaken in their judgment of me; for I had learned less of the practice than of the theory of pastoral duty. I said something to them in the way of advice, but it afforded them no relief. They were, however, under the care of the good physician. He applied his own balm to their wounded spirits, and 'healed, and bade them live.' Being progressively and effectually taught of God, they are both now established, judicious Christians. These are the first that appear to have been converted since my incumbency, but they cannot be reckoned the fruits of my ministry.

"The Lord was now preparing to gather to himself a fuller harvest in this place. He might have removed me as an useless incumbrance, or rather an intervening obstacle, out of the way, and subjected me to the doom of the unprofitable servant; but he was graciously pleased to spare me, and visit me in mercy, and even to employ me as one of his instruments in carrying on his own work. Glory to his name who commanded light to shine out of darkness.—The writings of pious men, which were put in my hands by one or another Christian friend, were made the means of bringing me acquainted with the truths of the Gospel. Among these I may mention the works of the Rev. John Newton and Thomas Scott, as eminently useful to me. I was slow in receiving and embracing the doctrines maintained by these writers. By degrees, however, I was persuaded that they were agreeable to Scripture, and that no doubt they must be admitted as true."

"The biographical sketches in the Evangelical Magazine were principal means of impressing my heart, of opening my eyes to perceive the truth, of exciting a love to godliness, and a desire after usefulness. The power of

Divine grace appeared illustrious in the composure, the triumph, with which many pious Christians left the world. I saw their triumphant hope supported, not by a complacent reflection on a well-spent life, but by a confidence in the unmerited love of Christ, and in his power and willingness to save even the chief of sinners. I was particularly struck with the account of ministers who had laboured with much diligence and success, and had died at an early period of life, full of good fruits; while I, who had already lived longer, and been longer in the ministry than they, could not say that I had taken any pains with my people, nor that I had been the means of reclaiming one sinner from the error of his way, or of saving one soul from death. The conversation and example of some persons of a truly spiritual mind, to whose acquaintance I was admitted, and who exhibited to my view what I found only described in written memoirs, conduced much to impress on my mind the truths with which I was gradually becoming more acquainted. I cannot omit mentioning, in this connexion, the blessing I enjoyed in the preaching, the prayers, and the conversation, of that much favoured servant of Christ, the Rev. Charles Simeon, of King's College, Cambridge. He was a man sent from God to me, was my guest for two days in June 1796, preached in my church, and left a savour of the things of God, which has remained with us ever since.

“ From that time, I began to teach and preach Jesus Christ, with some degree of knowledge and confidence. From August 1797 to January 1798, I preached a course of sermons on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

“ The novelty of the matter, and some change in my manner of preaching, excited attention. People began to think more, and sometimes to talk together, of religious subjects, and of the sermons they heard. But I did not yet know of any deep or lasting impressions having been made. The two persons before mentioned as earliest converted, had by this time got clearer views of the Gospel, were enabled to derive comfort from the word of salvation, and began to bear their testimony to the grace of God their Saviour. They were in use of visiting occa-

sionally a poor infirm woman, who had long walked with God, and who now lived alone in a mean cottage in the neighbouring village. It was proposed that they should come together to her house at a time appointed, and that I and some of my family should join them, and spend an evening hour or two in reading, conversation and prayer. In process of time, different persons who were enquiring after the one thing needful, hearing how we were employed, and believing that God was with us, were at their own request admitted of our party. In this poor woman's little smoky hovel, we continued to hold our weekly meetings, to August 1799, when she was called away to join the general assembly of the first born above. Her growth in grace had been very conspicuous, and her death was triumphant.

“ In summer 1798, the Lord's supper was dispensed in our congregation, at the usual time of the year. For some weeks before, I endeavoured in preaching to explain more fully, and with more application to the conscience, the nature of the ordinance; and the character of those who, under the denomination of disciples, were commanded to keep it. The exhortations and warnings then given, appeared to be accompanied with a divine blessing. Some of the ordinary communicants, judging themselves to be in an unconverted state, kept back, of their own accord, from partaking of the sacrament. Others, after conversing with me privately on the subject, took the same resolution. Many of those who might otherwise have applied for admission, forbore to apply. I inferred this from the comparatively small number of persons applying. For some years before, the number of candidates for admission each summer amounted to thirty, forty, and sometimes near fifty. In summer 1798, there were not above twelve; of whom nine were admitted. The sacrament was dispensed the same year again in November, on which occasion there were only six more new communicants admitted.

“ Although the number of communicants was thus for the time diminished, yet the number of those who were brought under concern about their eternal interests was

increasing. This concern showed itself chiefly among the younger people under twenty-five or thirty. Their knowledge was yet imperfect. A natural shyness often hindered them long from discovering to others what they thought or felt. They had as yet no friend or intimate whom they judged able, from experience, to understand their situation, or to give them counsel. Some of them began to visit one of the two earlier converts formerly mentioned, from whose reading and conversation they derived considerable benefit. By means of this common friend, they were brought more acquainted with each other. One might now observe at church, after divine service, two or three small groups forming themselves round our few more advanced believers, and withdrawing from the crowd into the adjacent fields, to exchange Christian salutations, and hold Christian converse together; while a little cousin, or other young relative, followed as a silent attendant on the party, and listened earnestly to their religious discourse.

“As the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper had been much abused, by admitting, without strict examination or special instruction, all candidates who could give a tolerable answer to common questions, and who were free from grosser immoralities; so it must be confessed, that the sacrament of baptism had been still more profaned. Nothing but one kind of scandal was understood to preclude a man from admission to this ordinance. Gross ignorance, or immoral behaviour, only laid a man open to some admonition or reproof; or at most laid him under the necessity of procuring another sponsor; but hardly ever hindered the baptism of his child. Nothing subjects a man to greater disgrace and obloquy among us, than to have his child remain unbaptized. The dominion of custom in this matter is so despotic, that most parents would choose rather to carry their children a hundred miles to be baptized by a Popish priest, than be refused baptism when they demand it. The superstitious notions, and other abuses attending our celebration of this sacrament, called loudly for reformation. Last year, I preached a short course of sermons on baptism. At the same time,

agreeably to a recent resolution and recommendation of the Presbytery to which I belong, I revived the laws of the church which had fallen into disuse, relative to this ordinance, particularly that which prohibits private baptism. *Acts of Assembly*, 1690, X. Whenever I baptize a child on a week-day, whether in the church or elsewhere, I give previous intimation of sermon, and after preaching I administer the ordinance in the presence of the congregation. By these means many have been brought to understand better the nature of this sacrament, and to attend to it with more reverence. It had been long customary for the parent to give an entertainment, according to his station, to his neighbours and connections, immediately after the baptism; by which means this sacred ordinance, instead of being regarded as a most solemn religious service, had degenerated into an occasion of carnal mirth and festivity. The more religiously disposed amongst us have set the example of discontinuing this practice.

“ The following month, March 1799, I began a course of practical sermons on Regeneration, which I continued to the beginning of July following. These were attended with a more general awakening than had yet appeared among us. Seldom a week passed in which we did not see or hear of one, two, or three persons, brought under deep concern about their souls, accompanied with strong convictions of sin, and earnest enquiry after a Saviour. It was a great advantage to these that there were others on the road before them; for they were seldom at a loss now to find an acquaintance to whom they could freely communicate their anxious thoughts. The house of one of our most established Christians became the chief resort of all who wished to spend an hour in reading or conversing about spiritual subjects. Some who had but newly begun to entertain serious thoughts about religion, and who had not yet come so far as to speak out their mind, would contrive an errand to this person's house, and listen to her talk. She was visited at other times by those who were drawn only by curiosity or a disputatious spirit, who wanted to cavil at her words, or

draw her into controversy. Such visitors she did not avoid, and at last they ceased to trouble her.

“ Other experienced Christians among us have been extremely useful to their younger brethren or sisters. Their conversation and example have been principal means of turning the attention of the young to religion, and of edifying those who have been already awakened. Such persons I find most serviceable auxiliaries. If they be neither *prophets*, nor *apostles*, nor *teachers*, yet their usefulness in the church entitles them to the appellation of *helps*, 1 Cor. xii. 28. Nor do I think an apostle would hesitate to acknowledge them, both men and women, in the relation of *fellow-labourers*, Phil. iv. 3. Nor has success in this divine work been confined to instruments raised up among ourselves. The same happy effects have, in a certain measure, attended the preaching, the prayers, or conversation of pious brethren, who have assisted at the celebration of the Lord’s supper, or made us other occasional visits.

“ It is observable that the work of conversion has been begun and carried on among this people in a quiet manner, without any confusion, and without those ungovernable agitations of mind, or convulsions of the body, or shrieking, or fainting, which have often accompanied a general awakening in other places. One young woman was so much moved in church, in March 1799, that she wept bitterly, and her friends thought it prudent to convey her out a little before the congregation was dismissed. She was for five or six days unfit for going about her usual work. In June following, at the time of our sacrament, she felt emotions of joy, for a few days, to such a degree as to withdraw her regard, in a great measure, from sensible objects. Spiritual affections were unusually strong in her, and spiritual objects appeared visible and near; but her sentiments were quite correct and scriptural. A few days afterwards, when her emotions had subsided, she told me that she was at the time sensible that her mind was somewhat unsettled, but that she found comfort in recollecting the apostle’s words, ‘ If we are beside ourselves, it is to God.’ This was exactly her case. She continues a

humble lively Christian, and, except these two short intervals she has regularly performed her ordinary work, as a maid-servant, to the satisfaction of her master and mistress, in whose service she still remains. Another woman, the mother of a family, in April last, was so much moved in hearing sermon, that of her own accord she left the church. Excepting these two instances, I know of none whose emotions under the preaching of the word discovered themselves in any other manner than by silent tears.

“ Having lately made an enumeration of those of our congregation, whom, to the best of my judgment, I trust I can reckon truly enlightened with the saving knowledge of Christ, I find their number about seventy. The greater part of these are under thirty years of age. Several are above forty; six or seven above fifty; one fifty-six; and one above seventy. Of children under twelve or fourteen, there are a good many who seem to have a liking to religion; but we find it difficult to form a decided opinion of their case. Of persons who have died within these twelve months, three we are persuaded, and we hope two or three others, have slept in Jesus.”

In the Memoir of Dr Stewart published, in 1822, his biographer has furnished us in his private letters with more of the utterance of the heart than he had deemed it right to pour out in his narrative. From these we make a few selections, premising that they are addressed to the Rev. Mr Black, at that time a pastor in Edinburgh, though at the time of their first intimacy he was settled in St Madoes. “ Mr Stewart always referred to a conversation with his friend at St Madoes, as connected with the commencement of his spiritual life. Mr Black, as they sat together in an arbour in the garden, took occasion to describe the triumphant dying scene of a deceased sister. Such a fact was not to be accounted for on Mr Stewart’s principles; and the event made an impression on his mind, never afterwards wholly effaced.”

Many years after this incident he writes—“ The dear name of Mr Black is always associated with my first perceptions of divine truth and redeeming love. My thoughts



took a long flight backwards, and the parlour and the garden of St Madoes appeared to me like an upper chamber in Jerusalem, and like the garden of Gethsemane.”\*

To this beloved friend and estimable man his heart turned in its fulness, when he had not only emerged from the twilight into the noonday of Gospel light himself, but when he saw his people flying like clouds, and flocking as doves to their windows, to that gracious Redeemer, of whom they were both erewhile so ignorant.

“ TO MR BLACK.

“ Moulin, Oct. 20, 1800.

“ O my dear brother, had you but been with us for a week past how your heart would have rejoiced! Such hungering and thirsting after communion with God! Such genuine humility and contrition for sin! Such devotedness to the Saviour! Old converts quickened, and new ones added to the Lord! Yesterday was, I trust, a great day of the Son of Man. I almost felt my own nerves, rigid as they are, touched, and my sympathy (my admiration, I am sure) excited, in various private conversations which I had during the week. Glenbriachan, which I visited on Tuesday, I found blossoming like the rose. I had observed, for some months past, a kind of concern, a kind of ‘voluntary humility’ appearing among them, rather bordering on ostentation; but now their expressions of concern and humiliation are fewer, more unaffected, and seem to come ‘more directly from the heart.’”

Afterwards he writes—“ O for the pen of a ready writer, to tell of the Lord’s abundant goodness! One lad in the parish of Blair, whom I visited a few days ago, and who seems to have walked with God for many years, appears to be going home, bearing ample testimony to the grace of God his Saviour. Several called here yesterday, hungering and thirsting as much as ever. Widow M. entered joyfully into her rest. But what chiefly

\* Life of Stewart, p. 42.

engages our praise at present, is the case of Robert R—, tenant in Glenbriachan (still a favoured spot). His wife was among the first fruits in the glens, and now the husband, laid on a sick-bed, has been visited with the joy of salvation, and proclaims the freeness and fulness of divine grace. It is a singular sight to see his wife, with the near prospect of widowhood, and a family of small children, his two sisters, brother-in-law, &c., all rejoicing by his bedside. Mrs B. or you, I am sure, will not fail to make our dear brethren partakers of our joy.”

“ The day Mr ——— preached, I succeeded him, and gave briefly in Gaelic the substance of his discourse, which had been a long one. He staid here on Monday. That day he and I took a walk to see John C——, mentioned by my sister in her last letter to Mrs Black. This man had been brought a few weeks ago to a clear and comfortable knowledge of the Gospel, chiefly by means of a young woman whom he had hired for the five weeks of harvest, on purpose to enjoy her religious company. About a month ago his wife was in great bodily distress, but it was a season of love to her soul. She was enlightened with the knowledge of her Saviour, and enabled to trust and rejoice in him. Margaret K——, the young woman whose conversation had been blessed to the husband, was their constant attendant. The wife has been much distressed since her illness, and her recovery very doubtful. Mr ——— and I found her in a very weak state, but both she and her husband were quite resigned and cheerful. Unfortunately, neither of them can speak a word of English, so that Mr ——— had no conversation with them, but he was much delighted with the man’s animated and heavenly countenance. \* \* \* I have had calls from two young women, who spent one or two half-years in service in this parish. They were in that time awakened, I trust effectually, and pretty well instructed in the truth. At Martinmas they quitted their service, and returned to their native parish of Blair-Athole, where they live in the same village, and are mutual aids and comforts to each other. They read and

converse much together, and not seldom bear their testimony against the profanity of swearers and Sabbath-breakers in their village. Their unusual manners and sentiments draw upon them many taunts, and on the Moulin people, among whom they learned such odd notions; but they have been enabled to abide steadfast, and I hope humble.

“ Such things having now, by the peculiar blessing of God, and his abounding grace, become pretty frequent, are much talked of. They have excited the attention and wonder of many, and the diversion and hatred of some, just as might have been expected. I hear of few scoffers among ourselves, where the behaviour of our young converts is seen and known; but I hear they are the subjects of much obloquy in the neighbouring parishes, where, on account of the distance, there is more room for misrepresenting their sentiments and conduct, and where they are grossly misrepresented. Hitherto, the Lord has watched over them most tenderly, so that I have not heard of one who has fallen off, or brought a stain on his profession. On the contrary, those who live nearest to this place, and whom I know best, appear evidently to be growing in grace and knowledge. We have many enquirers after the truth, who are yet but exploring their way, and some who, from opposing and reprobating its doctrines, are brought to listen to them with acquiescence, at least, if not with a desire to learn. S—— is attended every day, and almost all hours, by persons of every description. She and a tradesman in this village, W. W—— and Margaret K——, are my principal ‘ helps,’ 1st Cor. xii. 28. Expositors would be at no loss to understand that term, if they were a few weeks among us. What a treasure has been distributed among us! and in what frail earthen vessels! Truly the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. O that our hearts were more enlarged, and our tongues more ready, and our voices more tuned to praise Him who hath made the day spring from on high to visit us! But how dry! how barren! I used to give little credit to the complaints of good men, such as Mr Newton, when lamenting their want of love,

and their indisposition to labour ; but now I give them full credit. I am sure they said no more than they must have felt, and I dare say they felt no more than was real." \*

“ When the news of those things had spread abroad, it excited an uncommon interest among all those who loved Zion’s prosperity. Good men and good ministers could hardly be satisfied, without repairing to the scene. After a visit of Mr Black to Moulin, he wrote thus in his diary : — ‘ My visit to Moulin was particularly gratifying. Such a revival I never witnessed before. It is truly the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes. Much as I had heard of it before, it far exceeded expectation. I preached on Matt. xxii. 42 ; the congregation attentive, and some of them much affected. Had a great deal of conversation in private with those under religious concern, and considerably under the influence of doubts and fears. They spoke feelingly of the hardness of their hearts, and of their indisposedness for every thing that is good. At the same time their hearts seemed to be much alive to God. They have a keen appetite for the Word of God, and an evident love for the Saviour, though they will not allow it themselves. A deep sense of their own unworthiness, and a strong affection for one another, are the most prominent features of their character. Some are more advanced, and greatly enlightened in the knowledge of divine truth. These serve as guides to the rest, and are made exceedingly useful by their example and conversation.

“ Dear Mr Stewart himself is mercifully preserved humble amidst all the honour that God is conferring upon him. O may the good shepherd watch over him, and the flock committed to his charge ! And may the divine influence be spread abroad throughout all our congregations, that every where there may be a shaking among the dry bones, and that a great harvest of souls may be gathered to the Saviour.’ †

“ As an instance of his kindly affection to those around

\* Life of Stewart, p. 161.

† Ibid. p. 163.

him, it may be mentioned, that at the hour of evening worship, a bell rang to give notice to the bordering villagers of the evening sacrifice, when as many as were disengaged and willing-hearted repaired to the place, and in the kitchen, or, in fine weather, before the door, listened to the opening up of some passage of Scripture, and joined in prayer and praise. His attention to the cases of the newly awakened was unremitting; and if some trial, or some unlooked-for mercy exercised the hearts of his more established converts, their minister took a lively interest in the dispensation.\*

“What a fine picture Mr Stewart draws in some of his letters, when, after an occasional absence, on drawing near to the habitations of his beloved people, now one, and now another, on discovering his approach, hastened to salute him, and to welcome his return! And how interesting must those Sabbaths have been, in which the Son of Man showed his power, and sent forth the Gospel invitation with an influence of grace which the called could not resist! No wonder that many resorted to such a highly favoured spot, and that many were anxious to procure for their own congregations the benefit of Mr S.’s occasional ministrations.”

We return to the conclusion of Mr Stewart’s published narrative for a few interesting particulars of the general state of the parish:—

“The external effects of a general concern about religion, have appeared in the behaviour even of those who do not seem to have experienced a change of heart. While the younger people attended a Sabbath school, those who were grown up used to spend the evening of that day in sauntering about the fields and woods in gossiping parties, or visiting their acquaintance at a distance, without improving their time by any profitable exercise. Now there is hardly a lounge to be seen; nor any person walking abroad, except going to some house or meeting where he may hear the Scriptures read. Swearing,

\* Life of Stewart, p. 167.

profane talking, foolish and indecent jesting, have in a great measure ceased. At *late wakes*, where people assemble to watch by the body of a deceased neighbour, the whole night used to be spent in childish noisy sports and pastimes. Even the apartment where the corpse lay was the scene of their revelry. This unnatural custom, which is still pretty general over a great part of the Highlands, is almost wholly discontinued in this part of the country. They still assemble on such occasions, but they pass the time in reading the Bible or some religious book, and in sober conversation.

“ In reply to your request of relating a few of the more remarkable cases of conversion which have occurred among this people, I must say that I have little uncommon to communicate. I have mentioned already that almost all our converts have been brought to serious concern and enquiry in a quiet, gradual manner. To an intelligent observer, the change in the conversation, temper, deportment, and the very countenance of individuals, is striking; the change, too, on the general aspect of the manners of the people is conspicuous. The effect is thus, on the whole, obvious; yet there are few particulars in the case of each person, which, taken singly, will appear uncommon, or worthy of being detailed in a separate narrative. We have no instances of persons remarkable for profligacy of manners or profaneness of speech, who have been reclaimed from such enormities; because there was none of that description to be found in our society. The change has been from ignorance and indifference, and disrelish of divine things, to knowledge, and concern, and spiritual enjoyment. Neither are there among us examples of persons suddenly struck and impressed by some alarming event, or singular interposition of Providence. The word of truth proclaimed in public, or spoken in private, has been almost the only outward mean of producing conviction of sin, and confidence in the Saviour. In every single case, the power of God is visible in the effect produced; but there is little ‘diversity of operation.’ Instead of endeavouring to paint the

beauties of holiness in the scene around me, I rather wish to prevail with you and other friends, who know how to enjoy such a spectacle, to 'come and see.'

"I have thus, my dear sir, endeavoured to give a concise view of the prosperous state of religion in this congregation for the last two or three years. We still have the happiness to find, from week to week, that the same concern and awakening is spreading around, and extending to some neighbouring congregations. Within these few weeks persons from six and seven miles' distance have called here on a Sabbath morning, under evident concern about their souls. On a succeeding Sabbath, the same persons have called again, introducing a relation or fellow-servant, under similar concern. All of these, so far as can be judged from present appearances, are in a hopeful way. Such is the manifold grace and loving-kindness with which it has pleased the Lord to visit this corner of his vineyard. I trust that all our Christian brethren, who may receive the joyful intelligence, will join us in praying, that God may continue to water, with showers of blessings, 'this vine which his own right hand hath planted;' and that no boar from the wood may be allowed to waste it, nor worm at the root to smite it that it wither."

In the year 1805 the Providence of God removed Mr Stewart from Moulin to take charge of the parish of Dingwall. The blow was a severe one to himself and his people, but Christian submission to the Divine appointment was a grace which they were called upon to exercise, and they were strengthened in the hour of need. By his change of scene, his labours were much increased, while his emoluments remained the same,—so that even gainsayers were put to silence as to the purity of his motives.

He writes, "Now that the time of my departure is almost at hand, you will be anxious to know how it fares with us. There is really much composure and quiet acquiescence that prevail. Some weeks ago I used to only make distant allusions to the situation in which we stood. Of late I have thought proper to speak of our

situation more explicitly, and make the mention of it somewhat familiar to our ears, so as to be able to think and talk of it without overpowering emotion. Our evening readings are crowded. The people seem to swallow the word greedily, considering that their time may be short."

It is an affecting fact that the patron of Moulin, who condescended not to take counsel, however modestly proposed by Mr Stewart, and considered not the desires of the people, presented a preacher not according to their wishes, and the well-conditioned flock who were gathered round the faithful pastor, fell off to find pasture where best they might—so that the good work at Moulin has melted away, and its church has returned to the stillness of an altar forsaken by its priest, where the sacrifice is chilled and the fire expiring. O, when will men be wise, and Scotland awake to know where her strength and safety lie!



## CHAPTER XXII.

## ISLE OF ARRAN.

1804—BUT ESPECIALLY 1812 AND 1813.

WE are indebted to No. V. of the Glasgow Revival Tracts for the only account of this Revival we have obtained, which probably is the only one in print. It is furnished by the Rev. Angus M-Millan, successor of the venerable Mr M-Bride, in the parish of Kilmorie, Isle of Arran. We give the narrative part of the tract without alteration or omission.

“Thirty years ago, the state of religion in this island was exceedingly low. ‘Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people.’ But, through the tender mercy of God, the day-spring from on high visited it. Divine light arose on them that sat in darkness, and the cause of Christ has gained much ground in this part of his vineyard, since the year 1804. In that year, and the year following, many were awakened at the north end of the island, especially about the farms of Sannox and their neighbourhood. And although this awakening, as to its power and progress, was not of long continuance, yet a considerable number of the subjects of it testified, by their after lives and conversation, that they had undergone a gracious change. This day of small things was the commencement of the revival which followed. From this time, a change for the better might be observed in the religious sentiments and conduct of many among the people. Many seemed now to be awakened from the slumber of spiritual death; being disposed to attend to the things which belonged to their everlasting peace. Their eyes were now opened to see the evil of their former wicked ways, their perishing condition as sinners, and their need of Christ as a Saviour. They now began also to *distinguish* between *truth* and *error*; to *relish*

*evangelical doctrine; to attend with diligence on the means of grace; and, in general, to set up the worship of God, morning and evening, in their families.* Religious meetings were also set up in many places; and, in the course of a few years, a kind of reformation was thus visible throughout many parts of the island. This was the case more especially, though not exclusively, in the parish of Kilmorie, which was at this time favoured with the ministry of the late pious and laborious Mr M'Bride. It may be remarked, respecting his usual style of preaching, that he was by no means what might be called an alarming preacher, but rather the opposite. His sermons were frequently close and searching; but he dwelt more on the consolations of the Gospel than on the terrors of the law; and the excitement seemed to be, in general, greater under the sermons in which the riches of divine grace and the consolations of the Gospel were exhibited, than under such as were more awful, and apparently better fitted to awaken. Mr M'Bride's manner of preaching was very much distinguished for seriousness, fervour, and great zeal for the salvation of sinners; and this often led him to make very close appeals to the conscience. But the revival itself was not of a sudden. It was gradual, and spread from one place to another. Neither was it in all cases saving as to its effects. Many under it assumed a form of godliness, who were altogether destitute of its power. In other cases, however, there was something more deep and precious—even the quickening, saving, and soul-transforming influence of the Holy Spirit. During its progress, a considerable number were accordingly brought under deep convictions of their guilt and unworthiness as sinners, of their liability to eternal misery, and of their utter helplessness as concerned themselves. Now, they began in earnest to say, 'What shall we do to be saved?'—and to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus—for an interest in him. And the God of all grace who thus visited them with the awakening influences of his Spirit, was pleased also to enlighten their minds as to the way of salvation; and thus to lead them, by faith, for peace and

rest to the only Saviour of sinners. And being thus quickened, enlightened, and comforted, by the teaching of the same Spirit, they were also united together in the bonds of love and Christian fellowship, while they travelled together Zionward.

“The subjects of these spiritual influences were, however, only as a little flock, when compared with the multitude who remained yet stout-hearted and far from righteousness. And these, becoming impatient under the restraints which the late Reformation had laid upon them, with regard to unholy practices, began to break out anew with greater violence; so that, in 1810 and 1811, many were bolder in sin, and more abandoned to wickedness, than they had been at any former period. The enemy of souls now came in as a flood, and threatened to carry all before him. It is right, however, to observe that this was in no respect true of professors, or of such as there was reason to believe had been the subjects of divine grace. These were for the most part remarkably consistent in their walk and conversation. The breaking out of sin here referred to, was among the bulk of the people who made no particular profession of religion,—and especially among the young, who had been brought under temporary restraint.

“These circumstances, however, affected the tender-hearted, and stirred up the pious zeal of Mr M·Bride, and led him to be even more earnest in his warnings and remonstrances from the pulpit and otherwise against abounding iniquity. The little flock of tender-hearted Christians scattered throughout his parish, were, at the same time, moved with a sense of the prevalence of sin and the desolations of Zion. They felt an increased concern for the conversion and salvation of sinners, and a deeper interest in the prosperity and enlargement of the kingdom of Christ. They began to be more frequent and earnest in their supplications at a throne of grace for a time of revival—of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Several little parties of them, by mutual consent, set apart some days for private fasting and prayer, sending up their united supplications to the Hearer of prayer,

for the downpouring of the Spirit, in his awakening and converting influences on sinners around them. They kept several such days *for nearly a twelvemonth* before the commencement of what is generally called, ‘The Revival of Religion in Arran.’ In these devotional exercises, some of them enjoyed uncommon nearness to God, and great freedom at a throne of grace, when pouring out their hearts in earnest supplication for the manifestation of divine power and glory in the sanctuary, especially in the congregation with which they were themselves connected. Their minds were much stirred up to press after these things in secret,—and at their fellowship meetings, and also when attending public ordinances. They seemed to be animated by the spirit of him who said, ‘For Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.’

“While this little flock of Christ, and their pastor at their head, were thus engaged, and about the beginning of March 1812, the Lord began to work in an unusual way among them, in a way of which they had not till this time any expectation, and which, accordingly, caused some surprise. It was at this time that the outcrying commenced, which was afterwards so common for a considerable time. It began at first in some private meetings, but afterwards extended to the public assembly under Mr M’Bride’s ministry. What made the thing the more remarkable was, *that it made its first appearance among the people of God.* Yea, the most tender, humble, and spiritual-minded among them were the first affected in this manner, and it continued for a short time among them only. But the influence which appeared first moving on them, in this unusual way, was soon extended to others; and the next subjects of it were those who had been before seriously disposed, or who had been at one time or other under serious impressions. But soon after it was extended to the gay and thoughtless, the moral, and the openly wicked. Persons of almost every description and age, from nine years or under, to that of sixty or upwards,

were affected; but the number of old people was small compared with that of the young. The crying at first—and while confined to the people of God, was attended with very little bodily agitation; but after others were affected, it was generally attended with these—such as panting, trembling, and other convulsive appearances.

“ The writer of these pages did not reside in Arran till about six months after the commencement of this revival; but he enquired particularly concerning the beginning of it, from such as were best able to inform him, and is satisfied, in his own mind, that the Spirit of the Lord was at work in preparing for it—that his mighty power was revealed in the commencement of it—and that he had a gracious and merciful design in ordering the circumstances of it. Although this revival did in some measure degenerate latterly, through the weakness and folly of men, yet the beginning of it was truly the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes. Some, who were among the first affected, told the writer, that they had not the most remote idea of crying out before they were constrained to do so. So much was this the case, that they said they could not have refrained, even if they had been threatened with instant death. They added, that their outcries and bodily agitations *arose entirely from the state of their minds*, when powerfully impressed and affected with a sense of divine truth. But it is proper to observe, that the writer is here speaking only of such as were lively exercised Christians previous to this revival. On examining others, who knew nothing of Christian experience before the beginning of this work, he found that the first impressions of many of them were accompanied with deep convictions of sin, with a painful sense of their helplessness and misery as sinners, and also with earnest desires after an interest in Christ; which it is to be hoped many of them attained. But it must be acknowledged, that the accounts given by all were not alike satisfactory. Many were deeply affected externally, who could give little account of the matter. Their affections were moved, but convictions of sin did not take any deep hold on their hearts and consciences, and so their awaken-

ing soon passed away; at least, it was so with some. But if there be joy in heaven over even one sinner that repenteth, we have reason to think that there must have been much joy, in that world of light and love, over many that were brought to true repentance, in this place, during the progress of that work.

“About the beginning of 1812, the awakening became general, and continued to make progress about three months. After this, it seemed to be at a stand, till the beginning of the following December, when it again revived, and continued to spread considerably for about three months more; during which period it extended over a great part of the parish of Kilmorie, which is nearly thirty miles long, and it extended also to some parts of the parish of Kilbride. The writer cannot pretend to give the exact number of the subjects of this awakening; but the number, from first to last, was very considerable. It must have amounted to two or three hundred persons, old and young taken together. He may state them at two hundred and fifty; which is rather below than above the real number. But he does not mean to insinuate that the whole of these proved true believers. This will appear from the statements already made.

“For some months after the commencement of the awakening, the subjects of it manifested an uncommon thirst after the means of grace. Both old and young flocked in multitudes to hear the word of God. His house, and the place employed for private meetings, were frequently so crowded, that the people, as it were, trod one on another. To travel ten or fifteen miles to hear sermon, was considered as a very small matter; and after sermon was over, it was no uncommon thing for many of them to meet together in private houses, or in barns, and to spend several hours in religious exercises. Some of them spent even whole nights in this way. They also longed for the return of the Sabbath. They rejoiced when it was said unto them, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’ They eagerly sought after renewed opportunities of receiving spiritual instruction. Their desire was so great as not to

be easily satisfied. In our religious assemblies, at this time, some might be seen filled with divine love, others with fear; some rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, and others trembling lest they should come short of it; some crying out in accents of praise, and others indicating, by their cries, their dread of everlasting wrath. At this time, our meetings were frequent and well attended: and almost every sermon seemed to be effective in awakening, quickening, or refreshing. Satan and his agents, indeed, made strong efforts to counteract the designs and operations of the Spirit of God, by throwing all manner of stumblingblocks in the way of his people; but, notwithstanding all the opposition of earth and hell, the word of the Lord grew and multiplied. Some who were lively Christians before, enjoyed at this time much of the refreshing influences of the Spirit, and were often filled, in an extraordinary measure, with peace and joy in believing. As illustrative of this, I may mention, that, in the spring of 1813, I was catechising one day at a particular farm, in the district of ———, and when speaking of the character of Christ as the Redeemer of God's elect, and attempting to describe the preciousness of his blood, and the riches of his grace, an excellent Christian, who is now in the world of spirits, cried out, in an elevated tone of voice, 'O the infinite virtue of the blood of Christ—the preciousness of his blood! What am I, what am I, that he should ever spend one thought concerning me! O my nothingness, my nothingness, my nothingness!' And, soon after, she exclaimed, 'I shall soon be with thee—I shall soon be with thee—be for ever with thee, Lord!' I have seen others, also, on various occasions, affected much in the same way. And these ecstasies of spiritual joy, among the people of God, were generally *accompanied with great humility and tenderness of spirit*. Instead of being puffed up, they were, on the contrary, bowed down to the very dust, under a sense of their privileges. When the glory of the King of Zion was manifested to their souls, in the light of the Spirit, they were ready to exclaim, with Job, 'Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' I have heard others, under awakenings of conscience, cry out,

‘ O what shall we do? what shall we do? Wash us from sin; let us not deceive ourselves, for we cannot deceive thee.’ It was pleasing thus to see many of them really afraid of self-deception, and earnest in their enquiries after the only sure foundation, the only hope set before them in the gospel.

“ In the spring of 1813, this awakening, however, began to decline, and ceased very soon after; but those who were truly Christians, continued to enjoy, both in secret duties and at public ordinances, renewed and manifest tokens of the divine presence and favour. This was especially the case on sacramental occasions; at which they were favoured with the assistance of some of the most pious ministers of the day. Most of these having now departed this life, I am enabled to name the greater part of them, without making any reference to the living. The late Rev. Messrs Bayne of Greenock, and Robertson of Kingussie, formerly of the chapel at Rothsay, assisted here constantly for many years. The late Rev. Dr Love of Anderston assisted here occasionally, about the time of the revival; and the late Rev. Mr M’Kenzie of Gorbals, formerly of the Gaelic Chapel, Duke Street, Glasgow, assisted also occasionally, but chiefly before the commencement of this work. These, along with the late Mr M’Bride himself, were considered, and I believe justly, among the most pious ministers of their day: but they have ceased from their labours, and their works do follow them. The more regular or occasional labours of these men were often blessed as seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. It is doubtless true, that, as the awakening declined, some of those who appeared at one time much affected, and much engaged in religious pursuits, began to grow cold and remiss in spiritual duties, to fall into divers temptations, and to slide back into conformity with the world. Like the stony-ground hearers, the religious impressions of many were slight and transitory—their convictions were not of a spiritual or abiding nature; and, having no root in their hearts, they soon withered away, without bringing forward any fruit to perfection. But although many did thus turn, as the dog to



his vomit, and soon got rid of their religious impressions, a considerable number of the subjects of this work continue, to the present day, bringing forth fruit meet for repentance, and manifesting their faith by their works. It is due, however, to acknowledge, that, even in respect of the best of us, the zeal, fervour, and liveliness, manifest during the time of our revival, have suffered some decay; and that, instead of these, coldness, deadness, and formality in religion, are now too prevalent among us. We have, therefore, much need to be earnest in our supplications for another season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord—to pray, with the devout Psalmist—‘ Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.—Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.’

“ As some enquiries have been made respecting the bodily agitation and outcrying which were observable during our revival, I may now state, that these did *not always* accompany cases of conversion. There are some among the subjects of that work, whom I consider serious Christians, who, as far as I know, never cried out; but such cases were rare, after the excitement had fully set in among us. The outcrying also ceased, with the greater number, after a certain period, but not with the whole; for there are a few who still continue to be occasionally affected in the same way, though not to the same height as formerly. Then, as to the opinions of the people themselves, I am not aware that there are any of the truly pious in this place, who consider bodily excitement as necessary to a gracious operation of the Spirit; but there is no doubt that some lay too much stress on powerful bodily feelings; and they are thus very ready to conclude, that the Spirit of the Lord is at work when such effects are produced. Still I do not think that any hold such effects to be necessary to true conversion, or that there can be no saving change without them. And they have at least seen and heard much to convince them how erroneous such an opinion would be.”

The influence of this revival was felt in other of the

western islands, and we had occasion in another part of the work to refer to its effects in the isle of Bute. Having conversed with those who have recently passed summer weeks in the isle of Arran, it is very comforting to learn from them that the savour of its blessed days has not yet, at the end of twenty-three years, expired. Some aged people still live to tell of what the Lord did for their souls at that happy time; and the descendants of others are made partakers of like precious faith. One peculiar habit of the inhabitants of this island took its rise at the period of the revival, and exists to this day. When the fishermen are out in their boats, and have set their nets for the night, they engage in the duty of family worship with as much regularity and composure as they do when on shore. How consoling to the wife and daughters at home, to know that the husband and brothers have committed themselves to the keeping of Him who holds the waters in the hollow of his hand. How sweet the harmony when the strain of praise and thanksgiving mingles with the music of the billows that have tossed themselves from the far Atlantic, and the scream of the sea-bird who has made her home upon the waves. Not only does Kedar's wilderness lift up her lovely voice, but the wildernesses of old ocean send up their strains of joy to God. O when shall all the world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ! How many acts of rebellion have been the sins of the sea! How many whom the Ruler of the waves has carried in safety to their desired haven, have blasphemed His holy name in their precarious dwelling places! But the time is hastening, when not only the poor fishermen of Arran, but all the men who do business on the mighty waters, shall send up their hearts in prayer to the God of all the Promises.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## REVIVAL IN BREADALBANE, IN 1816 AND 1817.

THE following account of the revival on Loch Tay-side is extracted from the Life of William M·Gavin of Glasgow, the justly celebrated author of "The Protestant." He narrates that which he himself witnessed. The character which he gives of the style of preaching of John M·Donald of Urquhart is most just and striking. The effect of his preaching in Glenlyon is similar to the results that have followed it in many a Highland glen, where we have heard of persons travelling seventy miles, attracted by the power of the Spirit which accompanies his words. Even the remote and lonely St Kilda has, through his zealous instrumentality, been made to "stretch out her hands to God." His name and influence recur continually when awakenings in the Highlands and Islands are the theme; but without his own authority, and without evidences of the abiding effects of those great emotions which have very generally accompanied his toilsome labours on many a mountain side far from his own flock, it were imprudent, and perhaps presuming, to give any details. Let us hope that great as his exertions are, his energy still enables him to keep memoranda of the striking occurrences which follow his preaching, and that the church will one day be refreshed by the detail of what the spirit has wrought by him.

" SIR,

" Glasgow, 1st Jan. 1818.

" I presume most of your readers have heard of the late revival of religion in Breadalbane, and some other parts of the Highlands of Scotland. As information on this subject must be interesting to every one who desires

the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, and as it was my lot, in company with a few friends, to visit some of those parts in September, and again in December last, I shall, without farther preface, proceed to relate such particulars as I was informed of on the spot, and what came under my own observation.

“ This revival began just a year before my visit in September, at the dispensation of the Lord's Supper at Ardionick, on Loch Tay-side, and chiefly under the preaching of the Rev. Mr M'Donald of Urquhart. Ardionick is a missionary station, supported by the royal bounty, or by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, in connexion with the Church of Scotland. It is on the south side of the loch, about half way between Killin and Kenmore. There is no chapel here; but a tent, constructed of a few rough boards, serves to shelter the minister while preaching, and the congregation stand exposed in all weathers on the side of a hill.

“ Here, at the above mentioned period, a great number of people had assembled to hear the word, many of whom had come from a distance. The preaching of Mr M'Donald was accompanied by a power such as they had never witnessed before. The whole congregation seemed affected by a singular movement. I suppose it was something like what the prophet saw in vision,—a shaking among the dry bones in the valley. The first impression was a deep conviction of sin in the minds of many, accompanied by an earnest enquiry about the way of escape from the wrath to come. Some indeed were agitated by strong emotion when thus awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger; and it is not doubted that several were led by the Holy Spirit to embrace Christ as the Saviour of their own souls. The impression of that day was carried in many a bosom to distant parts of the country, and into remote glens, in which, perhaps, the sound of salvation had never before been heard.

“ The Rev. Mr Findlater, the minister on this station, has his residence at Ardionick, and the tent is close by his house; but he preaches also on the opposite side of the loch, where there is a small chapel, called Lawer's

Kirk. We had a letter of introduction to this gentleman, but regret we did not find him at home, as he would no doubt have communicated many interesting particulars. We had some conversation, however, with a very intelligent servant, who told us they had 'a great day' there the week before. It was the time of dispensing the Lord's Supper, and it might have been called the anniversary of the first revival. Mr M'Donald had preached; and many, chiefly among the young, seemed to be seriously impressed. The congregation was estimated at between eight and nine thousand, who were all able to hear the preacher's voice. The place could contain ten times that number; and it is not easy to say how many might be able to hear in such a situation; for I was convinced, by subsequent experience, that it is easy to speak so as to make people hear upon the rising side of a mountain.

"About four miles east on the same side of the loch, there is a tent erected for preaching by ministers or missionaries of the Tabernacle connexion.

"Mr Findlater preaches, I believe, every second Sabbath at Lawer's Kirk, on the north side of the loch. Indeed, this and Ardionick may be considered the same station, the kirk being on one side of the loch, and the manse on the other; and such is his zeal and diligence, that sometimes after having preached twice on one side of the loch on Lord's days, he goes over to the other side and preaches in the evening. The awakening has been chiefly among people on the north side; and Lawer's Kirk, as might be expected, is well attended. To this place the Glenlyon people resort, coming round the bottom of Benlawers, a distance of fifteen or twenty miles, and some a great deal farther; and besides travelling thus far, they must ferry across the loch, which is here about a mile wide, when the preaching is at the tent. The country is very populous on both sides of the loch, notwithstanding the late emigrations; and I believe there are as many people on the north side alone as would fill five such houses as Lawer's Kirk.

"There is an Independent church in Aberfeldy, the pastor of which has laboured much, and been very suc-

cessful in preaching the gospel in Glenlyon. We took up our quarters for a few nights at Weem, or Taybridge Inn, as it is now called, which is about a mile from Aberfeldy, where we found ourselves as comfortable as we would have been in any inn in the kingdom. We got ourselves introduced to Mr Kennedy, the pastor of the church in the above village, who was kind enough to offer to accompany us to Glenlyon on the following day.

“ When we came to Fortingale, which is a kirk town near the opening of the glen, we met an old man on horseback, with whom our companion was acquainted. Three of his children, we were told, had lately been the subjects of a gracious change. The old man himself seemed very desirous of hearing the word ; and taking us for ministers, he said he hoped we were going to the glen to preach. Indeed he begged that we would, and said we might depend upon collecting a few, though most of the people were at the hill working with their peats. All the male part of our company were indeed stated or occasional preachers ; and the writer was chosen to do duty on the present occasion. We rode five or six miles farther to Invervar, which was as far as a carriage could well go. This place is by the side of a wood, in which Mr K. sometimes preaches on winter evenings, by lights suspended from the trees. This gentleman had left word at a few cottages as we passed that there was to be sermon, and also made it known at the houses which compose the small village. It was true most of the people were at work on the hill, but in a short time about forty persons were collected ; and, to our great surprise, the old man whom we met at Fortingale had rode two or three miles farther down the country, had done his business, and was back at Invervar before the worship commenced. After the discourse in English, Mr K. gave the substance of it in Gaelic, chiefly for the sake of the old people, who understood little English ; for those of middle age, as one of them told me, understood me pretty well. During the whole time they heard with grave attention ; but I could not help observing the difference when Mr K. began to speak in Gaelic. Every

eye beamed with intelligence and interest ; and the very children, who had been comparatively listless before, were all alive the moment they heard the sound of their own dear language of the mountains. I never spoke in a more interesting and melting situation. The gloomy grandeur of the surrounding mountains—the rich verdure of the valleys—the winding of a copious stream—the numerous patches of corn waiting the sickle, and the multitude of sheep on the hills, suggested the subject of discourse, which was the last five verses of the 65th Psalm, and which I endeavoured to improve, by directing the attention of the people to the abundance of spiritual blessings exhibited to sinners by the gospel. When I saw the lively attention with which they listened to the words of eternal life, and heard the rude fervour of their music, I thought of the accomplishment of the prophet's prayer,—‘ Let the inhabitants of the rock sing ; let them shout from the top of the mountains.’

“ The appearance of the people indicated a state of great poverty. They suffered much from the failure of the crops in 1816 ; and it is worthy of remark, that it was at the very time when this calamity overtook them, that the Lord was pleased in so remarkable a manner to visit them with the blessings of his gospel. Glenlyon, like Loch Tay-side, is very populous. It is richer, in point of soil and verdure, than most Highland glens. We passed many fields of oats and barley nearly ripe, and some in the process of cutting down. The people are, of course, more dependent upon the weather than mere graziers, or those who inhabit more barren spots. Their ordinary fare is potatoes and milk, and they sell what grain they raise for the purpose of paying rent, buying clothes, and other necessaries. Having little grain the preceding year, and losing even a great part of their potato crop, they must have been reduced to great distress ; but amidst their deep poverty, the Lord was pleased to visit them with the riches of his mercy. When I visited the same place in December, I was happy to find that all their crops had been safely got in. The valley is well sheltered and warm ; and the grain was

sooner ripe than in many extensive districts of the low countries.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ The character of those who appear to be under the influence of the truth (and there are many such) is that of affectionate earnestness with regard to their eternal interests. So far as I could learn, there is not one, of whose conversion there was satisfactory evidence, who has fallen from his profession, or done dishonour to the cause of truth. A visible change has taken place in the temper and conduct of great numbers. As an instance, there is a man who was so quarrelsome, and so noted a fighter, that he was called the Lion of Glenlyon. He is now as quiet as a lamb: and an acquaintance whom we met with at Aberfeldy, told us that she had seen him a few days before, driving along in his peat-cart reading the Bible.

“ Highland fairs used to be scenes of revelling and wickedness; at least I used to find them so in other places. It happened to be the fair-day when we arrived at Kenmore; and most of the people there must have been from Loch Tay-side, Glenlyon, and the neighbouring glens. Among the hundreds, nay, I may say the thousands whom we saw there and met on the road going home, there was only one who showed symptoms of intoxication. The inn was full of people transacting business and taking refreshment. A number of tents were erected for selling liquor. Many may have taken too much, but the above was the only instance of having drunk to excess which came under our observation; and we mixed familiarly with the people, and entered into conversation with many of them. Dancing had begun at the inn, but it continued only for a few minutes, and the musician sat idle in the lobby the remainder of the evening. One of the ladies of our company gave him a few tracts and some good advice to comfort him for his want of employment, but I am not sure that he was satisfied with the result of the day's business. The crowd retired by degrees, and by nine o'clock there was scarcely a vestige of the fair to be seen.

“ It is one pleasing feature of this revival, that it is in a



great measure free from the extravagance which is said to have accompanied a revival in some other places. When the work began indeed under the preaching of Mr M'Donald, it was attended by something of a similar nature. Some were under violent agitation when first awakened to a sense of their guilt and danger; and I am far from saying this is either extravagant or unnatural. There was, however, so little of this, as scarcely to be remembered. It was, in general, rather a silent melting under the preaching of the word; and those who did appear under violent agitation at first, never exhibited such symptoms after they believed and received the comforts of the gospel. I made particular enquiry, but did not hear of one instance of periodical or mechanical agitation, or any sort of indecorous behaviour during divine worship, by those who made a credible profession of the faith. It is not uncommon indeed to see a large congregation melted into tears. This is not only consistent with a sober reception of the truth, but it may be considered as a pleasing accompaniment of the tenderness and ardour of first love; and such has been the effect upon the preacher himself, that he has had to stop and weep with them.

“As Mr M'Donald has been honoured by the great head of the Church to be eminently useful, we were at some pains to ascertain the peculiar character of his preaching. His strain is evangelical, and his peculiar excellence is said to be that of bringing home the word of God to the hearts and consciences of his hearers. He shows them to themselves; he turns their hearts inside out; he makes them see that they are ruined, perishing sinners, and exhibits the finished work of Christ as the only ground of hope to the guilty. This is the kind of preaching which God has honoured, and will always honour as the means of bringing sinners to himself.

“The origin of this work may, however, be traced to a period somewhat more remote than the preaching of this gentleman. There was, as usual, a dawn before the morning—a few drops before the shower of blessing. There was a Mr Farquharson, who preached here about

twelve or fifteen years ago. He was supported by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at home; and after having laboured some time in Breadalbane, he went to America, where he died. His labours were blessed to a few, most of whom are still alive, and who have been helpful to the more recent converts, by the instruction which they have been enabled to communicate.

“ I cannot allow myself to forget the gentleman who accompanied us to Glenlyon, who, if he had no part in the work at its commencement, has been eminently useful in helping it forward. He possesses more of the spirit of a missionary than any man I ever knew. His labours in Glenlyon are abundant, and they have been wonderfully successful. On our return from the glen, we met several young persons whom he introduced to us as his children, and whose countenances showed the affection with which they regarded him. It is not easy to conceive the privations he must have suffered while labouring among the poor people. At one time he staid among them three weeks, preaching once or oftener every day; and such was their eagerness to hear him, that he could scarcely get leave to return to his family and charge.

“ Glenlyon, which occupies about one-third of the parish of Fortingale, is twenty-eight miles in length. The plain at the bottom is very narrow, and some of the highest mountains in the kingdom rise on both sides of it. Several villages are so embosomed on the north side of the hills, that the sun does not rise on them for three months in the year. There being no carriage road through the whole glen, it has not been much visited by strangers, but I think it must now become interesting to Christian travellers. Here they will find much to gratify a taste for the sublime and beautiful, and they will be delighted to witness the influence of the gospel on the minds of the formerly rude inhabitants.”\*

We have heard of another account of the revival of Glenlyon, as the Breadalbane country is commonly called,

\* From the Memoir of the late William M'Gavin, p. 285.

but have not been able to obtain it. The report of the present condition of that populous strath is not encouraging, though in perfect conformity with the experience of those who are conversant with revivals. It is said that some zealous Christians, who were attracted to the interesting spot, were so ill advised as to introduce a controversial subject. Perhaps it was the baptismal controversy. But, whatever it was, from the hour that attention was withdrawn from the condition of their own souls, and occupied with controversy, the converting influence was arrested, meltings of heart ceased, and no new souls were won in Glenlyon. It is matter of humble gratitude that the old ones continue consistent and faithful, honouring their profession as becometh saints. But may this impediment to the progress of the Spirit's work act as a caution to zealous Christians of all denominations to adhere in their dealings with new converts to the great points that touch salvation, lest they have to answer for the loss of souls!

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## ISLE OF SKYE.

THIS is the largest island of the Hebrides, and in point of produce and population is the most important of the western group. It contains seven parishes, including the small isles of Rassay and Scalpa, and, besides its parochial clergy, has four missionaries, and two government chapels, together with several catechists and Gaelic-school teachers.

It is not easy to ascertain the date at which this district professed to accept the doctrines of the Reformation; nor is it of consequence, for the profession was the reverse of an enlightened acceptance of truth, leaving the poor people under the influence of a fearful mixture of Druidical, Papistical, and Protestant notions. Like other rude and remote districts, they believed in witches, ghosts, fairies, the efficacy of an *evil eye*, and ill-wishes. They paid a small fine for the benefit of the poor on being rebuked for particular sins; and this was so much regarded in the light of purchasing an indulgence, or doing a penance, that the omission to make this satisfaction was deemed a greater scandal than the sin itself. Funerals were conducted with great riot and excess, much ardent spirits being consumed before lifting the dead body; and meat and drink, to such an extent as frequently to impoverish the survivors or keep them in debt for life, carried with the remains to the burying-ground, where a feast was made—in the church, if the minister was so *generous* as to grant it, he himself often mingling in the excess—bagpipes played, songs sung, filthy tales and jests recounted, pieces of meat flung amongst the attendant children, to make a *scramble* for the diversion of their seniors, till riot increasing to fury, clansmen ar-

ranged themselves against neighbour clans; fighting, bloodshed, and sometimes even death was the consequence. Before closing the grave, a cross was marked upon the coffin, to insure the spiritual safety of the dead. Whatever had been his life of profanity or lewdness, after death it was the custom to say of him, "He is well;" and the more decency and decorum were outraged at his funeral, the more was he honoured.

It is unprofitable to enter into a more particular description of the state of things then. Whatever corrupt nature, aided by gross ignorance and sustained by false precepts, could devise of evil and abomination, was practised; and the crowning point of all was, that the ministers were truly blind leading the blind, and wallowing in the ditch together with the people. The profanation of ordinances was awful. It was customary to proclaim all the business of the week—such as sales, fairs, &c. at the church-door, and to finish bargains there. At the sacramental occasions, which often occurred only after intervals of three years, the tents of pedlars and spirit-dealers were pitched all around the churchyard, and a busy market of all sorts of wares carried on during the week-days; which market was confined to an immense sale of ardent spirits on the Sabbath. Even elders were to be seen carrying about the sacred elements with inflamed countenances, and sometimes with unsteady steps; and, so far as is believed, not one family on the island kept up family-worship.

As a specimen of the doctrines taught, it may be mentioned that two ministers once went in company to visit a dying man, whose conscience was awakened, and he told them in great alarm he was mightily afraid he was going to hell. His guides told him they knew him from his youth, and saw nothing in his life deserving hell; nay, there were many good things in him, and done by him, that (besides God's mercy) would obtain heaven for him; and if *he* went to hell, many had cause to fear. The dying man replied, with a deep sigh, "Is there no word of Christ? Is there no word of Christ?"

As far as can be ascertained, in 1805, there were but

two persons within the whole bounds of the presbytery of Skye, who might be counted upon as enlightened Christians, having embraced the truth in the love of it. One, a young lady who had profited by the ministry of Mr M'Kenzie during a visit to Lochcarron; the other, a teacher who brought religious impressions from his favoured native county of Ross. He was the instrument of putting down the practice of swearing in Rassay, where he taught. But both these lights in the surrounding gloom were extinguished by death in 1806. The year before their death, however, Mr Farquharson, an Independent, itinerated in the country; and one who had cause to bless the Lord for his messenger, says, "I heard this worthy man four times. I believe his discourses were accompanied with divine power. From this date I got new views of Scripture myself, and of the practices of the inhabitants of the island. I think it probable that other two or three came under conviction by means of Mr Farquharson's preaching." This man was catechist in the parish of Portree at this time; and before the end of the year, two or three additional persons were by his means brought under conviction. At this time there was not one Gaelic Bible in the parish, and but two or three copies of the New Testament. At the same time, a man who came from Sutherland stirred up seven others in the parish of Snizort to hold a monthly prayer-meeting. This new thing appeared singular and odious in the eyes of the people. Curiosity attracted many. Two of its members made remarks on passages of Scripture, which excited a few to prayer, and to abstain from gross sin. In 1806, the rare and important occurrence took place of the change of views in one of the pastors. The Rev. D—— M——, minister of Kilmuir, became a subject of converting grace. After having been for many years in darkness, like Saul, he straightway preached Christ, whom in ignorance he had persecuted. He cherished the despised members of the prayer-meeting, and presently several of his own congregation began to study a part of the New Testament, which was found with a man who did not use it. It required but an application

to the British and Foreign Bible Society, which he made, to fill the hands of these hungering souls with the whole word of God. At length Mr M—— was called to another charge. He did what he could for the new converts in Snizort, who desired the sincere milk of the word, by providing two pious catechists, one of whom was also schoolmaster. The other was the first man who was brought to serious reflection under Mr Farquharson's preaching, who often assembled the infirm and those at a distance from the parish church, and expounded the Scriptures to them. Good accompanied this, and his reading of the practical works of Boston, Baxter, Bunyan, Willison, and Edwards, so that many were brought under powerful convictions of conscience, and were made to feel deeply their need of God's mercy in Christ. Their meetings were not confined to the Sabbath; and persons of discernment, who were occasionally attracted to them from the mainland, declare that they have heard poor and illiterate men guided to speak with a discrimination and force of truth, and with a spirituality of conception, scarcely to be credited, even by spiritual persons.

“ In 1812, by means of these meetings, an uncommon awakening took place among the people, which was attended with trembling and distress of body, and some were even constrained to cry out. These emotions were like summer showers, which move about, when the rain falls on one field without a drop on another. They were here to-day, and in another place to-morrow. Some persons came under convictions when attending the meetings—others when they came in contact with awakened persons who attended them. The leaders of the meetings were made deeply sensible of their own insufficiency, and felt that their strength could only come from God. This led them to cry to God day and night for his gracious presence and support; and with gratitude they had to acknowledge, that at sundry times they were furnished with strength, which enabled them to testify of Him in public: and often they felt much life and refreshment communicated to them by the reading of a chapter without note or comment. These were days of power and of

sweetness to as many as had spiritual taste and discernment,—so that, when they met, they were reluctant to part. Very little sleep was sufficient to serve them. They were much devoted to prayer, public and private. ‘Verily,’ says one, ‘there was here *then* such power with the word of God as can scarcely be believed by Christians who did not witness it, or feel it experimentally.’

“Although these meetings and emotions commenced in Kilmuir, they extended to Snizort. \* \* \* \*

“During the space of six months, a considerable number, who before were ignorant and careless, were awakened. Yet offences ensued, because of two reasons: First, because many of those who were awakened apostatized and went back to their former ways; second, because there were some among those who were awakened who became fanatical in the proper sense of the term. They pretended to *dreams* and *visions*, and to have received a spirit of penetration, which enabled them to foretell who should be saved, and who not. \* \* \* \*

“We are not to affirm whence it was, whether from a right spirit or a spirit of delusion; but we have reason to believe that most of it was from the latter, because of the apostasy of some, and the divination of others. Probably some men, from this conclusion, may be apt to infer that the whole was from the wicked spirit; but that was not the case, as we believe, from the following reasons, viz.

“I. Because such as had been in some measure enlightened and quickened before these emotions commenced experienced themselves refreshed, enlivened, and benefited in attending to the means of grace at the meetings.

“II. Because some of those who were awakened at the time have continued steadfast and sincere, maintaining a life and conversation becoming their Christian profession.

“III. Because many of those awakened at that time, though they have not attained to firm assurance, seem to have the law of the Lord in their hearts. They desire the way of the gospel. Some of this description, after



having lived in fears and uncertainty as to their salvation for twelve or thirteen years, departed this life in sweet serenity of mind, and in a blessed hope, relying wholly on Christ and on his propitiation.

“ These reasons, then, prove sufficiently that those persons who attribute these [latter] operations and awakenings to the wicked spirit are awfully mistaken. \* \* ”

“ There can be little doubt but these operations were in consequence of a downpouring of the Holy Spirit.” †

The persons on whose minds salutary impressions were made belonged to the parishes of Kilmuir and Snizort. The late excellent Mr Shaw had by that time become minister of the parish of Bracadale, and his instructions were what these persons delighted to hear; but distance debarred many from frequently enjoying that privilege. In consequence of having no minister within reach who edified them, they were obliged often to meet in the fields. About 1817, a gentleman who had a small tract of land in the parish of Snizort, divided it into crofts, or small tenements, which were rented by several serious persons, who were attracted thither from the parish of Kilmuir. There they were permitted to build a house for meeting, which will contain about two hundred persons. It is honourable to the minister of this parish, that he has never joined in the intolerant spirit which in so many cases has led to the persecution of those who were conscientiously concerned in holding such meetings. These persons are attached to the Church of Scotland, and have never separated from it. They have other two or three meetings in farm-houses, which are all conducted on the same plan; two or three of confessedly superior knowledge and experience presiding alternately. The meetings are not confined to the Sabbath, but are held also during the week. These faithful persons are not without their portion of trial, in their difficulty of obtaining ordinances. In many cases baptism is withheld from them; and, indeed, were it not so, they might not feel at liberty to receive the ordinance from the hand of every man who might be willing to bestow

† Account of State of Religion in the Highlands, p. 64.

it; neither could they with a good conscience mingle themselves at the table of the Lord with the openly unchristian and profane. The position in which these poor Christian people are thus placed is most affecting, and perhaps without example in any other church. Surely the hearer of prayer will soon have pity on his children, and bestow upon them the sincere milk of the word, which they long for.

When Mr Shaw was placed in charge of the parish of Bracadale, 1812, he proved himself a zealous and laborious pastor. An arm of the sea dividing the parish, he obtained Gaelic-school teachers, who, by means of their exemplary lives, and pious instructions, have been enabled to work a striking general improvement in the morals of the people, especially in the district of Minginish. Many have become devout and intelligent Christians.

Mr Shaw confessed himself not to possess nerve enough to stand forth against evils which he could not expect to remedy, and thus yielded to administering ordinances to some contrary to the light of his conscience. On this account the good man had many inward conflicts, which impaired his health, and hastened his death. He said himself, with regard to the deplorable ignorance of many of the inhabitants, that they ought to be viewed and treated as the heathen, to whom missionaries are sent to teach and to christianize them. Yet he baptized children of parents who never sought the ordinance of the Supper, and whose lives evinced how much they were the children of this world. His excellent successor, the Rev. Roderick M'Leod (whose induction to Bracadale was hailed by all the pious), has manifested a commendable zeal, though we do not know if it has often been accompanied with success, by labouring to promote true and undefiled religion amongst his people, and by opposing wickedness of every kind. He has denied church privileges to irreligious and ignorant persons, and for this he has suffered persecution in various forms, which it may console him to know has excited the brotherly sympathy of thousands who never saw his face. Would that

those most active in this case would consider how "they have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom God has not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way."\*

There are now two, if not three small Baptist congregations in Skye, whose members exhibit a conversation according to their profession; and there are a number of serious people in the district of Vaternish, in the parish of Durnish, who were first awakened to a sense of divine things by the instruction and example of the Gaelic-school teachers. It is a woful truth, that some pastors in Skye have discouraged and discountenanced the Gaelic Society's teachers; and two parishes, where they have not been admitted, and where no awakening has taken place, are in general as ignorant and superstitious as was the whole island in 1805. The bagpipe may still be heard at their funerals; drinking and fighting still disgrace the hours of mourning; and, in March, 1827, the interment even of a lady was disgraced by a fight in the parish of Sleate.

It is a pleasing evidence of the influence of the gospel, which has been reiterated a thousand times, though some men's eyes are still closed against it, that wherever the truth has found entrance, these barbarous and abominable customs have been banished, and quietness, sympathy, and purity of manners have occupied their place.

There has not, as far as appears, any religious awakening, in the revival form, occurred in the counties of Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, Nairn, or Inverness; and yet all who are well informed, agree in the fact that true religion prospers in a regular and consistent progress more in the above counties than in any part of the Church of Scotland. Ministers from these districts never fail to mention "speaking to the question" as one of their most successful means of grace. The meaning of this unusual phrase is but obscurely apprehended in the Lowlands. And having found a very accurate description of it in a pamphlet, entitled "An account of the present state of

\* Ezek. xiii. 22.

religion in the Highlands of Scotland," published in 1827, we give it a place here.

It is to this pamphlet that we owe the little account of the revival in Skye. The writer is speaking of the practice in Ross-shire, but the description applies to the other counties also.

"On the first Monday of every month a meeting is held in the parish church for prayer, and what is called in the north, 'speaking to the question;' which practice is also attended to on sacramental and other occasions."

The Friday which occurs between the Fast-day previous to the communion and the preparation day, is, in the north, called the *examination* day; and on that day they exercise themselves in speaking to the question.

"The congregation assembles as on other days. After prayer and praise, the minister who presides enquires if any in the assembly has 'a word of a question' (the Gaelic idiom) respecting which he would like to hear some of the brethren present give their opinion. One or other generally rises and gives out a passage of Scripture, such as the following: 'Except a man be born again,' &c., or 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' &c., or 'To be spiritually minded is life and peace.' Supposing that he gave out the first of these texts, he would add, 'I am desirous to hear the opinion of the brethren on the nature of the new birth, and the marks of it?' Or should he give out the second of these texts, he would add, 'I should wish to hear the nature and marks of true poverty of spirit?' The question being thus propounded, the minister who presides gives a brief exposition of the text, in order to lay it open to those who may be called upon to speak. He then calls, by name, upon some well-known and experienced Christian to rise and speak to the question. Very frequently it is not without a good deal of pressing that he prevails on some one to do this. Often half-a-dozen of persons or more in succession speak to the question proposed. The minister presiding recapitulates the substance of what has been brought forward by the various speakers; and should any of them have stated any thing which he conceives to be not according

to sound doctrine, he points it out and corrects it. The person who propounded the question is generally called upon to conclude with prayer,—and after singing of Psalms, the congregation retires. People in the Lowlands can hardly believe what immense multitudes assemble together in the north on the preaching days connected with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper; and on no day, excepting the communion day, do more persons assemble, than on the Friday on which the question is spoken to. It is not uncommon in parishes in Ross-shire, which may not contain a population of more than two or three thousand souls, to witness a congregation of ten, twelve, or even fifteen thousand present on a sacramental occasion. The services in Gaelic are therefore necessarily carried on in the open air, while those in English are held in the church."\*

The pastoral occupations of the people enable them to secure time for this their greatest luxury. "On such occasions catechists, elders, and private Christians, who are noted for their piety and talents, from parishes far and near, in Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, often meet together. Meetings for prayer and religious exercises are held every evening during the preaching days in every part of the parish. On Friday, when the question is to be spoken to, the catechist, and sometimes an elder, stand beside the tent where the presiding minister is stationed, to tell him what distinguished Christians from other parishes they know to be present, in order that he may call upon them to speak.

"It is most refreshing and instructive to listen to the varied experience, the ready utterance, the clear illustrations, the correct modes of thinking, and the striking similies of many of these speakers, some of whom, though they may never have learned to read, prove themselves mighty in the Scriptures, and well acquainted with the human heart in all its windings. \* \* \* The 'speaking to the question' has many beneficial effects; among others, it is calculated to arrest the attention of the most

\* Account of State of Religion in the Highlands. p. 21.

careless individual in the congregation, and to convince him that many are in earnest in their religion, and that he ought to be so likewise."\*

The author of the *State of Religion in the Highlands*, aware of the objection made by Lowlanders, who are accustomed to hear the illiterate use so poor a dialect as would seem unworthy of a solemn or lofty theme, reminds us, that in Gaelic there is but one style for the illiterate and the learned; and he assures us that those who speak generally possess solid judgments, retentive memories, and well-stored minds. Judging by the specimens of Gaelic which we have heard translated, we cannot but perceive that a more dignified tone, deeper feeling, and more highly poetical illustration is common to their discourse than we usually meet with in English, except when it is studied; even in their common conversation, especially when under the influence of powerful feeling, this is remarkably the case. An example of this occurs. When one of these Highland patriarchs was informed of the death of a friend with whom he for many years had walked to the house of God in company, he exclaimed, as soon as he recovered voice to speak, "Ah, who will brush the spots from my garment now!" Whether he meant who should tell him his faults? who correct his opinions? or who defend him from the slanders of others? the expression was full of pathetic and poetical beauty. The author above alluded to remarks, that in the Lowlands, where true religion has flourished under a faithful pastor, on his removal it generally dies away, and very soon indifference about divine things abounds. But in the north their experience is very different, for if they have the misfortune to have a careless pastor succeed one who has been the instrument of a work of grace in the parish, though he should live forty years amongst them, the people are found to be as much alive to the concerns of religion, and as earnestly desirous to obtain a good minister, as their fathers were at his predecessor's decease. This he ascribes, probably most justly, to the practice of

\* *Account of State of Religion in the Highlands*, p. 25.

“speaking to the question,” which keeps not only knowledge, but the spirit of prayer in exercise. Its good effects have been found by our missionaries in the Isle of Cape Breton, whither they have followed our emigrants from Ross and Sutherland. They inform us that the aged men have kept up their home habits of prayer-meetings, Scripture readings, and catechisings,—so that the new generation, reared in the wilderness, are actually thirsting for ordinances, and building themselves houses in which to meet for worship, until the Head of the church shall in mercy send them pastors.

Such examples are encouraging evidence of what *lay-agency* may effect, and ought to make a strong impression on the minds of those who object to the employment of missionaries in reclaiming our city population from the depths of ignorance and vice, unless they have received a regular theological education. Other highly important motives may doubtless operate in the preference which is given to students and preachers of divinity when selecting persons for the useful work of our city missions; and it is scarcely possible to estimate too highly the advantage which may accrue to the church by this species of training being employed for preparing our future ministers for the sacred office to which they aspire. But it ought never to be forgotten, that, however desirable human learning may be, it is not the “one thing needful;” and that an unspeakably higher qualification in the great business of bringing men to the knowledge of Christ is the teaching of the Holy Spirit. That man will be wise to win souls who knows himself, his Saviour, and his Bible; although he may scarcely know even by name some of those distinctions which are embodied in systematic theology. Had we but a company of those sedate and prayerful Christian characters who shine as lights in the Highlands set afloat in each of our cities, we might soon see the scene of debauch turned into a place where prayer is wont to be made, and the eye, inflamed with excess, raised in hopeful contemplation to Heaven.

“In every parish within the bounds of the Synod of Ross and Presbytery of Inverness frequent meetings are

held by pious persons for reading the Scriptures, religious conference, and prayer. Meetings of this description are generally held on Saturday, sometimes during daylight. Meetings for similar exercises are held on Sabbath evenings. And in some cases, that every house in a hamlet may have equal advantage, and bear an equal proportion of the expense of the light and fire, the meeting circulates through the hamlet.”\*

Would witnesses but preserve records more authentic than oral tradition, precious things might be stated in that country to the glory of God and the encouragement of his church. In one parish an awakening originated in the following manner:—A woman who hungered after the word of life had the misfortune to be so hard of hearing that she could obtain little instruction from the public services. She fell upon the expedient of placing herself on a little knoll by the wayside, and there laid hold on the first individual who came from church, requesting a note of the sermon. Then she detained the second, and the third, till nearly all the congregation who passed that way were collected, and they went forward together reciting the things they had heard, and discoursing of their faith and hope. When several miles from the church, they reached the point where the road by the shore split off into many paths, by which they must each pursue their separate way to their dwellings, scattered on the mountain. This point became their resting-place, and, as if loathe to part, they sung a song of praise, after which one of the seniors of the company presented their prayers; and being thus somewhat filled with each other's company they sought their homes.

We could tell of a parish whose faithful pastor *knows* that there is not a house without its altar, and without some members of the family whose souls are enlightened and growing in grace. We could also tell of a town in the north, where a much-beloved minister can recount from day-dawn to sunset, with tearful eyes, the examples of exalted Christian attainment which he himself has

\* State of Religion in the Highlands, p. 27.



seen, and where he can speak of a company of daily enquirers thronging his house, which often on a Monday morning amounts to thirty or forty, and this including persons of various ranks and ages. We might fill many pages with anecdotes drawn from his lips, all proving the integrity, the Christian simplicity, and the delight in religious exercises which he has witnessed. But we forbear to do any thing which might cause him to feel it less a duty to record and preserve the many affecting facts he knows, by which we trust the church will one day be cheered. Enough has been said to exhibit the Spirit of God reviving his church in our native land. And we trust it may be perceived at the same time that this Holy Spirit works not capriciously, but by consistent rules of infinite wisdom, which, though often dark and mysterious to our limited views, would yet, were our minds sufficiently enlightened, entirely approve themselves to our understandings. It is not as uninformed persons are apt enough to imagine, that the Spirit comes in an arbitrary fashion, to seize suddenly on a set of unthinking persons and put them into fear. We allege nothing that militates against the divine sovereignty when we say that the Spirit works by rules that may be observed, and upon which the people of God may found expectations. Our readers must have observed, that when a revival occurs, a new and prayerful concern usually comes upon those who have already embraced the truth. They are refreshed, and speaking out of the abundance of their hearts, they urge religion more on their friends, pray more for them, and for their ministers, for the church, and for the world. Prayer paves the way—prayer fills it with travellers—prayer enlivens and confirms souls, for prayer has power with God and prevails. Even in the case of such amazing success as Wesley was honoured with, when he offered gospel truth in villages little raised above heathenism, it must not be forgotten, that though the villagers had not been accustomed to pray themselves, the man who addressed them was a man of prayer, and his labours were kept continually before the Lord by the petitions of many zealous souls.

It is a mark of God's chosen people that they "cry day and night to him." And if we will have our own souls prosper, our own country prosper, or the church of Christ prosper,—if we will have the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of the Lord, we must double our earnestness and multiply our petitions, and call on our God till he refresh us with a plentiful rain that shall cause the desert to blossom as the rose, and fill the world with songs of praise.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## ISLE OF LEWIS.

THE isle of Lewis, which is the most distant of the Hebrides, is little known, and from its remote situation, has escaped the researches of tourists—inso-much, that the important events passing in its little world are scarcely heard of. Yet it has for some time been to the Christian one of the most interesting spots in the British dominions; and the King of Kings has, out of his abundant grace, selected for himself a dwelling in the hearts of *many* of its simple inhabitants.

When the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society became alive to the ignorant condition of many in the Highlands, they sent out teachers and Bibles, and from the year 1811 they continued to supply gradually the most necessitous districts. These means have been in many cases eminently blessed, and it is peculiarly to be noted, that the teachers were selected with most conscientious caution. Men who were not only moral in their habits, and skilful as instructors, were sought for, but who had embraced gospel truth for themselves, and therefore knew how to convey it to others.

Mr M'Leod of Uig remarks that “the directors are firmly attached to vital piety; and as long as they will act thus firmly, and continue perseveringly attached to the glorious cause in which they have the honour to take a prominent lead, and by which, with the Divine blessing, they have already been made so eminently useful to thousands of their fellow-creatures, there is every reason to hope that God will crown their labours with his effectual blessing. Whenever they begin to receive complaints from those callous to vital godliness, to the prejudice of their own institution and officebearers, they will then surely be walking in slip-

pery paths. May the Lord keep their feet off such dangerous paths!" The Report for 1830 states, what recent and more minute investigation corroborates abundantly—"In broad and plain terms, we say that a mighty work of the Spirit has been and now is carried on by means of the men who teach your schools." And again, in 1831,—“While the mists of ignorance are thus, through the instrumentality of your schools, gradually retiring before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the vices arising from ignorance disappear along with them.”

A correspondent in Stornoway, isle of Lewis, writes, July, 1828,—“The beneficial effects of your society struck me so forcibly on my return to this island, after four years' absence, that I feel constrained to write you a few lines on the subject. Before I left this country, I remarked that the effect produced on the poor and unlettered, by being enabled to peruse the sacred volume, was in many instances a frantic consternation, similar to that felt by a person on discovering himself on the brink of destruction. But the frantic fever soon subsided; and in that infallible mirror in which they discovered their disease, they also discovered the consolatory efficacy of the Divine Physician's prescription. Now, many of these poor people, whom you have been the means of snatching from their state of darkness, present so exemplary a spectacle as to be not only a cause of great rejoicing to you, but to load those in whose hands the means of grace have been long neglected with shame. The preaching of the truth to these poor people, when incapable of perusing the holy records, did not profit them much. It must afford you great gladness to know that the work of the Lord prospers in your hands.”\*

It was from the Gaelic teachers, then, that the first rays of light dawned on these poor islanders, though now, the set time to favour them being come, they have several faithful ministers, whose declarations of the truth are highly honoured to win souls. In 1820, John McLeod was sent as a teacher to Tolsta, in the parish

\* Report for 1829, p. 22.

of Uig. His heart mourned over the deplorable darkness of the land; and besides teaching to read, he explained the Scriptures to all who came to him. The number of persons who became concerned about their spiritual condition continually increasing, John was complained of to the directors of the society, as infringing their rule, which forbids any thing in the form of preaching or public exhortation to their teachers. The good man received his rebuke, but could not promise to desist; for he felt that souls were in jeopardy, and that he had liberty in speaking, and was made useful to them. The rule was imperative, and, with whatever regret, John M·Leod was dismissed from the service of the society. He was reduced thus to penury, but not to silence; and it pleased the Lord of his vineyard, by an unknown hand, to furnish the means of living to this excellent man, though no longer connected with his society, and to keep him in the employment so dear to his heart. He continued in this work till 1832, when he died. His faithful friend and pastor, the Rev. Alexander M·Leod of Uig, writes,—“I have seen him on his death-bed, and brought his remains from Tolsta (on the north side of Loch Roag) to the burying-ground here, have settled his just debts, and disposed of several things for the benefit of his widow and the Gaelic School Society.” We quote the whole of Mr M·Leod’s letter to the Society on this subject, published in their Report for 1833

“A variety of circumstances prevented me hitherto from transmitting to you a short account of one of your Society’s most devoted servants. On Monday, the 8th of October, 1832, died at Tolstachilis, in this parish, John M·Leod, teacher there. He was a native of Skye, and came to the Lewis in 1820 as a Gaelic teacher, from the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society. He has all along been made eminently useful in several districts of this island, not only in the capacity of a teacher of youth, but for rousing sinners to and convincing them of their fallen state, both by nature and practice, and was at unremitting pains to instruct his fellow-men in the whole doctrines of inspiration, with an understanding and feeling which evi-

dently gave satisfaction that these doctrines were made spirit and life to his own soul. He had the glory of God and the salvation of souls ardently at heart. No Christian, indeed, within our knowledge or information was a greater wrestler at a throne of grace for a crumb of the hidden manna for his own soul, and for the prosperity of Zion at large; and we have seen no fellow-traveller to the heavenly city in our day who was so pointed and tender, both in precept and example, as this singularly devoted character during the time he tabernacled amongst us. He was, in fine, day and night watching on the walls of Jerusalem, and giving no rest, or ceasing not to plead, until the Lord should, *to all intents and purposes*, make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

“Several promising individuals, who own that this man’s Christian labours were savingly blessed to them, have, from every part of the island, accompanied his remains to the grave. The removal of a person so eminent in Christian attainments, is much felt by the whole body of Christians, not only in this parish, but also in all the Lewis. May the Lord mercifully add daily to the number of his peculiar people, and fill up in the kingdom of grace the late situations of departed saints.

“John M’Leod made his will a few years ago, in which he orders the whole of his effects to be divided between the Gaelic School Society and his widow; the one-half of said effects given to said Society, and the other half to his widow; ‘but whatever of this money she may not use before her death, I appoint to be paid to said society.’ So decidedly you see, his whole heart was interested in your Society’s prosperity, which he saw was productive of so much good. I think when a few things are sold, and the money received, that each share will amount to about L.75 sterling. The principal part of the money is now in the hands of a Christian friend, to whom I wrote lately on the subject.

“Be assured, as a friend of your valuable institution, how much gratified I feel in having the honour of making

such a communication from the parish wherein the labours of your Society, and the memory of the deceased shall be had in edifying and sweet remembrance for many generations yet to come. It is perfectly unnecessary to make any comment upon the disinterested and holy motives by which the testator has been actuated, in favour of an institution which he daily witnessed so productive of efficient and active usefulness. Although circumstances took place which rendered it necessary for him to operate in his Lord's vineyard under other Christian friends, and in a situation which the Lord provided for him in a remarkable manner, when duty led him to drop the immediate service of the Gaelic Society, I would remark that the deceased left this sum by means of much Christian prudence and economy."\*

The teachers are commonly in circumstances as poor as those of their pupils, and this large sum was actually saved out of the slender income of L.20 per annum. Truly, "a little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked;" and thus was the benevolent purpose of the donor doubly blessed. During the life and after the removal of John M'Leod, it was still employed in the way the parties most desired it should. We cannot withhold a tribute of admiration to the character of that man who was so entirely delivered from the selfishness which cleaves to fallen humanity, as to bequeath the half of all he possessed to the Society which years before had rejected his services and cast him out.

The communications from the teacher of the school at Barras are also of a very interesting character. We present such extracts as we can venture to make room for:—

"December, 1828.

"PREVIOUSLY to my commencing teaching here, I assembled the parents, male and female, and told them that the object of the Society in sending me was not so much for the purpose of teaching their children as themselves; and that if they would now promise to attend school

\* Gaelic School Report for 1833.

two days a-week, besides Sabbath morning and evening, I would be most willing to remain amongst them. As they were anxious to secure a teacher for their children, they promised to comply with this request, but I had little expectation then that I would realize it to the extent that I afterwards did; indeed, they now confess that when they made the promise they were not in earnest, but made it to secure a teacher for the time being. The first Sabbath which I spent among them, I never ought to forget, I suppose there were from 250 to 300 present. After giving them an exhortation (which I conceived suitable to the occasion), and relating to them a variety of interesting anecdotes, calculated to stimulate them to commence and persevere, I proceeded to offer them copies of the Society's First Elementary Book in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and told them that I earnestly hoped none of them would think of taking one in His name, but such of them as were fully resolved in his strength patiently to persevere until they overcame every difficulty. The scene which now presented itself to my view, it is not easy for me to describe. The unlettered mother received the First Book out of my hand, silently shedding tears, while the sucking infant, unconscious of what was going on, smiled me full in the face, hanging at her breast! I took particular notice of Widow Macdonald; she is a great-grandmother, sixty-eight years of age. As I approached where she sat, she stared at me, and, at length, in broken accents, spoke as follows: 'Oh—do you think, could I learn yet?'—'Why not?'—'Because I am sixty-eight years of age.'—'But though you are, I have no doubt that you will still learn, if you are spared and willing.'—But she continued to reply, 'Do you really think yourself that it is possible for me to learn yet, seeing that I am sixty-eight years of age, and, besides, I have great-grandchildren.'—'But although you have,' said I, 'and although you were 100 years of age, providing you have faith in Jesus Christ, I am fully convinced that you may still learn.'—'Oh, then,' said she, grasping the First Book out of my hand, 'I am taking this book in the name of Christ.' Your Committee



will be glad to learn, that this interesting old woman is now reading the New Testament in her seventy-first year.

“Widow Murray, aged sixty-five, had been confined to bed a year when I opened school. She sent to me for a First Book, and, by the help of her grandchildren, learned the letters upon her bed. When she recovered, her first visit was to the school-house, bending over a staff, with a weight of infirmities. After I dismissed the public meeting of the day, my time had been a little engaged by taking up subscriptions for your Society; she followed me into my room and sat down beside me, and then said, ‘Write down my name’ (she reminded me of the beautiful allegory in the Pilgrim’s Progress), after which she gave me a shilling. I asked her if it was not too much. ‘No, no,’ she said, ‘she only thought it too little, and that if every one were as poor as she and her neighbours, none would come to instruct the ignorant; but blessed be the name of the Lord, that he thought and saw otherwise, and may his blessing rest upon the heads of those godly people that are at such labour and pains in sending out teachers to instruct blind sinners.’ This old woman is now reading the New Testament.

“Donald M’Ritchie is the father of a family. When the school was opened here, neither he nor any member of his family could read the Word of God. I have been told that he promised and paid to a neighbour’s boy a lamb for going to his house every morning and evening for the purpose of reading the chapter to him at the time of family worship. This man and his wife are now able to read a little in the New Testament, and a little daughter of theirs, about ten years of age, precepts and reads the chapter at family worship, whilst her father raises the tune and prays.”

The P. S. to this interesting letter, which contains anecdotes of several other persons, states that the thirty-six pairs of spectacles sent are all gone, and requests sixty pairs with their prices to be sent to Stornoway quickly.

The parish of Lochs has been the scene of a considerable awakening, but of it we have not obtained particu-

lars. That of Knock, under the Rev. Finlay Cook, has been also cheering and remarkable. Mr Cook being aware that before 1824, during the ministrations of some itinerant preachers, there had been great and unreasonable excitements and violent agitations amongst multitudes who, after the excitement subsided, brought forth no fruit, but settled down into their former stupor, was particularly careful to discountenance violent outward demonstration of feeling, and thus preserved the people from the deplorable delusion of mistaking agitation for regeneration, and impeding the exercise of their minds by yielding to mere nervous emotion. By this means, there was a solid and prolonged work in his parish; only one example of the fruit of this is within our reach at present. The zeal of the inhabitants to enjoy the privilege of attending family worship in the Manse, is such as to induce some to walk a distance, which in the Lowlands would be counted an obstacle, even to attending church. In the parish of Knock three apprentices, who were in the habit of meeting for Scripture reading and prayer, had made an arrangement which enabled them alternately to attend family worship at the Manse, five miles from home. To accomplish this, he whose turn it was, left work sooner than the regular hour, and the two who remained worked an hour for him: (such arrangements are said not to be uncommon). One of these youths, who was the only surviving son of his parents, had offended a maniac in the neighbourhood, by often defending his mother from his insane violence. It does not appear whether, in the Lewis as in Skye, they once entertained a superstition that it is *unlucky* to constrain maniacs and idiots—but however that was, the poor insane creature was left to range at liberty, and having vowed revenge, found means to fulfil it; for he took an opportunity, when the youth was in his house in a stooping position, to cleave his skull with a spade. His parents, of his duty to whom many beautiful instances were recounted, had the great consolation, under this bitter dispensation, to believe that their child was happily prepared for his hasty entrance into the world unseen. His

two surviving friends agreed in future, to hold their accustomed meetings for reading and prayer in the house of the bereaved parents, in hopes thus to contribute to their consolation.

The Rev. Alex. M'Leod commenced his exertions as Minister of Uig in 1824. The people attended public worship tolerably well from the time of his admission; but he describes his painful conviction that the fixed gaze with which they beheld him was not an intelligent but what Wesley used to call "a stupid attention." This lasted but one month, when he began to observe one and another melt into tears, and a tender wistful listening, a "living ear" substituted for the former stupid one. Presently enquirers came to obtain private instruction, and the exigencies of the people led to the extension of religious opportunities—such as a lecture on Thursdays and many regular prayer meetings, which still exist, and are attended with avidity. In 1827, upwards of 600 pupils, of various ages, attended the schools—and in 1834, mention is made of 13 Sabbath schools in that one parish. Auxiliaries were required to aid the teachers and catechists, and every thing seemed to be in a state of lively movement. When Mr M'L. first entered on his office all the people of a certain age were accustomed to flock to the table of communion. He had reason to apprehend that few of them discerned the Lord in the feast, and preached to them carefully for a year, before he ventured to celebrate that solemn ordinance; and so much had their light increased, that but a small portion of the old communicants presented themselves, and they with silent tears.—It is very remarkable, that in the course of years wherein he has acted as their pastor, he has scarcely been obliged to reject or keep back any one from this feast of love. Indeed there are many whom their pastor would be glad to admit, who keep back, perhaps from some erroneous apprehension of the nature of the ordinance. This is the case in several other Highland parishes. At the communion services of 1828, the island seemed to be moved with one emotion, for 9000 people flocked to Uig on that occasion. Then and subsequently the days and nights,

from the fast to the thanksgiving days, have been occupied in exhortation and prayer, by the various ministers and elders, amongst whom the name of John Macdonald of Farintosh or Urquhart stands pre-eminent. In 1833, an immense concourse of persons attended, following and seeking the truth, from the isles of Harris and Uist, as they had done for a year or two before; and the cautious pastor, speaking of this and similar occasions, describes to a Christian friend the "deep impression" which was then made, the "deepening work," the "new and old converts," the "liberty of the ministers in preaching," the "refreshment of the people in hearing," and the "fervent longing for another such season." He also speaks of "the knowledge and experience of the people," of "the Gospel prospering in Lewis," of "many new converts being brought in during the solemnities." It is not in our power to give much particular detail, the honourable and judicious caution of the faithful pastor, for the present declining to bring into public view the cases of individuals in whose real devotion to God he has much comfort. General results, however, are in the possession of the public, and may be thankfully and humbly stated, to the praise of that blessed Spirit who has wrought such changes. In proof of the minister's own enjoyment of his scene of labour it is pleasing to state, that he remarks in 1834: "Ten winters have I passed here, all wonderfully short, pleasant, and delightful;" and his teachers are all so much interested in their occupation, that they would rather expend their lives in that retired region than remove to wealthier and more southern districts. We hope the faithful records preserved by him who watches for their souls as one who must give account, will, at no distant day, be published to revive the drooping church. In the mean time all that we are about to relate of the general aspect of society there, we mention as detailed by witnesses much interested in stating the truth correctly:

1. *The prayerfulness* of the people.—One gentleman, who annually visits the Lewis, mentions that he has often walked forth at eventide to have his spirit refreshed by observing the devotional temper of the people of Uig—

and that at all hours, from eight o'clock at night till one in the morning, he has passed by and overheard persons engaged in prayer. Many a bush formed a shelter for a soul communing with its God; and along the brown ridges of the fallow, by stooping, so as to cast the figures between the eye and the clear margin of the horizon, dim forms might be discerned, either alone, or two and three together, kneeling and pouring out their wants at the footstool of mercy. The Captain of a King's ship, which lay for a considerable time off the island, who, in pursuing his sports, has crossed and recrossed the lands in all directions, bears witness that he never met any intoxication, any profanity, nor indeed a single person engaged in any occupation which might tempt him to wish to shrink from public inspection, except during their frequent retirements for prayer. He mentioned, in particular, his having entered a woodyard in the town of Stornoway to enquire into the progress of some repairs making on his boat, when he saw two men retire behind the logs to pray together, and though their Gaelic was unintelligible to him, their occupation, and obvious abstraction from the world, and solemn impression of the divine presence, softened and subdued the man of the sea, though not given to the melting mood.

He said, "They are an extraordinary people here; one cannot but be struck with their honesty, kindness, and sobriety. I am told they make a good deal of whisky for sale. It cannot be for home consumption, for I think I never met a drunk person out of the town. One *hears* of religion elsewhere, but one *sees* it here in every thing."

We have pleasure in mentioning, as another example of the devotional habits of these people, what a friend who was rowed up the Loch Roag witnessed. The way being long, it is customary to stop to rest and refresh the oarsmen. When they had drawn their boat up into the little bay, and ceased from their toil, the men, before they tasted of their food, raised their blue bonnets, and united in prayer.

It may be proper to state, that the cabins of the inhabitants, consisting of but one apartment, furnish no op-

portunity of retirement ; and this explains in part the custom of praying in the open air. There is, however, another and more affecting reason. The people want to repair far more frequently to the footstool of mercy than at morning and evening ; and as their occupations are in general out of doors, or on the waves, so also are their prayers.

There are five natives of the parish of Uig who were enlisted when a regiment was raised on the island, and having gone with the army to Egypt, lost their sight by ophthalmia, and after their return have become acquainted with the doctrines of the gospel. It is common with them to bless God for having taken away their bodily eyes, since they regard that as one of the instruments in his hand for opening the mental sight, which was before in a state of darkness. Three of them are active fellow-helpers in the extension of Christian truth and consolation. One is a most efficient and zealous elder in the parish of Uig ; of another we shall have occasion to relate a curious circumstance under the head of *liberality* ; and of the third we present the following well authenticated narrative, under the head of *prayerfulness*.

This blind man, whose name even is unknown to us, had the affliction of losing a wife who was a very pious character. She left a daughter old enough to distinguish the excellences of her mother. In the course of time the father took another wife, of a very feeble constitution, who, though a good woman, had not attained to the Christian advancement of the first. The girl was most exemplary in all her duties, obeying and reverencing her stepmother as if she had been her own mother. She was in all respects a most promising and pleasing character ; and her father having often enjoyed spiritual conversation with her, was, from these mutual communings, fully satisfied of her happy state. On a Saturday, when the weather was tempestuous, the young people, as was customary with them, were going out a-fishing. The father urged his daughter to remain at home, but she said her mother liked a fish for her dinner, and she would try to catch one for to-morrow, as it was the only sustenance

she cared for. They went to fish, when suddenly a huge billow swept the face of the rock on which they were set. The boys of the company managed to scramble up the rock, but the beloved daughter of the blind veteran was swept into the boiling ocean. The last view her terrified comrades had of her, was sitting on the crest of a wave, with her fishing-rod in one hand, and basket in the other. They returned with the sorrowful tidings; and from the nature of the rocky coast, and the course of the tides and currents, no one entertained a hope of finding the remnants of her mangled body. The Christians around, came as they did of old to Martha and Mary, to weep with the afflicted father, and passed the mournful night in prayer. His mind, though before so satisfied, became filled with alarm and concern about her final state, now that she was gone, and his soul refused to be comforted. In the course of prayer he was led to reiterate the petition, that if she were one of the assembly of the redeemed, he might know it by this token, that the sea should give back his dead, and that he might bury her. In the morning those who passed along the shore in their way to the house of God, found the dear girl gently deposited on the sand, her limbs decently composed, as if she had been adjusted for burial, and in no way defaced or injured. Then went the weeping father, and with solemn joy took up his dead, witnessing that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" that their very dust is dear to him; and also, that He is verily the hearer and the answerer of prayer.

Are there some who read this fact, that count it the extreme of credulous superstition, and stamp the work in Lewis as of this character for its sake? That is because they do not know the sweet intimacy and communion that subsists between the Father in Heaven and his reconciled children. They cannot judge of a case in which they have no experience. Perhaps even some of those who believe in the efficacy of prayer, may say there is a want of caution in narrating this story. Why then should we be cautious to hide what God reveals? His own spirit dictated the narration of the prayers of Gideon, how he selected his tokens himself once and again, and they were

granted to him. And if Gideon, who knew the Lord only by the more obscure early promises of redemption, could venture to ask so much, are those who have heard all that we have of the benignity and the compassions of Jesus, not to come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need? Is the divine character changed? Is He not the same God who filled the fleece with dew, and left the earth around dry; and again bedewed the ground, and preserved the fleece from moisture,—that heard the cry of his afflicted servant in the Lewis? His mighty billow swept the lamb from the rock into the engulfing ocean. His gentle wave restored her vacated tabernacle to console her father, and answer his doubt, by an assurance that she was that day with her Saviour in Paradise. If he hath done the great thing of dying for us, will he despise to do the less of consoling us, and proving that his eye is upon us still?

Howe, in his “Living Temple,” in treating of what he terms “God’s *conversableness* with men,” has the following reasonings, which appear so suited to the case of the bereaved parent, that we introduce them. If it be a mark of superior talent in a man, that he can adapt his converse to the comprehension and knowledge of a child, why should we wonder when we behold the holy and wise condescension of the Divine Being, who deals with his creatures according, not only to their faith, but to their state of cultivation, and to the habits of their country? The dweller in tents is approached by three way-faring men, who address him at his tent door. To the Lawgiver, the Spirit that dwelt in the unconsumed bush spoke in solemnity, while he kept his sheep at the back of the desert. David, in the refinements of a court, has a message by the lips of Nathan, a man like himself. Solomon is visited on his splendid couch with a vision of the night. The multitudes of Judea hear the voice of one in rough garments crying in the wilderness. Cornelius, in return to his often presented petitions, has Peter sent to guide him; and the blind Highland soldier, when his heart is overwhelmed within him, receives the mark for which he ventures to supplicate from Him who is his stronghold and present help in time of trouble.



Who shall limit the various methods of the Divine converse with man, or stigmatize any one of them as unlikely, because new to himself, and belonging to a higher degree of faith and prayer than he has attained?

“As man immediately owes the peculiar excellences of his intelligent nature to God only, it is apparently consequent that having formed this his more excellent creature according to his own more express likeness, stamped it with the glorious characters of his living image, given it a nature suitable to his own, and thereby made it capable of rational and intelligent converse with him, he hath it ever in his power to maintain a continual converse with this creature, by agreeable communications, by letting in upon it the vital beams and influences of his own light and love, and receiving back the return of its grateful acknowledgements and praises. Wherein it is manifest he should do no greater thing than he hath done: for who sees not that it is a matter of no greater difficulty to converse with, than to make a reasonable creature? Or who would not be ashamed to deny, that he who hath been the only author of the soul of man, and of the excellent powers and faculties belonging to it, can more easily sustain what he hath made, and converse with that his creature suitably to the way wherein he hath made it capable of his converse? Whereto the consideration being added of his gracious nature, it is further evident that he is not only able, but apt and ready to converse with men, in such a way as shall tend to the improving of their being to that blessedness whereof he hath made them naturally capable, *if their own voluntary alienation and aversion to him do not obstruct the way of that intercourse.*” \*

We are well aware that the nature of the old and new dispensations differs in regard to miraculous interferences, as well as in various other particulars. But who will venture to deny that what we term the ordinary operations of nature are so adjusted and arranged as to answer the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man? In the present instance, the extremity of the Christian man's

\* Howe's Living Temple, p. 85.

distress, the workings of a mind deeply imbued with a sense of the overruling providence of him who numbers the very hairs of our heads, and his undoubting reliance on the promises made to those who ask in faith, removed every obstacle to converse with God which alienation or aversion so continually present, even in the hearts of those who do attempt to pray.

2. The *uprightness* of the people.—On occasion of a year of famine, the natives were put to great straits, and in danger of perishing for want. A vessel laden with meal was driven upon their shores by stress of weather? Did the famine-stricken natives seize on the ship, and lawlessly apply her cargo to the supply of their necessities? If they had, hunger would have formed for them a plausible excuse. Twenty years before, they would doubtless have done so, and held themselves guiltless. But now it was not so. Every portion was accurately weighed or divided, and as their necessities were so great that they had nothing then to pay, their affectionate minister gave a promissory-note for it, knowing well that the excellent lady, whose property the lands are, would not suffer him to be impoverished. The people knew this also, but none took advantage of it, all were occupied in economising to the utmost till one after another they had repaid their debt. Thus they obtained not only the great blessing of necessary food, but preserved the still greater blessing of integrity, and a spirit free from covetousness.

It is the rule in this and the other isles of the Hebrides, that when a man meets a stray sheep on the moor, he is entitled to carry it home as his own, and obliged to make an equivalent offering in the collection for the poor on the Sabbath day. After the commencement of the revival in the Lewis, many came to confess to their minister the trouble of conscience they experienced by reason of having what they called a *black sheep* in their flocks—some having had them for several winters. The minister always directed them to make restitution now in the appointed way, and in one season the sum of L.16 was deposited in the plate. The number of sheep annually lost has wonderfully diminished since the commencement of

the revival, leading to the conclusion that the loss imputed to accident arose from dishonesty.

3. The *Christian liberality* of the people.—It has long been the custom to make a collection at the Thursday lecture, for the most necessitous persons in the district where the lecture is held—and thus, without poor rates, these people support their own poor. For many years they have contributed L.13 or upwards to the Gaelic School Society, sometimes L.16, and one year when the society was in difficulty, the contribution amounted to L.20. On transmitting L.16, which was the sum collected in Uig in 1830, Mr M·Leod remarks—“Considering the circumstances of the people, I bear testimony that their liberality and zeal in this case have cause to provoke very many to similar duties. It was most delightful to see the hoary head, and the young scholar of eight or nine years joining in this contribution. The will preponderates over our purse, so that we cannot do exactly what we would.” In 1831, Mr M·Leod, while he petitions that a teacher may not be removed from his present station for another year, says, “A poor man in that station declared to me lately, that should the directors demand one of his cows, he would readily give one before he would part with the teacher.”

The journal of the superintendent, in stating the examination of one of the schools in Uig, mentions the case of a man, named Norman M·Leod, who is one of the many hundreds of souls in the isle of Lewis that have come out of gross darkness into the sweet and blessed light of the knowledge of God, partly by means of the Gaelic schools, and partly by the ministration of the truth:—“Norman M·Leod is a native of this parish, and at an early age enlisted into the army, went abroad, and was in several engagements.” “Balls,” says he, “whizzing about me in numbers, but the Lord directed them so that they did me no harm.” He was in Egypt, and there lived in drunkenness and profligacy. “There,” says he in his native Gaelic, “the Lord took from me my bodily sight. I came home and on the way was wonderfully preserved. At length I found myself in my native land. Here I found

things not as I left them. I found the Bible of God, of which I was totally ignorant, among my friends; and schools amongst them for teaching the knowledge of that blessed book. I found such a work among them with Bibles and schools as was altogether new to me.\* Nay, the very children would correct and reprove me, though an old man. In one of these schools, the Bible caught my ear, it sunk unto my heart; it there opened an eye that sin had ever kept sealed; it read to me my deeds, it led me to trace my former ways; yea, times, places, and deeds that were quite banished from my memory, were recalled into full view. It recorded a black catalogue against me, and seemed to fix my portion amongst the damned. I thought my case altogether a hopeless one, but the same Bible brought to my ears tidings of unutterable worth—salvation through a crucified Saviour.”

The superintendent mentions this as a preface to a little story, “which were the honesty and simplicity of the old man known to the reader, would be considered more interesting still.”

“I began,” said Norman to his minister, “to think how these Gaelic schools came to be planted in my country. I thought on the state of my country when I knew it before in my youth, and on the blessed fruits of these schools among my kindred. I contrasted both, and wondered, and thought, and wondered again. Said I, what is this? What a change of things! Blessed God! Blessed Bible! Blessed people, that sent their schools! and blessed schools that teach the Bible of God to perishing sinners! and blessed teachers, men of Christ! I thought what would my poor country be, but for the Bible and these schools. I was led into their history, and traced them to a society in Edinburgh. They engrossed my attention, and I thought them really the schools of Christ. I thought I would pray for them,

\* The same astonishment was expressed by many of the disbanded Highlanders of the 78th, on their return to their native land, on finding old and young going to school, and reading the Bible in Gaelic. Norman calls them in his native tongue, “The Schools of Christ.”

and so I did ; but this, thought I, is not enough. When the Lord took away my eyesight, he gave me a pension. I thought I should give some of that to help *his* schools. A public collection was proposed by you. I felt happy at this, and prayed that the Lord might open *na sporain dhubhà* (that is, the black purses, an appellation given to the purses of greedy worldlings), and I myself gave two shillings. When a collection was proposed this year, ‘ I think,’ said I to myself, ‘ I shall give this year four shillings, double what I gave last.’ ‘ It is enough for you,’ said something within me, ‘ to give what you gave last year, two shillings.’” Here follows a long and most original debate, between Norman with the enlarged and melted heart, and the old worldly-wise Norman. Sometimes he would give double, then five, then ten, then back to five. During all this debate he was in great agitation, having, as he felt, lifted up his hand to the Lord that he would give so much. He thought of Ananias and Sapphira, and dared not go back ; while the same inward voice asked him, “ ‘ Ah, Norman, what are you about ; you are now going crazy altogether ; you are a poor blind man, you cannot work, you have a family of seven to support, and the money God gave you as a provision for your family, you should apply to the object for which it was given, which will be most acceptable to Him,’ &c. &c.

“ I then began to ruminate on the whole process, and at length I thought my opposition might be the suggestion of Satan to keep me from giving so much to the cause of Christ. On reflecting on this for a while, I felt convinced it was he. I started upon my legs, and lifting up my hand with defiance, I said, ‘ Ah ! you devil, I will give a score of them. I will give a pound note every year I live, so the further you follow me, the more you shall lose.’ From that moment the temptation ceased.”

“ How interesting and encouraging it is to mark the wonderful and merciful working of God in preserving this poor blind man abroad, and in bringing him in safety home to his native land, until, by your instrumentality, he should be made acquainted with the ways and salva-

tion of God. Thus, from Egypt all the way, a blind scholar has been brought to your schools. Thus, the Bible having been blessed to a poor blind man, in a remote hamlet of your land, has drawn forth the prayer of his heart in its own cause, and as much out of his small pittance for the cause of Christ, as out of the purses of those who have their hundreds and their thousands. Poor Norman contributed his 'score of shillings' both last year and the present, and says he means to do so while he lives, 'unless the King becomes bankrupt!'"\* We have pleasure in stating that Norman is not weary of his liberality, as he adds one penny to his pound for every year that God adds to his life.

Their pastor, knowing that, by losses at sea and a bad harvest, they were one season unusually impoverished, did not call in the collection as usual; but they collected it amongst themselves, and carried it to him. He said he feared they could not afford it, but they would not be excused.

In 1835, when, in addition to all their usual collections, they in one day at church gathered L.20 for church extension, they were favoured with such a successful fishing season, as enabled them to supply all the wants of the winter. The fishing had for *many* years failed, and the people observed that, by means of this wealth bestowed on them from the sea in 1835, they were amply repaid for all they had been enabled to give. This is another of those facts which we note to the glory of Him who is nigh unto all them that fear him. He knoweth what we have need of, and they who scatter in faith shall still increase. Let not any of those contributors shrink from this mention of the gracious dealing of God with them. The effort of their liberality was known to those interested in the church extension scheme, and the plentiful fishing was told in the newspapers. May those who see the divine hand give Him the praise!

Dr Chalmers, who is well acquainted with the amount usually collected in such a situation, observed that L.7

\* Gaelic School Report for 1828, p. 48.

would have been a handsome contribution for the parish of Uig. The parish of Lochs must also be mentioned as rivalling its neighbour in liberality, having contributed as much as L.20 to the Gaelic School Society in one year, influenced by the same feeling of gratitude and concern for the ignorant. It is pleasing to be enabled to trace this to the only genuine source of liberality. The faithful pastor at Lochs has lately been cheered by seeing several new souls awakened, and the good work is going on prosperously in the early months of 1836. May the spirit of the Lord cause this thing to grow!

One feature of this revival peculiarly interesting is that souls of all ages have been affected, from the infant of three years to the man verging on a hundred. We present a notice of the youngest, and two of the oldest within our knowledge. In Lewis, as in the American revivals, the effects produced on the characters of others, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, seem to occupy many minds with an unwonted solemnity, the cause of which they do not themselves always perceive; and many are excited to imitate pious neighbours, by establishing family prayer, who are not as yet walking in the true light of the Gospel. This is said to explain some parts of the conduct of the parents of the child whose little history is here related.

Catharine Smith was a native of Pabay, a small island in Loch Roag, where dwell seven families. From their insular situation and poverty, it has not been in the power of the parents to educate their children; but little Kitty is an example of the truth that all God's children are taught of him, for when only two years old she was observed to lay aside her playthings, and clasp her little hands with reverence during family worship; and at the age of three she was in the habit of repeating the 23d Psalm, with such relish and fervour as showed that she looked to the good shepherd in the character of a lamb of his flock. Her parents taught her also the Lord's Prayer, which she repeated duly, not only at her stated times, but often in the silence of night. She frequently pressed the duty of prayer, not only on the other children, but

on her parents, and she told her father that, in their absence, when she would ask a blessing on the food left for the children, her brothers and sisters would mock at and beat her for doing so. At another time, when she was probably about six years old, she was out with her companions herding cattle, when she spoke to them of the comeliness of Christ. They, probably to tempt her, said he was black. She left them, and returned home much cast down, and said, "The children vexed me very much to-day. I will not go with them, for they said that Christ was black, and that grieved my spirit." Her parents asked her what she replied to that. "I told them," she said, "that Christ is white and glorious in his apparel."

It is probable that Kitty was sufficiently enlightened to discern the moral comeliness of the gracious Redeemer, while her thoughtless comrades did not extend their ideas beyond personal beauty. They would have said any thing that might produce the effect of provoking their playfellow, whose more intelligent spirit grieved for them that they "saw no beauty in him" whom her soul loved, "that they should desire him." Perhaps no Christian character is truly confirmed in faith and patience, without some trial of persecution, which both shows to the heart its own corruption, by the irritating effects of gain-saying, and affords an opportunity of proving that we are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. This dear child had her trial adapted to her age and sphere, and came forth on the Lord's side holding fast the word of life, in as firm a way as a much more experienced Christian might have done,

The Rev. J. Macdonald of Farintosh having preached in the parish of Uig, Kitty's parents were among the many who went to hear him. On their return they mentioned what he had said about the formality of much that is called prayer, and the ignorance of many as to its spirituality; they stated, according to their recollection of the sermon, that many had old useless prayers, and greatly needed to learn to pray with the Spirit. The child observed this, and two days after, said to her mother, "it



is time for me to give over my old form of prayer." Her mother replied, "neither you nor your prayers are old;" but she rejoined, "I must give them over, and use the prayers which the Lord will teach me." After this she withdrew to retired spots for prayer. At one time her younger sister returned without her, and on being asked where she had left Kitty, she said, "I left her praying." Her father says that he has often sat up in bed listening to her sweet young voice, presenting this petition with heartfelt earnestness, "Oh, redeem me from spiritual and eternal death."

From the remoteness of her dwelling, Kitty had never attended any place of public worship,—but the Sabbath was her delight,—and often would she call in her brothers and sisters from the play in which they were thoughtlessly engaged, asking them to join in prayer and other devout exercises, and warning them, that if they profaned the day, and disliked God's worship, they must perish. Her mother observing the intent gaze with which she looked on a large fire, enquired what she saw in that fire? She replied, "I am seeing that my state would be awful if I were to fall into that fire, even though I should be immediately taken out; but wo is me, those who are cast into hell fire will never come out thence." Another day, when walking by the side of a precipice, and looking down, she exclaimed to her mother, "how fearful would our state be if we were to fall down this rock, even though we should be lifted up again; but they who are cast into the depths of hell will never be raised therefrom."\*

One day her mother found her lying on a bench with a sad countenance, and addressed some jocular words to her with a view to cheer her. But the child's heart was occupied with solemn thoughts of eternity; and instead of smiling, she answered gravely, "O, mother, you are vexing my spirit, I would rather hear you praying." In

\* The reader is requested to observe that the child's words are translated from the Gaelic, and thus have lost their infantine expression.

truth, eternity was very near her, and the Spirit of God was preparing her for entering it. As she got up one morning, she said, "O, are we not wicked creatures who have put Christ to death." Her mother, curious to hear what one so young could say on such a subject, replied, "Christ was put to death, Kitty, long before we were born." The child, speaking with an understanding heart, said, "mother, I am younger than you, but my sins were crucifying him." After a pause, she added, "what a wonder that Christ could be put to death when he himself was God, and had power to kill every one; indeed, they only put him to death as man, for it is impossible to kill God." She used often to repeat passages from Peter Grant's spiritual songs, such as, "It is the blood of the Lamb that precious is." When she came to the conclusion of the verse, "It is not valued according to its worth," she would, in touching terms, lament the sad truth, that His blood is so lightly thought of. Being present when some pious persons spoke of those in vii. Rev. who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, she said, "is it not wonderful that, while other blood stains what is dipped in it, *this* cleanses and makes white."

Murdoch Macleod being engaged in the valuable duties of a Scottish elder in the little island of Pabay, Kitty wished much to hear him, but from bashfulness was ashamed to enter the house where he was employed in worship; she therefore climbed up to the window and sat there till all was over. Being asked what she had heard, she said she was amazed to hear that Christ offered himself as a Saviour to many in our land who rejected him, and that he was now going to other and more remote quarters to win souls. She then added with the pathos of a full heart, "O, who knows but he may return here again."

Soon after she had completed her seventh year she was attacked by that sickness which opened her way to the kingdom of Heaven. When her father asked who she pitied most of those she would leave behind, she replied that she pitied every one whom she left in a Christless

state. She suffered much from thirst during her illness, and her mother, reluctant to give her so much cold water as she longed for, fell upon the evil expedient of telling her that the well was dried up. The following day, when she saw water brought in for household purposes, poor Kitty's heart was grieved, and she said, "O, mother dear, was it not you who told the great lie yesterday, when you said the well was dry—O, never do so again, for it angers God." During her illness, she was enabled almost literally to obey the command, "pray without ceasing," and was often interceding with the Lord to look down and visit her native place. On the morning of her last day on earth, her father said, "there is reason for thankfulness that we see another day." Kitty opened her eyes, and said, "O, Holy One of Israel save me from death," a petition often used when in perfect health, and evidently referring to spiritual and eternal death. Throughout the day she was generally silent, which her father remarked, saying, "I do not hear you praying as usual;" to which she replied, "dear father, I pray without ceasing, though not because you desire me to do so." In her last moments she was heard to say, "O, redeem me from death." Her father, leaning over her, said, "Kitty, where are you now?" To which the reply was, "I am on the shore;" and immediately her soul was launched into the great ocean of eternity. In December, 1829, this lowly child was carried from her poor native island to the blessed region where the redeemed of the Lord find their home, and her name has left a sweet perfume behind it.

From this most satisfactory and authentic account of the blessed state of one of the youngest souls brought to Christ during the revival at the Lewis, which strongly reminds us of the narrative of a child of equally tender years detailed by Jonathan Edwards, we turn to two aged men, who almost literally explain the anomalous expression, "a child of a hundred years old."

John M'Kae, family piper to the Earl of Seaforth, and probably having inherited that rather dignified office from a line of ancestors, stimulated by desire after the truth, acquired the art of reading when very old. He applied

to the noble lady, who is not only heir to her father's lands, but acts as the patroness and friend of all the Lewis, for a very large printed Bible, "as she must remember that his eyes were nearly fourscore years old." The lady remarked, that as there were no Gaelic schools in his youth, she supposed it did not signify, as its being a large print would not enable him to read it. "Ay," said the patriarchal student, "but I've been to school, and I have learnt to read her \* myself, for that is better than hearing her read." The large Bible was procured by sending all the way to Dingwall, and when he received it, poor M'Kae hugged it to his breast, while tears started in his eyes, and he exclaimed, "Ay then, may be I may read her through yet myself before I die; I've heard her read in the kirk, but I never thought to read her myself"—and a diligent student did the old man prove himself while he sat by the hall fire with the Bible on his knee. In a few months after obtaining this treasure he was called to the full enjoyment of all its blessed promises. He had been a sober and respectable person during his long life, but he was believed to have been but lately awakened to a deeper sense of eternal things, by having his only son, who was celebrated as a fine swimmer, drowned when crossing a loch.

Malcolm Macleod had attained the great age of 95, without experiencing repentance unto life. Infirmity had for some time prevented him from attending public worship, and as far as man might judge, his decaying faculties were fast shutting up the avenues to the soul, and he was less likely than many to become the subject of converting grace. But the Lord saw it not so. In October or November, 1834, his pious daughter brought home notes of a sermon she had been hearing, which were made the means of serious impression to her father, and he is going on in a very promising progress in the divine life. Though he is becoming blind with age, his

\* It is pretty generally known that Highlanders apply personal pronouns to inanimate objects, and reverse the genders in using them.

mental faculties are entire, and the whole man is enlivened, having received a stimulus which arouses his attention, sharpens his understanding, and interests his heart. Instead of dozing away his hours, he now sleeps very little, prayer and praise have also become his principal food. His glad pastor says of him, "He is a most interesting sight, caught at the eleventh hour; O how wonderful are the ways of sovereign grace!" With his usual faithfulness Mr MacLeod ministers to him in private, and lately preached at his bed-side on the man who was thirty-eight years at the pool. And at the last season of communion the venerable man was borne by four friends and placed at the table of his Lord, with tears of sorrow for past profanation of that privilege, and of grateful love for present blessings coursing each other over his furrowed cheeks. The whole multitude were moved, every eye glistening in sweet sympathy with his feelings. When we hear of such things, may we not justly exclaim, "what hath God wrought!"

In 1835, the Rev. A. MacLeod visited some of the other western Isles to ascertain their state, and was much moved to see the Isle of Tyree in particular, fortified against gospel truth, by the opposition of those having influence, and the natural ignorance and corruption of the people. His heart has not found rest without suggesting means to "assault the ancient garrison," so that they may "in the Lord's good time subdue and drive the Canaanite out of the land." But that which brings the visit to Tyree under our peculiar notice, is the effect produced on the people of Uig, when their pastor again reached home, and related to them what he had witnessed. He frequently had occasion to observe that after a short absence, not only was the love of his people for himself increased, but their zeal to run their Christian course also. On hearing of the deplorable ignorance and wickedness to be met with in the Isle of Tyree, several of Mr MacLeod's people who were then as careless as they, were brought under concern; and when they heard of the *religious views* entertained by some of these islanders, they were convicted with having secretly cherished simi-

lar opinions, although they were daily favoured with gospel ordinances. Since November in particular, there has been much religious impression amongst the people. Silent tears in general pervading the whole congregation. This used to be the case during the long time when worship was held in the field, while the church was building, but had subsided in a degree since they occupied the new church, till this fresh awakening has melted many new hearts, and refreshed many who had been previously awakened. It is a fact much worthy of observation, that during ten years in which this work of grace has made a steady progress, there has not been one outbreaking of enthusiasm, or delusion, or false doctrine, so that their minister expressed great astonishment and thankfulness, after reading Dr Sprague's work on American Revivals, that they have been so graciously preserved from the extravagance and error which has in some few instances broke in to injure the integrity of the work in America.

In considering the state of things in the parish of Uig, we are disposed to rejoice over it more than over any other Scottish Revival. Its calm, and deep, and prolonged flow, and its sincerity may be imputed to some natural and obvious causes. God has vouchsafed to them for ten years the ministrations of a man, whose method is consistent and now well understood by them. He has been preserved in prayerful humility as their watchman, and saved from in any way casting a stumblingblock in their way. The ministers who have been placed in the neighbouring churches (two of which are government churches that have within a few years been opened on the island) are men who greatly strengthen his hands by preaching not "another gospel," but the same doctrine with himself, thus avoiding distraction and perplexity. Though Uig be the most enlivened spot, the revival is by no means limited to that parish. There has been no variety of sects introducing controversy and strife, or withdrawing men's minds from the essentials that concern their own souls, to fix them on the less weighty forms of church government, or questions of no profit. In this respect, truth has had a fairer entrance to the

mind, and prayer has not been hindered. At Arran there seemed to be a tendency in some to yield to bodily excitement and nervous emotions which their results proved not to have been genuine workings of the renewed heart. In Glenlyon the spirit of controversy met and drove back the spirit of contrition. At Moulin the removal of the faithful instructor left the sheep to be scattered. But in Lewis hitherto the Lord hath upheld and sheltered his flock from such dangers, and the spirit of faith and prayer and a sound mind is preserved amongst them. May it never die away, but from this distant spot of our empire may the blessed wave of salvation swell and rise, till it shall overflow the land, and gather in every county, every parish, and every soul to the kingdom of our God and of his Christ !

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The point designed to be proved by this little work is, that *it is true that we have had revivals in Great Britain*. This, it is humbly trusted, has been accomplished by the few unexaggerated facts here stated, which constitute but a slender portion of the matter of a similar kind, that a careful research would bring to view, as what has been vouchsafed to our country since the Reformation. It is pleasing to hear that Haworth, the scene of Grimshaw's labours, and of a Divine awakening in the last century, is again visited by a shower of the Holy Spirit, and that in more than one of the congregations which took their rise so many years ago, the Spirit of penitence and of prayer is at present bestowed in a lively manner—especially in one community of baptists, upwards of sixty members having been added to them during the last few months.

“Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain.”—Joel, ii. 23.





## APPENDIX.

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### FALSE APPEARANCES OF THE INFLUENCES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE occupation of searching for the Spirit's operations on the souls of men, is calculated to have an effect the very reverse of fostering credulity. The darkness of human ignorance, the folly and infirmity of human affections, the aptitude of the mind which experiences some solicitude about its eternal welfare to catch up erroneous notions, and in its confusion to accept pungent feeling and evanescent emotion as marks of its reconciliation to God—not only these, but the excitability of human beings when collected in multitudes, of which the history of the world furnishes abundant examples, tend to put the enquirer in an attitude of distrust. In matters not connected with religion at all, we see periods of enthusiasm—nay, we may say of fanaticism—either political, mercantile, or philosophical, which, in the ardour they have excited, are somewhat analogous to the emotion of a revival. The sentiment that continually furnished thousands to fight and to perish in the Crusades, which partook, in the minds of many of the leaders at least, as much of the nature of political as religious fanaticism; the spirit of revolution which so recently rendered France callous to the horror of being deluged with blood; the spirit of cupidity or speculation which induced hundreds to risk their all in the South Sea bubble and the Darien expedition; the spirit from which some of our countrymen are to this hour smarting by means of their failure to gather wealth from the mines of South America; the spirit which for a time pervaded the philosophers of Europe, so as to lead them to consume their lives in lonely cells, concocting all manner of baneful substances over gloomy furnaces, in search

of the philosopher's stone;—that same spirit has been at work also in the progress of religion, and if for a while it has lain in abeyance, it required but to be stirred to show itself in all its vigour. Mind is a great enigma. It possesses sympathies of an extraordinary nature, which, when the proper chord is touched, seem to give a supernatural energy to the human character. The knowledge of this renders it necessary to “try the Spirits,” and to guard steadily against mistaking false excitements for the genuine influences of the Holy Spirit, which alone produces repentance unto life.

From the time when Theudas boasted himself to be somebody, and about four hundred men joined themselves to him—and Judas of Galilee, who drew away much people after him, who also perished\*—down to the present time, there seems no century to have passed without having produced a leader of delusions in some part of the Christian world.

The Montanists in Arabia, in 172, were seized with raptures, fell into ecstasies, and uttered unintelligible sounds; and even Tertullian, esteemed as one of the Fathers, was drawn aside by them.

The soul sickens over the publications which recount the extravagances of many who might be very sincere in the midst of their delusions. “The Cry from the Desert,” the “Prophetical Warnings,” “The History of the Camizars,” “Lacy’s Warnings,” are almost sufficiently humbling and disgusting, to excite distrust on reading the very best authenticated accounts of the genuine works of the Spirit. The mind is rather required to guard against rejecting truth than against admitting folly and insanity.

When Martin Luther began his important work, there was no lack of impediments thrown in his way in the form of false prophets and false reformers. Witness Thomas Munzer and Nicolas Stork. We extract a brief passage from Luther’s letter to the Elector of Saxony, which, in his very energetic and blunt manner, gives us his view of the cause of the false excitements which impeded him.

1520. “It is Satan’s method to attempt to crush every revival of the Divine word, first by force, then by false spirits, then by artful and mischievous teachers. It was so in the first propagation of the gospel. He deluged Christendom with the blood of martyrs. But this did not answer his purpose. He therefore sent forth a tribe of false prophets, and filled every corner of the world with heresies, till at length the

\* See Acts, v. 36, 37.

Papacy, that most powerful of all the Antichrists, completed his design. It is so at this very time. They reckon little of our teaching faith, charity, and the cross at Wittemberg. 'You must hear,' say they, 'the voice of God itself.'"

In our own country, from the visit of the Fifth Monarchy men, and the ejaculatory denunciations of Eliza Barton, the holy maid of Kent, in 1533, down to Joanna Southcote, we have not failed to be tempted by lying spirits and extravagances, the folly and profanity of which fill the mind with shame and sorrow that any should be found to adopt them.

Of these we present one which seems distinctly a device of the enemy of souls, purposely to impede the work of revival which went on so prosperously in the North of Ireland during the ministry of the Scottish clergy about 1630.

"At Craigfergus, in 1627, lived one Mr James Glendonning, a lecturer, who met with great applause for his learning. My curiosity being on this account raised, I" [Mr Blair of Bangor] "went one day to hear him; but perceived that he did but trifle away the time in citing passages from learned authors, whom he had never seen nor read. After sermon, I communed freely with him on that matter, and he was so much convinced that his ministrations did not edify the people of that place, that he quickly retired to Oldstone; where, as it was a country place, and the people very ignorant, he hoped to do more good. Accordingly, the Lord was pleased to serve himself by him; for no sooner was he settled at Oldstone, than he began to preach diligently, and having a strong voice, vehement delivery, and treating much of the law and its threatenings, he roused up the people, and awakened them with terrors; but not having understood the gospel well, nor been well grounded in learning, nor of a solid judgment, he could not pacify the conscience with the gospel offers, nor silence the objections and resolve the doubts of the awakened.

"Mr Glendonning was at first glad of the confluence of people" [drawn together by the monthly meetings at Antrim], "but we not having invited him to bear a part in the monthly meetings, he became so emulous that to preserve popular applause, he watched and fasted wonderfully. Afterwards, he was smitten with a number of erroneous and enthusiastic opinions—such as that persons turning in bed after they fell asleep, was an evidence of their want of the truth of Christianity; condescending upon a certain short day as the day of judgment; and affirming that whoever would join with him in a ridiculous way of roaring out some prayers, lying with

their faces on the earth, would undoubtedly be converted; and the like.

“ Some judicious gentlemen, to whom he had imparted these conceits, having formerly received benefit from his ministry, sent an express for me to repair to him with all expedition. Accordingly, I made haste to visit him, and found him so drowned in his delusions, that he endeavoured to convert me to his opinions, and even ventured to put his foot in the fire, in expectation of his persuading me by a miracle, which I prevented by mere force. But finding him resolute in his madness, I humoured him in the disclosure of his notions, and then from his own mouth I convicted him of contradictions and absurdities. Whereupon he made a motion to pray, and ere ever I had considered well what to do, he was flat upon the earth, roaring out his absurdities and repetitions in such a way as surprised all who were within hearing. Finding him thus add sin to his folly, I required him in the Lord’s name to be silent, and kneeling down (several other persons occasionally present also joining in the duty), I prayed with humble confidence for a considerable space, and when I had made an end, Mr Glendonning took me aside, and confessed he saw himself mistaken, and entreated that the matter might be concealed. Yet this delusive distemper was not at an end, for some time thereafter he fell again into it, and embracing one error after another, he set out at last on a visit to the seven churches of Asia.” \*

Mr Blair does not impute the extravagances of this man to insanity, though from the recurrence of his delusions, that was most probably the real cause of his unscriptural follies. The pious men of that neighbourhood, who were instrumental in producing a great work of God, did not doubt that it was a deep design of Satan in this way to disgrace the real and true conversions. They had reason, however, to thank God for the display of his wisdom, power, and goodness in that matter; for neither man nor woman were stumbled by his fall, but took warning thereby to avoid the extravagances which he adopted, and were taught to work out their salvation with the greater fear and trembling. What is particularly remarkable in this man’s history is, that “ the Lord was pleased to serve himself by him, as he roused up the people and awakened them with terrors;” and that “ judicious gentlemen had received benefit by his ministry.” Thus a man full of follies and false conceits, and who did not himself

\* Memoir of Rev. R. Blair, p. 60, 61, 62.

understand the way of salvation, was made the instrument of commencing legal conviction in the minds of persons far superior to him in intellect, and who advanced under divine teaching to the true knowledge of the plan of salvation, while he adhered to his delusions.

Three years later, Mr Blair complains of a similar delusion, but more pernicious, because more extended in its operation. "The gospel thus flourishing by the ministry of his servants, and all opposition falling before it, we looked for a respite; but to our great grief, Satan was at last let loose, to contrive a pernicious device to dishonour God. By this time there were many converts in all our congregations, who, being the objects of Satan's envy, he set himself to perplex them, and discredit the work of God upon their hearts, playing the ape by this stratagem. He counterfeited the work of the Holy Spirit upon several people about Lochlearn, causing them to fall a mourning and crying during the time of public worship, and some of them were afflicted with pangs like convulsions. Their number increased daily, and at first both pastors and people pitied them, and had charitable thoughts concerning them, hoping that the Holy Spirit was at work with them. But thereafter, when they conferred with these persons, they did never discover any sense of their sinful state, nor any panting after the Saviour. Yet not content with this trial, the minister of the place wrote to his brethren to come and examine the matter; and when we came and had conferred with them, we perceived it to be a mere delusion and cheat of the destroyer to slander and disgrace the work of the Lord.

"The very next Sabbath, an ignorant person in my congregation made a noise and stretching of his body; but incontinent I was assisted to rebuke that lying spirit which disturbed the worship of God, and I charged the same, in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, not to molest that congregation; and, through God's mercy, we met with no more of that sort."\*

"The Bishops of Scotland sent information to the King, informing against us by Mr John Maxwell, called Bishop of Ross; and thinking that nonconformity would not be a crime sufficiently heinous, they informed that we stirred up the people to ecstasies and enthusiasms. There were, indeed, in some parishes, especially in Braidisland, where was a godly aged minister, Mr Edward Bryce, some people who used in

\* Memoir of Rev. R. Blair, p. 73.

time of sermon to fall on a high breathing and panting, as those do who have run long; but most of the ministers, and especially those who were complained of, discountenanced these practices, and suspected them not to proceed from the working of the Spirit of God, and that upon this ground. These people were alike affected, whatever purpose was preached; yea, although by one who had neither gifts nor good affections to the work of God; and accordingly few of these people ever came forward to any solid exercise of Christianity, but continued ignorant and profane, and left off that seeming emotion."\*

Mr Blair and Mr Livingston being fellow-labourers among the Scotch settlers in the north of Ireland, these false excitements which bear the same date, and gave ground for their being falsely accused to the king, must be one and the same. But Mr Blair mentions their existence in one place only, while Mr Livingston speaks of "some parishes," as if it were a more extended evil.

It was as long after this date as 1688 that France produced a band of persons who made pretensions to supernatural revelations and prophecy. They arose in Dauphiny among the Protestants. They professed themselves inspired by the Holy Ghost, and when the fit came upon them were accustomed to swoon, to beat with hands and feet, while they lay on their backs with closed eyes and heaving breasts. These convulsions were followed by twitchings, after which they delivered their utterances. They professed to see heaven open, the holy angels, paradise, and hell. Their assemblies at times consisted of three or four thousand persons—men, women, and even very young children hurrying to the appointed place. The burden of their prophecies was, "Amend your lives, repent ye; the end of all things draws nigh." The hills rebounded with their loud cries for *mercy*. They also uttered loud imprecations against the priests, the church, the pope, and antichrist, with predictions of the speedy downfall of popery. People of good understanding knew not what to make of it when they heard boys and girls, of the very dregs of the people, who could not so much as read, quote with fluency many texts of the Holy Scriptures.

In 1706 four of these prophets made their way to England, where the infection caught so quickly, that before the year was out two or three hundred, in and about London, of both sexes and various ages, had joined them. They made preten-

\* Life of Rev. J. Livingston, p. 18.

sion to the gift of healing; taught erroneous doctrines—such as that forgiveness of sin may be obtained independent of repentance; and uttered prophecies, of the fulfilment of which they were so persuaded, that John Lacy, who became one of the most prominent amongst them, ventured to conclude the preface to his last “Warning” with these words:—“If, in six months now to come, the mighty power of God doth not attest they were from him, I shall, before all the world, acknowledge my delusion. Witness my hand, this 29th day of October, 1707. John Lacy.”

Their influence was much enfeebled by their having had the folly to fix the 25th day of May, 1708, for the resurrection of Dr Emens, a celebrated person amongst them. On the day specified, the public curiosity or credulity was so great, that not less than 20,000 persons assembled near his grave, and a guard of soldiers was required to prevent disorder. Of course, the ignorant multitude were disappointed of the promised spectacle, the remains of Dr Emens still retaining their dark abode.

It seems strange that any were so perverse as to remain unconvinced after such a disappointment as this. But as we shall presently see, they obtained a footing in Edinburgh during the following year; and there is no reason to doubt, that it was a remnant of the same folly which still lingered in London thirty years later. There are in Wesley's journals repeated references to it. His account of a visit he made to one of these prophets, in September, 1739, we extract:—

“I went, having been long importuned thereto, about five in the evening, with four or five of my friends, to a house where was one of those called French prophets. After a time she came in. She seemed about four or five-and-twenty, of an agreeable speech and behaviour. She asked why we came? I said, to ‘try the spirits, whether they be of God.’ Presently after she leaned back in her chair, and seemed to have strong workings in her breast, with deep sighings intermixed. Her head and hands, and, by turns, every part of her body seemed also to be in a kind of convulsive motion. This continued about ten minutes; till about six she began to speak (though the workings, sighings, and contortions of her body were so intermixed with her words, that she seldom spoke half a sentence together) with a clear strong voice, ‘Father, thy will, thy will be done. Thus saith the Lord, if of any of you that is a father, his child ask bread, will he give him a stone? If he ask a fish, will he give him a scorpion? Ask bread of me, my children, and I will give you bread. I will

not, will not give you a scorpion. By this judge of what ye shall now hear.'

"She spoke much (all as in the person of God, and mostly in Scripture words) of the fulfilling of the prophecies, of the coming of Christ now at hand, and the spreading of the gospel over all the earth. Then she exhorted us not to be in haste in judging her spirit to be or not to be of God; but to wait upon God, and he would teach us, if we conferred not with flesh and blood. She added, with many enforcements, that we must watch and pray, and take up our cross, *and be still before God*

"Two or three of our company were much affected, and believed she spoke by the Spirit of God. But this was in no wise clear to me. The motion might be either hysterical or artificial; and the same words any person of a good understanding, and well versed in the Scriptures, might have spoken. But I let the matter alone; knowing this, that *if it be not of God, it will come to nought.*" \*

These persons ascended to very sublime heights in quietism, forbidding the preaching of the gospel the observing of the Sabbath more than all other days for religious purposes, and every other active duty of Christianity, conceiving their duty and safety to consist in *being still*. A deputation of three or four of them waited on Mr Wesley, and informed him that they would not quit his roof till they had by prayer brought him to the same possession of the hidden life with themselves. It would ill have accorded with the temperament of the lively itinerant to sit on a stool all day in mute meditation. He had neither leisure nor taste for the species of discipline his visitors wished to subject him to; he therefore told them, as such was their purpose, they would be most undisturbed if they sat in the society room. There he left them from early morning while he pursued his avocations; the weather was cold; they had no food; and feeling that in spite of their quietism they had not overcome the necessities of nature, they slunk from the house towards evening, and left Mr Wesley to pursue his own way of propagating the gospel.

In connexion with the subject of false excitements, we have the means, from most authentic and unpublished documents, to give a representation of the manners and utterances of some persons assuming to be prophets, who visited Edinburgh in 1709 and who probably sprung from the "French Prophets" above alluded to. Whether any of the persons de-

\* Wesley's Journal, vol. i. p. 165.



scribed in these letters were natives of France or not, can only be conjectured by the names. The letters are from a highly respectable minister of the Church of Scotland, addressed to his brother, then a student of medicine in the University of Leyden, and afterwards, for more than thirty years, a physician in the town of Haddington. We extract only such parts of the letters as refer to this subject, and in mentioning the names of those who united themselves with these prophets, we do so, unconscious who may be their descendants, solely to give the power of authenticating the facts to any who may feel an interest in doing so.

“ Saltoun, April 7, 1709.

“ I know not if you have yet heard that some of the English prophets have lately come to Edinburgh. There are three girls and a boy that take agitations, and utter warnings that are truly very surprising. They have with them two men that pass under the name of *Believers*, and they write what the former do deliver when under these agitations. I have been but once in town since their arrival, and my curiosity led me to visit these strangers. I was conveyed to a room where one of the believers was. His name is Mr Learner. He seems to be a very modest and sincere man, and of a calm and equal temper; which I could safely discover by his way of answering the queries and arguments that were proposed by some of the company. I had not the opportunity of discoursing with him as I desired, or proposing what objections I inclined to offer against their pretensions. There was a mixed multitude in the room, and some of them so very fond of disputing, that they interested themselves in every question that was started, taking a sort of airy pleasure to show how they could manage the argument both pro and con; so that I thought it best for that time to be silent. There were present two of the girls, one named Ann Topham, about fifteen or sixteen years of age; the other, Anna Maria King, aged about twelve years. When some time was spent in a loose kind of dispute, Mr Learner read a warning or two out of one of Mr Lacy's books; and a little after the oldest of the two girls last mentioned was suddenly seized with the usual agitations, and pronounced a short warning with which I was indeed surprised. It was good sense and well connected, and had a great air of piety. The agitation lasted about a quarter of an hour, and was pretty severe; yet I observed she was not fatigued by it, for it neither altered her colour nor put her

into a sweat. Mr Fletcher's \* lady happened to be in town next day, and heard her deliver another warning, wherein she spoke of *our Lord's coming to cleanse the whole creation of filthiness, so that no unclean thing should remain therein.* The agitation was sharp, and lasted about half an hour; yet, as soon as it was over, Madame Fletcher felt her pulse, and it went very slow. She had no beating at her heart, nor was she in a sweat, which is somewhat odd. She is, as I am informed, a very dull, ignorant creature, scarce able to speak any tolerable sense when free of those agitations. When I go to town again, 'tis like I may enquire more particularly about them; and if you think it worth your while, you shall have what farther information I am able to give you concerning them in my next. All I can now say is, that I am persuaded the warning I heard from the above-mentioned girl was none of her own. So that of necessity it must either have been a conn'd lesson—for which I apprehend there are some presumptions not altogether improbable—or it must be ascribed to the influence of a spirit, whether good or bad I will not yet venture to determine, though I must own there are several things about them, which I do not see how they can be reconciled with the character of the good spirit." \* \* \*

“Saltoun, August 12, 1709.

\* \* “The three English prophets of the second mission, whom I named in my last, came to Edinburgh about the middle of June. Mr Dutton is a man of a cleanly tight spirit, though of no great learning. He was some time clerk to Baron Scroop (now one of the Barons of Exchequer here), who gives a very favourable account of his behaviour while he served him in that post, before he joined the prophets. The other two are men of no learning. Mr Nut had been formerly a Quaker. He seems to be a plain, sincere man, and to have a sense of religion beyond what is common. Mr Glover was an Anabaptist. He is a simple, but, as far as I can judge, an ingenuous man. Their behaviour at Edinburgh has been much more prudent and cautious than that of the former. They lived very soberly, without giving any ground for the least surmise of what is scandalous and offensive. I several times heard their warnings, which were indeed very singular, particularly those of Mr Dutton. Several well-disposed people have been much affected with them. But that

\* The celebrated Fletcher of Saltoun.

which surprises me most is, that the agitations have seized about six or seven persons in Edinburgh already, and it is said there are some others who have the previous symptoms, though not so discernible as the former. Some of those who were lately agitated are of your acquaintance; viz. Mrs Ireland, Mrs Margaret Middleton (daughter of the Principal), and Mrs Isabel Cameron, daughter to Mr Cameron, with whom you boarded when at the College. You know these persons were of an excellent character, which makes the thing look more surprising. I cannot tell if ever you heard of one Mrs Catherine Orum. She was an intimate friend of Barnes's, and he gives her an extraordinary character. She was the first that felt the agitations here. I had occasion to discourse with her since, and I must say I was more satisfied with what passed in that conversation than with all that ever I read or heard of the prophets. She is one that has been for a considerable time engaged in the pursuit of a spiritual life, and she gives a most distinct and surprising account of the interior state of her soul while under agitations. About fifteen days ago one of the new inspired (the lady Abden) began to speak, and delivered a warning, which ordered two of the English prophets to return to their native country, viz. Dutton and Nutt. This they have obeyed, leaving Glover behind with Mr Noble the scribe, who might bear the brunt of the persecution which is now raised against them since the spreading of their spirit. These two last mentioned have lain these eight or ten days in the most disgraceful prison—the Correction-house—and it is not easy to have access to them. How long they shall continue there nobody knows. They were committed by an order of the Town Council, though it is said the Queen's advocate (Sir David Dalrymple) refused to meddle in the matter, and declared he knew no law against them. They wanted not some to appear for them, but in vain. Public thanks have been returned to the magistrates of Edinburgh, from the pulpit, for the godly zeal they have expressed on the occasion, and they have been exhorted to go on as they have begun. In the mean time the imprisoned bear the hardships and disgrace of their present state very cheerfully, and are ready to suffer more if called to it. The new-inspired, and all who are thought in the least to favour them, want not a sufficient trial of their patience. They are most unmercifully lashed by the tongues of all, and have the utmost contempt poured out upon them. Many scandalous stories and tales are industriously spread to defame them, though all who know any thing of the persons agitated must own, that they were not only free of any thing

that is scandalous hitherto, but had the reputation of gravity and piety above the common rate. They have their meetings daily, though very private, and there is none of them that speaks yet, except the Lady Abden. She is a very simple creature; but as I am told by those who know her well, she has led a pious life, and was particularly remarkable for her meekness and humility. She was some time married, but is now a widow, and has but one child. I was surprised t'other day to hear her deliver an excellent warning, and a prayer so sublime, and in such a strain of humility and resignation, as it will be hard to find any thing beyond in the profoundest mystics. It is thought some of the rest will speak in a little time. God knows what this will turn to. It seems to be going forward under all the clouds and difficulties that darken it. May the Father of lights give us light in darkness, and save every sincere soul from the snares of a deluding spirit."

"Saltoun, 5th September, 1709.

\* \* \* "Mr Glover, the English prophet, and his attendant, Mr Noble, of whom I wrote to you in my last letter, were some days ago carried from the Correction-house to Newhaven, and from thence conveyed in a boat to the road of Leith, where they were put aboard a ship that was to sail for Newcastle. Thus they are sent back to their own country. I can as yet give you no farther account of those they have left behind at Edinburgh. None of them have spoken yet but —, who delivers a great many warnings, and has given several blessings. I apprehend in a little time you may hear of some other of your acquaintances there being seized with agitations."

"Saltoun, Feb. 5, 1710.

\* \* \* "As to our prophets, I have but little to say at this time, but perhaps it will surprise you more than any thing you have yet heard from me on this subject. In short, those of our acquaintances who have interested themselves in this matter, are so far from being shaken by what has lately happened in the case of the Lady Abden, that they seem to be more confirmed than ever. There are two things that have contributed much to this. One is, that Mr Ingles (sometime minister at Burntisland, who was deposed several years ago by the Synod of Fife for owning Jac. Behmen's principles) has lately engaged in this dispensation. Now, they look on him as one that is in the divine light, and that has had extraordinary communication with God for the space of ten years.

And he affirms, that it is revealed to him that this is a legal dispensation of the Father, in the spirit and power of Elias, and therefore accompanied with agitations to awaken the world, but that this will quickly cease, and be followed by that of the Son, in which none shall be made use of as instruments, but the regenerate only, and this dispensation shall be in the small still voice. The other thing will surprise you yet more. It is, that Barnes has owned his conviction, that this dispensation is divine, which he thinks he has from the divine light, having attained to it only by the method of silent prayer. He is so firm and positive in this matter, that he says no external argument can ever make him doubt of this dispensation. For as his conviction was never bottomed on any outward thing but (as he believes) on the Rock of Israel, so it is not in the power of any thing but his own infidelity to destroy it. All outward disappointments, and failings of predictions, yea, and things more stumbling, if they should happen, would not in the least move him. He needs but to have his silent recourse to his Heavenly Father, sinking all his doubts and fears into the inexhaustible abyss of his mercy, and he finds his soul restored to its former peace and tranquillity, and his conviction more bright than before. To this purpose he expresses himself, in a letter to Dr G., of which I doubt not the Dr will give you a more particular account. This has mightily confirmed the late converts; so that they are not only agitated still, but begin now to speak. The Lady Clava has delivered several warnings in our language. Mrs Orum, they say, speaks in an unknown tongue sometimes for an hour together. Mr Inglis supposes it to be the language of nature. Their number has of late increased, by Jo. Moulton and Mr Giles, their arrival from Ireland—and about eight days ago there arrived from London Mr Nutt and Mr Noble (who were here last summer), together with Ann Topham and Anna Maria King, who were two of the first set that came to Edinburgh. I hear that Ann Topham, in a blessing that she gave to Nutt and Noble some days ago in the name of God, told them that they were not now to keep within doors, but they must prepare to go to the market-place and deliver their warnings openly. I have now done with what I have to say on this head. I mightily dread the consequences of this matter, and shall be glad if my fears are disappointed.”

“ Saltoun, March 9, 1710.

“ DEAR BROTHER,

“ I should have answered your last presently upon the receipt of it, but that you still require of me a further account

of our prophets, which obliged me to wait till I had information from Edinburgh, for I have not been in town myself. I doubted nothing of your being surprised with the account I gave you of our friend Barnes, his declaring so positively for the prophets—and I assure you, it would give him no small offence that you determine so peremptorily against them. He is so firmly persuaded of the truth of this dispensation, that it is in vain to attempt to undeceive him. If you read my last over again, you may safely perceive it. He owns that he has an inward illumination from God, to assure him that this dispensation is divine, and therefore he must needs believe it to be so, whatever any man can say to the contrary. He has quite another view of the matter than you seem to have. You look on it as an apparent delusion, so gross, so exterior, and so opposite to all the design of the interior life, that you wonder how a man of his character should be caught by it. But he would tell you it is a dispensation so interior, so divine, so pure, and so much subservient to all the designs of the inward life, that he never felt his soul so powerfully touched, and so mightily advanced in all interior virtues, as since he was acquainted with it. Indeed, I thought it my duty to discourse freely with him on this head, which I did without reserve, and at great length, but nothing I was able to say could make any, the least impression. He asked me several times if I had any particular vocation from God that this was delusion. This I could not pretend to, and since I could not, whatever else I could say was nothing. I happened to have with me a letter I had received from Mr Ramsay, which contained his to Mr P——t, together with Mr P.'s return. I hoped the reading of Mr P.'s letter (which was on this argument) might have touched him, though what I said did not. But still he was as firm as ever, and demanded if Mr P. affirmed that he had any interior light from God in this matter; to which I could say nothing, only I told him that we were to presume in charity that Mr P., in examining of this matter, would have the same method, and follow the same rules he recommends so much to others. In short, it is altogether in vain to make any attempt to shake B., and therefore I am resolved to speak no more on this subject to him. I find his letters are like to make impressions on some others. Dr G. has translated some of them into Latin, and designs to transmit them to Mr P. 'Tis like they may come to your hands as soon as this, if not sooner. I hope you will let me know Mr P.'s sense of them. You need not doubt, after all this, but that the rest of your acquaintances, formerly mentioned, are still firmly in the belief of this new dispensation. They

have been not a little confirmed by what has lately happened in Woolmote's family, where two persons having received a blessing and a promise of the spirit from Mr Nutt, were some days after seized with agitations, and spoke each of them under the first agitation. The one is chaplain in the family. I have not heard his name—the other is a servant maid called Ramsay. This last uttered, they say, an admirable prayer under her first agitation. What the chaplain said I know not, but I am told that some time after at Edinburgh, under agitations, he spoke somewhat extravagantly, which was like to have shaken some of the new converts, but the rest made nothing of it, imputing it to the disorder of his imagination, which, as they allege, often happens to the newly-inspired in the beginning. Since that time they have met with a new disappointment. Mr Nutt had, some considerable time ago, blessed Mrs Orum, under the operation of their spirit, and in the blessing there was a solemn promise that her mouth should be opened to speak plainly on the first day of this month of March. There were several other circumstances which rendered this blessing more solemn than ordinary. This raised a great expectation in all concerned; but when the day came, and they were duly convened, she spoke nothing but a few broken words, so that they were all sensible that the promise was not fulfilled, as they expected it should have been. This is very uneasy to Mrs Orum herself, because she reckons the disappointment is entirely owing to some failure on her part, but the rest do easily digest it as a new trial of their faith. You see how hard it is to make any impression on the minds of these persons. Nothing but the powerful grace of God can recover them. I hope he will have compassion on such as are humble and sincere, and will not leave them under the power of delusion. As for the English prophets, after the appearances that they made once and again at the Cross, and in the market place of Edinburgh, the magistrates made strict search for them, and were like to treat them severely. At last, they had warnings to go for Ireland, which they have obeyed. Only Mr Gibs lies in prison at Edinburgh. I think you have enough of the prophets for this time."

" Saltoun, May 1, 1710.

\* \* \* " The affair of our prophets seems still to go forward, notwithstanding all their disappointments. I had occasion to see Barnes at Edinburgh since I wrote to you, and though I had resolved not to engage with him on that argument again, yet he brought in the discussion, so that I could

not handsomely avoid it. He is still firm as before, and (what I knew not when I wrote my last) he has for some considerable time had agitations. They who have seen him under them, say they are very violent. I observed nothing of that nature while I was in company with him, except some little startings, which were not very perceptible. However, he affirms, with the greatest assurance, that he feels these bodily emotions, accompanied with such interior effects in the very centre of his soul, as must either come from the spirit of God, or we have no certain marks and characters whereby to distinguish the good spirit from the bad. He told me he had lately received a long letter from Dr G. on that subject, but it seems what the Dr says does not in the least alter his thoughts. I reckon by this time he is at Rosehart. He designed to give our friends there a visit about the beginning of May. I have nothing else to add on this subject, but that Robert Stuart is also agitated. His agitations, they say, are violent, but they do not attack him while teaching his scholars. I hear Sir Richard Bulkley died some time ago in Ireland. There were great promises frequently made to him, which have not been accomplished, but this will be reckoned no difficulty, because they take such promises to have been conditional, though there was no condition expressed. It seems the spirit of this dispensation has some part to act yet amongst us. Time will, I hope, give some farther discovery of it."

" Saltoun, May 31, 1710.

\*\*\* " I have scarce time to say any thing concerning our prophets. I shall only tell you of another of your good friends, who is so far engaged in that matter as to be seized with agitations. 'Tis Mr Falconer—whom you know to be a pious, well-accomplished gentleman. I hear also that a boy, who serves Mr Kenneth Gordon, advocate, has for some time been agitated. I am informed that Mr Dutton and Mr Glover (two of those whom we had here last summer), together with their wives, and Mr Lardner as a scribe, are ordered to prepare for a journey to Edinburgh. God preserve us from the power of delusions, and check the progress of every deluding spirit! I have seen a book lately published at London, containing, among other things, a historical account of Montanism. I know not if ever you had occasion to ask Mr P. his thoughts of Montanus and his prophetesses. 'Tis like he may have considered that matter.

" I am, dear Brother, yours,

" ARCH. LUNDIE."



There are some letters missing in this narrative, neither does it carry us to the termination of the story; but it is most probable that this delusion melted away, and that its extinction was scarcely observed, as has been the fate of most of its fellows. The story is told with a simplicity and candour, and with an absence of all epithets of censure, that seems to have been formed on the model of the gospel narrative, and we cannot but esteem the good man who so scrupulously honoured all that was estimable about these persons, without scorning or contemning the folly which he so much deprecated. The foundation of their error is obvious. Instead of regarding the canon of scripture as completed, and expecting the teaching of the Holy Spirit to consist in the application of the words already revealed to their souls, they expected inward vocations or revelations, which were to their heated imaginations of more weight than the word of God. Instead of the Spirit taking of the things which are Christ's, and showing them to their souls, they adopted the warnings, and prophecies, and dictations of each other, "giving heed to seducing spirits." The student of scripture is naturally impressed with the care of Christ over his church; in that he has told us before, that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," lest we be perplexed and drawn aside by such delusions; and of all the variety of form that apostasy has assumed, there is not one which has not been foretold and delineated as belonging to the perilous times which should come in the last days.

No one can read these particulars of the prophets of 1709 and 1710, without recognising in almost each feature the opinions, feelings, and pretensions of a party which was at its height a hundred and twenty years later, when its founder, Mr Campbell of the Row, was excluded from the Church of Scotland. In both cases, it was not the profane and ungodly who were seized with a set of new notions; but it was those who had some experience of the internal work of grace on the soul—who seemed to be the very flower of the Church for piety and prayerfulness—that were drawn aside. The agitations, the utterances, the warnings, the prophecies, all remind us of the hackneyed phrase, "*Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.*" The resemblance is complete, except in the article of miracles, to which the prophets of 1709 seem to have made no pretensions. We cannot but presume, that if some of those who yielded themselves with such unsuspecting devotion to these delusions in 1830, had been favoured

with a detail of the proceedings and expectations of those who preceded them by a century, it might have had a salutary effect in putting them on their guard. The hope that such may be the effect of reading these statements, is the occasion of now giving these curious letters to the public.

FINIS.

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